

2025 Women's College World Series

Wednesday, May 28, 2025
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Texas Longhorns

Coach Mike White

Reese Atwood

Teagan Kavan

Kayden Henry

Press Conference



But it's just an interesting fact that being part of the SEC, you have to deal a little bit more with the weather. The travel wasn't an issue. Most flights are under three hours, so that was pretty good. We enjoyed the competition week in and week out, the great crowds at all the venues, and just the level of play and the organization of the SEC Conference itself. Jeremy Hammond does a tremendous job, and we're excited to be in that conference.

THE MODERATOR: Coach White, if you have an opening statement, feel free; if not, we'll go to questions.

MIKE WHITE: Sure. Obviously very excited to be back in Women's College World Series in Oklahoma City. An exciting post-season, to say the least. Again, really tough super regional. Clemson was a very tough ACC opponent. Just excited to be back here and have an opportunity to compete for a national title.

Q. Mike, for Reese to put up the numbers, back-to-back season, just how remarkable is that, especially transferring to the SEC?

MIKE WHITE: Nothing is ever guaranteed, and the amount of work that Reese puts in in the offseason, not only physically but mentally and prepares herself, it doesn't surprise me she's had the success she's had, following up such a great sophomore season as well.

We're looking forward to having her here one more year and see what numbers she can put up. She's set the Texas all-time record for RBIs and I'm sure some other records as well.

Q. Coach White, you mentioned the SEC, first year in the conference, obviously things turned out pretty well for you, but what are your thoughts about how difficult or challenging it was over the course of the season, and how did that prepare you for right now?

MIKE WHITE: One of the struggles we had was the weather. I don't think we had just one weekend without a weather delay or something. But it's the same for both teams.

Q. Teagan, you guys were here last year. I'm curious, what role does '24 play in '25? Is it motivation? What piece of the puzzle is that for you guys?

TEAGAN KAVAN: I think a little bit for sure, we know what it takes to get there, and we know what it feels like to lose at the end and not get on top. So obviously it plays a role, but I think most of it is just experience.

We graduated a few, but we bring back a lot of experience. Everybody but four of us have been here, and so you think that's more than a lot of teams probably here. So I think using that to our advantage, and we know what it feels like, so just using that.

Q. Mike, a lot of talk about seeding with this tournament, whether it's seeding through 32 or 64 or re-seeding at this point. Do you have strong opinions on either, whether we should see a deeper seed from the original collection or this tournament should be re-seeded?

MIKE WHITE: I would like to see seeding through 32. I think that the parity is really lifted in this game right now. And one of the reasons you play such a tough schedule is to put yourself in a position to either, one, host in the post-season, the super regionals and regionals, and/or to make sure that you qualify. It's different levels there as well. But I think you should be seeded and given some benefit for the volume of work you have done over the season.

Q. (Indiscernible.)



MIKE WHITE: I don't think re-seeding. It's part of the excitement, and I think that's the fun of it. That's just my opinion. I don't know if that's right or wrong.

Q. Mike, you certainly led Oregon to a lot of success during your time there, and it took time for Missy to build it back to this. Your reaction to them reaching this stage to this point? And how much did '21 give you closure to everything there, or how much it resonates when Rob and Lisa are still there now today?

MIKE WHITE: Yeah, I have a lot of friends still in Oregon, and it was fun to see them qualify for sure. It takes time to build a program, without a doubt. It took time at Texas to build the program up to where we feel like we're contenders.

And it took Missy a little bit of time as well. And just to see the fans turn out and the excitement that was generated at the Jane, it was tremendous to see, and it's good for all of softball. Anytime a program gets to another level, I think it's good for all of us.

Q. Reese, and then Coach, if you would like to chime in on this as well, but Reese, as someone who I assume has watched lots of former teammates go on and try to make it at the pro level, I'm curious what a current college player's view of the pro game right now is as Athletes Unlimited is kind of getting going and you maybe look to that in your future.

REESE ATWOOD: Yeah, of course. It's a dream of mine to play pro. And looking ahead at all the past players from the collegiate level being able to go play at the next top level is really cool to see. I think it's great, and I'm very excited to see how much it grows by the time I've graduated.

MIKE WHITE: It's exciting to see, to give women another opportunity to not only finish their college careers, because right now that is the pinnacle, other than if you're going to play for USA, of course. That's another step there.

And with the Olympics coming up, we're hoping that tide lifts all the boats, including the professional league as well. There are some great people and great coaches that are around that sport right now, and just need the promotion and the sponsors to get behind it and make sure these women can make a living out of playing softball.

Q. Kayden or Reese, I feel like Ashton's season goes a little bit under the radar. Just how well does she really set the table going for everything to get going for this offense?

REESE ATWOOD: Ashton is great, and I do believe she goes a little bit under the radar. She's probably the biggest table-setter we have. I swear, every time she gets on, no matter what her batting average is, I can't tell you there's a time she's not going to lead us off that first inning. It could be first pitch, whatever it is, she's on first base.

That's a huge spark of our lineup right now. If Ashton is on, I feel like all of us are going to follow her. So she's a huge part of our lineup.

KAYDEN HENRY: Yeah, she's a huge spark plug. She brings energy in the locker room. She brings energy on the field. When she hits, she wants to be the person that sets the table for us for sure.

Like Reese said, she just wants to get us started. And she feels when she's on, then everyone else is on. When she feels like she's off, she takes so much credit for our lineup not being the best. And we're like: Hey, shake it. Don't worry about us. You keep doing your thing; we'll cover you up.

Q. This is for the players. There's a lot of people watching softball maybe for the first time, and one thing that's mentioned by people who don't watch it all the time is the cheers you guys do in the dugouts. What I wanted to know is how important is that process of putting those things together to building team chemistry and having fun with what you do?

REESE ATWOOD: Yeah, I think energy is just a huge part of this game and just in women's sports in general. We show a lot of passion, and I think it shows our heart and love for the game. And I think it brings just like the team together as one instead of being all about yourself.

I think if you're cheering for everyone else, it makes you a little less focused on yourself and focus on the team. This team, we have seen when we don't have the energy, we don't play as well. And something Coach White harps on all the time, bringing full energy, which includes all the cheers and communication.

TEAGAN KAVAN: You said it, it's more fun, it's more fun to be loud and have the energy and be part of the field. I like when both teams are loud because it makes the game more fun. Coach Z says you're either doing a thing or supporting a thing, and I think that puts it really well.

KAYDEN HENRY: Yeah, same thing what they said. The energy helps the game, keeps the energy, brings a lot of momentum and passion and support for each other. The game doesn't know who is supposed to win, but when you



have that energy at that point, anybody can take over.

Q. Teagan and Reese, can I get you two to talk about your relationship with each other? When you're out there, you make such a great battery, you look locked in together.

REESE ATWOOD: Teagan is one of my best friends. I think that's a key part to how we are able to connect on the field. I feel like throughout the two years of my catching her, I have been able to grow in my knowledge of when she's on and when she's off mentally.

And I think that's big for us and our pitching staff, being able to create those relationships where I can talk to Teagan and know what she needs to hear from me and be able to be successful.

TEAGAN KAVAN: Yeah, I think same thing. Her passion and her drive kind of just inspire me. And I know she's going to give her all for this team, and I think that rubs off on all of us.

And she's one of my best friends off the field, and I think that helps a lot. We trust each other. And she can tell sometimes what I'm feeling, and it helps out when we need it.

Q. Mike, if you could speak towards the upcoming schedule of what you guys are looking at this week with potentially facing some teams that you've already faced in conference play and what that looks like for you with Florida obviously tomorrow and what's to come for the rest of the week.

MIKE WHITE: I don't know about potentially, but it's going to happen. Either way, win or lose, we're going to face two SEC teams. It's exciting. They're going to be a tough battle. But that's what you come here for, to play the best. And if you want to be the best, you have to beat the best.

It's exciting from the standpoint of the game right now, it's just tremendous. We can't get wait to get out there and play and have some fun. I think that's when our team battles the best. Sometimes when we're down, we're most dangerous. I hope that's not the case, but we can come out on the field and show the country what we can do.

Q. Mike, we hear a lot in men's sports, particularly football in the playoffs or basketball during the NCAA Tournament when the portal opens for the teams no longer playing and the difficulty and challenge that is for coaching staffs and whether or not there's a way around that.

What is the challenge here for softball when that's the case? Is that a challenge in the same way because the academic calendar is a little different? Or is it as big a challenge for the softball coaches and how would you like to see it fixed, remedied or not?

MIKE WHITE: Yeah, it's a big issue and right now there's already some players committed to teams in or out of the tournament, and your focus for this obviously needs to be on this tournament right now, or should it be as least.

So scheduling those, some are having visits to programs that are in the super regionals or regionals. That's not something we're doing. I'm not saying it's right or wrong, but it can be an issue.

I think it should be pushed back just a little bit until everybody's done with their season. I think that would be fair. So readjusting the calendar, but we're going to go with rules that are set. We're going to make adjustments and deal with it.

And I'm not griping about it, but we deal with what the issues are right now, and our issues are to compete in this tournament and then maybe look for some people in the transfer. We're still looking, don't get me wrong. We're looking for people in the transfer portal, and we're going to go along with that.

Q. Mike, how big was those last few innings for Mac and bringing her confidence into this week to end the super regionals?

MIKE WHITE: We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Mac Morgan. We could say that for several other people. We could say that about the bump that Katie Cimus put down or the strikeout that Teagan made and the last play she made that she made look pretty easy. That little double-hopper, you kind of held your breath over that play by the really fast person on base.

There's a lot of turning points in that game, but Mac's contribution and especially after having been hit around a little bit towards the end of the year, it didn't faze her one bit. She was ready. She wanted the ball, said: I'm going to do the best for my team.

That's what we can ask, and she did that for us.

THE MODERATOR: That will wrap things up for Texas.

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