Gobbler Coaching Staff Receives House Cleaning

BLACKSBURG, Va. — Two remaining members of Virginia Tech's defensive staff, Tommy Brasher and Monty Crook, have been relieved of their duties pending hiring of a new defensive coordinator, and a third, Carl Ellis, has been assigned new duties, head coach Charlie Coffey announced here Monday. Earlier, defensive coordinator George McKinney resigned.

After McKinney, defensive coordinator for the last three years, resigned, Coffey said, "While the final decision on staff members is mine, I feel that the coordinator should have a definite hand in selecting his staff.

"It could be quite some time before I make any moves because some of the people I have in mind as candidates are still involved in the continuing college season and in bowl games."

COFFEY'S ACTION leaves Brasher and Crook in limbo, while Ellis has been switched, at least temporarily, to strictly recruiting duties. He already is on the road, as are Coffey and the remainder of his staff.

"Both Brasher or Crook could be a candidate to remain, but I certainly want to give our new coordinator some leeway. Under the circumstances I don't feel that it's fair to them or to our program to assign recruiting responsibilities to either of them at this time," Coffey said.

"Whether or not Ellis remains as a varsity assistant, he will be on the staff with increasing responsibilities in our recruiting program in which he has been quite instrumental during our first three years," Coffey added.

Brasher, 32, joined Coffey's original staff as defensive line coach and was switched last summer to the linebacker job.

Crook, 32, formerly offensive line coach at Gordon Military, served as graduate assistant in Tech's program in 1972 and then was elevated this year to the varsity to work with defensive ends.

ELLIS, 30, played under Coffey at Tennessee. He joined the original staff as offensive coach of the scout squad.

The recent changes came as no surprise. Herald Courier sports editor Dave Sparks predicted in the shakeup in a Saturday column and named the assistants who were under fire before the season finale against VMI.

Vanderbilt's Doug Parcells and Tennessee's Gary Wyant are rumored to be future Coffey aides.