

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Thursday, May 22, 2025

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

Texas Longhorns

Jim Schlossnagle

Ethan Mendoza

Ethan Walker

Gavin Kilen

Postgame Press Conference



like 30 minutes beforehand. Mentally, it's all the same. We preach one inning save, one pitch at a time, and I think taking that with me within each pitch, within each inning really helped and kind of made similar.

Q. Walker, what's it like to have a catcher like Galvan and any routine that you worked through with him in the fall has set the tone for you this time a year?

ETHAN WALKER: Yeah, Galvan has been great. He brings the energy, he builds that connection, and I think there isn't anyone else I'd want behind the plate when I'm pitching. He's really good at just getting me some calls. He's good at bringing the energy and keeping my head locked in the game, and he knows how to read my body language.

Q. Mendoza, what were your thoughts on how the offense performed today, especially against the Tennessee bullpen late?

ETHAN MENDOZA: Specifically the bullpen or just overall? I mean, we didn't score many runs in the middle innings. I think we need to work on that. We came up clutch the bottom of the ninth, scored a run. That was big. We just never got that big hit we were all looking for. But hopefully, we get to work on that and be better next time.

Q. What's it like for you guys to play in an environment like this?

ETHAN MENDOZA: I would say it's pretty special. This is my first time here, all of us, I guess, except Coach Schloss. It's pretty cool. We went to the game last night. It was pretty special to see all these people come to watch us. It was definitely something super cool.

Q. How do you take your mentality going into next week with your regionals coming up, and how do you stay positive to move forward from this?

ETHAN WALKER: Yeah, we treat every game like it's opening day, and that just helps us wash what happens in the past, whether we win or lose, and just keep playing to

Tennessee 7, Texas 5 (12)

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Congratulations to Tennessee. Good ballgame. I thought that Ethan was just outstanding today. That's a good sign for us moving forward.

Offensively we did a great job against Doyle. He's such a good pitcher. I thought we battled him. Ethan got a big hit, and then Arvidson was outstanding. He was really the difference in the game. Stretched through 85 pitches, punched out nine, walked one. Brandon was on our team at A&M a couple years ago, so I know he's a good pitcher. But I'm proud of our team. Stinks to lose, stinks to go home. This is a fun place to be this time of year.

But we've got to go home and get ready for next weekend.

Q. Ethan Walker, take us through your day, when you found out you were going to start, what you wanted to accomplish today and how you thought you pitched.

ETHAN WALKER: Yeah, no. So I found out yesterday. I was really excited. It's a big stage. Throughout the day, I was just getting my body ready. I was just really excited to compete. I thought I threw pretty well. Could always three more strikes, but overall I competed to the best of my ability today.

Q. Following up off of that, what did you make of your start and the differences coming out of the pen versus starting?

ETHAN WALKER: Yeah, the big difference is just kind of preparation, not throwing an hour beforehand, just throwing



our standard. So we can acknowledge what happened today, but tomorrow, we're getting ready for opening day.

Q. What was it like last year being in the Big 12 playing in an MLB stadium for a conference environment and now playing in Hoover for the first time, how do you compare the two regardless if this is a little bit of an intimate ballpark?

ETHAN MENDOZA: We weren't in the Big 12 last year, we were in the Pac, so we didn't play at Globe Life. But I guess it was pretty cool. This is definitely an upgrade.

ETHAN WALKER: Yeah, I came from a JuCo, so it's very different, better ballparks, better fans, more people. But it's more exciting. 15 people to 15,000, yeah.

Q. Jim, what went into the process of going with Ethan today and how does that performance set you up for next week?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Well, it certainly gives us somebody, depending on matchup and how deep we play into the regionals, he's got experience starting a game. So since Spencer is down, we really don't have a defined third starter, so we've had a lot of guys who have started games throughout the course of the season, which we have done that by design.

But Ethan is a strike thrower and keeps the ball on the ground most of the time, and now he's got experience of not just starting a game, but getting up and down and throwing four plus innings, so that's good for us for next weekend.

Q. Jim, you referenced having Brandon at A&M back in '23. How is he different than the kid you had then, and what impressed you so much about what he did today?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Well, he was pretty banged up. If I remember right, he had a bad back. He had a lot of health issues and could never really get going. He always could really spin the ball, and loose arm. So you could see it coming. He went to San Jac and got some good innings in and over there with Coach Anderson, obviously with a great pitching coach.

He was just throwing the two breaking balls and running his fastball up to 95, 96, and then he had the two different breaking balls that we just didn't see -- we were swinging at them, and they're not even in the strike zone, so that tells you how good he was.

Q. You always preach that opening day mentality.

Just curious, in your experience, what value does momentum play this time of year and does a loss like this thwart some of the momentum you built coming off of OU?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: No, I don't think so. It'll be whatever we make it. 2015 was at TCU and we went two and out in the conference tournament, and Coach Garrido, first text message I had, was this is the best thing to ever happen to your team, and that team was the second of four straight College World Series teams. It'll be whatever we make it. We've got to get home. We've got work to do. We've got to make sure we're prepared for next weekend.

Q. Big moment for Ethan Walker. Could you detail his journey, how he got here today?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah, pretty awesome. For the University of Texas, first ever SEC game, we have a somewhat recruited -- not really a walk-on. We recruited him, but in the summer, we were just looking for bodies. We needed lefties and we needed strike throwers, and Coach Wiener had had his eye on Ethan just as a strike thrower, and a guy that could be deceptive, and here he is starting University of Texas's first ever SEC game against his home state school. That's crazy. But credit to -- Ethan did an awesome job, and we're super fired up he's on the team.

I don't even know if he made the first seven or eight road trips in the SEC. It's just been the last three weeks that he's really kind of come on for us.

Q. You've played in the most, if not one of the most, one-run ballgames in the country of any team, especially in the SEC. How does that throughout the season build the character of this team, especially doing so in the SEC tournament here against a team with the talent that Tennessee does and the stage that it's on going extra innings? How does that identify this team's MO going into the postseason?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Well, certainly, like all the coaches I'm sure have said, when you get through this league and you play through this league, there's nothing that's going to surprise you. We're going to play good teams next week and moving forward if we earn the right to play after next weekend. But there's not going to be any teams that are going to be better. There's not going to be better pitchers. There's no other lefty that I know of that's better than Liam Doyle. So you can work off that. We've played a lot of close games because we do pitch well. We do play solid. Not the most offensive team, but kind of an opportunistic offensive team.



We have to play clean baseball to win because we're not super explosive. We can be with the right guys healthy, if we get Jonah back. Belyeu obviously changes the makeup of our team. But this is a tough team. They win anyway. In Austin, they call it Texas fight and this bunch has that. We've still got to go earn the wins, but it's an honor to be in the dugout with our team.

Q. I know Dylan Volantis has been really good against lefties this year, but was there any thought of walking Kilen right there in the 12th to load the bases?

JIM SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah, thought of it, thought about it. Got a lot of respect for Fisher. Hindsight, Kilen, great bat-to-ball skills, and of course Fisher strikes out, so made me look worse. No, just take our shot there, but Volantis is our guy, and we've seen him get out the really good lefties before. But give it to Gavin; he had the two big swings of the day for sure.

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