Houston Brings ‘Dry’ Outlook to Tech

By BILL MILLSAPS
College football odds 'n ends:

THE WEEKEND weather forecast for Blacksburg and vicinity isn't in yet, but you are hereby advised to make book against rain for Saturday's battle between Virginia Tech and the University of Houston.

Since Bill Yeoman became Houston's coach in 1962, the Cougars have gotten wet during a football game only twice — once in 1962 and again in 1971. Houston plays all its home games in the Astrodome, and if it rains in that place, there's a leak in the roof.

Wet weather would hurt the Hokies' crowd, yet it would have certain advantages for Tech. Houston, a winner once in the first three games, brings a young and very fast team into the Lane Stadium (1:30 kickoff). Yeoman has 12 sophomores in his first 22 players.

Seven start on defense, including linebacker Harold Evans, a reformed basketball player who was the Southwest Conference Lineman of the Week following the Cougars' loss to Arizona State. Along the front seven, Houston has some tall hands to battle Tech's tall quarterback, Don Strock, a 6-5 thrower. Among the down linemen and the linebackers, the Cougars start players listed at 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, 6-6 and 6-8.

Tech's offensive guard John Schneider isn't feeling either very tall or very good this week. He suffered badly sprained knee ligaments in the Hokies' 13-10 triumph over Southern Methodist last weekend and is out for Saturday's game. Tech coach Charlie Coffey had planned to move Pete Horoszko, a 6-3, 230-pound junior, into Schneider's spot but had to make other arrangements.

Horoszko came down with blood poisoning this week, and Coffey was forced to bring Charley Martin, a 6-0, 222-pound sophomore, over from the defensive line to fill Schneider's position.

VIRGINIA AND Vanderbilt will be playing a "mirror image" football game Saturday night (8:30 kickoff) in Nashville.

"Vandy has some very good athletes," said U. Va. coach Don Lawrence, "but like us, they're pretty thin."

The similarities do not end there. The Commodores won their opener and got their fans excited. Then they suffered successive losses to Mississippi State (10-6) and Alabama (48-21). Virginia won its first two games to send its backers into paroxysms of ecstasy. Then West Virginia and Duke brought the Wahoos rudely back to earth.

Virginia's defense has been unyielding at times and very vulnerable on other occasions. The same for Vanderbilt. The Cavaliers' offense has been inconsistent behind quarterback Harrison Davis. Vandy has been alternating Watson Brown and David Lee at quarterback, and neither has been able to generate an effective attack.

Lawrence has viewed the films of the Commodores' game with Alabama, and he said, "they looked as fast as Alabama. There was a difference in size, though." The score of 48-21 indicates there were other noticeable differences.

THE UNIVERSITY of Richmond football program got defensive back Bob Loprete without ever having seen him play a game, either "live" or on films. Nearly four years ago, UR coach Frank Jones and assis-

FAIT tentatively suggested that maybe his Spider boss should wait to see films of Loprete in action. "No," said Jones, "I don't think I have to. I liked the look in his eyes."

Loprete was signed and has vindicated Jones' first impression. He's now a regular in the defensive backfield and was this week's Southern Conference Defensive Player of the Week.

NORTH CAROLINA offensive tackle Joel Bradshaw, a former star at Richmond's Hermitage High School, cracked a small bone in his ankle in UNC's 29-14 loss to Ohio State last Saturday. He'll miss the Tar Heels' next weekend against Kentucky. UNC has an open date Saturday...South Carolina's decisive victory over Memphis State last weekend eased some of the pressure on coach Paul Dietzel. Since he left Louisiana State, Dietzel's coaching record is 38-56-2...Richmonnder Bruce Shaw, the N.C. State quarterback who is hitting on 63 per cent of his passes, says, "I have always felt good throwing the short passes, but now the long ones are starting to drop in, too." Shaw and the Wolfpack play a big Atlantic Coast Conference game against Duke Saturday...The Kickoff, a ratings publication, sees it like this for area games this weekend: Houston by 10 over Virginia Tech, Vanderbilt by 11-7 over Virginia, West Virginia by 13 over William & Mary and The Citadel by 23 over VMI...Of the 106 teams listed in this week's Kickoff, only Boston University has a lower rating than VMI...An afterthought: when Tech beat SMU last weekend, it marked the first time the Hokies had won a game in September since 1969.