Tech Must Replace the No. 1 QB in the Nation

By KEN MORRISON
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Don Strock has taken his golden arm and bulging scrapbook to the Miami Dolphins, leaving Virginia Tech's Gobblers with two inexperienced quarterbacks to face a schedule that includes Houston, Alabama, and Florida State.

Charlie Coffey, who enters his third year at the Tech helm, lamented, "You simply don't replace the number one quarterback in the nation."

Last year Strock completed 288 passes for 16 touchdowns and

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3,243 yards, just a little short of two miles.

Coffey's leading candidates to fill Strock's shoes are Rick Arians, Strock's back-up last year, but still unproven as a junior and sophomore redshirt Rick Popp.

THE OFFENSIVE PROBLEMS don't stop at quarterback, either. Coffey lost five of his first seven wide receivers and inherited an offensive line with more holes than a dozen donuts.

Fauquier's Steve Galloway is counted on to fill one of the receiving spots. The 6-0, 180 junior last year caught 10 passes for 147 yards and one touchdown. He'll be joined at flanker by Ricky Scales, a junior that Coffey rates in the super category.

Coffey will rely on youngsters in the offensive line, with Steve Philbrick, Monte Cole, and Richard Arthur expected to play major roles.

The Hokies may gobble up a lot of ground this year, with quality backs as plentiful as linemen are scarce. The stable of horses includes sophomore Phil Rogers, a 5-11, 180 game breaker from Gate City. Coffey said Rogers, "His spring game efforts put him at the top of the list, even ahead of senior James Barber, until somebody else proves otherwise."

improvement in '73 as we did between 1971 and 1972, but I won't predict that will happen."

Loudoun County's Larry Herndon, a 6-3, 230 defensive end, will play a major role in the Hokies defense, which should be basically sound. Coffey remarked, "We have returning the nucleus for a good secondary and a good linebacker corps, with linebacker Tommy Shirley becoming a real super star. We moved Herndon from linebacker and he should solve part of our problem at defensive end."

Coffey's strong secondary, which features Chuck Perdue and two-year letterman Jerry Scharns at safety also includes Strasburg's Lynn McCoy and Jay Neal who may crack the starting lineup.

Coffey believes Tech will definitely rely on the development of its younger players, adding, "Fans sure as heck are going to need a program." He continued, "I'd certainly like to think we can show as much