Gobblers Have Quality Players

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game, I firmly believe we’re two positions away from being a great football team.

Those positions are quarterback — vacant since multi-talented Phil Rogers graduated — and one linebacker spot — where Doug Thacker graduated.

The leading quarterback candidate is Mitchael Barnes, a 6-0, 190-pound senior. He rushed only 22 times last fall, for 39 yards, and completed 14 of 23 passes. Barnes’ best attribute may be his familiarity with Tech’s Wishbone, since it takes a well-seasoned player to handle the option offense.

Returning to the backfield is junior Roscoe Coles, who, if he maintains his present pace, should break Tech’s career rushing records. He had 1,045 yards last year and 10 touchdowns. He has a goal this year of “at least 1,500 yards.”

Further experience can be found in senior fullback George Heath, senior Paul Adams and senior Chuck Nuttycombe. If Sharpe wants to turn to speed, he can use Dick Holway, Larry Fallen, Dennis Scott and Ellis Savage.

The defense is in solid shape, a far cry from that night in 1973 in Tuscaloosa, Ala. All of the down linemen return, led by ends Keith McCarter and Stuart Patterson. Linebacker Rick Razzano, a two-year starter, is a possible All-America.

The secondary lost cornerbacks Bill Hardee and Flash Davis. Junior Henry Bradley should have one corner position, while sophomore Gary Smith should start at free safety.

It’s a talented, motivated and experienced Tech team for the upcoming season. It’s also a team with a favorable schedule — eight of its 11 games are inside Virginia.

“With our players and coaches more familiar with our total operation, we hope to continue to improve at an even faster rate that we have in the last two years,” Sharpe said.