



2002 NCAA Division I Baseball Championships
South Bend Regional
May 31-June 2, 2002
Frank Eck Stadium

Notre Dame vs. South Alabama (Game #4) Quotes

Notre Dame Coach Paul Manieri

On the game...

"That was probably the most complete game by a team that I have ever coached. Obviously the hitting was tremendous, we got 32 hits, we played errorless ball and had some really great plays on defense, and Grant Johnson just pitched an outstanding game for us."

On his team's focus...

"They (the Notre Dame players) were so focused during batting practice that I could just tell there was no way that they were going to be denied. And the one thing I know after being around these kids for two years is that the bigger the game the better the play."

On the importance of today's win...

"This is a game that we needed to get over the hump. The last couple years in the regional we've won the opening game of the tournament and then have that pivotal game for the winner's bracket and come up on the short end."

Notre Dame P Grant Johnson

On his complete game one-hitter...

"I came in and I was a little nervous, I mean I drilled that first dude. After that, I settled down, got in my rhythm, and it felt good."

Notre Dame 2B Steve Stollmann

On his six-hit, seven-RBI performance...

"I don't think I've ever had one."

Notre Dame C Paul O'Toole

On his recovery from a hitting slump...

"It's just one of those things. I got hot in April, and I just hit a slump in May. Today was just one of those days when I was seeing the ball well... I was just happy to get a couple hits in there. I probably take more pride in my defense today. Hitting well is just a bonus, but I take more pride in commanding this young pitching staff."

On Notre Dame's team confidence...

"Being a senior on the team I can speak for Steve Stanley, Andrew Bushey, Matt Strickroth and all the other seniors on the team. There's something different— we know what it takes. You get that feeling as a team that we're just not gonna lose, we're not gonna give up. We just have to go out there and do it tomorrow."

South Alabama Head Coach Steve Kitrell

On the game...

"We ran into a buzzsaw. Notre Dame was really focused. They pitched well and hit well. A one hitter with thirty-two hits, I don't think you can ask for a better game than that. Our guys looked ready to play before the game, but it was just their day and they crushed the ball. They didn't have any cheap hits and Johnson did a great job. I thought maybe in the first inning that we could bounce back and change momentum back and get in the game, but he just shut us down and they kept extending their lead. I'm anxious to see how our guys respond tonight to a very good Ohio State team, but I hope we get another crack at it because we are much better than this and I know that they are good, but I don't know that they can be that good. If we win tonight and win that first one Sunday, then its one game for all the marbles, so there's still a chance for us, we just have to battle back. It's going to take better baseball than we played today."

On the victory margin of the game...

"Twenty-five to one is hard to conceive, especially in a game like this between a one and two seed. The fans were hoping to see a good game and we didn't hold up our end of the bargain. I've seen our guys battle back all year. I'm just hoping that we can play a good game tonight and that it doesn't affect us tonight and we play well and get another crack at this thing because we are much better than how we played today."

On their turnaround to play Ohio State...

"We have to get ready for Ohio State. That's the key, for us to come back down, have a meeting, get focused, play a good game against Ohio State, and then come back here tomorrow and hopefully play two great games. If we do, we can beat anybody in the country. It's going to take a great effort on our part and I'd love to show the fans at Notre Dame that we're much better than this."