

Settle Returns to NC as Panthers' RB Coach

Written by Mike Flynn
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John Settle, the second-leading rusher in Appalachian State University history and one of only four ASU players to have his number retired, has returned to North Carolina as running backs coach for the Carolina Panthers, the National Football League organization announced on Friday.

Settle, who graduated as Appalachian's all-time leading rusher with 4,409 yards from 1983-86, most recently served as the running backs coach at the University of Wisconsin since 2006. Prior to his five-season stint at Wisconsin, he coached for eight years in a similar capacity at Fresno State University (1998-2005).

Settle's successful coaching career began at his alma mater, assisting with ASU's running backs in 1994. He then spent three seasons (1995-97) as an offensive assistant with the Cleveland Browns/Baltimore Ravens.

The Reidsville, N.C. native was a two-time all-American and the 1986 Southern Conference Offensive Player of the Year and 1986-87 SoCon Male Athlete of the Year while becoming ASU's all-time leading rusher under current Texas head coach Mack Brown (1983) and VMI head coach Sparky Woods (1984-86). Despite having his career rushing record broken by Kevin Richardson in 2007 (4,804 yds.), Settle still holds 15 school records and was the first player in program history to have his jersey number retired when his No. 23 was retired prior to his final regular-season game in 1986.

Despite not being drafted, Settle enjoyed a productive six-year NFL career, playing four seasons for the Atlanta Falcons and two with the Washington Redskins. He became the first undrafted 1,000-yard rusher in NFL history en route to earning a Pro Bowl invitation with the Falcons in 1988. In 1991, he earned a Super Bowl championship ring with the Redskins.

Ironically, Settle will coach in Carolina under first-year head coach Ron Rivera, who was on the same staff as ASU alum Steve Wilks the past two seasons with the San Diego Chargers and in 2006 with the Chicago Bears.