West Tailback
Getting Ready
For Tech Trial

By John Markon

For many of the performers in next weekend's state high school all-star football game, yesterday's pre-practice checkout session at the Robins Center signalled an end to idleness.

More than a month of no classes, summer jobs and the attendant opportunities for rest and relaxation had robbed a few of the stars of their in-season sleekness. For Scott Dovel, however, the change was minimal.

Dovel, a tailback from Lynchburg's E.C. Glass High who will play for the West in next Friday night's game at City Stadium, has been content to leave the search for soft dollars to others.

"Instead of working, I've been working out," said Dovel.

"Almost every day, me and [Virginia Tech halfback] Mickey Fitzgerald have been going over to Glass and using the track and the weights. When we want to take a break, we'll stop for a while and do something like play tennis."

It's in Dovel's best interests to stay as close to Fitzgerald as possible. In September, when Hokie coach Bill Dooley completes his lineup, Dovel hopes he'll still be only a few yards from his former high school teammate in the starting offensive backfield.

"Mickey's been really helpful about telling me things," said Dovel. "but one thing we never talk about is how well I stack up against the other tailbacks. When I get to Blacksburg, I'm sure I'll find out for myself."

Dovel, a 5-11, 180-pounder, has the credentials to inject himself into Tech's slightly crowded tailback picture. He played on two Western District title winners and rushed for more than 1,000 yards in each of last two seasons.

all but committed himself to North Carolina, where a coach named Bill Dooley was preparing the Tar Heels for a match with Nebraska in the Liberty Bowl.

It wasn't long, however, before Dooley had left Chapel Hill for Tech — a development that left Dovel more than a little uncertain. Georgia Tech was quick to enter the recruiting battle, followed closely by Dooley and assistant Tom Fletcher as representatives of the Hokies.

"It was really awkward at the start," said Dovel. "because Coach Fletcher and Coach Dooley were trying to sell me on a place I'd never considered. One of my best friends in Lynchburg was a Tech fan and had taken me to some of the games, but I'd never considered going there."

What eventually swayed Dovel was Dooley's talent for putting the Tar Heels into postseason play.

"Maybe we won't be big winners right away at Tech," said Dovel, "but we will eventually. I'm convinced of it."

In August, Dovel hopes to compete with veterans Kenny Lewis, Larry Fallen and Mike Romagnoli for duty at tailback. It's the traditional "glamor" spot in a Dooley offense and, at North Carolina, Dooley filled it with players like Don McCauley, Mike Voight and Amos Lawrence.

Scott Dovel
Summer Means Workouts

"That didn't have much to do with my choice," said Dovel. "I think I'm quick enough to play there, but, if I don't make it, I'll be trying just as hard to get into the lineup somewhere else. I'm going there to play."

Due perhaps to Dooley's late start in recruiting, this year's West squad does not have the "Team Tech" look to it that others did during the tenures of Jimmy Sharpe and Charlie Coffey.

Last year's West team contained seven Tech signees. This year's includes only Dovel, defensive back Rick Miles (Northside of Roanoke) and 6-4 tight end Henry Smith (George Washington of Danville).

"It'll be nice just to run behind big linemen again," said Dovel. "In my sophomore year at Glass [Fitzgerald's senior season] we went 11-1 and our line was so big that the guys on defense couldn't even see our backfield. That's the way I like it."