

**2019 Mississippi State Baseball
Postgame Quotes
Mississippi State vs. South Alabama
April 10, 2019**

Head Coach Chris Lemonis

Q: You had an up and down game tonight, but the bats got going for you with some long balls. What were you seeing from the team offensively?

CL: They were on some balls pretty well early. I thought we hit some balls hard at them, too. I thought some of our guys, [like] Gunner Halter, Rowdey [Jordan], [Justin Foscue] had some hard outs, but the home run by Tanner Allen, I thought, really was a big part of the game. The ballpark was playing pretty offensive tonight also, so early in the game and early in [batting practice], we saw that and we were able to drive some balls. I think [Justin Foscue] hit a hanging breaking ball and then Tanner's big swing. That may have been one of the farther balls I've seen in the ballpark, just in this small amount of time.

Q: Tanner bounced around the batting order against Tennessee then back up to number 3 tonight. How much of that is lineup adjustment and how much is that trying to send him a wakeup call?

CL: It wasn't about sending him a wakeup call, it was just really trying to match up to the pitching of the other team. We need those lefties in the middle of our order to space our lineup out and we were trying to set up our batting order. They had [Garrett Crockett] at Tennessee and some of those guys, we were trying to balance it out.

Q: Do you see Tanner starting to break out of his slump these past couple games?

CL: I think so. He's had some really big swings. Tonight, there were some huge swings. Over the weekend, he had two hits off lefties. He had the big hit to open up that first game, then he had the home run on Sunday. I'd like to think he's been swinging it pretty well lately.

Q: With Cole Gordon being a former starter, you gave him a two inning save tonight. Will you try to extend him for more than one inning going forward?

CL: Well we did, we had some guys that weren't available tonight either. Cole threw last Friday, so he's been off for a while and he's pretty resilient so he's a guy who can come back and pitch on Friday. [Jared Liebelt] and [Trysten] Barlow were out because they threw so much over the weekend so we were just trying to conserve and be ready for Alabama.

Q: What did you see with an extended outing from Riley Self?

CL: I thought he was great. He didn't get a couple pitches there in that one inning he got hit and he was facing some good hitters and just left one ball. He probably left a ball up, so their guy took advantage of it. I thought he was really good tonight, his velocity was good and his location was [also].

Tanner Allen

Q: You've produced at the plate the last few games. How did you feel over the weekend and coming into tonight?

TA: I had a good weekend. I've been up and down, up and down. Tonight, it felt really good. I felt relaxed at the plate. I was seeing the ball really well and was able to put some good swings on it and help us win. That's all I was trying to do was help us win.

Q: How difficult was it to fight the inconsistency and fight through to get where you are now?

TA: When you got teammates and a coaching staff that believes in you and is behind you every single day and pulling for you... You stress out as a baseball player. You're struggling [and you're thinking,] man, I want to hit five home runs in one swing but you can't. You have a coaching staff behind you and teammates behind you, it really helps a lot and it made a big difference.

Riley Self

Q: Where do you think you are as far as your recovery and where you want to be?

RS: There is still room to improve. [I'm] definitely better than I have been, getting [velocity] back, being able to, I guess, make my cutter more un-hittable, I don't know how you would say that. It's definitely moving a lot more with the [velocity] coming on but there's always room to improve. I'm still leaving some balls up. Obviously, the home run was up and in. I just have to get better.

Q: Is that a physical or mental thing?

RS: It's just losing focus for that one pitch. Sometimes it just happens. It's baseball. Major leaguers don't make every pitch they want to throw. It's just part of it. You can always get better the next outing.

Q: What about the increased velocity thing, is that a mechanics thing or are you getting stronger?

RS: Having surgery twice, once recently, it's just loosening it up and breaking all the scar tissue down, stretching a lot and practicing throwing hard. That's a big part of it. You get out there and long toss and do your pull downs. That definitely helps. It's loosening up a little bit and working some mechanics, using my legs a little bit more, so all that helps.

Q: What are you expecting to see from the series with Alabama?

RS: Good [games]. Big crowds. They're a good team and we're going to have to come out and swing the bats and pitch them well. It should be a good one.