

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

Arkansas Razorbacks

Coach Dave Van Horn

Christian Foutch

Peyton Stovall

Postgame Press Conference



I felt like we've done a good job all year of putting ourselves in those positions. We've just got to be able to get that big hit. And instead of maybe a sac fly or punch in one, maybe getting a huge hit and scoring three or four. Just keep putting ourselves in good position, and eventually it'll fall.

Q. Christian, I know you faced Cole Messina today. Everybody else who did didn't have much success. What's the book on him? How do you approach him?

CHRISTIAN FOUTCH: I think the key is get ahead. He's a good hitter. So if there's nobody on in front of him, usually a double or something doesn't hurt. But he was just able to take advantage of some good pitches. He's a good hitter, and we just didn't make good pitches right there, which happens.

Q. Peyton, I think you guys faced both Good and Eli Jones when you played South Carolina earlier. Did you see anything different from them today?

PEYTON STOVALL: Yeah, they were filling up the zone and they were getting ahead, but I thought we did a pretty good job of working counts and stuff, and we had a couple walks and stuff.

But they were filling up the zone and around the zone, and the reliever that came in, he's a really good reliever. And he could throw more than just two pitches for a strike. And when you can do that, you're effective. So credit to them.

Q. Peyton, what do you expect out of you guys tomorrow? What do you feel like you have the rest of this tournament?

PEYTON STOVALL: Yeah, just come out, play hard, take it game by game. The only thing we're focused on tomorrow is the game tomorrow.

So hydrate, sleep well, get some rest, come out here and play hard. And if we play hard, I don't think anybody is going to be upset. So that's the number one thing to do.

Q. Getting another shot at Kentucky?

South Carolina 6, Arkansas 5

DAVE VAN HORN: Just on our side, just kind of a game of maybe missed opportunities. We had a couple of chances to blow it open. Instead of a two-run inning, maybe three or four, one hit away. That was disappointing. Give them credit for pitching out of a couple of jams.

On the other side, as far as our pitching, we hit a guy, hit a two-run homer; hit a guy, hit a two-run homer. First inning, two quick outs and two walks, base hit, he's behind in the count, throws a fastball; 2-0, base hit, they score a run.

Free passes are -- at this time of year when everybody plays good, they'll come back and get you, and they got us today.

Q. Christian, you've come in a lot of late-game situations this year. Anything different coming in early? What specifically has been working for you here down the stretch of the season? It's been a while since you've given up a run.

CHRISTIAN FOUTCH: Yeah, coming in, I approach it all the same. Hopefully, the goal today was to go a little bit longer, but threw a lot of balls today. That's all I've got.

Q. Peyton, your thoughts overall on the game, and like he said, maybe some missed opportunities do you think?

PEYTON STOVALL: Yeah, for sure. I think the biggest thing, like Coach Van Horn said, was a couple of swings away from maybe putting up three or four more runs with runners in scoring position.



PEYTON STOVALL: For sure. They're a really good ball club, really well coached. They have a lot of good players. So it's going to be fun, and we're looking forward to it.

CHRISTIAN FOUTCH: Yeah, I think we're all excited. We didn't play our best during that series. After that series we said we wanted to play them again. So we're going to go play hard tomorrow.

Q. You guys faced this South Carolina team about a month ago. In your opinion, what is different about this team today versus back then when you played them the first time?

DAVE VAN HORN: I don't know if there's a whole lot of difference. Baseball, there's a lot of ups and downs. They didn't score a lot of runs that weekend, but we played three games in about 24 hours. It was quick, in and out. Because of the weather that was supposed to come in, we played Friday night and two games on Saturday, and we were out of there.

I don't probably have a great answer for you. They're talented. They have a good team. The lineup is right, left, right, left. They don't really have too many holes in that lineup. We maneuvered through it pretty good except for one guy, and he killed us.

Q. You've faced him a lot. What did you not execute against Messina today?

DAVE VAN HORN: Well, the first ball that went out of the park. Obviously it was a breaking ball and he was sitting on it, and it wasn't down enough, and he hammered it. He didn't try to pull it.

Good hitter. The one off Coil, Coil hits the first batter he faces, a left-handed hitter that's somebody we really needed him to get out, and then I was still finishing up my interview, so I'm not sure exactly what pitch he hit, but he hit it, and I watched it.

I mean, he's dangerous. When we played them over there earlier in the season, he was the guy that we would not let beat us. As a matter of fact, I know we intentionally walked him in one big situation when the game was on the line we felt like. But we also had first base open. Might have been runners at second, third, two down, and we went ahead and put him on.

Yeah, you know, he made us pay when we made a mistake.

Q. Are you thinking about starting Hagen?

DAVE VAN HORN: Yeah, we're starting Hagen.

Q. You'll get another shot at Kentucky after that series

--

DAVE VAN HORN: I don't really care who we play, honestly. I just care about the shot. I just want to play good and advance a little bit and feel good when we leave.

Q. Kendall Diggs took a step in the right direction today. How promising was it to see that?

DAVE VAN HORN: I thought he had a good day. They had him play up the middle a couple times. He hit a couple balls there, got that big two-strike hit in the inning we almost got after it a little bit. We scored a couple, left some out there.

But took some pitches, laid down a bunt that just barely went foul. I loved seeing that.

I feel good about what I saw. Throw the batting average out is what I tell them. Just go out there and from here until the end of the season, just be a tough out.

Q. Edmunson got in there, hit a couple balls well. How good was that to see?

DAVE VAN HORN: Yeah, the first one he got to a full count, and the pitcher actually was throwing a lot of changeups and curveballs, and he threw him a fastball in. Watched the replay, got his hands inside the ball, hit it to right center, obviously it dropped in, got us going that inning.

His last at-bat he got behind in the count and he was just a little bit out front on a breaking ball, hit it off the end of the bat. But I felt like he was on it, so that was good to see.

Q. He even broke his bat on a swing. How often have you seen that happen?

DAVE VAN HORN: In professional baseball I've seen it a lot. They use wood.

So not much. I don't even know if he broke it when he hit the -- I don't think the ball was as far inside. I think the bat just broke. Yeah, kind of different.

Q. Been a while since we've seen Gabe even struggle at all. What did you see from him out there, and what's the message for him to wash this one and move forward?

DAVE VAN HORN: Yeah, got behind in the count a little bit. He didn't get behind the count on the home run ball, he just threw it down the middle.

Just a learning experience. He's young. He's got great stuff. He's been really good for us down the stretch. I don't think there's anything wrong. I think he just got beat by a good hitter.

Q. Tomorrow with Hagen, any specific pitch count? I know you might not reveal it, but how much are you thinking about next weekend with his start tomorrow?

DAVE VAN HORN: Yeah, I don't want to say much.

Q. You pinch-hit for Souza with Helfrick. He got a sac fly for you, but what happened there?

DAVE VAN HORN: Yeah, and I did the same thing at the end of the order with them, as well, in our 9 hole and he got a hit off him. It's probably 80 points better. Lefties were seeing him good. He just kept throwing that changeup. It was a good changeup. Curveballs about the same to both hitters, but the changeup to the left is really hard on them.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports