

## Season Recap

### Raiders Battle To The End

On the most basic, foundational level it was the simple bounce of a ball that altered the course of a season and set in motion the comparisons to lessons learned in life. Seasons begin and seasons end. Every team that began their march to a coveted prize, including those that will realize the goal, will not have a high school football game to play the following week. The season will have ended. That time has come for the 2024 South Point Red Raiders. And it came too soon for a group so deserving of the acclaim that comes with a state championship trophy. This team of Red Raiders stood out on the gridiron, setting themselves apart by claiming South Point's 23rd conference football championship. They battled to the end of every contest. And while there may not be an additional piece of tangible hardware to proudly display in the trophy case this year, there has been something gained for which the value cannot be measured. It is a worthy award that will never tarnish but will rather carry on and be called upon whenever young men become old men. It will house some of their fondest memories and reignite a passion and pride which describes a special time in their lives when they positively contributed to something much larger than themselves. It will reassure them that they have been a part of a strong and proud tradition, the likes of which become more and more rare as the years pass. It is an award with many branches as it will touch so many aspects of their lives. This valuable award, that has no equal, is the Heart of a Champion. The scoreboard was not in favor of the Big Red last Friday night, but the numbers on display would have fallen far short of defining the character of this team. Rather the true measure was seen in the aftermath, when teammates shed tears and voiced their appreciation for one another. The term "hugs" seems to diminish the expression of love each showed to the other. Instead, it was with one heart that these teammates tightly "embraced", to say that the tie that binds them to this place and to each other will never be broken. No better example could support the truth that "it's not about the destination; it's about the journey."

We will get through the pain, a brighter day will come, and we will, at the appropriate time, begin another journey with a team that shares a single focus and a common goal. But for now, we express our gratitude to those Seniors who represented this school and this community in a manner that keeps this program and tradition standing proud. Thank you, Chris Stowe, Garrett Tidd, Dalton Skipper, Chayne Ford, Eric Forston, and Wyatt Moore. Your hard work continued a mark of high expectations set for those who follow and aspire to someday run where you have run. Thank you, Kenyon Dunlap, Josh Crawford-White, Gavin Gibson, Nathan Nguyen, Colin Drumm, and Zolan McCollough. You have embodied the true spirit of what it means to be a Red Raider and have displayed the attitude necessary to be a part of this proud program. Thank you, Tommy Choa, David Bray, Luke Lassiter, Luke Wesolowski, and Quentin Smith. Your

dedication and devotion to South Point football ensures the tradition continues. These Seniors, whose recorded names forever link them to South Point football history, become a part of a bigger team. The South Point Red Raider Team!

Sometimes the bounce of a ball can trigger disappointing events and force painful reflection of what might have been. Life's lessons can be hard. And they can be harder when learned on a football field. But pains subside and are replaced by fond memories. The 2024 season has ended for South Point football, far sooner than was deserved. But the efforts of a group of young men who became a Team and gained the Hearts of Champions ensures that a proud football tradition will continue.

Go Big Red!