

**Rick Karle WVTM 13** · 20 hrs · 🌐

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Dear my media brethren,

I hope you are doing well.

I know it's a hectic time for you, as you are working harder than ever, fighting deadlines, and spending time away from your families. You are facing pressure from your bosses, criticism from fans and yes, even more deadlines.

Whether you are a writer, a radio announcer, a podcaster, a blogger, a social media expert or a TV reporter or anchor, I appreciate what you do. I get it. I'm one of you.

But something's been eating at me for... well... about thirteen years, and it came to light again today as I listened to Coach Saban's pre-Rose Bowl news conference, which was held virtually today as the coach fielded questions from across America while he was stationed in Tuscaloosa.

You see, I have a problem with reporters calling Coach Saban "Nick" when asking the coach a question. I have heard this since the coach arrived in Tuscaloosa in 2007.

Questions like, "Nick, can you tell me about the progression of your quarterback?"

Or, "Nick, what have you learned about your team this year?"

Today I even heard a young reporter get on the call and start her question with, "Hi, Saban!" (yes, it could have been nerves- understand if it was).

I've come up with a proposal for all of us media people to follow as we move into a new year.

How about simply calling the head football coach at the University Of Alabama, "Coach Saban"?

I think the man has earned that much respect.

Oh, I get it.

Some reporters call the coach "Nick" in hopes that the coach perceives himself and the reporter on equal footing.

The problem? The footing is not equal.

Nick Saban is Nick Saban.

We are not.

Who, in my eyes, can call Coach Saban "Nick"?

Miss Terry can.

Lifelong friends can.

His current assistants can.

Perhaps a few in the media world can call him "Nick":

Chris Lowe, perhaps Finebaum or Rece Davis or Tom Rinaldi.

But the last time I checked, none of the above are any of us.

Think about it: Why does almost every person in our state refer to Paul "Bear" Bryant as "Coach Bryant"?

Respect.

Calling him any name other than Coach Bryant is showing disrespect.

Can you imagine a reporter attending a Coach Bryant news conference back in the 70's and saying, "Hey Paul, can you update us on that injury to Barry Krauss?", or "Hey Bear, can you give us an update on Steadman Shealy?"

And if Coach Bryant ever heard a question that began, "Hi, Bryant"?

Katy bar the door!

And if a reporter asked a question to Coach Stallings after he won the national championship in New Orleans starting with, "Hey Gene..."

Coach Stallings would have given the reporter that Coach Stallings look and Heaven knows what would have happened.

I have had Coach Saban sit in my kitchen and in my living room.

He's stood on my front lawn and sat in my dinghy.

In my house, Nick Saban is always "Coach Saban."

I have stood in the Saban's living room, kitchen and recruiting room.

I have stood on his front lawn to receive coaching wisdom.

I have sat next to Miss Terry to watch her play the piano.

At the Saban house, he's always "Coach Saban".

I have interviewed the coach at A-Day, picture day, after national championship games, on the golf course, at his car dealership- heck, even at the Mercedes Marathon.

He is always "Coach Saban".

So how about we make a New Year's resolution to address the greatest coach in the history of college football as "Coach Saban" (and yes, simply "Coach" will do)?

It's the most proper, most classy and most respectful thing to do.

Thanks again for what you do, my media friends.

I know that you will be making your own decisions on how to address the Alabama football coach, but I hope that you will consider my proposal.

Keep up the great work and keep grinding, and let's all look forward to 2021 when we stop addressing the man who has won six national championships as "Nick."

Oh, but there is some good news:

You can call me "Rick".

Picture courtesy UA Athletics/Rose Bowl



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**Holley Cash Murphy**  
This is so true! It's kind of like parents referring to their child's teacher by a first name or referring to a physician as a first name or even the governor or president by a first name. It's a matter of demonstrating good manners, showing class and respect. Thank you for your post, Mr. Karle!

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**Judy Simpson N...** replied · 5 replies

**Lois Martin Miller**  
Thank you, Mr. Rick!!!!!!! I recently commented to my husband concerning the disrespect in the media referencing our dear Coach Saban by his first name. I appreciate your stand and voice on this. I have been waiting for the day when Coach Saban calls out these members of the media!

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**Barbara Jenkins** replied · 3 replies

**Kathy Parker**  
Well said! There are so few of you left in the media who show respect these days. Thank goodness for those of you who have earned OUR respect for telling the truth and calling it like you see it!

20 hrs Like Reply More

**Denice Simma** replied · 5 replies

**Kent Kramer**  
Thank you Rick Karle for calling out your colleagues. Sadly, it just confirms our thoughts about the media in general. They have lost their credibility, ethics, and journalistic integrity. They have become arrogant activists instead of journalists trying to provide value to the people. Therefore, we the people no longer respect them or care about anything they have to say, because they have become irrelevant.

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**Thomas Morrissey** replied · 3 replies

**Lynn Davies Howell**  
I comment on this all the time and beyond me the lack of respect for elders or ones with specific earned titles .... Thank you for bringing this up... By the way, who is responsible for press conferences ? Seems they might ought to instruct the press about what to call him.... Might want to send this to ESPN also !!

14 hrs Like Reply More

**Thomas Morrissey** replied · 2 replies

**Dianne Snow**  
Thank you, Rick. One of our country's biggest problems is a lack of respect for anybody or anything. It just doesn't exist very much anymore. Thank you for calling out those responsible for thinking they can address Coach Saban just any ole way.

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**Julia Carlin** replied · 1 reply

**Misty Haynes**  
THIS is why I have the utmost respect for you! Every time I hear someone call him Rick or cringe! My mother taught me to address all people with respect, particularly those who have earned it. I'm not sure if it's a generational issue or perhaps those reporters are attempting to make others think they have a close personal relationship with Coach Saban, but regardless of their reason it is not only disrespectful but unprofessional.

18 hrs Like Reply More

**Janice Liveoak Wester**  
Consider the total lack of respect for our president for the past four years. Even if you don't like him, the office he holds demands respect. Everyone should have known the media would take the same path from that point on. No one knows what respect is these days.

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**Colin Morton** replied · 4 replies

**Pamela Jenkins Lauyans**  
Thank you for standing up for what is right! Appreciate your candor. Our society in general has lost respect for each other. How infrequently do we hear the terms ma'am and sir? Not sure why we have headed down this path and I sure hope we can turn it around.

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**Maria Brooks**  
I totally agree! I am born and raised in the south. I was taught to always address someone as mam and sir. I'm 45 and I still call them mam or sir even if they are younger than me. And if I'm lucky enough to know their first or last name I will than say Mr or Ms. a lot of our younger generation have zero manners or respect. Roll Tide ❤️

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**Jackie McFarland** replied · 1 reply

**Janice Gibbs Key**  
Amen!! That agitates me too. People don't know how to show respect anymore. Same thing with government officials. I my not agree with their political views but I would respect their office

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**Jeff Williams** replied · 4 replies

**Stan Narewski**  
Amen.  
I am 71 years old and I still call my college coach "Coach."  
I will never address him by his first name.  
I have too much respect for my coach who has done so much for me and mine.

17 hrs Like Reply More

**Nikki Johnson**  
Well sadly it's not just abt coaches. I hear it at church all the time calling our pastor by his first name instead of pastor A. It's a respect thing and sadly people aren't taught it anymore and some don't care. I hate it. I can't stand dislike respect period. I don't care who you are.

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**Martha Searfoss** replied · 6 replies

**William Brannon**  
Thank you Mr. Karle. Parents have failed their children(who are now adults) by not teaching this anymore. Everyone deserves to be treated respectfully.

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**Renee B. Fulford**  
I completely agree and thought the very same just watching this press conference! It should always be Coach Saban! Dropping titles is so disrespectful. No wonder he loses respect for them, along with them asking redundant questions. I thought he was extremely patient with them today!

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**Denise C Schuman**  
Our society has forgotten the unwritten expectation of showing RESPECT! No matter your age, you should show your respect for others. Failure to so, reflects poorly on you and your upbringing.

16 hrs Like Reply More

**Kelli Chisholm**  
Amen! No. Just no. So disrespectful. It's a sad day when someone needs to be told that. He should only be addressed as Coach Saban or just, Coach.

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**Judy Creel Stricklin**  
Ask Bobby knight how a coach should be addressed. He'll tell you in a heartbeat - that's "Coach Knight" to you. They deserve the respect.

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**Thomas Morrissey** replied · 3 replies

**Carla Slovensky Smart**  
I was always taught to say Mr or Mrs. or aunt/uncle. It's a sign of respect. Same goes for all my teachers. I recently emailed my son's 4th grade teacher addressing her as Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ because that's what you do (even if they are younger than you.). I got a response that started "hey Carla" and I thought geez...times are changing. Signs of the times, I guess, no respect.

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**Rick Carroll** replied · 1 reply

**Russ Moore**  
RESPECT!! A forgotten art these days!!! Well said sir!!!!

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**Dawn Anderson Eaton**  
I was raised that you NEVER called a person several years older than you by their first name if they did not ask you to do so. Even then, they were to be called Miss/Mrs/Mr Name and never just the first name. Thank you for reminding others how to show Coach Saban the respect he has earned.

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**Roger Myers** replied · 2 replies

**Annette Mathews Gunter**  
I was watching that with my son and said exactly what you said. In a professional setting I do not expect to be called by my first name. It's just part of the media in general's lack of respect for those who are successful.

20 hrs Like Reply More

1 reply

**Debra Hayes**  
Thank you!!! I cringe when I hear media personnel calling Coach Saban "Nick." Fir me, too, it shows a lack of respect. Thank you for posting this!!! Roll Tide 🇺🇸🇺🇸🇺🇸

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**Sue Cox Jones**  
I agree, but I don't think the media should address any coach by their first name. They should ALL be called Coach. I heard a young reporter call the new Auburn football coach "Bryan" in his initial interview. Very inappropriate!! Thank you Mr. Karle for bringing this to light.

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1 reply

**Donna Christie**  
and coach Saban say "Miss Terry" as a sign of respect for his very own wife

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**Tacqua Clemon** replied · 2 replies

**Allison Teague Bell**  
YES!! I heard a reporter call him Nick last week and I looked at my husband and said, "Can you imagine a reporter calling Bear Bryant, Bear?" He was always Coach Bryant or Coach. When did it become okay to call coaches by their first names? They've earned the respect that comes with the title Coach and should be addressed as such. Thank you for pointing this out!

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**Vickie Beth Tennent**  
Some of this is a Southern thing and I can say that because I have lived all over the Northeast. Southerners are taught to respect others and therefore you have Miss or Mrs. Terry and Coach Saban vs. Terry and Nick. Even typing that is hard!!!!

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**Mary Ann Blaylock**  
Well said! Thank you for standing up for the respect Coach Saban deserves! I, too, have noticed this. Coach Saban has created records not often made...he has earned the respect of the masses, especially the media.

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**Jane Green Deveraux**  
Perfectly said! She should know better because she should have been taught that when she was growing up as a child. That's what I taught my daughter to do when she was growing up to put a title on an older person. It is just respect.

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**Kay Yarbrough...** replied · 1 reply

**Debbie Hall**  
Thank you so much for addressing this issue. I see it as disrespect. I grew up during the Coach Bryant era. My parents nor my cousin, who played for him, only called him Coach Bryant. He worked very hard to earn this respect. I think just as Coach Bryant, Coach Saban has earned this respect as well! Thank you, Rick Karle!!! Roll Tide!!!!

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1 reply

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