Gobblers’ New Offense

By JACK ROGACZYK
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BLACKSBURG — Just 24 hours before
beginning his final football season at Vir-
ginia Tech, quarterback David Lamie is
practicing less but enjoying it more.

Lamie, the subject of occasional boo-
birds last year as punchless Tech went 3-7-1
in Coach Jimmy Sharpe’s swansong, claims
he’s “finding” himself in the “I” formation
installed by new Coach Bill Dooley.

He’s also discovering himself in the
head coach’s office more often as the Gob-
blers prepare to open Saturday afternoon
at Lane Stadium against Tulsa.

“Practices are shorter now,” admitted
Lamie, recalling his junior season as a com-
parison. “But while we spend less time on
the field, we do just as much ... no, make
that even more, mentally.

“Every day, all the quarterbacks meet
with Coach Dooley in his office. We’ve dis-
cussed the game plan, and we’ll keep doing
every week. When classes start (Sept. 20),
we’ll just have to find a time everyone can
get together.

“I never talked with Coach Sharpe
much about the game plan. I did most of
my talking with Coach Nelson Stokley
(Sharpe’s offensive coordinator). This way,
I feel I’m talking to the main man.”

Lamie, a Bristol, Tenn., native and a
former quarterback in a split back veer of-
ference similar to the University of Houston’s
while at Tennessee High, could be the Gob-
blers’ main man himself.

While fans, writers, coaches and line-
backers are watching fallback Mickey Fitz-
gerald, Lamie will have more opportunity
to display his abilities in the “I” than he
did in the wishbone employed by Sharpe.

It’s all because of blocking schemes
and the thrust of the triple-option wishbone
attack. The son of a missiles systems plant
executive also claims he’ll more readily
throw the pass because of the sprint-out
characteristics prevalent in a properly op-
erated “I.”

“I like our new offense. I think it fits
my ability better,” said Lamie. “It’s also
important that this is the last time season
for me. Every day I go out there and prac-
tice, I realize the end is getting close.

“I think I’ll probably do more running
now than I did in the wishbone (Lamie ran
122 times for 288 yards last year) and I
think I’ll be more productive, too. The “I”
gets me out on the corner and I can throw
sprint out passes. I’ve never been a drop-
back passer.

“The wishbone offense gives you three
options, but you’re running right off the
corner. There’s a lot of confusion there,
with line backers stunting. The wishbone is
good if the fullback makes it go. That’s why
I think we were better the second half of
last season once Mickey was back there.

“Now, if we get by the defensive end,
we’ll make some yardage. And we’ve got
some good runners back there in Kenny
(Lewis, fallback) and Mickey.

Lamie, a business major, has been im-
pressed with Dooley’s organizational meth-
ods. “It’s unbelievable,” said the 21-year-
old quarterback. “In his 12 years of coach-
ing, it’s easy to see that he’s been organized
to the minute and even the second. ...

“The other day at the quarterback
meeting, Coach Dooley took out these
books and in there he had the practice
schedules for every day of his 11 years as
head coach. He could go back and trace
what his teams did at a certain time on a
certain day.”

Lamie says his final football season is
most important now, but he’s looking for-
ward to Christmas time and his family’s
vacation to Florida. “I’m going to get in
some golf down there,” said Lamie, a two-
handicap golfer who turned down college
scholarships in that sport to play Tech foot-
ball. “Then, I’m going to come back in the
spring and try out for the golf team. I hope
I can make it.”

Lamie hopes he can make it happen
this fall, too. “I’ve never been dejected be-
cause I’ve always kept trying,” he noted. “I
was disappointed about last season, but I
ever got down on myself because I did
the best I could.

“A lot of stuff that happened wasn’t
my fault, even though I took the blame.
Playing quarterback is a tough job, tougher
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Tech’s David Lamie

Lamie

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than most. You expect the heat and you
have to be ready to take it.”

GODDLEB GOSSEP: Tech Ticket Man-
ger Tom McNeer said a crowd in the
neighborhood of 29,000 is expected for Sat-
urday’s opener with Tulsa, which opened
last weekend by squeezing past Arkansas
State, 21-20. He added that between 800
and 1,000 students are expected for the
game. “If the students were back, we’d
have 32,000 or 33,000,” said McNeer ...

Tulsa will start 12 seniors, six juniors and
six sophomores in its top 24 including kick-
ing specialist Saturday. One spot sure to
be tested by the Golden Hurricane will be
linebacker, where Floyd County’s Lewis
Stuart and New Jersey native Ron Lunnich
are the only sophomores on the defensive
unit.

Tulsa has beaten Tech in two of three
meetings to date, including a 46-26 decision
in 1971. In that game, Tech’s Don Strock
and the Hurricane’s Todd Starls combined
for these passing statistics: 38 of 56 for 397
yards and three touchdowns. That type
of offensive fireworks should not be expected
Saturday. Tulsa threw just 11 times last
week.