

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Tuesday, May 25, 2021

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

South Carolina Gamecocks

Wes Clarke

Postgame Press Conference



We had a chance to score there. It wasn't our hitters. He threw well, but if anyone's on the mound, we can get a ball and score a guy on third base.

Alabama 9, South Carolina 3

THE MODERATOR: Thank you for joining us, Wes. If you could open up with a statement, talk about how things went for you today, and we'll start taking questions.

WES CLARKE: Yeah, I think we're a much better team than they played today. It sucks it was single elimination, and we played bad on the day we needed to play good. It sucks right now, and we're going to learn from it. This isn't going to happen next week, and it's going to be a completely different story once we get to regionals.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Wes Clarke now.

Q. You've obviously got a long time between now and regional play. What do you focus on offensively over these next eight days or so?

WES CLARKE: Well, clutch hitting is definitely one thing we need to work on. We get hits, we do get people on base, but we have trouble scoring them right now. We have to do live bats with our pitchers so they stay in shape. We have to put ourselves in RBI situations and wreck it out until we get done, get comfortable scoring runs.

Q. Wes, just what was their pitcher doing early in the game to keep you guys in? Seemed like you had chances early with clutch hitting but couldn't get it done. How frustrating was that, especially early in the game?

WES CLARKE: He has a very good arm and had good stuff, but really it doesn't matter who we're facing. Obviously, we pitched well. It doesn't matter who we're facing or what we need to do. It comes from us. We need to get our jobs done and get them done early because the earlier you score runs, the more likely you are to win a game because of momentum and everything.

Q. Where's the confidence level of this team offensively right now? You obviously had good outings and bad outings over the last couple weeks. Just confidence level, where are you right now?

WES CLARKE: We're all very confident. I think we hit well today. We had like seven or eight hits, scored a couple runs, a couple big hits. We're good, and we know we're good; and we know what we need to do, and we've got to do it. Sometimes we struggle in those situations where we've got to score runs. We've got runners in scoring position, RBIs, at bats, and we're good. We're really good.

We just need to capitalize on those moments, and that will come. Especially with this week, that's what we're going to focus on, and we're going to get better, and we're going to be ready for regionals. I'd say we're very confident.

Q. How frustrating is a day like this, obviously knowing a win goes a long way to postseason. How frustrating is a loss like this for you guys?

WES CLARKE: It's very frustrating, especially when all of us planned to go pretty deep in this tournament. That's why we set up the game we did today with using a lot of guys so we could have our big arms ready for the next games. You know, it just happened to not work out. It's very frustrating, but at the end of the day, when the season comes to the end and our team's in Omaha, this loss isn't going to matter one bit.

Q. How much do you guys as players pay attention to the hosting race and the RPI, strength of schedule, all that kind of stuff? I know Coach Kingston talked a lot about the strong schedule that you guys have played. Is that something you pay attention to, or do you try not to get too wrapped in that?

WES CLARKE: We don't get too wrapped up in it. If you tell us to go play somewhere, we go play somewhere, and we'll bring it. Obviously, we like to play at home, but at the

end of the day, we're playing the same game, same field,
same team, and we're ready to go wherever we have to go.

We don't really buy into it. People can say what they want,
they can write what they want, but at the end of the day,
we're playing a different team, and that's what we're ready
for.

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