

2023 Men's College World Series

Saturday, June 24, 2023

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Florida Gators

Coach Kevin O'Sullivan

Wyatt Langford

BT Riopelle

Postgame Press Conference



LSU - 4, Florida - 3 (11)

COACH O'SULLIVAN: Well, it was, obviously, a well-played game. We got off to a tough start on the mound. We ran into a lot of offensive counts. But Brandon was able to pitch his way out of it. Obviously his pitch count got up there.

I thought Cade came in and did an outstanding job. Obviously he made that one mistake on the 0-2 count, but other than that he pitched great. And I thought Brandon pitched great. It came down to one pitch.

Offensively, we struck out 20 times tonight. They only walked two. I just think our swings are a little bit big tonight.

And we've handled the moment really well. Tonight, offensively I think we kind of got caught up in it a little bit and that kind of resulted in the strikeouts.

But with that being said, we got Hurston going tomorrow, and we'll do everything we can win tomorrow and force a Game 3. That simple.

Q. What made Floyd so tough tonight in your mind in terms of his stuff?

BT RIOPELLE: I think he's just a great pitcher in general. He has a fastball that kind of plays like it rides a little bit with an induced vertical break. It's a lower slot. The shadow isn't the easiest thing at the beginning of the game; it got shown for both teams in the early innings.

He's a great pitcher who threw it really well tonight. What could you ask for a guy in the World Series, giving you a

bunch of innings and limited their bullpen use tonight. They played a great game.

WYATT LANGFORD: Pretty much what BT said. He's a really good pitcher as it is. And tonight was just his night. That's kind of how it went about. And that's just what it was, I guess.

Q. BT I saw you shaking your head when Sully was going through the walk-to-strike ratio. What did you feel was so frustrating about the at-bats tonight, aside from Floyd, I guess?

BT RIOPELLE: Everybody just didn't have their night. Your best players have to play the best when it matters the most to win games like this. It's one pitch that completely changes the game, obviously. Tonight was a perfect example of that.

And they just won way too many pitches or more pitches than we won tonight. Sadly, that's the end of the game. But all we can do is move on to tomorrow and, like Sully said, try to force a game three.

Q. Wyatt, your thoughts, emotions in the bottom of the 10th when you hit the line drive going over the left fielder's head. Did you feel that was a shot and how tough did you think it was for him to make that catch?

WYATT LANGFORD: I knew I hit the ball good. I just hit it right at him. That sucks, probably something I'll never forget, looking back on it.

That's baseball. You can hit the ball as hard as you can but sometimes it just goes right at them. So that's just part of it.

Q. BT, you've caught for Brandon Sproat for a couple of years now. What can you say about his mentality tonight and how he was able to get out of a lot of those jams in the early innings?

BT RIOPELLE: I think he had to get out of a lot of jams, like Sully said, because we got in a lot of deeper counts, and they're a bunch of really good hitters that don't like to



strike out and like to get themselves in advantage counts and do damage. And that's exactly what they did.

It didn't play in our favor that we weren't getting ahead of guys. But whenever Sproat got in jams like that, he kind of pulled himself together and made some pitches when it mattered the most, but ran up his pitch count really fast and he was out after four innings.

That didn't really play into our plan, but, yeah, I guess he got out of jams when he had to.

Q. How much of an advantage do you feel it's for your club? You get to come back with Waldrep tomorrow, just given how well he's thrown for you lately.

BT RIOPELLE: Anytime that guy gets on the mound is a great advantage for us. Ultimately we have to go out and execute. I think execution is the most important thing. You can throw out all the talent and throw out everything else. All that matters now is if you execute and make the pitch when it matters -- or the at-bat when it matters or the defensive play when it matters.

If you don't you'll lose to good teams like LSU. We have to go out tomorrow and attack and bring the game to them and that's all we can do.

Q. Just the mindset going into tomorrow and how do you feel having Hurston on the mound?

WYATT LANGFORD: Like BT just said, anytime Hurston gets on the mound we know we have a really good chance to win. Obviously we're trying to flush tonight and come in tomorrow ready to play.

BT RIOPELLE: Can't dwell on tonight. It's in the past. We've been in this position before where our back's up against the wall and we're taking some punches and we have to throw back.

It's a matter of going out and attacking and playing our best baseball. If we don't then that's just how it rolls. We'll do everything in our power to play our best baseball tomorrow and force a game three on Monday.

Q. BT just mentioned you can't dwell on the moment. For a guy that to say something like that, for a leader, how confident are you in your senior leaders to flush and move on?

COACH O'SULLIVAN: Yeah, I think it's hard right now. Once they go back to the hotel, get a shower, get something to eat -- we'll have them ready to play tomorrow.

This team has shown fight the entire year. We've had a situation in Regionals we had to win three in a row, and we were able to do that. We'll need some other guys to step up in the pen. But we certainly feel confident that they will. We've got a bunch of guys that have not even stepped on the mound yet. But they'll be ready to play tomorrow.

Q. There wasn't much contact made even just to stay alive in counts against Ty tonight. What did you see in the type of at-bats that you guys had against him?

COACH O'SULLIVAN: Well, I think it was a combination of things. We had a game plan coming in. And he threw good. I mean, it's really that simple. But from our standpoint, when you look back, there were some swings with two strikes that were maybe a little bit too big, swings that we hadn't taken in the past or in a while.

But I thought we took some fastballs on the outer half of the plate, early in the count, to get us behind the count. He threw just enough breaking balls to keep us off his fastball. And we chased a bunch of up fastballs and he pitched really good.

But in games like this it comes down to one at-bat, one pitch. They walked two guys in 11 innings. We walked eight. And it's part of it. It wasn't our best night, but we played 11 innings and lost by a pitch on a 1-0 count.

And we didn't play our best baseball, but the message tomorrow is, you know, we've got nothing to lose at this point. We're in the College World Series and playing in the Finals. We lost by a run. Everybody's disappointed, but we can't let this leak into tomorrow.

Q. I'm curious about your thoughts about the bullpen tonight pitching in next innings. They have to go seven. Just your thoughts on maybe some of the performances. And bringing Cade back out to start the eighth, you were just looking for another inning from him?

COACH O'SULLIVAN: Yeah, I mean, he was throwing them all good. It's one pitch. I mean, when you strike out five over three and a third, walk nobody. It's one pitch an 0-2 count that no one feels worse than he does.

But it's our job to make sure he's focused tomorrow. That's part of the game. Sometimes it comes down to one pitch. But I mean Cade knows what he's doing. We wouldn't be here right now without him. We'll boost up his spirits tomorrow and get him ready to go.

Q. You mentioned needing more stuff out of the bullpen. Obviously Sproat didn't go maybe as deep

into the game as you would want him to, only four innings pitched. But third straight game with 100-plus pitches. What does it mean to you that you've got an experienced guy like that that's able to bounce back out of jams and keep that pitch count up and going as late in the game as possible -- about Sproat tonight managing to get out of some of those jams early in the game and even though his pitch count was up, staying in the game as long as he could.

COACH O'SULLIVAN: The bottom line is he left and kept us close within one swing at-bat. Certainly I hoped he would have gone deeper in the game. But the other guys did pick him up.

When you lose games by one run or win games by one run, it comes down to one this or that. But in this situation there was quite a few things that led to us to this point right now.

So we've had a lot of good fortune and the ball that Wyatt hit, if it's over his head or five more feet to the left to right, we're in a different position. But it is what it is. We got outplayed of tonight. It's our job to make sure these guys are ready to go tomorrow.

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