Pride Crucial to Tech Fortunes

By TONY PETERELLA
Times Sports Writer

BLACKSBURG—Almost everything is changing at Virginia Tech. There’s a new coach, new uniforms, even a new offense. But just how much effect all of that will have upon Tech’s record this season is very questionable.

“Pride. Coach Jimmy Sharpe and yesterday is ‘something we’ve got to establish here. Once we believe in ourselves, then everything else will come easier.”

Besides pride, Sharpe must instill the belief that Virginia Tech is a team that can win a lot of games. This team might not be loaded with talent, but it will be a classically-looking aggregation.

Finding a quarterback is one of our first challenges,” Sharpe said. “Brock’s system does bring back some of the old Rambles and scholarship players we had a few years ago. Another boy who can really be a first-year player is Ricky Scales. If he wants to be. He’s got to really dedicate himself to what we’re doing here, though. The first thing he’s got to do is block, which is primary in the Wishbone. He didn’t do much blocking last season because this was a drop-back passing offense.”

Another thing that’s changed is Tech’s offensive line. Center Randy Vey and left guard Steve Phillips are both seniors, after that four or five Gobblers are young and inexperienced.

“All of this means we’ve got to pull together,” Sharpe said. “We believe in a disciplined program here. We have tough practices and we ask our kids to do a lot of hard work. But we can’t ever forget we’re dealing with healthy young men.”

“I’m not really qualified to talk about the problems that were here before. I don’t know why the program suffered last season. But I do know what I saw.”

“People in the press box calling plays last year when I was an assistant at Alabama. Sharpe said, “and it didn’t take much to know that something had to be missing when a team like Virginia Tech gets beat, 74-7, by Alabama.”

“Then, before I accepted the job I talked to a lot of people and asked a lot of questions.”

Creasey ‘Skips’ Georgia for Gobblers

By TONY PETERELLA
Times Sports Writer

BLACKSBURG—Growing up almost in the shadow of old Mile Stadium, Skip Creasey quite naturally formed an early love affair with Virginia Tech.

He went to practices regularly, rarely missed a game and was instilled with “Techisms” by his father and grandfather.

Virginia Tech,” he said Saturday, “was the only college I ever wanted to attend. I guess that’s not really surprising.

Creasey’s initiation with Tech didn’t seem as far away as when his family packed off to Athens, Ga., where nearly everybody who plays football wears red and black and watches games from the stands.

“I was in the sixth grade when we moved,” Creasey said. “But I was too committed to Tech by then to change my allegiance.”

It was assumed, however, that Skip Creasey would follow the normal career of action and go to Georgia.

“The coaches there didn’t recruit me very much,” Creasey said. “They weren’t going to Georgia like everybody else and that was that. Especially since I was doing an agriculture course in high school.”

The people at Georgia figured I was locked up, but Skip Creasey learned a lot of Virginia Tech still lingered with him, though. And when the offer came, he jumped at it.

When he signed to come to Tech, his family moved back to Blacksburg.

“Clemson was talking to me quite a bit, but I always wanted to come here. Besides that, the coaching staff wanted me at tight end at Tech, and that’s what really clinched it for me. Everybody else wanted me as a linebacker.”

In that respect, Skip Creasey got a lot of change from his last year at Tech. Catching one post last season at tight end, he went into spring practice and found himself as defensive end. Now he’s an offensive tackle.

“I’d read I was going to get shuffled around and it might have influenced my decision when I was first talking about college,” he said. “But I’m over it now.”

Actually, I didn’t think the switch from tight end was fair, even after spring drills. But coach Dennis Sharpe called me into his office about two weeks ago and told me it was unfair. A day or two later, he told me it was fair.”

“I don’t see much of a transition for me, though,” Creasey said, “because the blocking assignments for a tackle are a lot like a tight end.”

“Some time ago, he was slightly disappointed when being shifted. First, from tight end and eventually from defense.”

Like any other person, Skip Creasey said, “I was always more fun to talk to somebody than stand there and talk about it. Obviously, Creasey takes a lot of his inspiration. Despite his relatively small 6 feet 1, 207 pounds, he’s expected to be the left tackle in Sharp’s new offensive line.

“When you come right down to it, it is important thing,” Creasey said. “I want to play. I’ve got to be an offensive tackle, that’s what I’ll be.”

Gobblers At a Glance

Coach — Jimmy Sharpe (First Year)

Returning Starters — 9

Lettermen — 21

Top Newcomers — Ken Lambert, D.B. Bruce Arians, Bruce Tompkins, D.T. Tony Cooper, D.B.

All-Star Candidates — Phil Rogers, R.F. Ken Lambert, D.T. Skip Creasey

Schedule: Sept. 14, Kentucky 21, at Southern Methodist Sept. 21, at Richmond 12, at South Carolina 12, at Virginia 26, Richmond 12, at Miami 8, at William and Mary 19, at Florida State 55, West Virginia 55

Predicted Record — 4-7