

## SEASON

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most ever for a Mountaineer, and broke assistant coach Ryan Hollifield's career record with 2,288 yards.

Senior wide receiver Kendrick Bell padded his pass-catching records which he set as a junior. He became the first KMHS receiver ever to have over 500 yards receiving (569 on 30 receptions) in a single season, and he ran his school-record career total to 80 catches for 1,361 yards.

As a team, the Mountaineers set records for most points (448), most yards rushing (3,920), most yards passing (1,325), most yards total offense (5,245) and most wins (14).

The defense also got into the record books with senior linebacker KeLee Thompson recording 189 tackles to break the old mark of 159 set just last year by Mark Roper.

"I feel good about the individuals, and especially the team for breaking records," Massey said.

The most important record, of course, was the 14 victories.

"I don't think a lot of people understand how hard it is to win 14 games in a season, especially when you look at the teams we played during the regular season and in the playoffs," he said. "Winning 14 games with a schedule like ours is a great accomplishment. I think our kids have learned how to win."

Although the Mountaineers lose a wealth of talented seniors off this year's team, Massey fully expects the winning to continue.

"We've got some outstanding juniors returning next year," he said. "We'll drop off a little bit

in talent, but I think with a good off-season there's no question that we can be just as successful as we were this year.

"I think there's a lot to be said for the seniors we had and the job they did," he continued. "A lot of them will have a future in college football hopefully."

Massey has placed football on the back burner momentarily to give his returning players an opportunity to enjoy the Christmas season. But soon after school resumes in January the team will be right back in the weight room working toward another successful season.

"I'll sit down with the staff and we'll throw around some ideas," he said. "The first thing we've got to start with is our off-season weight program which will be important to us the first two or three months next year.

"We're going to do some things a little bit different next year. We're going to let our rising seniors draft our underclassmen and have competition between them. They'll be awarded points by attendance, academic success at school, attendance in the weight room, and then when we test, how well they do on the test. We're going to try to make our seniors a little bit more involved in the instruction process of our younger players.

"Now, they are the leaders of our football team," he added. "Their role started on the Friday night after we lost the state championship. We'll evaluate personnel and this spring will probably visit some people and decide toward the end of the spring any changes we want to make with our offense and defense."

Massey credited his assistants, support personnel and fans for helping make this sea-



Kings Mountain High Coach Ron Massey has prays with his team after 33-28 loss to Winston-Salem Carver in state championship game in Chapel Hill.

son an enjoyable one that will be remembered for years to come.

"A lot of thanks goes to the people behind the scenes," he said. "Donnie Mace volunteers his time to do our equipment, and I also appreciate the chain gang and all other volunteers who showed up at the games and continued doing their roles.

"Frankie Webster and Sandra Bumgardner had a tremendous burden trying to keep up with tickets during the playoffs. Our faculty was very supportive. Our other coaches were very supportive. I think we've got a very close knit group of coaches at Kings Mountain, and a lot of thanks goes out to them for

their support.

"Our administration always worked with us and provided a lot of things it takes to have a successful program.

"We appreciate Carl Champion allowing us to have one of the largest crowds ever at Kenan Stadium by getting those buses for us. People like Keith Falls and Todd Cloninger and the Booster Club made sure our kids were fed when they needed to be fed.

"I thought Julie Rikard and the cheerleading staff did a tremendous job creating school spirit with the students. I'm probably leaving somebody out. There are a lot of people that did a lot behind the scenes

that helped us be successful, and I very much appreciate the City of Kings Mountain for the reception they gave the kids when they came back from Chapel Hill.

"I'd like to thank all the fans who came to the games in a positive manner and appreciated the effort that our kids gave.

"It's hard to accept not winning the state championship when we came so close, but I think the thing that you appreciate more than anything over the last few years - and especially this year - is that we saw a lot of young men understand what it takes to be successful. And I think they'll carry that characteristic into life."

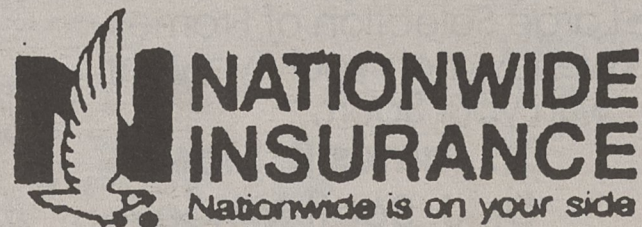
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