Virginia Tech Institutes

‘Perfect Play Drill’ Daily

BLACKSBURG, Va. — “Practice makes perfect” certainly isn’t new but Virginia Tech football coach Charlie Coffey is reemphasizing that old adage in a special daily drill for the 1973 Fighting Gobblers.

“Everyone agrees that if you don’t executive well on the practice field you aren’t likely to perform to your capabilities in competition, but we’re going back to the idea of executing to absolute perfection in a daily ‘perfect play drill,’” Coffey points out.

On both the offensive and defensive fields, a Tech team unit isn’t going to be allowed to proceed to its next assignment until it has executed perfectly three consecutive times on a given play.

Although Tech had a 6-4-1 record in 1972, “We’re convinced that we would have had a much better record if we had stressed just a little more attention to perfection.”

One of last year’s “imperfect” performances was against Wm. & Mary. This season’s opening opponent here on September 8.

LIFE ISN’T going to be a snap for Rick Popp who is temporarily down on his luck but should be competing for Virginia Tech’s number one quarterback job.

Due to a broken left hand, he won’t be able to take a snap from center until about the end of the month, but he still can run and throw — and think.

“It’s going to take a super effort,” the redshirt sophomore allows, but he intends to compete. “I’m going to stay as sharp as I can in the mental aspects of our offense.

“Luck-wise, this is the worst year I’ve ever had,” he points out.

After making all the 1972 varsity trips but not playing, Popp missed the last half of Spring practice due to a shoulder injury. He played in the Spring game and hurt his knee. He reinjured the knee while handling a chain saw on an early Summer job. Then a couple of weeks ago, while making a tag in a softball game, he sustained the broken hand.

NICKNAMES often are ludicrous and none more so than Virginia Tech linebacker Tommy Shirley being called “Midget.”

“Giant” more nearly described his physical bulk even before he became a serious weight lifter. And now he considers himself ‘bigger, stronger and faster’ than last year when as a sophomore middle linebacker he blossomed into stardom for the Fighting Gobblers.

He never really enjoyed lifting weights until last Winter when he pushed himself hard to rebuild from a late season knee injury. At one point during the Winter his weight got to 238, dropped to 233 at the end of Spring practice and now he’s a svelte 227, aiming for 225.