

2022 Women's College World Series

Thursday, June 2, 2022

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

UCLA Bruins

Coach Kelly Inouye-Perez

Megan Faraimo

Briana Perez

Postgame Press Conference



Texas - 7, UCLA - 2

THE MODERATOR: This is the Game 1 press conference featuring the UCLA Bruins. We're joined by head coach Kelly Inouye-Perez and student-athletes Megan Faraimo and Briana Perez.

Q. Megan, this is your first significant appearance. What was the moment like for you? Was there something that surprised you about getting the starting or stock exchange into the starting role, and how do you think it can help you going into tomorrow?

MEGAN FARAIMO: This moment is something I was looking forward to for a long time. I was just trying to focus on being where my feet are, living in one time zone.

Q. In that third inning you started off well, and then it kind of spiraled there. What happened in the circle?

MEGAN FARAIMO: Obviously, I didn't execute the way I would want to, but I'm just glad that we got back in the dugout eventually. Holly, I think, had my back, and I think Lauren Shaw also had my back. We're just prepared to get after it tomorrow.

Q. Briana, due to the double-elimination, you guys are still alive. A chance to get out there and get back on track. Is that kind of the message for this team? What are you using to kind of rally each other right now?

BRIANA PEREZ: Just lucky that the bracket is built this way and ready to fight tomorrow. That's what our game is all about, is just what you do next. That's what Coach Inouye always says. It's not what happens, it's what you do next. I think this team has a lot of fight in us.

Q. Briana, what were you kind of seeing from Dolcini today? You guys had been pretty hot in the postseason, but she kind of kept your bats pretty quiet there for a while.

BRIANA PEREZ: Just a lot of respect to her. She's a great pitcher. I think we knew coming in that she was going to have that rise ball and spin the ball a lot, and then we knew we had to get on top of it. And I think we could have been a little bit more top of it, and we swung at a few balls, but I believe in us.

Q. What was your message to the team after that?

KELLY INOUEY-PEREZ: First, I would like to credit Texas. They came out, and they executed, and we didn't, so we didn't deserve to win that game.

I have a lot of belief and faith in this team, and if we play the way we're capable of playing, then that's the best -- that's what we have to look forward to. The only good news is we didn't play our game tonight. Once again, that doesn't take away from the fact that Texas did. Credit to them.

Q. Coach, you guys played Texas earlier in the season. What was different from today's Longhorn team than you saw at the beginning of the year?

KELLY INOUEY-PEREZ: Well, that was in February and this is in June, so a lot. I think we all have gone through a full season. Aaliyah Jordan was in the line-up against them last time and did some damage. They had a different pitcher they started last time.

That's kind of a random question. That was then; this is now. Today was a different ball game. It's a different time of year, but I think at the end of the day we all have to put ourselves in the position to play your game right now, here and now.

Past is as old as dirt. It's about who shows up today. Once again, I'll just say they executed. We didn't. We didn't deserve to win the game today, but I believe that my team will punch back.

Q. Bri just mentioned it, but from your point of view what did you think of the at-bats that your players were taking?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I believe we could have adjusted, bottom line. She threw a good screwball. We've seen good screwballs. Credit her that she was effective.

I think we tried to hone in and get better pitches to swing at, and it seemed like the zone got a little bit wider on those first pitches at the end, which kind of forced us to swing at some pitches we may not have wanted to, but at the end of the day we need to adjust, and we did.

To be able to get on the board and not give up is a sign of what great teams do, but she was effective today. We didn't have enough quality at-bats to be able to put together to put up enough of a fight, and we dug ourselves a hole there that was a pretty big one to climb out of, but bottom line, at-bats across the board could have been better, period.

Q. Delanie Wisz's two-run bomb, what does that say for the team? Is that something that you carry into tomorrow for the elimination game tomorrow?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Huge. Absolutely. It's awesome to be able to see Lanie do what she does. Kinsley, finding a way to get on base, and Lanie coming up big in big moments. Those are the things that we hold on to are we've got to be able to play our game and get back to doing the things that we do. We got to see a piece of that.

The ability for Kinsley to find a way to get on and then Lanie. No one throwing pitches over the plate to Lanie Wisz because she's done so much damage, but for her to do that on this stage I think says great things about our ability to play our game. Got to get everybody dialed in, but that is a huge, huge momentum, and that's what I told the team.

We didn't quit. I think that's something that is important that we didn't quit. We continued to try to fight and find a way to be able to close the gap. And, yeah, that was a huge at-bat. That's UCLA softball. Lanie has done it for us all year, and I love that she's doing it here on this stage.

Q. What did you think of your pitching staff, specifically Megan and Holly having their first major appearances on the World Series stage?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: It's the game. I think we could say time, place, all of that. I believe that we obviously could be better at the end of the day. I think that every

team here has found a way to get here and is playing great ball.

I believe in my pitching staff. I've got to go back and look at film to be able to see, but once again, I think I credit Texas more than I say that we just fell apart.

When you see pitchers fall apart, they're walking people, hitting people, and getting behind in the count, and we attacked the zone. It's what we do.

Credit the ability for the opponent to be able to execute. And I'll go back and look at film and see just how many pitches we actually missed, but it's the game. That's why we're here, and I feel that my team is in a good place to be able to play the game.

We didn't execute today. It happens to be in June. It's a bad time for that, but the double elimination bracket allows us to come back. And like the girls said, it's not what happened today. It's what we do next. We have the opportunity to play our game. That's the focus right now, is just get to the next pitch.

Q. Coach Mike White from Texas was saying when referring to the third inning and that interference call, he was saying that without the implementation of a safety base at first base, it gives coaches the opportunity to kind of just challenge whenever someone has got a close play at first base. I'm just curious what your thoughts were on that play and the safety base.

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I would love to be a loud voice. That is how we lost Aaliyah Jordan and how Kinsley Washington got hurt in the middle of season.

I have a strong opinion about that; that I believe that a safety base would prevent some of those potential injuries or some of the plays because when you have two people trying to occupy that small space with the ball in motion, then it potentially can create not just interesting plays like that, but also injury.

I am a big voice, big advocate that there is a need. Major League Baseball has looked to expand the size of the bases to be able to create more space, so Major League Baseball is heading that direction. I hope softball does the same because I had a critical injury because -- and it was actually against Texas that ended Aaliyah's season this year -- because two people were trying to occupy that first base bag.

I'm going to say it again: I hope that we pull together to find a way, especially at this level to be able to find a way,



to have two different lanes for the defender and for the runner to be able to get to the bag.

Q. Obviously you have a quick turnaround and have to come back tomorrow. What's the approach between now and tomorrow night with your season on the line?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Go get some food, get some rest, and study a little bit and get right back out here.

Thank you.

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