By JACK BOGACZYK
Sports Writer

Charlie Moir has waited a long time to be the head basketball coach at Virginia Tech. But he will wait considerably less time for his first coaching win with the Hokies.

Like just a few more hours, the Hokies open the season tonight in the friendly confines of Tech Coliseum, as Marriott College pays a visit for Moir’s debut. The students are out of school at Tech, so plenty of tick- ets will be available at the door.

While Moir hopes to experiment with his team under game conditions for the first time, he also hopes to win. He won’t say, but this season should be the 16th straight Tech win in the “House of the Hokies Built.” That victory streak dates back to a February, 1977, Blackburg loss to North Carolina, and includes 14 straight home wins in last season’s NCAA-bounded voyage under Coach Don DeVoe.

While Tech opens, other state teams continue play in various tournaments. Finals will be contested tonight in the Virginia Invitational at Charlottesville and the Spider Classic in Rich- mond. There’s also the last round of the Big Four—an Atlantic Coast Conference show in Greensboro. Clemson’s IPTAY Invitational will also conclude tonight.

And Maryland will become the final ACC team to jump into the 1977-78 season when the Terrapins entertain Notre Dame in a battle of 20 college clubs this morning at the eye-opening hour of 11.

Tech and Marietta are meeting for the first time, and Moir at least has an idea about what to expect from the Division II club from New York.

“We scouted their exhibition game,” said Moir of Marietta. “They beat the Egyptian Na- tional Team, 101-45.”

But Tech has no Egyptians, as Marietta should learn tonight. The visitors were 10-14 last year and finished with the second worst record in the Ohio Conference. The Hokies have lost three starters, but Moir still has some DeVoe- recruited talent left other than what he and as- sistant Frankline Allen and Don Brown brought in since last March.

Super-sub Duke Thorpe—the darling of Tech Coliseum crowds—will start at one forward spot, his 6-6 frame the tallest among the Tech starters except for 6-11 Ernie Download. Phil Thieman, the 6-5 senior sharpshooter, will start at either for- ward or guard, depending on who Moir figures as another man to get the call for the opening tap.

Sporofable Marshall Ashford (6-2) is the Hokies’ point guard. Either freshman Les Henson (6-3½) or junior college transfer Ron Bell (6-1) will be the other starter. If Henson is the man, he plays forward with Thieman at the shooting guard spot. Thieman is a forward if Bell gets the call.

“I’m anxious to get started,” said Moir, who was a Tech assistant for four seasons in the mid- 1960s before meeting the Roundhouse College and pa- loting the Maroons to the small college title in 1972. “I wouldn’t be here unless I thought I could do well.”

“I don’t want to put pressure on the team, my staff or myself and say we’re going to the NCAA tournament.”

Moir claims it’s “difficult to know what kind of team we’re going to have” considering the loss of high-scoring Russell Davis and Larry Cooke and Floor leader Dave Sansburg.

“They had a great ball club last year,” said the North Carolina native. “But we only have three people back who played a lot—Thorpe, Wamsley and Thieman.”

The obvious answer is to keep his best peo- ple on the floor. That means that Thorpe, who has been foul-prone in starts earlier in his ca- reer, must curt his tendency to get nervous and start fouling.

“It’s going to awfully tough to have our best player in the game for only 18-20 minutes,” said Moir. “That’s Thorpe’s ability to cut down on fouls is a question in his mind. “But I don’t think people will see a great deal of difference between the way Tech played last year and this year.

“We hope to run and shoot. Last year’s team put a lot of points on the board, and we might not be able to score like that. But we will run.

Primarily, we’ll be a man-to-man defensive team. We want to play good defense, and I’m en- couraged. We have some kids who really get af- ter it.”

Tonight, Moir says one player the Hokies will have to get after is Marietta sophomore guard Mitch Miracle, who lived up to his name last year by scoring 25 points-per-game.

At Maryland, the Techers will find out quickly how they perform against top talent without John Lucas and Mo Howard for the first time in four years, but Druillet can still call on people like Brad Davis, Steve Sheppard, Lawrence Bos- ton and Larry Gibson.

Today could start a rebuilding season for Notre Dame. The Irish lost Adri Dantley to the pros and center Bill lambeur and guard Ber- nie Rencher to academic deficiencies. Bruce Flowers is the top returnee.

Two Southern Conference teams open against Division II foes. Davidson entertains Wofford while Furman begins its year at home versus Presbyterian.

Area-wise on the Division II and III level, Washington and Lee faces Western Maryland in 9 in the second game of the final night of the W&L Tip-Off. Hampden-Sydney goes against York in the 7 p.m. lidfifer.

Liberty Baptist meets Marantha in the Ten- nessee Temple Round Robin Classic while George Mason plays in the Elizabethtown College Classic in Seneca Falls, N.Y. At Virginia Wesley- an’s Tip-Off, the host team meets Shenandoah while Christopher Newport faces Wilmington. St. Paul’s debut at Hampton Institute and Warren Wilson goes to Clinic Valley, Ferrum College plays Wincage in the Loudoun Tourna- ment.