Will Mercy Prevail
In Tide-Tech Tilt?

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Times Sports Editor

Saturday, October 27, 1973

The publicity release out of Alabama this week is interesting.
Bear Bryant, the coach of the nation's No. 2 team, has this to say about tonight's
game with Virginia Tech:

"This will be a real test for our team.
Everyone will look at Tech's record and say
it will be easy, but Tech has some real
quality people at the skill positions."

Actually, the Bear meant "skill" posi-
tions. Or did be? Maybe he has taken note
of the way Tech plays defense.

At any rate, Bama is 6-0 and trying
very hard to give Bryant his fourth national
championship. That would indicate that Al-
abama would not call off the hounds to pre-
vent a runaway.

But the quality of mercy lies deep in
Bryant, even though Alabama has beaten
California 66-0 and Vanderbilt 44-0 and is
averaging 46.8 points per game. Last year,
Bama rolled to a quick 34-0 lead against
Tech and then toyed with the Hokies the
rest of the way for a 52-13 victory.

In that game, Alabama completely
shackled Tech quarterback Don Brock, who
was the nation's total offense leader. This
time, the Tech QB will be freshman Eddie
Joyce, who will be making his varsity debut
with Ricky Popp out for the year with an
injury.

The question is not whether Tech can
win, but can the Hokies beat the batting line,
which is hovering around 49 points?

Alabama has been moving the ball 65
yards per try against some good teams.
Tech's defense has been less than adequate.
If Tech wins, it will be the biggest upset
since Gus Dorais and Knute Rockne popu-
larized the forward pass.

Meanwhile, closer to home, Virginia and
Wake Forest play in Charlottesville. The
Cavs are 5-2; the Deacons are 1-5. Last
week, Wake Forest netted one first down,