

2022 College World Series

Monday, June 20, 2022

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Stanford Cardinal

Coach David Esquer

Adam Crampton

Drew Dowd

Postgame Press Conference



Auburn - 6, Stanford - 2

DAVID ESQUER: Obviously a great ballgame by Auburn. I give them credit. And we didn't play the game like we typically could, which is, you need to be relentless offensively. Scoring two in the first two innings and we weren't going to hold that game to a 2-0 win. And they bent a little and we had a runner on third, less than two outs, and there's an opportunity for run and then a bases-loaded situation.

We bent them a little but they just wouldn't break or crack. And we weren't able to get that on our side. I thought they did a good job pitching out of trouble. They got a good start by Trace Bright and Sheehan came in did a nice job. And Burkhalter did a great job at the end. And, so, no regrets with this team at all.

If there's someone going to be on the mound, we want it to be Quinn Mathews, who is there to decide the game. Drew Dowd did an outstanding job for us, just getting the game going for us, and started. And then going to Quinn, I think I speak for the whole team, there's no one else we'd rather have on the mound, but we just have to get him in the right situation that the game is in his hands.

They got a big swing by the second baseman, the double. And our team won't relent and will continue to fight.

And it hurts here at the end. And I think you see your team hurting when the game's over because the season's over and they don't get a chance to play with each other.

And that kind of makes you proud that you had that type of locker room and you had that type of camaraderie. And that's what our program is built on. And I'm proud of these guys. And nothing will take away from what we've accomplished this year.

And I mentioned to them in our huddle that, when time passes, no one is going to remember what the score was of any of our games or what our record here at Omaha was. I think what I will remember I had a chance to go to the College World Series with a team I love and spend about a week trying to play for the national championship.

And along the way we won the Pac-12 title. We won the Pac-12 Tournament title. We won a Regional. We won a Super Regional to earn the opportunity to come here.

I don't think we could ask any more from our guys. And the sometimes the game rewards you or falls in your lap. You're just going to play well and get on a run. As I mentioned, like, in '87, I think, when we got here and won the title, we didn't play our best, but we hung around long enough and finally played really good baseball by the end.

And sometimes you've got to find a way to win and just kind of hang around and then you'll play your best baseball at some point during the tournament.

We were still battling to try to find that, but again, I'm so proud of this team and our program and our coaches. And there's no shame in our showing here at Omaha. And I love these guys. That's the part that I'll remember.

Q. Drew, how did you feel today pitching with six strikeouts, four innings and three hits allowed? What are your biggest (indiscernible) with your mechanics coming into this offseason?

DREW DOWD: Today I felt good. I was just attacking their hitters. I think the biggest thing was just command of all three of my pitches. I think we played great defense behind me and I was able to early on in the game I was getting behind guys a little bit too much but able to come back in those counts.

I think in the offseason, in terms of mechanically, just try to use more of my legs. Add a few miles per hour to that fastball. And also just give myself a little bit of a break. I've been throwing a lot. Just those two things, probably. But overall I felt good today.

Q. Adam, you guys got to Bright a little bit early. Obviously the third, fourth, fifth was a little bit of a different story. Did you see anything different in the way he was attacking you guys that allowed him to settle in after those first two innings?

ADAM CRAMPTON: Hats off to him. He was making good pitches, pounding the zone. We just were relentless as we needed to be, on more of the approach side we let up, got a little too comfortable when we should have kept our foot on the gas a little bit.

Q. When you kind of reflect back on this season you guys had and the run to get here, the pack, regular season and conference tournament, what do you think is going to stick out in your mind the most?

ADAM CRAMPTON: We started Pac-12 1-5 and turned it all the way around and came here. I don't think anybody thought we were capable of doing that.

And just like we believed in one another and I know we played for each other. A lot of memories. I'm going to miss this team a lot, man. Honestly, like obviously the games are winning the Pac-12 is super sick and all that stuff. But I'm just going to miss being with these guys, being in the locker room, hanging out and cracking jokes, all that stuff.

DREW DOWD: I think, like, what he said. On the field, obviously, I feel like we didn't get off to a great start and to get to where we are now. Even with being down two runs in the Regional final against Texas State, this team just never gave up. We didn't care about what people thought or what kind of situation we were in. We were just going to give it our all.

But like Adam said, I think the biggest thing that hurts right now is just the fact that I'm not going to be able to play with those guys and this team ever again. And it's a tough -- that's really what hit me after game first thing wasn't we didn't win a national title.

We could have beat Auburn today, it was more just I'm not going to be able to play with these 26 other guys on the field right now and that hurt.

Q. Adam, your day obviously was good offensively, but as good as your offense had been for the past month and a half coming to Omaha, it was not nearly that good the past two games. Any specific reason why?

ADAM CRAMPTON: I don't know. I mean, obviously we're trying. We're trying our best out there. I think it was just

probably you let the moment get a little too big, maybe. Obviously a big stadium, a lot of fans. And just gotta slow down and relax.

And to our offense, Esquer talks about it all the time. And I don't think we did that to the best of our ability.

Q. How much pride do you have in what you guys have been part of the last two season getting back to Omaha last season, back to back this year, getting Stanford baseball back to that stage after it had been a little while?

DREW DOWD: I mean, I think growing up, going to Stanford games, and seeing a lot of great players come through, whether it be Cal Quantrill or Mark Appel and Nico Hoerner, you've seen a lot of great teams and those teams never made it to Omaha.

To be part of a team like this and the team last year as well, like it's something I'm going to tell my kids about and it's something that we're all going to be able to share for the rest of our lives. And I'm going to be friends with these guys until the day I die.

And I think that's -- I mean, it's great to make it to Omaha. It's great to play for a national title. But ultimately, what I'm more happy about is we got to both teams got to play baseball a lot longer than other teams did and got to spend more time together and share a lot more memories together that other teams didn't. And I think that's just really, really special.

ADAM CRAMPTON: My freshman year, we didn't have the best year. Got off to a tough start. Got banged for COVID, and then the next two years completely flipped the script. I'm super proud of all of my teammates and all the guys for having that resiliency and kind of defined our lives at that point in time and we should be proud of this accomplishment and we made it back-to-back years. And so I'm happy and proud of everybody else. And I think we're leaving in good hands. I think we'll be back here.

Q. When you look back at the time like the guys who played their final game for Stanford and the time they spent here, what's going to stick out to you most when you look back in future years?

DAVID ESQUER: Just the memories. We talked about playing for memories. I mean, whether it's the day we clinch the Pac-12 title, that feeling. The day we won the Pac-12 tournament title and those feelings of celebration, winning a Regional. Pulling that out. Just those memories and celebration that those guys had. And a Super Regional.



That's a lot of positive and great memories that our team had. And games at Omaha don't turn out the way you like doesn't overshadow what our team has accomplished and our feelings about them. And probably behind the season pull the curtain Omaha and our coaches and we take pride everyone had that perception of us. But you know we almost feel like if we can do it with the pieces we had now, look out, we're in pretty good shape.

Q. You answered a little bit of it just now. You are one of the most positive guys I know. So what's your positive spin on this, like the state of the program now. You've been to two straight trips here to Omaha. What's going to be the key moving forward coming back again next year or in the years ahead?

DAVID ESQUER: I think continuing obviously coach Tom Eager does a tremendous job recruiting, does a tremendous job preparing our pitchers, as our program continues to grow and it's going to be uses consistency of that. We're continuing to give good players and train them well. And I feel great about where we're at as far as getting the last two years to Omaha and probably not have our pitching staff as stacked as we would like, when we get here. But good enough to get to Omaha and compete. And I think we have pitchers who are here now that will, with improvement, will be the type that emerge to the front of the line and help us even more than they did this year.

And just, I don't even feel like it's a positive spin in the sense like I said this team has accomplished so much. And to have culture changers like Brock Jones. We're going to miss a guy like that but that's a generational type player that we had a chance to coach.

And you don't get a player like that who is the most talented, who is the hardest worker and the most unbelievable student and he keeps everybody loose and he's the biggest advocate for what we preach and backs whatever the coaches say, you don't always get that. And to have a guy to come into our program with one idea is get to Omaha and to see him fulfill that prophesy and work for it and gather the guys around him to do that. You know, his imprint and mark will be on the program for as long as I'm there. And that's when you know you have a strong program is when people leave your program and the players and the coaches feel like how are we going to replace that guy versus thank God that guy is gone. It's going to be way better without him. You never want that guy. And so we have a lot of those. And the Cody Huffs who have an opportunity to sign and Alex Williams, just senior after senior.

And I'll be honest, our program to the point is we have

people who impact our program who don't even play. They're just energy and work ethic and positivity. They show up every day. And they make it impossible for the guys who get to play that they get to take a day off, because if they're inputting the effort the guys who represent them on the field there's a little pressure for them to make sure that they can keep up with the guys who don't play. If you were going to use four or five adjectives to describe the 2022 Stanford Cardinal what would those adjectives be. One of the -- I don't even know if they're adjectives and I should because I went to Stanford. But I want to give you five words that I'm going to remember. And one is just I talk about memories all the time. And just the memories that we created with this group something I'll never forget.

And with people that I will never forget. The toughness that we talk about, just the guys who bought in to being really good at the confrontation of baseball. And they really trusted us that what we were doing was going to help them get better. And I think the trust factor of our players with our coaches, whether it's our hitters, with our hitting coaches and myself or with the pitchers with Coach Eager, that trust factor is you have to have that in order to let us coach them pretty hard. I think the brotherhood.

I'm always going to say that, the brotherhood that our program has off the field, in the locker room, outside, off the baseball field, is something that it's been a focus of mine that we need to have good people that will bond together, and maybe have an understanding and an empathy with each other that they can be closer than just teammates. And that's one of the reasons we're here. And to say that we have the all the mechanics necessary to be a top 8 team or for the country to think we're the number two ranked team in the country. That has everything to do with the culture of our program and not necessarily anything to do with whether we were that team on paper.

Q. What was the message today following the first loss seemed like the team came out with more fire, what was the message?

DAVID ESQUER: We talk a lot. We're getting back to ourselves. We do such a good job competing and trying to stay loose and just try to bring our real selves to the field. I thought Drew Dowd did a great job just allowing us to come out there trying to get in the flow of the game. They just won a couple of the bigger moments.

They won a couple of the bigger moments. I think the runner at third, less than two outs and infield in. They get two of the best hitters in the country out. That's a big moment. And then we have the bases loaded and maybe



to be able to just knock the lead down a little bit. Maybe give them a little worry and weren't able to do that.

And then, quite frankly, them coming up with big hits. And I say it all the time because it has to happen on our side, you can hope all the support players do all they can to help you, but sometimes your guy's gotta beat their guy. You can't escape it. Sometimes the best players on your team have to beat the best players on their team. And there's a couple of those moments and they were able to come on top today. But again, nothing will take away from my positive feeling about our team and the season.

There's not one thing that anyone could say, and it's probably out there. We're probably the first time that Stanford has gone 0-2 in the College World Series. That doesn't even detract from anything that this team did. Not at all.

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