



GAME 1: Cincinnati 11, Wake Forest 6

Cincinnati Head Coach Jordan Bischel

Opening Statement...

"Yeah, just a good college baseball game. You know, I have so much respect for coach [Tom] Walter and Wake Forest, just one of the best programs in the country over the last several years. So, [we knew we] would have our hands full. I think [this featured] two teams that take a lot of pride in making you earn all 27 outs. And I think their hitters did a great job making Nate [Taylor] work and he battled through it. But our offense, I think, did some really good things in terms of just pressuring. Obviously, we had a little bit of free stuff early, but part of that's good hitting approach. And then combination of pressuring with that short game and then hitting the ball out of the park a little got us, really, that big inning. That was the difference, right? That six-run inning. And [I am] proud of the guys for being ready to go."

On the team's style of baseball...

"I don't know what that means. You know what it means to me is our guys have worked their butt off to play a style of baseball that has an identity, right? Like, it takes a lot of preparation to [apply] pressure in the run game, pressure in the bunt game [and yet] still hit the ball out of the park, take your walks and attack the strike zone. And, listen, if we did all those things poorly, it would mean Bischel ball with fire in it, right? So, I think it's a reflection of these guys just working their tail off to develop a style that's hard to contend with."

On gutsy performance from starting pitcher Nathan Taylor...

"Yeah, he's really grown up and [that has] helped him. He pitched a lot as a freshman, he was in that rotation, and he just keeps getting better. And his stats aren't going to jump off the page right now, but when we play, when he pitches, we usually win. And that's a good thing to do, right? And that was, I mean, that was guts. He was at 59 pitches, a 40-pitch inning. He could have been out of there in two-and-a-third, no problem. And that's a lot different ball game, different ball game for him. For him to get through six against that offense is pretty darn good."

On the first two home runs being from freshman...

"Yeah, they're not going anywhere. These guys, these guys love being Bearcats. We know when we recruited them, they're going to be good players for us. We also had a lot of older,

good players that beat them out for playing time early in the season, but man, when that door opened for both Derrick [Pitts] and Quinton [Coats], they've run right through that thing, which doesn't surprise me at all. They prepare so well, they listen. They're coachable and they're athletes that are good baseball players. So, I think it's also a reflection of their teammates, their teammates pulling them along, making sure they feel welcome, making sure they know, 'Hey, keep getting ready when the opportunity comes.' Landyn [Vidourek had] been hurt for a couple of weeks and I said to Landyn the other day, I said, 'Hey, how are you doing?' [If you are] not playing, it's not easy this this time of year to be sitting out. And his immediate response was, 'Yeah, sucks, Coach. God, I love watching what Derrick's doing right now.' And that's why the young guy goes out there and does well, because he's got the support of his teammates."

On the pitcher for tomorrow...

"Yeah, Kellen O'Connor for sure tomorrow. You can put that one in stone, outside of a bus accident or something."

Cincinnati Junior Outfield Landyn Vidourek

On being from Cincinnati...

"It's really good. It's been a long time since Cincinnati, especially Bearcat baseball, has had a team that's going out on a national stage and performing. All the recruits—all the guys that the coaches are recruiting—can look at [this] and know what to expect for the future of Bearcats baseball."

On being the designated hitter and hitting one to right field...

"I knew I'd be able to get out there and tough through it. It's just, 'Would I be able to give the team a better chance to win with me being out there?' Whether that's and 80 or 90 [percent], I was glad to get out there and help the guys get a win. We move on to tomorrow and that's all that matters."

Cincinnati Freshman Outfielder Derrick Pitts

On his home run being the top moment of his career...

"Yeah, that's number one. Hitting a home run in the regional was definitely something I've dreamed [of]. I dreamed about that last year. Just going out there, having fun, taking advantage of every opportunity I'm giving is something that I love to do. It was definitely fun and exciting."

Wake Forest Head Coach Tom Walter

Opening Statement...

"We started Blake Morningstar so we could get off to a good start in this game. And then, clearly that didn't happen, too many free 90s early in the game. I don't know that Blake has had three starts where he's walked six, let alone, in one start. And a bunch of times with two outs, we just couldn't get off the field. So, they scored four runs with two outs and two strikes and they scored two runs with two outs in like a 1-1 count. So, again, six two-out

RBI's. And Blake's usually really good in those situations, at putting hitters away. Obviously, just didn't have his best stuff today. We knew coming into this if you give Cincinnati a lot of free [bases], then they could score some runs. And that's what happened [for them] offensively. I thought we did a pretty good job. We had a little stretch there after Dalton [Wentz's] second home run, I wasn't happy with our at-bats there and that kind of seven-hitter stretch there, or 25 pitches or so before and after that. I thought our bats were pretty good all day. You know, Marek [Houston] had a great swing there in the eighth [with a] couple guys on. We had good swings on the night. So, I was happy with our at-bats. We certainly have enough firepower on the mound and offensively to come back in the loser's bracket in this regional and that's where we'll try to do."

On how difficult it is to play through situations where the opponent makes the team stay on their toes like the early bunt...

"Quite frankly, I have to look at the video. I thought that was a play we probably should make. Quite honestly, I thought it got kind of under our glove, might have ... been a double play if we catch that ball. But, again, we knew coming in, we were prepared for what they did. Nothing surprised us, really. And they got the one bunt hit on a bang, bang [play] ... but the bunt didn't really hurt us today. It was the free passes."

On if Blake Morningstar not pitching in a while was a factor in his performance...

"That's a great point. I mean, maybe it was. He threw well in the scrimmage this week, but there's only two innings. He certainly wasn't sharp, that's for sure. He didn't have his ... good fastball command than he normally has. He didn't have his good cutter today. Those are two of his best pitches. So, yeah, maybe, maybe missing the start in the conference tournament hurt him a little more than we thought."

On how important it was to get 4.1 innings out of Blake Morningstar today...

"It was huge for him to get those six outs after it was in play at eight. Then, he got two shutdown innings in a row. Got six outs and then, obviously, gave up the two-run homer to the to the nine-hole guy. I mean, we hit four home runs with nobody on base. They hit three home runs with somebody on base. And when you really talk about the difference in a game, they hit their homers with people on base, like it boils [down to that]. It really, probably is that simple. But again, he just kind of backed up a cutter to the nine-hole guy for the home run there. I mean, maybe I shouldn't have sent him back out there for the fifth, but his pitch count was still okay and he felt good. And he had gotten the last six outs, but it was huge. Again, we didn't have to burn too many bullpen pieces today. You know, the guys that threw today [will not do so] tomorrow and they'll be able to come back on Sunday."

On who he is starting tomorrow...

"Depends on who wins the game. If Tennessee wins the game, we'll start Chris Levonas. If Miami of Ohio wins the game, we'll start Matt Dallas."

On if the possibility of pitching coach Corey Muscara leaving for the Mississippi State job created a distraction...

“That's not a distraction. I mean, Corey is sought after for head coaching jobs and assistant coaching jobs alike. There's certainly no done deal in place for Corey anywhere. But he's good at what he does and he's had job offers every year. But we understand this is a business. Our guys, it wasn't a distraction [for them]. Our guys were ready to go.”

Wake Forest Freshman Infielder Dalton Wentz

On knowing that this was a hitter's park and how was batting practice was...

“Well, I actually didn't take great batting practice, but I kind of just leave BP in the past and go play the game. It's a good park to hit in, no doubt, but [you have to] just go have competitive at-bats and let the let it fall where it may.”

On what his developmental process has been like in the program...

“I think it just boils down to getting experience and being able to lean on guys [who came] before [me], guys like Marek [Houston], Matt Scannell, Jack Winnay. You get to learn so much from those guys and when you get your own experiences, things like that, [you then] start to build and start to learn how to play the game at the caliber you want. And the culture here kind of builds that.”

Wake Forest Junior Infielder Marek Houston

On how Cincinnati pitcher Nathan Taylor was able to give them troubles early...

“Yeah, I thought he felt out the zone. We had a couple walks in the beginning of the game, but he really settled in. I think that was the toughest part. He had a good curveball, and he mixes that really well with his fastball. We put some good swings on it, but we let a couple at-bats turn into turn into two or three outs. So, we got to stack quality at-bats there, which we did not. But yeah, he did pretty good today.”

On how much it motivates him knowing tomorrow might be his last collegiate game...

“Yeah, we know we can do it. And so, we have all the guys we need. We got all the starting pitching. [And we've really] got a good depth on the pitcher's mound and we're just going to try. And for me, I'm just going to try and go out there and have fun with my guys and treat every game like it's my last and play as hard as I can for the guys next to me, for those fifth-year seniors who are going to hang up the cleats after this year. This means a lot for those guys, so I'm really trying to get it done.”