**Gobblers Are Underdog At WVU Tonite**

By JERRY RATCLIFFE
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West Virginia basketball coach Joedy Gardner will spend most of the day going over scouting reports from Virginia Tech’s game with Charleston Baptist Monday night in preparation for tonight’s game between the two arch-rivals.

The two square off in one of the most fierce rivalries known to the area, with West Virginia a definite favorite going into the game.

"I don’t know how much the scouting report will help. Probably not as much as I’d like it to," Gardner told New River Newspapers late Tuesday from his office in Morgantown.

"Tech has played two teams they’ve beaten badly so we’re concerned.”

West Virginia is 2-0 and so is Tech, but Gardner admits he feels WVU’s 2-0 came harder than did Tech’s. "They beat two teams that apparently are weak. We didn’t really play that well, but both came over teams that won 20 games or more last year.”

The Mountaineers won the Hall of Fame Tournament by beating Massachusetts, which Gardner calls “a very good, very physical team that is tough inside,” and Syracuse which he describes as "a team that plays hard, a heckua ball club, but that’s in the past. Virginia Tech is present.

Of the last six games, five have been barn burners, with the exception of a rout by Tech at home last season in a game taken over early by the men in stripped shirts. "The officials dominated the game from the start. We only have played two bad games in two years, one was that game against Tech in Blacksburg and against Villanova in the Palestron," the Mounties’ boss pointed out.

This is the year West Virginia is supposed to turn its basketball seasons around, back towards national prominence. Gardner’s team went 15-13 last year, the most wins in a season since 1966.

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winner receiving an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament.

This excites Gardner because of the exposure his team will get in the five metropolitan areas (Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Washington, and Pittsburgh), which never hurts recruiting.

But he hasn’t been satisfied with his team’s play. "I’m not satisfied with our defense, our offense, our rebounding," he said. "The only thing I have been satisfied with is our foul shooting. It’s never been this good before. But we’ve been working hard on that phase of our game.”

If there has been any surprise for WVU this year it has to be 6-4 forward Sid Bosick who averaged only 4.7 points per game last season, but has been the Mountaineers’ leading scorer the past two games.

"I’m really not surprised," said Gardner, "Sid is a very unselfish player. If he has the shot he’ll take it, but if he

doesn’t he won’t try and create a shot.”

Back with Bosick are Tony Robertson, 6-5 guard from Detroit, who led WVU in scoring with a 17.9 average last year. Robertson also was the leader in assists with 100 and was the leading field goal shooter at 53 percent. Many pro coaches and scouts consider Robertson as the premier “big guard” pro prospect this year.

Bob Huggins, a two-year starter, is expected to continue

his consistent play at guard. He averaged 6.9 points per game last season and was an 80 per cent free throw shooter.

Russell Chapman is the other senior returning to the squad. He finished strong last season after sitting out the previous year to meet transfer requirements. Russell at 6-7, is an excellent shot from 20 feet in. He averaged eight points per game last year.

Murricane Robinson, a 6-7 junior from Welch, is expected to return to the form he showed at the end of his freshman year. Robinson was the second leading rebounder last year while averaging 6.4 points per game.

The other returners are Tommy Roberts, Dana Perno, and Junior Lewis. Roberts, a 6-4 junior from Monroeville, Pa., is a good outside shooter and averaged 3.2 points per game last year in a reserve role. Perno, a 6-2 sophomore from Uniontown, Pa., started twice and averaged 2.2 points per game for the season.

Lewis continued to improve throughout the year. The 6-11 sophomore from Richmon, Va., averaged 1.6 points per game and is expected to contribute much more this year.

WVU will have four newcomers on this year’s team. They are Joe Fryz, a 6-2 guard from Coraopolis, Pa.; Dennis Heepe, a 6-4 forward from Midland Pa.; Lowen Morsa, a 6-1 guard from Mt. Vernon, N.Y.; and Jess Hutton, a 5-11 guard from Uniontown, Pa. The first three are freshmen, while Hutton will be a junior after transferring from Robert Morris College.

Gardner conceives nothing against Virginia Tech though, a team he thinks is the finest his Mounties faced last year.

"We’ll have to play out of our minds to win this one," he said. "We’ll have to improve rapidly in those areas I mentioned earlier to be able to beat Tech."

"I know Wansley, Thiemann, Thorpe, Foggins and Ashford from games in the past and by watching these films I have here. I just finished watching Tech on film," said the coach. It shapes up as quality basketball game in the tradition of the past Gobbler-Mountaineer collisions.