A quarterback was the chief problem facing Collins in preseason appraisals — and probably still is, considering the lopsided licking his team took last week. Meantime, nobody has ever raved about Mitcheal Barnes being a passing whiz for the Gobblers.

Whatever the potential, Tech rates a favorite by at least two touchdowns, and not only because this is its 1976 home opener.

The Gobblers are smarting from their loss in Texas on two accounts: they had a two-season win streak stopped at five games and that 19-0 setback was their first whitewashing after having scored in 66 straight contests dating back to 1970’s opener.

Not only is Tech expected to exact atonement against Southern Mississippi, but there’s also a five-game home winning streak at stake and the Gobblers don’t figure to disappoint an expected crowd of 35,000.

To achieve that victorious end, and in light of last week’s disappointing performance on offense, Sharpe might introduce something different on attack, either in tactical or personnel switches, though none are contemplated or even rumored.

Still, since fullbacks Paul Adams and George Heath have been Tech’s most productive ground-gainers, the See Southern, Pg 38, Cols. 5-6

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Continued from Page 33 possibility looms of Heath running with Adams in the same unit — at half-back, which is not exactly an unfamiliar position to the senior from Bristol, Tenn.

Another possibility is that, though Barnes almost certainly will be the starting quarterback, sophomore Eddie Snell from Snellville, Ga. will see considerably more action.

Snell is much faster and at least just as quick as Barnes, but neither has shown a great proclivity toward passing, which poses something of a quandary for Coach Sharpe because Southern Miss is perhaps most vulnerable in its defensive secondardy.

Still, starter Kenny Alderman did hit 11 of 18 aerial tries against East Carolina good for 112 yards, so Tech’s secondary defenders may be kept busy. Barnes and Snell, on the other hand, connected only once each for a net 27 yards against Texas A&M.

More than likely, the Gobblers with Adams, Heath and the ever-dangerous Roscoe Coles will first try to re-establish their ground game which netted 274 yards in the Wake Forest season-opener (when it might have gained more but substituted freely instead).

The Golden Eagles could use the same strategy because, despite the miserable showing against East Carolina, they claim having several talented runners led by senior fullback Carlos Montgomery.

Other Eagles adept at getting big chunks of yardage running are tailbacks Ben Garry and Chuck Clancy plus Curtis Dickey. Garry accumulated 846 yards last season while Clancy and Dickey chipped in with 424 and 441, respectively.

That trio could be worked extra hard because Southern Mississippi’s air attack is further handicapped by the fact that its entire corps of wide receivers was lost through graduation.