

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

Alabama Crimson Tide

Brad Bohannon

Postgame Press Conference



Alabama 3, Tennessee 2

THE MODERATOR: Coach, before you take questions, will you please give us your general thoughts on the game today.

BRAD BOHANNON: What a crazy day at the ballpark, goodness gracious, in every way, shape, and form. Just a lot of crazy plays.

Tennessee played a great game. Really proud of our kids. We could have easily folded or cracked after those defensive miscues in the 7th inning. Kids just keep coming, that's what they do. This group is as resilient and as good at dealing with diversity as I've ever had. Just really happy for them if they can get some short-term satisfaction today. Just real proud of them.

I know we'll talk about these guys, but Jacob McNairy just gave us a great start. Chase Lee was amazing out of the pen, and Dio got the big hit. It was a really, really good day.

Q. Coach, you said it yourself, solid start on the mound for Jacob McNairy today, and just as impressive, Lee was able to get out of quite a few jams there starting in the 7th. Talk about their performances on the mound, particularly Lee and how he was able to follow through for his longest outing of the season.

BRAD BOHANNON: Well, Jacob got us off to a great start. He's coming off a little injury, and he threw two innings on Saturday against Mississippi State and looked great. Really we're just hoping to get two innings out of him today, and he had two quicker innings, and I said, hey, man, how do you feel? Do you think you could get one more? He did that, and then after the third, go tell him he's done, and he's like the most respectful, best kid in the world. Coach, why are you taking me out, man? I'm hitting my spots. I

feel good. I can rest all summer. I said, well, all right, but you'll be on a short leash. So went back out and kept going and pitched great.

Chase has just been a rock in the pen for us for three years now. At that point, once Tennessee tied the game, J.J. and I just kind of said, hey, this is Chase's game, just made big pitch after big pitch and kept his composure when things didn't go great behind him. Just very symbolic of the type of kid he is.

Q. I just wanted to ask you about Dio. I know he'd had some struggles down the stretch, but he seems to be rounding back into the form we saw early. He's had some really big at bats in this tournament so far. What did you guys kind of tell him before the big hit to retake the lead in the 11th?

BRAD BOHANNON: Dio kind of got a little bit out of whack. We don't talk mechanics a lot, especially during the season, but he kind of got a little bit out of whack with the swing and made some nice adjustments there where he can repeat a little better.

He's just got that clutch gene. Whatever it is, he's got it. He's a guy that I like having up with people on base, especially late in the game. There was nothing special there. Hunley for Tennessee is a really good pitcher and really pitches off his fastball. We were kind of just saying, get a good pitch to hit, make sure they pitch the fastball down because he's really hard to hit if you're swinging at pitches at the top of the zone or above the strike zone. Dio obviously got a good pitch to hit and put a good swing on it.

Q. You kind of mentioned in your opening just some crazy plays out there. What was your vantage point there in the bottom of the 9th on the runner interference call?

BRAD BOHANNON: I really think they got all the calls right. I really do. I just think -- I'm going to give the league a compliment. Adding video review has been amazing. It just takes all the emotion out of it. As a coach or as a player, all you can do is ask them to take a look. I thought they got all the calls right. I really do.



You know, you don't notice a good umpire. You only notice the ones when they make mistakes, and I'm just so thankful that my profession is not like that. I would hate for coaching to be the exact same way.

Q. You guys, like you said, there were a lot of calls where they had to go to replay, and they got the decisions right in the end, but how big was this game and being able to come back from that 7th inning to win it in the 11th for you guys' NCAA Tournament hopes?

BRAD BOHANNON: It's big on so many levels. You can't win this tournament going through the loser's bracket. I'm sure nobody's ever lost playing one on Tuesday then lost on Wednesday and played straight through. I can't imagine that would ever happen.

So it just buys us two more days. I just keep saying, I'm not even worried about the NCAA Tournament, not even worried about winning this tournament. I just want to extend this season. I absolutely love these kids. We've got the best kids in the world from great families. I love working with them, and I just don't want it to end. I just want some more time with these guys. That's the biggest motivation for me personally of wanting to win.

Yeah, you get 12 of 17 in league play, you'd better go pretty deep in this thing to be on the bubble or to get in. So I'd feel a lot better if we win another game or two.

Q. This question is kind of a two-parter. First off, the news on Drew Williamson on Monday sounded pretty bleak, yet he was out there in the game today. How is he feeling?

The second part of my question is what's the pitching plan moving forward tomorrow, and have you decided who the starter is for tomorrow yet?

BRAD BOHANNON: Yeah, so Drew just got his cast off yesterday. We put him in to play defense with stitches in his hand, and that will tell you the type of competitor and warrior that he is. We wouldn't do that if our medical staff wasn't comfortable with him playing defense for half an inning, but he's not to the point where he's cleared to swing the bat, but he's an elite defender at first base. If we have a lead tomorrow late, then he's going to be in there to play defense as long as he's able and willing to do it.

I think tomorrow we're going to start Chase Lee. I'm just kidding. He would probably do it, but we're going to start Dylan Smith tomorrow.

Q. I know you just said that you gave away your pitching plans, but as far as the bullpen, it's really been a strength the first two days. Where do you think it is? Obviously, Chase Lee exerted a ton -- 80-plus pitches. How do you like how your bullpen is set up right now?

BRAD BOHANNON: You can never have enough pitching, but I feel good coming to the park tomorrow. Dylan Smith is going to give us a great start, like he has every time this year. Connor Shamblin is still available, and Landon Green is still available, along with some other guys.

As far as trying to get to the weekend or get to Sunday, it's important to win tomorrow so you get that day off on Friday. We'll give them everything we've got tomorrow and see how it goes. If we're playing Friday morning, then we'll just kind of see what we got and roll with it.

Q. Just what are your preliminary thoughts on Florida? A team you guys weren't able to face in the regular season, a team that railroaded Mississippi State. What are your thoughts on them?

BRAD BOHANNON: You can ask me that question every year the last ten years, and I'd tell you the same thing. One of the best teams in the country, uber well talented, really well coached. They're the total package. They look like a team that's heating up at the right time. Tremendous, tremendous challenge, and I know they'll get our best effort, and we're going to have to play really, really well to beat them.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports