

2019 Mississippi State Baseball
Postgame Quotes
Mississippi State vs. ECU
March 5, 2019

Head Coach Chris Lemonis

Q: What did you think about your team's pitching performance?

CL: [I was] very pleased, I thought everybody did their job. The game played out for us pretty good late too, in the seventh having the three lefties coming up to the plate, really four lefties [and] being able to use our bullpen the way we wanted to. I thought the guys were great. We didn't play great defense, played a little sloppy. We haven't done that all year, so maybe it was a little bit of the weather. We have to be a little bit better in that.

Q: Does this team have knack for winning?

CL: I think so. I was really impressed in the sixth, seventh and the eighth. We came out in all of those innings and expanded the game by one. Somebody got a big hit, a big get-me-over, two-out knock, whatever it might be. I thought we did a really good job there manufacturing some offense on a really tough night to hit.

Q: What does it say about this team, that they can go out there even when they are not hitting the baseball well and putting runs up?

CL: They are very engaged, they're very competitive. They were still really into it there late in the night. They know what they're playing for and these are huge wins, beating East Carolina, [who is] a top twenty program. They are showing up every day with a purpose, which I like to see.

Q: We haven't seen Riley [Self] in a few weeks, is he okay?

CL: He's fine. You will probably see him tomorrow. I don't want to guarantee anything, but he's a big piece of our bullpen. Right now, the seventh, eighth and ninth, with the three guys we've been using, has been pretty good, and we haven't had to extend them. Riley is kind of the guy we use in the middle of the inning and we just haven't had to do it much.

Q: Cole Gordon's situation was different in the ninth than what he's seen lately, are you happy to see him have a little adversity and see how he handled it?

CL: I think so. Colby White had a little bit of it too. Both guys had to kind of wiggle out of jams and they pitched really [well]. It happens, especially when you pitch the ninth inning, it seems like something happens all the time [whether it's] a chink hit or a [wild pitch] strike out like we saw...You have to be able to compete in the ninth and it's not always going to be clean.

Jordan Westburg

Q: What was your approach out there tonight?

JW: We knew we were going to face a good arm, he had a lively arm and our approach was to just take what he gives us. We knew he was a fastball-heavy guy. We just tried to lay-off any of his off-speed pitches and get a good pitch-to-hit. So, I was lucky enough to get a few pitches to hit and handled them well.

Q: Is it understood amongst the offense that you guys do not have to do too much to get enough runs to win a ball game?

JW: Well, they're [pitching staff] doing an outstanding job, first and foremost. We don't win these games without their pitching performances. Our offense doesn't really think like that. I think it's pedal to the metal, no matter what the score is, no matter what's going on, no matter if we had a three-up, three-down inning. We're still going to go out in the next inning and try to put up as many [runs] as we can.

Q: Every time that the opposition scores, you guys always seem to answer back. What does that say about this team?

JW: That's just the culture that we try to ingrain in everybody here. It's just a grind-it-out culture. We fight like some bulldogs, really. If they get one, we're going to try to answer back with two, whether we have to fight, claw, scratch. Whatever we have to do to get them back, that's our mentality.

Q: Twelve games in, you all would have taken 11-1 in a heartbeat. What is it like to go through that stretch, play some good teams and come out with 11 wins already?

JW: It's awesome. It's eye-opening for everybody. You get some top-10 matchups and play really well in them. We knew that we're a good team and we knew that we we're capable of this. We have to continue this. We have to have our pedal to the metal, can't take our foot off of the gas.

Q: Having a slow start last year and this year doing a complete 180, what is it like having the season start out this way?

JW: It takes some pressure off of your back. You get to play with a little bit more fun. When you're winning, it's always fun. We just have to keep that going and keep playing hard.

Q: How good can this team be?

JW: Very good. This is a special group with special talent and special players.