

2023 Women's College World Series

Thursday, June 1, 2023

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Florida State Seminoles
Coach Lonni Alameda

Kaley Mudge

Michaela Edenfield

Kathryn Sandercock

Postgame Press Conference



Florida State 8, Oklahoma State 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Florida State.

Lonni will give a statement, and we'll go to questions for the players, then go to questions just for Lonni.

LONNI ALAMEDA: Really proud. This is new territory for us. We broke the curse of losing the first game, so that's pretty exciting for us. Gritty Oklahoma State team. Kat did a great job, defense did a great job. Big swing by Micheala to get the mojo going for us.

I think the best thing was the rain delay, our ability to stay in it, our ability to know what we need so when we get back up there, getting after Becker after a rain delay for Kat is a big one. She's a great hitter. That was really a huge spark for us. Really proud of the squad.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for players.

Q. Kathryn, you were able to shut down the lineup, no runs allowed, only four hits. What were you able to do that was so successful against them tonight?

KATHRYN SANDERCOCK: I think we talked about just the ability to come out and play our game. It's a different environment, it's exciting. It's a lot of pressure. A lot of hype just surrounding the World Series. Just the ability to come out and stay within ourselves and play Florida State softball was really big for us.

That was my goal, just staying within my routine. Eyeing up my defense, eyeing up Micheala. I think that's definitely what allowed me to be successful.

Q. Kathryn, from a pitching perspective, then Kaley, from an offensive perspective, what did Micheala's home run in the first inning did for y'all?

KATHRYN SANDERCOCK: I was just so excited to put up a two spot that early in the game, it's amazing. It definitely kind of relaxes you a little bit out there on the mound. You know that you have a little wiggle room to make some mistakes. It was just awesome.

It got the momentum on our side, we kept it for the rest of the game. It was a huge team at-bat for us. Yeah, super proud of Micheala.

KALEY MUDGE: A lot of fun to watch. Kalei had a great at-bat before that, getting on, taking a walk after two strike-outs. To start the game off like that, her first at-bat here, that was awesome.

She was here in 2021, but just from the dugout perspective, getting to see her first at-bat be a ball, in which we see her hit every day in BP, but seeing on the stage makes it more exciting for her. It was a great start to the game.

Q. You guys have a history, everyone does, of rain delays, having to start and stop. You had to do it twice today, starting late, two-hour delay. Kaley, how did you guys respond to that? What are the keys to coming out and playing well when you're thrown off schedule?

KALEY MUDGE: Yeah, we have a lot of fun with each other when we're in rain delays. We have a lot of them obviously being from Florida. We've had a lot of delays this year.

We had a lot of fun in the locker room playing some hacky, playing some Wordle, just making it fun, keeping each other energized. Obviously we waited all day to play. It was getting late.

We were just excited to be on the stage and spend more quality time with each other. We had a lot of fun during the

delay. It felt like we were able to come out and kind of relax the mojo, relax the vibe, just be able to go out and play our game.

Q. Micheala, just how big was that, what were you looking for first pitch there?

MICHAELA EDENFIELD: I just remember when Kalei held off on that change-up, got the walk, immediately we eyed each other up, just knowing the idea of just being able to pass the bat regardless of how big or small. It still matters. We talk about doing the little things and the little things right.

I just knew I just wanted to get my swing off. I told my Coach T-Wil earlier today, I was like, You want to know what my plan is today?

And he goes, What, sit middle in?

I was like, No, to swing.

Just really glad I was able to do that for my team.

Q. You talked a lot about sort of staying loose, having fun. One of the things I think is the most fun about softball is the energy in the dugout between the chants, all that other stuff. On a day like this, how important is it in a game this late to have that energy going for the bench? Do you have anything special you do to keep that going?

KATHRYN SANDERCOCK: Yeah, we have all kinds of special stuff that we do. It's so fun. I think that's just kind of the beauty of softball, is that it's such a long season, we play so many games. A lot of our cheers, kind of like dugout things just develop throughout season. They all come from something really funny that happened during a series, a lot of them are just passed down from team to team.

We definitely have a whole lot of things that we do in the dugout that just keep us engaged in the game. It's just a lot of fun. We have a lot of fun with each other.

MICHAELA EDENFIELD: I want to add on about our mental performance coach, Ellie Cooper, said quite a few different statements, and I think just having a whole hashtag good moment. I remember when we first got the first delay, we had to get off the field, I was just like, Yes, yes, yes, because I think the best way to react to something to something is positive because we can only control our reaction to things.

I mean, clearly the weather is out of our control, so...

Q. Kat, how big was that play by Jahni? I think that was right after the rain delay to get you out of the inning?

KATHRYN SANDERCOCK: That was awesome. Jahni made a great play coming over to get the ball after -- I think she beat the shift a little bit, so coming, getting that ball, firing to it Dev, Dev putting out a great tag. That was great. That was hype. I think I was screaming out there. I was super excited. Yeah, Jahni, Dev, just the entire defense did such a great job today.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Lonni.

Q. You obviously had the momentum going into that second rain delay. Anything specific on your end that you have to do to keep that momentum trending right when you do manage to get back out on the field, or do you leave it up to the girls?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Definitely I think Kat is the one that starts that. She does a really good job of staying in her mental head space. She kind of sits off to the side, relaxes a little bit.

But sometimes, you know, when you go a little bit longer than half an hour, you start to tighten up a little bit. Maybe your stuff isn't as sharp as she was in the beginning.

On the other side, they're probably in there planning because now they know the pitches we threw. Now you go out, did they change their game plans against Kat. We had a little strategic talk on that side.

I think she was lights out, and the defense was lights out. We just kept it rolling. Getting more runs, like she said, allows you to be a little more aggressive in your pitch calling.

Q. NCAA policy wasn't going to let you play until 2 a.m. Is there a comfort in knowing no matter when you might start playing, you know when you're not going to play? Second, when you came back out, OSU went to it's number three pitcher, you banged around pretty good. Offensively how did you respond to that pitching change?

LONNI ALAMEDA: As for the pitching change, we were lucky enough to be able to come here and play Oklahoma State and Oklahoma in the season. We're so lucky to have the ability to go and play people in their park, so I think we are a different team than we played them when we were here in the regular season.



Just like them, they got a look at all our pitchers' action and they got a look at theirs. We knew what Kyra had. We knew Maxwell. I mean, they're great pitchers.

For our kids to be a little bit better at their plans at the plate, their maturity really showed up today, and we grew a ton as an offense today. That was awesome to see. For Mudge to get that swing off, get under a high velo, heavy pitch that Kyra throws was pretty awesome on that side.

Then the first part of the question, I forgot. Oh, playing late into the night. Yeah, I think our coaches association does a really good job of getting together and trying to protect this tournament. We want the best on TV. I know when Kenny and I two years ago were sitting up there knowing we were going to play the game at midnight till 2 in the morning, we were going to do what we did, but then we got all the coaches behind us to make change.

It's a budget line, the NCAA has to meet it. We can see how great this game is. We have to keep collaborating as an organization to keep this game growing, then we have the opportunities to have the best softball on TV and for these girls.

Q. You talked with this team about how it's someone different every game. In every facet today someone else impacted the game. How much of a complete team effort did it feel like?

LONNI ALAMEDA: I can tell you that it's probably been about two weeks that I think we've shifted. We've been really getting after this mindset for the whole season. To play selfless ball is a really hard thing to do. When you talk about out-teaming another team in all aspects, that's a really hard thing to do. We've had to have a lot of conversations of not just your skill set but your mindset.

To see it all start to come together, now they can play free and lose. Like Kalei to Micheala, we're having a plan against a great pitcher in Maxwell. If someone can get on, someone is going to get after that backdoor curve, and Micheala did, which is so awesome. So to see there's joy for each other right now, and that's really hard to beat. I've been against it in the other dugout, and you're like, man, they've got juju going on too, along with their skill set.

Proud of the squad for sticking to that.

Q. A couple times Micheala backed up a couple throws at first, Kat was backing up third. For them to be on this big stage and still doing little things, how big is that for you to see?

LONNI ALAMEDA: I mean, that's successful softball at this

stage of the game. Like, you have to do the little things. If you about give teams like this inch, they're going to take advantage of it and start to get away from you. We harp on the fundamentals all the time.

It becomes second nature, it's just what you fall back on. Yeah, it's really pretty to see. As the coach, it's really neat to see.

Q. It seemed like every time they had a sniff of momentum, you came back with something bigger to take it away. Could you sense that, sense it building as the game went on?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Yeah, I mean, we all know momentum is a big part of the game. Big innings are a huge part of what you're trying to hunt.

Kat does an outstanding job of managing in the circle, managing with the defense. Like she talked, she eyes up her defense a ton because there's this trust right now that they know she is going to pitch to them or she's going to work through a double play or we're going to try to get a pop-up. There's this connection going on.

Someone got on first base, we need to get out of this. They heighten their awareness at that point to know that we have to shut down this momentum inning because it could turn into something that could be dangerous for us.

That goes back to the smart part. Kat does a really, really good job of that.

Q. You talked about it right at the start of your opening about you're in unfamiliar territory. What does that do winning the first game? For the confidence, monkey off the back standpoint, but I know in the expanded format now it really rewards the teams that do that.

LONNI ALAMEDA: Uh-huh, yeah. Again, alluding to the other question earlier about taking care of our game. If we want the best softball on TV, we have to take care of it.

Honestly, it's kind of a joke about we've always lost here. The reality is I felt like we've always come here and played softball and made adjustments while we've played in this tournament. It's another tournament for us. Yes, it's the biggest stage and there's only eight teams playing.

If we can keep it that simple and play that simple game of softball right now, we have opportunities to get to the next day. Whether that's the double life or you're in the winner's bracket, you have to keep it as simple as it's the next day to play softball.



I think it's pretty cool everyone is talking about it. The fact is we get a day off tomorrow, regroup, we're going to have a tough one on Saturday.

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