Dream Comes True For Pearson

By JERRY VERNON
Sports Writer

A few years ago, Doug Pearson spent most of his Saturdays during autumn in Virginia Tech's Lane Stadium. He was just one of many spectators who cheered for Hokie success and dreamed of playing on the field.

During those days, Pearson played football under Al Kincaid at Giles County High School. He placed on New River All-District teams three times during his Spartan stint—twice as a linebacker and once as an offensive guard.

A lot has changed since Pearson left the Giles program three years ago. Kincaid has moved on to a coaching position at the University of Alabama and Pearson has graduated to college football.

He never played on the Tech field during his first three college years.

But this Saturday the William & Mary guard will get a chance to hit the Lane turf against his old friends.

"I've been waiting since my freshman year to play in Lane Stadium," said the senior Monday via the telephone. "I used to sit in the stands and wish I could be out there. Now I'll have that chance. This game is very special to me."

The Pearisburg native will be back in the starting slot he lost to David O'Neil earlier this season.

"I'll definitely be up for this one," said Pearson. "The game is definitely going to be a challenge. I think the guy (Keith Gibson) I'll be up against is much bigger than me so I'll get a chance to use my speed."

In fact, the Tech offensive lineman outweighs the 220 pound Pearson by a good 80 pounds. Despite this potentially bruising handicap, the Indian defensive tackle looks forward to this Saturday's encounter.

 Pearson expects a close game that, in his words, "won't be a matter of them (Tech) having to make mistakes for us to win." But he knows the Indians must play a better game than last week's 20-19 loss to East Carolina.

"The loss last week didn't have much effect on me," explained Pearson. "Just playing Tech gets me excited. I know they're tough at home, but we can beat them if we play good."

This Saturday's game brings Pearson's high school fantasy into the actual realm of field action. The William & Mary senior plans to look good on his old home ground.