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Bowden film kicks off Tallahassee Film Festival

George Butler's 'The Good Fight' debuts at FSU

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As coach Bobby Bowden might say, "Dadgum, that was a good little movie."

Nearly 200 film and football fans turned out on a rainy Thursday night for a sneak peek at a new documentary about Bowden and the Seminoles football team during the stormy 2006 season. The movie, tentatively titled "The Good Fight," kicked off the inaugural Tallahassee Film Festival at Florida State's Student Life Cinema.

"I've got great affection for this city and the Bowden family and the Seminoles team," "Good Fight" director George Butler said before the screening. "People were unfailingly polite to my crew."

The documentary takes viewers into weight rooms, locker rooms, practice fields, the Bowden home and more for an intimate look at one of the most famous college football programs in the country.

"If you walk down a street in New York, where I have an office, no one will know who Bobby Bowden is," Butler said. "I think this film will change that forever."

Butler's other films include "Pumping Iron," which launched the career of Arnold Schwarzenegger.

"I think it captured (the FSU football program) very well," Seminoles team chaplain Clint Purvis said after the movie. "I loved it. I think he's a talented director."

"You don't have to be an FSU fan to love that film," FSU alum and lobbyist Brecht Heuchan said. "I don't know Bobby Bowden personally but I feel like I do after that."

Butler said he hopes to have the film finished and ready for theatrical release in eight months. He said he's still going through the 300 hours of footage he shot between 2005 and 2006.

The Tallahassee Film Festival continues its run today and Saturday with more than 50 movies being shown in venues around town. Many of the screenings are free. (See today's Limelight for full details.) The festival also includes a special "Starfest" Downtown GetDown that runs from 6 to 10 p.m. today on the Adams Street Commons and is free to the public.