Coffey Plans A Shake-up On Defense

BY BOB LIPPER
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BLACKSBURG — The question was put to Charlie Coffey innocently enough. In the wake of a 2-9 season and in response to a defense that permitted 476 yards total offense per outing, would there be any changes defensively?

“There’ll definitely be some changes made,” he said. “These announcements will come about at the proper time.”

His audience perked up. What type of changes? Personnel or philosophy?

Charlie Coffey allowed himself just the slightest hint of a smile. “I’m not,” he drawled, “talking about philosophy.”

And with that, Coffey, in his third—and most disappointing by far—season, admitted what has been rumored for weeks—that defensive coordinator George McKinney and perhaps the entire defensive staff (the others are Tommy Brasher, Monty Crook, and Carl Ellis) will in all likelihood not be retained.

Thus did Coffey, said to be in no danger of losing his position this year, reveal the first steps he intends to take in an effort to restructure an overpublicized program seemingly gone wrong.

Good things had been expected of this Tech edition, but the record is the worst in 22 years and Coffey, calmly discussing the post mortems, said, “All of it is hard for me to believe or tolerate or what have you.”

“We faced a lot of problems along the line,” he added. “I hope I’m a better football coach because of them. I know I’m a better person.”