Bristow Likes New Pivot Spot

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BLACKSBURG—When they told Allan Bristow he was going to play the pivot next season for the Virginia Tech basketball team, he was like a kid with a new toy.

“[I'm] all excited,” said the talented senior-to-be from Richmond. “I know I’m not the tallest guy in the world but I think I can do the team and myself more good in the pivot. I’m really looking forward to it.”

Bristow, who can stretch a bit and reach the 6-3 mark, has enjoyed two great seasons as a forward at Tech. He already holds many scoring records and is on the verge of recording many others.

His play at forward drew raves from all who watched him play and gained him many all-star honors. He is among the leading contenders for All-America honors next year.

But now that Tech didn’t land a big junior college graduate nor a recruit with giant proportions to play the pivot, coach Don DeVoe put the finger on Bristow.

One thing for certain, Bristow will have at least one distinction very few rookie pivot men receive. He’ll be featured on the October cover of the Atlantic Journal.

The pictures will help illustrate an inside story on offensive pivot play, written by assistant Sonny Smith. The story is one of three written by the Tech staff that are slated next fall in the magazine that is widely distributed in the coaching field.

DeVoe has a story in September on inside play while assistant Jim Hallihan will write one on pressure defense for the November issue.

John Griffith, editor of the Athletic Journal, was in Blacksburg yesterday filming illustrations for the stories. It was during the demonstrations that Bristow got a real taste of the pivot play.

Bristow realizes that his opponents in the pivot spot will carry a great height advantage but he is looking forward to the challenge.

Actually, he believes he will have an advantage and also a disadvantage in the new position.

“I think it will help on offense,” he said. “I think I might be quicker than most big men who will be guarding me. I like the idea because I will get my hands on the ball more. Inside is my best game. Now instead of getting the ball outside and having to take it in, I’ll already have it here.

“I’ll still go outside some . . . that’s where I’ll have to play if I hope to make it in the pros. I’m going to work hard on a better outside shot and also on taking the ball to the basket. I also need some more inside moves.”

The disadvantage, Bristow believes, will come on defense where he will find himself going against some of the biggest in the business.

“I’ll have to work on quickness and other little things,” he said. “It’s a lot tougher to guard a bigger man than it is to score against him.”

Bristow also feels he can rely on his teammates for plenty of help — especially from his roommate Ed Frazier, a 6-4 forward.

“Ed can take care of a lot of trouble,” Bristow said. “He’s the best on defense and you can bet I’m going to treat him good next year.”

Bristow also has kind words for forward Craig Lieder, who he calls a “real team man.”

Bristow also feels he will be playing with enough outside talent to keep the opponents from sagging on him. He is anxious to begin work with Furman College guard recruit Charlie Thomas and Bobby Stevens. And he feels Mark Hatcher, who was injured most of his freshman season, has shown great leadership and should be a big asset.

“But, heck, we’ll have a lot of good players,” Bristow said. “I feel we will be a very close team and one that will not seek any individual glory.”

Bristow said he was not scared of any physical beating he might have to take inside.

“I like it rough,” he smiled. “I feel I am getting stronger all the time. I’m not scared of getting outranked. But I also know that I’ll have to keep working and moving all the time. Yes, it’s going to be something.”

Bristow has been elected captain of the Gobblers for next year and he has vowed to accept the responsibilities of the position. He already is busy talking it up and pushing his teammates to make self improvements and sacrifices. He will continue this during the summer and in pre-season work next fall.

This summer, Bristow should win some type of camping award. He expects to display his talents in at least four camps and is still awaiting word from the Furman College camp.

Bristow will work at Jimmy Graves’ camp for a week, at Duke’s for two weeks, at the Virginia Tech camp for three and at the Wake Forest camp for two.

And then when the season comes next winter, Bristow will be busy in the pivot trying to get his hands on the ball, put it in the basket and helping Tech to what could be an outstanding season.