Southern Miss Head coach Scott Berry

Opening Statement
“Well, you know, certainly a hard fought game by both clubs. Neither club played particularly well, but at the end of the day it is about winning. You certainly take an ugly win over a pretty loss, and that’s what it was today. I’m proud of our guys coming back from being down 6-1. When we went up 8-6 we were able to keep that momentum.”

On the bigger stage
“When you get to this point of the season and you are fortunate enough to play in the regional tournament every game is so huge trying to stay in that winner’s side and for our guys to overcome that 6-1 deficit, you saw what this team is about. They grinded it out.”

On the home-field atmosphere
“Hats off to our crowd and how the energy that they brought, and I know there were a lot not happy with a 1 p.m. start, but whatever sacrifices they made to fill our stands, our program and our team appreciate it.”

On how the team has built its chemistry
“Everybody on this team has tremendous chemistry because they have each other’s back. They believe in one another and that’s what is so special. That’s what chemistry is all about. They believe in one another and they care about one another. If you can say ‘I’ll do whatever it takes when called upon” then you are going to be successful.”

On starter Kirk McCarty’s day
“Certainly we would have liked Kirk to go deeper into the game but we are at a point right now where we are going to do whatever it takes to win. We are glad Nick [Sandlin] was able to finish things out there at the end. He hung an 0-2 breaking ball on a kid who hit the homerun. But I wasn’t disappointed with that, I was disappointed with the two walks and the hit batter that lead to that inning. So many things in this game where both teams hurt themselves. At the end of the day, one team goes away with a ‘W’ and another with a loss. Proud that we were the team with the ‘W’.”

Southern Miss Pinch-hitter/designated hitter Matthew Guidry

On how his coming-off-the-bench approach
“You try to stay locked in even if you aren’t in the starting lineup. Try to kick start yourself in a hurry. I lock-in and understand what my job is and stay as level-headed as possible.”
Southern Miss reliever Hayden Roberts

_On his clutch squeeze-bunt play at the plate_

“It’s something that we always practice. Give credit to [assistant coach B.A. Vollmuth on that one. We always end practice working on squeezes (bunts). As soon as I got it out of my glove, I knew we had a chance and we had him in time.”

UIC head coach Mike Dee

_Opening Statement_

“We made some defensive mistakes we haven’t all year. We hadn’t made three errors [in a game] in a month. To be fair and honest, it’s a tough environment. The fans are great and they are all over you. They’re aggressive and both teams are trying their rear ends off. I think their team was feeling the effects of the stress too and just outlasted us.”

_On reacting to Southern Miss’ rally and their uncharacteristic errors_

“As soon as you get into a mindset about trying to protect, nothing good comes from it. We knew Southern Miss was going to make a run at us, and I just wanted us to make sure the run they would make was that they swung the bat and we didn’t make mistakes, so that surprised me. But, they are a really good team and it’s a tough environment. It’s human nature that you may overdo it. You just have to stay who you are.”

UIC catcher Rob Calabrese

_On his grand slam that made it a 6-1 lead_

“I got down early, 0-2 I believe, and just tried to shorten up and get a pitch out over the plate. I got a slider and tried to get some good contact. Basically our approach was middle away and try to fight stuff in and he just left it over the plate.”

UIC starting pitcher Jake Dahlberg

_On getting the starting nod in the opener_

“To be honest, I didn’t feel much of [the pressure]. The last couple of weeks. I went into it like it was another game, and my pregame routine was the same. I felt like I lacked focus on first pitch strikes and I make that a part of my game. I didn’t think about that as much today. I couldn’t get ahead of hitters and find the zone at times, and it was just a few pitches here and there [as the difference].”