The Don Strock Era, which got the Charlie Coffey Show off the ground, comes to a close this afternoon in Willcox, Ariz., against Yavapai College. It is an era of more individual glory than team success, which Coffey believers will come later.

In the two years that the 6-5 wonder from Warwick, Pa., has been the quarterbacl, Tech has won only nine games, lost 11 and tied one.

But there has been improvement this year to 5-4-1 although there were disadvantages for Tech followers in the losses to Virginia and William and Mary. Those failures were somewhat overcome by victories over favored SMU and Oklahoma State but a tie with Temple is a bit of a letdown from the Tech record is about what you would have expected.

Offense, Passing Titles Almost Sure
Strock's considerable success, however, has created great enthusiasm in Blacksburg and around Southwest Virginia, which has enabled Coffey's crew to make great strides, especially in receiving.

Because Utah State's Tony Adams, who led Strock in total offense by 122 yards, was hurt in the first quarter of his final game Thursday, Strock is almost a cinch to win both the total offense and national passing crowns.

He needs only four pass completions and 170 yards in offense for those two championships, which would be the first ever for an area collegian.

Likewise, Strock needs but 216 yards in offense, will be able to lead Tech to their first appearance in the fifth man in NCAA history to surpass 3,000 yards in a single season.

Strock, Tech's game plan will be to pass, pass, pass against the weak Deacons. Strock has an out-side shot at the all-time total offense record of 3,563 yards, set by Tech's Bill Anderson in 1969.

Strock actually would have been in easy range of that figure had he not been held to 50 yards by Florida State's defense during Tech's first two losses, two yards short of one Adama's NCAA mark, for Strock to surpass that embarrassment.

Besides Anderson, the only other collegians ever to surpass 3,500 yards in a season were Greg Cook of Cincinnati (3,502) and Don Shula of San Diego State in 1969 (3,197) and Tulsa's Jerry Thomine in 1966 (3,128).

Outstanding Two-Year Career
If Strock nets 250 yards against the Deacons, he will become the sixth man ever to total 8,000 yards in his career. The others are Jim Plunkett of Stanford, the all-time leader with 7,007, Chuck Hickey of SMU (3,622), John McVay of Georgia Tech, Virgil Carter of Brigham Young and Duke's Leo E. Howard.

It is amazing that Strock has gained virtually all of his yardage on a pedestrian 5-5-1 record. Had Coffey come to Blacksburg a year earlier, Strock would have been a true completely rewritten the NCAA record book.

Playing under Jerry Claiborne, who red-shirted him a year, Strock gained only 189 yards in his sophomore season as a backup man to Bob Geeman.

Strock is virtually a cinch to be a first-round pick in the next private college draft. Virginia State's Gary Huff, is likely to be one of the first three quarterbacks selected. Tech has never had a first-round quarterback.

Tech's lack of success and national name has hampered Strock's chances to be the All-American quarterback and a serious contender for the Heisman Trophy, which most often goes to a passing star. But Strock is certainly Coffey's Heisman's hope.

Coffey wanted to establish Tech as a colorful, exciting team, something that he has been able to do.

Thanks to his super passer, Coffey has been able to fiddle with the Tech offense passing crowds into Lane Stadium. That type of team, something that the coach has always wanted, has greatly benefited Tech in the recruiting wars.

If Tech becomes the national power that Coffey wants, the Tech coach will be ever thankful that he inherited Don Strock from Claiborne. And you must assume that Strock will always be grateful that the coaching change was made just in time.

Without Coffey's offense, Strock almost surely would never have made the leap from one of the pros, who are likely to make him a rich young man.