

Distinguished Achievement Citation

Thomas Butters

Class of 1960

Today, with this presentation of Ohio Wesleyan's Distinguished Achievement Citation, we are honored and privileged to recognize Thomas Butters for his outstanding and profound accomplishments in the field of collegiate sports.

Following his graduation from Ohio Wesleyan University, Tom played professional baseball for the Pittsburgh Pirates and then served as an assistant director of admissions at Ohio Wesleyan for three years prior to moving to Duke University in 1967 as the Director of Special Events. He was named Duke's head baseball coach in 1968 and coached through the 1970 season, until he became the inaugural director of the Iron Dukes, the school's athletics fund-raising organization. Tom was so successful in that job that *The Sporting News* labeled him, "the world champion of fundraisers." His success with the Iron Dukes led to his appointment as Assistant Athletics Director in 1972, then as Associate Athletics Director and Assistant to the Chancellor in 1976.

Tom became Director of Athletics in 1977. During his twenty years at the helm he selected all but one of the head coaches, including taking a chance on a young unknown by the name of Mike Krzyzewski, now affectionately known as Coach K. He presided over the creation of most of Duke's twelve women's intercollegiate sports and oversaw a department that graduated 95 percent of its athletes, among the best percentages in NCAA Division I.

During his tenure, Duke won two national championships in basketball and reached the Final Four eight times, played in two football bowl games, won the 1986 NCAA men's soccer title and played in three NCAA title games, and reached the Final Four in lacrosse, women's soccer and women's tennis. Listed in the Top 50 Most Powerful People in Sports by *College Sports*, Tom has served as the chairman of the College Football Association's Championship Study Committee and the NCAA Men's Basketball Selection Committee. He also served on the NCAA Division I-A Athletic Directors' Television Committee.

A man of principle and high standards. This is what comes to mind when speaking about Tom Butters. Tom's character can be encapsulated with a quote taken from an interview with writer Peter Maas about his appointment to Duke University. When he was hired, Butters recalled, "The question was, 'How do we rebuild a program that complements what this university is all about?' The answer, as always, was that the kids come first. I was a professional athlete, (a major league pitcher), so for me winning is important, but not at any price. This institution stands for a lot more than what we've garnered on the basketball court." We join everyone today in applauding and recognizing Thomas Butters' notable career through the presentation of this Distinguished Achievement Citation.

14 May 2005

