



## The Michigan Men's Football Experience: Raising a million dollars for cancer research

By Mike Keliher



A select team of “players” dressed in their Maize and Blue jersey’s huddle in the tunnel at the Big House waiting to be individually announced, picture on the scoreboard, to cheering fans. This is the 2012 Michigan Men’s Football Experience (MMFE) squad gathered as one to face an unforgiving opponent. Along with the Michigan Football coaches and event sponsors, they will have raised more than a million dollars to beat prostate cancer.

### History of the Michigan Men’s Football Experience.

The charity event evolved not from an idea about football, but instead as a way for a grateful patient to honor the doctor who performed his life saving surgery. The patient, U-M Athletic Director Dave Brandon, was then CEO of Domino’s Pizza, Inc. and his doctor, James E. Montie, M.D., was chair of the U-M Department of Urology.

Brandon, a former Michigan football player coached by Bo, conceived of the idea and contacted Coach Lloyd Carr about offering an offseason 48-hour window in the life of the Michigan football team prior to kick-off. Coach Carr immediately embraced the idea of doing this for cancer research with these conditions:

- Participation by his coaches would be voluntary and there would be no monetary compensation;
- Participation would be limited to the number of lockers (116) in the Michigan locker room; and

- Attendees would be taught individual skills, exposed to the mental side of the game, would learn how to execute a couple of plays and would be treated like walk-ons no matter their off-the-field status or accomplishments.

### Coach Brady Hoke commits to the 2012 camp

The MMFE went into hiatus following Coach Carr’s retirement in 2007 due to renovations of the Big House and other priorities making the program impractical. However, before he had even coached a game at Michigan, Coach Hoke revived the event set for May 30 & 31, 2012.

### More than a million dollars raised

Including expected donations through 2012, the MMFE will raise in excess of \$1 million to fund cancer research. Research, like football, is a team sport. It requires many members, each playing an important role. Funds from the MMFE allow University of Michigan physicians and researchers to flush out their roster with blue chip research recruits and provide the infrastructure and

start up monies to investigate promising new ideas for diagnosis and treatment and get them to the point of external funding or venture capital interest.

### How can you help?

If you apply quickly, you may be able to secure one of the remaining slots on the 2012 squad. Interested parties can also participate through event sponsorship opportunities.

For more information, player fees and registration forms please log on to [uofmfootballexperience.umich.edu](http://uofmfootballexperience.umich.edu) or send an e-mail to [FootballExperience@umich.edu](mailto:FootballExperience@umich.edu). You can also follow us on twitter at [MFootballExperi](https://twitter.com/MFootballExperi) or join our LinkedIn or Facebook groups.

### About the author:

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*A note from Mike:*

*I am a returning member from the 2007 team. My company sponsored this article because I believe that the MMFE is a glowing example of the overwhelming positive impact that coaches play in our society, as well as how innovation by creative people can create great societal benefit.*

*As Dave Brandon saw a way to honor his doctor, this is my way of honoring my coaches. Like most American men, I participated in athletics up through high school learning teamwork, sportsmanship and integrity. Through the MMFE, the Michigan Football coaches gave me a wonderful refresher course in those values and traditions.*

*My most important coach, my dad Dan Keliher, was taken from our family much too early by this insidious foe. Coach Carr and Coach Hoke are leading our team’s fund raising efforts to beat cancer. We will succeed.*

*Coach Carr embodied the feeling of both players and coaches alike,*

*“We had a terrific time coaching these fellows and I think they had as much fun as we did. It was great to see so much effort put forth with heart and determination.”*