By BILL CATE
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Bobby Bowden, the West Virginia coach, has heard the noise. No, he doesn’t believe the Virginia Tech practices this week will so reduce the squad that it will make the trip to Morgantown in a Volkswagen bus.

Truthfully, however, West Virginia has scouted Charlie Coffey’s Hokies twice this season and he has no idea what to expect.

“I have no idea what to expect from down there (Blacksburg),” Bowden said Tuesday. “I figure Charlie (Coffey) will get something going one way or the other. I don’t know what he’s going to do. By watching them on film, we see some good young talent who have the ability to battle anybody.”

How does Bowden expect Coffey’s team to react after a week of intensive practice?

“We won’t see the same team,” he says. “They’ll either be a lot better or a lot...eh, I’d better not say that.”

Bowden is concerned.

“They’re either going to come in here like a bunch of wild people,” he says or something else. I don’t think the something else is likely to happen.”

Tech’s concern must be that its defense has had two tests and flunked them both. And West Virginia has the potential of being one of the most explosive offensive units the Hokies will face all season. With All-American candidate Danny (Lightning) Buggs, who beat Maryland last week with a punt return, at flanker, West Virginia can score without notice. In fact, every fifth time Buggs handled the ball last season, he scored. He continued that record last Saturday.

Bowden, however, is not impressed with his offense.

“Defensively, we played better than I thought we could against Maryland,” he said. “But offensively we made many more mistakes than I had anticipated. We worked hard not to have mistakes but we made enough to kill us.”

Of course, Bowden did not tell his squad, but he says he figured his team would suffer a loss against Maryland. “I was surprised our defense handled them like they did,” he says. “I know how (Jerry) Claiborne coaches. I figured he’d field-goal us to death.”

With a player like Buggs, why doesn’t Bowden get him the ball more. Simple math will tell you if he scores once every five times he gets the ball, he’d score five times every 25 times he gets the ball. That’s 20 points a game instead of six.

“We tried to get it to him last Saturday,” Bowden says. “Our quarterback threw well to all our receivers except Buggs. He just didn’t get him the ball.” Buggs touched the ball five times, once for a long touchdown on the punt return, another for an eight-yard loss on a reverse, another for a 19-yard pass completion, and he fair-caught two punts.

“Potentially, we have a fine football team,” Bowden says, “but I don’t expect it to blossom in the first five games.”

If the current trend continues, West Virginia’s offense should get going against Tech Saturday.

“What we can’t understand is what got into Tech the second half at Kentucky,” Bowden says. “They gave up 31 points in the first half, then stop Kentucky cold the second half. They (Tech) had a chance to win the game. I just don’t know which half they’ll bring up here. I expect it will be the second half.”

“Tech will definitely have a psychological advantage. They have to have this one. We want it bad, too. But Charlie has to have it.”