Good evening. My name is Tim Grimm and I have had the pleasure of working in many capacities in support of North Football for fifteen seasons. I started out as an officer in the Booster Club and then moved on to develop the website www.nhsrecords.com – the online repository for all of the Huskies exploits and records in both football and basketball. Since 2008 I have been North's official statistician for both sports.

I'm the guy who has done the research and history in order put together the record books. This is my ninth time to have the pleasure of addressing the North football family at the post season banquet.

It's been my experience to witness the adventures of many North football teams over the years. In 2016 I felt it was my great pleasure to see first-hand the results of many seasons of youth football at "the new school" begin to bear fruit.

I say this because this was the first ball club composed of players who had the opportunity to spend their formative years as well as their varsity seasons out here amongst the fields surrounding Bundrandt Stadium. For those of us who remember 8th grade football games played on "the dirty ground" of the Old North facility with four rows of splintery bleachers and watching as players stumbled over the baseball field's second and third base anchors, the change is remarkable.

It's remarkable in that we now have a program full of players raised with greater expectations. Where once we perceived ourselves as underdogs, we now have a program stocked with players AND parents who believe in themselves.

The 2016 Huskies exemplified that belief.

Coming off a 2015 season in which the spirit lagged as the season wore on, this team this season was notable for the atmosphere of hope and belief that permeated the entire program. The spirit of these Huskies was boundless and their belief that they could go toe-to-toe with the best the SIAC had to offer was on display from the opening moments of the season.

Looking back at opening night at Bob Clements Field in Terre Haute, there was the 'bend but don't break' philosophy of the defense that played itself out over an entire season. The Braves of Terre Haute South began their first drive at the North 46. They hammered away at the young, untested Husky defense and those eleven young men rallied around their captain and leader in the middle of the defense.

On eight plays the Braves contended with **Cage Street** as he put on a display of fire and ice. I say fire because he recorded tackles on six of those eight plays as South made their way to the six yard line. His savage tackle for loss on first and goal followed by solid play by **Eric McClain** at end brought up fourth and goal from the 16. I say ice because **Cage** coldly calculated where he needed to be and when on the ensuing field goal attempt and blocked the kick.

The next several possessions on offense made a similar statement about the 2016 North offense. Behind an offensive line that consisted of tight end **Reid McIntire**, tackles **Hunter Garrett** and **Evan Gallaty**, guards **Gavin Vaughn** and **Evan Fehd**, and center **Evan Stroud**, the Huskies gave notice to the rest of the conference that they could score in a broad variety of ways. First the Green and White pounded out a twelve play 79 yard drive that featured 11 runs and finished with a 25 yard field goal. The evidence of a stout running game was apparent from that moment.

The next two possessions showed that we could be explosive. Sophomore **AJ Wheeler** came off the bench and on his first play executed a screen pass to **D'amonte Sylvain**. **Sylvain** lit 'the after burners' and went 60 yards for a score.

On the Huskies very next offensive play**, Sean Coane** dropped back to pass and rocketed a pass down the right hand sideline to **Daniel Sellers** for a 57 yard "bomb" and seven points.

Yes, you could say North's attitude had changed from 2015. These Huskies knew they could stop you and they could run over you. There was a return of a certain swagger to the organization that this class brought with it.

Perhaps there was no better example of this 'swagger' than the second quarter performance of **Sean Coane** against Broad Ripple.

Consider this—the first time he touched the ball in the second quarter he ran 26 yards for a touchdown, the second time he carried the ball he went 34 yards for another score, the third time he ran he went 29 yards to the 8 yard line, and his fourth touch went the final eight yards to paydirt.

When the offense was cooking, it could score on any team in the league.

The Huskies opened up a 14 point lead on Memorial when **Daniel Sellers** broke a reverse for a 40 yard gain. He broke two tackles and danced and rambled down the sideline to the 26. A couple plays later he snagged a third down pass near the goal line and rolled over a defender into the end zone.

The Huskies possessed both grace and power in equal amounts.

Perhaps the high water mark of the season came in the first half of “the track meet” with Harrison.

North walked onto the field a 17 point underdog in the game according to the Evansville Courier’s editorial staff.

Perhaps they underestimated the heart of this Husky ball club.

They certainly underestimated the heart of **Sean Coane**.

He returned the opening kickoff 37 yards and then ran 37 yards on his first play from scrimmage. When the drive stalled **Nem Gvozdic** nailed a 38 yard field goal to spot North a 3-0 lead.

When the Warriors answered with a score, **Coane** returned the next kickoff to the 38 yard line. He then ran 50 yards on his next carry from scrimmage to set up a score that returned the lead to North.

Harrison put up another score and again chose to kickoff to **Coane**. He returned the ball out near midfield and then ran 48 yards for a touchdown to yet again give North the lead.

When the defense held the Warriors and forced a punt, **Coane** returned that kick 21 yards to the Harrison 44.

In total, in one quarter of football, **Sean** ran for 146 yards, passed for another 12, and returned kicks for an additional 95. He garnered 253 all-purpose yards and led the Huskies to a 17-14 lead against a state ranked team in just one quarter of play.

There were many players on this ball club who played with great “heart”. One of those players who ‘grew up’ on the turf at Bundrandt Stadium began his career as a quarterback. I remember watching him as the smallest player on the field as a seventh grader doing battle against much bigger players and holding his own.

Zach Martin “grew into” a 5’10” ball player but he never lost that heart of a lion that he possessed. As a cub and jayvee player he always exemplified that young man who was always looking for a way to win. Despite moving to receiver for his senior season, he kept evolving as that player his teammates could count on to do what was needed when it needed to be done.

One example of this came in the second half against Bosse with the Huskies trailing 13-10. A North drive stalled inside the ten and the team lined up for a field goal that would tie the score. The snap came to **Martin** as the holder on the play and with perfect execution he surprised everyone on the defense and everyone in the stands by tossing a shovel pass to **AJ Wheeler** . **Wheeler** slid through the interior of the defense and North had a lead it would never relinquish in a 24-19 win.

That Bosse contest gave rise to a number of players on defense who 'came of age' in that game. A series of unexpected events led to the Bulldogs running nearly thirty plays in the fourth quarter. Most defenses could be expected to 'wear down' having to be on the field that much that late in a game.

Not these Huskies.

Early in the period, Bosse looked poised to break out as they gained a first down near midfield. Junior **Andrew Hendrickson** shot through from his linebacker position and threw a runner for a loss. Sophomore **Andrew Routh** then sacked the quarterback for a loss on second down. Junior **Eric McClain** followed up that sack with another and the threat was ended.

As was the case for the last several years, however, it was **Cage Street** who had the final word in that fourth quarter that seemed to last forever. After the Bulldogs recovered an onside kick and looked as though they might regain the lead in the final minute, **Street** fell back into pass coverage and intercepted a Bosse pass at the 30 yard line and returned it well into Bulldog territory to end the threat and preserve the victory.

The 2016 Huskies possessed a core group of seniors who excelled at the highest levels of their game. It also contained a number of underclassmen who look to bolster the future. I have mentioned some of those sophomores and juniors above and there are others like sophomore **Braylen Neighbors** and junior **Caleb Hague** who appear to add to the nucleus that will insure great things for North in season's to come.

This night, however, typically belongs to the Seniors and I would be remiss if I didn't devote the last few minutes recognizing their efforts.

Senior **Daniel Sellers** ends his career with 39 receptions, 505 receiving yards, and five receiving touchdowns. All three of those numbers rank in the top 20 All-time for North football and he would like have finished higher if not for a knee injury.

Zach Martin's 32 receptions in 2016 are good for eighth best in a single season by a Husky.

Perhaps one of the biggest reasons for the season's improved results can be laid at the feet of several basketball players who ventured onto the gridiron for their senior season. **D'amonte Sylvain** proved to be multi-talented on offense and defense. He averaged over six yards per carry rushing the ball with 215 yards on 34 carries and a whopping 24 yards per catch on four receptions. Down the stretch, he moved to defense and played cornerback and racked up three tackles for losses.

Courtland Darrett displayed a nose for the ball on defense as he recovered a pair of fumbles and intercepted a pair of passes. He finished fifth on the team in tackles with 32 and was consistently matched up with every opponent's best receiver.

No stranger to the football field, **Tyreak Cogdell** proved to be a player who could catch lightning-in-a-bottle. He caught 11 passes for 155 yards and a pair of scores. He dashed 54 yards on a touchdown run and 'turned the field around' against Central with a 53 yard catch.

As the season wore into its final games, it was the defense that seemed to grow with each contest.

While McClain and Hendrickson manned the outside edges of the eight man front, it was the interior of the defense that bore the brunt of most opponent's attacks. In the interior, **Kaleb McTier**, **Gavin Meffert**, **Jimmy Hoing**, and **Braden Huber** toiled where the lights shine dimmest. Down in the dirt and in the trenches, this group battled to keep opponent linemen from reaching the linebackers.

And trust me, the linebackers were plenty for opponents to worry about.

Inside linebacker **Adra Armstead** finished up his career with nearly 70 tackles (6 for loss) to his credit over two seasons as a starter. His solid presence in the middle allowed his partner to range free and wide in pursuit of opponents. **Adra** held down the middle of the defense.

He did that in support of a player who can only be described as a once-in-a-generation defender. Captain **Cage Street** just completed what has to rank in the annals of North history as one of the greatest careers ever. It is unfortunate that the team's won-loss record doesn't reflect the glory of what

he accomplished on the field—his efforts truly belong in the same discussion with what All-Time great Deke Cooper accomplished at North.

Street had no fewer than five games in his career in which he recorded twenty tackles. No one else has more than one such game in the record book. He broke the career record for most unassisted solo tackles in a career and he did it with five games to spare in his senior season. He broke a 36 year old record for solo unassisted tackles in a season. He blocked eight kicks, intercepted four passes, caused a handful of fumbles and recovered four more. He recorded 38 tackles for loss in his career, no one else has half as many. He sacked quarterbacks nine times.

His name belongs in that pantheon of North greats that graces the All-Time teams.

As great a season as Street had, he had his equal of offense in **Sean Coane**. The 'swiss-army-knife' of football players, there was no position that **Coane** was uncomfortable at. I can offer no higher praise than to say that he resembled former North great **Chase Whitler** in his ability to provide his team whatever it needed it wherever it needed it anywhere on a football field.

Coane finished his career ranked 8th on the All-Time rushing list with 2,169 yards gained. His 353 carries also ranks 8th as does his average gain of 6.1 yards per carry. **Sean's** 2969 yards of career total offense ranks just ahead of **Deke Cooper** for 8th on that list as well. Eleven times in his career he rushed for 100 or more yards—a total that ranks fourth on the All-Time list.

Beyond the rushing yards, **Coane's** accomplishments with a football in his hand include scores from all over the field and an uncanny ability to give his team premium field position. He returned kicks for touchdowns and averaged over 23 yards per kickoff return and an amazing 22 yards per punt return. As a punter he averaged over 34 yards per kick and put over 33 percent of his kicks inside the opponent's 20 yard line. As a junior, he also started at cornerback on defense and finished fourth in tackles, tied for the lead in interceptions, recovered a pair of fumbles, and tackled four runners for loss.

Both he and **Stree**t combined to give the 2016 Huskies the star-power that made them competitive in nearly every game they played. Their careers stand as witness to the direction this program is heading and proof of the results that a strong booster club organization can provide. North athletes are arriving at the varsity level well equipped to compete with the best in the city and it's thanks to the efforts of everyone in this room. There is reason to believe better results will follow.

And now it is my pleasure to introduce to you **Coach Brett Szabo** to continue the Awards ceremony.