

College World Series

Saturday, June 25, 2016

Omaha, Nebraska



Jim Schlossnagle

Evan Skoug

Dane Steinhagen

TCU

Coastal Carolina - 7, TCU - 5

THE MODERATOR: Jim, give us an overview and then we'll have questions for the student-athletes.

COACH SCHLOSSNAGLE: First of all, congratulations to Coastal Carolina. Their resiliency, toughness and talent has shown through in this tournament. By no means are they a Cinderella. You don't win 53 games and be Cinderella. You're a really good team that can win a national title. And congratulations to those guys.

Proud of our team. Felt like we competed. We just couldn't get off the field in the middle innings. The one thing we did in the first two games which I talked about up here was have the relievers come in, get the first guy out they faced. And we didn't really execute fastballs pretty much the whole night. If you don't command your fastball against a really good fastball hitting team, then you're going to get beat up, especially with the park playing different than it did last night.

So congratulations to those guys. We'll be rooting for them to have success.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.

Q. Dane, you had three hits tonight. What did it feel like for you guys offensively against the arms they were throwing tonight?

DANE STEINHAGEN: We were putting the ball in play. Some hits just didn't fall in for us. I was seeing the ball well tonight. It's something I've been working on on occasion before the game, just staying behind the ball a little bit better tonight. I don't know, we just couldn't string a couple of hits together. Some timely hits that we needed we didn't get.

But no worries, we just -- the timely hits we couldn't get tonight, that's probably the biggest reason why we didn't get a couple of runs.

Q. Dane, can you describe the ball to center field

that went in and out of your glove, what you were thinking with the leap and how close you thought you were to the wall?

DANE STEINHAGEN: I was thinking catch it. The ball's in the air, catch it in the air, it's an out. That didn't happen. I mean, usually I couldn't hear Wade. He said he was yelling, but I couldn't hear him. The crowd was pretty loud out there. I don't know, I didn't -- I kept my eyes focused on the ball and I didn't check where I was, I didn't check the wall. I was kind of banking on hearing the warning track. And it was in there and then it ricocheted out.

But, I mean, they got two runs on it. But it wasn't a game-changer, but we'll see.

Q. Evan, you guys were down six runs here and chipped away and had the tying run at the plate in the ninth. What do you think that says about the character of this team?

EVAN SKOUG: I mean, that's our motto. I mean, I learned that -- Dane and I learned that last year from the seniors who were here. We're never out of the ballgame. That just shows how well the coaches do, teaching us patience and swinging at the right pitches and just fighting back to know that we're never out of a game. I mean, it's a promising future with a lot of young guys, and it's just a really good character builder for them.

Q. Evan, can you talk about the way Jared threw for you tonight and what Durbin did with his final three innings?

EVAN SKOUG: Well, I mean, Jared's been throwing the best for us. And he's been putting us in positions to let us win. And, I mean, I wouldn't change that for the world. I'd have him out on the mound, because I know he's going to compete. He's going to give us the best chance. And he just didn't have his stuff tonight. He's human. We all have a day that we're not our best.

And they just put good swings on baseballs. And then Durbin came in, and he had some success locating his fastball and his offspeed pitches. Just, again, it's a great learning experience for him against a great offense on a big stage. Really excited for both of their futures.

Q. Evan, Dane, can you talk about the run you guys

got on to win 16 out of 18, to reach this point, and what that meant to you as you were doing that?

DANE STEINHAGEN: I didn't understand the question. The run?

Q. During the 16-2 run that got you guys here, how did you play and what that meant to you?

DANE STEINHAGEN: We were playing really good, solid baseball. All the way through. I mean, we got together as a team many times before we made that run and said that we can do this. We lost a few series in the year, but so what? We just kept battling all year. And a few of us, the team leaders, few more guys on the team, we came together, too, and thought what we needed to say to the team and to get us going and a few motivation things. And we played good, solid baseball, offensive and defensively, and we were able to get a bunch of wins throughout that stretch.

EVAN SKOUG: I mean, it's something that I'll never forget for the rest of my life. I mean, coming to the College World Series two years in a row, playing and winning a Super Regional at A&M, playing another Regional and winning another Regional at home. Those are just things you're not going to forget.

Like Dane said, we were playing really good baseball. We came together as a group really well. It just shows that the Big 12 is not around a play. We're ready to go. We can come win big ballgames, and we just came up a bit short. I'm really, really thankful to have the opportunity to play with these guys and come back to this series.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach.

Q. Jim, a couple of weeks ago in College Station, you and I talked about you wanted to get these young guys in the postseason, see what you could do, get them some experience. You guys got close to playing for a title. Talk about the run and also how things set up for next year. I know this is the furthest thing from your mind, but this team does stack up pretty well next year?

COACH SCHLOSSNAGLE: It does, and certainly it's awful soon after making the last out to start thinking about next season, because we wanted to win this thing, man. We expected to win it. Especially after we won the first game and we didn't look past anybody.

But that's just straight credit to Coastal Carolina and how well they played. But certainly on paper, you have, at least as of right now, unless something changes, eight of those nine guys back in that lineup. And you lose Guillory, probably, not sure what Trieglaff and Traver are going to do, but we anticipate having everybody else back, and we feel good about the guys

we have coming in.

There's no national seeds left here. Gotta play good baseball. Doesn't matter how good you are or how well you're thought of in the preseason or throughout the regular season. You got to get in the tournament, and then you just have to try and play your best.

Yes, we're looking forward to it. Yes, we should learn from this experience. But right now it's disappointment. And it's real disappointment, as disappointed as I've ever been leaving this great city. Because we had the club to win this thing.

Q. Jim, what have you seen from Coastal these last two nights that makes them so dangerous? Is it their offense? Is it their belief? What is it that has them here?

COACH SCHLOSSNAGLE: I just think -- I think anytime -- the teams that are left this time of year, they are either hot, talented or both. And they're both. Their lineup has great savvy. They can do a lot of different things and beat you. You make mistakes, they get on a roll quick. And I don't know their players personally, but they seem to have some toughness, and obviously those two pitchers, to do what they did, the two starting pitchers, to do what they've done this week, that's incredible.

So you have to tip your cap in every way to what they've done and Coach Gilmore and his staff. But they're not -- you guys have been around college baseball know what an unbelievable program they've had. And now they've played, what, five games in the College World Series? It doesn't matter whether it's your first time, they're five games in. So the fact that it's Omaha is over and done with. So those guys are on a mission, and Arizona's got a great club, too. But it should match up for a good championship series.

Q. What was your thoughts about the defense for you in the last couple of games; just seemed to kind of go away on you a little bit from the first?

COACH SCHLOSSNAGLE: Yeah, I mean, yesterday we made either poor decisions or plays. Today Dane made a -- he made a good attempt at that ball and just didn't catch it. I don't think -- the rest of it, we made an error on Skoug, but that didn't cost us anything. It was more about poorly executed pitches by the pitching staff.

But, shoot, we made some poorly executed pitches earlier in this tournament and got away with them. And tonight, against their lineup, especially those left-handed hitters in the middle of the order, we didn't. So the credit goes to Coastal Carolina. For me to say that our defense cost us the game is not true. That would

take away from how great Coastal played.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

Q. The contributions Steinhagen made for you this year and some of the other seniors, as you look back on it?

COACH SCHLOSSNAGLE: We only have two, Steinhagen and Guillory. I'm so proud of Dane and Preston, but Dane -- Dane was kind of a role player, support role-type player last year. He played every game, but he wasn't asked to do a whole bunch. For that guy to have the season he had and the home runs, it's phenomenal.

And we're going to look like crazy to find somebody to give him a chance to keep playing in professional baseball. Just real proud of him. And he's exemplified everything that our program is about. And he's really upset right now. But we're going to find a way to get back here and make him proud.

Q. Can you sum up the year for you and maybe what you expected out of it, when it started, midpoint, and then when you got here?

COACH SCHLOSSNAGLE: It's hard to -- we had so many new players going into the season. So you just didn't really know what you were going to get. Then you lose Traver to start the year, and all of a sudden things are really thrown on guys like Luken, especially. I really think that Kirk Saarloos did an awesome job with our pitching staff, kind of piecemealing it together and getting us to pitch at our very best at the most important time.

We were really excited about our offense, and we started out the season I think 22-5. Played really well in the Houston College Classic, got confidence, hit a lull in the middle. Tech was outplaying us like crazy and so was Oklahoma State.

But I still felt like our best baseball was ahead of us and we had to overcome some things, which every team that plays this deep in the season has to overcome adversity. Our guys stayed true to the values of the program, the values of the school, the Horned Frog mentality and toughness.

We ended up playing well down the stretch. Got a Regional at home, which was huge to be able to do that again, especially with the investment our university made in our ballpark in the last 12 months. So I was glad to be able to reward that. And then an epic Super Regional against a great team and program like A&M.

So I'm not ready to reflect on those things, but you asked me. So I'm just disappointed that we didn't win a national title, because that's what we want to do.