As the UND football product has improved on the field under fourth-year coach Bubba Schweigert, work has been done this offseason to boost the environment surrounding the games.

On Thursday, the Alerus Center outlined a handful of changes UND fans can expect when the home schedule starts Sept. 9 against Missouri State.

No. 8-ranked UND opens the season on the road Aug. 31 at Utah.

In a partnership between UND and Spectra by Comcast Spectacor—the providers of Venue Management and Food Services & Hospitality to Alerus Center—tailgate times have been extended to have the lots open at 8 a.m. for all home games.

A release from the Alerus adds that more bathroom facilities will be added to the tailgate lot.

Fans are encouraged to pick up a "Fighting Hawkerchief" at the Tailgate Village. The items were paid for by a donor.

New to the 13,500-seat Alerus this fall will be increased security measures. Fans are encouraged to allow for extra time to enter the Alerus and to leave non-essential items at home. Bags must be smaller than 5.5 inches by 8.5 inches. Items not allowed into the Alerus include backpacks, briefcases, video cameras, laser pointers, noisemakers, laptops, tablets and outside food and beverage.

Inside the Alerus, fans can find new food options, including a prime rib sandwich, a Cuban Panini, a Coach Bubba Burger, a Hawk Strip Basket and more.

UND will return Bubba$ Buck$ for another year. Students will have the chance to win a $5,000 scholarship at each home game. With five home games on the schedule, the promotion will give away $25,000 in scholarships, an amount secured by alumni donations.

The Alerus will have a new look and sound in 2017, too. The Alerus has added free public Wi-Fi, new LED lighting and a revamped sound system.