NO NOSTALGIA TRIP

Eagles, Gobblers Seek ‘High Road’

By CHARLES KARMOSKY
Daily Press Sports Editor

What’s generally considered to be the “longest-running road show” in college football history moves into Blacksburg Saturday to test the early 1976 comeback efforts of Virginia Tech.

Refurbishing and rebuilding of Southern Mississippi’s football stadium has kept the Golden Eagles away from home the past two and a half seasons, but they won’t be lacking incentive, and for some of their coaches it’ll be sort of a homecoming.

Second-year head mentor for the Eagles, who holds a 2-1 edge in their series against the Gobblers which started in 1958, is Bobby Collins, and he’s no stranger to Tech people. Nor are two of his aides, Bill Clay and Jimmy Weatherford.

Collins, who had a 7-4 record last season, served three years (1964-66) as defensive backfield coach at Tech under Jerry Claiborne and later was on North Carolina’s staff. Clay and Weatherford, of course, also have had coaching experience under Tech mentors.

However, renewing old friendships won’t be on their minds Saturday. Nor will Jimmy Sharpe and the Gobblers be rolling out any welcoming red carpets.

The Sharpies won their opener against Wake Forest 23-6, but last weekend both teams were shut out. The Golden Eagles were lambasted by East Carolina 48-0, while Tech showed defensive strength but lacked offense in bowing to nationally-ranked Texas A&M 19-0.

It shapes up as an unusual battle. Neither team displayed fearsome prowess gaining on the ground and both have the potential to restrain each other on the overland routes, yet the two foes are “suspect” on their ability to move the ball via aerial routes.