If Houston is Mediocre, Then What is Va. Tech?

BLACKSBURG — Gad. If that's all there is my friend, then roll out the beer and have a brew. And brother, that really is all there is to the Virginia Tech gridiron team.

Even Jimmy Sharpe, Tech's ever-optimistic coach, admitted Saturday that he threw everything he had at the University of Houston.

And if we had known when we walked into the kitchen sink, he added as an afterthought, 'we'd have thrown that at them, too.'

In essence, Virginia Tech was beaten almost to a pulp before all 30,000 fans at Lane Stadium, where the Hokies had been the biggest open-air funeral since Evelyn Kettner tried to commit suicide a couple weeks ago.

There was nothing fancy about Houston's offense. It was a well-timed, well-executed ball handling. All the Cougars did was force-feed the football down the Hokies' throats.

And the worst part is, Houston coach Bill Yeoman had the nerve, the sheer audacity, to say, 'We're not anywhere right now. We're still in the mediocre variety and we've got to start improving.'

If that's mediocre, Jimmy Sharpe better put in a long distance telephone call to Tuscaloosa. Maybe the Bear has some spare bodies he's not using. Sharpe is the first to concede his team needs help. He does know how to turn the East Airforce-Rangers could arrange that many furloughs on such short notice.

Talk about kicking sand in a guy's face. My Lord, the Cougars courted the around the place like a bunch of hunks from Muscle Beach. The offensive right guard weighs 280 pounds. The right tackle goes 290, and he's just a baby- bocce player compared to George. Even when he scores 19 points, he doesn't feel as though he's earned it.

'I've got to think that something we can correct,' Sharpe said. 'We missed an awful lot of scoring opportunities. Our people were going to the runner, but they weren't wrapping their arms around his neck.'

'You're going to get your face scratched up a lot when you try that, but they had to stick in there and hold on until help arrives.'

Sure thing, you're going to get your face scratched up a lot. That's what they have to do to stick in there and hold on until help arrives.

On this sunny Saturday, there was no help to be found. Houston was in high gear from the very beginning and the one-sided domination after the first 15 minutes was not whether Tech would be beaten. No, it was merely a question of how badly.

Now there is one question which Sharpe and his struggling young team must answer: Will Tech utterly collapse, or can the Hokies sufficiently regroup their forces and muster an attack?

One thing's for sure, Sharpe said, 'they aren't going to call in our schedule. Tech, then, must solve the riddle that commons is referred to as its offense. It certainly wasn't in evidence against Houston's brazenly horde-like defense. - a gift, rescuing from Ken Lambert's tackle on David Humann. Lambert recovered for Tech on the three, and George Heath went over the middle on the next play. Tech, after a quarter was more than...'

The center went to the back. One lonely wide receiver was flanked to the right. The rest of Tech's offensive team seemed to off five players to the left. The center snapped, the runner was swamped. It looked like something a bunch of 18-year-old kids would improbably in somebody's backyard.

Sharpe looked chagrined when he talked of that play during his post-mortem. 'Let me assure you,' he finally said, 'that's not gonna be our style of football once we get some help.'