

2023 Women's College World Series

Wednesday, June 7, 2023
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Oklahoma Sooners
Coach Patty Gasso
Jordy Bahl
Rylie Boone
Kinzie Hansen

Postgame Press Conference



Ma 5, Florida State 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Oklahoma.

We'll start with a statement from Coach.

PATTY GASSO: Just it's always really good to get that first win under your belt. Really important. Our team was really focused for that.

The rain situation and all of the lightning and so forth kind of put a wrench in it. So it felt like a little bit of rushing. It was just uncharacteristic of what the beginning of a championship series would feel like.

Watching all the fans go in and out, it was just... Some were not moving at all (smiling).

It's a big moment. Everybody wants to see it. So I think we started off a little bit nervous. We had a little conversation as a group. They decided we need to be more like us and stop trying. We don't try hard, we just play. We were trying hard. You can see the difference.

Once they got their feet on the ground, just kind of took off, hit the ball hard. Really started hitting the ball hard. Jordy again was just absolutely exceptional.

Proud of how we turned that switch really quickly. Then from that moment on, we just were back to our old selves.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players.

Q. Jordy, we talk about pitching, but the pinch running opportunity there in the fifth, walk us through that play

from the start. Kinzie, curious about your perspective on Jordy's base running on that play.

JORDY BAHL: I think base running is really fun. So when I went out there, I was thinking just be fast but be smart. Get a good jump. If the ball is in the dirt, you're going, but get a good jump.

I saw the ball off Hansen's bat. Knowing where the outfielders were, it was going to get through. I was able to get a good jump and run.

Yeah, like I said, Hansen put a great swing on a great pitch and it all just worked out.

KINZIE HANSEN: Yeah, when Jordy went in to pinch run, in my mind I was like, if I get the ball in the gap, we're going to be 1-0. Jordy has wheels. She runs circles around us at practice sometimes. She strikes us out, too. It's all over the place.

I knew going into my at-bat, my previous at-bat I rolled over, so I was really trying to make that adjustment because I knew, based on the situation and my runner at first, being able to apply that swing to that pitch would end up successful with the team.

Q. Jordy, I wanted to ask you about the fourth inning. They get a couple base runners on, you're able to escape the jam. How big was it to get that stop at the top of the frame? How much confidence do you have if you get enough defensive stops, the offense is going to respond?

JORDY BAHL: I always know the offense is going to get going. Especially this entire tournament, we've faced some really tough pitching, but I know they're going to score runs.

I just try to do my best to just throw a good game and let the defense work, know that the offense is going to come through.

Q. Rylie and Kinzie, during the regular season, we saw teams throw multiple pitchers against you. Are you

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surprised that teams are still doing this, throwing different arms at you? I was wondering your thoughts on Coach Gasso's dance moves during the weather delay. We saw it on ESPN.

KINZIE HANSEN: One thing about our offense is we embrace challenges. I know we work on a lot of things specifically at practice that we know we're going to see in the game.

Going into this game, we knew that they were going to try to take a different strategy possibly. We know there's a bunch of different challenges that people might throw at us to catch us off guard.

When that did happen, that did occur going into the second time through the lineup, it didn't really faze us. We were kind of excited to see the challenge, excited to get a different look going into it.

RYLIE BOONE: Yeah, we like challenges, so it worked out pretty good.

And for Coach's moves, she was just dancing for the Lord. What more could you ask for?

KINZIE HANSEN: When we all get going, it's infectious.

Q. During those two really long weather delays, what was going on in the locker room?

KINZIE HANSEN: We've been playing some brain games with each other, trying to guess words and stuff. We were doing that. We were playing some music, dancing some more. That's pretty much it. It was pretty fun.

RYLIE BOONE: Yeah, we were just having fun.

JORDY BAHL: Yeah, lots of fun was going on. I was doing a lot of pacing, trying to stay mentally locked in. Okay, when are we going to start playing? Are they going to cancel? I was very worried about what was going to happen.

Q. Jordy, if you could get into that a little bit more. You're the pitcher. You've got to do certain things to be ready to go back in. Were you thinking about that at all?

JORDY BAHL: I would say from a pitcher's perspective or point of view, it's important to stay mentally locked in. It is hard getting a bunch of reps in during that time because you don't want to throw a bunch of pitches in the bullpen before you are, like, through the whole first inning.

I think it's a lot about trying to keep your mind in it.

KINZIE HANSEN: Like Jordy said, keeping your mind in it is really important. We don't allow outside factors to allow what's going on within our tight circle.

Like I said, we were having fun in the locker room. When the rain delay ended up being over, we walked right back into our game plan and kept rolling with it. There was never a pause and restart.

Our dugout is pretty chaotic consistently. When that keeps rolling for us, there's never really a pause and restart on the energy.

RYLIE BOONE: Yeah, I think with the rain delay, I thought we handled it very well. I didn't think we were going like a roller coaster. We just stayed neutral. Whatever was thrown at us, we were going to handle it.

Q. Kinzie, you've talked a lot last year helped you become a better teammate. As you've been healthy throughout this run, how much have you enjoyed it, appreciated being able to be healthy?

KINZIE HANSEN: It's obviously my performance has been well, but the best part about it is being able to be with them celebrating all of the great things that are going on.

The team consistently with celebrations in the dugout, it's always so joyful all the time. Being able to be alongside them through their successes, that's my favorite part of it all, being able to stand hand-in-hand united with them through anything that's thrown at us.

Q. Rylie, I don't know if you know this, but you tied the single game record for doubles in a champ series game. What does that mean to you? Take us through the second one when you got hit with the ball.

RYLIE BOONE: Doesn't really mean anything to me because I play for something more. It's cool, not saying that I don't care. It's cool.

What was the second question?

Q. When the ball hit you.

RYLIE BOONE: Oh, hit my hand. Yeah, that one hurt (smiling).

Yeah, I was just celebrating, looking at my teammates, firing them up. It hit my hand, then I went to third. So yeah...

THE MODERATOR: We'll continue with questions for Coach Gasso.

Q. We're going to talk about Jordy's level of pitching, but how important has this schedule been where you can throw Jordy in every single game and give her major innings four straight games at the World Series?

PATTY GASSO: She is made to be able to do that. She wants the ball like nobody's business. Not that we don't have faith in our others. It's just she is like a very, very hot pitcher right now. She's throwing the best she has all season right now. You want to take advantage of that without running her too hard where she's going to run out of gas.

But she is just feeling it right now.

Again, it's just that first game that's really important. Against a team like Florida State, I mean, you just got to go for it because they're so well-coached. They run bases so well. There's things I'm watching them, We've got to do more of this, we got to learn how to do this better.

They are very, very good top to bottom in everything that they do. It was a matter of like we've got to get our feet on the ground. Jordy was the right matchup for this first game just to kind of allow us to get our feet on the ground.

Q. The fourth inning sparked a lot more for you. They changed pitchers. Did you see anything else that you performed there that changed?

PATTY GASSO: I think we went kind of back in the - what do I want to call it - back in the tunnel, and we just talked about, What are we doing? Who are we right now? This is not how we play the game.

I think the moment got big. For the first time in a long time, they started thinking what is happening right now. Mistakes, which we don't do, we don't do that. You could see by the way they were swinging or they were frozen that they weren't ready for it. They were off.

We just really talked about what's going on. Let's reset. We stopped and we reset.

Haley Lee getting hit, them telling me bit, any time they say something happened, I believe them. I'm always going to challenge it 'cause I don't think they'll lie to me (smiling). They probably have, but has nothing to do with softball.

I had to listen. That was big. That was big when we got that overturned. Then the momentum of bringing in Jordy. We needed a spark. We needed some kind of spark. I

think when Jordy comes in to run, our team gets kind of amped.

From that point on, everything just started, we started finding some gaps, get a little more confidence in what we were doing.

Just because I'm thinking about it, one of the biggest plays I felt of the game was Jayda Coleman getting that ball in from centerfield to throw them out at second. That was huge. We just needed momentum. We needed to continue to create momentum because Jordy was the only one doing it at that time.

I was really proud of them just really turning things around very quickly and responding to the words we were talking about.

Q. Because of the way so many teams have gone through a pitching staff, do you have to have any conversations internally to go with your gut or with the hot arm and not overthink? Throwing Jordy again today, is that a conversation you all have? Second, I have to ask what the dance moves were?

PATTY GASSO: Okay, let's start with the first question 'cause...

There is conversation, without question. But what is really beautiful about this tournament is that you get days off. That really helps pitchers a ton. We have just a group of people working on our players, whether it's ice baths or massages and so forth. I mean, they have hands all over them trying to help them recover quickly. So that makes a big difference.

I think our other pitchers understand, and they all want the ball, but they understand what's at stake because we're talking about it. They don't question. They're hungry. They're waiting.

Dance moves? I have no idea. How did they look (smiling)?

Q. Smooth.

PATTY GASSO: I did? Was I in the dugout? Thank you. I'm happy that it worked out (laughter). I was just feeling something. I don't know. I was wanting to play. Everybody gets really... The wait is hard. The wait, from the moment you wake up, till the moment you get here, then a little bit of anxiousness, then you have to wait, you're coming out on the field. You're just trying to get yourself back. I guess that's what I do. I don't know (smiling).

Q. You mentioned how aggressive this Florida State team can be. That's not something you've seen a whole lot of at this tournament. Was that something you had to prepare your team for? How do you think they handled that today?

PATTY GASSO: Absolutely. I think Jordy was a lot to do with handling that. No, we talked a lot. Like you keep your head up, you look ahead, you think ahead because if you put your head down, they're gone or they're going to make you pay.

They're going to try to create chaos, and we understand that. We make us better. I knew Florida State was going to be in this championship, we faced each other before, and we've had battles, but they always make us play hard and better. That is just a tribute to them.

We have to get ready for that. We have to get ready for their pitching staff, who they throw four pitchers in a seven-inning game, so you have to keep switching your mindset, keep switching your plan. It's tough to prepare for them. They're the real deal. They're that good. They really are.

Q. You mentioned how good Florida State's offense is. What does it say about this defense that you're still able to contain an offense like this?

PATTY GASSO: Well, Jordy is a big part of the defense just by the location of her pitches, keeping them off the base pass.

Like I said, I think Jayda Coleman's play was fantastic. I saw Jayda Coleman giving applause to the left fielder on that great catch she made, because that game could likely have been over at that time.

There's nothing better than watching. To me, I love hitting, pitching, but I love great defense. I still think defense wins championships.

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