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Tech’s Air Corridor Stops at Goal Line

Nothing more than feelings.

Virginia Tech’s football team is passing more but enjoying it less this fall.

The Gobblers threw just 81 passes a year ago, an average of 7.4 aerials per game. This year, through five starts, Coach Jimmy Sharpe’s team has tossed 64 times, an average of 12.8 per contest.

But if passing from the wishbone formation is up, the point production is down. Tech hasn’t thrown for a touchdown in its last eight games, dating back into last season. And over that span, the Gobblers own a 1-6-1 record.

Tech’s last scoring pass—a 16-yarder from Mitchell Barnes to Moses Foster (both seniors a year ago)—came on Oct. 30, 1976 against West Virginia at Lane Stadium in the first quarter. That’s 35 periods ago.

Maybe the Gobblers could use some passing help from one of the great “names” in college football today. That’s Samoa Samoa (no lie), who ranks 10th in the nation among junior college passers. Samoa (take your pick if that’s his first or last name) throws for Long Beach City College.

According to a new computer program set up by the NCAA, Missouri and Baylor have played the two toughest football schedules in the nation so far.

The system works this way: You take the combined records of a team’s opponents, and then subtract the games involving that certain team. For example, Richmond’s opponents have a combined record of 24-11 (against Division I 1985). Subtracting the Spiders’ 1-5 mark from that record, the UR opponents have a 19-10 record for the computer’s sake. That’s the 11th toughest schedule in the nation so far. Of course, the ratings change every week according to won-loss figures.

The NCAA’s new system takes away the claim from most lowly teams that shout about their tough schedules. For example, an 0-7 team’s opponents might be 17-10 combined. But take those seven wins away and it’s even 500 (10-10). So far, Kentucky, Kansas, Army, Duke, Michigan, New Mexico, Mississippi and Ohio State follow Missouri and Baylor to round out the 10 toughest schedules.