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Gobblers' Paul Adams Shows New Peak Form

By CHARLES KARMOSKY
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A baseball career no longer is uppermost in the mind of Paul Adams. Football's No. 1 again.

That's great news for Virginia Tech and may serve as a warning to Wake Forest as the two teams today wind up heavy drills for their 1976 opener at Winston-Salem Saturday night.

Adams, a .338 hitter with home run power, entertained bright visions of a future in baseball, but since he wasn't tapped until the 27th round of the recent major league drafts, the veteran fullback has returned to the world of college football with renewed, linebusting vigor.

"He's really putting out," is the way one observer describes Adams' efforts since preseason practice started in Blacksburg, which would indicate the native of Dante, Va., will give fleet teammate Roscoe Coles stern competition for headliner attention in the upcoming campaign.

No doubt the vigorous drill-field output of Adams is a major reason why one of the game captains for Coach Jimmy Sharpe's squad against the Atlantic Coast Conference Deacons will be his starting fullback.

The Gobblers' other leader when Tech bids to triumph in a season-opener for the first time since 1967 will be standout defensive end Stuart "Stu" Patterson of Lynchburg.

Pairing off of Adams and Patterson in leadership roles may be another indicator of the high emotional pitch Sharpe seeks for his team despite a recent flurry of idling bumps and bruises that reduced scrimmage time drastically.

Wake Forest reportedly is at peak physically, but it now appears the Gobblers will be at least equally fit, with one worrisome exception.

Cornerback Henry Bradley, victimized by a broken foot last year, has been pained by soreness at the point of

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that break and is "a very doubtful starter." However, others with recently-listed minor hurts, such as quarterback Mitch Barnes, Mike Stallings, Bill Houseright and Tom Beasley, are expected to be sound against the Deacons.

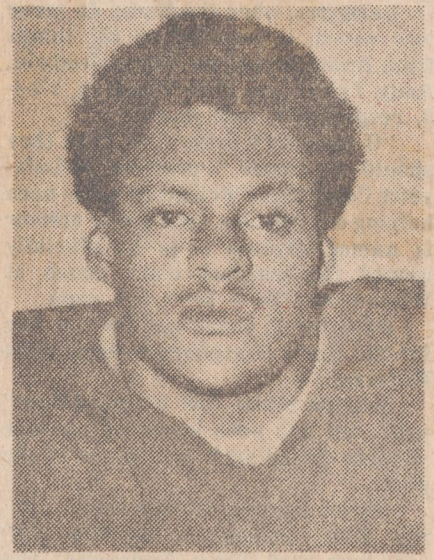
With that bright medical report, the Techmen will be looking to improvemts on past records other than snapping the season-opener jinx.

The Gobblers' sports information analysts have brought to light the dreary fact that September just hasn't been a good month. Over the past seven years Tech has managed to win only two games while dropping 18.

Besides relegating baseball to several notches below football, at least temporarily, there's another aspect of the practice showings of Adams that surely will be significant if Tech is to get off on the right foot.

It has just been revealed that the 220-pound workhorse only a few days ago relieved himself of a great burden when he completed Summer school work to put his eligibility on much sounder footing.

Thus relieved, Adams and George Heath give the Gobblers a highly regarded 1-2 punch at fullback which greatly broadens the versatility of their Wishbone offense.



FULLBACK PAUL ADAMS
"He's Really Putting Out"

Adams, of course, will start in a backfield comprised of Barnes, Coles and Chuck Nuttycombe, a fine blocker at right halfback from Newport News, but they'll have to function smoothly in high gear, because — if nothing else — Sharpe has voiced much respect for Wake Forest's offense potential.

When Chuck Mills took over the Deacons, the promised "Throw and Go" offense had a long way to go. In '76, though, it could produce its best results with two quarterbacks who are gifted passers and a multi-threat halfback named John Zeglinski who was rated in the top seven of six different categories on offense in the ACC.

So, while Saturday's 7:30 p.m. debut for both teams may have the earmarks of an all-out offense show, if Tech is to snap out of its long-suffered September doldrums the defense which is Sharpe's pride and joy will have to raise up and assert itself.