

2026 Men's College World Series

Friday, June 12, 2026

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Troy Trojans

Coach Skylar Meade

Jimmy Janicki

Drew Nelson

Postgame Press Conference

West Virginia - 7, Troy - 5

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Troy head coach Skylar Meade and student-athletes Jimmy Janicki and Drew Nelson.

SKYLAR MEADE: Heck of a college baseball game. Unfortunate to be on the wrong side. But give all credit to West Virginia. I kind of alluded to it, at least the last couple of days, two programs that are absolute fighters. And that's really what that game was. It felt like a heavyweight bout.

And somebody, unfortunately for us, was going to win that game. And obviously wish it had been on an absolutely assaulted ball. Mr. Hall had hit a couple others pretty good. Unfortunately, his softest one was most impactful as baseball tends to work out.

But man, they were just -- one thing, they were just better than us on defense. You can't give freebies, and you can't give the extra outs. They made some plays that, even for us, even if it didn't lead to a run, lead to extra pitches.

And unfortunately, out here in this park, in particular when the wind shifts as it did there in the fourth inning, you can't give up freebies.

But heck of a job. Our guys competed their tails off, especially these two guys next to me. But all credit to West Virginia. There's a reason that they were a host. There's a reason that they're out here with us as well.

Q. Jimmy and Drew, what was it that made Ian Korn so effective in the last six innings of the game?



JIMMY JANICKI: He was a big strike thrower, and he had good stuff. And I thought we competed our tails off, just like Meade said. But at the end of the day, he just had good pitches, good stuff.

DREW NELSON: I saw every single one of his pitches. I think he had five, and I saw all five. So being able to mix and match and attack the strike zone like he did, that's how you succeed.

Q. Drew, their starter has been so pesky all year long, very good arm. And you got him out of there in the third, had traffic on a all game against him. The bottom of the order today, six hits, three RBI and a couple of runs scored. Can you just talk about how you guys were able to string together a couple of rallies today.

JIMMY JANICKI: Yeah, I credit Coach Wolgamot a lot and Meade for the game plan we had going in, and then the bottom of the order just sticking to it. We were supposed to see it up and see it out. And I felt like that's exactly what we did.

We've done good recently chasing the starters. So I mean hopefully we can build on that and continue it later this week.

Q. Jimmy, Coach called this a heavyweight fight. And it seemed like early in the game they kept landing blows and you guys immediately answered. What was it kind of like being in that fight and continue to go respond and then just the back and forth, the feeling of that?

JIMMY JANICKI: I mean it's a lot of fun, the atmosphere, playing against West Virginia. They're a good squad, just like Meade said. I think it all comes down to, I mean they had that one big hit, that little chopper. I think that's just what it comes down to.

Q. Jimmy, the first inning, that steal of home, the stolen base what was it like from your perspective, what were you thinking that was going to be a possibility?

JIMMY JANICKI: Yeah, I kind of just saw it get away and I thought I could steal a bag.

Q. You were in familiar position in the Sun Belt tournament and you responded back and got all the way to the semifinal. What's the message to the team? After you played after an emotional game like this, what's the message to the rest of the guys?

JIMMY JANICKI: I think all you can say is you have got to come out ready to play tomorrow. We're going to give our best effort. And I've got no doubt that our guys are going to do that.

Q. You guys have come back after losing the first game in the regional. You kind of know what it's like to be the under dogs. Talk about what you're going to use from that game to prepare you guys for Sunday now?

JIMMY JANICKI: That one definitely stung a lot. We're going to come with a good game plan tomorrow. I'm not sure who we're facing. But just gotta come out ready to play.

Q. Was there any nerves, first time in the College World Series? Or was it kind of evened out because West Virginia was in the same boat?

DREW NELSON: I'd say just embracing the opportunity. Not really nerves. This was our goal the whole year long. So being here is an accomplishment that we were ready to take that punch and take that punch to them and embrace the opportunity to compete and win and make a run.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

Q. The guys spoke to this a little bit earlier, but what did you see from them offensively in the first couple of innings to get some guys on base, get some early runs and get their starter out of there earlier than they probably would have liked?

SKYLAR MEADE: We don't say this after the fact -- of course, you're not going to publicize this -- we just felt like it was a good match-up for us in terms of just the way our lineup's constructed, what our guys can do, their plan implementation. You know, they talked about what Coach Ben does. And we just were able to put it into action.

And so I think it also shows that the stage was not -- we lost the game because West Virginia just made one more play, one more pitch, one more swing. When you can have a game plan that -- if you sat on our bus when we

were doing the scouting report, like, we said this is exactly what we were going to do. Like we knew we were going to do that.

And that kid's awesome; I'm not disparaging him. He's awesome. There's a reason -- I mean, I don't know, he might be an All-American based on his numbers. But it's a good match-up for us. And sometimes baseball is a game of match-ups. And so it shows our guys were prepared for it.

Unfortunately, Korn who had a tough regional there, he was able to bounce back and there's a reason he's had a lot of success through the year because he's been punched, right? But he stepped up and was his very best today.

Q. Talk about Zack being overshadowed a little bit. He came in and shut West Virginia down, put up a bunch of zeros that allowed you to hang in the game and come back and take the lead at one time. Talk about his performance?

SKYLAR MEADE: I could not, A, be more proud of Zach. And, B, I know this is a room of media, but if that guy's not a top 10 senior sign, I don't know what they look like. That kid, he can pitch in the big leagues. He handled the moment and the game and the situation.

And West Virginia is a very potent offense. He goose-egged them for a while. They got a couple of hits there in the eighth, of course, which is eventually going to happen.

That being said, I mean, it was darn impressive to watch him. But that's what he's really done the last, I could be off on the game, but it's really been the last 40 games of the year, he turned a corner and he's been as good a left-handed arm out of the bullpen as there is in college baseball.

Q. We talked a couple weeks ago after the Sun Belt tournament about the tenacity of your team and always being ready for the moment. Coach, talk about the message to the guys after you play an emotional game like this and come back out here and hopefully get out of the losers' bracket.

SKYLAR MEADE: Well, as you can tell, I mean, they're already talking about tomorrow, because they're just excited to think about what's next, even though we that it's a Sunday. I think that kind of, in a weird way, it's almost a subliminal, like, this is how our guys are.

I mean, we talked about it in the dugout and said, hey,

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

look, we have an opportunity to compete again on Sunday, and we know we're going to do to do that. Of course, we don't know what opponent yet. And it does sound cliché, I'm well aware, but whatever goes on Sunday, our guys are not scared. Okay? They are not scared.

And that's a huge part -- maybe something that actually, I don't know, maybe this isn't even the question, but as a head coach there are things you like. I like home runs and I like velocity, that's cool. But you know what? Our team's never going to be scared. That's a cool thing to have said about it.

And that's the players. You can message all you want and be confident and bravado-ish, you know, as a coach and coaches. But when your team shows that every time that you compete, you can sit there -- I ran into Coach Kingston, who I worked for, and he used to say this about a player on our team. He's like, hey, I'm okay if we lose with him.

I'm not okay losing, I don't want my words misconstrued. But when your guys fight at that level, you're not sitting there going, well, they had something in the tank. Our guys, they emptied the clip. Unfortunately, West Virginia was just a smidge better than us.

Q. In the regional press conference one of them mentioned about pitching philosophy, that you may have to adjust it a little bit throughout the losers' bracket and change a little bit of things that you've done throughout the year for a couple of specific games against Florida and Miami and Rider. Can you draw from any of those experiences in that region, falling to the losers' bracket immediately here in the College World Series?

SKYLAR MEADE: I'll answer that two ways. That was a little bit in reference to some stylistic in-house things. So certain guys changing some ways they're doing things. I will not give a game plan, so I'm not going to tell you exactly what that means.

But what I would derive from a who's available perspective, unfortunate he took the loss, but Zach stepping up there and being the only reliever we used, while you have the off-day here in Omaha, I mean, we use two arms. There's two guys on our available roster that will not throw Sunday. So we know who they are. And we have ample amount of arms that should be ready to go.

And those guys -- especially Zach -- should be commended for that. But, yeah, there's some things that we've learned, but that's a little bit more like individual to individual, when they're in that battle, how they're going to

utilize their pitch repertoire in order to make them either continue to be successful or start to be more successful.

Q. You mentioned your team is fearless out there. Could you go into that a little more, how that comes about, the process of it, regardless of situation that they seem to fight?

SKYLAR MEADE: It's a great question, first off. I want to answer it properly. It's one of those things, where, when you start developing -- culture is like a program thing, and I utilize culture a lot.

But each year you still have your own individualized identity. And I would be disingenuous to say, look, we all think we're smart. Of course, I think I'm smart. I have to be. I can't be an idiot and try to lead a program. But you don't totally know what your guys are made of or how to make them what you hope they are day one, and I think with our guys, there was a learning curve.

Look, we had a ton of new players. They're very talented. But sometimes when you're very talented, maybe you expect it to go easy. I think that's a fair thing that happens from time to time.

And for us, we had to figure out how to push buttons within them to get them to be their best version. But then the biggest part of credit goes to the players to understand if we're challenging them, we're on them, we're pushing, nodding, prodding on them, hey, this is why we're doing it, because it means you're awesome. But we're not going to let you just be very good. We need you to be awesome. We need you to be great. We need you to be elite. And it took us some time to do that.

But within all of that, fearless means you have an insane level of confidence. Okay? Nobody that's fearless is shaking on the edge of the cliff before they jump, right? They're not. They're standing there going, I'm about to jump and I don't care. And I think our guys, once they realize how to do that individually and collectively, that's why we are where we are. It doesn't mean we win a national championship. It's the hardest thing to do in all of sports, especially our sport.

But they've maximized their fearlessness and what's expected and asked in our culture. And for me, that's why I'm not going to sit here and enter that bus in a second and say, oh, man, so and so -- no, every person that traveled, every person that suited up today, they gave us exactly what we asked for, and to me that's how you're fearless and you have an elite culture.

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