ACC To Vote Monday on Virginia Tech

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Virginia Tech probably will learn Monday whether it will be accepted as a member of the Atlantic Coast Conference. The ACC will hold a special meeting Monday at 2 p.m. at the Governor’s Inn between Raleigh and Durham. The Roanoke Times & World-News has learned.

Kenneth Vickery of Clemson, the conference president, will be in charge of the session, which has been called to “clear the air” on the Virginia Tech admittance prior to the ACC’s annual meeting at Myrtle Beach, S.C., May 15-16.

Conference Commissioner Bob James stated Wednesday, “This office has stayed totally out of this matter. It is the decision of the seven member institutions.”

The ACC has been a seven-team league ever since South Carolina withdrew in 1971. Earlier, there had been reports that the Gamecocks and Georgia Tech also were interested in possible ACC membership, but that is no longer the case. Virginia Tech made formal application for ACC membership and a special committee visited Blacksburg in February. The committee reported on the physical facilities at Tech, plus other related athletic matters. The report went out to all member schools in late March.

It will require five affirmative votes for Tech to gain entrance into the league, something that unquestionably would be a great boost to the Hokies’ overall athletic program.

Tech is being sponsored by Virginia, Duke and Clemson, the Times & World-News has learned, although those schools are not committed to voting affirmatively.

In fact, one source said that Duke is one of the key schools. Another source said that Tech has three sure votes—UVa, Clemson and Wake Forest—and one sure vote against—North Carolina.

At a recent meeting of the Maryland athletic committee, the vote reportedly was 55 with one member absent. Maryland also could prove to be a swing school in the voting.

All seven schools are reportedly ready to vote. However, if one reports it is undecided, the meeting would be called off.

If Tech is admitted, it will be effective immediately and the Gobbler would have full voting rights at the regular league meeting.

When the committee visited Tech, it discovered that:

- Tech is expanding Lane Stadium to 50,000 seats, effective in 1978, and has long range plans to complete a horseshoe stadium that could seat 60,000.

- Tech paid out an average of $65,000 to five visiting football teams last fall. The ACC minimum is $45,000. With the additional fees, Tech believes its football paychecks would far exceed that minimum.

Should Tech be admitted, it was learned, the Hokies would not participate in the annual conference basketball tournament for three seasons, or until 1978-79.

It was not determined how long it would take Tech to get on all football schedules. Currently, the Hokies play UVa and Wake Forest and begin a series with Clemson in the fall. Previously, the ACC had agreed to a round-robin schedule of its current seven members, effective 1978.

The best guess is that Tech would immediately become eligible for championships in all sports except basketball and football.

Further, it has been learned that a Tech proposal on ACC basketball tickets and an agreement to pay a guilty sum to enter the league has received a favorable reaction.

Tech reportedly has agreed to a five-year plan for ACC basketball tickets. It would take a handful of tickets the first year, and more each subsequent year until receiving a full one-eighth share after the fifth year.

Considerable money is generated from these tournament tickets. At some schools, contributors have to pay as much as $1,000 for the right to purchase a pair of tickets. Thus, according to the plan proposed by Tech, in its first two years in the tourney, the Hokies would receive fewer tickets than the other members.

Tech also has proposed that it would post money equal to a one-seventh share in the present conference treasury. This figure, it has been learned, is substantially in excess of $300,000 but less than $600,000.

Tech, then under the leadership of Dr. T. Marshall Hahn, Jr., once before sought membership in the ACC, but at the time the league had eight teams and there never was a formal vote on whether or not to expand.