DAVID HALSTEAD, Virginia High's talented junior slasher, is destined to write his name prominently into the baseball record books in Hicklaid before he graduates next spring. Halstead had a super year for the Techmen this season leading the team in hitting with a .365 average and driving in 27 runs.

Dandy Dave led Tech in six departments.

"He's the best I've ever seen," says Tech coach Bobby Humphreys, who guided the Goldens to a 15-15 mark in his first season in 1973. "And if he doesn't sign a professional contract before he's through, I'll really be surprised. He's a fine baseball player and has the potential to make the majors just fine.

Halstead, who went to Tech on a combined football-baseball scholarship, raised his freshman baseball season to concentrate on football practice. But he has now chosen to miss his senior football season to concentrate on baseball, the sport he appears destined to pursue professionally. Halstead, of course, is a good defensive back on the gridiron—but he's better than good on the diamond.

AFTER A .365 batting average with three doubles, a triple, two homers and 15 RBIs as a sophomore in 1972, Halstead broke an ankle in early baseball practice in 1973 and missed eight games before recovering. When he returned, he exploded at the plate for a superb season.

In addition to his .366 average, 12th highest in Tech history, Halstead came within one homer of breaking the Tech single season round-tripper mark with six, pulled within the career triples mark with four, added five more doubles to his total and drove in 27 runs to run his career mark to 42—38 short of the career record at Tech. He also led the team in scoring with 21 runs, hit for a team-leading 46 total bases and struck out only a dozen times. He had 39 hits in 98 trips to the plate in 22 games.

Having already tied the school record for triples in a single season, his six homers this season was one short of the seven record set by Van Arden in 1971. Van Arden was the national batting champ in '71 with a fantastic .396 average and he holds the single season RBI record of 34.

Humphreys, a capable former major league player who played on the Cardinals' World Series championship team, expects a banner year for Halstead in 1973. "I'd like for him to go to the Valley League this summer and Madison has offered him a contract," says the Tech coach. "But I think he's leaning toward playing in a San Miguel League around Bristol this summer."

The Valley League, in which Bristol's Hal Bibe and Greg Johnson have played, is a collegiate-dominated league which attracts numerous major league scouts.

David, who was known as the "Hammer" during his high school days at John Battle with a pitching record of 34-3 and 340 strike outs, will return to the mound at Tech in 1973. "He threw real hard and we had to pitch him before now had it not been for the injury that slowed him down early in the season. We're going to put him on the mound next spring," says Humphreys.

Humphreys, who was at Castlewood Thursday night to take a close look at Blue Devil southpaw Ronnie Patrick, has another gold on from the southwest-Virginia area.

PAUL ADAMS, the "Black Ghost," who is destined to show some folks some power running on the gridiron in Tech next fall, also had a good year with the Tech baseballers before hustling over to Lane Stadium, where the "Sharpening Process" is underway and heats up with a spring game on Saturday.

Powerful Paul, in a designated hitter's role and playing with a heavily bandaged left hand, batted out 21 hits for a .281 average and rapped four homers. He drove in 19 runs, third highest on the squad, and added a pair of doubles.

Adams, redshirted from the football wars after a knee injury last fall, is in the "up run" position in the Wishbone and he's going to return to his old running form this fall. Coaches have liked what they have seen of him this spring as a running back.

Humphreys has made an outstanding impression on high school coaches in the Bristol area this season. He wasn't on the job a week until he was sitting at my desk asking for coaches' names, prospects and the like in this season. He was the first Tech baseball coach I've seen in this office since I've been here and that's over 10 years. You see him around scouting area schoolboy stars and I'm convinced he will build a baseball program at Tech if they will give up a few more scholarships to work with.

"I HAVE TWO major objectives," he says. "The first is to try to get the program for pay for itself as much as possible and not take the tour to the College World Series in Omaha. Our team will play aggressive baseball. I saw the old Gas House Gang play and that's my kind of baseball."

Humphreys would like to put his shot on the road in the future and we'd like to see Tech play a home game here in Bristol or Randolph Field. He'll be after it and would also like to play one in Marion and Roanoke. We suggested playing Newport News or Milligan at Bristol and Humphreys hopes to work out such a deal for next season.