

2022 College World Series

Saturday, June 18, 2022

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Stanford Cardinal

Coach David Esquer

Brock Jones

Press Conference



Arkansas - 17, Stanford - 2

DAVID ESQUER: Hats off to Arkansas, played a great game. Seemed like they were in front of everything we hit. Didn't their pitcher have 60 pitches through six innings.

We had one strikeout. We were seeing the ball well. We hit the ball right at them. Unfortunately Brock hit a couple of balls into the teeth of the wind. And I gave them credit because Lanzilli's home run, that was kind of the biggest pitch of the game.

Their guy beat our guy. That's all you ask when you come into the World Series. That has to happen, is you want your guy out there, and if he happens to beat you have to tip your cap.

As the game went on, obviously you've got to be able to stay in the tournament if you're going to have a chance to move on once the game gets a little spread, see if maybe you can score some runs behind some of your back-line pitching. Unfortunately we weren't able to hold them along the way.

But it's one of those days where they found the holes and I think we hit 15, 16 balls right at the infield. They did a good job preparing for us and preparing for that pitching. And hopefully we'll get a chance to see them again and the rubber match between Arkansas and Stanford, what happens there.

Q. Brock, could you speak to -- you hit the home run off Noland, but what was he throwing? What made him so efficient until he came out?

BROCK JONES: He did a really good job just staying in the zone. He has good stuff. But he threw a lot of strikes. Like Esque said, we hit it right at guys, and a lot of times that's baseball. And you'll put the ball in play and there will be guys there. Our offense did a good job if putting the ball in play and testing their defense. They had really good

defense today, and he was able to pound the zone.

Q. Brock, what did you get on the home run? What were you looking for? What went on there?

BROCK JONES: I came in and told Esque hit and run when I hit that. Sometimes when I catch myself being a little defensive in the box, I just tell myself hit and run, hit and run. So I got the swing, and he left the fastball a little out over the plate. I was just able to meet it and get it over the fence.

Q. Dave, you and I have talked so many times about you seeing these guys earlier this year at Round Rock. And granted it's just one game, but what have you seen from Arkansas a little differently than what you saw in those three games earlier in the year because they've been a different team these last three weeks?

DAVID ESQUER: Obviously they're not hitting to their numbers at this point. They're just playing better baseball. And I thought they played really good defense today. Kind of got the best of us today.

But it probably was kind of the opposite in Round Rock where I think they hit some balls right at us. Just a little baseball. I give them credit. That swing by Lanzilli was a big swing. And trying to hold it close there, we weren't able to do that. And the game gets away from you some when you go to the back-line pitching to stay in the tournament.

But we played at the same field. We could talk a lot about that. Brock squared up a couple balls that on a normal day could go. But they hit a couple of home runs regardless, too. It's hard to say that our balls didn't travel and theirs did.

Q. When your at-bats are going so quickly there through the middle innings are you concerned at all that your guy isn't get much rest? He's off and two seconds he has to be out there on the hot day.

DAVID ESQUER: A little bit. That's why I didn't mind that challenge. I think it gave him a little bit of rest while they checked the videotape. It was moving quick.

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

It's tough to kind of rein back your offense when you haven't been a take team for most of the year. It was strange to see how quickly within three pitches he was getting us out.

We easily could have put hits on the board and created some innings too. But we weren't able to do that. I give him credit. He was able to pitch to the zone and get us out in it seemed like three pitches or less, and kind of keep running those innings together. And we weren't able to get guys on base and lengthen out the time of the innings.

Q. What's your message to the team after a loss like that going into Monday?

DAVID ESQUER: You've got to flush it for one, right? It's got to be quick. That's unfortunate. That's not what you want the country to see. We haven't been that team. But you get into the College World Series, the final eight, you're trying to stay in the tournament because you're trying to squeeze every drop you can out of your pitching staff.

But I think, hey, we'll come back and play a good game the next game. We've been playing with our backs up against the wall for some time now. Seems like we played our best when that's the case.

But you really can't let them -- as hard as it would be, you can't let them worry about that or feel like that's their defining moment of the season. It's just one of those that you've got to flush.

I think I remember coming out here as the No. 1 team my sophomore year. I think we were the No. 1 seed and Miami rolled us 17-3. I think they ended up winning the national title that year, too.

Q. What did you think of Alex's start today?

DAVID ESQUER: He didn't come out of the gate strong, but he battled and found a little bit of a groove. And then just came down to that one pitch where, hey, their guy just beat him. Lanzilli hits that change-up.

Alex has been our best guy all year. You can't say much other than when their guy beats our best guy. You've got to tip your cap and were hoping that our offense could support him a little better than that.

But Connor Noland was on today and their defense was set well. And they just did a good job of preparing their guys, coaching it through, and executing.

Q. Did Arkansas surprise you at all with how

aggressive they were early in the counts? Because that's not necessarily been their game plan all year.

DAVID ESQUER: I don't think so. When you face Alex Williams, who doesn't walk a lot of guys -- he's known for throwing strikes. You're going to get some teams that will try to get him early.

He's going to have to establish his secondary stuff and try to keep you off balance. Again, stay one pitch ahead of you.

He seemed to hit a little bit of a groove there but I think in that one inning, like I said, Lanzilli hit a change-up -- that's his pitch. If he's able to hit his pitch, he got the best of them there.

But the fact that they were aggressive, I think that was a product of the fact that Alex just throws a lot of strikes. And I think you can afford to be aggressive in the count.

I think he was able to get some strikeouts early. I think he had, what, six strikeouts in 4 1/3. He was putting some guys away. It just came down to some at-bats where they had a base hit, a walk and a home run.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

