

# 2023 Men's College World Series

Saturday, June 24, 2023  
Omaha, Nebraska, USA

**LSU Tigers**

**Coach Jay Johnson**

**Cade Beloso**

**Riley Cooper**

**Ty Floyd**

Postgame Press Conference



said the first time he met you was after a high school football game. Do you remember that interaction at all what's your relationship with Tre'?

CADE BELOSO: First and foremost, he's one of my best friends. Even though he's younger than me I admire him. I kind of look up to him, the way he goes about his business. He's so strong mentally.

He's going to play professional baseball for so long, and he's one of the best first basemen I've ever seen and maybe college baseball has ever seen.

But I do remember that about football. We mess with him all the time we used to pick on 1-9. My high school didn't throw the ball that often, but Tre' was a cornerback and we would go after him every time.

**Q. Cade, can you just take us through that last at-bat and what you were seeing at the plate?**

CADE BELOSO: You've got to give credit to Brandon Neely first. He's unbelievable. He's one of the best pitchers in the country. And he has a great fastball.

My prior at-bat he struck me out on three straight heaters. I figured he was going to go back to that. It was not pretty.

And then the first pitch blew by me again. So I knew he was coming back with it; they weren't going to switch anything up. Finally got one that I was supposed to swing at and put a good swing on it.

**Q. Ty, tying the NCAA college baseball record with 17 strikeouts, what's it like to have Alex Milazzo be such a good catcher behind the ditch for the course of the season?**

TY FLOYD: Alex has been great for us all year. This was actually the first time he caught me in a couple of weeks, but he came up like he's caught me all year. He was able to steal me some pitches tonight, able to block some balls when I needed it.

And also I know other teams are threatened by his arm.

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COACH JOHNSON: Great college baseball game. Two of the best teams in the country, a ton of execution by both teams from the mound. Great defensive plays. Really good, quality at-bats.

Ty was outstanding tonight. Really hard to put into words what that performance meant for the outcome of the game and for our team.

I think the eighth inning was the turning point, getting through the eighth, sending him back out there against their best hitters and striking out the side was amazing.

Riley obviously did what Riley's done here and executed at a high level. Really proud of him for getting through that first and second one-out, I believe it was in the tenth with Langford and Caglianone.

And offensively we did a lot of things right. Getting Sproat out before the fifth inning was a good job by our team. He's going to be a high draft pick. And we executed really well there.

Hit into tough luck with the bases loaded there with Tommy lining to third base. I thought that was a good at-bat. Sproat did a nice job wiggling out of it where we might have been able to add some on early.

But we stayed with it. And Tommy and Cade getting those swings were outstanding. On to tomorrow.

**Q. Cade, I was talking to Tre' after the game and he**



So I know that runners don't run as much on him.

**Q. What was working tonight? Looked like the fastball had a lot of rise on it. Kept going to it. What did you feel short rest for you, but obviously your best performance?**

TY FLOYD: I felt good. With as many people as were here tonight, the adrenaline felt good and stuff. I knew that throwing my fastball at the top of the zone, being able to mix in off-speed pitches enough to get them off was the biggest thing tonight.

**Q. In your last start you were rolling up until the sixth inning. Anything you changed between starts in order to keep doing what you did, kind of go deeper into a game?**

TY FLOYD: I don't think so. I think it was just staying mentally strong about it and just knowing that my stuff is going to play. Just having confidence in myself and knowing what I do well.

**Q. How did you shake off the home run by BT and getting back to mowing them down?**

TY FLOYD: I knew my stuff was going to play. I know he put a really good swing on a fastball. You've got to tip your cap. But I knew that I've got a great offense behind me that's going to back me up and get us back in the game.

**Q. Cade, you guys offensively were getting on base and having a lot of opportunities. Just didn't kind of capitalize there in the first part of the game. Just how do you stay mentally in there when you know you're having success but just not seeing it in terms of the run scored and whatnot?**

CADE BELOSO: Baseball is a tough game. And when runners get on that's when pitchers tend to make their best pitches. That's when they rise to the occasion. They make good pitches and stuff like that.

But in terms of not getting the job done, no one's freaking out about it. We've got to just keep playing the game and keep putting ourselves in those opportunities. And you just know eventually we're going to come through and provide pitchers with run support.

But, like I said, baseball's hard. With bases loaded earlier in the game Tommy hit one, like, 110 right at the guy. That's two runs right there. It could go either way.

**Q. Riley and Ty, seems like you guys have so much fun. The team chemistry is up the roof. Can you just**

**talk about the momentum you guys are having and how much fun you guys are having playing together?**

RILEY COOPER: The chemistry is crazy. Just so fun to be around the guys and what better place to be. And so we're just having a blast doing it.

TY FLOYD: Our team chemistry has been amazing all year. Us pitchers are all really, really close. We support each other and (indiscernible) so much to each other. And when we have so much success, we're very happy for them when they have a lot of success.

**Q. Riley, what's it like to have a guy like Josh Pearson step up in a big moment with that catch in the tenth inning?**

RILEY COOPER: That's sweet. That's what I'm talking about with just filling up the strike zone and trusting my defense. I completely trust him and he saved me out there. I was continuing to fill up the strike zone.

**Q. Riley, just wanted to know what was your reaction to watching Ty strike out guy after guy, inning after inning? And, Ty, you haven't been a guy who shows a lot of emotion on the mound. That last strikeout you showed some. What was going through your mind in that moment?**

RILEY COOPER: It was awesome to see. I love Ty, and he works really hard. And to see him do that was amazing, especially here in that game. And the emotion fired me up.

TY FLOYD: I've never been known for my emotions, but I feel like when I show my emotion is when I'm done, I know I'm done. That's one of the biggest reasons I was able to get fired up. Plus I knew the game was tight. I knew we still had to win the game.

**Q. Cade, you did not watch the last out. You were back in the batting cage. Why could you not -- why were you back there, I guess?**

CADE BELOSO: One, I had to use the restroom. (Laughter). And then we got an out. And I was, like, I'm going to stay back here. When you have no control over something you want something to happen so bad you tend to get a little nervous.

Not to say I don't trust Riley because he's the man and he does his deal. But I was a little nervous just because like anything can happen in baseball -- and I had to pee.

**Q. Just talk about playing for a national title tomorrow. Obviously I know you're going to talk about the**

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**approach and staying with it. But how do you do that given what's on the line?**

CADE BELOSO: I mean, you can't make it anything bigger than it is. It's another baseball game. And we always take the one-game-at-a-time, one-pitch-at-a-time approach. And that works best for us.

We're going to take the exact same approach. We know what's on the line. You don't need to say it or doesn't need to be broadcasted.

The same thing when we were fighting for our season, you didn't hear this guy, all right, we gotta win or we're going home. That's not the case. We just want to play baseball. We've got to play a good game tomorrow. That's all we're focused on.

RILEY COOPER: It's hard -- it's cool to think about and stuff, but when it comes down to it, it's still just baseball. Still going to do the same thing we've been doing the whole year because it's worked for us and stick to the approach. It's fun to think about, just chilling in my room.

TY FLOYD: It's something we've talked about since the fall. It's something we wanted to accomplish as a team and stuff. We know we still have to take every game at a time. As great as tonight felt and stuff, but we know we still need to get one more done.

**Q. Cade, you battled back from injury. Obviously you're the heartbeat of this team, a fifth-year guy who's been in Baton Rouge for half a decade. (Indiscernible), the culture of what it means to be an LSU Tiger, friends and family here tonight, talk to me through what it means to have that moment with your family tonight?**

CADE BELOSO: Gosh, I've been here for five years. I just love this university so much and love -- especially this team. There's so many good guys and good people on this team. Some of my best friends, going talk to them for the rest of my life.

I just love baseball it's as simple as that. You ask every guy on the team and they'll give you the same answer. It's nothing more than that.

This university is special. I grew up in New Orleans. Wanted to be Mikey Mahtook, Ryan Schimpf, Jared Mitchell. Watching the highlights of the 2009 national championship on repeat on YouTube when I was a kid. This means the world, one, just being in Omaha and, two, playing for a national championship.

**Q. Going with Ty, you've talked all year about he's a**

**winner, et cetera. But obviously the resiliency that he has to limit it, we talked about that as well. Just his performance tonight, what does it mean to you to see it?**

COACH JOHNSON: It's coaching. What I mean -- no, what I mean by that, we need to have a reason to be there. When you have a guy that's as talented as that, sometimes you have to get them to the point they understand what they need to be successful, give them a path to execute that and get them believing in themselves.

That's really all we've tried to do over two years. And I mentioned he finished the season really strong last year. He was very unselfish at the beginning of this thing the first two weeks of the season. We needed him in the bullpen until we figured out who we were going to be. And he did that. Helped us get off to a good start there.

Like I said, he's had a terrific season. Nothing better than that tonight. But we're not sitting here in this position without Ty Floyd. I feel like he's one of the most underrated, underappreciated players in college baseball this year.

**Q. You said there was a specific turning point for you in the eighth inning to send him back out there. What went into that decision?**

COACH JOHNSON: We had a spot where we thought we would go to Riley and it was kind of -- we had Guidry down there warming up. I felt like we may get into a lengthy game, just with Neely throwing the ball as well as he was. Those are the two guys we were going to use and go to.

And so it was a little bit of a tricky spot. So for him to get two more hitters was a big deal. And then there was no way, with the way he pitched to Kurland and Langford, like, it was Caglionone was going to be his. And he deserved to finish that inning. I'm glad he did. Made some great pitches and allowed us to turn the ball over to Riley.

I think striking out the side with those three hitters right there, that's legit. That's pitching at the highest level, especially when he emptied the tank to put us in the position he did for the first seven innings.

**Q. Second game you've won here in extra innings. I wonder, what goes into building that resiliency offensively especially when things weren't seemingly going y'all's way at the beginning of the night?**

COACH JOHNSON: I don't think we look at the game the same way people on the outside of the fence look at the game. I think we're facing a team that's won 53 games this

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year. We're facing a pitcher -- and that's all we've faced here with our bracket. It's got to be one of the best pitching brackets in College World Series history.

We just don't get discouraged. We set the table in I believe it was the second or the third. And Tommy hits the line drive. And then Sproat made some pitches. I think that was more him than us.

I didn't think anybody thought anything of leaving guys on base or any of those types of things. And we got good hitters, and part of what good hitters do they hit mistakes. Tommy was in the two-strike count right there. Fisher left the ball up, and he put a great swing on it.

Neely, I don't even know if it was that bad of a pitch. I haven't seen Cade's home run. But he was in position to hit on time. He stayed short. He let the pitcher supply the power and put a great swing on it.

I think it's we're doing what we do. And the last inning before he hit the home run, we wanted to get kind of settled back down again. And if somebody's going to hit a big home run in extra innings, maybe I'll have the offensive meeting a little sooner because I like that.

**Q. You come into these games after we've just been mesmerized by Skenes and Lowder. Feels like Ty has kind of like just flown by, but this is two performances now against really top-notch offenses where he basically looked like this the entire time?**

COACH JOHNSON: He's there. I think it's probably just because of Paul -- you know what I mean? -- and Paul being so out of this world good. Nobody's really paid attention to him, but the pro people are. He's not going to last very long on the draft board. Somebody will be very, very happy with Ty Floyd.

I think he'll pitch for a very long time. Like I mentioned with a couple of the other pitchers in the game on Thursday night, there's a chance for it to be a short arc from Omaha to a big league stadium for him.

**Q. Have you ever seen a story that's quite like Cade's in terms of being from the New Orleans area and here for five years and to be just coming up in these big clutch moments? I guess just talk about that perspective a little bit.**

COACH JOHNSON: I'm really proud of him. I think I mentioned this earlier. He's had a great tournament. So we've talked about him a lot, that he didn't have a very good 2021 season. We needed to shift some things.

But my first impressions of him were he was all about the team. All he wanted to do was be a great player for LSU. He's never mentioned pro baseball one time. It's just what can I do to help, whether that's leadership, fix my swing, improve my approach, maybe be able to play some first base.

And he wasn't playing at the beginning of the season because Tommy hurt his shoulder and so we had to shift the DH position around. I just kind of had a feeling we'd get to our best team, he would be part of that. That was really clear. He never wavered in any of that.

I tell people all the time, him going down last year, that hurt our team dramatically. I think if you're paying attention to the College World Series, you can clearly see why.

**Q. Obviously we talked about Cade, but Gavin as well. Just the veteran presence on this team and its ability to see the moment and then stay in it?**

COACH JOHNSON: I think you have to have two things to -- you have to have a little more than two things. But you have to have two things to get here and to win here. You have to have future Major League players. That's clear. Nobody's getting here any more without future Major League players, and you have to have old players that really know what they're doing. Those two guys really know what they're doing.

The buy-in piece of it, to just a new deal, I mean they've made this for me as a new coach. Like those two guys have made this situation, program, culture, they're as important as anybody. They don't get talked about the same way because you've got Dylan and Paul, and those guys should be talked about, too, because they're leaders and they're special talents.

But when it was 2-0, we know who drove in the first two runs today. They're sitting right in that spot in the order for a reason because I know what I'm going to get in terms of those at-bats.

**Q. Wanted to ask about the catch with Josh, we saw it the other night with Tre', those are game-deciders. We think about clutchness with pitching and hitting, what do you make of the elite defensive plays you've made that have changed games tonight?**

COACH JOHNSON: Yeah, I think our team is super locked in. I've mentioned this before, Marc Wanaka, who positions our defense, is as good at that as anybody. Not college baseball, in baseball. That's a tough one. And you're chewing on the matchup, do you bring somebody in for Langford? He's hitting .390, but I think I'll go with the

guy that's pitched here now six times that's just been filling up the zone and got the ball down just enough where he couldn't elevate it. And he got it just either in or off the barrel enough. I can't remember at this point.

And Josh was standing where he needed to be. Broke back and made a heck of a play. And he's a good defender.

Somebody asked me, hey, are you going to keep going with him, he's maybe not swinging the bat as well as some of the other guys here, that's not even a thought because I know he's going to walk, move the offense and he's going to play great defense in left field. And that was probably the defensive play of the game tonight.

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