

2026 Men's College World Series

Monday, June 22, 2026

Omaha, Nebraska, USA

North Carolina Tar Heels

Coach Scott Forbes

Matthew Matthijs

Gavin Gallaher

Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma - 13, North Carolina - 2

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by North Carolina head coach Scott Forbes and student-athletes Gavin Gallaher and Matthew Matthijs.

SCOTT FORBES: Obviously, that's a tough loss, but, first of all, I want to congratulate Oklahoma. Heck of a ball team. They deserved it. They played well tonight. They earned it.

Congratulations to Skip. I've known him a long time. I have a lot of respect for him. This is the second time being in this game or in a national championship and they got it done. So a big congrats to them, their entire university. It's hard to do. And they got it done.

On the reverse side of that, I couldn't be prouder of a group. I just talked to them in the locker room. We talk all the time about service, about serving one another. I don't tell them this, but I write it down every day for myself, in Galatians 5:13: True service, serving one another through love, humbly in love and how powerful love is.

This group loved each other all season. They took us on a ride that was unbelievable. We came up a little bit short. But I would take that ride again every day of the year.

While we're sad, the sadness will go away. We also talk about joy. Joy doesn't go away, and these guys have given me, our coaching staff, our fans, our administration, everybody a ton of joy and a ton to be proud of.

The thing I'm going to miss the most is just being with them. That's what I'm going to miss the most. Obviously, it gets emotional back there.

But I'm thankful, too. I'm thankful that I've been given the opportunity. It's an honor and a privilege to be the head coach at University of North Carolina. I don't take that lightly. And I'm just so proud, is the word I will use, of this team and what they did and the hard work they put in to get us here.

And I love them. They know how much I love them, and I'm just thankful for the group and for the season that we had. And they just took us on a heck of a ride, and I'll be eternally grateful for that.

Q. As the captains and the leaders of this team, how would you describe and put into words what it was like to lead this group this season?

MATTHEW MATTHIJS: At times, challenging, but sometimes we were a little dumb on the field, but there's nobody in that locker room that I wouldn't want to go to battle for no matter what troubles we have. Just thankful for that group.

And I'm sure Gavin can say the same thing, they voted us captains, and we tried to lead the best we could. I'd go do this journey all over again with them.

GAVIN GALLAHER: Yeah, he said it. He said it well. Just really thankful that this team and this coaching staff, they trusted me to put the C on my jersey. It's something that UNC hasn't done for long. And it's an honor and a privilege to be able to say that I was a part of that.

But I mean, I love this team. I love every single guy in that locker room. It's a special group.

Q. If you can sort of speak to that from the coaching standpoint, when you listen to Coach Forbes say what he said about you guys and the journey and the love and the fellowship that you guys have.

GAVIN GALLAHER: Yeah, I mean -- sorry -- yeah, the coaching staff, they're amazing. I mean, that's all I can say about them. If you are a player and you're looking for a place that's going to care for you and they're going to love

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you, they're going to put you as a person before they put you as a player, they're going to show up every day and they're going to give you their best no matter what their lives off the field look like.

It's something that, I look around guys I know at other schools, and they don't have the same experience. So I mean, it's truly amazing. It's truly amazing.

MATTHEW MATTHIJS: I don't think there's another program out there that has the coaching staff that truly loves every single player as much as that man right there does. He cares about us. He loves us.

There's no other coaching staff that I would want to play for, spend my four years. I want to say thank you for giving me an opportunity when I was 14 years old. And I've loved every minute. And thank you.

Q. Gavin, after the game, when you're standing the dugout watching Oklahoma on the field, can you just describe what's going through your head?

GAVIN GALLAHER: Yeah, I mean, a lot of things. But, I mean, this is probably the most hurt I've ever felt in my life, and not just because we're one game away from doing something that no UNC baseball team has ever done, but more so just because this is the end of the season. We say it all the time, from the very beginning, this team will never be this team again.

And I've been here for three teams, and this is the best team I've ever played with. Like I said earlier, I love every single one of those guys in the locker room. Matty said it too. I would go to battle for anybody in that locker room.

Just the way that everybody showed up every single day, everybody put themselves to the side and put the team first. And no matter who you put on that field, you could trust that they were going to give everything that they had. And that's just a requirement of being here.

So to see a group buy into that as much as we did, yeah, it's just the reason we're here.

Q. Matty, you've been with this program for four years. You battled injury. You've seen adversity with the teams you've played with. Just what has that journey as a Tar Heel meant to you?

MATTHEW MATTHIJS: We talk about our pillars every day. And I mean, what comes to mind right now is just thankfulness. Thankful for this journey. Thankful for those guys in that locker room.

I'm not perfect. I mean, I'm not the perfect leader that I can be all the time, but I mean, those guys just -- I just jumped on their backs and just enjoyed the ride.

And for this four years of college baseball, I mean, had some ups and downs, injuries, obviously. But just ending it here, obviously we wanted to win that last game. But there's nobody, no school, no coaches that I would ever question going back on and not playing for the University of North Carolina.

Q. Yesterday, your teammates contained their offense, but collectively Oklahoma's offense has been on a roll in the postseason. What makes their lineup so difficult to deal with?

MATTHEW MATTHIJS: I think they just take advantage of your mistakes. You make a mistake in the zone, they're going to hit it pretty well.

Q. You guys continue to be one of the premier programs in college baseball. Getting to this point, do you think it's just a matter of time before you get that national championship?

SCOTT FORBES: I sure hope so. We're going to try. That's for sure. That's something that we're always going to do. We're going to work our tails off to get back here.

And the more you get to a place, hopefully you can knock that door down. We've just got to keep the main thing the main thing, and that's the players, and helping them get better and leave here better people.

And you've got to feel like eventually that winning will take care of itself and eventually we'll find a way to be on the other end.

Q. I believe in that fourth inning it started to get away from you a little bit. Can you shed some light on what was going on and maybe what they were doing with Glaub out there. We couldn't understand from the box.

SCOTT FORBES: I felt like they didn't give him enough time. I'm not going to come up here and talk about that part of it at this point.

You know, all these guys, the one thing they did is they gave everything they had. And obviously Oklahoma made us pay. We walked too many, but none of these guys were trying to walk anybody.

I mean, Glaub, we knew was going to be a short stint, maybe 15 pitches. And everybody went out there. They gave it all they had, we just ran out of gas, when it's all said

and done.

Q. You mentioned the other day how every team you've coached, you learn something different and every group is different. You bring in seven new guys from the super regional team last year. What did this group teach you?

SCOTT FORBES: Oh, man, I'd have to be here a while. You know, I just told them in there, they taught me the importance of what being a team means, because you do have a lot of new guys. But they kept the team first. And because of that, we're sitting here right now. We're just not on the right end of it.

So I would say the main thing I learned from them is, if you work and you put that work in every single day, with a team-first mentality, you have a real chance to play in the national championship, even if it's a bunch of new faces, even if maybe it's not five first-round draft picks.

We talk about the team, the team, the team all the time. And that's what they continue to teach me. Obviously I thought that was the case. I continue to know how important a team is.

But they also taught me a lot of other things. They reminded me the importance daily of just watching them, being around them, why you coach, and the importance of -- in my role -- really just to be there for them and to love them and make sure they know that no matter how they perform.

Q. After the game, a lot of your players, really all of them, stood on the railing and sort of stayed there for a while. It looked like you walked up to about just each one of them and said a couple of words. Could you take us into that and what you were telling each of those guys in that moment?

SCOTT FORBES: I was just telling them that I love them. That's it.

And I thanked them. Because they're the ones that brought us here. Coaches, head coach especially, get way too much credit. You know, it's everybody else -- the staff, it's the strength coach, it's the assistant coaches, it's the administration.

But at the end of the day, I also -- I made my last out in the Division III World Series and I know what that pain feels like. The pain's the pain. And I just wanted them to know how grateful I am for what they've taken us all on.

And it's been an amazing ride from being down to Southern

Cal, to playing to the very last day of the college baseball season. And that's pretty cool.

Q. Oklahoma scored the two runs in the second inning, and then you guys get some action in the bottom half of the inning with three hits. And then the bang, bang play, the right-field throw, that third out at third base. Can you just take us through your point of view on that play?

SCOTT FORBES: Yeah, gosh dang, it's hard for me to get mad at Carter French. I was mad in the moment. We all make mistakes. I make them every single day.

We talk about next-play mentality. You just gotta move on. But it was a mistake, but he owns the mistake. We all own it. It's what it is from that standpoint. But that wasn't the reason we lost the game. Obviously, it hurt our momentum a little bit.

But baseball, it's the best game there is. You know, you look at this box score, they outhit us by four, but they beat us pretty good. So there's a lot more within that box score than just the hits. But that was a tough play. And it's what it is. We just had to deal with it.

Q. The two guys who are sitting next to you, Gavin and Matty, they're both from North Carolina. But they both had very different careers here. Gavin comes in, he's a day-one starter and he moves around different positions. Matty's an All-American. Then he has the injury and comes back and is able to pitch this season. How do those two guys embody what you look for in Tar Heel baseball players?

SCOTT FORBES: Everything. That's where the tears come from, from me personally. It's not from the loss. I'm going to have joy either way. But it's just from not knowing that this might be it for Gavin Gallaher. He might sign professionally. And this is definitely it for Matty Matthijs.

But they're not the only ones. What's so special about a team is it's not just about the guys that are playing every single day. There's a lot more players that are on the team that make a team go.

And to see a guy like Kyle Percival stick with it, have injuries, be a phenomenal leader -- Kyle Percival is a big reason we're here. It may not look like that in the stat sheet. But more goes into it than people think.

But those two guys up here, they've made my job extremely easy by being the captains that they've been.

Q. What went into the decision to start Jackson Rose

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today? And what have you seen from Jackson Rose and Caden Glauber this entire season?

SCOTT FORBES: Yeah, I didn't feel -- the only other person we talked about starting was Jason DeCaro. But he's going to be a Major Leaguer and he's got a whole career.

One day I told him, hey, maybe if there's a situation where we have a lead and I can bring you in, maybe throw one inning.

I just feel like Jackson Rose deserved it. You look at it, he walked three, he punched out five. I'd do it again. I thought he was one of our hottest pitchers. I thought he competed his tail off. I mean, you're talking about a true freshman. I know they threw a true freshman as well.

But I'm proud of him. And I'm proud of -- without Jackson Rose, we wouldn't have got this far. But really the decision was I felt like he was the best option for us to win the game.

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