

2023 Women's College World Series

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Florida State Seminoles Coach Lonni Alameda Mack Leonard Kaley Mudge Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma 5, Florida State 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Florida State.

We'll start with an opening statement from Coach.

LONNI ALAMEDA: Yeah, I mean, obviously not the ballgame that we wanted on the win/loss column. What an incredible atmosphere. Really good ballclub. We knew it was going to be a tough ballgame.

I thought Mack pitched really well. We had our chances there. We had a couple swings, had our chances, now it's about regrouping and getting after a Game 2, which is vital. We're excited for the challenge.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the players.

Q. Mack, obviously softball can be a game of inches. The line drive you hit down the line, is that something that will be in your head for a while? Do you move past it?

MACK LEONARD: No, it's not really going to be in my head for a while. If it falls, it falls. If it doesn't, it doesn't. It's the game of softball. Like you said, it's a game of inches. Two runners on base wasn't going to change the game. I think we need to make a little more adjustments sooner, keep fighting like team 40 knows how to fight. If we do that tomorrow, I'm pretty confident in us.

Q. Kaley, that game could have ended there in the sixth inning. What did you see on the play? Is that trying to bring any positive momentum to tomorrow or use that momentum?

KALEY MUDGE: Yeah, definitely saw the ball go over my

head. Knowing the three-run home run could have ended it, wanted to try to do something for Allison, for my team.

Grateful their fence is short. I was able to get up a little bit on that fence. It's a moment I dream of regardless of the score. Just being able to stay in it, hitters being able to get a little bit more information in the top of the seventh inning is huge for tomorrow. Excited to go out and make more adjustments for tomorrow.

Q. Kaley, this has been a unique World Series for you guys winning three straight. Is the experience from the past, fighting back from elimination, something you'll draw upon?

KALEY MUDGE: I think going 3-0 is awesome here. Obviously making it to the championship series, having days off, is super huge. Getting to work our way back in 2021, got a lot of reps.

I think having a lot of rest in off days has been helpful for us, too, this year. Excited to get after it tomorrow. That will be the first time we didn't have an off day. But I feel pretty confident in us just being able to make adjustments. We responded well all season, so I'm excited to see tomorrow.

Q. Kaley, you pride yourselves in stopping momentum, halting that, turning games around. How hard was it once they started to grasp the momentum?

KALEY MUDGE: Definitely hard to stop their momentum. Obviously being here, they have a bunch of crowd cheering for them, too. Just being able to stop the bleeding, I think that's something we've done well all season.

Obviously having a couple runs here and there, not ideal. Definitely just being able to stop the bleeding, the infield brought it in quite a few times tonight. Obviously being from the outfield, being able to talk to J.J. and Hallie to my side, too. Being able to bring the dugout in, not letting them pile more and more runs and more base runners is huge.

I think we did a pretty good job of that. I'm excited to see



tomorrow.

Q. Mack, first three innings you limited them to one hit. What changed in the fourth inning? What can you do pitching-wise tomorrow to build on that momentum?

MACK LEONARD: I mean, honestly just trust Coach and trust our stuff. You talk about that day, you're going to compete regardless of what you have. Coach A makes the best decisions she's made all season. I will lay all of my trust and literally anything in Coach's hands.

I think whatever she has to do and whoever she wants to put in there is going to get the job done. I believe in Coach and what she has to do, honestly.

I think a lot of people will give their opinions about it. I think that's awesome, great. You have opinions. I also think we all trust each other, us at team 40, we know what we're doing as a squad. Our leader clearly knows what she's doing, as well. Just trusting in her, going out there and play softball, doing our best.

Q. You've had kind of that so what, who cares, next pitch mentality all year. How big will that be for you tomorrow?

KALEY MUDGE: I mean, I think it's going to be huge. Like I said, we've responded well all season, even from opening weekend. I remember being able to respond after a loss in regionals. I think that's huge. Something that we're used to doing is responding, just being able to flush today, learn from it, make adjustments.

Being able to go out there tomorrow knowing it's a new ballgame, just being able to play as a team, not losing anybody, just being able to play to our left and right, leave it all out there, so...

Q. Did Jordy seem to get more in control as the game went on, or what made her difficult?

MACK LEONARD: She's got a legit rise-drop change. Really good pitcher, really good competitor. Right now she's having a strong World Series, I think she's doing great as an athlete.

When you're that competitive and you have three phenomenal pitches right in your hip pocket, and you've got a defense like that, it's pretty tough to hit against. We can make adjustments, we can do what we can at the plate, and come out better tomorrow.

KALEY MUDGE: I think getting behind in the count is

super hard, too. She definitely feels more comfortable when she's ahead in the count. I think just being able to see the pitches we want, execute earlier in the counts will be huge for us against her as well.

Obviously good pitcher. When you have three, four runs under your belt, you're able to feel a little bit more comfortable.

I think our ability to see pitches today was huge in order to learn some more information.

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

Q. How important is that so what, who cares mentality going to be from here on out, knowing that any game could end the season?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Yeah, tomorrow's game to end the season, yeah, so...

I mean, it's a reality. Oklahoma is 60-1. There's a lot of teams they've beat.

We know this is a tall task. They're a great ballclub. I think the so what, next pitch kind of mindset is more about us staying in it, then really making sure that we just can't give the inches that they got today. They take advantage of them so well.

But we got outside ourselves a little bit today. It was a lot with the fans and the noise, the moments. I liked how we responded. We kind of went in and out. I would like us to stay a little tighter tomorrow. That's a challenge we talked about in the locker room.

Q. Did you think about putting Kat in when you made the pitching change in the fourth inning?

A. Nope. Definitely sticking to the plan we had all year. I think they're a really good team at making adjustments. Needed to see what we had from our other pitchers, too.

Once they got the lead, there was no reason to. Now we've got Game 2. If they go with Jordy, they go Jordy. If they go someone else, we got a different look. At least we got some looks at Jordy.

Q. Kaley mentioned her home run extending the game time, gave you guys a few more looks. How big was that play to carry over to it tomorrow?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Yeah, it was awesome. Mudge has done some Mudge things out there that have been



incredible.

To keep extending is great, get a few more swings. But it's about going back to game planning, being better tomorrow. We have to be better tomorrow. That's the mindset.

Run rule or no run rule, I wasn't really thinking about that. Don't really look into that part of it. We have to make sure we can manage.

Jordy is good up down, got to get her in the zone. A little left side today, that's tough on the lefties. Maybe we can have a different zone tomorrow, we can get after some things. That's just some things for day two.

Q. I know you have talked about the small margin of error against Oklahoma. How important is it to try to not to be too perfect and just be who you have been all year?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Yeah, for sure. I mean, I think there's going to be that. We've got to have some fun with it.

We had some miscommunication out there again. We don't get many opportunities where we have fans behind us, too. I think we try to -- when you get that roar and go, and you can't hear, that was something -- we missed our cut a couple times. That's abnormal of us.

Things that we just really have to talk about as a team tomorrow to be better at. That helps with the stop the bleeding mentality, the extra 60 feet.

They push. They can run. They push the defense. We just got to come together, instead of letting the moment get a little big for that next pitch, be about here we are, second and third, a runner at two, whatever, and just be about that pitch. That's a little bit of the adjustments I would like to see tomorrow, yeah.

Q. You mentioned the strike zone. I'm not asking you to critique it. How did they handle that? Tomorrow is the goal just to play your best game, not really worry about the result?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Yeah, I mean, that's nice about the championship series, it's two-out-of-three games. It's nice, you get a little chance to make some adjustments and work from there. It goes back to what we've been doing all season versus the tournament-type mentality.

Yeah, I mean, we've got to play our best game. That's all we have. Back's against the wall. Regardless, it's been an incredible season. For us to be where we're at right now, I told the kids, Don't hang your head.

It is a great season. It's a great ballclub. A great environment. We got outside ourselves a little bit. Let's be better tomorrow and let the chips fall where they fall. I don't think it is the end all, be all. I'm super proud of this team, proud of what we've done.

The first part of the question?

Q. Handling the strike zone.

LONNI ALAMEDA: We've been handling strike zones all year. Nothing changes, right?

I think, again, if you let that become a part of you or the lightning become a part of you, then you're taking away from what we need to do. The talk is just staying in it like we've been all year.

Q. Oklahoma has gotten staff approaches a lot this year. Does that change anything for you as far as knowing that's something they're pretty accustomed to at this point or just your approach?

LONNI ALAMEDA: Are you talking other teams staff approached against them?

Q. Yeah.

LONNI ALAMEDA: There's been a few. I know LSU, Tech, a couple that have gone that way.

They're a really good team at making adjustments and creating momentum. If you're going to keep yourself in a ballgame, you have to be able to combat that. It depends on what you have in the circle. Maybe the situations, too.

I think there's a little bit of what you have in the circle versus a Lee or a Coleman, but what you have situationally on the field, too. Do you have that in the pen to be able to match that up?

Yeah, I think the staff option is good. But, again, the more you play them, the more they get to know, the more they make the adjustments quicker. They're a really good hitting team.

I'm super impressed by that. It's really intriguing to me. Try to get me better as a pitching coach on that side.

Today we needed to hit the ball better and take advantage of some things to get a chance to be on both sides of it. Those are the adjustments we need to make tomorrow.

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