

At 1-2 N.C. A&T playing well below expectations

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State on Sept. 10, Small said, "We were very fortunate ... to

pull out this victory. We still didn't play sound enough football I felt like, but we can

still correct those mistakes and that's something we're going to have to do and concentrate on."

But mistakes, dropped passes, three quarterback fumbles and missed tackles doomed the Aggies against nationally-ranked

Hampton. "We have to become more fundamentally sound in what we do," Small said. "We have some young guys in some positions and we have some older guys in some positions. I don't feel like we're executing where we need to be."

Though the Aggies aren't panicking about their lackluster start, without serious improvement, A&T may be on pace for another losing season.

Remaining on the schedule for the Aggies include Saturday's game against

Elon at Elon and a nonconference game against Tennessee State in the Circle City Classic in Indianapolis.

Then there's the league schedule, where Howard is the only other school besides Elon left on the schedule that the Aggies beat last year.

Bulls find hope

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who is 0-4 in his second stint at Smith. "We've got to grow up, we've got to practice a little bit better, practice like we want to win."

Smith, which is 0-8 at Belk Complex, drove to Union's 9 with less than a minute to go, but Niles Rainey ended picking off freshman quarterback Carlton Richardson's pass in the corner of the end zone to end the threat. Intended receiver Marquis Belton ran an inside route, but Richardson read outside.

"Marquis was in the right place because his read is that if the corner drops back, his read is to sit down," Richardson said. "I don't blame him. He's a veteran, I'm a rookie. I should have followed his lead."

Smith's defense kept the Bulls in the hunt, but Union took advantage of big play opportunities. The Panthers struck first on a 70-yard connection between quarterback John Grier and wideout Herb Jones (seven catches, 164 yards). Then there was Hampton's return.

"Our defense is good, but they're not great," McNeill said. "We had a breakdown on the punt return at the end. Every play is a big play in this game and you can't relax. We relaxed on one play and that beat us."



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