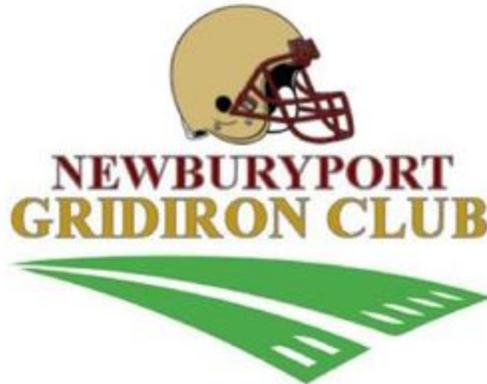


# The Newburyport Gridiron Club Newsletter

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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

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## News and Events

### "Tom Smolski Memorial Golf Tournament"

The 2018 Gridiron Golf Tournament will be held on **Friday July 13th** at Apple Hill Golf Course - again with a 7am check in and 8am shotgun start. You can now register online by emailing us at [newburyportgridironclub@gmail.com](mailto:newburyportgridironclub@gmail.com) with the full names of your 4-some, you can also register and pay online with a credit card or paypal by visiting our 'Membership and Events' page on our website. While there, check out more information on the tournament and new additions to this years fundraiser.

### The True Clipper Award

The Gridiron group has been discussing possible candidates for our second annual 'True Clipper Award' to be given out at the golf tournament in July. The True Clipper Award is given in recognition of the contributions to Clipper football and the greater Newburyport community. This annual award is given to a recipient who best reflects and demonstrates the characteristics of a true Clipper and in gratitude for their efforts and support of NHS Football and the Newburyport Gridiron Club. Last year's recipient was first year head coach Ben Smolski.

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## Team News: The 2018 Clippers



The 2017 Season was an overall success for the Clippers. A 6 - 4 record was an improvement over the past four seasons, the first winning season since 2013. The biggest success and a historic team goal was the sweep of the 'river rival' teams; wins over Ipswich, Triton, Pentucket and Amesbury were the highlight of the 2017 campaign. A playoff shutout over the Wildcats of Weston was another accomplishment, along with a consolation domination shutout over #2 ranked Somerville on senior night and a shutout victory on Thanksgiving over Amesbury. This year marked the inaugural 'Border Battle' match up with Triton, ending in

typical Nbpt - Triton fashion (a hard fought, back and forth game with high emotion). The Border Battle trophy now resides with the Clippers and will be up for grabs again next season at home.

This was also a season for individual accomplishments, as Myles Maloof and Owen Bradbury entered the record books for their rushing efforts as varsity football players over the past three seasons. There is an end of season breakdown in the 'Game Stats' section of the site, check out this document for detailed information on the season, game by game breakdowns and individual records.

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The 2018 Clippers are looking at a balance of returning starters, promising young players and new faces. New captains, **Seamus Webster**, **Rob Johnson** and **Trevor Foley** are featured in our ['Captains Corner'](#) section of the website under '2018 Game Stats', please check out these new bios and learn about who will be leading the Clippers in their 2018 campaign.

The off season is underway with weight training and many of our players participating in winter sports. New basketball Coach (and NHS Alumni) Dave Clay has his squad at the top of their division and out performing many outsiders expectations. NHS Hockey and Track are also seeing success this winter led by familiar senior faces Owen Bradbury on the ice and Donte Harmon on the track.



## 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 NHS Football Banquets

By: John Webber; Gridiron Club Historian, (NHS Class of '00')

The end of this past season and the organization of the team awards and banquet got me thinking about the history of some of the awards we issue each year. It also led me to look into some of the past practices of NHS teams and reasons behind them. This brief insight into the history of the NHS Banquets and Awards is taken from newspaper archives and from Bert Spofford's History of NHS Football. This article is part of a section put into the 'History Books' section of the website.

### History of the NHS football banquet

The annual end of the season banquet has changed a lot over the years, depending on the success of the team, the choice of the head coach and the involvement of the supporters of NHS. Over the years, this banquet has been held at schools (Nock / Molin and NHS), Halls (Elks, Fireman's, Dalton Club, City Hall) and Function Rooms (Sylvan Street, the Masonic Lodge). Regardless of the venue or the agenda, all of the past

gatherings have a common thread, a passing of the torch and one last opportunity to thank the seniors for their dedication, commitment and hard work over the years.

In the early years, banquets were held as a team gathering and no individual awards were given. Some of the first noted team 'banquets' were in the 1920's, most off site (Masonic Lodge, City Hall or other locations). Later, local all star players were recognized at the team banquet. In the 1930's teams began awarding letter-man sweaters or jackets and the varsity letter. Sometimes there was a special night given to the team, such was the case in 1943 when NHS Football got to see the Boston Bruins play. Individual awards began being given in 1971. At one point in the 1980's, individual banquets stopped and an annual seasonal awards night began. All teams would meet at NHS and be recognized, awards given and new captains introduced. Some team continued to host individual banquets or team nights, so eventually, the idea of a 'break up dinner' or a team banquet returned. In football's case, a return to some of the roots of the program with varsity letters and some original awards.

Below are some of the awards throughout the history and descriptions of some of the longer running namesakes. Some have changed due to sponsorship, coach decision and re-dedications.

### **Current Awards 2017 - Present**



#### **The Luther Reed "Toughness Award"**

Luther Reed (NHS Class of 1957) was an outstanding Wall of Fame offensive lineman and linebacker. He was a starter on the 1955 Class C Championship team and Co-Captain of the 1956 Class C Championship team (winning back to back state titles - the first in school history). An All-Scholastic Athlete, he was named to the Boston Globe All Stars and Class C All Stars in 1956; recognized in three independent Boston newspapers as an All Star player (a rarity in those days) he earned All Scholastic recognition as a senior in The Globe, The Record-American / Sunday Advertiser and the Traveler.

His reputation as a 'Hard-Hitting' Linebacker spread throughout the league in the mid-1950's. He was described by legendary local Sports Writer and Historian, the late Bert Spofford, as "a truly tough player who could play through anything and an aggressive force on the defensive side of the ball."

At 5'11" and 205 pounds, Reed was one of the biggest players of his era and by all accounts, one of the hardest hitters in the history of NHS football.

“They took a count those days and 17 or 18 times Luther hit someone that didn't stay in the ballgame” said former Wall of Fame coach Walter Sheridan, who presented Reed for induction to the NHS Wall of Fame. “Five of them I (Coach Sheridan) visited at the Anna Jaques Hospital. That’s how hard [Luther] hit.”

During the middle of his senior year, Luther’s parents moved to Lynn and Luther fully expected he’d be going with them. “I knew right then and there he wasn't going to move to Lynn” said Sheridan with a chuckle.

“Fortunately, I had a good friend that worked with me that had the opportunity and space available to help me out. I have five kids, so I couldn't do it; but Charlie Foley came to my rescue and brought Luther down to his house for the rest of the football season right up into January, when Luther was able to get back with his family. You don't let a player like Luther Reed get away”

This award was named in his honor after he was posthumously elected to the NHS Wall of Fame in 1998, due to his grit, determination and toughness. Recognition and achievement came not from statistics and scores, but from being one of the toughest to ever play at NHS. The Luther Reed Toughness Award is now one of the longest running annual awards at NHS and although there have been years, no deserving recipient has been recognized, the award continues to be part of the annual football banquet.

#### **The Palumbo / Price “Outstanding Lineman” Award**

This award is named in honor of Eugene Palumbo & outstanding lineman Mike Price (NHS 67’). This award has been given annually since 1973 "The Palumbo 'Outstanding Lineman' Award" and then the "Palumbo / Price" Outstanding Lineman since 1984. One of the longest running annual awards at NHS.

Mike Price was described as a force on the line and a player with grit and desire. A key member to the success of the super teams of the 1960’s. He died aboard the SS Marine Electric on February 12, 1983 as it was lost at sea in a storm off of the Virginia coast. The award has carried his namesake since 1984. In a conversation with Coach Jim Stehlin, he called Mike, “...one of the most dedicated, toughest and hardest working players I ever coached.”

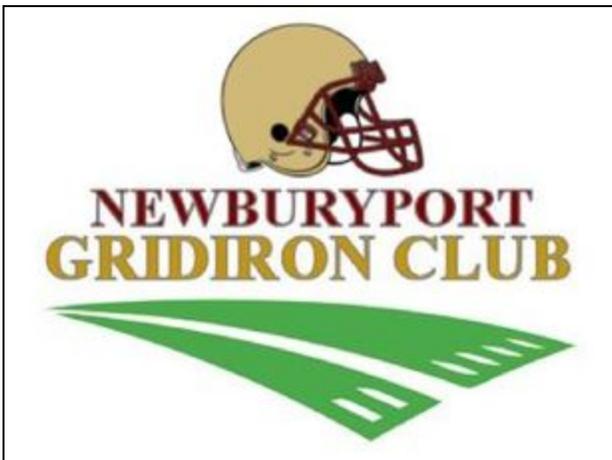
Eugene Palumbo: Gene was a Newburyporter with strong community ties. Tommy Palumbo (NHS 68’) (Gene’s son) was a stellar WOF fullback on the NHS teams of the 1960’s. During their years at and following NHS, they gave back to the community in many ways. One way to give back was sponsoring the ‘Outstanding Lineman Award’ each year since 1971 at the annual awards banquet. The award is no longer sponsored by the family, however, our program continues the name as a way of honoring those who gave so much to NHS Football and the Newburyport community.



**Coach Larry Smith Memorial “Coaches Award”** (plaque and scholarship money from the family)

Assistant Coach Larry Smith coached at NHS from 1999 until his untimely death in 2011. He was loved by the players he coached and by the people he interacted with. Coach Smith loved the game and his family continues to honor his legacy by presenting a graduating senior football player with a scholarship in his name each year. Chosen by the family, by those who knew Coach Smith and by the current staff, this recipient is a ‘coachable’, hard working player who gives his all and has a love for the game.

There has long been a 'coaches award' at NHS. 2017 marks the first year it was given in honor of former Coach Larry Smith. It was decided by coaches and the Smith family to combine the award with the annual scholarship given at scholarship night in the spring each year.



### **The Gridiron Award**

Sponsored and presented by the Newburyport Gridiron Club, this award exemplifies the player who comes ready to work each day. This player does not have to be the star performer, the statistical leader or get the recognition in the papers, but this player is a versatile grinder, a teammate and someone who carries himself like a true Clipper, bringing an intensity and passion for the game and being an ambassador for their team, program and school. This award is voted on by team (as are others) however, the Gridiron Club (alumnus, decide on the award recipient and present the award each year at the banquet). This award was established in 2016.

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### **Team MVP**

Like the title implies, the MVP is the team's most valuable player. Different teams interpret 'value' differently, however, more often than not, this is the player that the success of the team lies with. Over the years many groups and organizations have sponsored this award. Most recently, the Newburyport Gridiron Club has sponsored this award for the team. In the past, the NHS boosters organization and other area businesses or groups have sponsored this award as well, such as the Rotary Club of Newburyport. The MVP (as it is in most awards) the most consistently issued and longest running award at NHS.

### **Some past awards**

#### **The Sportsmanship Award**

This award has been sponsored and awarded from the league office (MIAA - 1988 was the 1st year), sponsored by WNBP (former local am radio station and long time supporters of NHS athletics); The Newburyport Daily News, The NHS Boosters Club and the Newburyport Gridiron Club.

#### **Most Versatile Player**

Another award that had been sponsored by many organizations and groups or companies; including 'Hawks and Sons'

#### **The Leo Ananian Memorial Award and later the 'Unsung Hero' Award**

This award was given in honor of Leo Ananian NHS Class of 1929. This award was given from 1976 - 1995

#### **Jay C's Most Improved Player**

Last awarded in 1970's (no information known)

#### **The James T. Stehlin MVP Award**

This award was originally given to the CAL MVP (Last winner was Brett Bashaw 1995) Years later it was given to the team MVP (Last winner was Rob Shay 2016).