BLACKSBURG — Virginia Tech's basketball team figured to have some problems, but lack of scoring punch wasn't expected to be one of them. Neither was shooting accuracy.

Those have been two main problems, however, and any lineup juggling Coach Don DeVoe might do won't prove much until the Gobblers start filling up the nets in proven style.

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The same personnel averaged almost 47 per cent shooting accuracy last season. In pre-season preparations they appeared considerably improved. But right now they have combined for a weak 35.5 per cent while dropping two out of three games, and only in the first half against Alabama did the Techmen show signs of snapping the slump.

“We started slowly last year, especially Craig Lieder,” DeVoe notes, “and I'm confident that we'll start hitting. But we've got to keep looking to find a winning combination.

Last year we found ways to win; so far this season we seem to be a step away from learning how to win.”

Ordinarily one would expect returning home to be a big plus for the Gobblers. On Monday, Tech will entertain Ohio State, and Florida will visit the Tech Coliseum on Saturday. There might be good crowds, but with school out the student body won't be as much in evidence as for most home contests.

And sandwiched between those two important home dates will be a Thursday night encounter at Charlotte with UNC's talented Tarheels.

“We certainly need to find our shooting eye,” DeVoe says. “Without that we'll have a tough time finding the winning combination that we're convinced is within the capabilities of this squad.”