

# 2018 Women's College World Series

Sunday, June 3, 2018  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



**Kelly Inouye-Perez**

**Rachel Garcia**

**Taylor Pack**

**Bubba Nickles**

UCLA Bruins

Florida State - 12, UCLA - 6

**Q. Rachel Garcia threw 429 pitches, won two games for you. Can you just talk about her performance at the College World Series and also throughout the year that allowed her to be the Player of the Year?**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Yeah, first and foremost, I'd like to start by saying congratulations to Florida State. They played a great game. They're a great team. They're well-coached, and just were the better team today.

As far as Rachel, I'm very proud of what Rachel has done. The accolade of being Player of the Year is something that is rewarded for your overall body of -- overall your complete body of work to receive it, and she earned it. She earned that. She had a solid season. She was able to impact the team both offensively at the plate and then in the circle, as well. She led us to be a top-8 seed, to be able to play at home for regionals and super regionals, and to put us in a great position to be able to get back to that championship game, and I simply say this: She left her guts on the field. She is someone that doesn't just quit. You'll never see that in Rachel Garcia.

As far as answering your question about her performance, I think she is a gutsy, fierce competitor, and I can't wait to see how this experience is going to make her even stronger moving forward.

**Q. What was the plan going into the second game and how did it evolve?**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: The plan was I started her and she had just come off of pitching a full game, whatever the pitch count was, and I wanted to see how it went in that first inning. They connected with some balls that made me say, I'm going to -- I was prepared to make a change, and we have a pitching staff, and

still had the ability to bring her back in. So that was the plan was to be able to keep going with Rachel, because once again, Rachel had put herself in a position to really be the driving force as far as the pitching staff is concerned, so I was going with my best. Made the change simply because that first inning they were scoring up some balls and I wanted to switch it up.

**Q. Rachel, how did you feel out there? Were you getting fatigued at any point during the game?**

RACHEL GARCIA: I wouldn't say fatigued. I know it's great seeing my other teammates, Selina and Holly and Johanna be able to get that opportunity, and my team having my back. Clearly we didn't give up the fight. We still had it in us.

**Q. Coach, can you talk about the breakout performance Taylor Pack had.**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Oh, just -- both of these two, first and foremost, I'm so proud of my team. I just had not an easy meeting being able to close out such a phenomenal season. This was such a great team, great chemistry, a lot of talent. It was spread out throughout the entire team. You know, I had said before that the College World Series is an opportunity to be able to be your best when your best is needed, and both Taylor, Rachel -- I could go around the horn because we had different game winners all the time.

Speaking specifically about Taylor, man, it's exciting. It's exciting to see someone take advantage of opportunity. She wasn't someone that got to be an everyday player. In fact, probably less than half the games, but when she did come in, she was impactful, and it's nice to see her start the season the way she did, take a little break in between more because of decision making on my part, and then for her to finish the way she did and help her team continue in this tournament was just powerful. I'm very proud of her.

**Q. Taylor, you guys were down 4-0, hit that two-run homer. Does it feel like maybe here we go again, we've done this before, we can do it again?**

TAYLOR PACK: Yeah, I think no matter how far behind we get, we never give up the fight, and no matter where we were in the game, we knew in our dugout we could come back, and we knew even until our last out we had it in us.

**Q. Bubba, can you talk about the two plays that you made, the amazing grab in the first game and the second one almost did it again and collided with the wall?**

BUBBA NICKLES: Yeah, in the first game, I was kind of surprised I didn't feel anything in my glove, so when I saw it in my glove, I was kind of really pleasantly surprised. But yeah, I thought honestly, a lot of the fly balls were flying out of the park today. There was a lot of close home runs that I was going to catch, and it seemed as if most of the home runs were catchable, but they just went over the fence. Just something about Oklahoma the ball carries. But yeah.

The second one was a bit tough. I hit the back of my head when I landed on the ground, and it kind of made me have like a pretty bad headache. Still kind of there, but it's okay, I took medicine. But yeah, I was just trying to give it my all. I wasn't trying to just let it go over. I really wanted to save those runs. It only worked out for one of them.

**Q. Coach, you guys played Washington in the regular season, just played Florida State three games. How do you see that series playing out and the key parts to that?**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I'm not really sure I understand the question. Are you talking about Washington or Florida State?

**Q. Both of them. You've played Washington and you just played Florida State --**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: You're asking me what I think about their series? I think it's going to be a great game.

**Q. For the players, can you talk about the effect that Kylee Perez had on you guys and what you can learn from her going forward?**

BUBBA NICKLES: She's an amazing player. We always talk about how much of a leader she is, and she always impacts us in the biggest way, whether it's her making plays or her pumping us up or her just dancing around having fun and being herself. For me personally, she's taught me to be myself and to not give in to any external factors and always just play and have fun because it is a game at the end of the day.

TAYLOR PACK: Yeah, Kylee's energy is infectious and she just believes in every single one of us so much. No matter who gets an at-bat she's behind every single one of us and all season she's had all of our backs and it's just kept a smile on everyone's faces and has really been the driving force behind us.

RACHEL GARCIA: I think all the seniors impact this

team so much. With Kylee, I think she just reminds me to have fun and play the game.

**Q. How do you encapsulate the season? I know this wasn't the finish you wanted, but how do you feel about the season as a whole right now?**

BUBBA NICKLES: I'm really pleased with how we played this whole season. We had confidence in each other every single game, and in the fall, we learned our lessons and then all of a sudden when we started this season, it was great because we all were bought in, and none of us gave up, whether we were down or we were up, and we were always all bought in.

RACHEL GARCIA: I think we were all bought in. I'm very happy with this team, and a tough loss today, but I couldn't have been more proud of my team. We weren't going down without a fight.

**Q. Coach, talk about the pitching staff this week and in particular how much of that's changed over the last five years where it went from just one to now you have to have at least two?**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Absolutely. I think the game clearly has changed. You're right, going back from when I was a player, now we've got 40 feet, the balls were white, the bats weren't really live. In this day and age as you can see in a tournament like this, it is very important for you to have a pitching staff. Every team has some offensive punch. Your ability to change the look and change speeds and be effective is a challenge of our game, and as you can see, sometimes it can be very effective and it can work, and sometimes it doesn't always work out. But for today, once again, we all can definitely tip our cap and say Florida State swung it big against all our pitchers, and that's what you need to do to be able to come up with those big timely hits, and they did it against all our pitching staff, so they earned it. They were the better team today.

But as far as your question is concerned, I think it's clear across the country. It is a very offensive sport, and pitching staff, the pitching staffs are, I think, an absolute. It changes in recruiting. You're going to need to have that, which is why I'm fortunate to have some two way players that help us offensively and defensively. Both Bubba and Rachel are pitchers that can play other positions and they also swing a stick, so we're looking for that. We're a school that recruits that. Some schools look for pitchers only; we recruit the two-way player and we've had some of the best in the game at UCLA. But once again, it's a very big part of our game.