TO VIRGINIA TECH — Belle Vernon Area's Dane Astle signed a commitment paper with Virginia Tech as the Lep's head coach Chuck Machesky (left) and assistant coach Joe Krootski look on.

BVA's Astle to Virginia Tech

What does Belle Vernon Area High's Dane Astle have in common with Pittsburgh Steelers defensive tackle Tom Beasley and Miami Dolphin backup quarterback Don Strock?

They all landed football scholarships to Virginia Tech.

Astle, the Leps' leading rusher in the 2023 season despite sitting out two games with an injury and being used sparingly in two others, will sign with the Blacksburg, Va., school next week.

A 6'1, 265-pounder, Astle rushed for 596 yards and six touchdowns last season. Most of those yards were picked up before he stretched ligaments in his knee at Steel Valley.

"It was a frustrating season because of the injury, but I'm fully recovered now," said Astle.

The Leps' standout picked Virginia Tech over two Pennsylvania Conference Western Division schools, Slippery Rock and Edinboro.

"I'll play more in the conference. It wasn't a difficult decision because Virginia Tech is a Division I school and their program is on the up and up," he said.

The Gobblers have posted back-to-back 7-4 seasons after going 8-4 in 1989 including a 20-10 loss to Miami (Fla.) in the Peach Bowl.

Virginia Tech is coached by Bill Dooley, brother of Georgia's head coach Vince Dooley.

The Gobblers' home games are played at Lane Stadium which has a seating capacity of 62,500 and also has lights for possible night contests.

Virginia Tech's 1983 schedule includes home games with Wake Forest, VMI, Louisville, Duke, Richmond, William & Mary and Vanderbilt and trips to Memphis State, West Virginia, Tulane and Virginia.

Clemson and Tulane will be on the Gobblers' card in 1984.

Chuck Machesky, the BVA mentor, wasn't surprised that the Virginia school took a chance on Astle despite his injury.

"They liked his size and speed," he claimed.

"They've been real sincere about Dane and they showed a lot of interest in him the past two years. Even when he was hurt, they wanted to know how he was doing."