DAVID HALSTEAD, Virginia Tech defensive back from John S. Battle, labeled Monday’s practice at Blacksburg as “the toughest a Virginia Tech team ever has had.” And that’s the way David likes it.

“He called Monday night and was in the best spirits he’s been in since he got here,” said Halstead Sr., David’s father who is athletic director at John S. Battle.

Tech head coach Charlie Coffey has closed all practices and is not going on a football road show behind the scenes, nor are the coaches. Coffey exploded after Tech’s loss to Kentucky Saturday and made it clear only the strong will survive in Tech’s determined bid to become a football team of repute.

“David said he had never felt worse after a football game than he did after the Kentucky game,” said Bill. “But he seemed in the best mood he’s been in since he went to Tech when he called Monday night. He said practice was tough, but he felt it was coming in and felt it was needed.”

Halstead, a competitive athlete who has never been a loser, is among those ready to rally behind Coffey, who said he expected a new unity and dedication at Tech.

“DAVID SEEMS the happiest since he’s been there,” said Bill. “He felt real good about Monday’s practice and said he didn’t mind the same thing that was coming Tuesday and Wednesday.

“There are going to be athletes who meet the challenge like Halstead,” said Bill. “There aren’t going to be some quitters. But chances are the men that make it with Coffey are going to be football players. It’s nitly - grittle time at Tech and anyone who doesn’t meet the challenge will get cast aside.”

Coffey’s tirade over the weekend in which he chewed out his players and coaches shocked a lot of people in the Virginia. They aren’t surprised. They haven’t heard that kind of oratory before - like they haven’t been exposed to a big-time football program. But you can bet your boots it was a necessity. COFFEY’S MISSION is simple. He comes to win. And the price of victory has not been cheap. It wasn’t for him at Ten- nesse or Arkansas, where big-time football is a way of life.

This corner shares the Coffey philosophy. I admire and revere and respect the man who has produced a Virginia Tech. Sure, he’s only in this his third year, a crucial one, and he hasn’t produced. But he’s facing the music the only way a winner knows how.

Coffey walks a lonely road today. Alumni are starting to doubt the coach and his staff and have hasn’t performed with the precision he expected. He has doubted himself — much the way Bear Bryant often has at Alabama — and said he has been too easy. Coffey shoulders the bulk of the blame for Tech’s failures in the two games — but his squad hasn’t performed up to its potential nor has his staff, a capable one, had the Hokies as well prepared as they could have.

NOW THAT COFFEY has been forced to resort to anger to wake the team, these few Flexn writers are starting to sug- gest football isn’t as important as Coffey is trying to make it. Bull! It’s important. If you are going to play in the bigtime, you have to play with passion.

Here’s one writer who hasn’t given up on Coffey and Tech. The potential is there. And Coffey can cut it all together if those folks in the orange jerseys rally behind him.

He can survive the pressure of the restless Alumni and the bite of ill will and bad press and bad hands. He knows some of this is justi- fied and will be the first to admit it. But he couldn’t survive dis- loyalty or anything less than 100 per cent from his players and staff.

TECH IS SO CLOSE to making it big in football that this cor- ner never expected to see it. But Coffey is getting tough and will pull the team out of the mire. What a bad.”

Right on, Charlie.

CHARLIE COFFEY...Seeks New Unity