VPI Hears Noises
Prepping For UVA

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Morris Blueford, the highly regarded freshman defensive back for Virginia Tech's football team, will miss Saturday's season opener with the University of Virginia.

Blueford, a native of Hampton who starred for Bethel High School last season as a running back, was slated as a defensive back for the Gobblers and was a number one reserve but he suffered a wrist fracture during the week and will be out at least six weeks according to Tech coach Charlie Coffey.

Coffey added an innovation to his practices for the annual meeting with the Cavaliers. He took the team to the field house and had the offense run the two minute drill, a series of plays designed to get a score in the final two minutes of a half.

Coffey had crowd noises piped in so the team could get accustomed to playing with the sound that will be raised by the sellout audience at Charlottesville.

Afterward the coach was asked how the team did. "I don't know if they called the plays as designated. I don't know," the coach said. "I couldn't hear a thing."

Tech will be trying to keep one trend alive and reverse another Saturday. In the last 17 meetings, dating back to 1963, Tech has beaten Virginia 14 times and lost but three. In the last 11 meetings, the Gobblers have won all but two games. In 1964, the Cavaliers pulled out a 20-17 win and in 1970, Virginia won 7-0. For the rest, it was all Tech and by one-sided scores for the most part.

The other trend: that Tech is on is losing opening games. This one the Gobblers would like to end. They haven't started with a win since 1967 when Tampa fell, 13-3. Since that season, Alabama twice, Virginia and Wake Forest have ruined Tech's debut.

A Tech spokesman said Thursday, "I believe the team is better prepared this year than they were last year for the opener."