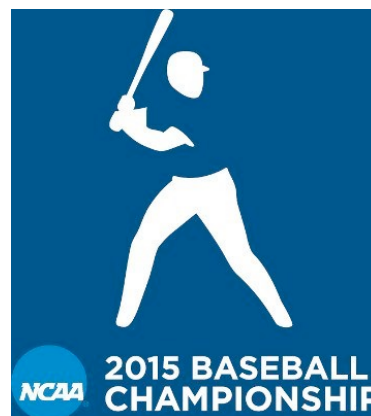


June 6, 2015



An Interview With:

VANDERBILT

TIM CORBIN: Well, I think first and foremost, our kids did a very nice job against a very good pitcher. I think Kevin is one of those kids who's pitched well for three years at every level, Illinois, summer leagues and so on, and we knew that this was going to be tough in order to break someone like that down. It had to be a team effort.

First inning was a big thing for us at the time because of the two opposite field hits, wise man driving the ball the other way, Dansby driving the ball the other way, Zander reaching base, and really I thought for us maybe the at-bat of the night was when Toffey went from 0-2 to 3-2 and drew the walk. I thought that allowed us to get the inning going a little bit, and after that we were fortunate to drive the pitch count up.

But I think that was -- it's an anomaly to do something like that against such a quality kid. From Carson's vantage point, I thought he did an outstanding job because I thought it was a situation where he didn't have the count for most of the night, and to keep a quality team off the scoreboard, not having the count is certainly indicative of how hard he competes and the quality of the pitches that he has to make at crucial times.

Just a good job. It's just one game, but at the same time I thought we played very good defense, we hit the ball well, professional at-bats, and we got some good pitching.

Q. Rhett, you guys obviously made the run last year and you've been in super regionals before, Illinois has not. How much of a factor do you think that's good for you guys to lean on that postseason experience?

RHETT WISEMAN: I think it's huge. You look at it, we have a lot of guys on the field, especially tonight you go around that field and you've got seven guys who are on the field last year in the College World Series with the exception of Jeren and Will Toffey, and that's huge, the experience in games like this, in big games, and Coach always talks about having a slow heartbeat in games like that, and basically what that is is the ability to slow the game down and not have the game speed up on you.

I think when you have veteran guys out there who have been in situations like that before, we know how to handle adversity and we know how to attack certain situations, and I think that's what you saw tonight.

Q. Rhett, what kind of confidence do you have going forward once you get that three-run lead in a guy like Carson on the mound?

RHETT WISEMAN: I feel like with Carson all we need is one run, but it's huge. You know what you're getting with Carson every outing. He's the best pitcher in college baseball. Really we derive so much energy from him that it's so easy to hit when he's on the mound and you look at our success in the first game of the series throughout this whole year, and that has a lot to do with this guy sitting next to me.

Q. Carson, what did the Illinois hitters in here a minute ago said they didn't think you were overpowering and they had seen other pitchers as good as you this year. Was there a competitive edge? Do you feel that competitive?

CARSON FULMER: Definitely felt like this was a game we were ready for. We didn't really try to play differently. We didn't have really an edge, and like Rhett said, I feel like it talks about the guys that have been on the field before. We were

ready; we took the same routine as we always do, and we always just thought of it as another opponent, and we were going out there, playing good baseball, stayed within ourselves, and just let the results take care of themselves.

Q. Carson, what do you think was maybe working the best for you to limit them only to four hits and no runs?

CARSON FULMER: Yeah, I mean, all year I've been really trying to refine my changeup. I threw a lot of those early on, I got a lot of swing and misses on them, a lot of quick outs. I feel like that was big for me. But being able to feel that throughout all my pitches, just letting them put the ball in play, it was big, and like I said, I wanted to carry the ball deep in the game and just give us the best chance to win.

Q. Rhett, the big moment at the end of the game where Kyle comes up to bat and gets that big hit, what's going through the dugout's mind then?

RHETT WISEMAN: That was such a special moment, and it amazing me how continually year after year we as a group feel so much excitement. There's always more excitement when someone else succeeds, and that moment right there was so big for us because Kyle Smith is one of the best teammates I've ever had. He goes in, and a lot of times he goes in, that's a tough spot when he pinch hits late in the game. It's one of the toughest things to do in baseball is go in when you're cold and face a guy usually late in the bullpen. But if you just watch the reaction of our whole bench, 10 or 11 runs, whatever it was, when Kyle doubled down that line, you can just see, everyone is so excited for him, and he's such a great kid and he's a great person.

Q. Carson, did you have any issues with the strike zone? It looked like on a couple pitches you looked a little frustrated by it. Any problems with calls in particular?

CARSON FULMER: I mean, obviously every time you go out there you make a few pitches that you don't think are strikes and then the other way around. But it's baseball. It happens. Just trying to compete in the zone, throw strikes and just keep the men off base was the biggest thing.

Q. Talk about the concept of going on the road versus being at home. I know you've

had disappointments at home. You lost to Louisville, right? Sometimes a team can go on the road and really be boosted by it. The way you guys played today, clearly you were very comfortable. Kind of talk about that, how you kind of used it to your advantage, less pressure as opposed to hosting?

RHETT WISEMAN: I think that honestly, really what it comes down to is the atmosphere, and I think that playing in the SEC, it's a conference where the atmosphere really puts you in uncomfortable situation every time you go on the road. So from that standpoint, we're ready -- I think we're ready for anything. Playing in the College World Series last year, and like I said earlier, the seven guys on the field playing in front of 35,000 people, we go on the road, Mississippi state, Arkansas, LSU, all these places that are 10,000, 11,000 of people that aren't saying the nicest things to you.

Basically all that's done for us is condition us for different atmospheres and being uncomfortable. We've learned to be comfortable in uncomfortable situations because of that.

CARSON FULMER: I couldn't have said it better than that. I think it speaks a lot about our team. You can look at it in the younger guys, too. I mean, you talk about having a slow heartbeat, I feel like those two or three or four guys that go out there and play, they have that, the pitching staff, and the guy Toffey and Jeren in the field.

We have a lot of confidence, and I feel like we're going to continue to be like that throughout the rest of the year and just stay within ourselves.

Q. What were you expecting coming into tonight from Illinois, and did you get it?

TIM CORBIN: I was expecting a very good team with very good pitching, and nothing else. We knew what we were getting into. We knew this was going to be a very difficult game. Offensively they've been very consistent. You look at their numbers, they don't give away at-bats, grinding at-bats. Each game is different, but we're expecting the same thing tomorrow, just a very good team.

Q. How reassuring was it when you have the experience that Rhett talked about to get those three runs in the first inning and seem to take control of it just like that?

TIM CORBIN: It's momentum during the

course of a game, and the ability to capture it and gather it and move forward with it, and when you can grab onto it and continue to hold it, it's very positive, no matter whether it's college football, college basketball or baseball, and the kids seemed to do that tonight offensively, and we were able to capture it from a defensive standpoint, too. I thought we had an attacking defense. The double play made in the bottom of the first was a very key moment for us because that's early in the ballgame, we scored three runs, they hit the ball hard, and then Tyler Campbell makes a great glove play to start a double play, and we turn another double play later in the game with a 5-4-3. I thought from that standpoint we were very well-versed throughout the game.

Q. Are you pretty pleased with Jeren's hustle on that run-down?

TIM CORBIN: Absolutely. I mean, that was a play, especially by a freshman, that he knew that he was in kind of a green read, which means he's gone, but if the ball was hit back to the pitcher, then he stays in the run-down, so it gives the batter runner an opportunity to get two bases, and he did. And he turned it into a positive by moving back to the defender. I thought it was a very heads-up play by a kid who's from Wisconsin, hasn't had a lot of baseball reps. I thought it was a very savvy play.

Q. Are you sticking with the game plan and going with Phil tomorrow?

TIM CORBIN: Yep, nothing changes that way.

Q. A year ago we saw Tyler Campbell step in for you in Omaha and really deliver in the clutch unexpectedly. And then today obviously he really helped you and you mentioned about his defense. I just checked the stats, the guy has got three errors all season. Talk about his arc over the last 12 months or so.

TIM CORBIN: Well, if you look at his offensive numbers, there's not a lot of RBIs, but I'm going to tell you there's a ton of RBIs in his glove and they're defensive RBIs that he does not allow, and that in itself is just as important to any team.

I tell the kids in the first meeting that you get on the field by playing defense. You stay on it with your offense. But he is able to stay on the field because he's such a nice defender, and last year obviously was a great moment for him

personally because he gained so much confidence by playing in the College World Series, then really excelling in the College World Series at the right time. I'm just happy for the kid.

You wait your whole career sometimes. He had 14 at-bats leading up to that moment, and it's just feel-good stories, as a dad, that you can see your kids respond in situations like that.

Q. This is a good moment for you to have him on the mound tomorrow, the chance to take you to Omaha after what he's been through?

TIM CORBIN: Well, I think the fact that he can continue playing baseball is a good story in itself. The fact that he's pitching for us is great, and doing well at it. I just love his continuous story and how he handles himself, and he's just mature. But yeah, whether it's Phil or Walker, we're just happy to be going into that game with guys that we think are competent.

Q. The way you ended the regional last weekend and picking up almost exactly where you left off, what did you do during the week to keep that momentum rolling?

TIM CORBIN: Just continued doing the same things we've been doing really all year and that's just kind to keep the guys centered in what they've been doing and really enjoy the moment they have with each other because as I tell them, these moments are fleeting and they're going, and just the fact that I think sometimes people get ahead of themselves, and I've always said that the training sessions in between the games are the most important experiences you can have, and the kids don't take those for granted, and I think we do a very good job in the days in between the games. The games take care of themselves if you take care of the training, and the kids do that. They're a mature group. It doesn't mean that you're going to win the next game, but as I told them, I'm at peace with them. I feel good about who they are and how they handle their business, and that's all that matters to me. The outcomes will settle themselves.

Q. Talk about the decision to send Fulmer back after the seventh. He had a nice little go on that outing. What went into the decision to send him back out?

TIM CORBIN: You don't know Carson.

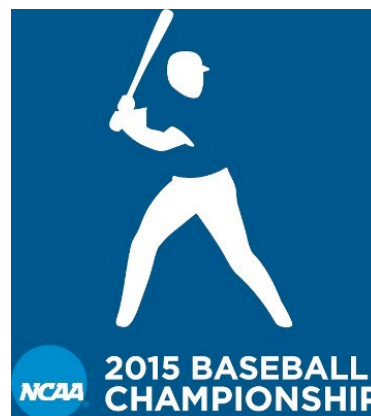
He's tough to take out. We hadn't run him into the ground. I think he was at 105 pitches at that point. I wanted get him out there one more time. In my mind the game was far from over. Regardless of what it says on that scoreboard, I respect that team a great deal and I know what they can do offensively. We just wanted to try to get to the eighth inning, but as you saw, he was out of gas. That game was tough for him because he threw a lot of pitches, got in three-ball counts quite a bit, but I just felt like it was the right move, and it was the right move to get him out, too, at that point.

Q. I asked the players a question about going on the road, and you team -- some guys almost embrace it.

Well, I think they enjoy being on the road. I do. I'm not saying that because we're at Illinois playing a super regional. I think they enjoy going on the road for SEC tournaments and games. They just enjoy those moments, the camaraderie, the ability to travel together, the ability to go out to dinner together, the ability to play somewhere else. I think in the last three years, our kids have played very, very well on the road. I don't know, we've just created that personality or created that situation, but they're very comfortable. They're comfortable in their own skin, and they don't get too up and they don't get too down. They stay pretty centered, and that's where they need to be.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

June 6, 2015



An Interview With:

ILLINOIS

DAN HARTLEB: Well, it's more fun being the second team in here, I can tell you that much. We just didn't play very well. If you look, the bottom line is we made nine major mistakes. We walked guys, we hit guys, and we made errors, and when you do that to a good team, you come out on the short end.

I think we got all of our mistakes out of the way for the weekend, and we just have to move forward. I thought our guys did a good job from a mental standpoint. Nobody panicked in the dugout. I thought we continued to take quality at-bats, hit some balls hard, just hit them right at some of the defenders, but I thought our guys still continued to play and didn't get down, and we just didn't perform very well with simple fundamentals.

Q. Kevin, the walks is pretty uncharacteristic for you. What do you think led to that tonight?

KEVIN DUCHENE: You know, I might have been a little overexcited, overthrowing the ball a little bit. You know, command hasn't been great the last couple starts. I felt good in the pen, and really there's no excuse for it. Just didn't have it.

Q. Kevin, how much of a factor do you think the difference in experience was? Obviously Vanderbilt had gone to Omaha and all that, you guys are making your first run through this.

KEVIN DUCHENE: You know, I believe in the ability of our team. You know, no matter who we're up against, somebody that's been there 10 times or somebody that's been there never. You

know, as Coach said, we didn't do key things right today, so I just -- I don't think that the experience factor had that much of a play on it.

Q. Ryan, you had two of the four hits off of Fulmer. How did you figure him out?

RYAN NAGLE: Yeah, overall he was giving me a few good pitches to hit. I didn't put the greatest swing on either one of my hits, they just found a way through. Other guys on the team hit the ball a lot harder than I did, they were just right at people. Just finding a hole in the infield, I guess.

Q. Did it seem like the opposite was true for Vanderbilt, that their softly hit ones --

RYAN NAGLE: Yeah, I think off Kevin they found a lot of balls right through the hole. I know a lot of balls came out to me past right Ryan, stuff like that. Yeah, but I don't think they hit too many balls that hard, they just found a few more holes than we did I feel like.

Q. Kevin, any issues with the strike zone? It seemed to be fluctuating a little bit.

KEVIN DUCHENE: I mean, I didn't see it from anybody else's standpoint, but I'm sure it was whatever it was both ways. I don't really have any issue with it. You know, yeah, not really.

Q. Kevin, is there anything you can identify that might have led to your sudden relative loss of command the last couple starts?

KEVIN DUCHENE: Nope. I have no idea or else I probably would have figured that one out.

Q. For both of you, how did Fulmer, how did actually facing them compare to what you expected going in?

RYAN NAGLE: He's a good pitcher but we've seen pitchers this year that were just as

good as him I thought. We just didn't get our job done as much as we should have, but yeah, he didn't overpower any of us. His command was good but it was nothing we haven't seen before.

KEVIN DUCHENE: I don't know if I could give you a very truthful response to that. Obviously it was uncharacteristically very, very bad today, very bad. I thought that their hitters did a very good job of laying off some pitches that to me looked pretty good, but at the same time I wasn't really around the strike zone at all. Laying off those pitches were just good decisions on their part.

Q. Can you speak to the great crowd you had that turned out? I imagine that adds to your disappointment that they went home.

KEVIN DUCHENE: Well, absolutely. The super regional sold out in, what, five minutes, eight minutes, something like that. The fans have been terrific all year long, very supportive. What did we have, 3,500 people out here tonight, and dating all the way back to the bleacher bum barbecue, we've had just a great backing.

You know, it was hard -- it's hard, obviously, to get beat pretty bad like that at home, but at the same time, you know, this is baseball. We're not done yet. This series isn't over. You know, hopefully we can get everybody back out there tomorrow and they can see a better ballgame from us.

Q. Ryan, this team has been pretty resilient this season. How do you feel like you'll face tomorrow's game, elimination game?

RYAN NAGLE: Yeah, I think we'll be fine. We've been down quite a few times this year it seems like, so we always find a way to come back, and we're confident we can win these next two games. We're not really stressing too much about it.

Q. Coach, there's another Midwest team playing right now and they lost by a pretty big margin to another SEC team. Just your thoughts on how you're going to get your team ready for tomorrow? I saw bits and pieces of Missouri state game and obviously the final score. It's just part of baseball. There's some games that get away from you. That's part of athletics. This team is going to bounce back. We've bounced back every time we haven't played well. We find a way to turn around and

get our jobs done. I have zero concern about our approach, and the way these guys are going to come out and play tomorrow because we've done it all year. We haven't changed anything from day one, so we'll be ready to go.

Q. Coach, I asked Kevin there about the difference in super regional experience. Even if that wasn't a factor, when you get down 3-0 like that, do you have to fight against that in the dugout, the difference in the experience between the two?

DAN HARTLEB: We've never had to fight from a mentality standpoint this year. We had some opportunities early to get right back in the game. With some situational type hitting, it's probably a different game. As I said, we got beat in all three areas, and you don't have to get hits always to score runs. We had opportunities to score a couple runs without getting hits, and we didn't do it. So I don't think that's experience, that's just, again, part of the game.

Q. Do you have a feel for why Kevin has not been as sharp the last three or so weeks?

DAN HARTLEB: No, no, I don't. As I said, if we had a feel for what we could do to help him or what he could do to make an adjustment, he's been good in bullpen sessions, he's been good in the bullpen prior to games, and then he's come out and just hasn't been as sharp. You know, we don't know what that situation is. Hopefully we can get our jobs done the next two days and try to help him make an adjustment or two in Omaha.

Q. Tomorrow do you go with Drasen Johnson? Do you stick with the rotation?

DAN HARTLEB: We haven't made on decisions on that yet. We'll talk when I get back over to the clubhouse.

Q. You didn't throw Tyler today, so he's available for anything?

DAN HARTLEB: Yeah, yeah, we've got everybody available. That's one reason when we got down, we just started to roll different guys out there, a number of different guys, just to keep pitch totals down. Everybody is available tomorrow except for Kevin.

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