

# Baseball Ruston Regional\_mixdown

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

Tom Soto, Gabrielle Crockett, Gavin Kelly, Teddy

### Gavin Kelly

You're listening to beyond 1894, a podcast dedicated to updating you on research, innovation and Campus Life happening in Louisiana Tech University.

### Tom Soto

Thank you for listening to us today on this special episode of beyond 1894. We will be discussing the conference tournament that just ended as well as the upcoming Ruston regional for the NCAA baseball tournament. I'm going to be kind of leaving things off. My name is Tom Soto with me I'm going to go around the table and hand it off to Teddy

### Teddy

Allen you bet this is Teddy glad to be with you.

### Gavin Kelly

This is Gavin Kelly, social media strategist here in the communications office and

### Gabrielle Crockett

I'm Gabrielle Crockett, also in the office of University Communications.

### Tom Soto

We've also got our videographer in here and audio engineer quarter Carol. He's waving to the to the microphones. Um

### Teddy

the audio engineer and he's coincidentally not miked up. We did plan to tell you about a lot of stuff happening in rust and this weekend.

### Gabrielle Crockett

I mean, it's jam packed. hit some of the hot points. We're

**Teddy**

going to come back to baseball because tech historically is hosting its first ever NCAA, baseball, regional. It's a huge, huge thing for the school. And we maybe talk a little bit about the last weekend significance in the coach in the conference tournament. And by the way, the last time tech hosted the conference tournament the winner won the College World Series that was Fresno State. And wow for some y'all with long memories. Louisiana Tech hosted the tournament, however, did not participate in it because it was a sore spot. So good luck to all Dominion who won the tournament. They're a scrappy bunch. They've been here for a week or more. And so good luck to them out east in their tournament but better luck to the Bulldogs. Who will be playing against rotter, NC State which I think is second American homeruns and Alabama which had a really good run like to get in tournament, but besides baseball, Gaby it's a historic weekend in another way.

**Gabrielle Crockett**

It sure is tiny we are in Reston are known for our annual peach festival. This summer marks the 71st annual peach festival we'll be rocking it this week. All week long. We are touching with the peach Restaurant Week where every restaurant in Reston gives their slice and flavor of something special with our patrons. You have a peachy sidewalk sale with local vendors in town and especially in historic downtown Reston. You have a new music festival on the bayou on the front. This Friday. Ruston Farmers Market Saturday morning. And of course the festival all week long.

**Gavin Kelly**

sweetness is great. The peach festival is quite literally one of the best ways to get a taste of rust and what Rasen has to offer.

**Teddy**

What she did

**Tom Soto**

is different definitely sweetness, baking a peach cobbler and each ice cream right now so

**Gabrielle Crockett**

on you also get some some sweet beats too. You have live music downtown, and you just get your own little slice of the pie and enjoy a full weekend for the family.

**Gavin Kelly**

Yeah, and downtown is a really cool place. So lots of nice places to eat and shop and hang out and meet new people and see people you've known for a long time and get to know the town and the place and the people and

**Teddy**

the replay. What a neat because you also have a softball tournament going on.

**Tom Soto**

With how many take 40 something Team 43 teams is what their websites currently say.

**Teddy**

And 30 something of those are from out of town. So hotel. It's like back in the day when we only had two hotels and they were seldom full, but lots of places to stay now but if there's ever a chance that will be jammed, it'll be this weekend.

**Gavin Kelly**

Lots of people from lots of different places coming out. So we're hopefully ressece showing off for everyone this weekend because we do have a lot to show off.

**Teddy**

So plenty of bike trails if you're into that kind of thing. Water, golf, all kinds of stuff today. Y'all are young people with the energy to do it Gavin. Gavin so can you think of anything else?

**Tom Soto**

The Peach art exhibit is also going on this weekend.

**Gavin Kelly**

A lot of arts in general at the peach festivals right so stalls and exhibits and displays for everybody to come see. And it's not all just paintings of peaches. By the way.

**Teddy**

And cruise campus if you hadn't been to campus for a while you'll be floored that the right word. You'll be astounded might even be an understatement. It probably is and try to get to the ballpark. And if you if you can't go to a gang if you want to go to gain 2573631 or go to law tech sports comm slash tickets. It is a fascinating piece of property. It's always been one wonderful place to have a ballpark but we could never have hosted the regional the school could not have without the tornado unless we were going to tear it down and, you know, somehow magically find the money to do it, but it's a \$24 million place. Mississippi State think it's meant to be status fixing to add on to their ballpark. No, that's wrong. It's not status University of Texas thing anyway, they're gonna it's a \$30 million renovation. So it's a lot of renovate. And still, this place at 24 million is a fascinating ballpark. And everybody's come through just raved about it. So I hope you get to go see it. And you'll get to see some ball the games are going to be at one in six Friday, Saturday, Sunday got a lot of tech sports calm, they'll keep you up to speed.

**Tom Soto**

Outstanding. You know, you were talking about how we've got some people on the episode here that young and have energy. Gavin, tell us a little bit about last week when you were the PA for the game. And we're up till late last night,

**Gavin Kelly**

it was very late. I was fortunate enough to be able to do public address at the Love Shack for the final game on. I guess technically it was Thursday because first pitch was after midnight. And that game went until three 315 330 in the morning, so it was a late night for everyone and I know a lot of those

athletics folks had to turn around and do it again. Get up at 5am and get back after and it was like that for them all weekend. So I know there was a lot of pressure on Louisiana Tech and russon to host a good conference tournament and I think it turned out pretty great.

### **Tom Soto**

I can say from experience go into the game this weekend are all several games this weekend that it was an awesome experience watching the comeback you know come from behind wins against Southern Miss and hanging out in the tents talking with everybody down there. The atmosphere was just amazing.

### **Teddy**

It was a fabulous time and besides the park the park and the crowd and everybody you know in kind of a post pandemic unrestrained joy kind of a feeling about being able to be out again. The there was a great baseball the Bulldogs if you've had a ticket for tech, if you're a tech fan you got you had more fun than anybody because you got six games for a walk off wins two wins and extra innings. Three wins by a run and that includes to come back wins over Southern Miss to avoid elimination that's your arch rival and so that Saturday with those two games was about as sweet as it gets. You're down eight nothing first get middlegame a little bit bleak. But up in one of the suites Dr. Les guys president University slowly turned his rally capital. So they never know what hit him. No, it was over. Right that point.

### **Gabrielle Crockett**

Just blindsided.

### **Teddy**

Yeah, he's kind of you know showing off a little more Morehouse parish backward hat look and Here come the dogs they went lambda tan and then when the second game what was the six to five all kind of runs together but but wonderful baseball and then even in the championship game the Bulldogs you know hit a homer Parker base did in the bottom of the ninth at the top and the head coach lane bro said later I just started laughing I said when I saw a ball in the park I did start laughing because I said well Sure why not now we're gonna win and he still thought we were gonna win until the very last batter hunter whales who you want up there grounded out but it didn't really feel like a loss like losses usually feel the fella said because you know you're going to play next week. And you've just finished a spectacular run. And you beat yard travel twice big comeback. This heartbreak and gut wrenching losses for those guys. As the Clarion ledger stated the next day in the newspaper, long ride home, but that's what you want is that's what that weekend may have been. I've tried to I think just one of the most significant if not the most significant athletic weekend in tech history. And that's because they know you've won Final Fours and gone to the sweet 16 a lot of Gulf states championships and Southland championships, wack titles ton to track and field titles. This happened here. And it Rustin people got to be a part of it. And they were 330 500 people you know a NASA tennis is some 2400 or something but with the lovebugs and laughed and descramblers they've sneaking in and had to be more than 3000 people there.

### **Gavin Kelly**

Yeah, I would say so. And it's tough. The outfield berm areas always packed and you got those, that apartment area over there too. So people are always in the outfield. They're always inside the stadium. The tenant area On the side, I mean it's it always seems full before the old Love Shack, you know. And now it's like, just on a much bigger scale, much more impressive.

**Teddy**

There's all kinds of places the lane to stand. put food on little trays. It's just there's plenty of bathrooms there was one in the old. That's true.

**Tom Soto**

I remember that and that they built the second one. Yep. And now I mean, when you in the old Love Shack, when you had to go to the concession stand, you had to go outside of the stadium. Yeah, down and out and get your food and then come back in and you would miss whatever and now you can sit there and as you're ordering stills, turn around and watch the game. It's it's outstanding. It's great atmosphere with the wide

**Teddy**

wide concourse I mean, it just makes all it makes all the do so plus administration and staff did you know working overtime as they performed like the baseball team did I mean they had to make a good show and then they did in two hours after the tournament ends you find out you're hosting a regional which has never been done before

**Gavin Kelly**

got to do it. Got to do it bigger and better you know you get done with one tournament and then one that's equal equally if not more significant on a nationwide scale you know, is right after it

**Teddy**

Yeah, so here we go again, the hits keep coming no rest for the weary I know. plenty to do this weekend. And so I hope all y'all can come be a part of it again. Crews campus look up in the suite if you're at the ballgame to see if you see Dr guys with his hat on backwards if he is then calm down. Everything's gonna be fine What else we got? Yeah.

**Tom Soto**

Let's so Teddy How did we Why don't you tell everybody that maybe doesn't know how we came with this new or how we got this new park. I know you mentioned about how much it costs to build and you know the tornado but give us a little bit of rundown on on the past or the the previous JC Love Field. And compared to to the new

**Teddy**

the longest time there was a concrete wall up there was kind of the press box and then eventually like close that and now in 71 is a heck of a heck of a venue and you always had the choo choo trains in the outfield and it's a great spot. The rally train rally train used to be an old house out in centerfield and then as time went along in the apartment, the dorm apartments came. It's a very nice place to play, but you don't have enough bathrooms. You don't have a concourse, you don't have anything to host. I

mean, the NCAA is gonna look at that and say we're supposed to bring three other things in here for this and it's just not gonna happen. Y'all have a nice splice for us done. Hope you enjoy it. But where are you going to put Media TV? What are you going to do with no

### **Gavin Kelly**

accessibility no elevators and things like

### **Teddy**

a handrail if you're older to get that straight off. There's probably some sort of lawsuit in there waiting to happen, I don't know. And Heaven forbid the the tornado came through late April. It's weird had the team who played at McNeese that night, come back, instead of going west to play, I think rice, they would have got back to the ballpark about the same time of the tour. So somehow Providence is looking at after everybody. And then that allowed. Some people call it Thema Stadium, by the way, or new park. Anyway, that just threw a ton of people working together. If you think about it two years ago right now, they still hadn't even cleaned anything up out there. The state couldn't pay if you want to go out there and mow grass, that's fine, but it's your money. So we had to wait till everything got squared up between theme and insurance architects engineers to start building it which was about a year ago and it was fascinating to see the the ballpark being built which we have pictures of which we can find@logitech.edu somewhere a lot tech sports.com there's any way that it's what do you call it when you take a picture what is the time lapse

### **Gavin Kelly**

the I know the athletics website, lots of works. I did the whole the whole project I had a video the whole project on both parts.

### **Teddy**

And so now you've got I mean if you go up there now you got room for a writer if you got a broadcast TV room, that's plenty big that was used this weekend. Of course, you got there's four suites up there, which is nice. There's bathrooms up there, there's elevators there's Home and Away Radio boose. And then there's all kinds of different places to sit as our say and whether it's the berms or extended Satan down rightfield line, there's the tents down I mean, left a lot of tents down the right field line. The berm over the first base dugout right now, mostly grownups are sitting there because of the tournament but in theory, you want students to end up sitting there so they can give the business to the visiting team right and a nice competitive way. The same thing with the Berman right is you just want to just wear the rightfield are out in Christian love you know you don't want to throw a battery or anything else be cool, right? Yeah, it's a great play and the you know the players love it too and they feel that the Golden Eagles got a little irritated this weekend as as you would in a competitive situation. And Tom hurt some of the comments down were all the tents are paper barbecue and if you want to go stand in the shape for a while, the concourse is so big that you can do that again, all kinds of places delaine get some from the concession stand and you can stand on the concourse put it on a little, you know, they have essentially a long table that you can stand put food there and watch the game. It's a it's everybody that event. Well, he was telling me the cup coach burrows was telling me somebody took their wife there. And they won't, you know, ate enough. And then she said this against Ole Miss Saturday. Southern Miss Saturday, the fifth inning bad guys are late night night. She said how much longer is this going to

last? And we go, and then they start coming back? Oh, it's Sean Fox. He's on the radio for Friday, our buddy Sean, and then his wife. They started coming back and she's you know, she understood. And then she said, When can we come back to another game. And that's how it is with most everybody I've heard I mean, length says, When Arkansas came on Ole Miss came that the third baseman would look at him and he's standing in the coaching box. They'd say, coach, man, y'all, y'all got it going on? And that was before you could have 100% people in? And yeah, really? Yeah. It really made it really has made a difference. And I'll tell you it left field where like the lovebug set in those apartments. And that's not a part of the stadium, right. But it's really as much part of the stadium as the pitcher's mound. If you think of it in what that is, brings a whole new, it's 3d ish, because people are three levels. And at night, the lights are on, they're sitting in folding chairs, they're sitting on retaining walls, stats, almost balconies, it's just it's a it's a good solid time for everybody.

### **Tom Soto**

It was we, this was our Saturday was the second time for us to come over. I live over in Bowser and you know, make the drive over for an hour with a six year old and my wife who's pregnant, you know, that hasn't been able to happen throughout this season. And, uh, but Saturday, we got our daughter over here. And she, as the day went on, you would think, you know, a six year old is going to get cranky and, and by the end of the day, she said, you know, Dad, I want to come back tomorrow. I just need to bring extra clothes and some ear muffs because it was a little while. was their heart. Yeah, it's good. We came back Sunday and she yelled her her heart out and wore her ear muffs and

### **Teddy**

it's nice and your precious wife didn't give birth Saturday with all those goings on. The coach almost did he's not even pregnant that I know. They were all exhausted too after the game. You know, I'm the coach and what just happened? It's so much stuff went on. Yeah, colors and sounds and

### **Tom Soto**

spreads. There weren't any heart attack Saturday.

### **Teddy**

Yeah, Gavin up in the bank, our gang running the running the booth up there for nothing but compliments. And I'm including from the coaching staff and the players. You know, who all's up there better than me, but, but what a job they've done since the game one when they know they were supposed to be there before the game, you know, dry play music and all that and immediately they they caught on and they're they're rocking it?

### **Gavin Kelly**

Yeah, it's a, like I said they were running on little to no sleep in most cases and having to treat every game with equal, you know, respect and care and attention. Because it's, you know, you don't just work the tech games. We're hosting the tournament. So everyone who plays in every game, you got to treat each game like, you know, like it's that important. So, yeah, kudos to them for sure. They

### **Teddy**

have Kip, everybody and your parents can Gabby.

**Gabrielle Crockett**

Yeah, they did. We, we unfortunately, were out of town. And we were watching for we were there at the Old Dominion games right before the start of the conference tournament. I've been thankful unfortunately, I saw heartbreaking loss of with a fantastic pet, excuse me, fantastic catch from their pitcher. But I've also had the opportunity to watch you know, our dogs have a 10 run rule. And so it's been great to see bookends of the spectrum of the magic that is at the Love Shack. And one question I really have for the three of you, each of you have had connections from the press box to the sideline. What does it really mean to you, especially from the devastating tragedy that came with the tornado? What does it mean to continue that magic going into this historic event? This weekend?

**Teddy**

I'll go first. I know we need to wrap this up. But to me seeing how everybody worked together architects, engineers, the guys You went and looked at other stadiums decided what we're going to do here, everybody working together to make this happen. And we looked at it a year ago, it's just ridiculous. That teamwork was able to pull it off. Then the six seniors who stuck around it could have, some of them could have gone and play ball. Someone could have Soca as a career, but they didn't. Now it's a first world problem. They're not starving or anything. But if you are a college baseball player, you expect to have a locker room in a field and they didn't have that. So you got to Ruston high and you share with him you practice on field B seven, you're trying to play division one baseball, and for them to go through all that thing. COVID knocked out your season last year after seven, you know, 17 games. So they really have been through a special circumstance. And then that turned out to play so good. They love being with each other. And they're so grateful for this ballpark. And for all the fans that have been coming to watch and play. I mean, to a man they're all just having the time of their lives. And I think you can tell by the way they're playing baseball's a funny game. I hope they do well, this weekend, obviously because you know, your roof people you know, and liked and care about but all of that has a cat I think kind of mesh together to, to make a little extra to use your word magic. It's fun to watch.

**Gavin Kelly**

It is I think the the ballpark the stadium on its own is an incredible story. And then the team, on its own is an incredible story of fact that they are intertwined right now and the things are going away they're going just makes it even more special, more magical again, tomorrow, your word.

**Teddy**

another layer is the city of Ruston, who's getting to enjoy it and has come out to support. And it was here through all of it in the stadiums right there. So everybody see it throughout the last two years, what's you know, going on what's happened and and now to be hosting a regional is is big, just huge for the school church.

**Tom Soto**

It's historic. I mean, you know, last weekend it was it was big for me being able to spend that time with my wife and daughter. You know, I've watched my nieces and nephews grow up cheering on the Bulldogs at the at the ballpark. So being able to spend that time with my daughter and see her excitement. You know that that was very special. So with with this historic weekend, I have a question



for all y'all. What's your most memorable moment? At JC Love Field, either the old stadium or the new stadium

**Teddy**

100 years ago, we would sit on folding chairs on top of the first base dugout, where it tech was back then, is where we watch the games, they will let you do that anymore. It's kind of hurts my feelings. But that in the end, we just pick one from this weekend. Looking at these guys reaction probably after Saturday. And, you know, lane said the next morning he's in his kitchen, he takes shower, he goes there gets a little breakfast. He just started crying in his kitchen. You know just thought you're so exhausted when you get home and everything and then you get up the next morning and you go wow, that just that really happened and all his people were there to to see it. Really the first night in the shack they played Southern and to see those people come out in left field and those lights come on when nobody could get in the stadium. But they could sit and ride and left. I think it was Kurt knows. Garcia Manny Garcia hit up home run to the other night light and a little kid there was four or 500 people in right field and he got the ball and he was just running. Just doing wind sprints 20 yards this way and 20 back which isn't there. Yeah. Which is cool. It's neat. And not get hit by a train that was even more awesome.

**Tom Soto**

Yes,

**Teddy**

anyway, more memories to come.

**Gavin Kelly**

Yeah, I've been fortunate enough to be to play a few roles throughout the recent the very, very recent history of the ballpark and when I'm was working over in the athletics department and had to work at every game for a couple seasons there that we played at home. And a lot of the same teams so and then being still able to go back and help out athletics that with some stuff and do some pa and so I think when I was doing pa even at that late game, even at 230 in the morning when everybody's all out of gas, sitting there and thinking about sitting in the old press box just three years ago and how far everyone and everything has come You know, the team, the park, the University, the city and it just you can't have been in the old Park and go into the new one without the impact being immediately evident without reflecting on it. How much has changed? And at the same? Like, it seems like it's been so long and at the same time, it seems like it has been no time at all. So for a specific memory I, there have been too many. But I think just being able to reflect on it has been the coolest thing for me for

**Gabrielle Crockett**

even like you said, I know for me, I have a favorite memory. Probably back in undergrad long before the brand new berms and just waiting for the train the rally train to come on through but sitting in right field and just getting to know maybe friends that you know, classmates that you just finished your evening class are like, Oh, yeah, there's, there's a baseball game. Let's go Let's go to the shack and getting to, to cheer on the dogs. But nothing was more magical than the first time sitting in the brand new stadium and just taking it all in. I mean, even at the grand opening, and just feeling the energy and just the

impact, like Gavin said, kind of wash over you have. Look at all that's happened and the excitement and anticipation for what's to come.

**Tom Soto**

I've got a lot of memories. You know, it was the day of the tornado when I got into town. It was kind of heartbreaking because I look up there and think about all the years that we spent watching my brother play. You know, this weekend watching those to come from behind wins. reminded me of another team we played for Mississippi in 2006. where we came from behind in the ninth scored seven runs to be Mississippi State. That was that was one of the among all the memorable moments, you know, that one stood out to me this weekend after those come from behind. I remember me and my dad. We were grilling for the teams. It was the old stadium. And it was on, you know, third baseline where the bullpen was. There was a grill out there. We were grilling for the teams. And we had a student at the time who would dress up as a gorilla and Joseph Mac man, he would hold Asana Well, he would write on this little It was a whiteboard. And as fans were leaving the stadium, he had the sign and it said you're gonna miss the comeback. And, you know, he wasn't wrong. They missed the comeback. And they were paying fans that had left the game that actually started coming back. We scored seven runs in the bottom of the night that beat Mississippi State ranked according to our stats, they were ranked number three at the time. So I think we're ready to close it up. So I mean, talking about all these memories not why don't you try and get some tickets. Come out to the game this week in watch number one seed tech play the Ryder University Bronx number four seed. You can also watch number two seed NC State take on number three seed Alabama. Come out and make some memories yourself. Anybody else have anything for closing?

**Teddy**

See you at the ballpark. Let's go to the love chat.

**Tom Soto**

Let's go.

**Gavin Kelly**

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