

2024 Women's College World Series

Friday, May 31, 2024

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Duke Blue Devils

Coach Marissa Young

Kelly Torres

Ana Gold

Postgame Press Conference



Alabama 2, Duke 1

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Duke.

We will start with an opening statement from coach.

MARISSA YOUNG: Obviously a really tough loss. But I am just filled with so much pride and joy, so proud of these girls, the way that they came back today and competed.

I felt like the world got to see what Duke softball was about. We're a play away from still being out on the field battling with Alabama. Ana struggled a little bit this season. To see her come up big on the big stage, that is so special. Cassidy occurred threw a gem in the circle. To have her back next year, I just continue to look at how bright the future is for Duke softball.

Kelly has been just a rock for us behind the plate all year long with our battery. Really glad to see our seniors be able to accomplish their goal, which was to be here at the World Series and go out on top.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for players.

Q. Ana, you talked to your mom. She was over the moon. What has that been like to be able to go through this journey with your team but also the family?

ANA GOLD: Yeah, I mean, I'm so grateful and fortunate enough to have family that's able to travel and see me play almost every weekend. They just made so many sacrifices for me to be where I am today. So seeing them in the crowd just fills my heart with so much joy.

Q. Coach said your class has went out on top. Can

you reflect on what's made Duke so special?

KELLY TORRES: Coach holding us to the same standard from day one. It's cool to come out as the most decorated class in Duke softball history. Seven years ago very young program. This is not the last you're going to see of Duke softball.

Q. Kelly, you've been here since 2021. You've been around the program for a while. When you look back on this year, what would you tell the younger version of you?

KELLY TORRES: I mean, I'd say the hype is real. It's unbelievable. Duke softball is amazing. Not even being an athlete, but being a student at Duke, as well. You're surrounded by excellence everywhere in the classroom with professors. Everyone is wanting to be excellent. It's an atmosphere I've never been in before.

I'm going to carry that with me forever, wherever I go. Duke softball is always going to be a part of me. Looking left and right, there's never going to be a group of girls that I'll love more.

Q. Ana, how do you keep this momentum going next year?

ANA GOLD: Yeah, I mean, I think just knowing that we have a very similar group next year and just carrying that into the season. Knowing we can compete at this level, trying to make it further next year, I think that's going to help us, as well.

Q. We're seeing a snapshot right now, but lots of times we see big tears, sadness. I don't get that sense from you. What are the emotions as you think about what you have done?

ANA GOLD: Yeah, I mean, our goal for this year was to make it to the World Series. I think especially for this senior class, they're so deserving of it. They have led our team so well. Ever since I stepped on campus, they have been there for me every step of the way. I'm so happy we could do it for them their last year. They deserve it so



much.

KELLY TORRES: I would say the tears you see can be confused with sadness. But it's pure joy. How many people come out to softball and watch this sport? It's joy. I couldn't think of a better way to end my career.

THE MODERATOR: That will wrap it up. We'll continue with questions for coach.

Q. Can you love a little bit more on your senior class.

MARISSA YOUNG: I'm sure like most freshmen classes, eyes wide open. They didn't have a clue of what they didn't know. For a lot of them, their role wasn't what they wanted it to be right from the start.

Just their unwavering commitment to our program, the love and desire to grow and learn and get better, to stay committed to the process is really what has enabled them to grow but also them to lead by example and continue to take our program to the next step year after year.

I'm just super thankful, especially in today's world, of seeing the transfer portal. We would not be here if it wasn't for the commitment and steadfast commitment from our senior class of staying true to it, continuing to be gritty and elevate themselves.

Q. It's raw, but could you put in perspective, you made history, you personally and the team, put those in perspective?

MARISSA YOUNG: I'm sure it won't hit us until we get back home to Durham, step on the field and see the Women's College World Series logo on the outside wall.

We're really trying to enjoy. It's been a lot of hard work and sacrifices over the last seven years to get us to this point. I'm thankful that I feel like it's paid off in so many ways, not just getting to this point, but again, seeing the growth in the players on and off the field. It gives me a lot of joy.

I'm looking forward to the future. It's been a tough road as a new program, but we're here. Just look forward to continuing to build from this.

Q. What was the challenge for your offense once Kayla Beaver entered the circle?

MARISSA YOUNG: I mean, it's a different look. Being able to flip the switch and make adjustments quickly. She's elite. Was really getting in on the left-handed hitters. They're working to make adjustments. We just sort of ran out of time.

Q. The girls have all talked this week about their families being here. For you, what was it like to see your daughters and your husband today?

MARISSA YOUNG: Yeah, overwhelming. I think my family has sacrificed so much for me to be a college coach on this level. To be a mom of four, there's a lot of nights and days and activities that I couldn't be at because I was working hard for this program.

They've sacrificed a lot along the way for me to get here. So for them to be here, to enjoy this, take it all in with me, is really, really special.

Also for my daughters, their teams are here now playing. For them to have the opportunity to sit in the stands as a fan and take this all in as preparation before they get to college I think is invaluable. I'm thankful for this opportunity for the family to enjoy.

Q. Being year seven, you have an alumni base that made the trip out here. What did that mean to you?

MARISSA YOUNG: So special. The fact that they are to me using their own money as young adults to come support us is incredible. I think the bond that they have as a group, being the pioneers in this program, is a bond that is indescribable. But they are a big part of why we're here. They laid the foundation, did the hard work, took the risk on coming to a new program before any of this happened.

I'm so glad that they get to be here and enjoy this with us.

Q. I asked Patrick about how it changed their program after they made their first World Series. What is your hope, the impact that this might have on the group coming back?

MARISSA YOUNG: They're going to be hungry, first and foremost. I think we've seen that every year. When we've come up short the end of our season, they wanted the next step, they come back on a mission the next season.

I'm excited for our first team meeting because I already know this group is going to come back ready with a list of things they want to do better and get us to the point where we're back here and able to win a game. Hopefully it should make recruiting a little bit easier. Continue just to move us forward, opening eyes to what Duke softball is all about.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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