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**New and old traditions enrich the experience for players and fans alike at the Donald J. Schneider Stadium.**

November 2011

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## Football team melds traditions old and new

When the St. Norbert football team moved to Kolstad Field at Schneider Stadium in 2010, they brought several football traditions with them. They also created some new ones, most notably the touching of Minahan Rock immediately prior to each home game.

Minahan Rock was erected at the west end of Minahan Stadium to dedicate that facility when it opened in 1938. At Schneider Stadium, the impressive granite slab stands sentry outside the St. Norbert locker room, right beside the team's entrance to the playing field.

Each player touches Minahan Rock before taking the field.

"It connects the old with the new, the past with the present, to honor all of the great teams and players who have ever played for St. Norbert," head football coach **Jim Purtill** says.

Purtill notes that no player is allowed to touch the rock except on game days.

After all players have touched Minahan Rock, the squad gathers in the northwest corner of the field to kneel in prayer before heading to their sideline. This tradition, according to Purtill, dates at least as far back as the coaching era of **Howard Kolstad**, which began in 1960. Each prayer ends with the benediction, "St. Norbert, pray for us."

Following each home win, the Green Knights return to their sideline following the post-game handshake with their opponents. The players salute the home crowd with their rendition of "Varsity Toast," the school's [fight song](#). In Minahan Stadium, the players sang "Varsity Toast" in the end zone, but the move into Schneider Stadium allows players to interact with students, parents and fans after the game.

When the song ends, each St. Norbert player heads to the northeast corner of the field to ring the St. Norbert Victory Bell. This tradition began early in the 2000s when **Don Maslinski '63** (College Advancement), then the college's athletics director, acquired the tower bell from a rural Manitowoc church about to be razed. As each player rings the bell, everyone for blocks around Schneider Stadium learns of a Green Knights

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