

2015 Women's College World Series

Thursday, May 28
LSU 6, Auburn 1



LSU

An Interview With:
COACH BETH TORINA
CARLEY HOOVER
BIANKA BELL
KELLSI KLOSS
EMILY GRIGGS

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by LSU head coach Beth Torina, Bianka Bell, Carley Hoover and Kellsie Kloss. Coach, general statements about the game.

COACH TORINA: I think that Auburn played a really good game against us. I think they're a tough team. I think they're going to continue to do well throughout the week. We wish them luck. Our team played a great game. I thought the best thing about the game was it was well pitched, well played, but I liked our team's fight. I thought they scored whether we had two outs or not. They were able to score and answer to Auburn anytime they did something. I thought our team showed a lot of guts and a lot of fight.

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. I think you won six straight games in this tournament. Carley has four wins, two saves, could you talk about her rising to the occasion beyond what she did beyond that?

COACH TORINA: I think the bigger the game, the better she pitches. From what we know about her this year, she wants the ball in these situations and she truly thrives in them. So it's a lot of fun having somebody like her on our team and having somebody you know can perform under pressure. I think that's the whole key to this is being able to get it done when the lights are on.

Q. Bianka Bell, your first ever at-bat, home run, can you talk about it?

BIANKA BELL: With two outs just trying to get on base, find my way on, do it with two outs and just hope someone can score me in. I guess I just got all of the ball and it went out but that was really cool, exciting I guess.

Q. Carley, talk about being in the circle today and being able to do what you needed to do every inning?

CARLEY HOOVER: I think what was really cool about today was that I personally didn't feel like I had 100 percent, I was missing a lot of middle. But our defense was so strong. We made amazing plays and our offense rallied. It always helps when we score first. Bianka's home run -- I think it's an overall good team win and like I said really strong defense.

Q. For those who haven't seen LSU before, they seem to have an excitable bench, a lot going on during the game. Can you talk about what's taking place on the bench with maybe some of the masks or whatever is happening and just talk about how that helps I guess the team rally?

EMILY GRIGGS: I think the main thing on this team is everybody knows that they have a part in everything that we do. So whether you're playing shortstop or you're on the bench, we need every single person. So just everybody being 100 percent, like diving into the game and giving their all, all their energy for us. I think that really helps our energy.

KELLSI KLOSS: I think it's cool to see our personalities come out during the game. I think that stuff is good to keep us loose and just reminds us that it's a game. If we're not enjoying having fun, then we're not going to play as good. We have crazy stuff like masks and horse heads and we got a fish named Juanita for the trip. It's stuff to keep us loose. Coach says we always play better when we're loose like that.

CARLEY HOOVER: I think we really scrape and fight for every single run. Every single run matters whether it's a home run or whether it's a grand slam, they're all exciting and you can't be crazy.

BIANKA BELL: Like she said, our motto is can't be crazy. It just keeps the game fun for us. Nobody likes to press and be tight the entire game. By using the mask and having the new fish that we just got just makes it light and it keeps it fun for us.

COACH TORINA: I don't know about the fish. I like personalities. I think there's nothing like the dynamic of a team. It's so cool to be a part of a team. It's something that's indescribable if you've never been a part of it. It's something that I enjoy. I think all their individual personalities truly make us who we are. I encourage personalities. There's some things we're

really uniform about. There's some standards that we uphold and every single girl on the team upholds those, but for the most part who they are as people is what makes us LSU. So I love that side of them. Maybe they do get a little crazy at times and they have to rein them back in but I'd much rather that than the other way.

Q. Bianka, where did the fish come from?

BIANKA BELL: I don't know, we went to Wal-Mart when we got here, and she's, like, go get snacks. And me and Allie (Walljasper) just got a fish instead. (Laughter).

COACH TORINA: I was not on this trip. I was at the administrative meeting, just for the record.

Q. Kellsy, what do you feed the fish, and who is responsible for that?

KELLSI KLOSS: Bianka told me you only feed them once a month. So this particular fish you only need to feed them once a month. But we got her a home and some pebbles and some nice plants to swim through, so she's well taken care of.

BIANKA BELL: I Googled it. So... Wikipedia is promising, so I hope she'll live through the week.

Q. Kellsy, can you talk about your home run that went out of the park and hit the foul pole?

KELLSI KLOSS: I mean, I wasn't trying to do anything too big, I was just trying to make an adjustment for my last at-bat and try to get a little more on top of the ball. And I put a good swing on it. And I stayed inside it enough to hit the pole and it's really exciting. It kind of got me just a little more comfortable and in my zone, and I think that just set a good tone for the rest of the day and my team fed off of it which is really cool.

Q. Were you wondering, did it appear foul?

KELLSI KLOSS: I knew it had the distance to go out, but I was kind of willing it to go fair. So, it was a really good feeling when I saw it hit the pole.

Q. Beth, you've seen A.J. (Andrews) make a lot of great plays over her career. Where does the one she made in center rank?

COACH TORINA: I think it's right there with so many others she made. It's almost like we don't have to watch her make the catch because we know as soon as she's out there she's going to make it. She's such a spectacular defensive player. She dives as well as any player I've seen. Looked like she almost broke her wrist on the play it got caught. And you know what I thought? She would have broken her wrist to catch that ball. Because that's who she is. She's our leader. She'll do anything it takes to catch any ball that we need her to. She'll run through a wall. She'll do

whatever it takes. She's our senior, our leader. She wants it as much as anybody for sure.

Q. Coach, getting on Marcy Harper as good as you guys did. She had a good game against you guys during the series you had against them. How much was that important and how much you guys broke her down to be able to jump on her like that?

COACH TORINA: She's been so good for them lately. I think she has been a huge reason for a lot of their success lately. She's thrown so well for them. So we definitely had a good plan, I think, for her going into it because we had to, because she's really talented and has done really well. We were able to get to her a little bit on Sunday in the series so we came in with that same idea. And we were lucky we got a few things to go our way today for sure. If somebody got the breaks today we got them. We had everything fall in that possibly could, I thought, on the day. And she's a great pitcher, has done a lot for Auburn here in the last few weeks.

Q. Kellsy, I just remember how excited you were last week going into the Super Regional and having a chance to make it to the women's College World Series. Just talk about that excitement and also channeling that in the right way to produce the victory?

KELLSI KLOSS: I mean, this is something I've dreamed of attending my entire life. As a little girl this is what you play for. This is the moment you live for your entire softball career. And to get here, it was a complete dream come true for me. I didn't even believe it an hour after we won to get into the World Series I was still in disbelief. But just getting here you have to take it all in for a second but then you remember it's the game you've played your entire life. There's nothing new, nothing changes. Coach said it's the same, 60 feet to each base and 43 feet to the mound. I gave myself a minute to enjoy it and then I focused in and I acted like it was just another game.

Q. The two-out hitting, the clutch hitting, what did that mean to you? I think your first five runs all came with two outs.

COACH TORINA: I thought they did a good job of having the same at-bats, whether it was no outs or two outs. I thought they did a good job of just having quality at-bats and not necessarily worrying about the situation, just looking for the right pitch, staying in the plan, trusting Coach (Howard) Dobson's plan and then going out and getting it done. I thought that was really good they just continued to keep the same mentality and continued to fight.

Q. Coach, this Auburn team last week played your in-state rival, correct, and the end of the game that

one game was pretty crazy where they lost the lead. My question is regarding freshmen stepping into your sport and being able to perform at a high level. I talked to Jenna Lilley from Oregon and obviously Carley Hoover, do you feel it's something particular to the sport of softball? A lot of time freshmen don't play, they redshirt. Do you think that's a testament to club softball, or is it more to the individual? I don't know if you give much thought to it. And specifically with Carley, how she's been able to -- she didn't walk anybody, didn't hit any batters today, and that's huge to closing it out.

COACH TORINA: I think the freshmen we have on our team are spectacular. I think they've been battle tested before they even got to LSU. I think they've been coached very well throughout their lives, played in some big stages already. They've played for great travel coaches and have really understood the game throughout their life. So it makes my job as a coach a lot easier. I think both Allie (Walljasper), Carley (Hoover) and Emily (Griggs) have all been challenged and play. They've been playing against these same kids on this field against us for their whole lives. So I don't think it makes it that much different for them once they get here, different colors, uniforms, added pressure. I've watched these guys play under pressure for a long time. I already knew they were capable of doing the things they were doing here today.

Q. Beth, on the same lines, but what has allowed Carley, you talk about her being somebody who wants the ball in these kind of games, if you go back to fall ball or the first few weeks of the season, what separated her at that point in time from being able to throw this kind of game?

COACH TORINA: I think she's just continued to grow throughout the year. I think she's continued to get better and better. And she's not the same pitcher today that she was when we started in February. And she definitely is not the same pitcher she was in the fall. The one thing she's always had, though, is what's inside of her. She'll try to beat you, if we're walking from the dugout to the fence, or whatever we're trying to do, she'll try to win. She's one of the most competitive people I've been around. She's always had that. She's worked really hard on some things mechanically, doing some things better, making some adjustments. I mean, the way we call the game for her now, it's not even close to the way we called the game for her early in the season. She's grown so much. She's able to mix pitches, mix speeds, do things so much better than where we were early. And I think that's a huge reason for this late success, too.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.