

Go Blue M Club Supports You

It is one of the most recognizable and exciting game day entrances in sports: The pregame tradition of Michigan football players racing out of the tunnel onto the field in Michigan Stadium and leaping into the air to touch the “Go Blue M Club Supports You” banner while the Marching Band plays “The Victors.”

“The Banner” as it has come to be known, measures 30’ x 4’ and has been at the center of this tradition at Michigan football games since 1962, when the then 1-5 Wolverines decided to shake things up. To show support for the struggling team, on the Friday practice before the 1962 homecoming game against Illinois, the “M” Club assembled a group of letterwinners from other sports to form two lines in a makeshift “flag tunnel” for the players to run through after practice, using a simple maize block M on a six-foot wide strip of fabric. Head coach Bump Elliott liked how his players reacted and gave permission for the athletes to come back the next day and usher the players onto the field at Michigan Stadium. The Wolverines won the game, and a tradition was born.

In the 1970’s there were two separate incidents involving the Ohio State Buckeyes, in which players and coaches attempted to co-opt or destroy The Banner. Given this history, The Banner is stored under lock and key in an undisclosed location in Crisler arena.

Today, The Banner is an integral part of Michigan Football tradition, as is the support Michigan non-football letterwinners show for the team on-field as they unfurl The Banner and cheer on the players. Perhaps it is this rich history of athletes supporting one another that is at the heart of a brand new tradition involving The Banner - unfurling banners of various sizes with the same message at non-football events.

The Letterwinners M Club, an organization of former Michigan varsity athletes and steward of The Banner, has begun working with other Michigan varsity teams to raise it at non-football events as a way of incorporating this football tradition into different sports. So far The Banner has made appearances at swimming, track & field, cross country, and wrestling.

In the words of Jabrill Peppers, former Michigan safety and current New England Patriot, “When you just run out and touch that banner you just know it’s game time now. You’re doing it for all who’ve come before you and all who are going to come after you.”

Want to experience all the Banner has to offer? The Letterwinners M Club has a banner experience, check our site for more information.

