



ECHO, Clemson Alumni News  
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### BYOG™ ~ A Way of Life

Coach Dabo Swinney on October 3, 2015 blended together four simple letters, BYOG™ during his now famous speech after the Clemson Tigers defeated the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame. Under the Saturday Night Lights in Death Valley, drenched from the pouring rain, Heather Cox asked, "What does this kind of win do for your program?" Coach Swinney replied, "Listen, we give you scholarships, we give you stipends, and meals, and a place to live. We give you nice uniforms. I can't give you Guts! And I can't give you Heart! And tonight, it was BYOG™ , Bring Your Guts"!™

BYOG™ Bring Your Own Guts™ has become one of the most talked about Coach's Slogans today, transcending college football. BYOG™ is a way of life that inspires those who fight EVERY day to conquer fears, to achieve dreams, to live life and to be better at who they are and can become tomorrow. BYOG™ is synonymous with PASSION, WILL, and HARD WORK.

Enter Tim Long (86) a Clemson graduate who now calls Mathew, N.C. home. At the age of 50, coming off of surgery for a ruptured Achilles tendon and rotator cuff complications, Tim found himself 40 pounds overweight and unable to exercise to shed the weight. His physical therapist recommended swimming as a good recovery exercise.

Not really knowing how to swim, Tim gave it a shot when introduced to the Siskey YMCA master's swim and triathlon program in his home town. In 2012, he completed his first sprint distance marathon which consisted of a 300-yard swim, a 12-mile bike ride, and a 5K run.

Tim recalls his experience of this first event, "I almost drowned in the pool and would have to stop and hang onto the wall after each lap, but I survived and completed the race."

After his first race, Tim got the itch and would go on to compete in a several more sprint triathlons before participating in a half distance race in 2013, 2014, and 2015 but was unsure if he would ever be up to complete an Ironman.

The world's most enduring race takes many hours, weeks, and months of physical training in addition to an unprecedented amount of mental endurance. On Oct. 1, Tim and his son traveled to Death Valley and witnessed yet again the Clemson Tigers display another BYOG™ moment as they defeated the Louisville Cardinals. On the big jumbo Tron, Tim saw the clip of Coach Swinney's BYOG™ speech from the previous season and at that very moment ~ Tim knew and decided that BYOG™ would be his race day mantra.

**"I could not think of a better way to describe what I would need to complete my first Ironman...passion, will, hard work, attitude, heart and guts."**



Tim made of BYOG™ - Bring Your Own Guts™ his mantra, and he wanted to share it with every participant of the Ironman. Tim reached out to the owner of BYOG™gear.com and CEO of the BYOG™ brand, Allison Van't Hof and shared his story. Tim sent Allison his racing suit to brand with the BYOG™ directive. They not only sent back his racing suit branded loud and proud with BYOG™, Bring Your Own Guts™ but, sent his family members BYOG™ shirts and hooded sweatshirts to wear while Tim competed.

Allison shared with me, "After speaking with Tim and hearing his courageous story and will to conquer his fears, I knew that we had to do whatever we could to be a part of his team. What better way than to outfit him in Clemson orange with the BYOG™ directive on his chest and back ~ pulling him and pushing him to the finish line. In fact, having the privilege to be a part of his BYOG™ team made that Saturday so much more rewarding. When I received the picture of with his family after the race ~ I had the biggest smile on my face and my heart was warm. It was a great Saturday!"

After swimming 2.4 miles, biking 50 miles (shortened due to the effects of Hurricane Matthew), and running 26.22 miles, on October 22, 2016 at the age of 54, Tim Long completed his first Ironman.

Tim is not alone in finding encouragement and being inspired from the BYOG™, Bring Your Own Guts™ initiative.

Fredia Dunn, a longtime Clemson fan and South Carolina resident while going through a divorce and having her father in poor health, Fredia was told that she had breast cancer. The road to recovery was long and hard and included missing her father's funeral due to surgery, and



attending court to finalize her divorce in a wheelchair while being connected to tubes in each arm.

Ten years after winning the battle against breast cancer, Fredia looks back on her experience and the support from her friends and family and knows that during her fight she had to Bring Her Own Guts™ to tackle life's many obstacles.

Allison Van't Hof shared, "I met Fredia because she was a customer on the BYOGgear.com website. She had ordered the Breast Cancer Awareness shirt and sent me an email to ask me a question about the garments. Instead of emailing her back, I picked up the phone and called her. We started talking, sharing life's stories and my own life's challenges became minimal as I heard and witnessed her receiving the medal of life for her 10 year battle with breast cancer. It was our absolute pleasure and privilege to make certain she had all she needed for her friends at her tailgate party. I can't wait to celebrate with her next week, give her a big 'ole hug, and continue to be inspired myself by her courage and strength."

The BYOG™ lifestyle and way of life holds true for Kathleen Winfield (2016) a Clemson Graduate and Greenville, South Carolina resident. A single mom to two teenagers, working two jobs, one of which she serves as the Operating Room Manager at Self Regional in Greenwood, S.C., all while going to school to further her education, brings her own guts every day.

"It took the words and advise of my new friend, Allison Van't Hof to make me realize and understand that I had unknowingly adopted the BYOG™ principles in my own everyday life," said Kathleen. "I met Allison when I ordered product on the BYOGgear.com website. She called me back to confirm my order. We got to talking about BYOG™, how she got involved with Clemson, BYOG™ and how the BYOG™ directive spoke to her. We shared our stories and when she explained to me that she was also a single mom raising two teenagers, running her own business, experiencing the end of a 22 year marriage, and her mom had just passed away ~ she said, that she brought her own guts every day and that is what her mom taught her. To never give up and always strive for excellence. Never be afraid. We are now friends for life."

"BYOG™ is not only a way of life and culture that teaches the young men on the Clemson football team how to live their lives, but is a daily inspiration and a mindset for so many people."

Additionally, in support of the BYOG™, Bring Your Own Guts™ initiative, we were able to speak with Luke Flood who owns The Fan Zone, a sportswear store in Charleston, South Carolina.

Luke shared with us, "My wife and I had the great pleasure of meeting Allison at the 2016 Sports Licensing and Tailgate Show, where she presented and introduced us to the BYOG™™ initiative and apparel line. The line is unique and creative, and we were excited to sign up as a Charleston area partner. We were very familiar with the speech that Coach Swinney made, and the BYOG™™ phrase that he coined. We immediately knew this merchandise line would be a home run! We believe that to be so, not just how the quote relates to football, but how it relates to young people and the development of the positive character traits to which Coach Swinney was referring".

Luke continued, "When we learned more about the BYOG™ business model from Allison, the building of the phrase as a lifestyle and way of life brand and that Coach Swinney donates part of the proceeds of the product line to his foundation, we were extremely excited. Our store has worked with a variety of athletes' foundations in the past, through signing events and charitable donations. As a small business, we believe in giving back to the community and supporting the

causes of the sports community. We hope for continued success in our partnership with Allison, BYOG™ as a lifestyle brand, and Clemson University”.

We are hopeful BYOG™ will continue to inspire people's lives, as it becomes alive every time each of us find meaning in those four letters. The core of this initiative is to remind us of what we are capable of, to be STRONG, to Bring Your Own Guts™, whether it is on the field, on the court, in a classroom, at work, being a mom, dad, sister, brother, friend, during hardships or even just getting out of bed every morning to face what life brings to us. Life is not a spectator sport. We must always remember to have faith in ourselves and God that no matter what is presented to us we must live our life with no regrets. BYOG™, today, tomorrow, EVERYDAY.

BYOG™ product is designed with passion, heart, and guts to inspire, encourage, and honor oneself in their daily mission to ‘make being excellent a habit’ ~ yet another inspiring message from Coach Swinney.

BYOG™ product is currently available at [BYOG™gear.com](http://BYOG™gear.com), The Fan Zone, Charleston, Palmetto Moon, The Tiger Sports Shop, ACD Sports, Modern Provisions, Atlanta, and Barnes & Noble Clemson Campus Bookstore and on Fanatics.