Energy Crisis Presents Sports Travel Worries

The energy crisis could present some very real problems for sports teams, not to mention those individuals of the fourth estate who cover the games those teams play.

One of the major areas will be with chartered aircraft. College teams travel to virtually every distant road game in a charter, more often a large jet which enables the schools to take along cheerleaders, major supporters and members of the faculty.

Since no ground rules have yet been set down, college officials are not yet certain what will happen. They are, however, prepared for the worst.

Virginia Tech athletic director Frank O. Moseley said that the Hokies would not be traveling to any basketball games this year by charter. Last year, Tech chartered to several games, and fans went to the NIT on a charter.

"We considered chartering to a couple of basketball games this year," Moseley said, "but the planes just weren't available."

In basketball, Moseley agrees, flying on commercial planes will not constitute a major problem because of the small number of people involved.

Football, though, is another matter. Moseley said that in a pinch, a football traveling group could be cut to "65 or 70" although currently Tech fills charters which hold 90 and more.

If teams travel commercially, they likely will leave behind many of the fringe people, including the cheerleaders.

Flight Bookings Not Easy

Booking flights for such large groups, however, is not easy. Airlines do not like to take that many people at one crack. There is the definite possibility that teams will not only eventually travel by commercial air, but on more than one plane.

This could lead to more missed class time. Certainly it will mean more travel time. Invariably, charter planes return after a game. That would be impossible in most instances with commercial travel.

Moseley said Tech was beginning now "to explore charter possibilities" for next season's football, but he conceded there might be some problems.

Tech has long distance trips next year at SMU (Dallas), Florida State (Tallahassee) and Miami. The Hokies also play at South Carolina, but could go by bus to Columbia.

In each case, typical of an area team, going by commercial air would mean transferring, which would increase the transportation problems.

It may not happen next season. Perhaps it will not happen at all. But it is an additional problem for the men who make up college travel plans, and most of them agree that there will be some forced changes in the next few months.