

## Victory Bell Tradition was started by Tressel

Massillon embraces their traditions. One of the favorites started in 1957 when Massillon head coach Lee Tressel purchased a railroad bell to be exchanged back and forth between the winner of the Massillon-Canton McKinley game each year.

Massillon controlled the bell for the first nine years. McKinley finally got to keep the bell for a year when they knocked off the Tigers in 1966.

Since then the bell's been passed back and forth be-

tween the schools an amazing 19 times.

When the playoffs began in 1972, a decision had to be made about what to do

with the bell when the two teams meet in the playoffs. The decision was made that the winner of the regular season game keeps the bell regardless of who wins the playoff game.

The victory bell has become a very important symbol for players, coaches, cheerleaders and fans alike.

It becomes all the more im-



*Maria Protos and Obie (Dick Fink) ring the victory bell and display a Massillon championship flag in 1972.*

## A CENTURY OF HEROES

portant when one school establishes a winning streak in the series.

The love of the bell became so pervasive that during McKinley Week when Canton held the bell, the Massillon cheerleader used to cheer, “We want our bell back. We we want our bell back.”

The longest streak for keeping the bell was Massillon’s initial reign. Since then neither team has kept the bell more than four straight years—a testimony to the fierce rivalry

between the two schools.

Willie Spencer, Jr. learned the importance of the Victory Bell during his senior season in 1994 when the Tigers played the Bulldogs in the 100th game.



*The Victory Bell was rather non-descript in 1961. McKinley’s bulldog appears to be protecting the bell in this photograph. Today the bell gets a new coat of paint and elaborate graphics every time it changes hands.*

“Up until that point I didn’t think that much of it. But after that game, Coach (Steve) Studer and I sprinted across the field and we both grabbed the bell and brought it back over on the Massillon sideline. It felt great. It brought tears to my eyes.