

Southeastern Conference

Covered by Ethan Kagno

Hunter Ensley, CF, Tennessee – 5 AB, 2 R, 4 H, 3 RBI, HR

The redshirt-senior delivered a memorable performance on Sunday in the top-ranked Volunteers' 7-2 series-sweeping win over South Carolina. Ensley tallied four hits including a two-run single to take the lead in the fourth inning and a solo home run (98 EV, 385 FT, 33.8 LA) in the eighth, his fourth of the season.

Ensley captured his eighth straight game with a base knock which includes multi-hit efforts in five of them. I asked Ensley what his approach has been the last couple of weeks to continue his dominant offensive stretch and he replied, "I just look to get up there and do some damage early in the counts ... I've really just been hinting pitches early and been trying to stay in my swing and get the barrel to it."

As one of the few seniors on the Vols this spring, Ensley has become a tremendous leader in a somewhat young but otherwise talented and experienced roster. Ensley credited his teammates with creating such a special culture in Knoxville adding, "having guys like Peebles, Chapman, Dean, and Bargo was huge because they know how it is here ... It's nice when you get a freshman class that we've gotten, and the transfers like Kilen and Fischer that want to come in and get to work."

Ensley worked to get everyone on the same page during the fall season considering all the moving parts of first-year players and seasoned transfers. "These guys take care of their business on and off the field so it's no surprise that they're having the successes they're having so far," Ensley said.

Andrew Fischer, 1B, Tennessee – 5 AB, 1 R, 2 H, RBI, HR

Andrew Fischer collected his third multi-hit effort in his last four games and had his second straight game with a home run as the Vols brought out this brooms in Columbia against the Gamecocks. Fischer hit the ladder of back-to-back homers (105 EV, 402 FT, 36.3 LA) with teammate Hunter Ensley in the eighth inning to cap off a seven-run day for the Orange and White.

Fischer has felt right at home this season, reaching double-digit long balls for the third straight season. He came into Sunday slashing .303/.517/.737 and has very much shown why he deserves to be a first round draft consideration this July. It's easy plus power and sprays it all over the field and utilizes a violent swing path to destroy baseballs to the gaps. "I feel like my plan at the plate and approach has been the same," said Fischer. "I'm just looking to drive the ball hard and over the last few efforts, the ball has found the grass."

I asked Fischer about how comfortable he's been at the cold corner this season following the move across the diamond. Fischer said the team "went out there and worked at every position in practice and in scrimmages which has helped all of us gain confidence at new looks on the field." Fischer was quick to point out some of his teammates along the dirt – including Manny Marin, Dean Curley, Gavin Kilen, and Ariel Antigua – who Fischer has been able to take plenty of reps with to see how their feet and hands work which has benefited his game a ton on the defense. "They play catch at a high level and it's contagious," Fischer exclaimed. "That's what wins us games."

One thing for sure is regardless of where Fischer's home is on the diamond, the bat will play for the rest of his collegiate career and when he makes the jump to the pros.

Charles Davalan, OF, Arkansas – 5 AB, 2 R, 2 H, 3 RBI, 2 HR, K

Despite a smaller 5-foot-9, 190-pound frame, Charles Davalan brings an advanced approach to the plate and has showed off some impressive in-game pop this season as he homered twice in the second-ranked Razorbacks sweep of No. 14 Vanderbilt in Nashville. His first homer of the day (95 EV, 376 FT, 35 LA) came in the third inning on a first pitch breaking ball that he drove the opposite way as the Hogs got out to a quick 2-0 lead. Later in the eighth inning, Davalan brought the boomstick back out to tie things at three runs a piece with a pull-side dinger (101 EV, 395 FT, 22.5 LA) off an Alex Kranzler breaking ball that hung up in the zone. Arkansas would tack on a few more and go onto win 7-3.

In regards to his late game heroics Davalan said, "I was just trying to put a good swing on a good pitch to hit. [Kranzler] was making good pitches but I knew I was going to get a pitch to hit if I stayed relaxed and trusted my approach." Davalan has been on a tear as of late, batting 28-for-57 (.491) during his active 12-game hitting streak since March 14.

Ben Bybee, RHP, Arkansas – 4 IP, 2 H, 0 R/ER, 1 BB, 7 K (62 NP)

The long 6-foot-6, 230-pound Ben Bybee came into relief for starter Landon Beidelschies in the sixth inning and was locked in as soon as his toes hit the rubber. Bybee sat down seven Vandy Boys in four innings, allowing just two hits and one free pass en route to earning the win.

Bybee's mid-90s fastball, mid-80s change-up, high-70s 12-6 curveball, and mid-80s slider all played well and generated plenty of miss. Coming into the outing, Bybee landed his cambio and slider for strikes 71% and 70% of the time, respectively. He has solid control and command of the zone and offers starter upside a part of the Razorbacks rotation.

Nolan Souza, INF, Arkansas – 4 AB, 2 H, 2B, 2 RBI

The third Razorback to make the sheet is none other than Nolan Souza. If you don't know the name quite yet, you will soon. A notable follow for the 2026 MLB Draft, the left-handed hitting Souza has a strong frame (6-foot-3, 215 pounds) and his pull-side power is imminent.

With two outs in the eighth inning, Souza swatted a 2-0 fastball backside against Ethan McElvain off the wall to score Ryder Helfrick and Cam Kozeal to break open the game late and eventually bring out the brooms.

Defensively, Souza has seen most of his collegiate reps at second and third base with the former being the more likely position going forward. It also wouldn't be surprising to see him back up onto the grass and cover either corner outfield positions on the Cape this summer.

Connor Fennell, SP, Vanderbilt – 5 IP, 3 H, 2 R/ER, BB, 10 K (91 NP)

Staying on the Vanderbilt/Arkansas game, Connor Fennell gave it his all on Sunday despite the no-decision as he sat down a career-high 10 strikeouts. The New England native out of Londonderry, New Hampshire transferred to Vandy from the University of Dayton after his freshman year that saw him throw 74 innings. So far in Nashville, Fennell has racked up 31 strikeouts through 14.1 innings of work. "I'm just focusing on attacking hitters and getting ahead in the count getting them to swing at my pitch," said Fennell. "Colin Barczi did a great job calling the game and I just tried to execute one pitch at a time."

Fennell at 6-foot-1, 168 pounds, isn't going to overpower you from the side arm slot but generates excellent break and deception to get hitters to swing and miss. He has one of the better changeups I've seen this season with significant fade sitting in the low-80s and had garnered a 69% miss rate entering his last outing. He works in a high-70s slider well and has found success backdooring it to lefties or getting chase off the outer half to righties. If he can add some weight and tack on a few more ticks to the heater, Fennell is going to be even harder to hit than he is already.

Ben Cleaver, LHP, Kentucky – 5.2 IP, 3 H, 2 R/ER, 2 BB, 7 K (105 NP)

It started off a little rocky for the Kentucky southpaw who needed 105 pitches to get 17 outs. The control also looked dicey at times as he tallied a wild pitch and two hit batsmen. After allowing a pair of first inning runs, Cleaver settled in and retired seven straight, capped off by a sword on an 89 mph fastball up and in to Jace LaViolette.

At 6-foot-3 and 185 pounds, it's a lean and lanky build with room to fill in. The pitch mix mainly includes a high-80s fastball, a slow looping curveball which may be his best offering, and a mid-70s slider. He'll occasionally mix in a changeup to right-handed hitters.

Justin LeBron, SS, Alabama – 3 AB, R, H, 2 BB, HBP

Justin LeBron, one of if not *the* top name in the 2026 MLB Draft, just finds ways to get on base. Entering Sunday, LeBron was getting on base at a .453 clip and raised that after singling, walking twice, and getting hit by a pitch in No. 12 Alabama's 8-6 victory over the ninth-ranked Sooners in Tuscaloosa.

LeBron has already surpassed his 12 home runs that he hit in 2024, with 13 long balls in nearly twice as few games. The bat-to-ball skills are evident and posted some of the hardest hit balls on the season for the Crimson Tide. He's a twitchy athlete with quick hands and average to plus tools across the board. Defensively, LeBron shows good range, solid instincts, and a plus arm that makes it likely he sticks at shortstop long term.