

2024 Women's College World Series

Sunday, June 2, 2024

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Stanford Cardinal

Coach Jessica Allister

Taryn Kern

Ava Gall

NiJaree Canady

Postgame Press Conference



Stanford 3, UCLA 1

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Stanford.

We will start with an opening statement by coach.

JESSICA ALLISTER: Yeah, just really, really proud of the entire group. Really proud of these women sitting to my right.

It was an excellent game of softball. Great seven innings. I thought NiJaree was absolutely phenomenal. Then obviously Ava, Taryn putting good swings on good pitches. Coming back from a deficit. Getting a third run was really important. Really bouncing back after having a tough series against UCLA at our place in the regular season. Coming out and competing the way we competed today.

That's a good team. I couldn't be prouder of the way we competed today. Just really proud.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players.

Q. Taryn, being here is probably of one of the many reasons you came to Stanford. Coming through in that moment, what did it mean to you?

TARYN KERN: I feel like that's one of your dreams as a little kid, to play at the World Series, come up in a big moment for your team, help out NiJaree, my girls. So it was awesome.

Q. NiJaree, for them to come back with those two runs, what did that do for your confidence and momentum in the circle?

NIJAREE CANADY: Yeah, I knew we were going to score. My job there was to just try to keep it at one run, just get my team back in the dugout and score more runs we needed.

Q. Last time two Pac-12 softball teams are going to play each other. For you to have staged a game that was quality, what does it mean to have been part of the last in this historic moment?

TARYN KERN: It's awesome. It's sad to see the Pac-12 kind of dissipating. It's exciting to be part of history. Even hosting the tournament at Stanford was really awesome.

Kind of a sentimental moment for the Pac-12.

AVA GALL: Yeah, I agree with Taryn. Growing up, playing for the Pac-12 was always a dream. Being a part of it, even though it was for one season, was super special.

Now that we were in I think it's the quarterfinals, two Pac-12 teams playing against each other, I think it's special. Really close game. Shows how powerful this conference really was.

NIJAREE CANADY: Yeah, just piggybacking off of these two, I think what made it even more special was it just being a really good game on both sides, just to show again the power that Pac-12 softball has. It was really cool for it to be a really good game.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, players. We'll continue with questions for coach.

Q. Was there any shock for you when they pulled Terry, or how you felt against both matchups, against Terry and Tinsley?

JESSICA ALLISTER: Was there shock, no? I think they've been splitting games for a while now. We had a feeling we were going to see both pitchers at some point in time. We were squaring the ball up pretty well four hitters in a row. Got the barrel to the ball. We knew there was going to be a change coming.



Q. Talk a little bit about they'd won seven straight, how important was it to get that win tonight against them?

JESSICA ALLISTER: Yeah, it was really important. We had that conversation in the pregame meeting of we just got to compete in the moment.

Our series against UCLA during the regular season, it was kind of a turning point in our season, where we didn't play the way we wanted to play. Felt like we got punched in the gut a little bit. Started to have to crawl our way back from there.

I think as far as how the season goes, like that was probably the low point of our season. We didn't walk away from that weekend feeling like we had given it our best.

I think being able to come back and having another opportunity, to play a much better game, there's satisfaction in winning any game in Oklahoma City, but it feels good to come out and play a better game.

Q. This last Pac-12 matchup, what does it mean to you to have been a part of that?

JESSICA ALLISTER: Yeah, it's sad. It's just sad because it has been the greatest softball conference in the country. When you look at the history of the conference, even the present of the conference, it's not just even really that close.

To not have UCLA on the schedule next year, to not have Oregon and Washington and Cal -- Cal will be on our schedule, that's great (smiling). You wish it was a little bit different. At the same time we're choosing to lean into what the future looks like. I think college athletics, things are going to continue to change.

We're excited about playing in the ACC. We're excited about the new rivalries that will happen there. Bittersweet, for sure.

Q. Texas looming tomorrow. Can you talk a little bit about that matchup.

JESSICA ALLISTER: This will be the fourth time we played them in four different weekends. I feel like our scout is pretty good. I think we got it. We'll save Coach Nyberg a little bit of time.

They're good in all three phases of the game. Can pitch, hit, defend. A big pitching staff with a lot of different looks. They've put together a deep, competitive ballclub.

There's a reason they were the overall No. 1 seed. We're going to have to play good softball tomorrow.

Q. For NiJaree to do what she did tonight, how does she continue to do that and be so special?

JESSICA ALLISTER: She's incredibly competitive. I think that's a little bit of her superhuman power. I know she feels like she has a lot of 'em. Maybe the biggest one is she wants to be in those moments. In those moments, she's not scared. She's aggressive, assertive and believes that she can do it.

You can see how our team fuels off that energy, rallies behind her. You can hear them talking about her, how much they love her.

I think NiJaree is a phenomenal teammate, a phenomenal person. She gets just as excited for her teammates' successes as her own. You can see all of that passion come out when she's on the field.

Q. How has adding Taryn and Ava to the lineup changed how you can do things offensively?

JESSICA ALLISTER: It's great to have, Ava and Taryn absolutely. Jade Berry is coming on strong. Aly Kaneshiro is having a great year. The list goes on and on. Emily Jones, Kyra Chan. People who have taken a step forward this year offensively.

Obviously I don't have current updated stats. I don't know what Taryn's on-base percentage is right now. It's really, really good to have the power that she has. Taryn is another one, she thrives in the big moments. She loves that piece. She just gives us confidence and puts together really good at-bats consistently.

Then Ava just coming into her own. Like all freshmen, hitting is hard. You have a little bit of your ups and downs. Seeing her just gain confidence with every game that she plays, every pitcher she faces. Getting off good swings. It's been fun to watch. She's been impressive.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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