Tech Tries Experiment At Noseguard

By DENNIS LATT
Times Sports Writer

BLACKSBURG — "We don't really know where he'll be playing. But wherever it is, he'll be good."

Virginia Tech assistant coach Terry Don Phillips is holding an experiment this week. He has taken his noseguard and moved him to defensive tackle. While he was at it, he has taken a defensive tackle and moved him to noseguard.

Bill Housewright is the reason for the switch. He has proven he can play tackle. But Tech needs a noseguard worse than a tackle. At 221 pounds, Housewright is being tried in the middle.

We know he can play tackle. We want to see what he can do at noseguard," said Phillips. "Where he'll be playing in the fall is up in the air. But he will be playing."

In the fall, Housewright will be listed as a sophomore. But this is not actually his freshman year at Tech.

"I took a leave of absence last year," Housewright explained. "I went back home to Gate City for a year."

Housewright is one of the few married men on the Gobblers' roster. He has a 17-month-old son and wife who luckily is a full fan.

"I know I would be coming back to Tech and would play football because that's what I wanted to do. After this past fall when I didn't play, I knew what I wanted to do."

"My wife wanted me to come back," the Gate City High School graduate continued. "She's a football fan and has been a real help."

During the 1972 season when Housewright was a freshman on the team, he started in six of Tech's games. But he was a defensive end then.

According to Phillips, "Defensive end is one of our strong points. Housewright will be able to play just about anywhere on the team. He's done real well at tackle. We just thought we'd give him at noseguard for the last week of spring drills."

Housewright doesn't really care where he plays. He just wants to play.

"I've been a tackle all through the spring, but I don't mind moving. They wanted me to play some noseguard so I'm trying to do it. They said they needed some depth there."

"There's a difference in the two positions," Housewright continued. "At tackle, you move up and down the line. At noseguard, you're taking care of the middle."

During the 1973 spring, Housewright will be small by noseguard standards. "I've faced a lot of offensive linemen who weigh more than me. That doesn't bother me."

After a year away, Housewright likes what he sees on the Tech practice field. "The defense is really improved. We have a lot of young guys who have a lot of room for improvement."

Phillips agreed that the young players should help the Gobblers in the fall, but he has been disappointed with spring drills.

"It's really hard to say what our defensive line will be like. We haven't been able to find out about some of the young kids because of injuries. Injuries have really slowed us down," Phillips said.

But one person who hasn't slowed down is Housewright. "I sure would like to have a team full of Housewrights," Phillips admitted.