

**2019 Mississippi State Baseball
Postgame Quotes
Mississippi State vs. Southern Miss
February 23, 2019**

Head Coach Chris Lemonis

Q: A little bit different offensive approach today? Took more pitches and ended up still getting good contact?

CL: I think so. We want to have an aggressive offense, we just wanted to make the pitcher work a little bit more. We spoke about it and talked about being disciplined in the zone, [talked about] what pitches we wanted to hit and about hitting good strikes. I thought our guys did a good job with that today. Jake [Mangum] started it off, had a good at-bat, and then from there I thought our offense really took off and then when [Justin Foscue] hit the [home run] it let everybody relax and then some balls found some holes, too.

Q: You shook up the lineup a little bit today. What was the thought process there?

CL: [It was] just to give Rowdey [Jordan] a step back. Him and Jake are so similar, sometimes when they're rolling its awesome... so we're just trying break it up a little bit. [Rowdey Jordan] has had a slower start, but he's a really good hitter, so we need him in our lineup. You saw that with the one swing today. So, we'll bounce those guys around, but it's just trying to find the right mix.

Q: Only one career home run from [Dustin] Skelton coming into today and he hits two bombs, did you see it coming?

CL: I wouldn't say I saw the home runs coming, but he's been a lot better at just staying in his legs. The ball he hit to centerfield was crushed. I know there was a good wind out there today, but that ball was really hit. He's hit a couple like that in our scrimmages. He's been good, but I think his defense is more impressive than his offense.

Q: JT [Ginn] has obviously got a lot of talent, but have you been shocked with how well he's done through two starts?

CL: No, because he's been good. He pitched like that this fall. I wasn't sure if he was really that good going against our hitters every day, but he did the same thing against our lineup. His poise, his competitiveness out there is huge.

Q: Was it a good test for [JT Ginn] with six lefties in the lineup? What did he do to attack those guys?

CL: I think so. There are some really good hitters in that lineup. We've pitched well against them, but coming out tomorrow you're going to play against some good hitters. I thought JT, he just really commanded the zone. Him and Ethan [Small] have just really commanded the zone with good stuff.

Q: Marshall Gilbert with a couple of hits today. What do you see from him in the DH spot?

CL: [He was] just being competitive. We felt like against that leftie we needed another righty in the lineup. Marshall is an older kid, handles the bat well and it was nice to see him [have some success]. He's had to sit there and watch a little bit, so him coming off the bench like that was huge and gave us a little lift.

Q: You mentioned [Dustin] Skelton's defense. How far and what areas has he improve in most?

CL: There's just such a poise about him. He's come into his own and realized, 'Hey, I'm a good catcher and I can play.' He's so good with our pitchers and I think the receiving part is the biggest part. JT Ginn, he's really hard to hit and he's really hard to catch, and Dustin does a great job with him and staying with all those sinkers that he's throwing. That's the biggest area of improvement.

Q: You have everybody available in the bullpen tomorrow?

CL: Everybody should be available. Even Colby [White] and Brandon [Smith] after today. We just went with one [inning each] because it's almost like a short bullpen for them to come out there. So, they should be available also.

Q: Given how quickly things can switch, we're in here last night talking about a 1-0 loss and you win 8-1 today. How big is that game tomorrow to end the weekend on the right note?

CL: It's huge. It's a weekend series against a top 20 opponent, an in-state opponent and for us, we just want to play well tomorrow. I know it's very coach speak, but [it is important] for us to be able to come out and play good baseball. They were pissed last night and so was I. But, its baseball and the good thing about [our sport] is we get to come out and play 24 hours later. I thought they responded well, and I'm sure Southern Miss will be ready to play tomorrow. It's going to be a really good game.

JT Ginn

Q: Sliders seemed to be working for you, what were you feeling with that?

JG: I'm just trying to get ahead in the counts and whenever I [can], just throw it for strikes and throw it in the dirt when I need to.

Q: Did you work differently because they have so many lefties in order and the wind was blowing hard to the left field, if they got one in the air, you were probably safe?

JG: We knew they were going to put a bunch of lefties in the lineup. The game plan was kind of the same thing, just stay down, stay away and work inside when I needed to. My fastball command was [such that] I was able to get the ball where I wanted to today, and let them hit it and let my defense work.

Q: Every pitch you had was in the 90s, did you really try to go out there and throw hard?

JG: Like I said, I was just trying to pound the zone, which was the game plan. I probably had a little bit of energy going out there today. I really didn't even know how hard I was throwing, I was just going out there and trying to make pitches.

Q: Ethan [Small] had a lot of success against that line up yesterday, did you talk to him about it?

JG: Yeah, we talked a little bit, it's kind of a little different approach because we have different stuff. He's more of a four-seam guy. We just knew that we could attack them with fastballs, pound the zone and make them hit it.

Q: With today being your second start, did you have less nerves?

JG: You are always going to have a little bit of nerves, but it was fun. I got in a rhythm out there and when my defense is playing [well] like that, it's a lot easier to make the pitches.

Dustin Skelton

Q: What did you hit each time?

DS: The first one I hit a fastball away and then my second one [home run] was a fastball down the middle.

Q: Did you feel good off the bat on both?

DS: Yes, just trying to put good swings together.

Q: Did your BP feel like you could put a charge on a couple?

DS: My swing is feeling fine right now. I'm just trying to find good pitches to hit, put good swings on them.

Q: You had aat bat in the tenth inning last night, did you sense you were figuring some things out?

DS: I'm trying to see the ball out of the pitcher's hand. I know the earlier I can see it, the better chance I have to hit it.

Q: You've caught a lot of guys, what's it like to catch JT Ginn and where does he rank amongst all these guys you've caught in your career?

DS: He's unbelievable. I've never caught a two-seam [fastball] that runs like that. Early on in the fall and with every bullpen [session], I was just learning how he does things. It's phenomenal catching him.

Q: Where you swinging deep or trying to make good contact?

DS: [I'm] trying to make good contact. [I'm] trying to get a good pitch that I know I can hit and put a good swing on it.