

2025 Women's College World Series

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Texas Tech Red Raiders

Coach Gerry Glasco

Alana Johnson

NiJaree Canady

Postgame Press Conference



Offensively, we struggled to get the ball in the air, we just kept hitting ground balls. We had four hits, and luckily two of them were right in a row and they were well-placed on that left field line.

When Lauren got the hit down the left field line, I was hoping she got that to second, and I thought she made that right read to stop. But then Alana was able to get that ball and get it past the left fielder, and Lauren's got really good speed for a first baseman and very deceptive speed. Runs well. Had a good jump, and she really got around the bases quick. That was a huge, huge run.

I thought we had the bases loaded. We kept -- we just couldn't get the ball past the pitcher. I think we hit three straight ground balls to the pitcher. Right there we needed a fly ball, something up in the air out in the outfield to get another run. But we didn't get it. And luckily NiJa was able to bow her neck and just do what she's done all year and get us across the finish line.

Q. Alana, talk about your hit that produced the only run of the game.

ALANA JOHNSON: First I want to say all glory to God. None of this would be possible without Him.

As Coach Glasco said, the first at-bat, I was early on a changeup, hit a ground ball. Our whole lineup almost was hitting ground balls. So he was getting on us a little bit, telling us to get the ball in the air.

And I feel like that's what I was trying to do. I figured I was going to get some more changeups because I got out my first at-bat on a changeup. So I was going to try to be a little bit late on a changeup and get it in the air a little bit.

Q. NiJaree, talk about the relationship of you and Vic, the battery mate that you have, how you guys have done this time and time again. Dominant performances, but it's both of you calling a great game. Just talk about the relationship you have together.

Texas Tech 1, Ole Miss 0

THE MODERATOR: We will start with an opening statement from Coach Glasco. If you have an opening statement, feel free, Coach.

GERRY GLASCO: Exciting, really fun to get out and be on the field, a rain delay, having to wait an hour added to the fun, I think, and the anticipation to finally get out there and see the crowd fill in and watch the stadium fill up. Really exciting to be on that field and play in that opening game.

The game itself, I thought you have to tip your hat to Aliyah Binford, having an outstanding senior year. Ole Miss had an outstanding season. I thought they scouted well, pitched extremely well. They played defense well. I just thought Binford was outstanding tonight. And tough loss for her to pitch that great a game, and I just want to give her all the accolades I can.

I thought our pitcher was really good. I thought our defense was really good. NiJa just continues to do what NiJa does, ten strikeouts, no walks, only two hits. Our defense was really good. Miya Davis made a Miya Davis catch out in the center field.

I say all the time she's the best center fielder in the country. When she makes a catch like she did tonight, and she does that stuff all the time. And just I don't want to take it for granted. That was a really good catch to be able to read that ball on that low line drive.

And I thought our freshman, third base, shortstop, they have done it all year, and they were outstanding again tonight as well as Alexa Langeliers over at second base. Another good night. Just been the rocks all year on the infield, especially the second half of the season.

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NiJAREE CANADY: Yeah, definitely fun off the field. We love to joke around and play card games. But when we step between the chalk lines, it's all business. She's always in my ear telling me what pitch is good, what pitch is bad. If they hit a ball, I'm looking back to see where it's at. So definitely a really good relationship.

Q. NiJa, the last two times you have been here, you have had to go through the losers bracket. How big was it to come out and get the first win and set yourself up for the week?

NiJAREE CANADY: Yeah, it's amazing. Actually, Lauren was just saying it's my first time too. So it was definitely a goal of mine just to come back, have a day off tomorrow. So definitely huge. To be able to give this team a rest I feel like is going to be really good.

Q. Alana, you have been in this situation before too, but this is a very different setting for you, a different experience. What has this experience been like overall, and what was this game like?

ALANA JOHNSON: I mean, it's been amazing to just get to come back to the World Series. Obviously it's something that you dream of and every little girl dreams of. And I feel like we came here with this in mind, to compete for a national championship. So feels real good.

Q. Alana, obviously you get that one on Binford, but what was she pitching differently that forced y'all into so many ground balls today?

ALANA JOHNSON: She has a really good dropball. So she was throwing a lot of drop and a lot of change. We just weren't getting under it enough.

Q. For both of the players, what was it like to get out there on the practice field and start getting your work in, and then the rains come and you have to sit and wait? NiJa, obviously, you have been here before, but for Alana, having to wait an extra hour and 15 minutes to finally play that College World Series game.

ALANA JOHNSON: I mean, it was a little bit of a lull, obviously, because we got warmed up, did some BP and had to go in the team room and sit for a little while, not knowing how long it was going to be. But we're all excited to come out here and compete for a national championship, so it didn't bring our excitement down any.

NiJAREE CANADY: I saw a tweet. We waited however long to come to a World Series; we can wait another hour. So I think it was okay.

Oh, it was you? (Laughter) Yeah, good tweet, good tweet.

Q. NiJa, you have been in this place before, but now with this new team, what were the emotions for you, just being able to win a World Series game with these girls by your side?

NiJAREE CANADY: Yeah, it was amazing, like Lana said. Just being able to play here has always been a dream, and to be able to come here and get the first win sets us up for the rest of the week and the rest of the tournament. So, yeah, it was good.

THE MODERATOR: That will wrap things up for the player, you guys are dismissed.

Questions for Coach.

Q. We have seen NiJa do this throughout the year, but up here she's very nonchalant, not saying a lot. But there's something that flips in her mind when she gets out there. You as a coach, do you see that throughout her progression warming up for a game where you can see her locking into the moment?

GERRY GLASCO: I think you just know. You just know when the game starts, she's a competitor. You have been around athletes enough, no matter what sport, you just run across people that can turn it up at game time. And she's that player.

I told somebody today I grew up in Illinois, and I was in Illinois when Michael Jordan -- and I read a lot about Michael Jordan. All the things you read about him in practice and the way he competed in practice harder than he did in games, that's what you see with NiJa.

It's amazing, her tendencies, and the way she'll use things. She'll say: They got a hit off me two years ago. They're not getting a hit off me tonight.

She'll remember things and say it out loud to motivate herself. She's an amazing competitor.

But when she come up out of the bullpen before the game, I said, Tara, how's NiJa look? She goes, Whoa. She may hit 75, 76 tonight. She's bringing it.

And so then Vic came by me: Vic, how you feel?

She said, Good.

I said, How does NiJa feel?

She said, Don't worry about NiJa, she's on.

I thought when both Tara and Vic gave me that report, I knew she must have been special in the bullpen.

Q. Has something clicked for Alana in the post-season? Just another big moment coming through in that at-bat and get the one RBI tonight.

GERRY GLASCO: Alana? Yeah, she's a clutch player, and she's worked really hard to be able to improve her ability to time pitches. And I thought it was really important, first at-bat, she was a little off time there, wasn't patient, and then she made some really good adjustments in the second one. That was huge.

We all know that one was huge. So I was really proud of her. She's really been getting RBIs for us here the last, oh, third of the season. Probably leading our team here the last 15 games. So just another clutch moment for her.

Q. Coach, what went into the decision to move Hailey back into the lineup? I know she was hitting out of that nine hole, and she was hitting pretty well, and then you move her back up. What went into that?

GERRY GLASCO: The match-up, working the match-up with the pitcher. She batted second a big part of the year. I like the speed of her when I can put her behind Mihyia, opens up the hit and run.

But I like the match-up with her on the dropball. And I wanted those five hitters there at the top. I thought it was going to be really important to score with the first five batters.

I felt like we were going to struggle offensively a little bit tonight, as I've been worried all day, and we talked about we need to keep the score. It's going to be -- I thought it would be a really low-scoring game, and it was. It played just the way I was afraid it would. I was hoping to find a way to get three or four runs, but I wanted that group of hitters at the front, and didn't want to leave Toney down there because she's got a good ability to hit the changeup and the dropball.

Q. Coach, the College World Series is such a marathon. How big is this win to get the day off tomorrow and you don't play again until Saturday?

GERRY GLASCO: It's just huge. It's huge for our program. We want to build Texas Tech into a national program that comes here on a regular basis. We've said that since the very beginning.

And I think that to not just be satisfied to get here but to be able to make the statement that we can come here and win and we can take that home with us as we go into the next year and try to improve upon the things that we've done this year.

Because we want to win a World Series. We don't want to just show up. We want to come back. If we don't win it this year, we want to win it next year. And we want to learn everything we can learn this year and learn how to win. And learn how to win a game like that is really important. So I think it was a huge opportunity for us tonight that we were able to take advantage of and get that win.

For all our players, too, to get that win in the first game at the World Series, the ones that haven't been here before, I think it was huge for them mentally.

THE MODERATOR: Any more questions? Thank you, coach.

GERRY GLASCO: Thank you.

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