

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Thursday, May 25, 2023

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

Texas A&M Aggies

Coach Jim Schlossnagle

Justin Lamkin

Trevor Werner

Postgame Press Conference



Texas A&M 5, South Carolina 0

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: First of all, congratulate South Carolina on a great regular season and best wishes in their postseason. Coach Kingston, great friend of mine.

We're excited. Really proud of Justin. Had a great feel that he was going to be ready to go when I walked down. I thought I was going to be the first guy at breakfast this morning, and he beat me there, so I knew he was ready to pitch. He's a great strike thrower for us, has a great future, building this program around guys like him.

And of course Trevor, who's really stepped forward not just as a great player, he's always been that, but as a leader on our team, both with his words and with how he plays. It doesn't surprise me that he's driving in runs for us.

Q. Justin, just a broad simple question. What's the feeling on the pitching staff right now, and you have to feel like things are rolling pretty good right now.

JUSTIN LAMKIN: Yeah, no, pitching staff is doing great right now. The start of this tournament, Troy set the tone for us, and we're just trying to do as good as him or better, and that's what we're trying to do these games and go from there.

Q. Trevor, you guys feel like you're peaking at the right time. How does the success the last few days compare to the way you guys were playing in the regular season?

TREVOR WERNER: Yeah, the goal of teams, especially this time of year, is you want to be playing your best baseball going into the postseason and at the end of the

regular season.

I feel like that's where we're at right now with our pitching staff and offense, and we played great defense all year. Just feels like things are finally coming together. We've had our ups and downs this season, but we're reaching the high at the right time.

Q. Justin, certainly looks like this is a pitcher's ballpark. Could you talk about how it is pitching with this spacious dimensions out there?

JUSTIN LAMKIN: Yeah, the field plays really big, something different than we've played all year. But they've all played great behind me, a few diving catches out there. Give props to them. They did a great job. I can fill the zone, and they catch anything that goes out there.

Q. Trevor, that triple, what did you think off the bat, and did you think that the center fielder had a chance of making that play?

TREVOR WERNER: No, I thought it was gone. I thought it was out for sure. Thought I had one out yesterday, too, but we just came from Mississippi State and the ball is flying there, and then we come here and the ball is -- you feel like you touch, and I thought the guy caught it at first but kept running, and he almost made a really great play. But just got a good pitch, put a good swing on it, and just let it go.

Q. Justin, was it as easy as it looked out there against this South Carolina lineup for you?

JUSTIN LAMKIN: They're definitely good hitters. Give them props for that. But I just felt really confident, and all three of my pitches and everything was working, filling up the zone, and the team made great plays behind me.

Q. Justin, you've been coming on strong lately. Is there something you can point to specifically that you feel like maybe you've turned a corner with?

JUSTIN LAMKIN: I think just being smarter, growing as a pitcher, watching games, pitching in games, learning from



previous outings and just going from there.

Q. Would you care to comment on breaking the curse of the SEC Network in-game interview?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: I blame most of that stuff on Tom Hart, all things ESPN related. I'm kidding. He's a great friend of mine. I mean, that's a good time. It's part of the allure of being in this conference is the great relationship between the conference and the network. You get to know those people, whether it be -- I've known Dave Neal for a long time and everybody else, guys like Dellucci I coached against, Todd Walker, of course.

Yeah, it's fun. It's fun, the banter back and forth, and I am glad we -- as soon as Petry swung the bat, I was like, if he hits a homer when I'm standing here, I may quit. I may quit coaching at the moment. And then Jace made the catch. We'll see what happens tomorrow. Do not interview me when Crews and White are hitting.

Q. I'd love to get your perspective on the SEC hosting situation. We had nine teams in contention coming in here, certainly seven is the most we've ever had, and then you look around the country, the Pac-12 may only get one, Big 12 may not get any if things fall right. From your background, you have a unique perspective, and I'd love to get your thoughts.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah. Well, if the committee goes on just truly who's deserving and solely looks at that without conference bias or anything like that, then if a team is in this conference and they've -- if they deserve to host -- Kentucky deserves to host. Alabama certainly deserves to host. Outside of maybe LSU -- LSU and Florida I know are super scary, and Arkansas plays great baseball, but Alabama, they have something really unique going, even though they lost the game last night.

I think if I was on the committee, I would look at each individual situation and not compare it relative to the conference that it's in. You have to give the host sites or the bids to the teams that have truly earned them, and that would be the case, whether it was the SEC or if I was still in the Big 12, I would still feel the exact same way.

You play through this league and you play a good non-conference schedule and your RPI, I don't know why you would do anything else. The days of regionals being regional, it used to be that way, but those are gone, and they should be gone. You give it to the teams that earn it.

Q. A ton of credit to Justin, obviously, but South Carolina has really struggled offensively here the last few weeks. What do you see in them from a scouting

standpoint that you feel comfortable in sharing that's made them maybe fall off a little bit?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Well, I know they're really banged up. Wimmer is out there, he's a heck of a player and he's trying to play hurt for his team. And I've been in those situations. In 2015 had a really good team at TCU. We went to the conference tournament and we were two and out in the conference tournament, and the first text message I got when I got back to the bus was from Augie Garrido, and he said, This is the best thing that has ever happened to your team. Go home, get rest, get ready for the regional, and we went to the College World Series.

I don't know the depth of the injuries that they have. I know Messina, that's a big loss, but if they can get him back, Wimmer gets healthy, I don't know if -- are they going to get any of the pitchers back? Get one pitcher back, okay, there you go.

Sometimes just getting home and getting away from it and resting can be the very best thing, and I would certainly encourage the Gamecock fans to stay behind their team. They have a great coaching staff. They've had an awesome season. Every single team has its own story, and we saw that at Ole Miss last year. Like I said, I experienced it at TCU in a conference tournament. Just go home, get rest, and get ready to play.

Q. I'm sure there are a lot of factors that play into it, but is there something you can point to just with the way the pitching seems to be rounding into form at the right time of year?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: I think it's unique to each individual pitcher. I think Wansing, maybe pitching out of the bullpen at Mississippi State was his breakthrough moment. Lamkin and Sdao are just guys who - they've pitched enough, we've had to use them so much because of our situation that now they have some confidence, and they're not afraid to throw the ball in the strike zone, which is scary to do in this league. I get it. I get it, some of the guys you're facing and the talent.

It starts with those guys. And then tomorrow is going to be really interesting. Will Johnston, two of his last three outings have been really good since we moved him into the rotation, and this one will be one in which he didn't have to pitch out of the bullpen like a day and a half ahead of that time. So if we can get a good one out of him tomorrow, regardless of who we play, then I like our chances. Dettmer is still up and down, but those lefties are doing a great job.

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