

2018 Women's College World Series

Saturday, June 2, 2018
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Patty Gasso
Paige Parker
Lea Wodach
Jocelyn Alo
Caleigh Clifton
Oklahoma Sooners

Oklahoma - 2, Arizona State - 0

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by head coach Patty Gasso, student-athletes Jocelyn Alo, Caleigh Clifton, Lea Wodach and Paige Parker. Coach, how much confidence is it for you as a staff and maybe more importantly as your team to be able to hand the ball to Paige Parker and say let's go get this?

COACH GASSO: It's a no-brainer. A no-brainer since she arrived in Oklahoma. So when we need big wins, she's always there and she loves the stage and there's really no decision. And she was, like she always is, masterful today.

Q. Paige, like Coach said, you earned the right to be able to go out there and win a game. How is it feeling for you, looks like you hit another level the last couple of innings?

PAIGE PARKER: Today was just going out there giving my team a chance to win. Defense was fantastic today. The last couple of innings I knew I needed to step it up a notch and really go into shut down mode and try to be efficient today and go after hitters and stay ahead in counts.

Q. Paige, are you good to go if you're asked to start another game; you threw less than 80 pitches? Patty, do you know what you're going to do?

PAIGE PARKER: Absolutely.

COACH GASSO: I don't know. (Laughter).

Q. Jocelyn, as a freshman, this is kind of your first run in the postseason with this team. And what is it about this squad that resilience and bouncing back from losses makes you guys so formidable

moving forward?

JOCELYN ALO: We just all really believe in each other that we can do it. And everyone's got each other's backs. Defense got pitchers' backs. Hitters got pitchers' back, pitchers got defense's back and everything.

Q. Lea, you guys struggled a little bit to move people to home plate early in the game. What was it like when you were finally able to break through and plate Caleigh Clifton?

LEA WODACH: I thought we were just trying to get another run. I know having one run is just always uneasy. You just never think any amount of runs is enough. So I was just trying to go up there and find a way to squeak the ball through, literally squeak it through. (Laughter). So I wasn't trying to be big with it and it was just important for our team, big momentum going into the seventh inning and just important to add to our lead.

Q. Coach, looked like you guys were more patient at the plate today. I think Caleigh Clifton's at-bat where she fouled a number of pitches off, just the runs might not show it, but more patient approach at the plate today?

COACH GASSO: Yeah, I think we did a really good job. And C.C.'s at-bat, I think, changed the momentum of the game for us; whether we scored or not, it was just a great at-bat and it was filtering into the other athletes.

So I thought we hit some balls hard. Four outs. We were on it. We put runners in scoring position. I think we left eight on. But it's hard when you're facing such a good pitcher. And they brought in two very good pitchers. I thought we battled very well. And we needed that second run. It was very, very important for us.

Q. Paige, Lea and Caleigh. You have a quick turnaround now. And it's Florida you're facing. What's the first word that comes to mind when you think of the Gators obviously fresh off last year's championship series?

PAIGE PARKER: They're tough. They're very, very tough. Great pitching staff. Great hitters. Great defense. They're a really tough team.

CALEIGH CLIFTON: Compete.



Q. Patty, for clarification for those of us who might not know, what is the hit batter rule? And it seemed like yesterday in the game there was one where you didn't argue but she was stationary and they did give her the break.

COACH GASSO: It's judgment, really. If they're in the box and it's a ball and they get hit by a pitch, then they take their bag. If it's a strike or they're hanging out of the batter's box. So it's judgment. It's hard for me to explain. It's really judgment.

Q. The judgment was that she was out over the plate a little bit?

COACH GASSO: Yes.

Q. Patty, what are the next four hours going to be like for this team?

COACH GASSO: We need to hustle. So you need to stop asking questions. (Laughter). No, we've got to get back. We've got to eat. I want them to shower. We need to get into film. We need to get our game plan created quickly, because we didn't want to do it before we could be successful against Arizona State. So we've got to go back, get ready, take a breath, refuel, come back and be ready to go.

Our season's on the line. But so is the Gators'. So it's going to be a really great matchup.

Q. Patty, how important with Paige going seven innings, you have Paige Lowary, fresh and ready to go tonight?

COACH GASSO: We have Paige Lowary and we have Mariah Lopez. You haven't seen much of her. But she can get it done and she did it last year in the World Series. If Paige Parker says I'm good, then she'll be on the mound as well. So there's lots of choices and opportunities. And that's the beauty of this deep pitching staff.

Q. Jocelyn, the pitch you hit out, were you looking for any kind of pitch and did you get it? And generally I'm very curious, do you go up to the plate maybe for the first pitch looking for a particular pitch?

JOCELYN ALO: I just look for a strike to hit. Anything that relatively looks like a strike.

Q. Your adjustment on the fly, not today but previous at-bats.

JOCELYN ALO: I just want to hit. That's it.

Q. After the loss on Thursday you guys really rallied around belief. And I saw today that you had a "believe" rock in your dugout. Where did that come from and what did that do for you guys?

COACH GASSO: Okay. All right. So when the selection show was going on and they had television coverage at my house, my husband took that rock, which is part of like a decor display. And he picked up the "believe" rock and did a photo bomb. So all you saw was that in the background.

So our team saw him do that and thought it was kind of crazy, ridiculous. So I stuck it in my bag when we went home yesterday and brought it and handed it over to Shay and said -- they have a little wall that they're kind of building. And I said you want to use this one. Yeah, it got really popular, apparently, that "believe" rock. It's been around. Got a lot of TV time.