

2023 Men's College World Series

Friday, June 16, 2023

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Oral Roberts Golden Eagles

Coach Ryan Folmar

Blaze Brothers

Cade Denton

Justin Quinn

Postgame Press Conference



Oral Roberts - 6, TCU - 5

COACH FOLMAR: First and foremost, we're blessed. God is good. We are glad we are here. But what a great college game, man. I think that's what this tournament is about.

You know, we talked coming into it and we talked at length about our team and the way they hang in there and the toughness and the resiliency. And it sure was on display this afternoon.

But we didn't play real well. Man, credit to that starter. That freshman is going to be special with mound composure and mound presence that he had. I thought he was extremely tough.

I was proud how Jakob Hall started the game for us. He got exactly what we needed to get it to the bullpen and we found a way to hang on.

Blaze makes a big swing. But I told our guys after the game, man, this is going to take everybody. It takes everybody here. Everybody's got to have a part in this thing.

And man, it was Blaze's turn tonight. And Cade finished the thing off like he has many times all year along. And Justin was special the entire game and really sparked us.

Proud of our guys. Proud of the way we hung in. Great thing is we get to play some more. So we're having fun.

Q. Blaze, obviously just walk us through that home

run. What did you see? Did you know it was out right away? What was going through your mind?

BLAZE BROTHERS: So when Mac scored, our shortstop, he came around and he said, he's throwing nothing but sliders. That was kind of my approach was see something up, hanging. And he left me two hanging and I took advantage of it.

Q. Cade, they fouled off a ton of pitches in that last inning, high stress. How did you calm your nerves when every pitch meant so much?

CADE DENTON: Man, like you said, fouling off a lot of pitches. I wasn't making the pitches I wanted to. On the strikeout I then finally executed a slider where I needed it to be. Got a swing and miss. That gave me little boost of confidence.

And obviously I knew I just need to fill up the zone and trust my stuff. I got pretty good stuff whenever I'm in my best. So I knew if I just filled up the zone there and even if they were fouling it off, that's still me doing my job throwing strikes. So just kept doing that.

Q. Justin, you have been the hero yourself before and being a part of that moment there in the ninth inning, it started off with Mac hustling off that ground ball. A lot of guys if they don't hustle it out, they don't spark the team the way they need to. Speak to your lineup, 1 through 9, everybody, no sense of quit, just always believing whoever it is whether it be Jonah or Blaze being able to come up with those big hits.

JUSTIN QUINN: It just shows the belief and fight that we have, pretty confident. And just playing together is special. And I mean to answer your question, like, repeat it again; you said -- you said?

Q. Just if you could speak to no matter who it is in the lineup, it feels like anybody can come through with a big hit. Like I said, like someone like yourself or someone that is a 9-hitter, like Blaze, and that's not a slight to him. But anybody can do it. Can you explain what the mentality is of your lineup, 1 through 9, to be

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able to come up in these big moments?

JUSTIN QUINN: Like I said, the fight we have and the discipline that we have at the plate is pretty special, 1 through 9. And it can be anybody. Like it was Blaze tonight.

And we talk about it all year responding when they do and they scored there three in the eighth inning and same mentality, just respond, so we came out responding with a 4-spot of our own. I think it's pretty special.

Q. Justin, how did it feel not only to come off the left side of the win column, but it's been quite a while since Oral Roberts has been in the College World Series, since 1978. And what's the advice that former alumni and let alone current Major Leaguers that have seen you guys blossom throughout the course of the last few months?

JUSTIN QUINN: They just tell us to keep going. What we're doing is pretty special. And they enjoy watching it and we enjoy doing it. As long as we keep confidence up and keep going I think we can get it done.

Q. We've seen it all year just from the league perspective, but I think nationally people are starting to get an understanding -- this goes for any of you guys -- but the composure that this lineup has and the entire team has, it seems like it's unwavering. How does a team get to that point where we saw last week in Oregon, there was no quit. We saw it today, there was no quit. What does it take for the team to get to that point here in June, the work in the fall and in the winter and everything?

CADE DENTON: Confidence in one another. Like you said, we have a solid lineup, 1 through 9. Every guy in that lineup knows the guy in front of them can get a hit and get the job done every single time.

It instills confidence in yourself knowing that you're the next guy in lineup. Same with the pitching staff. Everybody knows the guy behind you can go get it done. Obviously it may be a little shaky here and there, but we go out and throw strikes.

As a pitching staff we have very complete confidence in each one of our pitchers to go out there get the job done. To answer your question, just confidence in each other, trust in each other.

JUSTIN QUINN: I want to credit the coaching staff for keeping us locked in and giving us the scouting report every game, day in and day out, just keeping us motivated.

And credit to coaches for getting us prepared to be in this situation.

BLAZE BROTHERS: We're just a bunch of old guys that are really gritty at the plate. That's kind of how -- that's our attitude towards it.

Q. Blaze, what can you say about the team defensive effort? It kept you in the game until you could get the offense going.

BLAZE BROTHERS: I've always felt we're pretty good defensively. Me and Mac have a lot of chemistry up the middle, which is really good. And our third base, Holden Breeze, I live with him.

So I feel like in the infield -- oh, and Jake, he's my roommate on away games. We have a lot of chemistry on and off the field. And our outfielders are unreal out there. Credit to those guys.

Q. I want to ask players first and then Coach, top of mind, tell me what did Coach tell you -- because then I'll ask Coach what he said -- what did Coach tell you top of 9?

CADE DENTON: I'm sitting in the dugout watching our guys go out and put four up on the board, and obviously I came into the dugout thinking I needed to go back out and get a job done if we get the lead here.

Being able to get that opportunity from these guys -- Wes comes over to me after Blaze's home run and says, this is your game. Obviously going into that I knew I had to go and give my best effort out there.

So after that first inning, lacking a little confidence, Blaze's home run definitely instilled that confidence in me, and knowing that Wes was going to hand me the ball out there in the ninth inning, it instills infinite amounts of confidence in a pitcher to go out there and getting the ball after the getting the lead.

JUSTIN QUINN: They just told us string together good ABs. Stay relaxed, go out there and just be who you are. If we put together a couple good ABs we can create a rally. That's what we did.

BLAZE BROTHERS: On the mound, he just said go win this game right here. And that just kind of, like, instilled a little bit of confidence in us, too, like, let's go get this. We're right here, let's go get it.

Q. Blaze, I think we've kind of all heard the description of what it feels like on the hands when you hit one like



that. But what's it feel like as you're rounding the bases? How slow does that moment feel as you're running the bases, especially now in this stage and what that hit meant?

BLAZE BROTHERS: It was like slow motion right when I felt it off the bat it felt pretty good and I saw the left fielder kind of turn around, and I was, like, oh, that ball's out. Lets go.

I just wanted to get around the bases to celebrate with the boys. It was just an unreal feeling. It was awesome.

Q. Just from your perspective, it's interesting to hear what the guys heard. What did you feel going into that?

COACH FOLMAR: I don't know what we felt, but, man, that's not the first time we've had to overcome some adversity in the postseason. We're down 8-0 in the second inning in the Regional to Washington, a really good club.

We blew an 8-0 lead and had to come back and win a series after game one in Eugene. So been there, done that.

Obviously it's a shortened game at that moment. And it's gotta happen quick. But, man, our guys don't quit. They're going to keep playing, they're going to keep fighting. They're going to find a way.

I talked about this when we were down 8-0 to Washington in game two of the Regional in Stillwater. And it was ugly. First two innings were ugly. It was not good.

And in some weird way, it's like it juiced our guys up. I don't know what it was. It's not something I said or did. And it was that same feeling today. After you give up those three big runs. And it kind of juiced our guys up. And it's like they just they wanted to get after it and got juiced up.

It's a weird feeling. I know Coach is sitting here, he's probably had several of those moments. But it's fun to be part of. This is a player-led team. And they were juiced up and ready to go. I think it comes from a lot of good leadership inside our clubhouse.

Q. Ryan, I was wondering if you could speak to Cade bouncing back. He comes in, probably a little bit nervous there, gives up the lead, and then comes out in the ninth and does what you guys need to do. Just the mentality it takes to weather that roller coaster of emotions there.

COACH FOLMAR: That's what makes him good. That's what makes all the guys at the back end of games good -- a short memory and the opportunity to go get it again.

It takes a special guy to pitch at the back end of a game. It is. It's different. I don't care what anybody says, it's different. It takes a different mentality.

He is calm, cool and collected. Got in the dugout, regrouped. We took the lead. And I think everybody at that point was confident he had a chance to get it done for us.

So proud of the way he responded and hung in there and was able to flush that first half inning that he had. So I think that's just what our team stands for and what our team looks like.

It's going to take everybody. We're going to need him again at some point, just like the rest of those guys. I thought Dalton Patten was really good out of the bullpen, gave us some work. It was good to get Caleb Isaacs in there out of the bullpen because we'll need him. I'm glad Cade got that opportunity to kind of redeem himself.

Q. TCU is a team that likes to run. Can you talk about how to have Godman back there to control the game?

COACH FOLMAR: Wish you had them a lot longer that's the only issue. But when you look at us defensively -- I know somebody mentioned our defense earlier -- man, I've been doing this a long time. I don't know that I've been around a better defensive team, when you look at all three levels, when you look at the outfield play and the way it is, you look at our infield play in McCroskey and McMurray, especially those guys are special. But our pitcher/catcher combo has been just as good all year long.

Look at Jakob Hall and what he does, able to field his position and control the running game like he did today, and you have that safety net and leadership role in a guy in Jacob Godman that can control the game.

I know they had one other attempt, it was almost a strike him out/throw him out situation, another ball he put right on the bag. He's been especially all year. I'm glad people are starting to see it right now.

Q. You were able to pull off this win with two of your better hitters in the lineup going 0-for. Jonah Cox, one of the better hitters in the country, and Matt Hogan not being able to record a hit today. What kind of confidence does this give you and the rest of the guys moving forward knowing even when they're not able to play maybe their best, you can still pull out a win on

this stage this time of the year?

COACH FOLMAR: Takes everybody. Takes everybody. If you want to win and win at a high level, it's going to take every guy in your lineup. If you rely on one or two guys, I don't think you'll play very long. The other thing I think it does, guys understand, guys that have been in the lineup understand they don't have to win it. They don't have to win it. Jonah doesn't have to win it for us; Matt doesn't have to win it for us. We've got a lot of guys that can play. That's why you have a team.

This is not an individual sport. It's a team sport. And I think that is a way that a lot of pressure is relieved off a lot of those guys because they know they don't have to win it.

Jonah knows he doesn't have to win it. Matt knows he doesn't have to win it; they've just got to do their part. Sometimes you play better and sometimes you don't. That's the way this game goes. That's why you've got nine guys. It's a great team sport.

Q. Can you just speak to what kind of an accomplishment now that the hit streak is over, what he did this season, and also you've gotten the lead by the time he came up in the ninth, what you were expecting from that at-bat?

COACH FOLMAR: Nothing. I mean, the expectations at that point, we're trying to score, trying to win a game. I don't think anybody in the moment was worried about a streak or anything like that. So in the moment, man, that's not something we're thinking about.

Now that it's over, though, having a chance to reflect, how special is that? He's one of three guys in college baseball, one of three. This game's been going on for a long time. And to have yourself in that category, and as unique and special -- and we're proud of him and his accomplishment -- and I can't imagine the pressure he was going through. I wasn't good enough to do that.

So to have him go through that is special. And I mentioned this yesterday, too, it wasn't just Jonah's streak, it was everybody. Everybody's a huge part of that.

For him to be able to do that, you've got to be a great player. And he is. He has good bat-to-ball skills. He can really run. He can do some things. But there has to be some other things. You've got to have good people around you to be able to protect you so you can get enough pitches to extend those kind of streaks. And we had that, what Justin did and Hogie did behind him are just as impressive. And you've got to have some luck too. He certainly had moments where some things went his way,

too.

Combination of a lot of things. But, man, I'm blessed and happy that I had a chance to have a pretty good seat to watch the thing.

Hopefully now it relaxes him a little bit, too. I know the focus for him has been a lot on that. He's had to answer a lot of those questions and carry that pressure. But it's over, now he can relax and go play.

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