

# 2021 Women's College World Series

Wednesday, June 9, 2021  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

## Oklahoma Sooners Coach Patty Gasso Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma - 6, Florida State - 2

**Q. Wanted to ask you about Giselle. Obviously used sparingly before this tournament but huge wins by her. How did she stay so locked in, so ready to go? And then as far as tomorrow, are you thinking about bringing her back to pitch again tomorrow?**

COACH GASSO: I'll first start with the fact that she has been waiting for this moment. And I don't know -- I think sometimes when you're away from the game or you really want that moment and you're not getting it, it just kind of takes you to another place of, like, why am I not getting this? What do I have to do to get the ball more?

And that started happening in postseason. And she's turned into postseason form because she kind of let go of some of the things that were holding on to her, like, in her mind -- second-guessing and questioning and thinking too much.

So you're seeing a very free Giselle Juarez, which is what we did see in 2019. But it's a different G. It's very determined, very determined, unfazed right now. It's really exciting to see that.

Yes, tomorrow. I'm not telling you if she's going to start or not, because I don't know any of that yet. We've got to go back and just work out how we're going to go about this. But everything is on the table right now. You've got to do everything you can to find a way to win this. So whatever we have to do -- and I know she'll do whatever she has to do as well.

**Q. Wanted to ask you about the other storyline in the game, that sixth inning and Jocelyn Alo especially. What that home run, the record, the way that it brought you all back from the lead, the way that you all reacted to that. Just how big was that to shift the momentum back so quickly to your side?**

COACH GASSO: It's the difference in the game, without question. I mean, Giselle did such a great job. But offensively we were just not -- we were not having a lot of success. And Jocelyn is always the shot in the arm. She's the one in everybody's ear. It could be really easy for a hitter like her to just say, you know what, I'm that good and nobody else is. What are you guys doing?

And she's right in the middle of this. She is right in the middle of this team and trying to help them get rallied. She's not too big for these guys. She definitely is a great team player. So we without question needed that. And she was the spark throughout the game, without question.

**Q. Obviously Jocelyn had the big two-out triple against UCLA and that hit tonight. What is it about her that gives her this sort of ability to step up in big games like this when the team needs a hit the most?**

COACH GASSO: She is very, very unfazed by anything. And she believes that she can beat any pitcher anytime, anyplace. And she usually does. And that is Jocelyn. She's very, very prideful of her hitting. And it bleeds into our team.

But there are times when it would be real easy to get frustrated. And she doesn't. She trusts in her team and whenever she can spark us we seem to follow that. So she is just without -- there's no words to explain how important she is to this team.

**Q. The offense got going to the point they were passing the torch, so to speak, or getting it going. It took a while to get that going. Now that it has, though, hitting is contagious a little bit. I know you guys have been blasting all year, but do you think -- this could be a good omen for tomorrow, couldn't it?**

COACH GASSO: Absolutely. We felt momentum come -- we were just dead silent there for a while. After Jana Johns hit her solo home run it was ground ball after ground ball. Everybody was a little frustrated. We kept trying to rally and talk about things and make adjustments. And things just -- they weren't working very well and that's a credit to Florida State's pitching staff. They did a great job.



And good pitchers can get good hitters out a lot.

It was definitely Jocelyn Alo that kind of created this energy and everybody just started to step up behind her.

The momentum is definitely on our side. This team felt really good, very excited about how they won. Even though it was late in the game, it's a victory that puts us in a championship game to win it all. And that's a big deal for this group. They fought very hard throughout the season to get here. So should be an exciting day tomorrow.

**Q. Could you describe your team's confidence level both last night after the game and heading into the sixth inning when things were, the game was, you were down 2-1 and down to six outs?**

COACH GASSO: Last night? I'm confused with your question. I'm sorry.

**Q. She was referencing tonight, what was the confidence level after losing last night and then being down 2-1 heading into this.**

COACH GASSO: I see. Confident -- the team was down last night. We didn't play well at all. We didn't pitch very well. We just didn't do many things well last night.

And when you still have the tying run coming up to home plate, you just gotta pick things out of that game that you can build off of for the next game. The attitude that this team had is we don't lose two games in a row. We just don't. We haven't dealt with that all season. We referenced some times back in our season where we've been up against the wall and how we fought back to win games.

So we went back into our season and, like I said, just tried to get their memories back to how they fought through things. They were not going to quit tonight. I know that. I know that about this team. Although it wasn't going well for us, they did not quit.

And, again, Jocelyn Alo and Giselle Juarez and Lou, Donihoo, making big plays, there were some really big momentum plays on defense. Grace Lyons making a great play at shortstop, those are things that we can build off. We needed that. Even though it came late, it didn't matter. We built off of it.

**Q. You mentioned earlier that we're seeing a freer G now, that she's let go some of the stuff mentally. By the time you got to May or June, was there anything that you or Jen could do to speed that up, or did you just have to sit back and wait and watch and hope that**

**it would come?**

COACH GASSO: Did a lot of talking, really tried to figure out what she needed to let go of. We were always working with her. It was just -- it's so hard. Any coach could tell you. When it has something to do with what's going on mentally, you can give them cues and you can try to help them, but ultimately it's a player just deciding, I can't take this anymore. This is ruining my career. It's really messing with the fun that I have with the game. And you just gotta wait. You've got to wait sometimes until they get that figured out.

So with Giselle, it started coming slowly towards the end of the season. And really came alive in postseason. So she'll tell you, the only thing she's going to remember about her career is this last week.

**Q. It's become a pretty big topic of conversation over the course of this WS, that softball needing to institute replay. Mendes' call in the first inning brought that back up again. Is that something you'd like to see added? And has it been frustrating that seeing these calls you're pretty confident?**

COACH GASSO: Thank you for asking that question. We have over 40 cameras here. And there's a reason why we cannot have instant replay. I don't know how many college programs don't have it. I think more do have it. We're on the biggest stage there is. I've never come out of -- now, I'm not -- umpires are human. And coaches come out and they argue calls. I just feel like there's been so much of coaches coming out of their dugouts to question calls. And probably a lot of them are right. I'm not saying that they're wrong. But it's certainly, for peace of mind and for the good of the game, we want things to be right.

Umpires want things to be right. So I have no real -- you're hearing a lot of us coaches just -- we're baffled why don't we have instant replay? Baseball has it. Volleyball has it. Why doesn't softball have it, especially on the biggest stage? It's only fair -- it's fair for both programs, for all teams in the World Series. Everyone in the postseason.

If it takes a little extra time, our sport is that good that people aren't going to leave. And if they leave, personally, I would say I would rather a fan leave viewership and us get the call right.

It's what the game deserves. It's what our players deserve. It's what our players deserve. And I think everyone's -- there's just -- it's timing. It's all about timing. We want your game to be finished and get done by a certain time.

Let's do this right. Let's do this right. We deserve that.

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THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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