



2019 NCAA Starkville Super Regional  
Mississippi State Press Conference Quotes  
Dudy Noble Field  
Starkville, Mississippi  
Saturday, June 8, 2019

---

**Mississippi State Head Coach Chris Lemonis**

**Opening Statement**

**CL:** "Great start by Ethan [Small]. I just think in that atmosphere, that environment, a really good team in the other dugout, to get a quality start from your starting pitcher is huge especially managing the first inning. The first inning got a little crazy. Jake Mangum makes a great catch, but Ethan just keeps pounding the zone. Then, he settled in and had a really good day."

"I thought we had some great at-bats in those couple of innings where we scored being able to string some hits together and just good ab's [at-bats] together which has been what we have done all year long. That has been one of the strengths of our team, and I thought we played well defensively. I know Marshall Gilbert missed a ball in the first [inning], but I thought he made some phenomenal plays later in the game, so fun to see."

**Q: Scary moment in the seventh inning, do you have an update on Jack Eagan? How tough was it to get the team refocused and continue playing?**

**CL:** "I am still finding out myself. He has a medical issue. They say he is stable. As soon as I leave here, I will try to find him, touch base and see how him and his family are doing. It was tough [to continue the game]. It was a tough five, 10 minutes for our team. They are just a group of guys that care a lot about each other. When you see one go down like that, it was tough on everybody."

**Q: Did you feel like Ethan Small was having to grind tonight during his start more than normal?**

**CL:** "I did. Outside, I said 'You did not look quite as comfortable.' He said 'Coach, I am always comfortable.' I think you have to give a lot of credit to Stanford hitters. I think early they came out with a good approach. Ethan had one [start] earlier a couple of weeks ago when he came out like that. Then, all of a sudden, he fell into a groove. The Vanderbilt night, I thought he came out uncomfortable. But he got loose and into a groove, and he rolled. He is just such a competitor. If his stuff is good or great, he still wins."

**Q: What has the bottom of the lineup done recently to pick up their offensive production?**

**CL:** "It has been like that all year. We have had guys contribute and have the hot guy in there. When Josh [Hatcher] is good, he is as good as anybody in our lineup. We have Rowdy [Jordan] down there. Rowdy has been good. I do not know if he got a hit tonight, but he had two missals he hit that they caught."

"Marshall [Gilbert] had some big at bats. Coach Gautreau and Coach Cheesebrough have done a great job with our hitters. There is a lot of buy into this type of offense we are, and we are going to grind you out. The depth of our lineup, like I have said all year, is the strength of our lineup."

***Q: What is your mindset about being one win from Omaha?***

***CL:*** "We spoke after the game and said it was about staying in the moment. I know it is easy to talk about Omaha and everything else. That is obviously the goals of this program. We have a good team in the other dugout. We have to get a good night's sleep, get a good meal and hydrate. Then, come out and play good tomorrow. We cannot look ahead, taking care of business tomorrow is huge."

***Q: Do you ever take for granted the type of plays Jake Magnum makes on defense?***

***CL:*** "That was a huge play [in the first inning]. He told me after the game that it was the first one he had ever robbed. I said that was pretty amazing because I have seen you make a lot of great catches. He just helps you win games in so many ways. It is just day in and day out the way he shows up and shows out. That was a huge play in this ballgame."

#### ***Mississippi State Pitcher Ethan Small***

***Q: What was going through your mind as you left the mound tonight?***

***ES:*** "I cannot explain it. I do not know if I had any ideas in my head. I was kind of embracing it, looked up at the crowd and just listened to it one last time, just a really special moment. I do not think it is really the same thing as that is my last time doing it [at home]. I have been here for so long and pitched so many times in front of that crowd and that atmosphere. It just does not seem real that it is over."

***Q: From a mental standpoint, how tough was the start tonight?***

***ES:*** "Pretty tough. My biggest challenge tonight was just fighting myself, especially early. We had some good bounce back innings in between, and I finally started punching some guys out. Tonight, I was kind of fighting myself. Then, the biggest thing for me tonight, was going off of the changeup and working those two pitches together."

#### ***Mississippi State Designated Hitter Josh Hatcher***

***Q: What is it about the bottom third of the order done lately to have good quality at-bats?***

***JH:*** "We have a complete lineup. Hitting down there, you just got to try and get on-base. We try to string good at-bats together for Jake [Mangum] and the top of the lineup and get them to do what they have done all year. Hitting down there is just trying to have great at-bats each time, win pitches and try to get on-base."

#### ***Mississippi State Catcher Dustin Skelton***

***Q: What was your thought on Jake Mangum's catch in the first inning?***

***DS:*** "I thought it was gone off the bat. I knew he kind of got under it, but I knew when Jake was heading towards the wall. I was like, 'Oh no, this might get out. This might have a chance.' But when he got up in the air, I heard the other dugout go 'Oh my.' ... Yeah, he got pretty good metal on it."

***Q: What did you see from Ethan tonight, and what have you seen from him over the last couple of weeks?***

***DS:*** "I saw a really good fastball command as we have seen the whole year. He is just a bulldog when it comes to those Friday night starts. Whenever he gets his chance to throw, it is absolutely unbelievable."