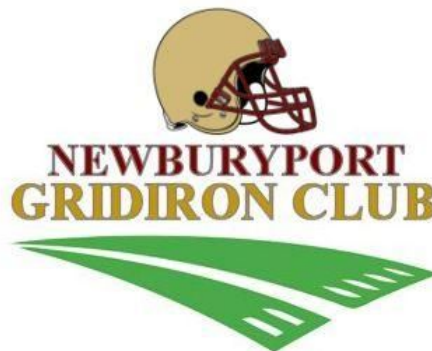


The Newburyport Gridiron Club Newsletter

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President's Note

By: Steve Lapham; Gridiron Club President (NHS Class of 98')

Hello Clipper faithful! As we transition from the school year into summer break, we shift our focus toward the most important period of our year. The summer is when the players and coaches prepare for the 2018 season and where the Gridiron Club does their best to execute yet another golf tournament. In order to raise as much money as possible to help our 2018 Clippers be as successful as they can be.

The 1st Annual Tom Smolski Memorial Tournament was a fantastic event and we look forward to continuing that tradition this year on July 13 at Apple Hill Golf Club. Former players are encouraged to reach out and put together foursomes of their teammates. Current parents, former parents, friends of the program, work colleagues, or simply those who like to play golf are welcome to play. It's a great day to reminisce about not only your playing days, but also about all of your memories as a Clipper in training throughout youth sports.

We look forward to seeing you all at the tournament and then at the Stehlin Field at World War Memorial Stadium this fall in support of the 2018 Clipper football team.

In closing, I'd like to give my gratitude and my best wishes to the outgoing seniors who wore the Crimson and Olde Gold for the last time on Thanksgiving with a decisive 27-0 victory over Amesbury. Best of luck in your future endeavors and welcome to the ranks of the Clipper Alumni.

Onward, Forward!

Steve Lapham

Class of '98

News and Events

The Newburyport Gridiron Club's 17 annual golf tournament will be held on **Friday July 14th, 2017** at Apple Hill Golf Club. We have had some very loyal alumnus and regular contributors to this event for many years now. As a program we constantly remind sponsors and contributors of the need for funding outside of our athletics stipend.

Over the years, the money raised from this tournament and through donations has provided our program with proper equipment and supplies to better the experience, safety and success of our team. Some of the purchases credited to these contributions are:

Pre-season camps. This was the first time Newburyport participated in the 7 on 7 tournament and the lineman challenge. These programs and camps are not cheap and the Clippers participants were sponsored by the Gridiron Club.

Training Chutes, which is a piece of equipment used in practice to promote proper body position and technique.

New jerseys and uniforms: Many people often comment how NHS always seems to have new uniforms and this is thanks to the Gridiron Club. These uniforms take a beating each season and the rips, wear and tear comes at a cost.

These funds also allow our program to have these uniforms sent out for cleaning and repair each week, so you parents can be thankful that after a mud or rain soaked game, these sweaty, dirty, wet and stained uniforms are not coming home to your laundry room. This cleaning process also controls the outbreak of *staph infection* within our locker room (which is a serious problem in some athletic locker rooms).

The Gridiron has also purchased new camera equipment for filming games, including a telescoping end zone camera.

Also for game use, the Gridiron replaced the old headsets for on field communication and updated with state of the art all weather headsets for improved communication.

The Gridiron Club was one of the key sponsors for the end of the season break up dinner last year and continued to sponsor one of the annual awards for ‘character, clipper pride and quality play’ with the Gridiron Award.

Lastly, the Gridiron funds helped pay for spirit wear, shorts, shirts and gear that we outfit players with. These are just a few examples of how this money is spent and it is important to know that the needs are ongoing, so thank you for your support and please continue to help and spread the word.

Team News: The 2017 Clippers

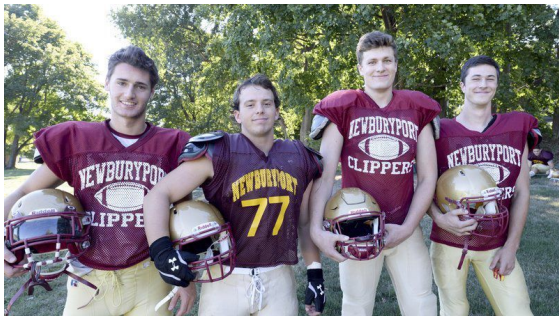
(Right: One of the incoming 2017 Captains. Senior Myles Maloof)



The Clipper squad came into last season with high expectations and for the first time in awhile, a very balanced league. On any given Friday, any team was capable of victory. A 4-6 record comes off as a bit of a disappointment, however, provides incentive and fuel for returning players.

We will again see great parody in the league and a demanding schedule with the race to five (needing a high number of quality wins within the first five games to have a good seeding in the playoffs). There is good veteran leadership and hopes are high for a successful campaign.

Meet this year's incoming Captains



NHS Captain: Connor Smith

(pictured 3rd L/R) - Pos: OL/DL

A three year starter for the Clippers, Connor is an imposing figure on the

NHS line. As a lineman, Connor does not make his living on the statistics sheet; although, he did lead the team in TFL last year as part of a defense recognized by the Daily News as the best front 7 in the area. Connor also got credit for his ability to play multiple positions in a complex scheme on the offensive side of the ball.

NHS Captain: Myles Maloof

Pos: RB/ DB



Myles is also a three year starter for the Clippers and has been 'Mr. Everything' during his time as a varsity player. Myles has played all over the field and carries a great tenacity into each game. As a RB, Myles is a hard nosed downhill runner, who can possess break-away ability when necessary. His biggest plays have come on the biggest stages, like in the fourth quarter as a Sophomore on Thanksgiving, where he broke away down the sideline to give the Clippers the tie and send the game to OT where we eventually prevailed.



NHS Captain: Matt Donlan

(pictured #55 setting the Defense)

Pos: OL/ LB

Matt has been a terrific two year leader at the JV level and now prepares to take the reigns as a senior. Matt is a hard working player with good football iq. He showed great leadership at the JV level and when called upon, played very well in a varsity capacity. He has been a terrific special teams player for the varsity and will certainly be an impact player in the CAL in 2017.

Clipper Corner

In each Clipper Corner we will highlight a part of NHS Football history; some recent, others much older. If you have any ideas, or would be interested in being a contributor, please email us through the contact us page on the Gridiron website.



“The Generational Impact”

By: John Webber (NHS Class of 00’)

This past April, Newburyport lost a giant in the community and a legend in the football community with the passing of Tom Smolski. All of us have been disheartened with the loss and remember Tom with fondness. I wanted to take this opportunity to share some memories and reflect on my experiences with Tom over the past 25 years.

In sports, a coach is a person involved in the direction, instruction and training of the operations of a sports team or of individual sportspeople. A coach may also be a teacher.

Tom was all of these things and more to me. Thinking back, some of my earliest memories began where many of them do for Newburyport boys, at the Pioneer League. Tom was a coach and a volunteer, teaching many of us from the beginning on the basics of baseball (although I truly believe his motives were to recruit boys to play football in the fall). Tom coached at all levels at the Pioneer League and through youth sports to the high school level. The sheer number of young people he impacted is staggering when you think of his career in sports.

I can vividly remember sitting on the couch with my father when the phone rang one evening in 1992. “John! (said the loud, husky voice on the other end), It’s Mr. Smolski”. (I

had known Mr. Smolski from the Pioneer League and because of his sons Michael and Ben, who are both my age). “I was wondering if you were interested in playing football this fall?” Up to this point I had no real interest in playing and really did not know a lot about the game. Eventually the phone went to my father and after a few minutes, I was signed up. I can not remember much about the games that year, I do not remember the opponents, the scores, the record or even how much I played... however, I remember that I was hooked. I also remember Coach Smolski’s jokes, his laugh, his passion for the game and his teachings. This is what made the difference for me. Not a winning team, not sensational play, but the coaches.

Once youth sports was over, my relationship and contact with Coach continued throughout high school. I was fortunate to play with one of the best teams in school history and with both of Coach’s sons throughout my time at NHS. The stories were always football and the conversations were always positive at the Smolski household.

After college I bumped into Coach and by now he had been coaching at NHS for a few seasons. I told him that I was interested in coaching and he said that he’d give me a call. Well... the next day the phone rang. “Web! It’s Coach Smolski. Why don’t you come to the high school after practice tomorrow and talk to Coach G and the staff”. It’s funny, after that call I could not help but think back to that phone call in 1992 when Coach first asked me to play.

The next few seasons were a lot of fun for me. I had the opportunity to Coach side by side with the man who first taught me the game, who first introduced me to football and who got me in the door at NHS. We worked the freshman team together with Jason Beauparlant and we had some great times. I would watch as Tom, only as he could, teach the game to ‘green’ players. From the stories of the past, to how to properly fit a uniform, to how to be a Clipper. It had come full circle, Coach had taught us the right way and how to teach these kids... now we were doing this together for the program we both love.

I thought about the generations of kids Coach worked with and how many of them have gone on to coach in various capacities and at all levels. This is the generational impact that Coach had, and his legacy in Newburyport. He taught us how to do it right and what it meant to be from Newburyport. Regardless if it is with NHS football or with the instructional t-ball at the Pioneer League... I stop now and, think back on all that he taught us and how we honor his legacy by passing on the knowledge, the stories and the jokes.

Today, in my house, the old trophies, the plaques and sport certificates are long gone. But in a closet, on a shelf, I have the ripped, tired, moth ridden t-shirt Coach handed me at our first football banquet in 1992. I will treasure it and the memories forever.

Thank you Coach, we miss you.

Epilogue

This upcoming season there will be two additions honoring Coach Smolski's service. All players will have a custom helmet sticker with the initials TRS, in remembrance of Coach. In addition, there is a plaque being made for just outside the football locker room. On the top is a half-hull of an older style Clipper helmet, below is a quote, given by Coach at his Wall of Fame induction back in 2015. The plaque will read:

In memory of Coach Tom Smolski

"It meant a lot to me to coach the kids and to be in Newburyport. I used to tell the kids, be proud! You wear the Crimson and Old Gold. When you play Newburyport, you know you played a game because we would hit people, and when you left the stadium, you knew you played Newburyport"

-Coach Tom Smolski

WOF Induction Speech. 2015

This plaque will stand in his memory and his words will continue to inspire generations of players before they take the field.