

# Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Wednesday, May 26, 2021

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

## Georgia Bulldogs

## Scott Stricklin

### Postgame Press Conference

Arkansas 11, Georgia 2

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by head coach Scott Stricklin. Coach, before we take questions, if you would please give us your general thoughts on tonight's game.

SCOTT STRICKLIN: Arkansas is a really good team. We certainly didn't play well enough to make it a good baseball game. When you play a team like Arkansas -- they're No. 1 in the country for a reason -- you have to be at your best. Way too many free bases. We didn't compete well enough at the plate. We didn't make plays when we needed to make them, and they did.

Lockhart was really, really good, and they made plays behind him, and they had good at bats. They got a lot of free bases, and they took advantage of them.

**Q. We assumed -- you never said that Liam Sullivan was definitely going to start. You kept that open. I think I understand why. I assume he's okay. Was that just kind of a strategic thing that might not have gone the way you hoped, or just what went into the decision to go with Goldstein maybe rather than Liam?**

SCOTT STRICKLIN: We want Liam to be 100 percent, and he would have been one day short of full rest, and he is a freshman. He's been in the rotation now for three weeks, and we wanted to make sure he was 100 percent. Yesterday before the game, we asked him how he's feeling, and he gave us the pretty good. I feel pretty good. That kind of told us, okay. When you tell us you're great -- maybe he'll learn from that. When he tells us he's great, he's good to go.

We wanted to make sure that he's 100 percent. We knew we had two games left when we won last night, and we wanted Liam to be 100 percent. He'll be 100 percent ready to go tomorrow. But, yes, he's in 100 percent condition,



and he will start tomorrow.

**Q. Obviously, the issue today was just walks, free passes, wild. Were you surprised that just as a team you just didn't play tighter than you normally do?**

SCOTT STRICKLIN: Yeah, that's what I told the team. That's not who we are. We've been a tough and gritty team all year long. Those first five innings, I didn't even recognize that team. We've had some struggles with some walks, especially with our young guys, and we threw a lot of young guys tonight.

When you play Arkansas, you've got to play really clean baseball, and we didn't do that. We didn't make plays. We made a couple of errors, walked way too many guys. We didn't compete at the plate. So the first five innings, they really took it to us. And after that, the game settled down, and I thought our guys -- especially when we made some subs, I thought those guys competed.

Early on, we didn't do anything to give ourselves a chance to win.

**Q. You mentioned some of the substitutions today, a lot of them. Is that just indicative of where the score was, or what were some aspect about some of the other guys that you weren't necessarily pleased with the way they were competing tonight?**

SCOTT STRICKLIN: A little bit of both. We need to get Fernando out of there. He's catching a lot, and he's getting beat up back there. Need to get Fernando out of there. You know, Kam Guidry, Randon Jernigan, Luke Wagner, Josh Stinson, all those guys, they play a role on our team. I wanted to kind of send a message, hey, we need to compete. There's guys over here who want to play.

Bottom line, we weren't playing very well. We needed to make a couple changes and light some fires. I think the guys will respond. After the game, they were ready to go. They're ticked off. They should be. We all are. They've got to turn the page and get ready to go.

More than anything, it was just making sure nobody gets

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hurt, get through this thing once the game got out of hand, and give these other guys some opportunities. And I thought they did a nice job.

**Q. That high pop dropped out there in short right field, was that kind of the wave that started it all for you tonight?**

SCOTT STRICKLIN: Well, what started was the two walks before that. Bloops don't hurt you if you don't walk anybody. At the end of the day, the free passes killed us. They scored 11 runs on 7 hits, and that's not a very good line score. We've got to clean that up. We've got Liam Sullivan ready to go tomorrow. We've got -- the bullpen is going to be in pretty good shape. We'll be ready to compete tomorrow, whoever we play, whether it's Ole Miss or Vanderbilt. I know our guys will turn the page and be ready to go.

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