



PLC Focus of Week 8: Reflecting on Winning

This week's coach note comes from a question that we've been longing to ask you all.

"At what point would you sacrifice integrity for a win?"

We're all aware of the epidemic in sport today that says we have to "win at all costs," but what are we teaching the student-athletes in allowing that medieval mentality to continue? In honesty, everyone is happy and excited about winning... frankly it's easy to get excited about winning. Character development comes through hard work, discipline and unfortunately loss. Life isn't just about winning all the time.

We would like to call your attention to a coach who understands the true meaning of Play Like a Champion Today®. Coach Houston Nutt of [Ole Miss](#) took his team into battle last Saturday against arguably one of the best football teams ever assembled in the Crimson Tide of Alabama. We all know that the South Eastern Conference is considered by many to be the toughest college football conference in the nation from top to bottom and boasts six (6) of the last seven (7) national championship football programs. Coach Nutt's team was one of the teams in the SEC that was in contention for the conference championship along with LSU, Arkansas and Alabama.

Coming into the game, Coach Nutt suspended four (4) starters for violating team rules. Per the pregame report it was a decision that he "agonized" in making but ultimately decided that it was much more important to teach character development than coach for an SEC



"A life of frustration is inevitable for any coach whose main enjoyment is winning."

~ Chuck Noll

Championship... WOW! How refreshing is that? Here we have a coach at the top of the coaching food chain in amateur sports who understands that character development through sport is one of the most important tools that is underutilized today. Not only does Coach Nutt expect integrity from his players and coaches, but he models that behavior in his decision making with regard to the team... NO MATTER THE PENDING CHALLENGES!

Youth coaches across the nation can learn a profound lesson from Coach Nutt's actions. At the end of the day, it isn't about our win/loss record, although we are sometimes unfairly judged by it. The GRO-W approach takes winning seriously, but notice that the W follows the G, R, and O. Reflect upon your understanding of winning in sport and Discuss Coach Nutt's decision with your team and help your players to understand that building a team demands that each player must take ownership of the rules.

Thank you, Coach Nutt for your integrity and steadfast approach in your role as leader, mentor and teacher.

Let's all remember to "Play Like a Champion Today."®