Sharpe named Va. Tech coach

BLACKSVRUG, Va. (AP)—Jimmy Sharpe, offensive coordinator for coach Paul “Bear” Bryant at the University of Alabama, today was signed to a five-year contract as head football coach at Virginia Tech.

Sharpe, 34, succeeds Charlie Coffey, who resigned the head coaching position here Jan. 4 with four years remaining on a seven-year contract. Coffey’s three teams won 10 games, lost 20 and tied one.

Tech athletic director Frank Moseley announced Sharpe’s appointment at a news conference and said the new head coach had been highly recommended by Bryant, under whom Sharpe played in 1960-62.

Terms of the contract were not revealed. Sharpe will choose his own staff. All of Coffey’s assistants have been notified their contracts will be terminated in February, unless Sharpe chooses to retain them.

Sharpe’s appointment, had been rumored as imminent for the better part of a week. He came here Monday to confer with Tech President T. Marshall Hahn and to settle final details of the contract.

Sharpe has been an assistant on Bryant’s staff at Alabama for 11 years and for the last four years has coordinated the Crimson Tide’s wishbone attack.

Moseley said Bryant, in recommending Sharpe, said he was “intelligent, a good coach on the blackboard and on the field who gets a lot out of his players and is a fine recruiter.”

At Virginia Tech, he faces the tall assignment of rebuilding a Gobbler team that won only two of 11 games last season under Coffey.

Sharpe was a three-year starter at guard for Alabama in the one-platoon era and, with Lee Roy Jordan, cocaptained the 1962 Crimson Tide. The 1961 Alabama team won the national championship.

During his playing years, Alabama appeared in the Liberty, Bluebonnet, Sugar and Orange bowls and in his 11 years as an assistant to Bryant, the Crimson Tide has played in a bowl each year.

Sharpe is a native of Montgomery, Ala.