

Football Bust

It is my pleasure this evening to

represent the Executive Officers of the University...and to convey on their behalf our congratulations for the achievements of the team this season.

To be sure, this was a season

characterized by unusual challenge and adversity...yet even in challenge is an opportunity to learn and grow...
When I used to train for distance races, I always had this quote by Nietzsche on my wall: "Pain always makes you stronger". (In my case, it didn't...)

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.

The University is extremely proud

of its intercollegiate athletic program... oh, certainly for its success; its winning tradition... perhaps even more for its integrity... but most of all for the way in which those who lead it, Don Canham, Bo Schembechler, and all of our other coaches dedicate themselves first and foremost to the education of the young men and women 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.

Just one final word...

During halftime of the Ohio State game, the Michigan Marching Band spelled out on the field a name that has come to symbolize excellence in intercollegiate athletics:
Canham...

Since Don will be stepping down next spring,

I wanted to use this opportunity to convey both congratulations for his extraordinary accomplishments as athlete, coach, and athletic director at Michigan... and to convey as well our immense pride in what he has done both for Michigan athletics...and for intercollegiate athletics across this nation.

If I had to use one word to describe the

Canham era at Michigan, it would be the word "class".

Don has set a standard for excellence

at Michigan that has rightfully earned the respect of this nation.

The University owes him a deep debt of

gratitude and respect.

In conclusion, just let me offer my

contratulations once again...to the players, coaches, trainers, and all of those who have made Michigan football the class act in intercollegiate athletics today.

We look forward to January 2nd in Florida