

# 2024 Men's College World Series

Sunday, June 16, 2024

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

**North Carolina Tar Heels**

**Coach Scott Forbes**

**Vance Honeycutt**

**Parks Harber**

Postgame Press Conference



the in the world confidence that on Tuesday against Florida State we'll be in a similar position and he'll come through.

VANCE HONEYCUTT: He said it all. We have all the confidence in our guys. So just continuing to back them. And like he said, on Tuesday we'll get it done.

**Q. Parks, you guys got your first hit in the top of the fourth inning. What's the dilemma for you guys to get on the board early on Tuesday?**

PARKS HARBER: Yeah, I think just keep doing what we're doing, just be confident and kind of attack. Sometimes I feel like we have kind of been on our heels recently. We need to go out there aggressive, let it all out there and play with no regrets.

**Q. Parks and Vance, when you saw that play that Colby made there in the first inning right to lead off the game. Is it like, hey, this is going to be a good night? Seemed like that was one of those plays that really gets something started.**

VANCE HONEYCUTT: For sure. Colby's been really good there all year. Just Christian Moore smoked that ball and Colby made a great play. And just continuing to make great plays behind our pitchers.

**Q. How would you gauge the mood in the locker room after this loss? As Coach alluded to, you ain't done yet. What would you say the vibes are like in there coming off this loss knowing that you're facing elimination now?**

PARKS HARBER: Personally for me, I'm really excited. Really, really excited to get out there for another opportunity on Tuesday. This is the most fun I've ever had playing baseball. I'm not going to let this loss ruin any my experiences here. I'll be so grateful that I have another opportunity to go out there and play and just leave it all out there and be ready to go.

VANCE HONEYCUTT: I couldn't have said it any better. So I just kind of let it go (laughter).

Tennessee - 6, North Carolina - 1

SCOTT FORBES: A lot of credit to Tennessee. I thought Drew Beam was really, really good. We had our chance that one inning. Obviously we didn't capitalize.

At the end of the day, I thought they got the big hit and they capitalized and we could not do that. I thought, top to bottom, we pitched the ball pretty dang well. But they got it done with runners in scoring position and we didn't. Credit to them. Good thing is we lost but we ain't done. So we'll bounce back and we'll be ready to roll on Tuesday.

**Q. Parks, Coach mentioned that Beam was really good tonight. What did you see from him? How do you feel you guys attacked him and did or did not succeed against him?**

PARKS HARBER: I thought he did a good job the first time through the order, attacked us with fastballs. The second time around he did a good job landing the off-speed pitches to get ahead in the count and kept you off balance. Credit to him and his preparation tonight.

**Q. I guess it was the sixth inning, Vance hits the homer but then you guys, as Coach alluded to, you ran out of that rally there with the thing with Donofrio. Maybe the frustration there, you've got two runners on and you're not able to score some more when you needed it. What did you see happening there and how it sort of impacted your chances?**

PARKS HARBER: I think that was, you know, a big spot for us in the game, but sometimes in baseball you don't come through. Donofrio has done such a good job for us this year, and that situation didn't work out. But I have all

**Q. What's your message to the team after this? Again, you said it, I mean they lost one but they've still got one to play.**

SCOTT FORBES: Yeah, that's what I told them. I said, move on. We have a 24-hour rule when we win. But after we lose, even quicker. You've got to walk out and it's gone.

The great thing about this format, I've been in it. In 2006 we won the first three, won the first four. Didn't end up winning it. In 2007 we lost the second game and we made it to the national championship.

So feel like we have the pitching to bounce back and I told them to keep your heads up. You're at the College World Series. You have a great opportunity ahead of you. We'll get back, take a shower, turn your loops in, eat a meal together, get some sleep and get back to work tomorrow.

**Q. You have three consecutive games with three runs or fewer. Obviously the pitching's been good. Can you put your finger on any other dynamic that's going on there?**

SCOTT FORBES: No, I think a lot of that is the guy on the mound. You've got to give him credit and look at who you're facing. Hitting is contagious. I feel like the one thing that kind of lets the air out is when you get those guys on, somebody hits the ball in the gap. Somebody hits the ball over the wall. Somebody gets hit by a pitch.

We just haven't been able to have a big, big inning but we're very capable of doing that. It can flip just like that. That's the thing about baseball.

**Q. Could you talk about the inning, the rally-killing pick-off?**

SCOTT FORBES: Donofrio's a really good baserunner. Him and Vance generally have the green light. We all make mistakes. Anthony made a mistake. I've made mistakes throughout the year as well as everybody else on the team. So we'll learn from it. And he'll let it teach him and won't let it happen again, hopefully.

**Q. Moments after they were eliminated, Brian O'Connor is standing there and he takes the time to stop you and your team at times and wish you guys luck and provide some encouragement. What does that say about the support of the conference as a whole and him in particular?**

SCOTT FORBES: I think it says more about him, in particular. Brian is what coaching's about. He cares about

his players.

He's been a tremendous friend to me. He's been a head coach a long time. I haven't been a head coach a long time, but he's always treated me, like, basically I was a head coach. It didn't matter to him. It's just who he is.

And we're pulling for each other except when we play each other. Obviously he wants us to do well because we're good friends. But he also respects the way we play. And he knows we respect the way they play.

**Q. When you say you have the pitching to be able to get it done over the longer course that you have to go now, what do you mean by that? What does that entail? What does that look like to you?**

SCOTT FORBES: I probably should rephrase that. We have the pitching, I think, to compete with Florida State. That's all you can focus on now. I have to keep the guys (indiscernible). I'll talk to them tonight when we eat. You don't look at what you have to do; you just look at what you can do right now.

And that is literally going back and getting a good night's rest and hydrating. It was hot out today. Getting our good lift in tomorrow. And then when we play Florida State I do feel like we've got enough guys that we can compete.

It's a really good offensive lineup we'll take it pitch by pitch. If we beat Florida State then hopefully we'll have enough guys to compete against Tennessee again. We'll start Aidan Haugh most likely.

**Q. What can you say about what Shea did? He was moving right along for those first three innings. Ran into some trouble in the fourth. How do you think he performed?**

SCOTT FORBES: The difference in the game. They made some mistakes, too, on the mound. I'm sure I'm going to see that when I go back and watch the game tonight.

Shea made that mistake with two outs. And winning games, you've got to have some clutch to get those two-out hits and we had a lot of that in the postseason. They had it tonight.

I believe it was Tears that hit that ball. Is that correct? Gotta give him credit. Just a change-up up in the zone. He did what you should do with that mistake.

But I tell you, I thought we pitched it well enough to win the game and even pitched it better than six runs. They just

capitalized and got that big hit. Didn't leave many guys on base.

**Q. After a game like this where maybe you don't get the offensive output that you were looking for, what do your conversations look like with coach Wierzbicki heading into the next?**

SCOTT FORBES: We won't have one. It's just baseball. You just move on. You don't really talk about it at all. These guys know what they're capable of doing. My job is to instill that confidence in them and say, hey, move on because it can flip just like that.

We could have scored 12 runs tomorrow -- today and the guy the next game could have been on and we don't get but two hits. I tell them to do what they've been doing. Coach Wierz is unbelievable with our hitters. If anything I will tell him to take a step back and don't take too many swings tomorrow, save those swings and get that bat speed ready for Florida State.

**Q. Florida State, another conference game, team, rather, that you're going to face. The familiarity of that, how does that play into the match-up? And what are your impressions how they're playing now?**

SCOTT FORBES: Really good club. Link is a heck of a coach. They've got really good players.

But we haven't played this season. We missed each other. So we'll look forward to that challenge playing each other.

But they're extremely offensive. Some high picks in that lineup. It will be a big challenge for us, but we feel like we'll be up for that challenge.

**Q. After Matty, if it had been a one-run deficit, would the pitching approach been different? You were able to get Dalton the day off. You threw guys who hadn't thrown in a bit. Would the approach have been different?**

SCOTT FORBES: Absolutely. What you don't want to do is when you're behind by a certain amount of runs you want to stay in the game, but there's some certain guys you aren't going to bring in unless you bridge the gap, maybe within two.

But I thought these guys, really, I thought they were aggressive. You're talking one, two, three -- five guys that have never pitched in the College World Series.

I know if I would have been out there I would have had some major butterflies. I thought they were all aggressive

and they looked really, really good. We're going to need all of them to get back through this bracket. And I have confidence in all of them.

**Q. In the vein of talking about capitalizing, was there anything in specific that Beam and the Tennessee staff did in particular that you think made it hard to find that offensive rhythm?**

SCOTT FORBES: Beam's good. He's way better in the windup. We couldn't get him in the stretch much. I thought he did a good job of moving his fastball to both sides of the plate. And he's got the good curveball. He threw a couple of change-ups to our lefties.

Connell has always been a good look for them. He's a tough look, a tough angle, especially on lefties. He came in and did his job.

And we had chances against Snead. Obviously he's -- I thought we had really good at-bats against him, throwing 95, 98, touching 99. We didn't strikeout. Only two weeks.

But we got those mistakes and we didn't capitalize on them. But I don't know without watching the video how many mistakes Drew Beam made, because I can go back and watch and be, like, man, he was really good and didn't give us many mistakes. I thought him and Connell were both very good.

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