

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Friday, May 26, 2023

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

LSU Tigers

Coach Jay Johnson

Cade Beloso

Postgame Press Conference



Texas A&M 5, LSU 4

JAY JOHNSON: Congratulations to Texas A&M on a good game, and for us, we look forward to the NCAA tournament.

Q. Cade, your final Hoover trip here. What do you take away from this?

CADE BELOSO: Yeah, it's such a great atmosphere. Credit the city of Hoover for putting on such a spectacular event. We love playing here. It's such, like I said, a cool environment. You just see all kinds of different type of stuff that you don't usually see, kids rolling downhill and stuff like that. It's just the best teams in the best conference come to play here, so you really can't ask for much more.

Q. What do you take away in terms of what we need to improve on as a team as you go into the NCAA tournament?

CADE BELOSO: Yeah, we could always clean up every aspect of the game. We're always looking to improve and get better on. We did some good things today. We did some things that we need to improve on, and there's no doubt we're going to fix them in practice and come out fiery on Friday, whoever we're playing, and after that we're going to get ready for Saturday and play whoever then. We know we need to improve on, and we're going to get it done.

Q. Despite the loss, how were you just feeling at the plate today?

CADE BELOSO: I mean, yeah, I felt pretty good. It's not about stats at this point in the season, though. It's about wins. That's the most important stat. We didn't get that done today, so that's the only thing we're focused on is

winning at this point.

Q. Jay, can we get a status update on Tommy White?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, he couldn't play today.

Q. With the left runners on base today, what do you think sort of was the crux of the issue there?

JAY JOHNSON: Different at different times. We've just got to do better, and then we've been phenomenal at runners on third and less than two outs for years, and were not very good today. We'll get better at that.

Q. Coach, it seemed like you guys came out a little flat. Did you see that, or is that just me?

JAY JOHNSON: I did not see that. I thought Ty had pitched well again, which was great. I think we were in control of the game for five innings. I think we could have put ourselves in more control of the game, and against a good offense. I mean, it's the same team that was in Omaha last year, as old a team as there is out there. You want to create distance, and we didn't do that.

When you give guys like Haas and Moss and Werner chances, Bost, they're going to capitalize.

I think if we could have created a little more distance, would have taken a little pressure off the pitching staff and would have been in a better spot, especially there at the end of the game.

I didn't see flat. I saw we were out of character in some at-bats today.

Q. What are the takeaways you get from this tournament heading into the postseason?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, it's a great event. Wish we were playing tomorrow, whether that was winning yesterday or winning today. There's a lot to be gained from being here, and we'll use that to get ready for the NCAA Tournament. I think our team has had a great regular season, to put ourselves in one of those spots where we're going to be



one of the eight that have an opportunity to host a regional and then host a super regional if we're able to win the regional. It's a credit to the players.

We'll get back to work when we get home and get ready to go for next Friday, but it's an awesome event, other than we'd like to be playing tomorrow.

Q. Is it an injury with Tommy White, and do you see him playing?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, I do see him playing. Yeah, he'll be available to play next week.

Q. The bunt you laid down when you were trying to take the lead, was it just a little off?

JAY JOHNSON: It was 3-1 at the time and trying to get it to 4-1 and try to get some separation between our team and Texas A&M, and I actually thought the pace on the bunt was great. He got it to the ground. Just the angle wasn't very good. We almost got it done anyway. It was a close play.

We had more chances than that, though. I think Gavin -- well, I don't think, Gavin was up in the 9th. We had three or four other times, we had at runner at third with no outs and he didn't score. Very uncharacteristic. Some of it's experience, having some younger players playing today, and some of it's Texas A&M pitching, and some of it's guys getting out of plan, and we'll look at each one of them and get better.

Again, it's something that we have to take a lot of pride in and something that we've been very good at, and we were not today, and against that caliber of team, it's going to cost you, and it certainly did today.

Q. Obviously it might be a little early to ask this, but what's going to be the first thing you try and crack down on before the regional starts this coming week?

JAY JOHNSON: Well, we've got to get some guys a little bit of rest. Like I said, I've mentioned it before, Dylan and Jordan have played every game since I've been here, and they play the two most demanding positions on the field.

We've got to get their bodies and minds back underneath them, and that's important. Going through this league, that's the 10th place team, and that team can win a national title that we just played today, and they finished in 10th place.

We've got to get our health right, and then get their minds right because playoff baseball is one pitch at a time. It's

not the team with the best players, it's the team that plays the best, which we've done a lot of this year, and didn't do that today. But I trust the guys that we have on the field. I trust them a lot, and I trust their care level and their character. I'm excited to get back to work with them after we get them a day or two off here.

Q. Gavin Guidry, a big inning from him, true freshman. What did you see from him?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, he's great. Those last eight to nine outs are tough to get, and wanted to have him at the end because he's got the poise to finish it. Obviously he would have gone back out had we tied or taken a lead in the 9th. Thought he executed really well against Bost, Mac and Kaufer, and he'll get the ball next weekend at an important time, there's no doubt about that.

Q. What went into the decision to put Sam Dutton in in the 6th inning?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, we had struck Haas out three times, hits .360 against left-handed pitchers. I thought Griffin just wasn't as sharp in the 2nd inning. I think he's a great pitcher. I think he's going to be a great pitcher. I think he's got starter caliber stuff here. I thought he was terrific in the 6th, and he just didn't look the same in the 7th. It wasn't necessarily the home run, it's walking the guy in front of it that made that hard right there. Had we gotten him out, we might have considered leaving Griffin in, but he didn't look the same with walk, double, deep fly ball, walk, and yeah. It obviously didn't work out. It was the wrong decision, which is my responsibility. But I have a lot of faith in Sam. I have a lot of faith in Sam, and we'll have to go to him in a situation where we play five games in a regional or in the bracket in Omaha.

Q. Do you walk away from it feeling good about obviously Skenes' and your other couple starters, Ackenhausen, Riley, the way they pitched out of the pen; is it just shoring up a couple of things?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, I feel confident in our team, and I trust them, as I said. I like the fact that we're going to play at home and get our fans there and behind them, and want to thank all the fans for coming out this weekend, and it feels like a home game. That's something to be proud of as part of our program, and I think that gives us a lift.

We've been on the road now for nine days or ten days, so it'll be good to get back and get reset and go for it.

Q. I think you said that Tre' Morgan hasn't been able to play first base for a lot of this season for health reasons, and then we saw him at first base and left



field this weekend. Can you just give us a status update on how he's doing?

JAY JOHNSON: Well, I mean, he made two or three spectacular plays in left field, made a nice catch at first base. He's doing good. Plays hard and cares and competes a lot.

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