Forecast Shakes Up Sharpe, But He Says VPI 'Will Be Ready'

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Jimmy Sharpe answered the telephone Thursday in a high-pitched, seemingly cheerful tone. Yet, when asked what he was so happy about, he replied: "I'm scared to death."

Perhaps he ought to be greatly frightened. His Virginia Tech football squad, tickled about its sharp 23-6 season-opening conquest of Wake Forest, leaves today to do battle with Texas A&M, an opponent ranked between No. 10 and 15 in just about every preseason poll.

"If I had to do anything with voting," Sharpe says, "I'd have to rank A&M in the top four." That accounts for his scared-like attitude, but then he shifts gears again when it is pointed out that one prognosticator (Associated Press) pegged the final score at A&M 31, Tech 14.

The next thing coming out of the phone sounded like "Who-o-o-e-e-e-e!" Then Sharpe says, "If I was a real betting man, I'd like to have some of that spread — 47 points."

However, what was more interesting to the Gobblers' mentor is that the AP selector wouldn't figure the Aggies could run up that many points (31) against a Tech defense which everyone feels will be Sharpe's pride and joy before 1976 campaign is concluded.

Although sounding flabbergasted, Sharpe offers no counter predictions, exclaiming only that "we'll be ready."

By being "ready" Sharpe means that the rugged scrimmaging for the week is over, having taken place Tuesday, and only one player is not physically ready to go. That's cornerback Henry Bradley. He didn't see any action against Wake Forest and a final verdict from the doctor on his availability will be made this morning.

With or without Bradley, the Gobblers won't even take light drills or warm-ups after reaching their destination.

Sharpe reveals, "we'll fly into Houston, take a bus from there to Huntsville, and we'll stay there and rest and do nothing until it's time to take another bus Saturday which will take us to See Darn, Page 34, Col. 3"