

2018 Women's College World Series

Thursday, May 31, 2018
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Lonni Alameda

Meghan King

Sydney Sherrill

Florida State Seminoles

UCLA - 7, Florida State - 4

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by head Lonni Alameda and student-athletes Meghan King and Sydney Sherrill. Coach Alameda, let's start with the performance that Meghan King gave you. She certainly pitched well and gave you a chance to win the game.

COACH ALAMEDA: Yeah, definitely. I think -- I don't know if you could have scripted it any better for our hitters to come out and score some runs against one of the best pitchers in the country. She was flinging it tonight, (Rachel) Garcia was, and we got after her and just one of those things. Meghan did a good job, and it was my decision to bring Kylee (Hansen) in and she got us out of the inning and that was good stuff too. And they went to another level with their swings and got after some miscues on our part and seeing-eye balls just here and there, and they made a big inning for themselves.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach or the student-athletes, please.

Q. Coach, Rachel was slinging it tonight. Sydney, what did you see out of Rachel, and what did you see when you hit that double?

SYDNEY SHERRILL: I definitely saw she was flinging it, but I was kind of in my head those first two at-bats, and I talked to Coach, I said, I'm in my head and she said get out of your head.

And I went out there and I got out of my head and it did it for me. And we should have come back with more runs in the later innings but that's how it goes, sometimes.

Q. How do you get out of your head? Do you have --

SYDNEY SHERRILL: She gave me a way to do it, just to kind of clear my mind and get in the box. I wish she

would have told me that earlier in the year but it's fine. It's a good time to say it. Thank you, Coach.

Q. Is that something that you tell all your girls if you see they're in their head, you try to -- tell them with one word?

COACH ALAMEDA: I definitely think the mental game is the biggest part of the game. And when the game gets going really fast -- this is a huge stage, it's a huge stage for Syd -- seniors have been here before. Experience plays a part. Kylee doing the same thing. You can't emulate this anywhere. You just have to look around and love and enjoy it.

And we're playing a very storied program. And UCLA is on a mission. They've been here before. And they're on a mission. The best way to combat it is to be simple and keep it simple. And all I told Syd, you can tell yourself you're going to get hit it outside the box. But when you get in it be present. That's the biggest thing, you want to suck a little less. A mindset.

And it's a game of failure. And let's be honest and real. She's doing it pretty good. The minute you go in and tell yourself negative stuff, you get negative results.

We try to eliminate that. And we do it in the circle a ton too. I'm not going to say it's all me and the word I told her. She is just a great hitter. And it all happened to be in that moment.

Q. Meghan, what was working for you tonight? You shut down a high-octane offense.

MEGHAN KING: I think that this is just something we've worked for all year. And I wanted to put the hitters in the best position I could. For them tonight, I felt really good and strong.

The first inning was rough. It's hot in Oklahoma City and I was sweaty. I couldn't grip the ball. I got a towel and it was smooth sailing from there.

And I felt really good. And everything was working. My defense was absolutely outstanding tonight. We're going to keep up this fight and not give up the rest of the way.

Q. Looking out next game you guys have Georgia. I mean, they had a rough go of it earlier. So how do

you prepare for this game coming up?

COACH ALAMEDA: Biggest thing right now for us is to let this sink in a little bit. We have a day off to give our bodies rest. It's a scrappy Georgia team. They've had a tremendous season. The loss of Brittany Gray was huge for them.

And they rallied around it. And hats off to Lou and the program for everything they've done. And our backs are against the walls and so are theirs. It's going to be one of those games, it's going to be completely scrappy. And it's hot and it is what it is.

We've been there before. We fight and fight and the first game we lose, and we're in this dogfight now. It's for our lives. So we have experience here too. Unfortunately, I guess. But now it's time to go out and just put your backs against the wall and get after it.

Q. Coach, can you talk about the decision to start Meghan tonight and the decision to go to Kylee when you did and just what factored into both of those decisions?

COACH ALAMEDA: Couple things for Meghan. Obviously the lefty-lefty matchup is pretty big. They have a lot of lefties in a row, a lot of righties in a row. So she's also very experienced in these situations, too.

So again go back to just the big stage and knowing Kylee would feel a little bit of that pressure. But we knew at some point, we felt all day today there's a lot of pitchers, great pitchers, another pitcher came in to close the game or relieve. That's a big thing at this stage right now. At some point Kylee's curveball is going to play for us against the right-handers. It did when we faced Garcia, when we got out of that inning. But then I think UCLA went to another level and was really swinging the bats and they took advantage of a few things. That was the mindset we were going to use today.

Q. Meghan, when you found out you were getting the start tonight, like Coach said, you've got the experience of having played here before. But when you found out you were getting the start, what went through your mind and what was your preparation to go out there and start the game tonight?

MEGHAN KING: I mean, I was pumped. I love to compete. I love to compete on this stage. Definitely I did not have a very good game against UCLA last year. So I was excited for another opportunity to get after it. And so I was just pumped and excited just ready to get the opportunity to compete.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.