

2022 College World Series

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Texas A&M Aggies

Coach Jim Schlossnagle

Troy Claunch

Jacob Palisch

Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma 5-Texas A&M 1

THE MODERATOR: Start with a statement from Jim, and then we'll open it up for questions for student-athletes. Jim.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Congratulations to Oklahoma. They've proven over the last six, seven days they're the best team in our bracket. At least playing the best baseball. Very, very consistent starting pitching, defense, timely hits.

Obviously, it felt like Jacob was just great. What a battler. Most number of pitches I think he has thrown all year. I'm really proud to be a part of this team, and proud to be the coach of Texas A&M.

I think there's only one coach that gets to feel good at the end of this week. There will come a day where we look back on this as awesome and a great, great step for our program, but right now everybody wearing an A&M uniform expected to win and keep playing, so we're disappointed, but Oklahoma just simply outplayed us today. Credit to them.

THE MODERATOR: Let's move on to questions for our student-athletes. Please raise your hand, and we'll start with Mike right here.

Q. Troy, what made Sandlin so tough today?

TROY CLAUNCH: He is just able to mix all of his pitches. He was able to get ahead early with fastballs in the first half, and then next time around was able to mix and kind of threw whatever he wanted whenever he wanted. Hats off to him.

Q. Jacob, was today one of those days where you were going to go until your arm fell off? What was it

like out there, and kind of what was your demeanor in going to how long you were going to throw?

JACOB PALISCH: It was just one of those days where I knew what was at stake, and I mean, I wanted to give everything I had to those guys. Fortunately, I had some pretty good command. Struggled here and there, but I just -- like I said, I wanted to leave it all out there on the line for those guys, and didn't matter how I felt. It was more just if the results were still working, I was going to run back out there.

Q. Troy or Jacob, either one of you guys come to Texas A&M kind of on a whim and put a lot of trust in Jim Schlossnagle. Can you put into words what this year has meant to you and what the university has meant to both of you?

TROY CLAUNCH: No, I can't. It was a leap of faith for sure. Just to have these guys with me all year long for my last season, couldn't have asked for anything more, so thank you.

JACOB PALISCH: I agree. I was sitting in this same situation last year, and I didn't really know where I was going to go, didn't know whether it was going to be pro ball or -- pro ball or back to school.

I'm so glad that Coach gave me a chance here. Honestly, came here for a little bit of closure. Wasn't really sure what I was going to be getting into, but I fell in love with the team, with the school, and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

There is no place I would rather be. I mean, the fact that it hurts this much I think speaks to how much it meant to me, Troy, all the guys that came in. We might have only been here one year, but it's definitely our home.

I can't thank the coaches enough that helped put this all together, and the other players on this team for making this a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Q. Troy, you guys have come from behind so many times this year. Was there ever a time that frustration and doubt had started creeping in that you just didn't

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think you would be able to --

TROY CLAUNCH: Today? No. You know, like you said, we've been here multiple times. We just tried to keep plugging. Today wasn't our day. It's part of it.

We've hit that lucky button enough times this season, and today it ran out on us. Just one heck of a run.

THE MODERATOR: Any more questions for the student-athletes? Thank you, guys. Congratulations on a great season. Questions now for Coach.

Q. Jim, what's it mean to a coach when a player is that emotionally thankful for the experience he has had in your program?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah, everything. It means everything. Again, you know, those are two players specifically right there that, I mean, they could have run down the top 25 of the end of the season last year and picked any place, with the exception of maybe a place that already had a catcher, but there's a lot of way more established programs than -- I shouldn't say more established programs, but way more established rosters that were built to win this time last year that just needed a plug-and-play catcher. And he could have picked one of those, but he took a chance on Texas A&M. And obviously, Nate Yeskie had a part of that. He took a chance on our coaching staff and what we were trying to do.

Those guys are Aggies. They're also Beaver and Cardinal, I guess, as well, but they will forever be remembered as hopefully the team that reignited Texas A&M baseball.

It's our job now, mine included, to honor what they've started and continue to build on it. It's not going to be easy to repeat. I don't care how many talented players you recruit. It's hard to create the kind of synergy and leadership that this team is. We have to start back at ground zero starting right now. We have to just start all over again.

We have some pieces coming back, but if you think you're replacing Troy Claunch, you're fooling yourself. It's not happening.

Q. Coach, in the third inning, you guys gave up the run, and then following the next inning you had the two lead-off guys on, and then Sandlin came back and struck out the side. How did that swing back the game?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: A lot. I think he was really good.

He was making good pitches. I don't know how we started maybe made a couple of hits or something like that. He was executing pitches. He really had a good breaking ball going. He established his fastball enough to his glove side to where maybe he earned a few pitches that were off the plate, at least from my view. That's not to say the umpire was bad. I'm just saying when you throw that many pitches to the same spot, you earn other pitches. When you are scattering balls all over the place, you don't get the borderline pitch.

I just thought he had us on our heels the whole game. Credit to him and Skip. Skip obviously an awesome pitching coach, always has been.

They're playing as good as anybody in college baseball, and they've earned the right to play for the championship.

Q. What was the pitching plan kind of coming into the game? Was Prager in an opener situation, or just a short leash? What was that coming --

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: If I had known what I know now, I would have started Palisch. That's easy to say, but if that's your mindset, then you are cashing in one game for the tournament because he already doesn't bounce back awesome, and obviously, he gave us a ton today.

If we would have scored a bunch of runs in the ninth inning -- what's today, Wednesday? -- he might have been able to pitch on Sunday, Saturday/Sunday. Just hoping to squeeze two or three innings out.

I thought he came in the game 3-0, right? I mean, our offense has been good, so I think the story is way less about who pitched for us and way more about Sandlin and the closer for them. They had us on our heels. We struck out 13 times. We only had -- they only had to field 14 balls. And a good defensive team and athletic team and a team that's playing well, you're setting yourself behind the 8-ball there.

Q. Great season, man.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Thank you.

Q. For ending it here, it was quite an accomplishment; but early on, a little bit of a struggle. Was it just a matter of the team gelling together, and when did that kind of turn happen in your season?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: For us, I think we were just still feeling each other out, trying to figure out who we were, what we stood for.

It really turned around when Austin Bost came in my office after the Tuesday night game against the University of Houston. We had some injuries. We had lost Kalae Harrison. We had lost Trevor Werner. We were playing two freshmen that weren't ready to play. And Austin said, Hey, I can play second base.

So we go to LSU, and we were on our heels. The first conference weekend. Had no idea what to expect. We got a left fielder playing second base, and he plays a good second base, and we win 2 out of 3. Could have swept.

I think from that point forward, even though we lost a couple of series -- one to Auburn and one to Alabama -- we won the rest of our SEC series. That's pretty good.

That will be hard to replicate next year. I think we just started -- the Pringles thing started. There was just a common bond among everybody that came out of that LSU Baton Rouge weekend. When you go in that environment and win a series, I think they started to believe in themselves, and I, frankly, had more belief in them than I did going into that weekend.

Q. You had told us that John Robinson had once told you, hey, slow down. What does this season mean for your future at Texas A&M? And obviously it's a bright one based on this first year.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: I think the biggest thing this year does is reignites the fan base. I hope it spurs some people to want to speed up the process on renovating our ballpark. We have work to do to get our facility the right way.

But I think the greatest thing it does is now you have a group of players that will be back next year that have been through this, and so instead of listening to Nate Yeskie or myself or Nolan Cain, a coach talk about Omaha and what's it like and how do you get there and how important is every single game, which, therefore, how important is every single practice, every single weight workout, because you're trying to stack good days on top of good days so that you earn the right to be here. Instead of hearing that from a coach, now you're going to hear it from players.

The best way that the younger players on our team can honor the guys that were just up here and the other older players that will be gone is to work their tails off to get us back here. Then hopefully we play just a little bit better. Got to find some starting pitching that's a little more consistent.

Dettmer, obviously, is a good building block for us, and

we're super fired up to have him back, but we have a lot of work to do in recruiting.

I think all in all, Aggies are pretty proud today. The beauty is that we're still real disappointed too because we want to win championships. I would anticipate -- even though I never take these trips for granted, I would anticipate us being back here at some point.

THE MODERATOR: We do too. Thank you, Jim.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Thank you.

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