

# 2021 Women's College World Series

Thursday, June 3, 2021

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Oklahoma Sooners

Patty Gasso

Tiare Jennings

Shannon Saile

Postgame Press Conference



James Madison 4, Oklahoma 3

THE MODERATOR: This is the Game 1 press conference featuring the Oklahoma Sooners. Joined by student-athletes Shannon Saile and Tiare Jennings. Questions for our student-athletes.

**Q. Tiare, what was it about Odicci Alexander that made her difficult for y'all to handle today? Was that the way she worked y'all about what you expected?**

TIARE JENNINGS: Yeah, she's a great pitcher. I give all the credit to her. Really effective rise ball that I think we couldn't make adjustments on. But I think that's just what really hurt us at the end, is just making adjustments. I think going on in the future, just continue to make those adjustments as quick as we can to try to win ballgames.

**Q. You have played so much ball. I know this is a disappointing thing today. Shannon, you guys know you can come back, as you Tiare. Like you just said, you got to win ballgames, get back in this thing.**

SHANNON SAILE: Yeah, I think that we have every capability to come back and play strong. It's loser go home now, and I don't think we want to go home. So I think next time we come out, we just got to throw punches early and fast and keep laying them down, play like we got nothing to lose.

I think a little bit there we were playing not to lose. I think that's the difference for going forward.

TIARE JENNINGS: Yeah, I think we learned a lesson. Tough way to start out the World Series. We just got to flush it. One pitch at a time. Just do what we do, stay true to our circle now. Just, you know, taking it one pitch at a

time, just doing this thing.

**Q. Tiare, I was wondering, surprising stat, are you more surprised or frustrated at the stat you guys only had two runners in scoring position all game?**

TIARE JENNINGS: I don't think frustrating. I think we haven't really been challenged like that all year. Usually we make adjustments quicker. It's not like us. But I think just moving on, you learn from it, you move on, you just go out, take it one pitch at a time, just keep going.

**Q. What was Coach's message was as you're trying to rally to go again on Saturday?**

TIARE JENNINGS: Kind of the same thing, just flush it, learn from it. When we've lost our couple games back in the season, we came out strong. I think we're doing it for each other. We're doing it for our super seniors. We're coming out and just doing our thing. Just flushing this game and moving on is pretty much the main message. Just continue, know what we do, trust in each other. Now just keep battling, just got to battle now.

SHANNON SAILE: Yeah, everything she said (laughter).

**Q. The challenges now of not being able to get right back out there, but you have the day off tomorrow, not to let the loss linger over two full days.**

SHANNON SAILE: I think tomorrow, and today, we can watch our future opponents, learn more about them, and come out ready to play Saturday. I think the worst thing we can do is sit in what we did. We have to keep looking forward and play pitch by pitch.

**Q. Shannon, this was really a pitcher's duel out there today. Did you feel any extra pressure in the circle?**

SHANNON SAILE: No. I was just playing pitch by pitch. I trusted my teammates. I trusted them in the field, I trust them at the plate. Like we said, we have to make adjustments. I had to make adjustments, too.

I think it's just a learning game.



**Q. Tiare, I wanted to ask you about that groundball you dove and fielded in the third inning there. Saw a few replays, it was really close. What was your initial feelings after not getting that out, that runner contribute on the home run?**

TIARE JENNINGS: Yeah, obviously dove, got the ball, kind of got stuck in my glove a little bit. Once the runner got on first, I thought double play ball, just get outs. Obviously when the home run happened, it was a good play. I did my best. Tried to move on. It was early in the game, so we had time to get that run back and do whatever we can.

I think just coming up to the plate when I came up next, just trying to make up for it in a way. But just not letting it bother me, keep doing what I did.

THE MODERATOR: Ladies, thank you very much for your time.

TIARE JENNINGS: Thank you.

SHANNON SAILE: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Now joined by head coach Patty Gasso. Questions for Coach Gasso.

**Q. This is going to be the longest wait you have to play after a loss this season. What are you guys going to do to maybe either not let this linger or to make it easier to respond?**

PATTY GASSO: That's a good question. You have to have short memory here or you're out of this tournament before you even play your next game. They've been called out. We've watched Florida State do it not that long ago, so it can be done. But it's going to have to take a completely different approach, attitude, commitment as a team to stay alive as long as you can.

That's what we're going to do. We're going to get prepared. We're going to take this day off that we have off and use it wisely, just kind of be ready to step in and play for a long time, as long as we can.

**Q. You have been the best at game planning and getting set up all year. I think it's been a key for you. Alexander came at you with 70 and a rise ball today. I know you tried to make adjustments, did a lot of different things. Talk about what you were going through today, what you can do with this offense going forward, the adjustments you continually have to make.**

PATTY GASSO: You do, and a big stage, you better be ready to make adjustments.

Look, we flat out got beat. We all admit that. We admit that. Alexander is really, really good. The ball gets on you really, really fast. The ball breaks really, really hard. She changes speeds really, really well. So you better have a good plan.

I think at the plate some of our plans got lost. You can see that by the way we were swinging. So we need to figure out why. Why did our plans get lost? Were the lights too big for you? Was the speed too fast for you? The video will tell us exactly what we need to know, so we can work on fixing that as we go forward.

**Q. When Gordon in the eighth inning hit that ball, did you immediately think, That's trouble? Did you know it was out?**

PATTY GASSO: I kind of got blocked. It was hard, it was like left center. I was trying to see. I couldn't see how high it was. I just saw our outfielders moving to the wall. Any time Jayda Coleman is up against the wall, we have a chance if it's not too far over.

As I saw them both jump, I knew that it was gone.

**Q. Your impressions of James Madison overall as a team, how they handled this environment. From our perspective, it seemed like they were game from this from the get-go?**

PATTY GASSO: I think they have something special going on there. Very calm, very cool, very team-oriented, fearless. You felt no fear from them. It's not that I pay a lot of attention. I was paying more attention to the way we were looking, which was a little out of character for us than the way James Madison.

They played well. They were coached well. Took advantage of a few of our miscues. Hit some timely hitting when they needed to. Made most all their defensive plays.

But their pitcher absolutely can take them a little bit further in this tournament. I mean, she has the capability of doing that. I know that. Like I said, there's no excuses here. They deserved every minute of that. My focus right now is our team and how we're going to fight through this bracket play. Our goal is to stand on Monday. That is our focus. We got a long road to get there. We're going to do our best.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about the third inning, leading**



**up to the home run. What did you make of those couple plays, the bang-bang play, the infield hit, the error that set that up?**

PATTY GASSO: You're talking about?

**Q. Their side of the third.**

PATTY GASSO: When they were on offense?

**Q. Yeah, leading up to Jubas' home run.**

PATTY GASSO: I will not make a comment on the play at first. Our error did not help the cause much. I mean, that allowed for two runners on. The top of their lineup is their power. She did a nice job.

We hung a change-up that just got hit hard. I mean, we answered right back. We answered right back in the way that we do.

The rest of that game we left runners, we didn't execute. We didn't have great productive at-bats. We just didn't create much till we got, say, I think Jayda stole second, we were just kind of hanging on with two outs, hoping Mendes could put something down through the infield.

Yeah, I mean, that's the way of the game. Sometimes you get things your way, sometimes you don't.

**Q. You mentioned all the ways that Alexander comes after hitters, breaks, velocity. The change of speeds, how does that reduce the margin of error for a hitter?**

PATTY GASSO: I don't know that she used it a ton today because she didn't need to. Sometimes they can be kind of hanging over the plate.

It's just the way she can move the ball in on you. You could see us looking at pitches that are in on us. The break of a rise ball is just really -- the way she throws the pitch comes on you really fast. I know it's 70, but the way it looks to me, it looked like it's 77. We just couldn't track it the way we needed to.

The change-up is definitely a bonus for her, but why lay something out there when you can get us chasing things out of the zone. That's what I felt she was doing.

**Q. We were just talking to Shannon. She said she felt like the team kind of played not to lose. Do you agree with that assessment, trying to get to Friday, start off on the right foot?**

PATTY GASSO: I don't know if I could feel that. You

could tell that we were having a little bit of problem at the plate. Then it just seemed to kind of rub off into some other areas.

There were a few people whose faces changed in the dugout today, faces that we really need in this lineup.

Look, what we've been doing all season is just learning lessons. That's what we've got to do. We got to take this game and learn from it. We have got to put every ounce of softball and energy and togetherness and fight that we have. That's all we can do.

So none of us are making excuses. No one is doing that. We put ourselves in this place. We're going to be tested to see how far we can go with this.

THE MODERATOR: Coach Gasso, thank you so much for your time.

PATTY GASSO: Thank you.

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