Spring Game Leaves Question Marks

Virginia Tech's spring football game took place under threatening skies last Saturday afternoon and the outcome seemed no less threatening to the Hokie faithful for next season.

First of all, it appears that the kicking game picked up where it left off last year. Field goal and extra point attempts were frequently wide of the mark and an otherwise satisfactory punting game was marred by a couple of very unsatisfactory snaps from center. Coach Sharpe, however, says he's not worried. Key injuries on the kicking unit undoubtedly what may have been an adequate display in that department. In addition, as is usual in spring games, punts were juggled positionally and the kicking game was no exception. Regardless, there will have to be some positive changes in the kicking department by next September.

The quarterback slot is another area of concern, since throughout spring practice Jimmy Sharpe maintained that no one person had emerged dominant in that position. A top quarterback was still not in evidence after Saturday's game. Jimmy Sharpe spent most of the day watching Phil Rogers. After the game, Sharpe suggested that he was looking for some very special things in Rogers' performance in order to gauge his development as a signal caller. Sharpe commented that he was satisfied by what he saw in Rogers' play.

When Sharpe mentions the top prospects for the quarterback position he speaks in terms of Phil Rogers, Mitchell Barnes, and Eddie Snell—in that order. Sharpe has the potential to be a fine signal caller except for the fact that he seems to have joined the ranks of the perennially injured. The one quarterback whom Sharpe seems to overlook, at least in his talks with the press, is junior college transfer student John Mason.

Mason, sharing time with Mitchell Barnes on behalf of the Headhunters last Saturday, called perhaps the best game of the day. Mason threw 10 passes, connecting on half of those. One of his completions was good for 40 yards and a touchdown. It is difficult for a player to join a team and immediately assume one of the top roles, but John Mason has proved that he bears further watching.

Finally, Saturday's game demonstrated the greatest problem that faces Jimmy Sharpe's team—a chronic lack of depth. A shortage of good substitutes is readily apparent in the defense and the spring game reinforced this view. The second-team defense, which was a part of the Mean Machine, yielded more yardage both rushing and passing than did their first-team counterparts playing for the Headhunters. Keep in mind that the first-team offense faced the first-team defense and likewise for the second-teams. This explains why the second team offense seemed to have outplayed their counterparts on the first-team. They were playing against a shakier defense.

To those who saw the game Saturday, Tech's hopes for a good 1975 season may seem dim. However, it must be remembered that the spring game is basically an experimental scrimmage. New people are attempting new things. It is a learning experience in which perfection is neither expected nor sought.

Another Wrestling Wright At Tech

There's nothing a college coach likes better than to have a stand-out athlete participate in university-level sports in his hometown. Virginia Tech wrestling coach Jerry Clay now currently finds himself in that enviable position with the announcement that Blacksburg's Gary Wright will attend Virginia Tech in the fall and will participate in the Gobbler wrestling program.

A high school wrestler, Wright competed at 134 pounds for coaches David Lenker and Donald Marks. Wright was a two-time state champion in single A and district champion in the Second Regional Class AA meet.

Wright is a good bet to do well at Tech. He is following in the footsteps of several brothers who have wrestled successfully for the Gobblers in previous years.