

College World Series: Baton Rouge Regional

Monday, June 2, 2025

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

LSU Tigers

Coach Jay Johnson

Cooper Williams

Postgame Press Conference



Little Rock - 10, LSU - 4

JAY JOHNSON: Great job by Little Rock today, winning two games against two great teams and you got to tip your hat to them. They took a lot of good at-bats throughout the day. Watched the entire first game as it was transpiring and complete performance by them.

I think the game kind of speaks for itself where it got away from us and we'll leave it here tonight, turn all our focus to tomorrow and find a way to play great.

THE MODERATOR: All right, Coach. Thank you very much. Questions now for Cooper?

Q. Hey, Cooper. If you could speak to the confidence that you have in the guys that have yet to throw, whether it be Casan or Zac or whomever is left on your staff that you think is going to have to pull you guys through this tomorrow.

COOPER WILLIAMS: Yes, sir. I have ultimate confidence in everybody we have left. You've seen it all year and I think we have a great group of strike throwers that are yet still ahead to come and throw tomorrow.

Q. Cooper, just for you, what was working on the mound today?

COOPER WILLIAMS: Just feeling out all four pitches and executing one pitch at a time, not letting the last pitch affect the next pitch and just staying within my plan.

Q. Yeah, Cooper, just building on that, to get hay leverage, 11 outs there in post-season baseball. What does that do for your confidence as a freshman pitcher kind of keeping the team in the game there for most of the middle innings?

COOPER WILLIAMS: Yes, sir. Not less than 12 months ago -- this is I dreamed of, being part of this program and getting the opportunity to do that and show the world what I'm capable of. It's what everybody wants to do.

Q. Cooper, what did this feel like in the dugout before you were pitching, just the shock of it, if there was.

COOPER WILLIAMS: Yes, sir. I mean, I was in the pen but I don't think there was ever a wave in confidence by anybody and we just wanted to keep playing hard and executing our plan.

Q. Coop, I don't know if you have ever placed a team that's playing with a lot of confidence, but how to you match that? How do you overcome that? Obviously Little Rock has done a lot of work here in Baton Rouge. How do you make sure your teammates are ready for what they're going to bring to you tomorrow?

COOPER WILLIAMS: Yeah, I think conversation is key and those guys that are coming in tomorrow will be some good learning points with stuff that I brought to the table today, and then obviously where we had success in the first game. We'll get together and converse about how to go about things.

THE MODERATOR: Any other questions for Cooper? We're good? All right, Cooper. Thank you for joining us, appreciate your time.

Getting ready to open up the floor for questions for Coach Johnson. I don't know if you know, just made an announcement 8:00 tomorrow night. It's been confirmed, ESPN 2, 8:00 p.m. tomorrow night.

With that, let's open up the floor for questions for Coach Jay Johnson.

Q. Coach, when the tide of the game started to turn, do you feel like the pressure got to you guys tonight?

JAY JOHNSON: I think it's probably an individual question. I wouldn't say that as a team. Certainly, some guys on the mound didn't perform probably the way that they want to or

maybe to the point where they're capable of and I think you'd have to ask them individually that. I didn't sense, as Cooper said, a widespread panic or anything like that in the dugout. Credit them, they made some big pitches with runners on base and we gave them a lot of free bases and then they cashed in, took some really good at-bats with runners on base.

They're a hot team. They've been playing well here for the past two weeks and you give your team that's playing well more opportunities, you put yourself in a tough spot and I think that happened three times tonight in the game and that was the difference.

Q. Yeah, Jay, can you just talk a little bit more about those scoring opportunities that you guys just didn't capitalize on there and those middle innings in particular, what did you see, what kind of, I guess went wrong to why you guys weren't able to score in those opportunities?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, I thought they executed a few good pitches at key times and then, again, like we were saying, trying to do too much is not a plan so I think probably the ghouls in those spots, something I'll go back to them and just make sure they're locked into their process and use it as a learning experience. That's what we try to do and confident that they can do that.

They've done a good job of bouncing back after a tough game, both individually and collectively this year and it gives me great confidence about what they can do tomorrow.

Q. Just kind of expanding on that, out may not female like it tonight but you're still in an advantageous position, I guess. How do you remind your team of that and trawl to steal some of this momentum back from a clearly hot team?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, it's a special day in life tomorrow. After this, unless you play in the major league World Series, you never play for a team ever again. It's an individual sport in pro baseball and you never quite get the feeling of game sevens unless you actually get to do it in the big leagues and that's a very small amount of guys that actually get to do that.

Opportunity. That's what it is, it's opportunity and I'm excited about tomorrow and just like anybody else, would have rather won tonight and wrapped out up and we didn't and that's because the opponent did a great job. I think it's just about opportunity tomorrow.

Less than 24 hours ago, we probably played the cleanest

and best brand of baseball that you could possibly play at this level and that was 24 hours ago, so I'm excited to see them do that tomorrow.

Q. Coach, was there any thought of starting Zac or Casan tonight?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, there was. I think Jaden had pitched well over the last two weeks between South Carolina and the SEC Tournament against Ole Miss and fell like he was a good option to do that and there was a number of ways that we looked at it.

He had a great first inning and not a very good second inning and so it's all hands on deck so he's got to recover well and if we need him to get an out tomorrow or two, he's got to be ready to do that.

Q. Yeah, Coach, kind of just piggybacking off that, with some of the guys out of the bullpen when it seems like they turn the corner, what's kind of preventing them from getting to that consistency completely?

JAY JOHNSON: It's probably a guy-by-guy question again. I don't think I would be being fair to any of them if I answer that in a totality. I think there are people that care a lot about performing well for themselves and for this team and those guys that took the mound tonight have all performed well for this team and so we'll pick them up and dig in because my hope is we'll need them again in this season for us to be successful and be where we want to be.

Q. Coach, you talked about Cooper a little bit and he mentioned it. How big was that for him tonight, not just for his development but for putting you guys in a situation where you still have your two big arms ready to go?

JAY JOHNSON: Yeah, I think it was a really good performance. I think you looked at the stat sheet, you know. He allowed one free base, filled up the strike zone, executed to both left- and right-handed hitters and hopefully it's next year but that's why I believe he can be a starter.

He can extend. He's got good arm speed and fast ball, breaking ball change, pitch to both sides of the play, top and bottom. I have a lot of confidence in him. He's had a really good season and the opportunities we've given him and there's a lot of good days for him here awe head.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Coach. Thank you for your time.



