Razzano Raps Schedule

By JACK BOGACZYK
Sports Writer

BLACKSBURG — After starting 32 consecutive games for Virginia Tech, Rick Razzano is certainly qualified to speak on the Gobblers’ football program.

And what he says isn’t going to endear many people in the commonwealth to the junior linebacker.

“I want to tell you one thing,” said Razzano, generally regarded as one of the finest defensive players ever to play in Blacksburg. “I think if we want to become a national power, we have to get some of the state schools off our schedule.”

“Beating them, well, we’re supposed to. But what do we gain by beating them in the way of a program that will be recognized nationally?”

“If we lose, it’s Tech stinks! It doesn’t figure. If you look back, we’ve played our best against those teams that have reputations.”

Razzano realizes that what he says will seem sour grapes since the Gobblers have lost to William and Mary and Richmond this season, the latter a 16-0 setback last Saturday. Razzano watched most of that loss from the sidelines, nursing a bruised thigh. He started the game to keep his string of starts (since the first game of his freshman year) intact. But despite the state losses, he tackled his feelings like he does ball carriers.

“We’re trying to get there quicker of our program up,” said the New Castle, Pa., native. “But when we beat the state teams, it doesn’t do much for us.”

Razzano hopes to play Saturday night at Florida State when the Gobblers conclude what the linebacker called a “disappointing” season.

Whether he will play half the game or go the distance, he isn’t sure. But he does expect to start.

“If (the streak of starts) really means a lot to me,” said Razzano, “Got (Jimmy) Sharpe knows that, and that’s why he let me start at Rich- mond.”

“This is the first time I’ve ever been injured like this.” When asked if he feels like he is letting his teammates down as he reams the sidelines, Razzano answered, “Yes, I do feel like that.”

Razzano said the Gobblers’ outlook as the Richmond game started last week “was the lowest point emotionally we’ve been at in two years.”

“It was our (the players’) fault at Richmond,” he said. “We let the coaches down. I don’t know why, but we’ve been flat for a number of our games this year. And it has affected us as the season has gone on.

“Sometimes, everyone seems a little dead. We’re just not involved in the games like we should be.”

Razzano said he doesn’t believe talk that the Gobblers have sometimes been overconfident is true. Nor does he think the players have backed in the glory of their pre-season press clip- pings.

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“I’m definitely disappointed with our season,” said Razzano. “Mostly, I feel bad for the seniors because they have established a solid program for people to build on. Since my freshman year here, there has been a complete turnaround.

But I don’t think we’ve reached a point where we’re overconfident. I learned that early. My freshman year, we lost to VMI. We lost to Virginia. There’s no doubt that any team can beat any other on any given day.

Still, I think we need to play more teams like Texas A&M and Tulsa. We can play with those teams, and we proved it. After we play those teams, it’s tough to get up for the state teams. Then, the state teams are just waiting to play us. They’re sky high.”

Razzano’s idea of a schedule with reputation is in the future for Tech, as in 1979 the Gobblers play Tulsa, Auburn, West Virginia, Kentucky, Florida State and Alabama. But the linebacker will then certainly have used up his eligibility.

Next year, Razzano would like to reach the bowl game that eluded the Gobblers this time, and perhaps garner some individual honors as well.

“Yeah, I think of it,” said Razzano, when asked if he would like to follow Mike Widge as a Tech all-America linebacker. “But my main objective— as long as I’ve played—is just to do the best I can.

“When you do the best you can each day, week or year, that’s all you can ask of yourself.”

“T’ve read about a lot of All-America linemen, but defensive linemen,” he added. “Sometimes, it all makes me laugh. I see a guy who has so many tackles and makes All-America at Notre Dame. I might have had more, but I played at Virginia Tech.

“What does it mean? I had 150 tackles as a freshman, and 160 last year. So, what can you do?”

Razzano didn’t say it, but perhaps he was thinking about where he’s making his tackles. Blacksburg is a nice home, but he’d rather be making his road trips to Tuscaloosa and Ann Arbor than Richmond and Charlottesville.