

2023 Men's College World Series

Monday, June 19, 2023

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Tennessee Volunteers

Coach Tony Vitello

Jared Dickey

Chase Burns

Postgame Press Conference



That's the way we rolled with it. But it's the second time he's gone up towards a hundred pitches in the playoffs. And Dole will bounce back, be one of the best pitchers to come out of this thing. And there's a lot of best pitchers, but I'm prejudice might be the best guy in the whole thing. And trust me I know the guy the other night we faced, how good he is, and that's why it was nice to be in our dugout today, in conclusion.

Tennessee - 6, Stanford - 4

COACH VITELLO: Outstanding game. Their lineup was as advertised. "Very difficult to navigate" was the word out on the street for good reason. They have a lot of fight to them, too.

I know they've got a lot of elimination wins and comeback wins. It was going to take an extra special effort out of our whole team, to be honest with you. This is the second week in a row we got to a guy that many people don't get to. And there's guys that can frustrate you.

Makes it more difficult when you're feeling that playoff vibe or elimination deal. We got the special effort by those guys, a guy who refuses to come out of a game came out of the game. We brought our guy that doesn't like to come out of a game.

And a few guys asked me on the field, a lot of people asked me on the field, what did you mean you made a mistake or you should have put your team in a better position game one.

That was me speaking out loud to you guys, being honest. I don't feel good about the guy left of me not being in a game we had a chance to win. Maybe we can go to him in the ninth inning when we cut it to five to three. But then he can't go for as long as he did, or doesn't even have an opportunity to come in that early in the game.

So that's kind of what I was referring to. It's an interesting deal how the season has worked out having a starter go to the bullpen for a reset and then lighting the world on fire out of the bullpen.

Q. Chase, how did it feel to maintain your composure with your mechanics on the mound finishing off with six innings, 72 pitches, 20 batters faced, no walks, striking out, nine batters, containing the run tempo, not having the Stanford offense get into scoring position the rest of the way?

CHASE BURNS: That offense is really talented. So me coming in there, me and Coach A had a game plan going into it and just following that game plan and sticking to it 100 percent.

Q. Jared, what allowed you guys to have more success in the fifth inning offensively?

JARED DICKEY: Just putting together quality at-bats. Obviously a really good pitcher. Done really good things this year. Credit to him for that. I think we just started to calm down a little bit, realized we're never out of the fight. I think we started to come together as a team like we always do later in the games.

Q. Chase, you came in that game, obviously felt like a lot of momentum. Stanford's dugout, different situations they could have put together. What was going through your mind as you approached that first hitter and settled in?

CHASE BURNS: Coming out of the bullpen, you've got one thing in mind, it's just do your job. No fight is too big for us. Just going to go out there, do my job, hope for the best.

Q. Chase, what do you think it is about this role that's suited you so well?

CHASE BURNS: That's hard to say. There's a lot that goes into it. I love energy. So coming in this game I had a lot of energy. Balling it up, I knew how to go a little bit longer today. It's a different role. But happy to be in it.

COACH VITELLO: I think regardless what inning he or other guys are throwing in, it was a crazy beginning of the season. And the whole group needed that. We needed to find our way but we also kind of needed to reset.

And whether it's individually or as a team, Jared mentioned it, just coming together and finding a way to be the best version of ourselves because we were fighting so many extra battles at the beginning of the year. And now we're just fighting the game and the opponent, which if you're in this place it's hard enough as is. So there's no reason to fight extra battles.

Q. Jared, if you could put your thoughts on Chase's outing into words?

JARED DICKEY: I said it last year when we were playing at Ole Miss, we're really lucky to have this guy on this team. Super special guy, hard worker. Even better guy off the field.

It's extremely special to have a guy like this in our program. He does great things for us. He showed you today that if you put your mind to something you can do whatever you want to do. So credit to him for a great outing.

Q. Jared, with that wind at times, looked like it might have taken two swings to get the ball out of the yard today. Saw that early on with the sac flies and everything. Did you make any adjustments to sort of hit more line drives, or was it just that happened?

JARED DICKEY: I think it was during that fifth inning, whenever we were rallying, you're hearing B shout-out from the dugout hands out on top. Whenever he does that, hands out on top, obviously, hit line drives.

We knew if we hit the ball in the air it wasn't going to do anything. There's probably one or two guys on our team that could get it out of there today.

COACH VITELLO: We tend to dumb it down a bit at our place.

Q. Chase, you guys are seventh in the country with earned run average, but let alone -- what lies ahead for you guys the next few days? The Floridas and LSUs are still in the mix. Familiar opponents, let alone in conference. What's it like to just go out there, and now you guys are going to compete still for a national title?

COACH VITELLO: I don't mean to speak for him, actually we used to tease him freshman year, he needed practice. But Danny said he's killing it out there compared to his high school interviews.

We're all about improvement in all areas. But I think now is an opportunity just to play. Like yesterday's off day was a little frustrating because we lost. We wanted to bounce back and play again.

Be careful what you ask for because now it's like Little League. You get your uni muddy. You just keep playing. Fortunately we have the arms to keep going.

We've kind of shortchanged some of those guys by taking them out of games early. But it might benefit us in the long run.

I'm glad you mentioned that number because I tried to spit it out the other night. I don't know where we stack up with ERA. That doesn't tell the whole story that we're necessarily better than whoever is third in the ERA.

But it's kudos to Coach Anderson who I lean on a lot because we've had, again, a quirky start to our year. A lot of guys have not had career years or anything like that. And yet as a group, if you combine it all together, it's a pretty impressive number.

Q. Chase, want to get your thoughts on the challenge of facing a really potent Stanford lineup for the first time. This was a challenge facing a lineup like this the first time, but also the first time they faced you. Did you think the first-time matchup worked to your advantage on this one at all?

CHASE BURNS: Definitely. I don't know if they have a pitcher in their conference that's kind of like me. They were putting good swings on my fastball -- and slider, too. So I used all my pitches today to get ahead in the count and did the job.

Q. Jared, you've had a lot of comeback wins, especially in the postseason. What can you say about the perseverance and the fight and this team improving over the course of the season?

JARED DICKEY: It's super special. Like I said earlier, we're never out of the fight. A special group of guys that have been through a lot this year.

We kind of huddled together before the game and told each other let's not let today be our last day. I think we all took that and ran with it. Just coming together in the right



time and it's super special what we've done.

Q. It felt like Quinn was really settling in there those first four innings. Felt he had a good rhythm going. How did you break that as suddenly and as potently as you guys did, do you think?

COACH VITELLO: Now that he's out of here, I think it's easier to say. He changed the energy of the game when he came in. And it was frustrating for everybody because we got a chance to score in the first inning and don't do it. We got the right guys up at the plate, we don't do it.

And then Doe is cruising or gets two quick outs, I should say, has a chance to get us in the dugout and keep this thing going.

We felt we had a good mindset and game plan for Mathews. I think the guys were excited about the challenge because last week during our -- whatever you want to call our schedule was in Hattiesburg. We had to sit there and wait for the Texas-Stanford game to finish so we knew what time we played the next day, which was the biggest game of the year.

Guys were excited about the challenge, and I think we had a good game plan. The offensive approach was there. But it was kind of a kick in the gut to think all of a sudden we're going to be ahead in the first, now we're down in the first.

And that was a theme early in the year. We expected to do great things right out of the chute, and when it didn't go well guys got deflated. Somewhere along the year we learned to respond the right way: When it gets tough, you've got to get a little tougher, whatever cliché you want to throw at it.

I think we grew up as a team, handled situations better like that, when you're down 4-0, we've come back 4-0. But to be honest, since he started to come into games, instead of starting, he's completely changed the vibe when he's out there. The guys get energy from it.

Q. What does it say about Chase given how the season has gone and yet he's responded the way he has? Have you been around too many relievers that can change the game the way he keeps doing it?

COACH VITELLO: He's a pro. Normally, when you get a freshman they're kind of out of sorts. They don't have routines. I kept saying it last year because he kept doing great things last year.

I had to answer a lot of questions about him. We didn't know we were getting what we got his freshman year. And

it's more of a compliment to him than anything. We knew we were getting a great arm, great stuff. We were fortunate enough he decided to go to college instead of sign. But we didn't know he was going to be that mature.

He thinks he's like an infielder or outfielder -- he's not that good -- but his PFP was really good. His routines were already polished. He's a pro.

I think when he's been asked to handle different situations, you know, he's TBA last year in the Super Regional. But we start him, he goes seven innings and is incredible then. That falls under the umbrella of pro.

And the Vanderbilt series is one that local media talks about. He changed the vibe in the stands with the media, with our fans not at the game, in the dugout, with our team, that particular instance.

But the rest, to be honest with you, I file under the category of he's one of the best pitchers on the planet, amateur status, and he's just getting us outs because, again, we've got a starter. And it will be interesting, if we can keep playing ball, it will be interesting when his next lump of innings comes. Does it come at the beginning of the game or the middle or at the end?

Q. Can you talk a little bit about what it means for you to get your first win here in Omaha and the program's first win in Omaha since 2001?

COACH VITELLO: Yeah, I mean, anytime there's a bridge to the history, it's a big deal for us. We invested a lot of time, researched Coach Delmonico's time in Rocky Top. And the 2005 team. But also Burke's team and Todd Helton's group. They helped us a bunch.

Anything that excites us that serves as a bridge and the success in the past -- Tennessee in general, Pat Summitt, proud tradition.

And for today, to be honest with you, our little theme we've had all year long, because of tough times, is just keep moving forward. This is one more day we get to keep moving forward. And a win is nice but you need more than one win at this place to get too excited about wins. It's more about this group getting to be together another day or two and hopefully even more than that. But I don't know if they agree with me in August and September, like, yeah, let's do whatever we've got to do to hang out a little bit more. But the team has come together. And I speak for them that we'll take another hour together if we can.

Q. Going against Quinn Mathews today, guy throwing 156 pitches previous start, did that change your

strategy at all, or did you have a specific strategy to attack him?

COACH VITELLO: We did as a group. And you kind of got two choices: You could say, man, why are we the team that inherits the number one strikeout pitcher in the country and the number two strikeout pitcher in the country in our back-to-back games? Or you can have the Brian Cain mindset of we get to face this guy and this guy.

I don't know, maybe it was because we were sitting watching that game on TV last week and our kids knew who he was or Coach Elander getting together with those guys and putting together a specific game plan I would share with you if I knew exactly. But I think it was more looking forward to and excited about the challenge and knowing it's not going to be easy.

This is a wild place. You're dying to get here as a ball player from the time you're a little tike, but again, as I said earlier, you better be careful what you ask for because when you get here, it's not going to be easy at any point in the deal.

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