

College World Series

Thursday, June 23, 2016

Omaha, Nebraska

Tim Tadlock

Eric Gutierrez

Stephen Smith

Texas Tech

Coastal Carolina - 7, Texas Tech - 5

THE MODERATOR: Tim, give us an overview from your dugout.

COACH TADLOCK: Okay. Well, as far as we played, we obviously fundamentally were not real good today. That's probably as many extra bases we've given up the whole year.

I thought Coastal Carolina did a really good job of taking the extra base, kind of a little bit of a shock just over some of that stuff because we hadn't really done that in a long time. Kind of uncharacteristic of our team, I think, throughout the year, played pretty good defense and pitched it pretty well and really probably just gave them too many -- you call them unearned runs, whatever you want to call them.

At the same time I thought Coastal Carolina did a good job not taking anything away from them. I thought their starter had really good stuff, and the two guys out of the bullpen we knew were going to be good. I knew they were pitchability guys, and they showed that.

And really from there as far as the game goes, I think we were in it at the end, and I think we hit a couple of balls hard there in the ninth, and that's baseball. Those two baseballs don't find a glove, who knows what happens.

But, overall, I'd just like to thank everybody, all the Red Raider fans for showing up and coming out. Obviously, our team, we can't ask for much more from our team and everything they did throughout the season.

Q. Eric or Stephen, just looking back at the last three years, you guys have been the class that's kind of taken this program to the next level. I guess in a short amount of words, kind of assess the last three years with this program. Pretty special.

ERIC GUTIERREZ: It sets up pretty good. The guys that are coming in, there's good leadership for next



year. And everything that we did, I guess the guys that are here are going to follow up through that.

STEPHEN SMITH: I mean, yeah, me, Eric, Nes, we've all done a lot for this program. And we've put Lubbock, Texas, on the map. And Gut being the Big 12 Player of the Year, he's been a starter for four years, he hasn't came off the field. He's done a lot for this program.

You know, we're going to miss him.

Q. Gut, no D-I offers, a long bus ride, a kid from Mission, Texas. Can you sum up, I know it's difficult right now, what Texas Tech has meant to you and what you think you've meant to Texas Tech?

ERIC GUTIERREZ: It means a lot. It's a blessing. Coach gave me an opportunity. He believed in me. And, I mean, it hurts. But I know this team's going to be back next year. And a couple of years, it's not going to be -- it's going to be expected to be here every year competing for the national championship. It's going to be expected from here on out.

Q. Stephen, a kid from Lubbock, Texas, you were drafted. We don't know your situation there. I know you probably want to think on that a little bit. But what has this three-year run meant for you being a local kid and being able to produce even that three-RBI hit tonight as well?

STEPHEN SMITH: Being a local kid, my goal is to help Texas Tech come to the College World Series first time in program history. We were able to do it twice. It meant a lot to the community in Lubbock and all the people out there, being a local kid. But I couldn't do it without my teammates and the coaches and all the support from the Texas Tech fans.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach.

Q. Tim, when you kind of look back at the last, you know, three years with this class, the junior class here and look at what they've accomplished, you guys obviously wanted to put this program -- take this program to the next level. I guess how do you kind of assess these last three years; been pretty remarkable?

COACH TADLOCK: It's been a lot of fun to coach

them. You guys about got me just asking Gut what it meant much less asking me what it has meant the last three years.

It's a lot of fun going to the ballpark every day. These guys, they like to work at it. They show up. They've been good. They've been good in all phases. They've been good in the classroom. We've had two or three semesters in a row. I'm not sure this semester, but 3.0 team GPA, guys have represented Texas Tech the right way.

They've played the game the right way. And today just wasn't in the cards as far as that goes. Really haven't reflected a lot lately as far as what the last three years have meant. And, I mean, Gut's been here four. There's a guy from Mission, Texas, stepped on our campus, was a leader day one. And is still leading.

Q. I know we'll go through a lot of the seniors here, but let's start with Tyler Floyd. You mentioned recently you've had former players saying he's one of the best catchers that they've seen. The importance of him behind the plate and helping out that young pitching staff this year?

COACH TADLOCK: Yeah, just probably can't put a value on how important he was. Probably can't put it into words. Does a great job with handling the staff. Does a great job in practice. Just a guy that everybody looks to, really just a great example for everybody on our team.

And as far as pitching staff goes, they all love throwing to him. Presents the ball really well. Has done a really good job. I mean, he's played dinged up really for the last three weeks. I don't know if you guys could tell, when he swings and misses, it hurts him. And that's probably the reason for the drag bunt yesterday with two strikes.

And he's a tough kid. He's a kid that there's no doubt -- I mean, we'll have relationship with him and all these guys for a lifetime. There's no doubt about that. And he's a special young man. It wouldn't surprise me anything he did in his life from this point forward.

He's got a bright future.

Q. Now to Gut, talking to him, his story is amazing. I know a lot of people have probably learned it over the past week here in town. But what has he meant to this program? And, I mean, a lot of people have talked about it. It seems like in the future his number will probably be one of the numbers that probably isn't worn again in Texas Tech history. Is that something that's safe to say?

COACH TADLOCK: I hadn't thought about that. That's

probably above my pay grade as far as that goes. He's awful special. He really is. When you stick a guy over there and you know he's going to play every day and he's going to play the game the right way and he's a good defender, he -- as good a defender as he is, he makes your infield so much better.

I can remember back his freshman year, we probably turned four double plays in the first month that he was over there that you're going, wow, this kid's going to be really special. I think number one, we were down at FIU, he fields a ball, dives kind of Cal Ripken-like, throws the ball from his knees, we get the lead runner. That's like, wow, that's a really good baseball player.

And but more than anything, his makeup, his character. As good as a baseball player he is, he's a better guy, he's a better person. And he's got a bright future, again. I mean, he really does. He's going to go play with the Marlins, and as most of these guys are going to get an opportunity to go do that.

And that's something that is real important to me. I mean, that they get to chase their dreams.

Q. I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about the matchup now tomorrow night. You've seen both of these teams. What do you think is going to be the key things there?

COACH TADLOCK: Well, Mitchell Traver was pretty tough. I mean, that angle is pretty tough. If he's throwing the ball in the strike zone, coming from 6'9" is really tough. I really don't know what Coastal will throw as far as that goes.

Both teams can apply a lot of pressure to you offensively. They both run a lot. I think Skoug will probably have a say in that a little bit. I think he threw a couple of guys out the other night. Should be a good baseball game. I mean, they both are playing at a really high level right now. Coastal going into Baton Rouge and winning two, pretty much says enough there.

And TCU went into A&M and won two out of three. And playing really good baseball here. As far as, I mean, you start talking about matchups and all that stuff, again, it's probably not fair for me to say because I don't really know who Coastal is going to run out there. Who is that? If it's the guy they threw Game 1, he's tough. And they know that. He was as tough as I've seen.

You just can't simulate what he's going to do tomorrow. From that arm angle and that arm slot to throw the breaking ball from down there and being able to sink it, at the same time I think they'll come up with a plan for him and do the best they can. But Beckwith could be

tough against anybody. That's a tough matchup.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.