

2026 Men's College World Series

Tuesday, June 16, 2026

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

Troy Trojans

Coach Skylar Meade

Steven Meier

Blake Cavill

Postgame Press Conference



West Virginia - 12, Troy - 0

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Troy head coach Skylar Meade and student-athletes Blake Cavill and Steven Meier.

SKYLAR MEADE: Well, first off, that game, probably in that -- you get through that sixth inning, two outs, nobody on, you got a leverage count against the 9-hole, who is certainly, by the way, not your typical 9-hole; that kids a really good player, Hall if anyone cares, I think he's really good.

But that's kind of where the game's won. You have your plan, kind of work into action. And Coop giving you three and we wiggled through some stuff. Could it have been one run? Of course. But great dirt ball read that they had. And you're going to, two outs and nobody on, you're in leverage and you feel like you're in a good spot and it's a 2-0 game.

And unfortunately you get it the up to a first-rounder, and the count gets anti-leverage. You go from 1-2 on him to 3-2, and I'm pretty sure, if my fact is correct, I think it's the first home run that Alonso's given up on a slider this year to a rightly. So unfortunate.

The way the game goes. That made it 5-0. And then you just gotta be smart. You're not going to maybe bring back a guy or two that otherwise, if the game stays at 2-0 there, and I know we put some game pressure on the next inning, but their reliever, Bassinger, came in and was really, really good.

Of course you guys know we have great hitters and probably just kind of the worst recognition maybe we've

had on a guy in a while. But that's credit to him. He was just really good and got nasty when you need to. And that's what you want to do.

And there's a reason that West Virginia's here. They're really good. They have had tremendous arm talent this year, and they know who they are as a team.

So the game was an opportunity to be won there. But it wasn't for a lack of fight. You put yourself in that position, you say 2-0 with two outs in the sixth. I'll sign that deal a lot of times. It was not meant to be.

But I do want to say it, just because I know these guys get removed as it goes, having Blake and Steve, two guys, let's be honest, they certainly took a bit of chance in coming to us, and they have other teammates who are seniors in their same boat -- to come to us from their previous schools and to be the elite-level players that they've been for us and battle many things.

I think it just goes to show what can happen when you've got toughness. Our all time HBP guy, and we only had him two years. Obviously this guy's now one of the most known players in college baseball because of his play and because of his personality. And I think when you couple those things, amazing things can happen.

And while it's painful and it should be -- I don't think anyone should be frolicking around -- we have real competitors top to bottom.

As the old saying goes, a bad day in Omaha is certainly better than a good day most places. And I do think that resonates is true. I know that I'm not the first person to say that, by the way, so I'm not trying to be the maker of that quote. But it is a true statement.

You're one of the last six teams in this country standing, and although it wasn't meant to be, I wanted to make sure I said thank you in front of these guys before you have questions for them.

Q. What did it mean to go on this run with this group of seniors and these guys that really believed in each

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other and really came together at the right time and made a run here all the way through into the World Series to today?

BLAKE CAVILL: It means everything. From top to bottom, I think we have half the team's seniors. It's been extraordinary. From being the last team in to being the last six -- 64 to 6, it's a good number.

I'm proud of every single 11. There wasn't one senior that didn't show up one time or show out here. It's been extraordinary. The time we've had together. The long road trips, the hotels, everything. I could tell you 15 things about every single one of my teammates right now. It's been awesome.

STEVEN MEIER: Yeah, it's really cool, especially with just the nature of how it was throughout the season. The start of it was not exactly the start we would have ever predicted to say the least. It was a story. It was a book. It was full of chapters, and some better than others. Most at the beginning, especially worse. But chapter 12 going to Gainesville, was really sweet; 13 was even sweeter. And 14 was a great one as well.

Q. Last season, both of you guys were excellent. You come back for another year at Troy. I was just curious on the message that you give to other teammates on this year's team, when some of them may be pondering what they're going to do next in their baseball career, whether it's draft or other expeditions?

STEVEN MEIER: Yeah, you could say it for other teammates, but you could even say for representing our culture. People coming in realizing -- like, I went to a school who I thought, I guess in my mind, I thought was Troy. And so coming here and seeing the freedom and the compete and the culture of this place really shows that this is everything I ever wanted.

So after last season, you get hurt, you get surgery again, and it should be a cleanup. I didn't have a doubt. I knew exactly what I was doing. I was staying right where I am. And that's where I wanted to be.

BLAKE CAVILL: If you're a kid and you're watching us play, there's not much thought that why you wouldn't want to play here. We're crazy. We're exciting. Not many teams in the country have more fun than the Troy Trojans where we battle, we battle, we battle. There's not many people out there that have been through what we've been through, and keep winning after and after. We get knocked down.

You want to play for a team like that when you know that any game you can win no matter what. It's a feeling. It's incredible knowing that we can go out there and compete against anybody in the country. And we sure showed that this year.

So if you're a young kid and you want to be part of the culture that's special, there's not many places you'd rather go than Troy.

Q. What a ride it's been for you guys not only as a team, but as a fan base. What do you have to say to the Trojan faithful for their continued support this season and how they've shown out here at Omaha?

BLAKE CAVILL: I love our fans. Even game one against West Virginia, you think our fans are probably louder. They had 75 percent of the stadium. But our fans, they travel. Gainesville, you're in an SEC ballpark and you're getting out-fanned by a Sun Belt team, which is one of a kind. That's what our fans are about.

We had our first super regional ever, and 85 percent of the whole town was there. That's something you don't talk about, you don't hear about. And that's the culture. That's the fans, that's what brings us together. It's awesome.

STEVEN MEIER: I mean, they say 18,000. But I highly doubt that. I'm thinking more towards 10 when there's no school in session.

In my mind they had about 130 percent of the town there at the super regional. It really showed out because the surrounding areas will come out. And they proved that. So it's cool to be seeing it firsthand. Like everything -- even former players, you see them and you're like, this is what they built through success or failures -- whatever they did led to where we are now. And we can't be more thankful because of it.

Q. You guys were gathered in the dugout in that little circle before you broke up. What was that final message in there as you guys left the field for the final time in Omaha?

BLAKE CAVILL: Enjoy it. We're here. Like, that was the message. We had a great run. We had to enjoy the last final moments. And celebrate with your brothers. How far we've made it. How far we've come.

There's not many people you'd rather spend it with. It's a moment. It's Omaha. It's a place to finish on top. There's not many places in the world like this. And I've been all over the world.

But this is one-in-a-lifetime opportunity. And I got to spend it with 33 close brothers that would do anything for me and I'd do anything for them. It was awesome.

STEVEN MEIER: Yeah, there's nothing like it. You enjoy it and you get every single one of them, and it's your brother. That's what it is.

It's crazy, because at the beginning it's, like, August 13th. You might not love everyone. You might not really like everyone. You don't know what you -- but I think everyone really liked being around each other.

There's moments where somebody does something dumb. It's your brother, he's going to do something dumb. But, God, this group of guys was the funnest group to be with, win, loss or indifferent. Like, shoot, we had every single emotion at some point during the season, and I wouldn't want to change who I was with or anything.

Q. Both seniors, what has it meant to play for Coach Meade these last few years?

STEVEN MEIER: Everything. I couldn't -- geez, where do I begin? It's great. He's the best coach in baseball, best coach I've ever had. It's the balance of being coached and taught. And sometimes I got MF'ed in the dugout and that's okay.

But also being so free and so able to just play your game that you don't feel judged or you don't feel in a box. I've been there before. And that is so defeating as a ball player.

And everything -- young kids, grad transfers, D-II guys, it's just so fun. And it's the improvement and the development. That's the biggest thing, it's so cool.

BLAKE CAVILL: There's not many places in the country that let me be me because I'm a little crazy sometimes. But Skylar, Skylar lets me get away with it most of the time. Sometimes he'll be in my ear -- cut it out a little bit or sometimes he'll tell me let it eat today.

But there's no one you'd rather play for, man, except he never gave me one inning on the mound, which is a little upsetting. But he's the man at the end of the day. There's people you strive to -- you look up to and he's one of them. He's the epitome of one of the best coaches in college baseball.

You look around. You look at third base. How many head coaches are out there, especially at third base, chasing down foul balls? He's got the hat in the cap. It's awesome. There's no one in the country I'd rather play than Skylar

Meade.

Q. You got the perspective of being here before as a player. How do you relate to them how it's going to feel maybe in a year or so? It hurts right now, but how do you relay the emotions of what this moment will mean when they get older?

SKYLAR MEADE: I mean, everything goes in phases. I think it will start to set in whenever it is we fly back tomorrow. You don't remember -- I have a pretty good memory, which can be problematic sometimes. But I do remember flying back as a player, and I just remember sitting next to Coach Williams and just having a conversation.

That was a memory for me where you're, whoa -- in Louisville in 2007, that wasn't a thing, just like Troy being here in 2026 was not a thing.

Just because people hear what we've talked about and believe, that doesn't mean that other people thought that was possible. I understand that. I'm well aware of that. So I think it will go in phases for them. I think tomorrow they'll probably have a different feeling than they have in a week and then a month from now, but then again years from now.

But the beautiful part is there's so many different ways they can revisit it when they need to when they want a positive memory, maybe unlike how it was years ago.

I mean, there's a lot of people taking pictures here. A lot of videos going on. So there's no way they're going to forget what they've done. And being one of the last six teams in this country is something that I'm sure nobody thought was possible, maybe other than the people that are in our dugout.

So if they're not proud of that, they can't be proud of anything in this world.

Q. What did this run show you about the character and the growth from your seniors, your leaders and your younger players?

SKYLAR MEADE: I think it's a good reminder to me -- and I think there was a time where, if I'm being totally honest -- and we've had so many things really going on in the last 15 months. I think I'd be remiss if I said that maybe I didn't catch myself couple times not -- I'm always, as a coach -- I'm locked in. I'll battle my lock-in versus anybody. That doesn't mean I'm the best. I'm definitely not the smartest or whatever, but locked in.

But I think there were some times where you worry about this or that or how this person is going to take it. And you're, no, we've never done that, across the board. When we got nitty-gritty and in the weeds I think that was the best version of us with this team. I know I've touched on that. But I think giving the players more credit than maybe you realize, that's what they want.

What Steve was saying. I don't MF players, let's make sure that's clear, for the record. I don't want to get in trouble. But I think what he is attempting to articulate is, we will tell them if something's not good enough. And I think sometimes, like, we all worry -- oh, don't challenge this guy or don't do this, he'll go in the portal.

If he goes in the portal, okay, whatever, who cares? We'll get good players. You know what I mean? But you've got to have guys who are in the foxhole with you. So you can't forget to be whatever your culture is.

Coach Schlossnagle is one of the greatest coaches in the world. I don't know what his culture is. I'm not privy to that, right? Coach Bianco, all these, I don't know what they are. But I bet what's made them incredibly successful and what I hope to do in my career is to always stay true to what I really am and what I value in communicating with people. And if I don't do that or I drop two or three percent of that, then I'm not doing the best job possible.

And I think that reminding yourself of that and then the players show you the way to do it, that's why I credit, not just the seniors, although they certainly deserve a lot because a lot of those guys have been here for a couple years, but it's all the players. And if guys can't handle that, then they were never going to be winners for us.

And that is the cold hard truth of how things work in this day and age. But, okay, well, then we'll have to move on and find the next Blake Cavill or Steven Meier or Drew Nelson or whomever that may be.

Q. Not only having to deal with adversity on the field here, but the camera equipment situation, how did you all go through that? And what was it like to see everybody respond and help you all continue to capture memories here as far as coming together?

SKYLAR MEADE: Well, it's certainly not an issue for at least our players and their experience. As I said, there tended to be a couple other people with cameras it seemed like around so we were all good to go.

I mean it's Omaha. Everybody's going to help out and do whatever and attempt to help with any and all things, whether it be a unique situation as that, or if our bus had

broke down, or if we had something we forgot, somebody would step up. That's what Omaha is.

And that's something that, honestly, is probably pretty distant in our guys' deal. And that thing will figure itself out as time moves forward.

Q. Anybody that watched this team throughout the NCAA Tournament knows that you guys belonged and didn't take any shortcuts to get here. You knocked off Ole Miss in the College World Series. You won in Gainesville in a regional against Florida twice. To the coaches and players that are in similar positions at non-power programs as you guys are, what advice or things would you tell them if they're looking to get to a similar spot as you right now in the College World Series?

SKYLAR MEADE: Well, I know I've done this 19 years now. I certainly don't think I'm in a position for advice. I know that. It's a great question.

I think obviously you're in control of some things. But sometimes you're not in control, right? Like some teams, let's just use Mercer. Mercer could have done a run. I don't know what happened. People are going to criticize or be critical of their schedule. It's not always, oh, they didn't schedule. People can say no, okay? That's how it works.

I made reference to this -- and please, if someone misconstrues my words -- but, when I got to Troy, I'll never forget, Jay Johnson called me. I never talked to Jay Johnson. He's like, man, we gotta flip something on the schedule. We were supposed to go there in '23. He's like, you guys are going to be really good. We got this. I walked into the schedule, whatever, whatever, and I'm like okay.

So we pivoted. And we found USC upstate who ended up being a really good program, and it was a great weekend for us. But we had LSU on the schedule, right, and that's not a diss on Coach Johnson. He walked into a schedule, too. We came in the same time.

So things happen that people don't know. Do I think that if you schedule, quote, cupcake or not well, could it be problematic? Of course. But I don't know. I would answer more to kind of like what Andrew said, I mean, I'm not in a position for advice. That's not my role. If I come to Omaha 30 straight years after this at 71, I can give some advice. You know what I meant? That'd be a heck of a run and maybe you should listen to what I say. But to me, the only thing I would say that was maybe a reminder of lessons of kind of what I alluded to, and just like, man, coach your team how you do it.

I mean, honestly, you know what, I'll give you one thing of advice. Here, I'll go on my one, since generally I never am very coy as you guys know. Like, just keep making it about your team.

We do have a lot of nonsense, and, by the way, the teams in Omaha don't really do that, but make the things about your team. You know what I mean?

People will resonate with you. Like, we've had like two instances where our guys yell at other teams. And so if you want me to jump on a soapbox of one thing, maybe that's it. Maybe corral it and maybe hold your guys accountable, but that's about it. That's where my advice stops.

But we have too great of a game. Our sport is massive. We don't need to be known for just our Twitter reactions when guys are yelling at other dugouts for no reason.

I enjoy celebrating with the boys, and I think our guys do too. And I think that's why people really latched onto our team.

Q. Just kind of broadly speaking, what will you remember about this season and this run through Omaha?

SKYLAR MEADE: Well, I have a good memory, so I will remember a lot. I mean, I think the first part, I don't mean to sound sad or downtrodden, like, you are disappointed. I want to be a national champion. We want to be a national champion.

So that is the goal. So I'm not going to sit here and say, like -- our coaches are going to hear it immediately. We have to do blah, blah, blah whatever better. Like, we have to be better. There's things that we can do better. There's things that I can do better, starting from the top. In fact, I'm always going to have more things that I can do better because I have my fingers in every single thing that goes on in our program. So we all have to improve.

But I think -- I was asked the question of a similar nature the other day, and the thing I would say -- and it's not people here -- but it validates -- all of your questions kind of connect, okay -- it validates when I pounded my fist so hard about what our program is.

We've won every year. We've been really good every year. And I'm not saying we would have went to Omaha last year or the year before. And we were right there in '23. If people remember our journey there in the Alabama regional. We've been awesome every year.

And teams like ours deserve the rightful opportunity for that. And so "validating" is a word -- and, like I said, I'm not trying to be petty in saying that -- but I want to answer your question truthfully. This is exactly what I knew our program could do.

And they have it recorded. So if you go to "Troy" you can see I said this almost five years ago. We were going to do this. This is not a surprise to me. Doesn't mean we will be back next year, doesn't mean we'll be back in 2028; it's the hardest thing to do.

But when you give the great programs -- and we can say we're a great program; we win a lot of games every year. Are we perfect? No, far from it. I'm far from perfect. But you should give the best teams the opportunity and amazing things can happen. And what just happened is amazing.

We'll probably finish in the top 10 in the country. We're one of the last six teams standing. And to be honest, we were absolutely battling. And it's a 2-0 game in the sixth inning against an awesome program that we lose every recruit to.

We are trying to be that version, and I hate that our programs -- well, they probably don't hate it because they won today -- but I hate that our programs had to battle it out because I think we're in an incredibly similar position in this country, but the fact that I can say to you guys -- and you can't contradict it -- that Troy is in that position every year and in Omaha making that statement is pretty incredible.

And so I'm very proud of that. We as coaches are proud of that, and I sure, sure hope our players are proud of that, because I know all of Trojan Nation is experiencing something that I knew as a player 19 years ago, but I'm not going to sit there and talk about it because it's meaningless, but every person who came here now knows, A, what this place is, like it's the most unique place in the world. It's the best college sporting event bar none. No offense to the others. Rose Bowl is awesome. It ain't this.

But now everyone knows why you work so hard, why you talk about it, why you recruit so much, why you'd never take breaks. They know.

Now when they hear us speak on it, they go, whoa, I get it. That's why it's so serious, because what we've gotten to do the last couple of weeks with hosting a super and then finishing our journey out here and showcasing, absolutely showcasing that we are one of the best teams in the country, there was no luck involved.

We won our last four games against the SEC. Okay? I don't think they're going to hand me an SEC title in there, but that's pretty good. Okay? And only one of those games was at home. All right. That's what our guys need to remember is that they were incredible, they were awesome and they will be legends at Troy for the rest of eternity, long when all of us are gone from this earth, and that to me is what I want them to know.

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