

2022 Women's College World Series

Monday, June 6, 2022

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

UCLA Bruins

Coach Kelly Inouye-Perez

Delanie Wisz

Maya Brady

Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma 15, UCLA 0

THE MODERATOR: This is Games 11 and 12 press conference featuring the UCLA Bruins, joined by head coach Kelly Inouye-Perez and student-athletes Maya Brady and Delanie Wisz. Questions for our student-athletes to start, please.

Q. For Delanie. Game 2 got away from you guys early, but what was kind of the message you guys were saying to each other just to stick into it?

DELANIE WISZ: Whatever we were saying is just we're here. Like, we made a statement in the first game, and that's what we came here to do, to make a statement.

It didn't go our way the second game, but we were just trying to have fun and keep it loose out on the field and just do whatever we could. Yeah.

Q. For Maya. The importance of getting those home runs in the first and just put yourself in position, and then also -- (Off microphone).

MAYA BRADY: I was just trying to make something happen for my team. Obviously, our backs are against the wall in the first game, so just kind of trying to make something happen.

His support is obviously very influential for me. He is a huge factor in my life, so it's nice to know that he is supporting me. For such a person with such -- so many accolades, a male athlete, to support women's sports is just huge for our game. It's really cool that he was drawing attention to the World Series in general.

Q. Maya, what do you think just getting that first win

and kind of coming out with that big punch, what do you think that shows about the character of this team?

MAYA BRADY: I think that it just kind of shows that we were a force to be reckoned with the whole time that maybe we didn't get the respect that we deserved. And I think that for us to come out and throw a punch against a team like that just shows that UCLA softball is still in the running and still deserves to be talked about.

I think that it just kind of showed what we -- who we knew we were the whole year. We knew that we would be able to do that. Whether people believed that or not, it didn't matter to us because we knew what we were capable of.

For us that was just playing UCLA softball, and it was just doing what we do on the daily, and we were just having fun.

THE MODERATOR: Delanie, you've got amazing pitching performances all year. Could you talk about what Megan and Holly and Lauren have meant to your team throughout the season and then especially in the postseason?

DELANIE WISZ: Yeah. They have worked their butts off the entire season and even in the fall. I believe they are if not the sole reason why we're back in OKC. They kept us in a lot of close games when the offense wasn't producing.

We wouldn't be here if it weren't for our pitching staff. Hats off to them because they put in the work.

Q. Delanie, you were on fire for the whole second half of the season, the postseason. What are you going to remember most about this final stretch of your career?

DELANIE WISZ: Honestly, just having fun with my teammates. (Tearing up.) My teammates helped me fall back in love with the game, and that has meant the world to me. So just having fun with my teammates and just finishing my career as a Bruin, it's amazing to me.

Q. Maya, what can you say about the senior class and what they've meant to this program?



MAYA BRADY: (Tearing up.) Sorry.

THE MODERATOR: We can come back to that one.

MAYA BRADY: This senior class, since I have kind of stepped foot on campus, has just been probably some of the biggest role models that I think that I've had softball-wise and in life.

They're amazing softball players, but the people that they are off the field is just incredible, and I'm going to miss them a lot personally. I live with Delanie. So, yeah, it's going to be hard, but they're such a special group, and they literally changed UCLA I think historically and they definitely left the program better than they found it, and I'm just so blessed that I was able to play with all of them.

Q. Delanie, you talked earlier about making statements this year. What statement do you think your team made this season?

DELANIE WISZ: Kind of like Maya said. I don't think we got the respect that we deserved this season, so we just came to play, and I think in the first game that you guys saw, we definitely came to play. Yeah, we just wanted play UCLA softball.

THE MODERATOR: Anything else for our student-athletes? Maya, Delanie, thank you very much for your time. We appreciate it. Congratulations on a wonderful season. Questions for Coach, please.

Q. Coach, what was your message to the team during that Game 2? Got away early, but you guys stuck in it.

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: During the game? You know, we're never out of it. It was definitely heart-wrenching to be down so much so fast so early, but we had language in the dugout like throughout the entire game of the belief that we could come and get right back into that game.

I think the score was 15. Somebody said we can score 16. We scored 16 off of them before. Aaliyah said, no, we only need eight, and we're still in the game. The language is what are we going to do next? That makes me proud at the end of the day.

It didn't turn out the way that we wanted to, but that Game 1 is a big one for us to be able to come out and be able to play, but the experience gained I think is the most important thing.

I told them, you know, it takes guts to play sports in general, to get on a stage, and there's a lot of highs and lows, but it doesn't completely define you as a person. It's

an opportunity. What they showed in Game 1 was UCLA softball. So proud of them.

And Game 2 got away from us. That is a quality team. And I should have started: Oklahoma, quality team. Everyone else knows that. We still believe we can beat them, and we did. At the end of the day to get them back-to-back on the same day is a pretty big challenge. But they're a solid team, they're well-coached, they have great athletes.

At the end of the day, my team, we don't quit. We don't quit. And I think that's what I'm so proud about them, and that's the DNA of UCLA softball. No matter how far you're down, you always have an opportunity. We just have to keep on punching. It wasn't our day on Game 2 today, but I'm very proud that we're standing here on day two with an opportunity.

Q. Coach, you've been around a lot of great hitters during your career. Where would you rank Jocelyn Alo in terms of just her impact and what she can do?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: It's just impressive. The strength factor is one thing. There's different types of hitters that have great hands and they have some that are really strong. I think she has both. She has the ability.

I got a straight view of her home run, and I'm, like, oh, that's going to -- please let it tail foul, and, unfortunately, it didn't.

Just a lot of respect for her. She's a quality hitter. She's a strong girl. She's got great hands. She's a tough out, and she performs on the stage in a big way and she got us today.

That was a moment, too, that Holly got her. It was pretty awesome that we had a little bit of both. But to answer your question, clearly, there's a reason why she's the Player of the Year.

Q. Your home runs won the game on the scoreboard, but your pitching in the first game held Oklahoma in check. They only scored three runs that game. You saw what they can do when they get going. Talk about that first game. Your pitching in your first game. That got you to the second game.

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Everything you said is true. Pitching definitely -- defense is what wins championships at the end of the day, and that's the name of the game because especially on this stage. We've had great opportunities to do some damage like that, and that's fun when that happens, but it's not something that is normal at

this time of the year.

So defense. Not just pitching, but your ability to field and your ability to throw, and those are the types of things a nine-on-one mentality is big. As the girls said, pitching is why we're here. We had players that left the line-up, and we had some adversity. No excuse. You've got to be able to defend to be able to move on. Especially against quality offensive teams.

Yes, bottom line, I love the way that they tag teamed and figured out a way to be able to stop a very offensive team. I think the timely hitting is something that you always hope for. And some people can step up on this stage, and they leave their mark and have great memories, and it's not easy to do.

Pitching is definitely what won Game 1 that allowed us to come through with those timely hits.

Q. UCLA has obviously been the top program in the history of the sport, and you have a ton of really great seasons, but what will you remember about this one?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Just a lot of grit, a lot of heart. A lot of versatility. No one got to see what was happening behind the doors this year, you know, behind the screens of what was happening. We just had different people in and out of the line-up. You didn't see it from our record. You didn't see it from how we were competing.

Like I say, that's the biggest thing is we have been fortunate to have a highlight reel with UCLA softball for the last four to five years of some of these guys playing on this stage as freshmen. The highlight reel of them is real, and the expectations and what we expect of these players, but this is a year where different people stood up and they stepped up and had big moments.

We always talk about versatility, but today -- this team we kind of almost went to the last length of our bench. I mean, Savi Pola is playing with nine fingers. I mean, really? We thought she was out too. As a freshman, I love that she got to get the experience and settle in and play. We thought she wasn't going to be able to finish the season. Kinsley wasn't supposed to finish. We've had a lot.

Adversity provides an opportunity for different people to step up, and UCLA this year, I'm so proud of them for that.

I think going back to what the bottom line is what everyone is saying, I'm proud of our pitchers. I'm proud of what Lisa has done with Megan and with Holly and with Lauren Shaw, and I want more out of Lexi Sosa in the future. I think pitching really -- that's kind of the history of our

program, right?

Q. What do you think the legacy of the senior class will be?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: They left their mark. I think they said it best. They left UCLA in a better place, and we kind of just went through that. Didn't get Lanie enough long enough to be able to have her be a four, you know, five year, but Kinsley and Holly and Bri have definitely left the program in a better place. They took care of it. They were leaders. They shined. They performed. They're great students. They represent with class. Like I said, kind of jokingly, but they're very classy and sassy and a lot bad assy. I think that senior class has it all.

I'm proud of them. We're going to miss them greatly, but they got us back to the World Series because we do have some young Bruins, and we're going to get some young Bruins coming in, but that senior class got us back four years in a row, five years since -- four years in a row. They're only seniors. Four years. And that's a huge statement to be able to do that. For us to have a presence here, it comes down to leadership and experiences, and we had that. That's why we're here.

Q. Coach, considering all the injuries you had this year and the adversity, was this one of the more challenging years for you and your staff and in some ways rewarding, considering, with all that, you got within one win away from playing for the National Championship Series?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Oh, 100%. I think I credit my coaches for finding different ways to find ways to win. We weren't as loaded as we've been in the past. Last year we had a roster that I think you could have looked at and said it's over just by the names on it, but this year we didn't.

With people going down, 100% exactly what you said. I'm so proud. It was challenging and very rewarding because we had to find different ways to win. I think that we'll go down, when you talk about this 2022 team, there's no one person, like, you know, Rachel Garcia was the big brand and so was Bubba in the past, but there's no one big name. We played as a team, and I think that is the definition of team sports right there, and this team represented big-time.

Q. You mentioned just experience and taking this forward. Specifically for Megan, what do you hope this experience does for her?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: It's not even hope it will. She's a competitor. She's fierce. She got us back to OKC. She

hasn't had the ability to take the program.

She's mad and sad and frustrated, but there is a fierce competitor in there that's going to do something about it, I truly believe.

I love to see that she got to use her stick and be able to swing her stick. I love to see that she got to perform in the circle. The game doesn't pay you back that quickly. I tell her this. Experience is a hard lesson, right? You don't learn it until afterwards, but the experience she gained this post-season and this World Series is going to do a great deal for UCLA softball in 2023. Wow, I can't believe I'm saying that. It's so long. 2023.

But everything. She will not quit, and she doesn't like letting her team down. So at the end of the day I believe she's going to be a bigger, stronger, more experienced Megan Faraimo in 2023.

Q. Coach, I wanted to ask you, did you guys do a lot of scout on Jordy Bahl coming in, not knowing what she was going to do, if she was going to throw or not? And just your thoughts on Jordy. And then also on Hope Trautwein and what she was able to do in Game 2.

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I'm going to be honest, no, I didn't study Jordy a lot. At this time of the year -- for Pac, we focus on Pac; and at this time of the year, we focus weekend to weekend on the opponent who is in the other dugout today.

We got to face her early, and I can tell you we didn't learn a lot about her because we didn't swing our stick a lot in that first weekend. We walked away -- I was shocked. I learned about my team. I was, like, whoa, we didn't compete in that first weekend. We let her dominate the game.

So, no, I haven't. I clearly can see she's a fierce competitor because I know she's not 100%. She's got a great drop. She's got a great off-speed. She's a competitor I think probably more than anything, but I couldn't speak really in detail because I didn't spend the time studying her.

Hope, the same. I think Hope throws hard, and she has a great rise-ball. Give us more at-bats, and I think we would have had a better opportunity to do some more damage against her. Respect to her because clearly she's helped Oklahoma. I believe we could have done some more against Hope.

However, out of respect, clearly, she's a quality pitcher. I

just didn't get a chance to really see her to tell you more about her.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much.

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Thanks, guys.

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