

# College World Series

Friday, June 21, 2019

Omaha, Nebraska

**Tim Corbin**

**Ethan Paul**

**Pat DeMarco**

Vanderbilt Commodores

Vanderbilt - 3, Louisville - 2

TIM CORBIN: Well, I thought it was a very well-played college baseball game. Certainly emotional for both sides. When you get to this point, you're trying to separate yourself from another championship team because really all these teams right now are championship level, and Dan's team certainly is that.

But I thought we got a very good pitching performance. We certainly had to stabilize their offense because runs were very expensive tonight. Luke Smith certainly pitched extremely well. He frustrated us. He was landing a lot of pitches. He was landing his off-speed pitches and secondary pitches, and we couldn't get anything going.

We had some good base running in that one inning where we did score when Harry went from first to third. But then just at the end, we got some very clutch hits, JJ finding first base and Ethan putting a good swing down in the corner and JJ just getting around the bases on what was a very tough, close play, and then Patrick just putting the ball in play with two strikes with a guy at third base.

But it was well defended. Certainly ended emotionally. And, yeah, just a tough, well-played game by both sides.

**Q. For Pat, from us watching from afar, it looked like the shouting match between Smith and Julian in the eighth stirred you guys up a little bit. How much do you think that had to do with the rally in the ninth?**

PAT DeMARCO: You know, I think that's just competition. He was pitching a great game, and he was keeping us off balance, and he was feeling confident. You know, in the middle of competition, you can't really say that he's being unsportsmanlike or anything like that. We try not to give energy to the other team. We know how that works. So we just tried to recenter ourselves, come back and focus the energy on us, and we came out on the right side.



**Q. Ethan, can you walk us through that last at-bat and what's going through your head as he's pitching to you?**

ETHAN PAUL: Yeah, I mean, hats off to him. He pitched a really good game. His pitch count was I think over 110, so he went deep into that game and walked JJ on some close pitches. But I knew that he was close to his end, so I just wanted to get a pitch that I could handle. I wasn't going to expand for him or chase or anything like that. Just got in a hitter's count and got the pitch I was looking for and put a barrel on it.

**Q. Ethan, you'd already seen him three times. I think he struck you out a couple times. That fourth time through the lineup, do you feel like having seen him already three times in the game that gives you a little extra insight into how to attack him, and what did he wind up giving you there?**

ETHAN PAUL: Yeah, any time you can see a pitcher four times, it helps. It doesn't matter who it is. But at the end of the day I was just going to go with my approach and my plan, and I wasn't going to give him anything on the corners or anything like that, I was just going to look for a good pitch to hit, and that's just what I got. I got a heater pretty center cut and just put a good barrel on it.

**Q. Pat, Ethan, last year in the super regional in Game 3 you guys had the two big hits in the bottom of the ninth, still just wasn't enough to pull it out. This year ninth inning you two guys do it again. What does it mean to get it done and send you guys to the finals?**

ETHAN PAUL: Yeah, that's a big moment. This team is special because no one really cares who steps up and gets that big hit or that big play. I mean, I can say honestly I think that this team just wants to compete and play all nine. We knew we had to play a complete game to beat those guys tonight, and some guys stepped up when we needed them.

**Q. Ethan, a long time ago, it seemed like it was forever ago, Mason pitched a phenomenal game to keep you guys in it. What can you say about the poise that he had to protect that 1-0 lead?**

ETHAN PAUL: Yeah, he's a mature kid. He's pitched a

lot in his career already here, and I knew that he was going to give us a quality start. He's always done that for us. Whether he doesn't start off like he wants to, he's going to bounce back, or if he comes out pitching well, we're always leaning on him and he comes up in those big moments for us, so the guys trust him a lot, and he came up for us today.

**Q. Ethan, can you discuss the play where the infield is in, ball comes to you, not your glove hand side, and you throw a strike to home?**

ETHAN PAUL: We train that so much back at Vandy. I just didn't want to rush the play, just trust myself and make a good throw. In those moments you try not to do too much and you just don't panic and you just make a good play.

**Q. Just more broadly, what can you say about the effort you've got on the mound from all your guys this week? Seems like they've been able to set the tone and keep the other team at bay and give your offense time to get to work?**

TIM CORBIN: Yes, they have. They've followed each other very well, Drake certainly in the first game against Louisville. He was coming off a couple starts that weren't Drake-like, but I thought he centered himself very well and pitched extremely well.

And Kumar, I thought that outing was outstanding, just to come into that environment for the first time. And tonight Mason did everything that he could just to keep us in the game, and he did. He left with a zero on the scoreboard, so he gave us a chance to win. And he's been very consistent, too. That's the word I would use with all of them.

**Q. Tim, along the lines of what I had asked Pat about, the words back and forth in the eighth inning, do you think he was basically saying that they needed to control their emotions; that that's what's important there, an emotional ending?**

TIM CORBIN: Yeah, we talked about that before the game started. I thought it would get to that point at some time, and I thought the most important thing was containing emotions and containing adrenaline at certain points, and I felt it could happen.

I knew at some point they would land a punch, and it was going to be a matter of how we responded, and I thought the guys did a nice job. You can't play this game angry. You just can't. You have to contain your emotions. You have to breathe, and you have to center yourself in order to deliver a pitch or get the barrel to the ball. Ethan did that. That was a huge at-bat. But Ethan has been a part of a lot of big at-bats at Vanderbilt.

**Q. Coach, there's a lot of talk about how explosive your offense is, but this is a game that you were kind of held at bay for eight innings and then you get that chance to kind of break through in the ninth. What do you think it says about just how difficult it is to hold this offense down all the way through the game? And in some ways it is almost more impressive these guys were able to rally late at the end when they've been shut down all game?**

TIM CORBIN: Yes, because of the frustration that exists throughout a game when that typically doesn't happen, but you have to give all the credit to Luke Smith. They put everything on that kid's shoulders tonight, and he pitched into the ninth inning and gave them a chance to win that ballgame. He was landing pitches, he was -- when he was behind in the count, he was landing changeups and breaking balls.

I mean, that kid did such a quality job of containing us, and it's not easy to do. I've seen this team for a long period of time right now. You have to really concentrate for nine hitters.

I give the credit to him, and they played good defense behind him, as well.

**Q. Now that you've locked your spot up in the finals, what are some of your initial thoughts on facing off against Michigan?**

TIM CORBIN: I don't have thoughts right now about that. You know, after Erik completed that win today, I was very happy for him. I mean, it goes without saying. We spend a lot of time together, our families spend a lot of time together.

But I think right now I just want to enjoy this win tonight and focus on the kids and the ability just to decompress and take a breath -- them, us, everyone. That was an emotional game in so many different ways.

It's tough to end a season that way. In Dan's regard, he's going to coach a bunch of our kids this summer, and he's such a good guy, but from our vantage point, just to kind of wind down a little bit, and thank goodness we don't have to play tomorrow.

**Q. Tim, Tyler Brown shuts the door again. I think he broke the school record for single season saves tonight. Can you talk about what it's like to have a guy you can really lean on in big pressure situations like tonight?**

TIM CORBIN: He contains his emotions unlike anyone I've ever seen before, in terms of what I've coached, at least at Vanderbilt, in terms of getting the ball. Those saves, I understand what the statistic save means, but his saves are critical. If you go back and look at the

nature of each one of those, his ability to focus and his ability to execute and his ability to stay in his lane and not get outside of himself is admirable. That's a wrestler, that's a dad, that's a -- he's still a sophomore in college. He doesn't look like one, but he still is. He's still 19 years old, 20 years old.

But his ability to contain his emotions is elite, extreme. It's extremely good.

**Q. Can you just speak to the ninth inning? You have the game on the line, you've got Tyler out there, you get the tough break, Harrison makes the great play to end it. How did that look from the dugout?**

TIM CORBIN: Geez, I don't know. He got a good burst on the ball. It was a hell of a play. I mean, you've got a ball that just shot up about 12 feet in the air, and it's in between the pitcher and the second baseman. I mean, yeah, when he caught the ball, I thought it was just such an outstanding play right there. Ethan's was great early in the game.

But you make a good pitch, and there were some bizarre happenings tonight. It's just one of those games. Ball hits the bag, come-backer that wasn't handled that rolls past Ethan, goes into left field. That was just kind of a different game. But I've seen the balls hit the bags here in Omaha before. That's how we lost in 2015. That's not much fun. But my mind didn't go there. I felt like Tyler could contain that inning.

**Q. Tim, we've asked you a lot of things about your balance in your lineup and there's no one best player, there's many best players. Does that come in most useful in games like this that's close, to have that balance across the lineup where the pressure is shared among the whole lineup?**

TIM CORBIN: I believe so, because I never -- as I tell the kids, I never look at our lineup and go, this is the leadoff guy. I just go, we have to line nine guys up, and we have a lot of -- just have a lot of confidence in each kid and their skill set. What I have the most confidence in is their ability to understand their skill set and not go outside of that.

But Smith did a nice job of frustrating enough to where we did leave that skill set. We couldn't get to the backside of the field consistently, and because of that, balls were left in the air and balls were left on the ground in places that they could field and defend.