

Add-ins

This was an incredible season...

Starting off with spectacular, if frustrating, efforts against Notre Dame and Miami, now the number 1 and number 2 teams in the nation...

Bouncing back to win the Big Ten championship in the face of injury after injury...

And what can I say about your game down in Columbus... that gutsy performance late in the fourth quarter is what Michigan football is all about!!!

And now the Rose Bowl!!!!

The University of Michigan has many

important traditions that make this institution the place it is...

and among the most visible and most important is the role of intercollegiate athletics at Michigan...

The University is extremely proud

of its athletic teams...

i) As our Dean of Medicine puts it, he wants to build a Medical School our Football Team can be proud of...

ii) Michigan is unique in its combination of world-class academic programs...and its winning tradition in athletics...

...If you compare the two top ten lists...

the top ten universities in academic quality...

and the top ten athletic programs in football...

You will find only one name on both lists...Michigan.

iii) Yet, as important as winning is, we are also proud of our programs for their integrity...their class.

iv) And of course, we have long taken great pride in having the nation's leading football coach... Bo Schembechler...and the superb coaching staff he leads...

v) But perhaps of most importance of all is the way in which Bo and his coaches dedicate themselves first and foremost to the education of the student-athletes who don the maize and blue.

Michigan belief:

Athletic competition can play an important role in our fundamental mission: education

While it is customary to think of a college education in terms of classes and labs, we believe it goes beyond that.

The experiences encountered in athletics provide our students with marvelous opportunities to develop qualities so important later in life: dedication, commitment, integrity, leadership.

At Michigan, we always place primary emphasis on the first word in the term "student-athlete"

While Bo and his staff are outstanding coaches, to be sure, we view them as well as some of our most gifted educators, teaching our student-athletes some of the most important lessons of life...lessons every bit as lasting as those we teach in the classroom or laboratory.

The role of intercollegiate athletics

We understand the dedication and commitment required to balance the demands of inter-

collegiate athletics with the demands of a Michigan education.

A Michigan education is challenging enough, without the additional pressures of participation in one of the nation's leading athletic programs.

But, I suspect that later in life most of our athletics look back upon their experience at Michigan as providing an extraordinary education, in the most complete sense of the word.

It has sometimes been said that the purpose of a college education is to learn the art of life... And, in this, you as student athletes may have a certain edge, since most of you are benefiting from a full-range of experiences on our campus, from the intellectual to the athletic to the cultural...

And the University is indeed proud

of the team and its coaches for the way in which they faced these challenges... and the way in which they continued the great tradition of Michigan Football.

Teamwork

Academic institutions are profoundly people-dependent
Hence, the key to excellence -- whether in the classroom, the lab, or on the field, is to attract and retain the most outstanding students, faculty, and staff, and then provide them with the environment and encouragement to push to the limits of their abilities...and then get out of the way!

We strive to build a culture
Which stresses excellence, achievement, and excitement...which removes constraints from talented people and encourages them to "go for it"!

But you as athletes know that something more is needed...for individual achievement will never, by itself, produce a winner.

Excellence requires coming together as a team... or in a more general sense, as a community.

This is as true in the classroom or laboratory!□s it is on the field.

It is both a challenge...yet also an important theme of the modern university to search for ways to unite us through shared values and goals this institution.

The Rose Bowl Tradition

I suppose it is something in the very nature of a university that causes us to continually ask the questions about our values, our goals, our priorities...

What are we?...what do we strive to become?...

Interestingly enough, I suspect that if one were to go through one of Bo's talks to his team with a highlighter, you would get some pretty good ideas...

Words...

Pride...in institutions and in one's self
Sacrifice for others...for the team
Dedication to the achievement of excellence
A disdain for mediocrity

Courage, confidence,...

Leadership...

Integrity, honesty,
Quality, Class....

It is certainly true that intercollegiate athletics can provide students with a marvelous opportunity to develop those qualities so important in later life...particularly when led by inspiring and enlightened coaches such as Bo Schlembecher

But it can do more, for these programs also serve as models not simply for the university community, but for many others throughout their society...

How many youngsters dream of the day they could play in the Rose Bowl...and learn from others the qualities necessary to get there?

And how many of us as adults tend to identify with these teams ...sharing their thrill in victory...and suffering with them through defeat.

Football...indeed, all intercollegiate athletics...is a game, to be sure... but it is also a remarkable model of life...and those factors which lead to a program's long term success are also the factors which prepare young men and women for life itself!

While it is important that we always keep it in perspective...that we always place primary emphasis on the first word in "student-athlete"... it is also important that we acknowledge that the lessons that Coach Schembechler and his colleagues teach to the young men who don the maize and blue of Michigan are some of the most important lessons of life...lessons every bit as important as those we teach in the classroom or laboratory...