Tech coach tries
a new approach

BY BOB MCLELLAND
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Coach Jimmy Sharpe is a very practical man. He
only worries about the things over which he has some
control. "I'm not worried about Houston. And I'm not worried
about SMU, Miami or any of the other teams we play," said
the new head coach at Virginia Tech. "I'm just concerned
with our own football team. I just want us to improve and be
the best we possibly can." "If I figure we keep improv-
ing and getting the effort, we'll win some. And we'll be doing
the job we came here to do—upgrade the football pro-
gram.

Sharpe introduced a new practice routine this week as
he prepared his Hokies for their game tomorrow after-
noon in Dallas against the big Mustangs of SMU. "We'll
do it every week," Sharpe said. "We'll come out
on Monday, work on our kick-
ing game and then line up and
scrimmage. We'll do the same
thing every Tuesday and
Wednesday. You can't improve
unless you practice. And the best way to practice is
to simulate actual game con-
ditions as closely as possible.

Tech opened last week and
was blasted 35-7 by a good
Kentucky team. The players
were expecting a tough, knock-
down, pulse-pounding Mon-
day. But Sharpe fooled them.
He called them all together
and told them to get rid of
those long faces," Sharpe said.
"I told them to never take the
fun out of football. We were
going out just to have fun, have
a few laughs and get on with the
business of improving as indi-
viduals and as a team."

Sharpe said there has been
some injuries in practice this
week, but the squad has re-
ponded, and seems to enjoy
the new practice routine.

There also will be several
lineup changes for the game
with the Mustangs. One will
find Mike Brammer, a sopho-
mores from Patrick Henry
High, starting at right offen-
sive guard. "Mike blocked the
linebackers better than any-
one we used against Ken-
tucky," Sharpe said.

Brammer will start despite
a broken thumb suffered this
week. Offensive lineman Steve Thibodeaux suffered a
broken hand and defensive end
Stuart Patterson a sprained ankle.

But on the plus side, running
back Bill King of Radford has
recovered from injuries and
will be ready for service.

SMU could be one of the
heaviest teams Tech will face.
One of the big mismatches will
be at center where Tech's
Hendy Voj will be outweighed
by pounds by the 6-foot-7, 275-pound SMU center.

The Mustangs also offer a
strong backfield and a tricky
quarterback to operate its
wishbone attack.

Meanwhile, Sharpe has
promised some improvement in
the Tech offense. He said
the pass will become a much
more important part of the at-
tack.

"Bruce Arians can throw the
ball and we have some folks
like Ricky Scales who can
catch it," said Sharpe. "We'll
pass more and much earlier."

Sharpe said he talked with
Kentucky Coach Fran Carri
this week and they agreed that
Tech hurt itself more on of-
defense and defense than did
the Wildcats.

"We went over our offense
and made everything more
simple," said Sharpe. "We cut
doing on the plays and cen-
tered our efforts on what we
could do best."

There also has been much
attention given to the kicking
game—a point where Tech
also looked weak.

Gibson has hit the SMU cam-
us. A promising freshman
football star died last Satur-
day, just hours before the Mus-
tangs were hard pressed to
defeat Tech, 35-7.

But SMU did get some good
events this week. The team's
captain and offensive center
has been given permission
by a court ruling to play in the
game. He had been declared
ineligible by the NCAA on a
recruiting charge.