

2016 Women's College World Series

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Clint Myers
Emily Carosone
Jade Rhodes
Makayla Martin
Kasey Cooper
Tiffany Howard
Auburn

Oklahoma - 2, Auburn - 1

CLINT MYERS: I'm very proud of these young ladies that play softball at Auburn University. They gave their heart, their soul. They gave their commitment. They battled. They were relentless. They lost to an outstanding Oklahoma team, well-coached, great athletes.

We talked at the beginning in August about having the opportunity. We were picked, I believe, sixth to finish in the SEC. We won it. We won it. We lost to Arizona. People said we couldn't come back. We beat them twice. Heart, character, relentless pursuit of excellence.

We lose the first game to Oklahoma. We come back. Extra innings. They beat Oklahoma. We came up one run short. We didn't do the little things. If we do the little things, we win that ballgame 1-0. The freshman pitcher, people were asking, why a freshman? I think you saw why a freshman.

Ice water in her veins, competitor beyond competitors, an outstanding young lady that went out there, took the ball, and said, we're going to win. And she pitched her ass off. I don't know if you can get that on the bloopers or not, but that's the best way to describe it. We could go on and on about the accolades of these young ladies that sit to my right and the ones that are not here. But I just told them -- we have a saying, if you play softball at Auburn University, you will make the world a better place. I believe that each of these young ladies with their commitment, their drive, what they've learned as far as life lessons has made the world a

better place.

Q. I know it's tough for everybody right now, but especially for Emily, how is she handling things and how tough is it to see such a player of that quality go through a game like that?

CLINT MYERS: Emily is just taking it hard. She is the one that sat up here and said -- Emily just came in. We will let Emily answer that question.

Q. Emily, obviously a big game yesterday and obviously you're such a quality player. How tough is it to have a game like this in this situation? I know everybody is having a tough time, but particularly with the struggles that you had today.

EMILY CAROSONE: I mean, in the beginning of the season, during the fall, I sat in front of my locker and just prayed. I was like, God, I just want to make it to the very last day. I want to play every last game that I can, every game possible, and I got it. I mean, the team was good enough to win. They're going to come back next year and they're going to come back strong.

Q. Emily, could you just talk about what happened on the throw on the play in the first inning? Did the ball slip out of your hand?

EMILY CAROSONE: It did. I mean, I don't get it. That's never happened before, but it happened today. It slipped.

Q. Clint, just want to ask what makes (Paige) Parker so difficult to face?

CLINT MYERS: Paige is a quality pitcher. I mean, the rest that she had, her velocity was up a little bit compared to what she was the first day. Her movement was a little bit more. When you're rested, you pitch better, and she's an outstanding pitcher. You don't win 35, 36, 37 games like she has and not be, especially for a program like Oklahoma. She pitched well.

I mean, if you look, it was a 2-1 ballgame. Our pitcher gave up only five hits, too. The Paige Parker of the future is sitting in front of you now. She gets the support that Paige gets and we do the things, but I just think that the rest gave her a little bit -- she was a little crisper, a little sharper. But I mean, we had our opportunities and we didn't capitalize.

Q. Makayla, you've just heard your coach say you pitched your ass off. How do you feel about your performance, such a high pressure situation for you being a freshman, and how hungry are you going to be next year to get back here?

MAKAYLA MARTIN: I mean, I wasn't really pressured when Corey (Myers) and all the coaches told me I was going to throw this game. I already knew I was going to throw this game yesterday, or two days ago, I don't know. But I mean, I thought I -- the game was -- I thought I was throwing good, and just like little things happened. I don't know. I don't know.

CLINT MYERS: I think you did a good job answering that.

Q. For the seniors, what did you tell your team coming into this game, and what final notes are you going to leave with them for next season?

TIFFANY HOWARD: I just want everybody to give all they had and leave it all on the field. We've worked so hard and just to let it just play and have fun. I had fun even though we lost. I had fun playing the game. That's all I can ask of our underclassmen to do. I just hope they continue to work just as hard as we did this entire year in practice and really do come back stronger and bring these other freshmen in and get them moving faster and learning faster. They'll be right back here next year if they can do that, and I know they can.

Q. Jade, Emily and Kasey, how frustrating is a game like this knowing you're a much better hitting team than that and not being able to deliver in a game like this?

JADE RHODES: I wouldn't say frustrated. I mean, yeah, it's frustrating, but it happens to the best. We got them to the third game, and most people didn't even think that was going to happen. I mean, I wouldn't want it any other way. This is an amazing team, and it's just -- you know, it sucks that we had to go out this way. But I know that we're capable of hitting. We've shown it all the time. The second game, look, we scored 11 runs in, what, two innings? So I really don't have any doubt that we could have done it again, so it is what it is.

EMILY CAROSONE: Paige Parker did a great job. It's the happiest time of the year and the saddest time of the year. There's always a loser and there's always a winner, and I think Oklahoma deserves it.

KASEY COOPER: I'm frustrated to the fact that we know we're better, but I'm more frustrated that we didn't have Emily's back. Emily had a bad game, and we weren't there for her, and we're better. When Whitney (Jordan) had a bad game, we got behind her and we gave her

the support, and Emily shouldn't be feeling this way because we didn't have her, and that's what I have to say about that.

Q. Jade and Tiffany, Jay Jacobs said the other day that Clint Myers is the best teacher he's ever been around. What did he teach you and what will you leave this program with?

TIFFANY HOWARD: Confidence. I had none of it basically my sophomore year, and it definitely built on every single year, and just him believing in me made me want to believe in myself even more, so mostly that. And literally just taught the game to me in a whole new way. I really don't think I understood softball quite as well as I thought I did until he came here, and I felt like I was literally learning a whole new game full and I think of him so much because he finally got me to my full potential I feel like, and I can't thank him enough for that.

Q. Jade, you had a successful series against Paige Parker, two home runs. Talk about what it was like to face her.

JADE RHODES: Just like facing any other pitcher. I mean, you're going against the best of the best when you come to the College World Series. She did her thing. I mean, she came in there and shut us down. A couple of us had great at-bats, and just seeing the ball was great, knowing that my last at-bat, I mean, it wasn't a hit, but she did her thing. She's a great pitcher and she came in and shut us down.

Q. For the seniors, when you think, and I know it's probably tough right now about the transformation this program has undergone since you were freshmen getting to this point, are you proud of the shape you're leaving the program in, and what do you think the future holds?

JADE RHODES: For me, I couldn't be more proud. Starting from when I was a freshman and ending now, I mean, it's an amazing feeling. Having Coach come in my sophomore year, he turned it around. I mean, obviously a lot of you don't know I was not the person I was my freshman year to now. Getting to finish with Emily, I mean, we call us our right side, so Emily is always going to be there if I'm there. I know he's going to leave -- this whole team, this is going to be a whole big turnaround. People are coming in. He's going to pick it up. He's not going to quit teaching. He's going to tell them what he told us, and that's -- we're not slowing down for you, you're going to have to pick it up and you're going to have to go with our pace because we're not slowing down.

TIFFANY HOWARD: I can't be more proud of us. I literally sometimes just sit down and really think about our freshman year, and then the transition our

sophomore year, and that was just in itself a huge leap, and then we took another huge leap, and now we're here playing for a national title, and I never thought in a million years I would be doing this, and I feel like none of us freshmen really did during that time. I'm so proud of us for what we did, and I guarantee you they're going to be back next year to finish it off.

Q. Kasey, this whole year, and you even said it back in fall ball, was three more days. You guys accomplished three more days. What is the next motto and when does that start for you guys?

KASEY COOPER: Maybe when. I think that's a good one. We need to be more specific next time. Just to focus more on the little things. We failed ourselves, and we failed to have each other's backs, and we're going to put a big focus and emphasis on that next year. We need to focus on when there's a runner on third, get them in. We need to focus on finding a way on and making adjustments at the plate when we're struggling and getting them in the air, put pressure on the defense, make them make the plays because the field is a rock, and it plays different the first inning than it does the fifth inning because the water dries off.

Just putting more pressure on the defense and having our pitchers' backs. I think our pitchers pitched a fantastic job, and I could not be more proud of them because they were the best staff that I've ever been a part of. We couldn't ask more from them, so we're going to say keep up the good work and keep doing what you're doing. Offensively we're going to really focus on that, because I feel that defense does win ballgames, but as long as you score more runs than the other team, you're going to win, so that's what I would say going forward.