

2021 Women's College World Series

Friday, June 4, 2021

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

James Madison Dukes

Loren LaPorte

Postgame Press Conference



James Madison - 2, Oklahoma State - 1

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions for coach.

Q. You got the bats going a little bit earlier tonight, but what do you want to see offensively on Sunday? What's going to be some of the messaging you're going to have over the next 24 hours to your team about whoever you play next, what you need to do offensively?

LOREN LAPORTE: Yeah, I really feel like we got runners on base. We just, it just didn't work out, some of our timely hitting. I feel like, I think it was the fourth or the fifth, we had runners on first and second and Kate hit a ball hard and she caught it. So I feel like we didn't, I wasn't unhappy about our offense at all. I loved how we took the count deep on Eberle, and we're hitting her pretty hard, where to the point where they put Maxwell in. Maxwell is very different than Eberle, so we had to make a quick adjustment and we didn't quite get there, but luckily we were able to score two runs beginning of the game and Cici and our defense did a great job at holding them just to one. And I think tomorrow we have to make sure we are preparing for who we might see on Sunday and talk to our hitters about that.

Q. Odicci's play, have you ever seen anything like that? Even on the TV broadcast they were saying they don't know if they have ever seen a play like that at the World Series.

LOREN LAPORTE: If that's not Top 10 SportsCenter, I don't know what is, because that's probably the best play I've ever seen in a career by a pitcher in that situation with that much pressure, and she's tired. Obviously our whole team is and it's not just the physical part, but it's the emotional part and the mental part and they're doing such a good job staying within themselves, but it is an adrenaline rush. I can tell you. Like, I'm on a high, so I can't even imagine what they are. But just to see her leave

her feet and make that tag, I mean, that's, it's unbelievable. I can't even describe it any other way.

Q. We have kind of been talking these big-picture story lines this whole time. You sit here. You're 2-0 in the Women's College Series. You're one win away from the championship series. I mean, did you ever think that was possible? What does that mean to this program right now where you're at?

LOREN LAPORTE: I think we're at the point where why not? Why not us? We do everything. We work our butts off, like they said in the off-season, just like every team does here. I mean, let's be honest, every team works hard, and so do we. And I think the biggest thing is just believing and it's such a cool thing to see across the country right now, dreams being made, and you talked about dreams coming true in this situation, but, I mean, I think we're at the point where this is something really special that's happening and our team believes that we can get it done and I don't even have to say that much anymore. It's just, they're just taking everything and running with it and we are here to support them as much as we can. But they just believe and it just means so much to us as a staff.

Q. You guys are now on the proverbial driver's seat. You have a couple of days here before you're able to see who makes it through the bracket to play you guys. What's kind of just your thoughts on what you guys will do over the next couple days and just the mentality the next couple days as you wait to see who your opponent is?

LOREN LAPORTE: Well, I'm telling you, we're celebrating tonight this win, and then tomorrow we wake up and it's a new day. Just like we told them before the game. It's a new day, a new game, and a new mission. And that's going to be the same message moving forward. It's important that they do celebrate this and we don't move too soon because this is very special and I want them to remember every second of these wins. But when we wake up in the morning, we're going to take care of our bodies. We are going to rest and we're going to do a lot of treatment and watch film again and be ready for Sunday. I just, I think it's a fine line of still enjoying this for a little bit

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

longer but getting prepared for the next. And they talk about it all the time. It's the next game, but this is pretty special.

Q. Cici talked about not having her best stuff tonight. Curious, as the staff, how does that change how you called her game, kind of what you were trying to do to get her through the game, and along with that, when did she become somebody who could pitch through that?

LOREN LAPORTE: Probably this year. Like, we've talked a lot in a lot of interviews, her mentality and her growth and her maturity is what's getting it done. She's always had the physical part of things, but where her mindset is right now, it's unbelievable. And I think what was important was when she came in the dugout, we, they had conversations a little bit more with coach -- or she had conversations with Coach Herzig and Coach Morris, just, okay, let's not throw this here, this isn't working as much. And that's important because sometimes things don't work. I think she figured it out and she kind of beared down, like we needed to do, and her changeup was really effective in those last two innings.

Q. I would love to talk to you about since you were sitting there, standing there watching the whole thing, there were the moments where it got rough in the last inning and you're standing there watching two runners on with no outs. How impressed were you with how your team was able to pull through each other and they bend but they didn't break?

LOREN LAPORTE: You know, the unity on this team, it's unbreakable right now. When we all stand in a circle together before that game we talk about nothing breaks through our circle and nothing broke through the defense, nothing broke through Lauren behind the plate and Cici in the circle, and our dugout was loud and they gave us momentum and, of course, obviously our fans in the stands. So I think it's one of those things where it takes everyone, like we've talked about, and they knew that no matter where the ball was going to be hit, it was going to get done.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports...