Coffey Has His Say

Charlie Coffey gave ‘em a double barrel load of Virginia Tech football—past, present and future—last night.

The chief Gobbler touched all bases as he talked to members of Tech’s Roanoke Valley alumni chapter. The things the old grads and their wives heard had most of them dancing with anticipation and left some of them sorry they hadn’t done more for their old school.

Coffey spent most of his time talking about his football program but there was time to issue a plea for more alumni participation.

The head football coach was proud that between $40,000 and $50,000 in aircraft had been offered by alumni and friends for the recruiting program this past year.

He was also thankful for those who have helped in many ways to send Tech athletes along their way. But he was disappointed that only 3,700 or so season tickets had been sold for the 1972 football home stand.

Coffey has set a goal of 12,000 and he plans to have his entire staff hustling the tickets during the month of July.

“You had better get in on the ground floor of the season ticket deal,” Coffey said, sort of tongue-in-cheek. “It won’t be too long before we will sell out the stadium with 52,000 season tickets. Then the only way you’ll get one is for a friend to die and will you one.”

Coffey later took on the appearance of a sideshow Barker or the front man for a traveling carnival. He really got enthusiastic as he outlined the giant promotions program he has arranged to push his product.

“Our No. 1 goal is you as a fan,” Coffey said.

The Big Push Coming

The citizens of Virginia might think they are being hit by flying Gobblers once the promotion is underway.

Coffey has signs of all sizes and descriptions for display. He claims various trucking firms throughout the state will bear Tech Territory displays on the back doors. Alumni chapters will be asked to rent giant billboards in their communities and Tech will supply the posters.

Coffey and defensive chief George McKinney were busy after the dinner hustling sports shirts, jackets and other menswear—each bearing the Tech emblem with a football helmet.

“The only place you can buy these great products is from us,” Coffey said.

Coffey will again have his weekly television program but he announced there will be a new Thursday night TV show that will feature McKinney and of offensive chief Wally English.

McKinney will discuss the upcoming opponents’ offense while English will explain to viewers what the Techmen face in the way of defense.

Coffey explained that it took money and a lot of support to built the type of football program he wants for Tech.

It is his contention that he must recruit at least 45 prospects each year to attain and maintain the high grade of excellence.

He has signed 50 prospects, expects maybe three not to qualify so he plans to have about 45-47 ready to actually enroll next September.

More Things Needed

Coffey also put in an early pitch for the alumni to buy football programs at the home games.

“You’re going to need a program to know who’s playing,” said Coffey as he began to discuss some 15 upcoming sophomores who he expects to either start or be pushing for a starting position.

The chief shortcomings of the present squad, according to Coffey, are speed and depth.

One of the weaknesses, he claims, is the lack of publicity. “Sometimes you have to look hard to read anything or hear anything about our program,” Coffey said.

He had earlier chided The Roanoke Valley alumni for their lack of participation in Tech’s student aid program. Coffey said only about 25 per cent of the alumni in the valley contributed in the program.

“It’s hard to operate any activity or business on only 25 per cent participation,” he said. “I know my wife would sure catch it if she only had good meals 25 per cent of the time.”