

College World Series: Baton Rouge Regional

Friday, June 2, 2023

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Tulane Green Wave

Coach Jay Uhlman

Brennan Lambert

Postgame Press Conference



LSU - 7, Tulane - 2

COACH UHLMAN: Congratulations to our opponent. Their guy pitched really well. I think our guys were up to the challenge. We had a couple spots where maybe things could have changed the fortune of the game a little bit and made it tighter earlier.

Dylan Carmouche on short rest went out there and battled and did what he did to give the ball to Michael Lombardi. I thought Michael Lombardi pitched really well and hung up some zeros and gave us a chance to get in there.

And the guy to my left put a big charge in one to get us close. And the fact that they ran schemes out for 120-plus pitches and didn't go to their bullpen against us, I'd like to take that as a measure of respect. And we'll live to fight another day and be back tomorrow whoever our opponent is.

Q. What was on your mind when you went to bat and you hit that big-time home run to get you all back into the ball game?

BRENNAN LAMBERT: I was just trying to get a fastball, something to get out over the plate and kind of stay with my approach, middle backside. I got a good pitch to hit. The chips fell that way. So it was pretty special.

Q. What was the toughest thing about Paul Skenes? Obviously he throws 100 miles per hour but you guys got some good swings against him. Just everybody struggles against him overall.

BRENNAN LAMBERT: He's a great pitcher with great stuff. He came right at you. I think that's the toughest part about him. He's going to throw a lot of strikes and put the pressure on you.

And I think we did a good job with him, I think, and we put some good swings on him. But he just comes right at you. That's what makes him pretty good.

Q. How confident are you heading into tomorrow the way you guys are playing right now?

BRENNAN LAMBERT: I really like our chances tomorrow. We're swinging the bat well, we're throwing the ball well and playing good defense. And if we keep it up we can play until Sunday or even Monday.

Q. Did your strategy kind of change a little bit when Skenes got the start today?

COACH UHLMAN: No, I mean, I think we were in our minds thinking it was going to be him or Hurd. And we were prepared for all three of them, actually, if they even went to Floyd.

I wasn't surprised by it. But again we were prepared for that announcement.

Q. You said it was a little measure of respect that you felt like they would throw Skenes against your team. What does he do so well? Obviously his talent is top tier, but how does he mix it up?

COACH UHLMAN: He uses all quadrants of the plate, in and out and up, and spins the curveball. And he's a big, tall glass of water. When you're big like that you create angle and at times makes it difficult to square guys up.

And when you have the numbers that you have and you've won and you're used to doing that, you tend to have a different kind of confidence and swagger about you.

And he's a horse. So he can -- I'm surprised actually that he hadn't gone longer than seven innings before and he's just a competitive kid. And I think the fact that he went to Air Force, I think, speaks volumes about who he is as a human being. I have a lot of respect for the program that he came from.

Q. Any team that faces Paul Skenes knows they're



going to have to be perfect to hang in there, and there were a couple plays early defensively on lead-off guys that led to runs. Do you think it could have been a different game late without those things happening early?

COACH UHLMAN: I thought three probably critical things early, the hit and run with LaPrairie that he hit the ball to the wall. Had that not gotten over his head, like I said, that loosens things up probably. A lead-off walk and a lead-off error and both come home to roost.

So again, like we always talk about with each other, championship baseball, you've got to play a good defense and pitch and not give away free runs. And unfortunately we did that, which again makes it more difficult and challenging to come back against anyone, but particularly against a guy like Paul Skenes.

Q. How good do you feel going into tomorrow? There were a lot of good swings off of Skenes today, even though you only had two runs to show for it?

COACH UHLMAN: The resilience our guys have shown all year and just the mentality with which they're going about it, I feel really good about it. We have our full pen and Ricky Castro and Billy Price. And so we feel good where we're at. And we just take tomorrow as it comes. And our back's been against the wall all season. So what's another game to have your back against the wall? So we'll be ready. The guys will be ready.

Q. Any pitcher you've coached against or played against you can compare this guy to?

COACH UHLMAN: Funny you should ask. Actually my son, who is our batboy, I looked at him -- when I was an assistant at Nevada, we played against some guy named Stephen Strasburg, and then one other guy very familiar, at Rice, a guy Jeff Niemann, similar, tall build, angle, to me those guys were in a league in their own. My first comp to him was Strasburg.

Q. Can you comment a little bit more on Lombardi's performance? And, also, you did take him out with two outs. Was that pitch limit or what was the thinking there?

COACH UHLMAN: In retrospect, like I looked at Iz, said, shoot, I should have left Lombardi in. He had pitched us for us at the end of the week in Clearwater. He had done his job, I felt like, and just I thought we could go to a matchup where Tommy White splits were like .250 against left-handers, and like .460 against right-handers.

So I went to Cleav, didn't work out. Went right back to Prigge against Tre' Morgan, who had the opposite splits too where he was well worse off against right-handers than left-handers.

Those two moves didn't pan out. I feel bad for those kids, the way their outing went, their one-hitter went. But Colin Reilly came in a challenging environment. For me, it was a learning experience for those three young guys. They got their feet wet in a really fun environment. And I think that will serve them well as they continue to move forward.

Like I said, Colin Reilly came in, gave up the one run with a walk. He did get ahead, 0-2, came in, got a groundout. Proud of him for that. But, yes, in hindsight, certainly it didn't work out, but based on the matchups in terms of right/left, I thought it was the right move.

Q. Who is going to start for you tomorrow?

COACH UHLMAN: I would assume it's probably going to be Ricky.

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