U.Va. vs. Tech Where It Counts

By BILL MILLSAPS

The University of Virginia and Virginia Tech today remove their football war from the sports pages and transfer it to the only place it really counts—a grassy field 100 yards long by 53 yards wide.

At 1:30 in U.Va.'s Scott Stadium, the two old and bitter state rivals will meet for the 54th time, and before the battle, Cavaliers' coach Don Lawrence had a final volley to fire in the direction of Blacksburg.

"I've been reading how Tech has won the recruiting battle from us the last two years," said Lawrence, whose troops scored a spirit-lifting season-opening 24-16 victory over South Carolina last week. "Now, the week of the game, I'm reading that they think our talent is just as good as theirs. How can that be?"

Outside of that, Lawrence said he'd keep quiet until after the game. "If we win, I'll have a few more things to say," promised the Virginia coach.

Tech coach Charlie Coffey, whose forces will be making their season debut, said he was fresh out of comment on the Old Dominion's version of The Big Game. Said Coffey, "I wish I could drop you a gem, but I can't. I'm tired of talking. Let's play this thing."

The Hokies base their hopes for improvement (they were 4-7 in '71) on quarterback Don Stock, the nation's No. 2 passer in 1971, running back J.B. Barber and a much-improved defense. Lawrence sees Barber as the key to a more potent Tech offense. "It would be different if all we had to do was stop Stock," said Lawrence, "but because they have Barber, defending against them is a much more complicated chore."

Virginia is much less conservative on offense than it was last year, but the man who makes the Cavalier attack go—quarterback Harrison Davis—has an injured shoulder. There is still a question whether he can play against the Hokies.

If nothing else, history is against the Cavaliers. They haven't won the their first two games in a season in 18 years.

If you don't have a ticket, don't bother driving to Charlottesville. Everything, including standing room, is gone. In Richmond, WRVA and WRNL will broadcast the game.