Virginia Tech, UVA Battle Matches ‘Look-Alike’ Teams

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Virginia Tech football Coach Charlie Coffey is almost anaesthetized to defeat. He’s making jokes about the plight of his team which has lost six straight games.

“We’ve lost so much, I don’t think I remember how to act as a winning coach,” he quips.

Coffey’s Gobblers get their chance once again to end their season-long slide Saturday when they host the University of Virginia in Blacksburg.

The Cavaliers are the first team in a month to face the Gobblers with a losing record. Coach Don Lawrence’s team has a 2-4 mark on victories over VMI and Duke while losing to Vanderbilt, Missouri, Clemson and North Carolina State.

“I have to believe our fans and those of Virginia are looking forward to this game as Lane Stadium’s 33,000 seats are all sold,” Coffey said.

“The fans will see look-alike teams,” Coffey added. “Virginia runs an offense that appears to be just like ours. They run the triple option we do. They pass back, so do we. In fact, our defensive sets are alike.”

Coffey said he felt his team had played its best game against Houston Friday. “I know we got beat real bad (54-27), but our young people did a lot of good things in the game. Defensively, we forced errors in the first half. Houston has a great team and they came back and did the same thing to us with outstanding results.

“I feel that young Danny Ludd did a great job at running back. He’s just a freshman. He may do it again Saturday as Phil Rogers is still a question mark.

“We’re giving Eddie Joyce more playing time. I hope to have him ready to do a few more things this week, but Ricky Popp is holding his own.”

Coffey said his defensive unit is banged up and will be a patch-work team Saturday. “I don’t know who will be playing. We’re hurting.”

One of the defenders Coffey will be counting on is Lynn McCoy, a junior from Toms Brook. McCoy recovered a pair of fumbles and intercepted a pass Friday.

“I think I was lucky,” McCoy said. “Houston was tough with big, fast players. That’s over with. We’re looking forward to playing Virginia now. It should be a great game with lots of enthusiasm.”

McCoy is no stranger to enthusiasm. He didn’t have a scholarship when he entered Virginia but earned one as a walk-on who made the club.

It must be an inherited factor. McCoy’s parents drove from Tom Brooks to Houston to see Friday’s game. “They left Thursday morning and drove all the way through. They stayed in Houston until Sunday, then drove back.”

McCoy added that the student body isn’t excited about the 0-6 record the team has, but for the most part everyone is still behind the ball club, hoping things turn around Saturday against Virginia.