Another Babe Ruth!

BLACKSBURG — Paul Adams has been pretending that he could fill the bill for that beer commercial.

You know, the one in which a guy named George Herman Ruth comes up and wants a tryout. The doubtful manager watches him sock the ball over the fence a couple of times and then asks if he knows a kid named Gehrig.

Adams is knocking the ball out of the park at a better rate than Babe Ruth did. In between he's also quite a football player.

Adams has nine homers in 104 at bats for the Virginia Tech baseball team this spring. That computes to one homer for every 11.5 times at bat.

Consider that Ruth's average was one for every 11.8 times. Hank Aaron, the majors' top blaster, averages only one homer for every 15.8 times at bat.

Now don't think you can compare Adams with Aaron and Ruth. Adams is in a different league. But it gives a person an idea of how proficient he's been with the bat for Tech Coach Bob Humphreys.

Last year Adams hit only four homers. "I changed my stance," he said. "I was getting fooled on a curve ball. I took a wider stance."

Paul Adams

Adams is eligible for the baseball draft this spring. But he's not likely to sign. He is a key fullback in Coach Jimmy Sharpe's plans for Tech football this year. Last fall Adams was Tech's third leading rusher with 354 yards. That wasn't bad since he played fullback and was counted on more for blocking than running.

"I'd like to be drafted and if the money's right, I might give up my senior year," he said.

He was drafted by Kansas City while he was in high school, but he decided to give college football a whirl. He doesn't feel as if missing spring practice will hurt him that much.

"It could throw me behind. But I have a good idea of how the offense goes. I still remember the assignments," he said. "I have the whole summer left to get in shape."

In 1972 Kansas City offered him "some money." But it wasn't enough. So now Adams is producing homers and yards for Virginia Tech and everyone's pleased with his production.