

## **Athletes Reception**

### **Welcome**

Anne and I would like to welcome you...  
as student athletes  
coaches, trainers, cheerleaders  
as faculty mentors, counselors, staff  
and all of the others who work so  
hard to sustain the Michigan  
tradition of excellence in  
athletics

Let me also express our welcome and  
appreciation to the Regents,  
Executive Officer, Deans, and other  
faculty and administrators who have  
joined us this afternoon...

We tried our best to avoid scheduling  
conflicts...but Michigan athletes  
are involved in so many activities,  
that this was impossible.

However, we did rearrange times a bit  
to allow those of you with tickets  
plenty of time to make it down to  
Chrysler Arena...

### **Explanation**

Anne and I thought it would be appropriate  
to host such an event for two  
principal reasons:

- i) First, to honor the student-athletes  
of the University...for your  
remarkable dedication and  
achievements, both on the field  
and in the classroom...  
(for at Michigan we always place  
the emphasis on the first word  
in the term student-athlete)
- ii) Second, to use this as an opportunity  
to stress in a highly visible manner  
that we view all of you, your teams,  
and your efforts as a very important part  
of this exciting academic community  
that comprises the University of  
Michigan.

Let me comment briefly on each of these  
points...

### **Theme 1: Pride...**

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  
participate in intercollegiate athletics, the  
student-athletes, the coaches and staff,  
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.

While we certainly have some of the nation's finest coaches, we also believe that many of our coaches also happen to be some of the most gifted educators on our campus... and teach you as student-athletes some of the most important lessons you will learn at this University...lessons every bit as lasting as those our other faculty members teach in the classroom or laboratory.

We understand the dedication and commitment required to balance the demands of inter-collegiate athletics with the demands of a Michigan education.

But, I suspect that later in life most of you will look back upon your experience at Michigan as providing you with 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...

### **Theme 2: A Sense of Community**

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 as 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.

For that reason, we are convinced that we must look for experiences beyond the academic process to bring people together...to establish new bonds of friendship and understanding.

Today's reception is an important part of our efforts to bring us together...

We hope that you have a chance to meet other

student-athletes and coaches this afternoon...

### **Concluding Points**

#### Introductions

In keeping with this theme of coming together and getting to know one another better, we have been joined this afternoon by many of the leaders of the University

#### Regents

Tom Roach  
Deane Baker

#### Executive Officers

Deans

#### Faculty

Judge Geraldine Ford, President of  
UM Alumni Association

Encourage you to wander around and try to meet some of these people...

Actually, many of these other guests are also athletes of one-type or another...

Some of us are has-been athletes...

For example, I'm an ex-football player and Anne is an ex-cheerleader...

Some of us even continue to participate in one way or another in some form of athletics...whether jogging or tennis or skiing or golf...

And, while we certainly don't have the ability or skills of most of you students, I think it fair to say that we certainly understand and appreciate the effort and dedication it takes to achieve excellence on the field...just as we admire your ability to also achieve excellence in the classroom and laboratory.

#### Thanks...

Also thank Music School...and note  
Dance Department

Thank Housing Division...

Most important of all, I would like to thank my wife, Anne, who not only had the original idea for this event, but who also designed and managed the incredible logistics to bring it off...

### **Final Remarks**

In conclusion, just us offer our congratulations once again...to the players, coaches, trainers, and all of those who have made Michigan the class act in intercollegiate athletics today.