COFFEY MAINTAINS

SMU Tilt Offers

VPI Opportunity

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“We have a real good opportunity to get our program on the right track this weekend,” Virginia Tech Football Coach Charlie Coffey declared earlier this week.

Coffey was discussing the upcoming game with the Mustangs of Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Tex., Saturday afternoon.

On paper it looks like an undertaking. The Gobblers are wireless in three starts, losing to William and Mary, 31-24; University of Kentucky, 31-26, and last weekend to West Virginia University, 24-10.

Meanwhile, SMU has trounced Santa Clara 49-7, and Oregon State, 35-10.

The Mustangs, led by All-America candidate Alvin Mazon, have rushed for 822 yards. Mazon is the Southwest Conference school’s all-time rusher, statistically surpassing Doak Walker and Kyle Rote.

The Mustangs do not move the ball much in the air. They threw only nine passes in the two games, completing six and suffering one interception.

Santa Clara ran for 131 yards and Oregon State made 72 on the ground against SMU.

The Mustangs were more vulnerable to the aerial game, relinquishing 176 to Santa Clara and 177 to Oregon State.

The airways may be where the Gobblers will go. Sophomore quarterback Rick Popp, now assured of the starting job, has completed 34 of 57 attempts for 263 yards and three touchdowns. His percentage is just under 60.

“We’re not making any changes in our personnel. We feel that we did a lot of things right last week. Certainly, I’m sicker of losing than you know.

“We just made big mistakes and they hurt us. We never quit. We’ve won every second half this year. We have to start winning some first halves.

“It looks bad when we turn the ball over inside the five-yard line in two different games, but we found out the reasons why. We’re not-ready to give up our offense.

“I feel Popp came out of that game stronger than when he went in. He had to ‘suck it up’ in the second half. We know we’re playing a tough team, but we haven’t

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