

2015 Women's College World Series

Tuesday, June 2
Michigan 1 - Florida 0



Florida

An Interview With:
COACH TIM WALTON
TAYLORE FULLER
LAUREN HAEGER

THE MODERATOR: At this time we have Florida head coach Tim Walton, student-athlete Taylore Fuller and student-athlete Lauren Haeger. Coach, general comments about the game.

COACH WALTON: First of all, congratulations to Michigan. I thought they played a really good defensive game. Haylie Wagner pitched a really good one. And I thought their intensity right from pitch one was good, just a good softball game. Obviously we came up on the short end of the stick with the runs but good softball play, some good defense all the way around. I know Michigan wants more hits. And four was enough to win for them. But overall it's a game of find a way to get runners in scoring position. We weren't able to do that.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Taylore, when you hit that line drive, did you think you had gotten enough of it to get it over her head?

TAYLORE FULLER: I mean, Jess did a good job reading it. You can never know what's going through a runner's mind. My job was to hit the ball. Her job was to run. Obviously I can't say she did the wrong thing because that's my teammate. I'm not going to throw her under the bus. I thought she did it correctly. I did my job. She did hers. We just couldn't get it all the way through.

Q. Lauren, how frustrating was it to keep shutting them down, not being able to get runs? It's been a long time since you guys felt this feeling of losing a game in the postseason.

LAUREN HAEGER: I mean, I didn't have my best either. She's a good pitcher. Credit to her. She did a great job. I was trying to go out there, throw up zeros, give my team a chance to win. That's what my play has been this whole entire season, is just give my team a chance to win. I thought I did a good job. I thought my hitters did a decent job too of getting on base.

Q. Tim, what did you see from Haylie that was causing so much problems with the offense?

COACH WALTON: I think, you know, I think the same old same old, our swings might be a little bit long especially this time of year. Didn't look -- we didn't have as much velocity in their movement. Getting on our hands. And getting on that many hands tells you a lot about the pitcher. If it was just one batter over and over again, I could say, well, that one batter wasn't seeing the ball very well. But I thought overall she was doing a good job, threw enough change-ups. Threw a couple of rise balls just to keep us honest. But overall I just thought -- I think the best description of it she throws a really heavy ball. It's hard to leverage and we weren't able to get any leverage.

Q. Players, how evenly matched are these two teams?

LAUREN HAEGER: Great. They have a great pitching staff. They have really great hitters. I think that today was just a pitcher's duel. And I mean credit to her, she did a really good job on both sides. Honestly, we had runners in scoring position. They did, too. They just got the hit when they needed it.

TAYLORE FULLER: I mean, we're both in the national championship for a reason. These are the two best teams in the country. We're going to go out and compete with each other. They just came out on top today.

Q. Coach, the home team has won both games so far. Is that something that you're looking forward to having on your side going into the final game, and is that something you really put a whole lot of stock in?

COACH WALTON: Yeah, I think you can. If you can come out and shut them out in the first inning, I think you can gain that momentum of the game knowing you have the last at-bat to play with, I guess you can say. It changes your perspective a little bit. I don't know Coach Hutch's philosophy, but I know for me, I don't like to bunt to tie a whole, whole lot. I think that does help you being the home team where you can bunt to tie as the home team but maybe not as much as visitors.

Q. Tim, you talk a lot about how when you fall behind it changes your swings. Did you see that

today or was it just a matter of not being able to get a ball to drop or get the big hit?

COACH WALTON: Yeah, I think a little bit. If we hadn't gone three and a third innings yesterday and the same result, I would say the score dictated that. But the swings looked pretty similar yesterday with a 3-0 lead as opposed to today being down 0-1. I think it's her. We struggled with her twice this season. We were able to generate enough offense in Game 1 when we beat them 2-1, and Game 2 we got some hit-by-pitches and some walks and followed by a couple of clutch hits. Today we had six hits and zero clutch hits.

Q. Coach, Bailey Castro has been in a slump. What have you been telling her to keep her motivated when she gets up to the plate?

COACH WALTON: Yeah, it's hard. I think my heart feels for her the most. She's playing injured right now and trying to do her best. And it's very obvious. I was ready to pinch-hit for her in the seventh inning. And I just went with on-base percentage, to be honest with you. She has the highest on-base percentage on the team. I didn't want to pinch-hit for her with somebody that -- I was just hoping she could find a way to get on base, no matter what it took. I know she's probably 0 for her last 21 or so. And at the end of the day she's still got a good on-base percentage, 0 for 21. We're just trying to play percentages.

Q. Can you talk about the position that you're in in terms of your pitchers? She didn't throw very many pitches today. You have a couple of pitchers that proved themselves yesterday. What position are you in heading into tomorrow in that way?

COACH WALTON: I think both clubs are in a good position. They can go back at us with (Haylie) Wagner tomorrow, feeling good, and living off the momentum. Or they'll go back to (Megan) Betsa, who has had a good season as well. I think we're both in a good position. I guarantee you, however many pitchers they have on their team, however many pitchers we have on our team, tomorrow you're going to see them all no matter what it takes to find a way to get a W.

Q. Lauren and Taylore, you're going to wake up tomorrow, one game, season's over. How are you going to look at the day, how do you see tomorrow kind of unfolding before you even get to the ballpark?

LAUREN HAEGER: I think it's going to be a little different for me. Try to be, do what I do every day, but be a little more competitive. I obviously want to win my last game in a Gator uniform, that means a lot to me. I just want to leave it all out there on the field and not play scared.

TAYLORE FULLER: I mean you'll definitely see

different energy. It's more than just the last softball game for us. It's putting the seniors out in the right way. We want to get that win for them. We want to get that win for each other. Because you all don't see how hard we really work. Our coaches see that. Sometimes they don't even see because we work on our own. So we really want to send them out the right way and there will definitely be a different energy.

Q. Lauren, you pitched and started the game last year that clinched the national championship. What do you take from that experience and how might you be able to use that to your advantage?

LAUREN HAEGER: I think just being there. Today I felt calm and cool. I felt really good out there. I'm just relaxed. It's a different feeling than I had last year, anyway. Last year I was a little nervous, that big stage for the first time. But I felt cool. I felt calm. I'm just going to come out there and be the competitor that everyone knows that I am.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.