Alabama Football Coach Paul "Bear" Bryant's System of Winning

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Dr. E. Gaylon McCollough learned more than football from legendary Alabama football coach Paul "Bear" Bryant. The coach taught him how to win in the games of business and life.

McCollough has begun revealing Bryant's secrets to success for the first time as a public speaker, outlining more than 40 points from the coach's playbook.

Based largely on his insightful book, "The Long Shadow of Coach Paul 'Bear' Bryant," McCollough draws on his experiences as a center who played on Alabama's 1964 National Championship team. He won All-America honors as a player and student-athlete and was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys. Later, McCollough became one of Bryant's doctors and a confidant of the larger-than-life coach.

"I wanted to do something on Bryant that people could use to teach their children or grandchildren or use in their own everyday life," says McCollough, a well-known facial plastic surgeon, teacher, author and motivational speaker who is also a United States Sports Academy Board of Visitors member. "I know a few of the little known facts that made him the winner he was. He had a system of winning that could and should be carried into the game of life."

McCollough has condensed Bryant's system of winning into 46 short lessons that he explained for the first time in his presentation, "Coach Paul 'Bear' Bryant: Grandmaster of Mind Over Matter," at a Gulf Coast Athletic Club meeting Nov. 21, 2011 in Gulf Shores, Ala.

McCollough starts the motivational talk with a story about how sports writers frequently asked Bryant: "Coach, what's the secret to your success?" Bryant would invariably glare at them and in a low growl give his pat answer: "If I knew, I sure as hell wouldn't tell you."

But Bryant did know and he drilled his winning system into his players, like McCollough. The coach would often tell his players that he was teaching them things they needed to live by after football, McCollough says.

Throughout the presentation, McCollough paints vivid pictures with words to illustrate Bryant's sage lessons on being prepared, making the right choices, adapting to change, conducting yourself like a winner, never giving up and so forth.

Coach Bryant never stopped teaching and McCollough recalls the last time he wore an Alabama uniform he learned Lesson #46.

In the Jan. 1, 1965 Orange Bowl between Alabama and Texas, McCollough lined up at center on fourth-and-goal on the 1-yard line. He was snapping to future NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath, who planned a quarterback sneak. Namath appeared to slip across the goal line to

complete an incredible comeback to defeat Texas on the game's last play. But the referee marked the ball six inches shy of the end zone.

Walking off the field, one of the Alabama players shouted, "We scored Coach!" Bryant shot back, "Well, if we walked it in there would never be a question about it, would there?"

Translation by McCollough: "To win in football, business or life, always go beyond what's expected and never leave any room for doubt."

To hear McCollough's presentation, "Coach Paul 'Bear' Bryant: Grandmaster of Mind Over Matter," attend his motivational speech, which is open to the public, at 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 25 at the United States Sports Academy. You can also view McCollough's talk on Nov. 21, 2011 to the Gulf Coast Athletic Club in Gulf Shores, Ala., at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZXiDzHAkT5c.

To watch a PBS interview of McCollough about his insightful book, "The Long Shadow of Coach Paul 'Bear' Bryant," visit http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com/about/newsevents.html. You can purchase the book online for $26.95 at http://www.mccolloughplasticsurgery.com/about/books.html.

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