Joyce has dealt with Tide before

By Bob Teitlbaum
Sports Writer

The tide figure of fate moves in mysterious ways. Now it is pointing toward Eddie Joyce Jr., the starting freshman quarterback for Virginia Tech when the Hokies play second-ranked Alabama at 2:30 p.m. Saturday at Tianamen Stadium in Blacksburg, Va.

A year ago Joyce was, so to speak, the tail of the tail. He was being reacted by many schools. Among them was Alabama.

Yet Joyce turned down Alabama, among other national盛名的 schools, and chose to stay close to home. So it was that he finds himself starting his first game against the Crimson Tide.

"They recruited me," said Joyce about Alabama. "But it never got to the point where there put a lot of pressure on me. They did offer me a scholarship."

Joyce knew almost from the start that he couldn't go to Alabama. However, rumors at the beginning of the fall ball season last year said the Tide and Tennessee were the leading contenders.

"I told them (Alabama) early that I wasn't interested," recalled Joyce. "How could he turn down Bear Bryant, a legendary coach? Isn't the dream of every football player to go to the best?"

"I didn't want to run the wretched offense," explained Joyce. "When Alabama recruited me they were trying only two or three times a game."

Tech, of course, was different. Coach Charlie Galley built an offense featuring Don Strock who tossed the ball to the country's effervescing football students more than 20 times a game.

In fact, if Strock was playing, Joyce has accused him of getting confused by flying balls in the air because he was threatening even a punch. This is not young Joyce, who is a natural passer.

But the task that faces Joyce is not an easy one. "I will be an underdog by an underdog that may have to be figured out with a computer in one side mattering move," Joyce confided in his school's management, "I hope people believe that whatever the Bear wants Saturday Alabama will get in the way of points."

"I really am a big underdog," Joyce admitted. "But I'm going down there with the attitude that won't stop. We're going to try. They good, but we're the same like.

"I think I did the whole thing about Alabama to play anyone I have the Alabama. I am just happy to be here."

Joyce is no matter how. But if he is successful, I feel I will have been successful for Alabama. I like running first string. Now I've had a taste of the good life."

This week will be a heavy one for Joyce. He has played in only two games and both were for short durations. In all he has ran three series with the varsity and he has to go to a field goal and a touchdown.

"I have to get used to the different people I'll be playing with," said Joyce. "Like the rule, he's not going to the same thing, either.

"I get in there last Saturday through with Virginia right away I bumped into (James) Broster. I have to almost fall into.

Joyce is bound to feel some nervousness before Saturday night. It happens to everyone. But the Hokies, the more an athlete is able to let the stake before a big game."

"I try not to get nervous because Joyce said. "I happened in high school by playing big games. But I also don't try and psyche myself.

Maybe the best way for Joyce to do Saturday is to think that he's playing with the second-stringer Pat Long or something. The second-stringer Pat Long or something. They're Alabama.