

# Southeastern Conference Baseball Tournament

Saturday, May 23, 2026

Hoover, Alabama, USA

Hoover Metropolitan Stadium

**Florida Gators**

**Coach Kevin O'Sullivan**

**Caden McDonald**

**Blake Cyr**

Postgame Press Conference



**bullpen that gave you guys problems? It seemed like they cruised through the middle and late innings there.**

CADEN McDONALD: I think they mixed really well. Guys threw a bunch of strikes. I don't think they had very many walks. Getting ahead in counts, just mixing up the pitches, and just throwing strikes. I think we put some good swings on the ball, just some of them didn't fall, and then they just made big pitches when they needed to.

**Q. Blake, in the past, you spoke to the importance of development in college baseball. Now that you've done it in two leagues and the performance here on this stage, what does success look like to you, especially your senior year and getting to this stage?**

BLAKE CYR: Is your question towards the difference between the two leagues, of, like, the success --

**Q. Your personal development.**

BLAKE CYR: Yeah, being a senior, I've had a lot of developing to do, especially being from two different schools and being in the ACC and SEC. But, like, the SEC development has been unbelievable. I really do think this is like Double-A, Triple-A, man. You see guys come out of the SEC and in a couple of months, they're big-leaguers, some arms, even some bats. I think the development in the SEC is number one in the country. If you want to go play professional baseball, you come to the SEC to play.

**Q. Guys have opened some eyes here in the past few weeks. Is this team doing enough, you think, to get an 8, 7 seed perhaps in the tournament coming up?**

CADEN McDONALD: I think we definitely did. We had convincing wins here, and, you know, the last month or so stretch that we've been on, we have been playing some really good baseball. So look at all the comparisons. I think the numbers are there and I think we definitely pass the eye test.

**Q. Playing in Athens in early April, what were the adjustments you felt from that series on to this point**

Georgia - 8, Florida - 7

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from Coach and then take questions for the players.

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: Well, first of all, congrats to Georgia.

They obviously played really, really well today. That's what they do. They just chipped away. I thought our pitching was good today. It was unfortunate that Russ got hit with that line drive. But fortunately enough for us it's not broken. That's probably the best his stuff has looked all year long.

Yeah, although it's disappointing, I'm really proud of the way our team played this week. I think we maybe opened up some eyes to other people around the country that may not have seen us play. And we've come such a long way. I think this weekend kind of puts us in a position for our team to be ready for the postseason.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players, please.

**Q. I think it was the 4th or 5th inning when Georgia started scoring runs. You guys were rolling until then. What changed in the momentum there?**

BLAKE CYR: I would say Georgia's a good team, so they're going to go out there and -- you know that they're going to go out there and put good at-bats together and they're going to score runs. We just got to do a better job of not letting it affect us as much and keep our foot on the pedal because we put up in -- I don't know, the 3rd maybe it was five or four, and even if they score a couple, we can't let it affect us and keep going.

**Q. Was there something specific from the Georgia**



## and what you guys want to prepare for next week?

BLAKE CYR: I think we just got to keep doing what we're doing. We went to Athens and we were the only SEC team that took a series out of there or a series from them. So we know how to play good baseball and we really showed that when we came up here to play. So I think, just like Coach said, man, I'm proud of our team for sure. There's nothing to look down upon coming out of this week for sure. I think what we did up here is so beneficial rolling into regionals.

CADEN McDONALD: Like Blake said, we definitely have shown that we can play some good baseball. That was great weekend, and we definitely did everything that we had to do to win that series. It really showed us how good we can be. So I think that having that under our belt can just help us know, like, what we're capable of.

### **Q. You played in the ACC and you had mentioned your development difference, but what is one or two, three different things that are different from the SEC from the ACC and how is the SEC better?**

BLAKE CYR: Yeah, that's actually a pretty easy question for me. I think the hitting is kind of overall -- like, everyone's kind of going to hit everywhere. But in this league, the pitching is unbelievable. You look at the guys that we roll out there, come on, man. Our bullpen, we had Russell who is 97, 98. In the ACC, you'll get a good starter as well, but then you're not bringing a guy that's next who is 97 to a hundred and then another guy that's 95, 97.

And it's not just that they got a plus fastball. They got plus two, three pitches. And it's not just our team. It's the whole SEC. And that's the main difference is the pitching. Man, I think as a hitter, that's why I wanted to come. I wanted to play against the best, and with Sully being, I mean, an unbelievable human being, an unbelievable coach, I wanted to play a for him, and I wanted to come play against the best competition, and that's what it is here.

### **Q. Can you speak to the adjustments you guys made against Dylan Vigue today. When you faced Georgia in Athens, he had your number. What did you do different this time?**

BLAKE CYR: I think it obviously helped that we already saw him. So that was nice that we already got a whole game under our belt against him. And then I think today it was just -- I mean, he's an east-west guy and what we did today is, hey, get your pitch and just don't miss it. He's going to be around the plate, they throw strikes, and that's what we did today. He gave us pitches over the plate and we did damage with them.

THE MODERATOR: We'll excuse the players and take questions for Coach.

### **Q. The importance of playing in the SEC tournament, some teams come in here and they don't play their best guys, but to you, how does this tournament help you prepare for the rest of the tournament?**

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: I think it goes back to, like, the ninth and tenth weeks of the year. Everybody's playing for something, whether it be a top 8 national seed, be one of the top 16 seeds to host. Some teams are playing just to get into the tournament. We have never taken this tournament lightly. We've always stayed with our rotation. The only time I think we may have done that is if we had to play on a Tuesday and we couldn't bring back our No. 1.

But, no, we try to come here to win it. Every game's important. Like I said, it was unfortunate today with Russ because that's about as good of stuff as he's had all year long. I'm looking at the board and he's throwing 96, 97, and he's throwing his fastball to both sides of the plate. That was the best he's looked. So lucky enough for us immediately they got him an X-ray and they came in and, I said, You already got one? That's awesome. It came back negative, so he'll be ready to go next week.

We got three good starters. Our bullpen's healthy for the very first time. We've got our lineup pretty much set now, and we'll see what happens with the draw. I know a lot of people asked if we should be a top 8 national seed. My answer every year is the same thing. It's out of my hands. It's in the committee's hands. I do think that we are one of the top 8 teams in the country, but it's not my decision to make.

### **Q. I know you talked about this before as far as Georgia goes, but speak to the length of their lineup and what that ability gives them with that offensive game they got.**

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: Yeah, it's almost like no matter how many runs you score you almost feel like it's not enough. I thought that, you know, after the rain delay, there was a couple tough hops there at third, and they got things rolling there. I didn't think Josh pitched poorly at all. I think he just left some balls out over the plate. We didn't give it to 'em. It's not like we walked a few guys and gave up a three-run homer or stuff. They just put some really good at-bats against one of the best arms in the country. I'm really pleased with how we played this weekend, or this week for that matter. I think it definitely prepares us for next weekend.

**Q. Was there any thought to putting Jackson on in the 8th inning when he ends up getting the sac fly that gives 'em the lead?**

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: No. You pick your poison. It's like -- and for me, the thought did cross my mind, but those are the opportunities -- like, Josh needs to face Jackson in that spot. Like, if he comes out successful, boy, does he feel really good about himself. So those are the type of battles within the game that you go you know what? Let's go mano-a-mano. Let's go head-to-head and see what happens. And I think that's important for players to go through that, and pitchers for that matter.

**Q. Every team you have is different this some way, shape, or form. What has been different about this Florida team that maybe people don't see, don't read about that kind of sets themselves apart, in your mind?**

KEVIN O'SULLIVAN: I think our resiliency. We got swept at Alabama, we turned it around. I'm really proud of the way we have improved offensively, how we improved pitching-wise, and defensively we've come a long way. And they have worked awfully hard. It's a tight-knit group, and yeah, they're disappointed that they lost. I flat out told 'em in the dugout, I'm proud of the way you guys played this week, we don't need to hang our heads. We'll get back home, give 'em a day off tomorrow, practice early on Monday, get ready to watch the selection show, give 'em the rest of Monday off and then get ready for the regional.

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