Tech’s Squad Divided
For Saturday’s Duel

By DAVE SPARKS
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Eight former Mountain Empire high school stars will be in the starting lineups and another six will be on second units when the Virginia Tech Gobblers stage their annual Orange - White spring football game at 1:30 in Lane Stadium Saturday afternoon.

GEORGE HEATH, former
Tennessee High prep All-America who led the Vikings to the 1972 national championship, will open at right halfback for the White while “Phantom Phil” Rogers, the former Gate City All-Southern Stater who started for Tech as a sophomore in 1973, will be in the same backfield.

Heath, one of the most fierce blockers on the squad, in addition to his mail-carrying ability, scored on a 32-yard run, and Rogers dashed 98 yards for a TD in a Wednesday scrimmage at Blacksburg.

The spring head-kicking session, the first under new head coach Jimmy Sharpe and his staff, is expected to match two teams divided fairly evenly.

“The squads have been divided as evenly as possible,” said Sharpe Thursday. “Charley Pell will serve as head coach of the Orange and will have most of the number one defensive front while Bobby Bennett will be the head coach of the White and have most of the first unit offense.”

SHARPE said there might be some last-minute changes in the lineups due to the uncertain status of runningback Paul Adams, and quarterbacks Greg Mullinax and Mike Barnes. All three are currently slowed by injuries.

Sharpe, the former Alabama aide under Bear Bryant, has installed the Wishbone offense at Tech and switched the positions of several players. The major moves saw fleet Billy Hardie, the flash from Florida, moved from receiver to defensive back and receiver Skip Creasey, moved to defensive end.

CHARLIE MARTIN, senior lineman from Tennessee High, will start at middle guard on the Orange defensive unit. Luke Marsingill of Appalachia will be at defensive end, Brent Bledsoe of Lynn View at left tackle and Chuck Perdue of Graham at short safety on the second unit of the Orange defense.

Starting with Rogers and Heath on the first unit White offense will be tackle Ron Davis of Elizabethon and Erwin’s Steve Scott will be the number three fullback. Betsy’s Johnny Goodwin is a number two split end.

ADAMS, the hard-running “Black Ghost” from Castlewood, will start at fullback on the Orange offense if healthy. Church Hill’s Keith Gibson will be a starting Orange offensive tackle and Mike Callison of Jonesboro will be at number two split end.

TOM TURNER, the headhunter from Appalachia, will start at tackle and Appy’s Ron “Flash” Davis will be at left cornerback on the first White defense.

Bruce Arians, senior quarterback, will direct the White attack. Arians threw three touchdown passes — two to speedster Ricky Scales — in a Wednesday scrimmage.

The starting quarterback for the Orange will be Mullinax with Barnes, who played his high school football for state champion Southampton, in a reserve role.

MORRIS BLUEFORD, switched from defensive back to running-back, will be in the Orange backfield and the White offense will have thepass-catching services of Scales, the newest man on the squad. Blueford also is a speed burner.