Beasley Has Shot at the Pros

By Jerry Vernon
Sports Writer

Most people would relax after winning a multitude of postseason football awards.
But not Tom Beasley.
The Virginia Tech senior is about as nervous these days as a fidgety bridegroom.

"I had no idea anything like this could ever come about," admitted the lean, muscular Northfolk, W. Va. native Monday. "I'm apprehensive, it's something I know very little about."
The something Beasley speaks of is two southern trips the defensive tackle will take within the next month. The 237-pound professional football prospect will play in the Blue-Grey game Dec. 24 in Montgomery, Ala. and then travel to Tampa, Fla. for the American Bowl on Jan. 2.

"I think some of the pro scouts want to look at me in these games," surmised Beasley. It might be better to say they want an indepth analysis of the honorable mention All-American and the first string All-South Independent squad member. The pro scouts have been peering toward Beasley all season.

"I've talked to quite a few of the scouts," admitted Beasley, "but they don't commit themselves. They've been talking to me as a defensive end. If I can get my weight up some I can play defensive tackle. I'd need to get up to about 265 for that."

At this time, Beasley is neither too concerned with the position or the team with whom he plays. "I'd just like to get a chance to play," he said.
And he'll probably get that shot. New England Patriot scout Tony Razzano (Tech's Rick Razzano's uncle) and a Cincinnati Bengal scout showed interest in Beasley during the latter part of this past season.

But the two postseason games should lend most of the influence to the Hokie's chances of playing professionally.

"It's going to add quite a bit of pressure," admitted Beasley. "If I have a good game it will increase my chances as a pro prospect."

Beasley, a dark-haired, 22-year old, is convinced he can play professional football. All he needs is the chance to prove himself.

"I am confident I have the ability," he warned. "Quickness is the biggest thing and then I have good running speed. I run a consistent 4.9 in the 40. Plus the scouts consider me to be fairly strong. And there's other factors...just having a sense for playing the game."

Life can be tough for a pro football prospect who lives in (Washington) Redskin country. Beasley's friends constantly remind him where his allegiance should lie.

"I think the majority of my friends would like to see me with the Redskins," smiled the soft-spoken athlete, "but I'll go for the best offer if I have that luxury."

The most attractive offer means money and playing time to Beasley. Local Redskin fans should expect to watch him play for another professional team. "I'd like to play," admitted Beasley. "George Allen is known for not playing rookies."

One aspect of the professional world Beasley spends little worry with is the rookie syndrome. He has been there twice on a more minor scale.

"I've gone through the rookie stage in high school and college," he said. "The pros will be another aspect...if I get the chance. There's a lot of fun in being a rookie."

Beasley also realizes there will be some pain as a first year pro.

"You get picked on, but that's just part of the game," he admitted. "On the college level football is supposed to be just a game. But when it comes to the pros you're trying to take someone's food off his plate. It's cutthroat more or less."

Off the field Beasley is a polite, mild-mannered spokesman. But when the clock starts his character changes as he put it, "It's either me or the other guy and I tend to throw a little favoritism toward myself."

Now the postseason ball player is concentrating most of his efforts toward the two upcoming games. This means he's spending a lot of time to himself. His game style dictates that he alienate himself and concentrate on his future opponent. At the moment this preparation is his most difficult task.

"I don't know what the games will be like," he said, "so I'm a little apprehensive. But I'm looking forward to them."

Maybe this anxiety explains why Beasley's eyes dart back and forth when you speak to him about his future. He's a nervous man, hoping for a prominent career in football.

On the other hand, Beasley is a fidgety bridegroom who will be married this Sunday.

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL PROSPECT
Scouts Will Look at Beasley in Postseason Games