Joyce To Sign With Gobblers

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Eddie Joyce Jr., All-State quarterback at Andrew Lewis High, said today he planned to sign an athletic grant-in-aid to Virginia Tech.

Joyce, who is regarded by many as the top passing quarterback developed in the state, is expected to sign with the Gobblers Saturday, Dec. 4, the first day of the NCAA signings.

"I have decided to attend Tech because they like to do what I do best—throw the football," Joyce said.

Although he was recruited by most of the major schools in the nation, Joyce visited only Florida State and Tennessee, in addition to Tech.

"I wasn't interested in the other schools so I didn't see any sense in wasting my time and theirs," Joyce said. "But I was flattered by the attention some of the big schools gave me." Joyce set all the passing records for Lewis and the Roanoke Metro area and is believed to hold three state 3-A records for passing. He was the Wolverines' regular quarterback four seasons and compiled a record that will be hard to equal.

His state records are 64 touchdowns, 473 completions and 6,243 passing yards in a career. He had only 34 interceptions as he paced the Wolverines to a 33-6 record during the four-year period.

Coach Charlie Coffey of Tech has said in the past he considered Joyce a truly outstanding college prospect.

"Joyce is a Don Strock-type quarterback and that says it all," Coffey has said in the past. "He has the natural ability and has had the benefit of outstanding high school coaching. We would be truly excited to have him attend Tech. He would be a great boost to our program."

Eddie Joyce Sr. coached his son during his scholastic career. Young Joyce stands 6-4 and weighs 190. He also has been an outstanding basketball player and track man at Lewis.

"I know it's going to be much tougher breaking into college football," Joyce said. "I know I have started four years and will now face the biggest challenge of my life. But that's what athletics is all about—fighting to make good and to be a success."

Young Joyce said he thought his biggest adjustment would be in reading defenses.

"You see a new defense on most every play in college," Joyce said. "It will take time and experience to read them as quickly as necessary."

He also said he hoped to improve his strength and to add some weight.

Joyce also said another reason for his decision to attend Tech was the fact it was close to home.

"I reckon I'm something of a home boy," he said. "I enjoy playing before my friends and the people who know me. I think it will make me work all the harder to succeed. I just hope I don't let them down."

Strock, who holds all the Tech passing records and won the NCAA passing and total offensive titles this season, will be graduated next month. This leaves a big void in the Tech offense.

Bruce Ariana, Strock's backup man this season, will return but Joyce is considered to be a real threat for the starting position.