Tech Tunes Up

BLACKSBURG, Va. — The wishbone offense pounds away with a running game but it also sets up the aerial bomb, which it did for Virginia Tech in a game scrimmage here Wednesday.

Tech’s first offense came up with five TDs, one of a long run and three on passes by quarterback Bruce Arians.

Rising sophomore George Heath, aided by a key block from running back Phil Rogers, swept 32 yards for one of the scores.

Arians threw TD strikes of 60 and 34 yards to wide receiver Ricky Scales and an eight-yarder to tight end Kevin Dick.

Rogers accounted for the other TD on a short blast.

“We’re pleased with the way they got after each other,” Coach Jimmy Sharpe noted, “and it’s the first time we’ve really come close to executing all the options of the wishbone. It’s still not real smooth, but we’re pleased.

“And we’re satisfied with the progress the defense is showing.”

While Rogers (15 for 98) and Heath (7 for 79) were the leading rushers, Sharpe was more excited about the way each blocked.

There are only two seniors among 11 players from Southwest Virginia and Upper Tennessee who are making big contributions to Virginia Tech’s football program this Spring.

All 11 will see action this Saturday in the annual intrasquad game, and on the basis of Spring drills so far as many as eight of them could well be starters in the fall.

CHARLEY MARTIN, a senior from Bristol, appears certain to be the noseman in Tech’s basically 5-2 defensive front, and Brent Bledsoe, a senior from Kingsport, is battling a sophomore for a defensive tackle spot.

Tom Turner, a junior from Appalachia, is in contention at the other defensive tackle position, and Ron (Flash) Davis, also a junior from Appalachia, is holding down a defensive secondary berth.

A third Appalachian product, junior Luke Marsingill, is competing at defensive end.

ROGERS, a junior from Gate City, is the bellwether of Tech’s running backs, although in ‘74 he might have to share the limelight with a couple of other tough runners, junior Paul Adams, from Castlewood, and sophomore Heath, of Bristol. John Goodwin, a sophomore from Elizabethton, is making a bid as a wide receiver.

Working in less glamorous but equally as important positions are a pair of sophomore offensive tackles, Keith Gibson, of Church Hill, and Rondal Davis, of Elizabethton. Both might well be ‘74 starters.

“WE’VE BEEN pleased with the overall effort and hitting during Spring practice, and we’re confident that progress made by each of these individuals is going to be a big plus for Virginia Tech this fall,” Sharpe declared.

Tech’s football fortunes aren’t scaling the heights yet, but they definitely are climbing a ladder of progress.

In goal-line scrimmage early in the week senior wide receiver Ricky Scales got a key block that sprung a back for a TD.

Scales was excited; maybe Sharpe was more excited.

“We’ve been on Ricky to improve his blocking,” Sharpe said, “and apparently it’s paying off.”