

2026 Men's College World Series

Thursday, June 11, 2026

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Texas Longhorns

Coach Jim Schlossnagle

Luke Harrison

Carson Tinney

Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas coach Jim Schlossnagle and student-athletes Luke Harrison and Carson Tinney.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: On behalf of the University of Texas, we're super excited to be here in Omaha for the 39th trip for our program. Congratulations to the seven other teams, especially to our SEC brethren, and personally from me, congratulations to West Virginia. I'm from Western Maryland, and Randy Mazey is a very dear friend and former assistant coach and former coaching staff member of mine that has done such an amazing job of building that program, and Coach Sabins kind of keep pushing it forward. Excited for the Mountaineers but even more so for our team and our players to get here and play, and we're just fired up for Saturday night.

Q. Luke, I believe it was in the SEC Tournament when Coach Schloss mentioned that the starters are going to pitch maybe in various roles in the postseason. I feel like you've kind of filled in that role of coming out of the bullpen a handful of times. What has that experience been like? Is the transition any different from starting to coming out of the bullpen, time of prep for you a little bit different?

LUKE HARRISON: I would say the preparation has been a little bit different. The workload is just a little bit different, a little bit more unexpected things, but I feel like the transition's been great.

I mean, as a pitcher, as a competitor, you want the ball in the biggest moments. And I think it's done a lot for our team to be able to have the starters available in the bullpen and be ready for whatever we need. And that's kind of what can really help you win games down the stretch, is

when guys are willing to be selfless and just go take the ball whenever you're called upon.

Q. How would you compare your game to Daniel Jackson, and who is faster on the base paths?

CARSON TINNEY: I would like to say that I probably have a little bit more speed than him. No, I'm just kidding. He's a great player. He's a really good kid. I had the opportunity to meet him last summer. He's a great competitor. I'm just excited to play.

Q. Can you talk about his game?

CARSON TINNEY: I know he hits the ball pretty well, hard, a lot of homers, steals some bags. But, no, I'm just excited to play the game.

Q. Carson, this pitching staff has been very talented, and the man kind of running the show from the coaching point of things is Max Weiner. What's it been like working alongside that man this year with Texas?

CARSON TINNEY: It's awesome. I've learned so much from him just about the game and how to lead a pitching staff. He's given me plenty of opportunities to be in control of the pitching staff. And I think he does a great job of communicating how that works.

There's a different vocabulary at Texas, and I think that our pitchers succeed because of the things that Max allows them to understand. He's very wise and very knowledge-based, and he's just a wizard. He's the most interesting man I've ever met.

Q. Luke, your experience with the College World Series, have you had a conversation with the pitchers and what the experience is like? And, Carson, have you had a chance to talk with Ashton and Temo, what their experiences were with Stanford and LSU and what it looks like for y'all as you go through the prep and block out the noise and all the distractions?

LUKE HARRISON: I think that's something that we've done a great job of is letting the guys who have been here



and played here, just let their voices be heard, hear what they have to say, what they see out of the teams and the people who have done well here.

I think we've done a great job of taking in all of the fun, the excitement that comes with being here in Omaha, but also understanding that our job's not done. It hasn't even started. And we've got to stay focused but also take in everything. I think that's been the message, is, like, have so much fun, enjoy it while you can, but you've got to focus on what matters when it matters.

It's great to be here. It's great to be sitting next to this guy and not across the way from him this time, and it's good to have this guy here too.

But fired up.

CARSON TINNEY: Like he said, I'm extremely grateful to be here. But the job hasn't even started. I think something we talk about a lot is that there's a lot of things that can be outside noise.

But at the end of the day, it's the same game you played when you were a kid, it's the same dirt and grass you're playing on, the same ball you're using. So not making it bigger than what it is. We're playing the same game and we have the same mission.

Q. Carson, you catch him; Luke, you saw him as a freshman. Dylan Volantis has just rose into becoming one of college baseball's biggest star arms. Luke, what have you seen from him and his progression since freshman year as, you know, your closer and a weekend starter? And then, Carson, same thing for you, catching him?

LUKE HARRISON: Yeah, I think the biggest kind of evolution for Dylan, obviously, all the physical tools have been there and the mental ability to take the ball and go throw strikes and not be intimidated or distracted, that's always been there, but I think the biggest growth for him has been just his maturity away from the field.

There were some times early last year where it was like he was a kid because he was. He was an 18-year-old kid coming onto campus, and he definitely needed some guidance. But just to see how far he's come in terms of taking care of himself and his daily preparation and his routine, it's been really cool to see, and I'm very proud of him for that.

CARSON TINNEY: I would honestly just second what Luke said. Ever since the fall, I think he's grown significantly in his maturity. I got to watch him on TV last

year. I didn't get to play with him. But obviously the skill set's there, and it's been present all year. But watching him grow as a human and just how much he loves baseball is what makes him so good.

Q. Luke, I want to go back to 2022 when you were here and you pitched against the Aggies, and how long were you mad at that guy sitting next to you for ruining your College World Series experience?

LUKE HARRISON: It's definitely not personal. I felt like that team had so much fun, was very talented. But at the end of the day, we weren't playing our best baseball when it mattered, and that's kind of how it went for us.

And great team. Definitely a lot of experiences, memories, lessons that I've learned from that year. But it's all prepared us to be where we are now. And if you would have told me that I would be here sitting next to Coach right now and we'd be getting ready to win a ball game, I'd probably believe you.

Q. Talking to Georgia, kind of seemed like they're trying to find ways to fill the time because it's so long until you guys play. So I'll ask you guys, what are you guys planning to do over the next two days just to kind of fill the time?

CARSON TINNEY: I think we're going to obviously spend the time practicing and getting our preparation in. But also this time of year you just gotta spend time with the guys. I love all these boys on this team like they're my own brothers, and I'm super grateful to be a part of the team with them. And after June 22nd, that's the last time we're all going to be riding together. So just enjoying the moments and not taking those relationships for granted.

LUKE HARRISON: Like Tinney said, it's all about the team. This team is going to be this team for X number of days and just taking every moment to enjoy each other but also enjoy where we are, whether it's walking around, going to find somewhere to eat or exploring the village around the field and going and buying some cool gear, just doing all that stuff together.

It's been really cool, and obviously we have a little bit more time to spend together. But we're just really excited, and we're not going to lose what's brought us this far, which is the team itself and how close we are as a group.

Q. Are you guys kind of surprised that you're here and now you're in a bracket with all SEC teams, or is that to be expected after what you've gone through facing them throughout the year?

CARSON TINNEY: I think that's to be expected, in my opinion. I think we play in the best conference in college baseball, and I think it shows at the end of the year. It's definitely a fun conference to be part of because it's a high-level competition, which is exactly what you look for when you're trying to play at the highest level. So I think that's what I look for or expected.

LUKE HARRISON: I think no surprise. I think when you look at what makes the SEC so good, it's that there's so many tough teams that prepare you for this time of year and to play baseball this time of year. So now that we're playing baseball this time of year, we're going to face those kind of teams, and this league's got the most of them.

Q. Luke, Georgia, 174 home runs. Have you faced a scarier lineup than Georgia, and how do you get Daniel Jackson out?

LUKE HARRISON: I think the key to getting any good hitter out is to go throw strike one. And I think that's the main focus for us, is control what we can control. And we know that our pitching staff, we've got plenty good enough stuff to get those guys out.

And it's just a matter of going out and executing pitches and not being distracted or not being brought down by any damage or anything like that and just moving on to the next pitch no matter what. That's what's important. That's what will always be important in this game.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

Q. Last time you were in Omaha coaching the College World Series, you were wearing a different color. You look great in burnt orange, I must say. But just a statement on overall this season? Because you did have to go back to College Station; now you're here in the College World Series. And I assume you've mentioned in previous press conferences that you come to Texas to win the College World Series, to win a national championship. What has been the statement that you've been telling the group of guys this week now that you're here?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: I mean, we planned on winning the national championship at TCU and A&M, too. It just didn't work out. Certainly at Texas, the fact that this is the 39th trip, the expectation -- it's a bad season if you don't finish it in Omaha. And certainly they've won six national titles, and we continue to win national titles in different sports. Just won back-to-back in softball. So the standard is very high amongst all of our head coaches. I certainly know what the assignment is.

The message to our team is we're prepared. The question about the SEC teams, I mean, we're certainly -- we haven't played Georgia this year. They've proved themselves to be the best team in our league throughout the stretch of the season, including the conference tournament. Wow, what an accomplishment for them to do that.

So they're certainly on a heater. But it's never about the best team. It's only about the team that plays the best. If it were about the best teams, over the course of a season, UCLA and Georgia Tech would be here. But baseball happens, unfortunately, or fortunately for West Virginia and Troy and everybody else.

So long story short is you just have to play well, and you have to be able to handle all the distractions and everything that comes with Omaha, which is mostly all great. But it's not necessarily always conducive to winning baseball if you're not focused on the task at hand when the time is called for.

So we're excited to be here. Excited to represent Texas, and we know the assignment.

Q. Jim, I'll ask you what I asked Luke, have you seen a scarier lineup? And is this going to be a game for exit velocity freaks and launch angle freaks?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: I mean, it's going to be a great game for baseball fans, that's for sure. Joey Volchko is a good pitcher. Dylan Volantis is a good pitcher. Just usually in baseball, just when you think it's going to go one way, it goes the opposite, like we'll see.

I will say the times in which I've been here, I don't remember a north wind. I don't remember a north wind blowing dead out like it is today and like it's supposed to on Saturday. So that should be interesting.

But we haven't played them. But I certainly studied their team. They have a great team. They do an awesome job of signing super physical players, experienced players, especially in the portal. And Wes and his staff do an incredible job of coaching the hitters. And they have a definite style of play. And I think the key is more than likely they're going to hit some homers. The question is how many guys are on base.

If you get caught up in being afraid to throw the ball in the strike zone, then there's going to be too many ducks on the pond, or dogs on the pond, and those homers really stretch the lead. And oh, by the way, we can hit some homers, too. We don't hit maybe as many as them, but we hit our share. So it should be a great ball game and super entertaining.

Q. You touched on it a little bit there, but I guess I'm just curious, you have a starter in Dylan who is obviously elite at keeping the ball on the ground. And you have a lineup that really lifts the ball. When you have that kind of stylistic clash, what kind of decides it, usually, in your experience, which way it leans?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah, I think just the execution of the pitches. You know I think if Dylan executes his pitches, more often than not then the chances are in our favor. That doesn't mean they can't hit a -- he can execute a really good pitch, and it can be lifted out of the ballpark, especially the way the wind's blowing. But if he doesn't, then he'll get banged around. The same thing on the other end.

So it's just a matter of the two-out hitting, and I think if you start thinking about those things, you make it more than actual baseball, which is pitching, defense, and timely hitting. And so we can't get caught up in anything other than that. It's just throwing strikes and playing good catch.

Q. You talked about defense. How does the team look so far in y'all's one practice and walk-through, and y'all obviously have some practice tomorrow on a dirt field?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: We only get 50 minutes out there. They don't let you be out there with cleats. So the infielders are on skates trying to get used to the field.

We'll go to the grass and dirt field tomorrow and get as many ground balls as we possibly can. And I think we get some maybe before the game. I'm not sure. But it's still baseball. And we'll have to make the routine plays, and Pendergrass and Robbins and Pack, there's a lot of outfield to cover out there. I'm glad Dariyan is healthy to help us cover the field here in Omaha.

Q. Like I said or mentioned to Luke, you said in the SEC Tournament press conference that you're going to throw guys in various different roles. How much of that is you leaned on his experienced leadership or left-handed match-ups against some left-handed bats?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: It was some of the match-ups and maybe analytics, but it was more about the person. In those moments, especially in the regional and then in the super regional, when we had to get the big out, I think the bases were loaded in a 7-to-1 game. And he got the last out, right, of the regional against Santa Barbara, against the center fielder, Rowan Kelly. Really good player.

So that's why we did what we did in the conference

tournament. I think that was a horrific taste for us, to have to go there and play one game and lose.

But at the same time we had a purpose to what we were doing, and then it showed up positively in the regional, super regional, especially Oregon's really good. I mean, they're certainly deserving to be here and a very SEC-like team. So it was very good experience for Luke.

And we'll have to win these games one at a time, and for the most part, anybody and everybody's available to pitch, and to try to stay out of the losers' bracket.

Q. Noticed you had been checking your phone maybe a few times before practice. Can you just speak to the challenge of maybe recruiting the transfer portal during all this?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah, I mean, it is what it is. I mean, I think when you're here, you're trying to keep up with everybody else who is at home. And if you're a team at home like we were last year, you're trying to get as many knocked down as you can before the teams from Omaha get home. It's certainly a challenge. I think that's the case in other sports.

I think -- I'm on the board of the ABCA, and I know there's going to be conversation this weekend and moving forward about where do we put the transfer portal, what does that window look like? Should it be after Omaha? Is that the best thing for all the teams? Is it the best thing for the student-athletes? There's no easy answer for any of those things. I saw Wes checking his phone, too, by the way.

But, yeah, in this league, like, we all recruit, for the most part, the same players. So everybody's going to get their fair share, I guess, but it's definitely really competitive. We have Zoom calls scheduled when we're not playing, and that's just part of it.

Q. About Carson and Daniel, what you've seen from Carson, is that the guy you thought or knew you were going to get? Has he even exceeded your expectations?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Daniel played last year. I actually got to shake his hand earlier when we were doing the media stuff, and very impressive young man, good eye contact. Good handshake. And we had just a real brief conversation.

But he certainly had an amazing season and very deserving of the Golden Spikes award or whatever he's going to win moving forward.

But Tinney has been incredible. You never really know till you coach them. He's caught really well. He's gotten better as both a defensive and offensive player, but where he's really grown is a leader on our team. And he takes a lot of pride in playing at Texas. That's no disrespect to Notre Dame, but he really loves being a Longhorn. And that means a lot at Texas, as you know, specifically.

And he started the season trying to live up to some expectation and put a lot of extra pressure on himself. And I think once he finally found his own voice, his voice within the team and the confidence from his teammates, then he kind of relaxed and now we're seeing the best version of him.

Q. Back-to-back freshmen pitchers of the year with Dylan Volantis in relief and this year it's Sam Cozart. Can you detail Cozart? Just because I know, first off, he's a massive freshman and second off, I know he comes from a big-time baseball family.

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: He does. It starts with his parents. He's got incredible parents, not just because they're baseball people, but faith is a big part of their life. And Sam really portrays that and lives that out in his everyday life, which is super impressive.

He's matured beyond his years. He's already a leader within the program, not just the team. When guys like Luke and Ruger and Max and probably Burns and those guys move on, whether it be pro ball or graduation, Sam's going to be right there in the middle of leading our team, not just our pitchers, but our team. He's that kind of human being.

And he's really done a great job. Max has obviously done an awesome job with him. But as I say always, the best players I've ever coached have the perfect combination of confidence and humility. He's confident that he can do the job and throw the ball in the strike zone, but he's humble enough to be coached and humble enough to know that he doesn't know everything, so he's constantly searching for ways to get better.

And we've got to keep him healthy and get those guys back here next year, and got a chance to be a pretty cool 1-2 punch in the weekend rotation, because he's certainly going to be a starting pitcher for us as he did to start this year.

Q. I know you've kind of alluded to maybe some stuff going on in the bullpen health-wise. Do you have a full complement down there? Are you working minus some guys right now?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Other than Grubbs, we're in a

really good spot. I think a few guys were just a little sore that thankfully we didn't have to go to a third game against Oregon. But everybody's had a really good week, Crossland, he wasn't banged up, but he threw really, really well this week. So we're super excited about getting him out there. Leffew is in a good spot. So we're excited.

Q. What kind of impact can the running game have in stolen bases, situational stuff in a game like this between the two teams that are seemingly pretty evenly matched?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: I mean, one thing I'm super proud of is I guess the stat that came out this week that we're the first Power 4 school in BBCOR era to have 100 stolen bases and 100 homers. I mean, that's awesome. I mean, I think if I'm an offensive player, I would want to play in that offense to be -- even a guy like Tinney has double-digit stolen bases.

And so I think our goal is to be able to play any brand of baseball, regardless of the conditions, and if the wind's blowing in and you can't hit a homer, then you've got to be able to score runs in some form or fashion. If the wind's blowing out or you're in a smaller park where you get one right, then we can swing. We're not going to hit as many homers as Georgia. They're not going to steal as many bases as us.

I think both teams are really good defensive teams. Neither team uses the bunt too much. You know, I know Branch will a few times. But you can't bunt it over the fence, I don't think. So we'll probably let them have those, unless it's a certain situation.

But I mean, regarding our team, I mean, we want to be an all-encompassing offense every year, and I think those are the ones that are the toughest to prepare for. So if they give us something, we'll take it.

Q. Adrian Rodriguez really transformed his body in the offseason, switched positions from third base to shortstop, has a huge super regional for you guys. Can you talk about his impact on this year's team?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Well, he's the most courageous player that I've ever coached because he's been dealing with a hand issue since last year at Missouri. We thought we had it fixed. It's better, but it's still not 100 percent to the point where he can switch hit and be fully who he is.

And so hopefully this summer we can get that figured out. Because he's a 12-15 homer player, and I don't know if we'd catch Georgia. But we would have more. And that takes a lot for a player who takes a lot of pride in his total

game to kind of not lower expectation but adjust the expectation and become a different kind of player when he needs to be.

It's going to be really good for his long-term benefit as a player into professional baseball because he's learned that he doesn't need a thousand swings to be ready to hit. He's that good. He can take 10 swings before the game and go out and be left on left against a great player and a great pitcher and use the whole field to hit. He certainly has played good defense for us. He's got a chance to be an iconic player in the history of Texas baseball, certainly if we were to win this thing, or next year. But I love his spirit.

His parents, we think the world of him. He's turned himself into a good shortstop.

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