

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Saturday, May 28, 2022

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

Florida Gators

Kevin O'Sullivan

Jud Fabian

Timmy Manning

Postgame Press Conference



weekends of ranked opponents, so we knew we had a good shot at winning a bunch of ballgames, and we just got together and made sure we all played together.

Q. Jud, you scored 20 runs today; what was working for the offense, and does that momentum carry from one game to the other?

JUD FABIAN: Yeah, I think the momentum that we had in the first game kind of rolled over to the second game. Hitting is contagious, and we had a bunch of hits today and scored a bunch of runs. We're going to look to keep that going tomorrow.

Q. Timmy, you haven't pitched in nearly two months; what went through your mind when you found out you were going to get the ball today against this quality of opponent and how do you dial in after that kind of a layoff and getting back in there?

TIMMY MANNING: Just go out and execute. I'm here for a reason. The beginning of the year didn't go the way I wanted it to, but that's the game of baseball. You come back, work hard, and when your opportunity is ready you make the most of it. That's what I did.

Q. Jud, what do you make of the strides that you've made between where you were at this time last summer and now?

JUD FABIAN: Yeah, you know, I had a bunch of strikeouts last year and I really put some time and effort into fixing that over the off-season. The draft didn't work out the way I wanted it to last year, so came back here, and it's been one of the best years I've had playing baseball. Having the opportunity to come back and make a run in the postseason like we do and we have, that's what I wanted to do and accomplish, and I think we've done that.

Q. Sully, kind of coming into the season, you were pretty adamant that this team would be in a really good spot at the end of the year, maybe not so much in a great spot at the beginning of the year. What have you seen from this club, both just clubhouse wise, because I know that was a concern last year, clubhouse and

Florida 9, Texas A&M 0

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: Well, I think the story of the game obviously today was pitching. Timmy gave us a great start, five scoreless, and then Fisher came in and threw four scoreless to help us save a few arms for tomorrow. But offensively we were really good all day, and I think some of the things that kind of go unnoticed, Josh Rivera had a really good game today offensively, Ty Evans made three outstanding plays in right field, and we asked Mac Guscette to catch 18 innings today and just did an incredible job with the pitching staff, had the big three-run homer in the first game and in the ninth and had a key line drive to drive in two.

I mean, it was a long day at the field, but it was a lot of fun. I'm really proud of the way we competed, and now we have an opportunity to play one more game.

Q. Timmy, after the season you've had, what does a game like today mean to you personally?

TIMMY MANNING: I just came in and did my job, got my name called on and just executed. Tried to win the ballgame and put my team in the position that we're in now.

Q. For Jud, since the Tennessee series it seems like this has been a totally different team. What's been different in the clubhouse? What's been kind of the different vibe of this team since those two series?

JUD FABIAN: We kind of got together and we talked with each other and we kind of came to the conclusion that we needed to play together, and I think we've played together throughout since you said, when we played Tennessee. We had our tough stretch of I think it was four straight



what you've seen on the field?

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: Well, I mean, I very rarely ever go in the clubhouse. I don't know the vibe. But I can tell you that through the course of the season, we played a very difficult schedule early on, and we kind of knew with the youth that we had in the bullpen and we had -- it was really hard to define roles.

I think honestly when Hunter went down, the Vanderbilt weekend, it kind of threw us a little bit into a tail spin. Now you've got to readjust your rotation. We lost Pierce Coppola after opening weekend, and so we had a lot of moving parts and we didn't have a whole lot of answers quite honestly, and the competition we were playing was really good. It just took us some time to kind of figure it out.

But you know, I made a joke of this before, but it's almost like we're running a day care center with our pitching staff. It's just freshman after freshman after freshman. But it's just taking some time.

Like I said, I was hoping we would figure it out a little bit sooner, but sometimes in this game it doesn't happen at the exact time you want to, in that time frame. But we're starting to play really good, and I said this in the postgame, but our defense has been like really good. I think it helps our young pitchers that have trust in their stuff a little bit more, and I thought offensively we've been really good the entire year. We've gone through spurts, but where we weren't as good as I had hoped, but for the most part by and large we've been pretty good offensively.

Q. After getting run ruled by Texas A&M and only getting one hit earlier this week, what can you attribute to the massive growth in the offense today that you showed against the Aggies compared to the last time out?

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: I don't know. I mean, it's a pretty resilient group. I think we faced a very similar pitcher in Noland on Arkansas. The things that we addressed about making adjustments with spin, I think -- Noland pitched really good against us when Arkansas came to our place, and I think we had a really good approach with him, and they're very similar. They kind of rely on their breaking ball when they have to make a big pitch, they usually go to the spin. But I thought that game probably helped us confidence-wise, and we made some adjustments.

Q. After the fifth inning, Timmy got really fired up and did a fist bump and everything and in here he was kind of quiet. What do you think this outing meant to him?

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: I think it meant a lot to him. The year hasn't gone exactly the way he's wanted it to. But he got an opportunity today, and I think I'll echo what he said, that he was presented with an opportunity and took full advantage of it. He pitched really, really good. Pitched really good for us today.

Q. You shut out a team that hadn't been shut out all year, scored in seven of nine innings. Is that as complete a performance in all three phases as you've seen all year against an opponent of that caliber?

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: I think we've played some really complete games down the stretch. I think it all started when we went to Mississippi State, and that's a hard place to play. We won all three games. Missouri had been playing really well up to that point, too, and we went up there and won two out of three. Then we have to come back, we got the midweek game against Florida State, that's not easy, then we won on a walk-off.

I just think we kind of came together at the right time. You've got to remember we were 6-12 in the league at one point. It was either we've got to get going or it's going to be an uphill battle.

Sometimes when your back is against the wall you have to respond, and our team at that point did.

Q. What went into the decision to go with Timmy today just with the guys that you had available? Obviously it's hard at this point in the tournament, but he hasn't pitched in two months. What went into it before you decided to go with him?

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: Well, he was the best guy available. It's our sixth game in five days, so when you looked at it, he gave us the best opportunity to win this ballgame. You're looking at pitching tomorrow, I have no idea what we're going to do, but we've got numbers of pitchers.

Like I said, it was our sixth game in five days. When we looked at all the pitching, he gave us the best opportunity. Really that simple.

Q. Coach, do you think you guys -- you could play Kentucky, but do you think you want a shot at Tennessee? They swept y'all.

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: I mean, we're just excited we're playing. Kentucky is playing really well, too, right now. We're just excited we have an opportunity to play tomorrow. But to pick one or the other, I'm not going to do that. Kentucky is pretty good, too.

