Tech's Don Strock To Go Both Ways

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BLACKSBURG — While Virginia Tech's Orange and White teams are getting instruction Saturday during intermission of the spring game, Don Strock will be changing jerseys.

Strock, Tech's All-American candidate quarterback, will play the first half as the Orange quarterback, then shift to the White team for the second half.

"It should give us an opportunity to put Strock in two football games," said Tech head coach Charlie Coffey. "He's going to start with the Orange with everything being equal like he'd start any game. I expect him to put that unit ahead.

"I hope it gives him a chance to get the Orange team ahead, then change to a team at the half which is behind. Now when it's a new ball game for him, instead of being with a team that is ahead.

"It might not work out that way. I really don't know how much we'll score, but I know we're not going to score as much as most people think. Our defense is better."

Coffey has divided what he calls the "skilled people" (running backs, receivers, punt returners, kickers etc.) equally, James Barber, Jim Poito, John Dobbins, sophomore receiver Steve Galloway and receivers Craig Valentine and Donnie Reel will play for the Orange. Sophomore receiver Ricky Scales, Dick Maksanty, Rusty Eddins, quarterbacks Bruce Ariens and Gary Zets are on the White unit.

Coffey predicts that pass plays will provide more than 50 percent of the offense.

"We're going to throw the ball," Coffey says. "I want people to leave that stadium talking about Strock and passing is what he does the best. Throwing sells more tickets than running.

"There will be some pro scouts at the game and there will be one guy representing an all-star game. If Strock plays well, he'll probably be the quarterback in that game.

"We're still trying to sell interest in our program. If you have a 3-0 game, you're not going to sell much interest."

What should the spectator look for?

"I'd be looking for some defensive improvement," Coffey says. "All linebackers should be watched closely. All defensive secondary people should be watched. Last year, we didn't attack. We didn't have any attack ability. This year we do.

"We have two players, Craig Valentine and Ricky Scales, who will be returning punts and kickoffs. They have quickness and speed.

"They'll have a chance to see Scales and Galloway catch the ball out wide. They can run. A lot of people will be looking at Tom Trice. He's about a head taller than anybody else. Running back James Barber will command attention. And John Dobbins and Jim Poito are playing better than they have.

"Tom Shirley and Rich Easterling are two outstanding linebacker prospects. Both of them have had good spring practices. They will attack you."

Coffey says there will be some loose footballs. "You'll see some collisions;" he says. And what will Coffey be looking for?

"I'm going to enjoy the heck out of it. I'm going to have it on film and I've got all summer to see what I want to see. I'm not going to be worrying about what play to call or what defense to call. This is one game I don't see how we can lose."