



2019 SEC BASEBALL TOURNAMENT  
MAY 21-26 | HOOVER METROPOLITAN STADIUM | HOOVER, ALA.

GAME 16 | Vanderbilt 13, LSU 4 | NOTES AND QUOTES

#### POST-GAME NOTES

- Vanderbilt is making its first final appearance 2015.
- Vandy will be seeking its third conference title (1980, 2007).
- Vanderbilt beat LSU for the second time in nine meetings in the SEC postseason. The Commodores are now 44-58 in the all-time series.
- The Commodores have now scored the most runs in the SEC this season with 490 and the most homeruns (81).
- Vanderbilt has 32 hits in its three wins this week in Hoover.
- Freshman Kumar Rocker allowed one run in five innings of work. He has not allowed more than two walks in 14 of his 15 appearances and tossed five-plus innings for the 10 of his last 11 starts.
- Junior JJ Bleday (38) and sophomore Austin Martin (25) each reached successfully to extend their on-base streaks.
- Martin now leads the SEC with 75 runs scored and Bleday with 71. Martin also remained a perfect 4-for-4 on stolen base attempts to lead the tournament with two more steals Saturday.
- With three RBI, Ethan Paul has tallied 67 on the season, surpassing his teammate JJ Bleday (66) for the top two spots in the SEC this season.
- Junior Ty Duvall recorded four RBIs and now leads the SEC Tournament with seven.
- 152,212 fans have attended the 2019 SEC Tournament with the championship bout remaining. The previous best total was 150,064 set in 2016.

#### **Vanderbilt Coach Tim Corbin**

##### *Opening Statement ...*

"It all starts on the mound. We scored some runs, but it's really about containing the opponent first, that is primary. Kumar Rocker was able to do that today with a very potent offensive team, lining out five initial left handed hitters. They are older and wiser, slow them down and take something and he did that. Then offensively we certainly won several frames, and we got the big ball today, Ethan Paul being one of those, JJ Bleday and certainly Ty Duvall's there at the end was a big hit for us. But we just defended it right and pitched enough to move forward."

##### *On JJ Bleday...*

"He has been that way the entire year. I say locked just from a stand point and very consistent behaviors. It doesn't change that we are in a tournament. We are the recipients of a well-made kid. His parents had a lot to do with that, but I have said over and over that he is just an old soul. He just stays centered so many times, whether it is academic, social, or baseball wise. Because of that he comes across good outcomes."

#### **Vanderbilt Senior IF Ethan Paul**

##### *On staying in the moment when you bigger thing in the weeks to come...*

"I think it starts with just not looking ahead. We play the whole season to get to this point and you want to give yourself a chance to host regionals and super-regionals. Really all that matters is the game that is in front of us, so we try and treat every day like it is the most important day. It's the same thing tomorrow and we will do that going forward."

**Vanderbilt Freshman RHP Kumar Rocker**

*On his first postseason start and if he recognizes it coming into today...*

"It's definitely another game. I figured it was a lot easier if you have the best cater in the country with you, the best defense behind you and the best lineup. It made it easier."



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- LSU's defeat allows Vanderbilt to chip into the 58-44 series and 6-2 all-time record in the SEC Tournament currently led by LSU.
- The 13 runs surrendered by the Tigers ties for the most runs they've allowed in single game in the SEC Tournament.
- Antoine Duplantis racked up a double and a triple for his 23<sup>rd</sup> multi-hit game of the season, which is the second most on the team.
- Saul Garza smacked two hits for his 11<sup>th</sup> multi-hit game and increased his hit streak to eight games, a career best and ties for fifth longest on the team this season. Garza now ties with Josh Smith with nine hits in the SEC Tournament, which leads the team.
- Josh Smith extended his hit streak to nine games.
- Daniel Cabrera has now reached base 14-consecutive games to continue his longest streak of reaching base this season.
- Zach Watson has now reached base for nine-consecutive games.
- The Tigers' pitchers combined for 12 strikeouts, which is the third time LSU pitchers collaborated for double-digit strikeouts this tournament and the 23<sup>rd</sup> on the season.
- Will Ripoll fanned five Commodores in 3.0 innings.

#### LSU Coach Paul Manieri

##### *Opening Statement...*

"Vanderbilt has an excellent baseball team. I thought Devin Fontenot really competed hard to start, he just could not find his slider today. When you are a one-pitch pony against that team the way they swing bats, it is eventually going to catch up with you and it did with Devin. It was not from lack of effort, that is for sure. I thought he competed really hard. Then Eric (Walker) and Zack (Hess) and Matthew Beck came to my room last night, and they wanted to pitch today. It was Walker's bullpen day anyway, but he just was not as sharp as he normally is so they were able to get to him a little bit. Once the score got to be what it was early, there was no use of using Hess or Beck so we gave the young kids a chance to pitch and I thought they actually did okay. Will Ripoll went pretty well there until they had the two-out rally. Then Riggs (Threadgill) and Rye (Gunter) both did okay. It is always disappointing when you get eliminated from a tournament so you can't be really happy right now. Like I told the kids, we are not going to let this one day take away from what we did this week. There were three pretty remarkable days in a row. We lost a 17-inning game so I include that in there because we fought so hard for so long and seemingly had the game won and then we didn't have it won and it was tied up and we ended up losing it in extra innings. To come back and have to play the next day on such short rest just took some unbelievable fortitude from our players. Then yesterday, we played so great against a great team with a big score. We did yesterday to Mississippi State what Vanderbilt did to us today."

##### *On Duplantis' record setting triple...*

"I knew he was tied for the all-time triples record for LSU then he got the triple to break the record. Any time you break a record at a storied program like LSU, that is saying something. I know a lot has been made about him closing in on Eddie Furniss' hit record but the triples record is pretty significant too."

**LSU Senior Right Fielder Antione Duplantis**

*On the games this week...*

"I think we are definitely glad we got those three wins. Looking back at that first game, we were down 5-1 in the second inning and we battled back and ended up winning that game. We ended up winning a couple of great games against Mississippi State and a good game against Auburn. I think looking at those wins and looking at how hard we fought in that game with Mississippi State, we were inches away from winning that game too. I think that just sets us up for positive momentum into the postseason."

**LSU Junior Shortstop Josh Smith**

*On the games this week helping for postseason preparation...*

"Any time we play a game against a Top 5 team like that to 17 innings, it just shows you what it takes to win that game. Whether it is one thing we could have done better or one thing we didn't capitalize on. It shows you how to compete in those close games and I think that helps us as a team to grow. I know for the majority of this year we have done well in one run games. Coach always says 'Your season is defined by one run games.' Those just push you to work harder and try to win those games."