

# College World Series: Baton Rouge Regional

Tuesday, June 7, 2016  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana



## Paul Mainieri Jared Poche' Kramer Robertson LSU

LSU - 5, Rice - 2

PAUL MAINIERI: The first thing I need to do is give props to our grounds crew. They are probably the most valuable people of the whole weekend with the rain and how many times that tarp went on and off. But Mark Lee and his staff, kudos to those guys. We wouldn't have been able to do it without their effort.

Obviously a little bit of relief but a great victory for our team to win a regional championship. Wasn't looking too good there for awhile. That first six innings were some of the -- probably the poorest baseball we've played in a while. We just weren't swinging the bats.

Last night, even though we got beat, we had so many good at-bats early in the game. We just weren't having a lot to show for it. Tonight we weren't having good at-bats early and were making mental mistakes that maybe didn't have anything to do with what the results were out there. I could just tell the guys weren't as focused as they needed to be.

The game turned around, not immediately, but it turned around when Jared Poche' came into the game. He threw six innings that, probably about as well as he's ever thrown. He's pitched a lot of great games for us, but I don't know that he's ever had a more important one and a better one than that one. Although probably can argue about that, too. There's been a lot of big -- I remember a shutout in the regional championship game last year, two.

And then we were just scuffling along, and Fraley drew a walk, and I cold Kramer in the on-deck circle: Look, we have to make something happen. Everything is just too stagnant. We're going to look for a hit-and-run here. So let's look for pitch away whether it's a fastball or a breaking ball. And that's about as fantastic a job on a hit-and-run that you'll ever see. Kramer took a ball, I think was over his head; might have hit him in the head if he hadn't hit it, and he put it through the hole

there and it made a first-and-third situation.

Then about the base coaching by Nolan Cain, sending Jake Fraley on the pop fly in foul territory; and the baserunning by Kramer taking second base on the pop fly, short pop fly. Sometimes our third base coach takes a lot of grief because some guys get thrown out at the plate and it's not deserved. Sometimes the other team just makes great plays.

Well, today he deserves credit for that courageous call, down two runs and sending Jake on that play. Fortunately with Jake's speed and great slide, we were able to make him safe.

And of course that moment when Greg hit that home run, that reminded me of the home run Ryan Schimpf hit back in 2009 against the Rice Owls in the super regional when we were down by a couple runs. He hit a three-run homer and the place was electric when he hit that. Special moment for everybody and we are proud to be part of it.

THE MODERATOR: Coach credited not only your offense but he said the key play in the game was the play you made in the second inning on the pop up in the hole at shortstop. Can you talk a little bit about the jump you got on that ball? He was surprised how well you got to that ball. And also, talk about your day at the plate.

KRAMER ROBERTSON: Yeah, obviously a big spot there, two outs, bases loaded and their 3-hole up. So I was hoping the ball was going to be hit to me so we could get out of it. It was already 2-0 there and they had the momentum. And I saw it off the bat, and it had inside-out spin on it, so it was tailing away from me. I wasn't sure if I was going to be able to get to it and I was fortunate to use my God-given ability to made a good play.

Everyone always wants to know what does your mom tell you what kind of motivation does she give me. But she's told me since I was a young kid that if you want to be a big-time player, you have to make big-time plays in big-time games, and I think that's what Jared Poche' did tonight, that's what Greg did tonight, and a lot of us did.

I'm just so proud of everybody. There's so many people that stepped up tonight. It wasn't just one catch or one play here. It was a group effort and a lot of guys who took it upon themselves with the season hanging on the line. I'm just really proud of these guys.

THE MODERATOR: Greg, you were named the Most Valuable Player of the regional, as well as going 3-for-4 today. Talk about the home run and your week at the plate.

GREG DEICHMANN: I mean, I'm kind of repetitive this weekend being up here as far as talking about the plate coverage that I had that Coach Cannizaro and I talk about. But that's been the key for me this weekend is not looking for a ball through a keyhole, kind of opening up my zone, getting to some balls that.

I've been taking before and like I said, using my leverage. I've hit a few more balls, I probably hit the most balls I have to left field this weekend than I have all season. But you know, that's just kind of the things that we've been working on.

And then that home run, I've just been seeing it well. Got up there, I was aggressive, looking for something to hit. I knew I had a guy on second, and hopefully put a ball in the gap somewhere, score on a single or even a double, and he left it up for me and I was able to get my hands up to it and just put a great swing on it in that situation.

Big moment for us. Kind of added on to Poche's outing, but just a great day for all of us.

THE MODERATOR: Jared, what exactly did you do? I'm just kidding.

Talk a little about your outing, please.

JARED POCHE': Coming in, I wasn't sure how long I was going to go. Coach said two, three, maybe four innings.

Going into the third inning, down 2-0, I knew it was a matter of time when this offense would start clicking and put up some runs. My job was to go out there and throw up as many zeros as possible and get us off the field as quick as possible and let them get at the plate.

Was fortunate enough to make them ground out a few times, pop out, and defense worked awesome behind me. The sixth inning, I think we scored a couple runs, seventh inning, and after that, just wanted to hold that lead as long as I could and I gave it all I had.

**Q. You came out of the bullpen at Notre Dame earlier this year and it don't go too well for you.**

**What was different, and what was your routine, not knowing if you would throw and how long you would throw?**

JARED POCHE': Routine was same as it's been all year. Today was scheduled for my bullpen day, around 30 pitches or so. So I felt great going into the game and throughout the entire game. Just stuck with that and tried to execute the pitches that AD called as best as I can.

This is a win or go home game for us, so I wanted the ball in my hand. I didn't want to come out of the game and just wanted to pitch as long as I possibly can, get us the best chance to win.

**Q. When you sent Jared out for the third, would you have imagined your next move would be new man in the ninth?**

PAUL MAINIERI: Well, probably not, Scooter, to be honest with you. As Jared mentioned, we talked about it and I was really hoping that between Jake and Jared, we would probably get five innings to start the game. I was hoping we could get to the sixth inning and we would have Reynolds and Bugg and Newman to finish the game up.

Obviously Jake had some bad luck. He had a swinging bunt there, and then he had a curveball in the dirt that we didn't block and the runner moved into scoring position. Great piece of hitting by their kid with two strikes, just smacked one inside the opposite-field line there.

So he had a little bit of bad luck. And then in the second inning he started to run into trouble and all of a sudden he was at 35 pitches. So I needed to get him out and I didn't want to bring Jared in in the middle of an inning, so Russell was the guy to get us out and he got a head of the one kid with two strikes and the kid went down to got a breaking ball and found a hole and they scored a second run.

But the play by Kramer was huge. If we had gotten into a 4-0 or 5-0 hole, it obviously would have been very difficult for us. But when Jared started the third inning, at that point I was hoping to get through the fifth inning. But not only was he outstanding, but he was very efficient. He only threw 69 pitches to get through six innings and that allowed him to get through six innings, but that got us through the eighth. And then of course I didn't even use Parker Bugg and we only needed one inning out of Newman.

I was a little bit nervous all day, being the visiting team, too, the way these guys have been swinging the bats. I was a little bit nervous about the bottom of that ninth inning, and I was hoping that Newman would be fresh when we brought him in. I didn't have to bring him in

about seventh inning where by the time we got to the bottom of the ninth, maybe his curveball wasn't as crisp or he lost a little bit off his fastball. So Jared just was amazing today what he did for his team.

**Q. You were on base when Greg hit that ball. What was the emotion when you saw it fly over the fence?**

KRAMER ROBERTSON: I was screaming at him from second. I always say it, just makes me feel better, they probably don't hear me, I was screaming, "See the slider up! See the slider up!" I think you got a fastball.

He didn't miss it. He's probably one of a handful of guys in college baseball that could hit a ball like that. The wind is not even blowing out, he had no help from the wind, might even have hurt the ball. Able to go left-center over the 405 sign. Off the bat I wasn't thinking home run. I was just hoping it would get over his head so I could tie the game.

Obviously when I saw it go over the fence, as I do sometimes, I kind of lose where I am and black out and just start going crazy. But that's what he's done the last month of the season. He's come up huge for us, and I think he's been a difference maker for us.

Probably one of the biggest difference-makers in our success at the end of the season is him stepping up and getting so many big hits and being the guy we all know, knew that he could be and it's just really encouraging to see. He makes us a lot better team.

**Q. When did you know you were going to pitch today, and is this the first time you've pitched at LSU on just three days' rest?**

JARED POCHE': When Coach took me out Friday, seems like so long ago, but he said, "Be ready for Monday."

Obviously we didn't know what the weather was going to do and everything. Then he told me yesterday that, "Not going to use you today. Be ready for tomorrow."

But as far as, I don't think I've ever thrown three days' rest, but it's my normal bullpen day. I felt great. Arm and body felt great.

So I was just going out there and throwing up as many zeros as I can and just waiting for the offense to start clicking and when it clicked, they sure did click.

**Q. We saw Andy, y'all had a hitter's huddle in the third or fourth inning and he was pretty animated. That's out of character for him. What was said in the huddle and the other two after that, did that get you guys going?**

KRAMER ROBERTSON: Yeah, it's definitely out of character.

PAUL MAINIERI: Don't tell him exactly what he said.

KRAMER ROBERTSON: I don't know if I can repeat exactly what he said. But like Coach said, it did kind of feel like everybody was a little bit uptight.

After the game last night, Lange and I kind of talked to everybody, and just tried to calm everybody down. I told them, I was like, the season's on the line tomorrow, whether you want to think about it or not. That's the reality of the situation. And you can either embrace it or you can run from it.

I think at the beginning of the game, we were just a little bit tight, and we finally broke it open there. But Andy was just basically telling us, calm down but wake up. Have better at-bats and good things will happen.

It took us a little while after that, but we finally found it.

GREG DEICHMANN: The only time Andy kind of gets like that is when you're kind of sleepwalking through the game and giving some at-bats away. That's kind of what we did through the first half of the ballgame because we had another hitters' meeting around the fifth, sixth inning, just telling us the same thing: We all need to relax, calm down, take a deep breath and play our game because when we play uptight, that's what happens. It's 2-0 going into the sixth, seventh inning.

Like Poche' said, we started clicking as an offense, and I think we came out of our little funk that we had.

**Q. Jared's from Lutch, so he's a bulldog. When you see a guy go out there and fight like that, do you want to -- does the game almost change where you want to play for him, win for him, that kind of situation?**

KRAMER ROBERTSON: Yeah, I know after early, first or second inning, that he was on. He looked good and I could tell that he was feeling good. And he changed the game for us. It wasn't my catch; it wasn't one hit here. It was Poche' going up and putting up -- I don't remember them hardly getting any baserunners off him. He was as good as I've ever seen him. I wasn't a part of it last year when he had the shutout in the regional.

And Greg's MVP of the regional, well-deserving, but we don't win the regional today without Jared Poche', and I don't think Jared wanted this to be his last game at Alex Box and he pitched like it. There's not enough superlatives to describe what he did today. I'm just amazed by it.

GREG DEICHMANN: Yeah, any time -- our whole entire pitching staff, they got a fire under them every time they go out. But like you said, Poche' is a bulldog and regardless if he had his best stuff or not, he's going to go out and give it his all. It was a combination of both; he gave his best stuff and he gave everything he had and threw up those five, six zeros for us. Unbelievable job by him and kept us in the game and allowed us to make a leap forward and grab that victory.

**Q. Kramer, you guys' body language didn't look real good for six innings. How did the mood and atmosphere in the dugout change after Greg's home run?**

KRAMER ROBERTSON: Yeah, it was, we were pretty flat. We wanted to come out with a lot of energy. But those guys just scoring in that first inning, bottom of the first, swinging bunt and passed ball and the guy, inside-out went down the line; I don't know if it took the wind out of us a little bit. As a veteran I try to keep everybody going, not press or anything, but I think it's just human nature, when the season is on the line, you realize if you lose, you're done. That's the reality of the situation.

I think when Jake finally led off the seventh inning and we got a baserunner, I think that was the first time we had a lead-off guy on base the whole game. I think that was key. I knew coming up there that I had to find a way to get on, string something together, because we had not done it all game. We just had big at-bat after big at-bat.

And obviously Greg's home run was just unbelievable, nail in the coffin you could say. We didn't need another run after that but we got a few insurance runs and just a fun game to be a part of.

**Q. Kramer just said you probably didn't want this to be your last game at Alex Box. Is that something you thought about when you entered in the third inning?**

JARED POCHE': No, not really. Obviously it was a win or go home game, but I just wanted to go out there and just leave it all on the field. I gave it everything I had. Like I said, I knew those guys, I knew the hitters were going to click eventually, but I just wanted to go out there and just get guys out as quickly as possible and let them get at the plate again.

**Q. When you come in, not only do you have no margin for error, because the team is trailing, but I'm sure you're aware that they had 25 runs on 29 hits the day before. Did all of those factors combined, did it affect your approach in any way? Were you cognizant of it? How with you explain**

**your thinking and mind-set?**

JARED POCHE': Yeah, I knew they scored 25 runs and that's an unbelievable accomplishment for them. The way to kind of think about that, obviously it doesn't happen very often for a team to score that many runs in two games, that many hits.

So I kind of just -- baseball is eventually going to catch up to them and those two-out knocks weren't going to come as frequently as it was the last two days.

But you know, as a pitcher, you don't think about that. The only thing I'm thinking about is getting that lead-off guy out, getting the leadoff guy out, and then two outs, close the inning off, and go right back out there and do it again.

**Q. Was there anything am adore was doing that kind of was giving y'all's teammates trouble? I know Greg had two hits off him before the home run and Kramer you had the hit-and-run. Did you observe anything that he was doing well or was it more of y'all just not locked in and focused?**

KRAMER ROBERTSON: I think you have to give credit where credit's due. The guy threw all of his pitches for strikes and good locations. I don't care what level of baseball you're at; when you can locate all your pitches, you're going to have success.

We didn't have probably our best approach and our best at-bats against him, but you have to credit him. He threw -- he didn't have overpowering stuff, but he threw everything he had for a strike and he worked ahead and kept us off balance. So I tip my hat to him. He pitched a great game.

**Q. How many times have you ever practiced or executed swinging at a ball that high, basically, over your head?**

KRAMER ROBERTSON: You know, Coach emphasizes the hit-and-run. It's a really big play; if you can execute it, it's a game changer. I was looking for a fastball away or a breaking ball, just something I could put the barrel on and hit it on the ground somewhere.

As that pitch was coming, it was like slow motion. I could remember the whole thing. I could remember my thoughts. You'd be amazed how many thoughts go through your head in such a short time.

I'm not going to tell you exactly what I was thinking in my head as that ball was coming, but I was fortunate to get the ball in play and hit it on the ground and it just happened to go to second base, I don't know how, but I'm thankful that it did.

**Q. With the base open there, knowing how hot**

**Deichmann is, were you surprised that they pitched to him?**

PAUL MAINIERI: Not really. I mean, they are the home team, first of all, and it's kind of a cardinal rule not to put the go-ahead run on base intentionally and it was still early in the game. Their kid was making a lot of good pitches. Glad they did pitch to him.

**Q. Take me through your thought process of starting Jake. And then was this always your plan to bring Jared in once Jake reached his inning or pitch limit?**

PAUL MAINIERI: Yes. This was always the plan. AD and I talked about it ad nauseam, really.

I didn't believe Jared was going to give us more than three innings, quite frankly. I thought if you figure an average of 12 to 15 pitches an inning, you're talking about 45 pitches, maybe 40 to 50 pitches somewhere in that neighborhood and on three days' rest, just I didn't know how good his stuff would be.

Then the first inning he first went out there, he was 90, 91. He had his stuff. And then he was dropping that curveball. Jared's last three or four outings, he has had great command of his curveball and that's really made a big difference for him.

And you know, so when he started to pitch, I was hoping, all right, well, he's going to get us through the fifth inning, which was the three innings I thought. And then, man, everything was -- I mean, how many in a row did he retire? 16 in a row.

So, hey, I didn't want to take him out and have 10,000 people screaming at me, you know. But I tell you, after the eighth inning, I was going to take him out no matter what. When he came to the dugout, I asked him how he felt, and he said, "You want the truth?"

I said, "Yes."

He said, "I'm done. I'm exhausted."

So I said, "Okay, you're out anyway." And this is what we've been grooming Hunter Newman for and he did a tremendous job.

**Q. You're not afraid to use the hit-and-run. Are some guys better at it? In this instance was it an "oh no, oh, no,"; "oh, yes, oh, yes" situation?**

PAUL MAINIERI: It's a play that I became affectionate about when I was playing at the University of New Orleans for Coach Ron Maestri. He loved it. I saw how run or two really good executed hit-and-run plays in a game could mean two or three runs.

Like Kramer called it a game-changer; at worse, you want it to be a sacrifice, or at least you're getting the runner into scoring position. At best, you're going to end up hitting a ball in the hole like that. Sometimes they will throw to third and the hitter will take second base. When the dust is settled, you have runners at second.

I tell the players all the time that one good hit-and-run will mean two or three runs in a ballgame, and that could mean the difference in a ballgame. You'd like to be able to execute it. It's a high-risk play, because if Kramer doesn't put the bat on the ball, their catcher probably throws Fraley out because he's not getting a good jump on the pitcher because he's got to make sure that he pitches.

So it's a high-risk play. I just felt like, you know what I'm watching the end of our season come to me before my very eyes here and we're being very unaggressive. We're not getting after it. We're not attacking. I just thought without great risk, you can't have great gain. It was time to take a gamble.

So I went out to the on-deck circle and I told them, usually after a pitcher walks a batter, they are going to try to get ahead of the next hitter and I thought he would throw him a fastball and the first two at-bats I said, "Kramer, how is he pitching?"

He said, "The first two at-bats, fastball away, first pitch."

I said, "Okay. I hope he does it again. If he throws a breaking ball and you're looking for an outside fastball, you'll still be able to stay back on that. Don't just be happy putting it in play. I want you to try to drive this ball through second base or hit it in the right field corner."

Easier said than done, of course. But I just wanted him to be aggressively going after the ball. And when I saw the trajectory come out of the kid's hand, I was like, oh, Lordy, looked like it was going to be high, and I don't know how you got the bat on the ball but what a beautifully executed play. I thought it just gave us life in the dugout and all of a sudden we had a chance.

And then when Bryce hit the pop-up down the right field line there, I just, again, Nolan Cain was courageous move, sending the runner, and Drew the throw and Kramer, great baserunning taking second base. I thought it was beautiful baseball there, that sequence of plays.

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## Wayne Graham Grayson Lewis Willy Amador Rice

LSU - 5, Rice - 2

WAYNE GRAHAM: Well, I thought our guys did a good job. Willy pitched very well. And we competed very well. But we forced LSU to play a good game and I thought they played an absolutely great game.

Robertson, you know, he prevented two more runs in the second inning with that diving play, and he had to go a long way to get it and then he set up that whole thing with the hit-and-run and then drove a run in later. He was the key player in the game. And of course, along with Poche', who was brilliant. He pitched better than we thought he could. I thought they played a great game and deserved to win, but we competed and I'm proud of our guys, too.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about your outing a little bit, please.

WILLY AMADOR: I felt good out there. It was a hostile environment. I just tried minimizing the fans and just looking down at my catcher. I never took my eyes off the catcher. I felt like I threw great, and just one hitter hurt me, bad, three hits on me.

THE MODERATOR: Talk about that at-bat, if you don't mind.

WILLY AMADOR: I was supposed to get the fastball in, and I messed up and he just -- he's a great hitter. He took advantage of it, and looked back and hit it straight over center field. There's nothing really I can say about that.

THE MODERATOR: You led the tournament in base hits. Talk about your weekend here and your career at Rice. I know you're a senior.

GRAYSON LEWIS: It's been a great career at Rice, my second year. I've had the pleasure of playing for some great coaching staffs, Coach Graham, Coach Van

Hook, Coach Hallmark and Coach Shepperd.

So yeah, it's been a fun two years, and this tournament, in particular, obviously it was very fun for me. It would have been a lot more fun if we had won this game today but you have to hand it to LSU. That was a good game. Like Coach Graham said, they played really well. It's been fun. It's been a great environment to play in. One of the most memorable probably baseball experiences that I'm ever going to have. It's been great.

**Q. Grayson, what was Poche' able to do so well that gave y'all trouble?**

GRAYSON LEWIS: He was just locating his pitches and locating mainly his fastball and his curveball and keeping it down, and mixing very well, keeping us off balance, coming in when he needed to with the fastball.

Yeah, just throwing that curveball exactly where he wanted it. He did a great job all night.

**Q. You threw very well for six innings. What did they do, did they make an adjustment in that sixth inning or did you leave a pitch up? Was it just good swings on the baseball?**

WILLY AMADOR: They are a good-hitting team, overall, but you can't forget about that hit-and-run where the ball is up and he pokes it straight through second base because he went to cover the bag. But that's what we're supposed to do, cover the bag and throw him out at second.

After that, they were ready for the fastball. I was throwing it down all day and I left it up, and that's what happens when you leave it up. They take advantage.

**Q. I know y'all came up short today but just what y'all were able to do in this regional with all the rain delays and all that stuff. How proud are you of your team for what they were able to do throughout this regional?**

WAYNE GRAHAM: I think this tournament showed that we've had a lot of growth. We started really slow this year, and hoped that our guys would get better and they did and they competed very well in this tournament and I'm proud of them.

WILLY AMADOR: I want to say that it was a pleasure playing with those group of seniors and I loved them and they battled their hearts out on the field. It was great playing with them.