ACC group studies Va. Tech

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BLACKSBURG—A screening committee from the Atlantic Coast Conference is touring Virginia Tech athletic facilities and talking with officials today.

The committee, studying schools for possible admission into the ACC, will make a recommendation of its findings at the conference's spring meeting.

The visit was prompted by a formal application for conference admission by Tech officials.

However, Tech Athletic Director Frank Moseley said, "We have no idea about our chances for gaining admission to the Atlantic Coast Conference.

"They (the committee) will have to evaluate and screen. They have certain enumerated items to look for."

However, Moseley left few doubts as to what Tech's feeling would be should the ACC offer an invitation for the school to join and as the eighth team.

"I've always said we want to be a member of a conference," said Moseley. "The ACC is in a wonderful geographic area for Tech. We're sitting right in the middle of their territory.

"I feel good that they are considering us first. I think we would contribute to their conference. It would certainly help our program and the state of Virginia. But this (the visit) is purely a procedural matter."

While both football Coach Jimmy Sharpe and basketball Coach Charlie Moir were out of town and unavailable for comment, another spokesman pointed out some of the advantages for Tech if it gains ACC membership.

"It would give us seven great rivalries and an identity," said the spokesman, wishing to remain anonymous.

"It would also be a big help to recruiting," he added.

Tech was a member of the Southern Conference, but the Hokies left that group following the 1965 athletic season. Since then, Tech has pursued an independent course.

In previous years Tech has been mentioned with various ventures started by other independent teams. The latest was a basketball league composed entirely of university division teams in the state. But Tech showed no interest in this kind of an alignment and the league fell through.

Tech also was mentioned as a possibility in an all-sports conference involving such name schools as Memphis State, Florida State and Southern Mississippi. This failed to materialize.

The ACC, as expected, has been besieged by possible new members. East Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia Tech and Richmond are other schools that have expressed interest in hooking up with the ACC in past years.

Because of the interest and the fact that the ACC is only a seven-team league since the withdrawal of South Carolina in the early 70s, the conference devised a system to study possible expansion.