While Jimmy Sharpe is deciding whether any injured player is too injured to start the opening game at Wake Forest, there is optimism in Demon Deaconland.

Wake was “whupped up on” soundly by Tech 40-10 in the final game of last season. Now the Deacs, with the most experienced and talented team yet coached by Chuck Mills hope to even things. Back from the offense that scored more points than any Wake team since 1948 are eight starters including John Zeglinski at tailback and a strong supporting cast.

There is no shortage of eagerness on either side, with Tech hitting hard enough in practice to cause many bruises and Wake—depleted by injuries at last fall’s meeting—out to prove its case that it was a fluke.

After last season’s contest, which was close in the opening quarters, Mills declined the usual coaches handshake, contending that Tech had deliberately run up the score.

That wasn’t the way it was. When the dam broke, it broke and the Deacons were swept away.

Wake is rated as a one touchdown underdog, but the game realistically could be called even, considering Tech’s perennial opening day slow start, the Deac’s Groves Stadium advantage and the fact that in recent seasons Wake has started off like Alabama and Notre Dame in its first three or so games.

A large delegation of Tech fans is likely since the game location is only a two hour drive away.

Mitchael Barnes will start at quarterback, talented but not possessed of blinding speed and Roscoe Coles—who is—will be turning on the burners as will battering Paul Adams.

The Hokie machine has been given Sharpe’s best preseason tuneup in the practice pits. If the key turns in the ignition Saturday, Tech’s spirited ’76 race will get the green flag.

Hokiemens, start your engines.