Virginia Tech coach Charlie Coffey said Saturday after the Gobblers’ Homecoming win over nationally ranked Oklahoma State that “we’re making do with a lot of heart and some skilled people.”

The most skilled of these, of course, is quarterback Don Strock, the national leader in passing and total offense. But even the best sometimes have some bad moments.

Like early Saturday afternoon, when Strock’s second pass of the day set up Oklahoma State’s first touchdown with Darryll Stewart intercepting. Then, not too many minutes later, Eugene Jefferson picked off Strock’s seventh pass of the day at the Cowboy four and Oklahoma State was in motion toward its second touchdown and a 14-0 advantage.

Under most circumstances, that would be enough to make a fellow, even the nation’s best, think twice about putting the ball into the air.

But not Don Strock. He didn’t even hesitate.

He had a 17-yarder to Kit Utz in the first Tech scoring move. Then, after a third interception, he came back with strikes to Utz (12), Mike Burnop (14), Donnie Reel (19) and Steve Galloway (22) in the 78-yard, 10-play move that tied the count.

Next time the Gobblers had possession, Strock needed but two plays, both passes to Ricky Scales (22 and 49 yards), to give Tech its first lead of the day.

At the half, when Tech was up, 24-23, Strock had hit 14 of 26 for 244 yards.

“There aren’t too many really fine passing teams anymore,” said OSU coach Dave Smith. “We knew it would be difficult to get to him (Strock). It’s difficult for us to play every down against passing.” So they were dropping the ends back to defend.

Strock made it easier for the Grovers after intermission, going to the run more — “We tried to establish a running game,” he said. “We thought we could run on them and (James) Barber did a hell of a job.”

Still, when the day was over, Tech had its biggest win in recent years, 34-32, and Strock had completed 20 of 40 passes for 355 yards and two TDs.

For that, the 6-8, 205-pound senior is a repeater as The Times-Dispatch Offensive Player of the Week.