

2023 Women's College World Series

Friday, June 2, 2023

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Stanford Cardinal
Jessica Allister

Alana Vawter

Sydney Steele

Postgame Press Conference



Stanford 2, Alabama 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Stanford.

Coach, do you have a statement you want to start with?

JESSICA ALLISTER: Yeah, another great day of softball. I thought our team came out and was good from the get-go. I thought Taylor Gindlesperger set a great tone offensively. Kylie Chung squared up the ball in the first inning. AV just did a phenomenal job coming in and setting the tone in the circle.

I thought we built from there. So great start by AV. She threw a freaking gem. Good finish by NiJa. Obviously Syd Steele squared the ball a couple times.

Great team effort, made some great defensive plays, too. Just really proud of the group.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players.

Q. Alana, you pitched yesterday, so you had your first chance at the World Series crowd. How much did getting that work in the circle yesterday play into when you found out you were getting the start today?

ALANA VAWTER: Yeah, for sure. I think yesterday I was a little bit surprised because it felt like another softball game to me, which I think is what it's supposed to feel like, which is good. I definitely think that played a big role in me coming out today and knowing it was another softball game.

Q. Alana, you had two shutouts in last year's tournament. Did that give you confidence? Different teams, but...

ALANA VAWTER: Absolutely. Similar players. Half the lineup is about the same. We knew Montana Fouts offensively. Just kind of understanding, yeah, it's a different team this year, but still being able to draw from the confidence from last year.

Q. Sydney, before your home run, how were you able to walk back in and have the successful move you had?

SYDNEY STEELE: Like AV said, just another softball game. I knew Montana Fouts is a good ball player. She's a great pitcher. I knew from my previous at-bats that she started off inside both times. I knew if I step in the box, I have to be ready and swing at pitches I know I can swing, and that's what I did.

Q. (No microphone.)

ALANA VAWTER: Yeah, I have nothing but respect for her. Actually the first time I really got to talk to her was when we were up here for the All-American Conference. She was like patting me on the back when I found out. Just a great person, too, as well as a great pitcher obviously.

Q. Sydney, several years ago you got to see your sister have a moment in the World Series, hit a home run in the World Series. Now you have your own World Series moment. How special is it to you that you now have your own, you both share that bond?

SYDNEY STEELE: It's absolutely amazing. Watching my sister play college ball, she's my reason why I love softball. I grew up around it. My dream was always to come to the Women's College World Series, just like she did, one day. Being here my senior year is absolutely amazing. Her being back in the stands with the same sign I made 12 years ago is absolutely amazing, and I couldn't be here without her.

Q. Alana, did you use last year, you faced Alabama in a winner-take-all, did you use that experience to help you here tonight?



ALANA VAWTER: Yeah, absolutely. Kind of like what I said earlier, it's just the idea of kind of knowing what works for the certain hitters that are the same in the lineup, understanding it's a different lineup, too, just kind of understanding that my best game can do what I can do. That's kind of my approach today.

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with questions for Coach.

Q. Obviously it ended up working out. That was a bold decision to pull Alana when she was doing so well. What went into that?

JESSICA ALLISTER: It was the plan all along. You say 'bold' but it's what we've done all year. Use NiJa and AV together. I think they're exceptional off of each other. I think AV's drop ball and change-up are as good as anyone's in the country. I think NiJa's rise ball is as good as anyone's in the country. When you have the opportunity to use both of those things, it's foolish not to.

I think it was a pretty easy decision. Just like yesterday the decision was we were going to split the game and go to AV. We are just fortunate to have two phenomenal pitchers. More than that, Regan Krause out there, she hasn't gotten the ball yet. She will get it this week sometime. You will be impressed with what you see there, too.

The more time a hitter sees a pitcher, the scales tip in their favor. So we're going to utilize the fact we have a deep bullpen and make changes when we think it makes sense.

Q. You mentioned about Taylor Gindlesperger being the starter. How important is it to have somebody like that, whether it's offensively, defensively, both, to be able to get your team going, get the momentum going?

JESSICA ALLISTER: I mean, it's huge. It sets a tone right away. I just thought that was an incredible at-bat. Fought deep into the count, continued to put a good swing on a good pitch. It sets the entire tone. I thought we were aggressive today.

There's a difference between reckless and aggressive. I thought we got a little reckless in the box maybe yesterday. I thought we were aggressive today. We swung at good pitches. That absolutely starts with Taylor, the first at-bat of the game.

Q. Your defense, obviously your pitching gets a lot of the credit, but your defense was fantastic. Talk about the defense. Then obviously great win for the

program, first World Series win in 19 years. Ramona Shelburne was in attendance. Talk about those things, your defense, what this win means for this program.

JESSICA ALLISTER: Yeah, I felt the defense was great today. Obviously Lim's catch there in the sixth was tremendous. River's play up the middle on the backhand was a big-time play. Young making the catch in the first inning. Taylor making the catch in the first inning. Young made a great play on a hotshot. I'm sure I'm missing a couple.

We have great pitching and we are fortunate to have really, really outstanding defense. You put those things together and it's hard to score. The defense was great tonight.

It was wonderful to have everybody in attendance. A lot of other faces out there that made the trek out. It means the world. We talked about it a little bit before, but the goal in building a program is to have everybody come back and be a part of it. That's when you have a program, not just a team.

Having them here, having Ramona fly in from the Finals is awesome. I don't know what her plan is in two days, but she better still be here. It was great. It was really great.

Q. Obviously last year you got to see Alabama in Tuscaloosa, see the way the crowd responds to Montana. What kind of legacy do you think she leaves?

JESSICA ALLISTER: I don't know that you can say enough about Montana Fouts. I have all the respect in the world for her competitiveness on the field, for her grace off the field. AV mentions the press conference, just her presence that she has, the way that she carries herself.

She is a wonderful thing for our game. I have absolutely nothing but respect for that woman.

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