

College World Series: Baton Rouge Regional

Sunday, June 1, 2025

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

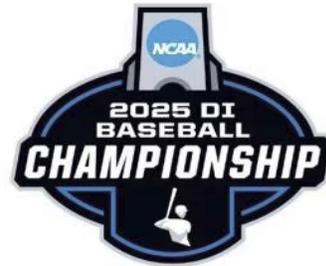
LSU Tigers

Coach Jay Johnson

Chris Stanfield

Kade Anderson

Postgame Press Conference



LSU - 12, Dallas Baptist - 0

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, good night for our team. I thought we played outstanding baseball tonight. Obviously it starts and ends on the mound. And Kade, as Kade has been all year, was the best pitcher on the planet tonight. And executed at a high level. Defense continued to support him, another game of zero in the error column.

And offensively I thought we did a lot of things well, starting in the first inning, two outs, nobody on, Danny walks, Jake gets hit with a pitch, and then Ethan, two-strike hard and low hits the ball the other way, very professional hitter-like to get us going.

Really good at-bat by Chris. Good at-bats all night by Chris. Homers there. And then I believe it was the third inning we opened it up with a lot of really sound baseball on the offensive side of it.

And then continued to do the job in the middle of the game. Scored in six of the eight innings offensively. And a good night. It's all about tomorrow now.

Q. Chris, tonight you joined the home run club and you had three RBIs, really great at-bats all night. Talk us through, what were you seeing so well, what really helped you tonight really excel?

CHRIS STANFIELD: Yeah, tonight and really this whole week I've been working hard on getting back to using the whole field and really just staying with that mindset. So today they were working me away. And Coach Johnson told me before the AB look away.

I was really just trusting it, letting the ball get deep. And I was able to put a good swing. Thankful it was able to fly

out of here. In my next at-bat, just really trying to have team at-bats and get the runs in more than anything.

Q. Kade, you're inching up the record books in strikeouts this season. As a kid from New Orleans, what does that mean to you?

KADE ANDERSON: We put ourselves in a situation to win. Stats don't really matter to me as long as you've got more wins than losses in the column.

Q. Chris, the old saying goes hitting is contagious. You guys, 1 through 9, these last two games have put up professional at-bats, like Coach Johnson said. What's the message when you're walking by a guy as he's going up to hit? What are you saying? How are you keeping guys positive and motivated and passing the baton as well as you all are right now?

CHRIS STANFIELD: We put a lot of hard work, get here early to hit. And so really, once we get in the game, just believing in each other and passing the bat down 1 through 9.

I believe we're the best lineup in the country, and we're untouchable when we play together and have team at-bats collectively.

We don't really say too much besides helping the pitch or trying to give a look. But other than that just competing and believing in ourselves.

Q. Kade, your coach just said you're the best pitcher on the planet tonight. That outing was 11 strikeouts, seven strong after that second. Really coasted through the rest of the way. What allowed you to settle in at that moment?

KADE ANDERSON: Really just getting to the next at-bat. And Coach Johnson is one of my mentors, and really just continuing to get better as the game goes along. That's something he strives to say all the time, you've got to get better as the game gets on, when the third lineup comes around. Really just battling out there and giving my team a chance to win.

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Q. Chris, how fun is it for you to be in that 9 hole spot, not only knowing how many opportunities you get to not only flip the lineup but just the opportunities to bring so many people in?

CHRIS STANFIELD: Yes, it's a lot of fun. Being in the 9 hole there's a lot of versatility. Sometimes I might need to bunt and get the bat to DC or drive a guy in and really just being there and being a team player more than anything, just enjoying the opportunities.

Q. Kade, I noticed that after one of your strikeouts you looked back in the dugout. I don't know who you were looking at. Run me through that moment and who were you smiling at?

KADE ANDERSON: It's a thing between me and Coach Yeskie. And he just told me a little detail that would help me out. It worked out and just gave a little smile. I trust what he does and really just believing in (indiscernible). Just a thing between me and him.

Q. Kade, I'm not sure if you had conversations with Anthony, but you guys obviously set the table now for the next couple days. You guys got a pretty loaded pitching staff available the next day or so. Did you have any conversations about that with him about just you two being able to go deep into these first two games and really save a lot of your big bullets here for the stretch run of the Regional?

KADE ANDERSON: Yeah, I think as a starting pitcher your goal is to save the pen as much as you can for the next game. I feel that Anthony and I did a really good job of -- we got too many pitchers and not enough innings tomorrow. And I think that's we're in a really good situation. And I couldn't be more excited to watch him pitch.

Q. Kade, seemed early on that DBU's approach was kind of run up your pitch count and battle in at-bats. You mentioned getting to the next at-bat. What's allowed you this season to fight through innings where your pitch count starts to run up?

KADE ANDERSON: Yeah, really I think it's the mentality of getting that dude out on that pitch and just setting yourself up for the next pitch as well.

I feel with Coach Yeskie's pitch calling, he helps out a lot. Just really talking with guys like Anthony and just learning from one another. That's something I've picked up on a lot.

Q. Kade, the pitchers have allowed one base runner to

get to third base these two games. Talk about not only you but the relievers who have come in shut the door?

KADE ANDERSON: It's a nine-inning game and every out matters. For DJ and Schmidt and Mayers to come in and close the door, getting two shutouts in a row is not easy. But it's something that I knew we're capable of doing. And I expect another one tomorrow.

Q. Chris, base running was a big aspect of this game, even the last one as well. Have you guys worked on base running a little bit more lately? Or is this just a product of all the work you guys have put in for the entire season?

CHRIS STANFIELD: We actually have recently in practice we've been base running.

Q. What do you guys usually do more specifically?

CHRIS STANFIELD: First-to-third stuff, ball in dirt, and just simple base-running cues.

Q. At any point in this season, are you going to think about stealing home plate?

CHRIS STANFIELD: That's not up to me. If Coach gives me that opportunity then yes, sir.

Q. Chris, what's the one thing that you think has opened up your offensive game since transferring from Auburn?

CHRIS STANFIELD: Really believing in myself and just more patient.

Q. Kade, you've pitched in some pretty big games this season. What was the atmosphere like, pitching in this atmosphere tonight at the Box?

KADE ANDERSON: It's something you dream of as a kid. Growing up in Louisiana, this is something that's special to me. And really grateful for the situation I'm put in and blessed for the opportunities he gives me as well.

Q. I know you said you all can play better, but the first two games you became the first team ever to win the first two games in any regional, super regional or World Series by shutout. You also scored in six of eight innings in both games, played flawless fielding. Can you do anything better?

JAY JOHNSON: I think just bring the high level of focus, intensity, attention to detail to each game that we play. We're not guaranteed tomorrow once you get into



postseason play. And so I think the game has our team's full attention. I think it's been part of their best quality this year is the consistency, especially with the schedule that we played.

And they've been working hard. And I've mentioned this a couple weeks ago. Like not every team improves this time of year. And I really believed our team was improving. And they've played well the last couple of days. And just get ready to do it again tomorrow.

Q. It's been mentioned, of course, that you all scored so many innings in these games. I imagine I know the answer to this, but I imagine -- their coach mentioned it -- just the pressure you guys applied to them inning after inning, I guess it makes you more pleased than like a seven-run inning. To be doing it inning after inning. What do you like about the way you're producing throughout the game?

JAY JOHNSON: We take a lot of pride in being complete, in winning any type of game. We've won some pitchers duels this year, close games, one-run type games, a few slugfests.

You play in different parks throughout this tournament. I think ours is one of the more fair ones, at least in our league.

And the ballpark in Omaha is bigger. So you just want to have a complete skill set to function in a way that helps you in any type of game and what's required. And I think this team was put together in a way that it can do that.

And there's certainly nothing that we will see that we have not seen playing the top-flight opponents that we have. And I think they're playing with really good confidence that they were pretty consistent through that.

And long answer is absolutely yes. I think it was a really good offensive performance tonight, getting lead-off guys on, executing the bunting game, ran the bases smart and aggressive, clutch hitting, two out hard and low line drives, extra-base hits, that's a lot of what the blueprint looks like.

Q. DBU came into this game with six hitters over .320. And those guys I believe limited to two hits all night. Can you just speak to the ability of Coach Yeskie's game planning just over the entire year. It feels like he's been able to shut down a lot of great offenses.

JAY JOHNSON: I think I've said this many times. I'm going off of an 18-, 20-year history, he's the most successful pitching coach in all of baseball history over the past 20 years in terms of producing draft picks,

All-Americans, low ERAs.

And he'll be the first to tell you that the guy on the mound allows you to call a good game by how they can execute. And these two starters through these two games have been about as good as anybody.

And it was a great performance. I actually thought Kade wasn't his best early in the game. He got over that hump quickly and quickly just rounded into form. And credit to him.

And those guys are very much in sync with each other, is what I would say. You heard him speak of the trust level. And got a guy that can go four pitches at any time and both sides of the plate and all quadrants of the strike zone, and a guy that knows what he's doing pulling the levers, you get the results that we're getting.

Q. To build on that a little bit, just the one-two punch right now with Kade and Anthony, have you had a pitching duo like that that has been performing like that at this level for this long, and what it does for you guys in the postseason, whether it's this weekend, next weekend, potentially in Omaha, having those guys be able to set the table in the first couple of games and really save your bullpen for more games down the stretch?

JAY JOHNSON: I'll save the comparatives until the whole story is written. But I couldn't feel any better about them. It's the talent, obviously, but the competitive nature the skill, the ability to execute their pitches, their toughness. And I talk about it with Anthony, to wiggle out of jams, or Kade to be that impressive when I didn't think he was actually at his best early in the game, that's pretty awesome, pretty special.

I think what it does for us is it allows the team to play with confidence. I mean, that was kind of a realization that we had talked about last week leading into this, is that we're going to be in every game we play. What a great opportunity to go out and go for it with confidence knowing that you have a chance to win that game.

And that's those two guys and the rest of the pitching staff as well. I feel like it's really good. Some of these guys just needed some time. And Kade included. He's coming off Tommy John. We tried to ease him back or ease him into this this year. And he's really taken off.

And Anthony's improved throughout the year. And a guy like William. He struck out the side in the ninth. He hadn't pitched because we had a rain-out the last mid-week for a while, and I thought he looked really sharp.

Q. What's the message to your players tonight going into a game tomorrow with the bats are alive, everything is looking pretty solid all fronts? What do you tell them going into a big game like tomorrow?

JAY JOHNSON: I think we're in a good character right now. We're in a good mindset. I think when you can get to the postseason, a lot of times you hear the stuff about one more, finishing the job. And that's not my mantra. My mantra is show up and enjoy competing.

This is really cool. I mean, to have 13,000 people in that stadium caring about what you're doing. National TV, that was all over national TV tonight. What a cool deal.

Let's not rush getting that over with; let's be in the moment and executing a plan.

That was two really good pitchers that we put that game together against tonight. Really good pitchers. Ellwanger is not going to last long in the draft. And he got us. The first four guys, I think, struck out when he came into the game. But really liked the at-bats tonight.

Q. Did you already have in mind who your starter might be tomorrow earlier in the week? Or are you formulating that now? Have you already told the guy he's starting?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, we're formulating that now. We don't know who we're going to play yet. That will obviously impact the decision. I think, judging by the relief-pitching decisions, we have a lot of options and put ourselves in a really good spot going into tomorrow with some guys that are throwing the ball really, really well. And we'll let that game finish tomorrow and then see where we go from there.

Q. You mentioned the clutch hitting. Seven of the 12 runs tonight were with two outs. How do you prepare for those scenarios, especially in a high-octane environment?

JAY JOHNSON: We call them goldens, two-out RBIs with scoring runners in scoring position. Stole that from Jim Leyland manager of the Pirates and Tigers. I think it was when they lost to the Braves in the playoffs one year, he said, two-out hits are golden. I always remembered that. We call them goldens.

And I think the key is guys not trying to do too much. I talk with hitters often. The best hitters, they'll drive the ball and get their doubles and homers. But they always get the one RBI when there's one RBI to get.

And we really did a good job of that tonight. Chris did it. Ethan did it obviously. Luis did it tonight. Derek got one right when Ellwanger came in the game.

So I thought it was -- we'll put it up on the video of how you hit with runners in scoring position for a long time.

Q. What was the game plan against Micah? And how did you take advantage of the fact that you're obviously very familiar with him?

JAY JOHNSON: The tournament's not over. So I won't speak too much to it. But what I will say I'm happy for him and his success here. I think I heard Bill say he had six wins when they were announcing him.

He throws a lot of strikes. You have to be ready to hit the mistake. He's got good live fastball, good bite on the breaking ball.

It's kind of developed in his time, and I think we just did a good job of we got some free bases with the walk and the hit-by pitch, and Ethan stayed on a pitch and did a great job. Chris stayed on a great pitch and did a great job.

I think we did a good job separating pitches we needed to swing at versus maybe the ones he wanted us to swing at.

Q. You've talked about it, with the two-out hitting, but Ethan's Frey's at-bat in the first inning, how does that set the tone, especially getting runs in the first inning?

JAY JOHNSON: I really believe playing with the lead in the postseason is a big deal. I've believed that for a long time. The first time I went to Omaha, it just seemed every single game of the tournament, whoever scored first won. And this has kind of always stuck with me that we try to make the score not change things but played by human beings and sometimes they change emotionally given situations, we try not to do that, but got everybody in the stands excited, I know that.

It was a really cool vibe in there in the first inning and really clutch hit, and it's 3-2 count. Guys are moving on the pitch, and we had our fastest runner at first base probably, so he was able to score from first. That's an exciting baseball play. It was good to see. Really good at-bat by Ethan right there.

Q. You mentioned Kade not having his stuff early. What was your message to him when you had the mound visit? What did you like about how he settled, I guess, into the game?

JAY JOHNSON: It was pretty simple. I mean, I'm not going out there talking about arm slot or any of those types of things. I just got the sense, and this can happen with a good pitcher sometimes, you get so used to strike one, strike two, strike three, one out, two outs, three outs, looked to me like he was trying to get to the end of the at-bat or the end of the inning or even the outing, instead of just like competing pitch to pitch.

As soon as I did it, he threw a strike. He threw a strike. Guy got a hit, but he fisted it out there. Struck the next guy out on three pitches and then we got the double play.

So to no surprise. His aptitude is like all-time. It's all-time aptitude.

Q. You mentioned the importance of getting the lead early. The offense has done a great job the first two games putting up crooked numbers early in the game. What's been the key to that success there?

JAY JOHNSON: I think we just kind of keep working. And you can have a plan, but it's your commitment to the plan in the box, and the totality of the nine guys in the order doing it so it functions as one unit.

I think we're putting up a lot of strands where we're getting three quality at-bats in a row. Our goal is to do that four times throughout the game. And we probably did it more than that tonight.

Really good contributions, especially from the middle of the order, running through Chris, and they're all kind of the same player to me. That's the beauty of this lineup, is it doesn't matter where we're starting an inning; you feel good about what you can do and there's versatility in there and there's competitive at-bats in there, and I think we saw that tonight.

We had a lot of games like that this year. You get into the heart of the SEC play and Doyle or Rhude (phonetic), there's no break.

The dude that Ole Miss threw in the SEC tournament, that dude is going in the first round, whether next year or the year after he's draft eligible. I don't think he even started on a weekend for them.

What a great opportunity for us to face all those good teams and all those good pitchers and stay positive about what they're doing and come out the other side of it.

Q. The double play that Derek turned almost himself, but like those kinds of plays, what do they do to the opposing dugout in terms of energy and attitude?

How big are those kinds of plays when Kade is working through what he worked through those first couple of plays?

JAY JOHNSON: Huge play. So it was first and second, nobody out. And then he struck out Tryon on three straight pitches. I think it was slider, slider, slider. I was like, okay, that's good. I think the pitch itself was a good pitch.

Good job by Coach Simpson aligning Derek, he was in enough where he could come in and make the play. I think it caught the base runner off guard. He thought it was falling. From the spot in the dugout, I could totally see how he would. Derek makes a great athletic play. And then great job by Jared, like, staying with the tag right there. I kind of got blocked out -- I'm not very tall -- so I didn't quite see how it finished, but I liked how it finished and it keeps the pitch count down. We were up 3-0 at that point. It gets the momentum back in our dugout. Huge play.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports