

Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Friday, May 23, 2025

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

Texas A&M Aggies

Coach Michael Earley

Clayton Freshcorn

Jace Laviolette

Postgame Press Conference



Q. Jace, I want to ask, you said you'd run through a brick wall for Coach. But what does being an Aggie mean to you personally? What does this program -- what do you want your legacy to be at Texas A&M?

JACE LAVIOLETTE: The past three years have undoubtedly been the best three years of my life. I can't speak enough about this university, what it's done for me, not only as a baseball player but as a person.

It's hard to fathom that three years ago I came into college and I'm leaving now a totally different person. I can't express enough of what this university can do for you and what these coaches can do for you. And just to the 12th Man I just want to say thank you. I can't imagine baseball without it. That's it.

Q. Jace, was it a surprise for you guys when Anthony Eyanson comes into the game in relief the last three innings?

JACE LAVIOLETTE: No, sir. It's still baseball. No matter who's on the mound, you've got to stick to an approach and gotta get your swing off on pitches in the zone.

Q. Clayton, how did you find success on the mound in the last few innings? What were you manipulating, exposing out there today?

CLAYTON FRESHCORN: I think it was just one of those things where I was able to throw every pitch at any count and land a new pitch at any point. I know our backs are against the wall. I know that there's no question I have to go out and perform. I think with that pressure it made it happen, in my opinion.

Q. Clayton, how much has basically everybody meant to you for the program? And on Harrison, how has he meant to the pitching staff going back to the fall? Is this the last time, you guys are 50th ranked RPI right now, but regardless of what lies ahead for selection Monday, what are your thoughts on this season and what lies ahead?

LSU - 4, Texas A&M - 3

Q. Jace, all of us would love to know what your last say 48 hours have been like?

JACE LAVIOLETTE: Got hit in the hand yesterday, broke a bone in there got surgery and played today.

Q. What went into the decision to play?

JACE LAVIOLETTE: I think it's pretty clear, I said in an interview I'd run through a brick wall for this guy and I want to win. That's just about it. I just want to win.

Q. What does the season mean to you and to put on this run as far as you were able to go, what was it like in the SEC Tournament?

JACE LAVIOLETTE: I think it's pretty clear. I think you can see it from every single person in that dugout, there's nobody else we'd rather play for than Coach right here. It's hard, man. You work so hard and prepare for a season like we did, and sometimes baseball is a funny game. It's hard. It's definitely got its ups and downs, but at the end of the day I'll be able to call these guys brothers for the rest of my life. I'm so glad I got to play for Coach Mike Earley, and I couldn't have asked to play for anybody else.

CLAYTON FRESHCORN: For me, my biggest goals for this year, for this team, was just to help them get as far as they could, especially after something like last year. And I know we always say something that we don't repeat anything. We recommit to something. And I just wanted to give everything I could for the guys that I knew that wouldn't be putting on this uniform anymore. And to your question, I think all of us left everything we could.



CLAYTON FRESHCORN: Kind of banking on what Jace said, baseball is a silly sport, and it is a very hard sport. And it's sometimes just doesn't go your way. I mean, there's no question that we put everything into practices, each moment that we had, each breath that we had.

These guys mean everything to me. Especially for a guy like me who is a first-year guy, just getting to meet these people and get to know them as humans, not just as teammates was a big deal for me and I'll never forget it.

Q. What has it meant to play for Mike, and what has he done for you in your opinion?

JACE LAVIOLETTE: I think he's done more than anybody on the outside can see. There's so much that, if you look at me before I got to college as a hitter, comparatively to now, it's night and day. And then if you look at me as a person -- I call this man my father. I really do. I'd die for him.

And it's not only me. There's multiple, multiple people on this team that would kill to play one more damn game for him.

I said it over the summer that there's no better coach in the nation, and I still believe it. And I hope to damn hell there's a lot of other people that want to come to school and want to play for this guy. He will change your life, and I think that's all there is to say.

Q. Listening to what Jace said, how do you accept his words?

MICHAEL EARLEY: I love my players a lot. It means a lot. Being a coach is way more than being a coach. I love them to death.

Q. It wasn't a great start for you guys on the mound, but you really found a rhythm really after the third. What was the key to that?

MICHAEL EARLEY: I mean Patton competed. They just got into a couple of pitches. I thought he pitched well. And Clayton was outstanding. He's been outstanding the last couple of weeks, got his cutter going, kept us in the game.

Our pitching the last couple of weeks and the season as a whole, we've struggled offensively a little bit as of late. We battled but we haven't got the hits we needed to get.

The guys on the mound did an outstanding job. Fresh pitched three days in a row. He pitched the last day in Georgia, I believe. His development, just maturation

coming from a junior college to here, just really, really proud of him and all the pitching staff. They did a tremendous job this season.

Q. You talked about all season how much these guys care in that dugout. Just seeing a guy like Jack Laviolette, everything he's done in the last 48 hours, what does it say about his character and perhaps this team?

MICHAEL EARLEY: It's one of the most unbelievable thing I have ever seen. He had surgery yesterday at 7:00 p.m. and played in a game at 6:45. I've never seen anything like that.

And it's big for us. For me, if trainers and doctors say you can't get hurt, I will play a kid as long as a kid is willing to play, you know what I mean? Never putting them at risk. But for him to do what he did today, that's one of the most, maybe the most incredible thing I've ever seen on a baseball field. It just shows a lot about how much that guy cares about his team.

Q. In the seventh, Kash leads off the inning with a triple. Few batters, few moments, Royo grounding out after that infraction call of first base. What were your thoughts on how the umpires handled that call in the seventh?

MICHAEL EARLEY: I definitely liked it when they didn't call it on the field. I haven't seen the replay. I would imagine, through replay, that was a correct call but I haven't seen it.

Q. In an environment like tonight was, it felt almost like an away game. You guys fall behind early but for you guys to give yourselves a chance to climb back, what does it say about this team?

MICHAEL EARLEY: I think it says who we are. We had situations throughout the year, whether it be injuries or self-inflicted wounds, one thing never stopped and that was our care and our belief and those guys' belief in each other. I'm really proud of them for that.

This year is not how we drew it up, but they never stopped playing, and I think, not a lot of clean baseball as a whole throughout the year has put us in the situation we're in, but a lot of hard-nosed baseball. Guys playing hard, and they never quit.

And for me, we had to play better. I could go on and on throughout the schedule, whatever, but my guys played really hard and that's something that I can hang my hat on.



Q. What has this year meant to you and what have you learned from this year in terms of first year as a head coach and how does this maybe help you in your career?

MICHAEL EARLEY: It's been a lot. I love Texas A&M. I love being part of the university, the culture, the community. Everything. I've learned more than I could have possibly imagined. Managing a lot of people and personalities and just creating such a broad scope of relationships is really tough. It's something I really pride myself in.

It's definitely been a learning experience. I think you can see the growth of our team throughout the season, and I'm just super proud to be a part of a university like this and the people, and it's just a really special place and I take so much pride in being the head coach here.

Q. I want to ask you what the next couple of days look like for your team and how much are you going to lean on the leadership of Jace and others in your program to get through these next couple days?

MICHAEL EARLEY: Just like we have all year, our leadership in our locker room and the people we have in it -- guys like Jace, Wyatt Henseler, Hayden Schott, Brad Rudis, Ryan Prager, Justin Lamkin, I could go on and on -- I really got lucky with guys like that. It will be important for them to keep us together through the next couple of days for sure.

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