Toledo Invades HokieLand

BLACKSBURG, Va. - For one of the few times this season the general public will have an opportunity to see Virginia Tech’s basketball team in action against one of the nation’s more formidable opponents.

Wednesday, Tech will entertain the Toledo Rockets who, after losing their first two games of the season (to South Carolina and Michigan), have come on to win 16 of their last 18.

For one of the few times this season, there are almost 2,000 seats available for sale to the public.

Last year at Toledo the Rockets thumped Tech. 89-74, the Gobblers’ last loss of the 1972-73 season. After that lesson, Tech went on to win six straight, including the N.I.T. Toledo lost its greatest player, Tom Kozelko, but Tech coach Don DeVoe declares, ‘Even without Kozelko, they’re a much better team this year.’

Tech, which virtually hung itself in the first half Saturday night by not being able to crack Wake Forest’s zone defense, is still looking for an inside game, and DeVoe might make some lineup changes.

Duke Thorpe, 6-6 freshman, and Mike Collins, 6-7 sophomore, lately have added some muscle to Tech’s inside attack, and DeVoe might go to either or both of them because ‘we’ve been letting people manhandle us inside.’ And DeVoe anticipates more of the same from Toledo.

I’m still firmly convinced that this Tech team isn’t playing to its potential,’ DeVoe declares, ‘and I’m equally confident that we can and will salvage a respectable record, even though the task doesn’t get any easier with six of the last eight games on the road.’

A win Wednesday over the Rockets is a must if the Gobblers are to launch such a finish.