

2022 College World Series

Saturday, June 18, 2022

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Auburn Tigers

Coach Butch Thompson

Carson Skipper

Bobby Peirce

Press Conference



Ole Miss - 5, Auburn - 1

BUTCH THOMPSON: Ole Miss did a good job putting a couple of left-handed hitters in the lineup. Graham's three-run homer, the first three runs of the game, with two outs and nobody on. Kind of unfortunate there.

They had some balls fall in. We never could garner any offense. And I thought Joseph had some sideways movement instead of some true sink. He showed flashes -- I haven't seen a box here -- he did have seven strikeouts, but nonetheless, sometimes he didn't get consistent sink on the baseball. It's a game of inches sometimes with the sinkerball guys.

Foster came out. He was sick, maybe, even dehydrated in the ball game and came out. Farquhar came in, got a double. Did a nice job. And Carson Skipper set the table for a reason. He did an excellent job.

Bobby got our first RBI in the ball game. But Dylan just set a slider beneath us and a fastball above us and didn't trick us too much. We could not evaluate the strike zone with him on the mound, and shortened the game for the bullpen to do a nice job and get to the finish line.

Q. Bobby, just talk a little bit about DeLucia. You saw him a little bit earlier in the season. What did he have going today?

BOBBY PEIRCE: I think the biggest thing was a lot of first-pitch strikes, not necessarily the fastballs but with offspeed. He was just kind of putting it where he wanted to today.

Q. Carson, can you talk about their two-out hitting? It seemed like four out of the five runs came with two outs and how they put that together.

CARSON SKIPPER: It all falls back on us not executing pitches like we need to. A lot of their hits were just pitches that we left up and met their barrels with. It wasn't really -- yeah, they're a good offensive team, but at the same time we've got to execute pitches the way we need to. And that eliminates that if we do.

Q. Bobby, I guess for both guys, you guys have been in these situations before -- regroup, just the mindset now for you guys as you have the come back on Monday?

CARSON SKIPPER: Just go back to the hotel. Everybody reset, and just reset, really. Just get back to what we do. Today wasn't really a true testimony of who we are. And Monday is going to be a different story.

BOBBY PEIRCE: Yeah, I mean, really it's just how the whole year has been, too. We've battled back a lot. And one loss isn't going to kill us. And we'll come back Monday fighting. I know for sure we're a team that's going to fight every game, no matter what if we're down five or up 10, whatever it is we're going to fight. I can promise you we're going to come out Monday fighting.

Q. A lot of SEC teams in this College World Series. However you're going to face the Stanford team you haven't seen out in the West Coast, No. 2 team in the country for a reason. Have you had a chance to watch them play this year? And do you know what kind of pitching challenges they'll propose to you guys?

BOBBY PEIRCE: Right before our games and in the postseason we've been able to watch them a little bit. But we haven't been able to scout them at all or do anything like that. Just kind of watching bits and pieces of games. But really don't know a whole lot about them.

Q. As a team, you all have battled adversity all year, and been able to get back up when you've been knocked down. How do you think that will help you all going into this game against Stanford on Monday?

CARSON SKIPPER: The league we play in is one of the top leagues in the country. For 10 weekends straight it



was going through a gauntlet. So, you'll lose a game here, lose a game there, but it's how you respond and bounce back from it defines who you are.

BOBBY PEIRCE: I'll add on to that real quick. Just being picked last in the West at the start of the year and being here now, that just shows kind of nobody's really believed in us. Nobody's believed in us on this side of our bracket, nobody picked us to win.

And that's okay because we believe in ourselves. We believe we're going to win even after one loss. We're going to regroup and come back.

Q. Your guys seem to be running into walls making plays in the field. What does it mean to you when your guys are showing effort like that?

BUTCH THOMPSON: Appreciate the question. I think of Brody Moore and Bello running all over the place out there. It lets the coach know they're engaged and fighting for inches. I absolutely tip my hat.

I wanted Joseph to be coming in here second talking about he just pitched that great and just happened to be on the other side today. The effort -- they walk by me after they score a run or after they get out or whatever happens, these guys are engaged and giving it everything they've got.

Another stat I look at here was just no walks. They didn't walk us. They didn't create any offense. That's three games in a row where we just haven't -- we won a third game of the Super Regional with three hits. It's the third game in a row where we just couldn't get a leadoff man on to ever start creating an inning. And really those fourth and fifth runs for Ole Miss, that was two guys on with nobody out.

And I thought when Rambusch had that 5-to-3 unassisted double play, got two outs, but they wound up getting a fifth run there. It was big. But the effort I know is engaged. And what you mentioned is the reason how we know our guys are playing as hard as they can by seeing how they're flying around the field with their body.

Q. What did you see on those pitches that they kind of took advantage of with two outs, especially in the first inning when Joseph seemed to be cruising there for the first two men?

BUTCH THOMPSON: These first innings of a tournament, especially a World Series, you can just watch. Getting out of the first is kind of a game plan going into this time of the year. Two outs, nobody on, Gonzalez had flew out. And

then just boom, boom, boom.

I thought their approaches were set way before ours. And it was kind of flatter, line drives. They fell in front of us or got in or sharp hits. It wasn't until we hooked it up there and Brody Moore got a backside hit. And then Bobby Peirce got the hit through the 6 hole, we felt like we were finally starting to flatten out.

It was either us late to our approach and them early to their approach. Is that because Joseph wasn't quite set? Was that because Dylan had his stuff set at the beginning of the game and we started getting to him? It's kind of the million-dollar question.

But I just thought their approaches created some fortune for them whereas our approach wouldn't set up, I guess. Both teams struck out 13 times, I guess, in the ball game. But it just didn't seem like we were ever in a count.

Bobby mentioned him getting ahead. There was just not those big disadvantage counts for us to do damage. It seemed like the whole day we were trying to make contact more or less than trying to get into some advantageous situations, getting the lead-off man on, getting set for an inning. It just hadn't happened for us the last couple of games.

Q. Around the same lines of what I asked Bobby, obviously your zone, you're focused -- with Stanford, what they present is a challenge. How much Stanford baseball have you been able to watch this year and just how good is that lineup?

BUTCH THOMPSON: Just over the past couple of years, very offensive ballclub. We just went to Oregon State and Stanford kind of squeaked them out so we know exactly what we're going to face. As far as, like, with the players and the scouting report and huddling and watching video and prepping, we've not done that. And we haven't done that all year.

So the SEC teams are familiar, but we still have to do a lot of work on each team. There's no putting the cart before the horse. We left Carson Skipper in the ball game today for a reason. One, there's one day off. And also the importance of a first game. You just look at the stats where it's a critical game, and these guys will keep playing and playing and playing. But a coach knows how important the game is. So I kept Carson in the game to try to see if we could get back and catch him late, which we could not.

But I think what, 36 of the last 40, winners have won that first game. And only four out of 40 have lost the first game

and come back. So it's a tall order. But that's what's good about the way the tournament's set up. We'll be able to meet as a staff, get into the guys, present something before practice, have a practice. Come back. Change your laundry out. Get together, have a meal together and start charting who is the starting pitcher, what are the relief pieces we expect to see and really get into a scouting report.

So once we did some things for a couple of days, but not playing the first day in here we're kind of locked in the baseball mode of things here and we'll spend a lot of time other Stanford tomorrow.

Q. In the first four games of this World Series, the four lower-seeded teams not only won but they never trail. Does that sort of underline just how wide open this event is and how wide open the sport is in general, maybe?

BUTCH THOMPSON: I think it's a great point. I do agree with you. It's where the pitcher is at that day, how the thing got started. They scored two in the first, that's important. When it was 3-0, I really felt that it was important to be the next team to score.

Ole Miss was the one that scored two more runs. And so it never happened for us. But I do think it's wide open. I think every team here had to climb some type of mountain and have success to get here.

I also think it's one of the best years I can remember in college baseball. And year 30 and 20 years in the SEC, I just think the interest has continued to grow and it's exciting, and I think that just puts more teams in play. And it's referenced out here that whoever gets up in this bracket here and gets those 1-0 games are going to be huge tomorrow, sets them up pretty.

But logically you feel like most every team out here has a chance, and it's whoever kind of catches fire. And that's pretty quality across the board in this tournament.

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