

2024 Women's College World Series

Saturday, June 1, 2024

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

UCLA Bruins

Coach Kelly Inouye-Perez

Maya Brady

Sharlize Palacios

Jordan Woolery

Postgame Press Conference



Oklahoma 1, UCLA 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by UCLA.

We will start with an opening statement by coach.

KELLY INOUE-PEREZ: I shared with my team, you know, that's a tough team, Oklahoma is a tough team. Today they were just one pitch better than us. I'm proud of my team, proud of how we played, proud of how we defended, proud of both my pitchers on how they both competed.

The path we're going to take is we're going to have more ABs. That's a good thing. The opportunity for us to get more live ABs on the stage is going to allow us to see the ball better, get more comfortable with the field. This team does a great job of adjusting. This is the path.

I'm going to say it again. I'm just proud and we're not done yet.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for players.

Q. Maya, what was the toughest thing about Kelly Maxwell today?

MAYA BRADY: I mean, she's a great pitcher, so... She's their ace. Obviously they're at this point because of her. She's a great person and a great pitcher. I think Jen Rocha is a great pitch caller. Sometimes it's not your day. Sometimes it's the pitcher's day. She came up with a lot of good pitches.

I think we are good enough to say we didn't play our best

either. Obviously she's a great pitcher and she had great stuff working today.

SHARLIZE PALACIOS: Yeah, I think Maya said it all. She's a great pitcher. I think we can be one pitch better next game.

JORDAN WOOLERY: Yeah, I agree. We can be just one pitch better and stick to having quality at-bats, too.

Q. Sharlize, how impressed have you been with these two young pitchers?

SHARLIZE PALACIOS: I mean, that was pretty impressive of an outing for them, right? They did a really good job. They were super composed since the first pitch that they pitched. It was really fun catching them today. They had all their good stuff today. They were gritty competitors.

We've known it this entire time, but now the world knows it, so... Nothing new for us.

Q. Maya, from your perspective, what impressed you the most about the way they handled this stage?

MAYA BRADY: To hold that offense to one run, it's a pretty good outing. I think for me, my favorite thing is when KT gives up a hit and she turns around and laughs. To me that tells me that my freshman pitcher is in a really good place, and she's unshakeable, she's in her zone.

I think for all of us, we love seeing that. As a defense, that gives us a lot of confidence. Tins went out there and did her thing. She did that against Alabama. She came out and was an absolute animal.

I think for me, obviously I'm not as involved as Shar, but as somebody that's in close proximity to them, they give us a lot of confidence.

They definitely gave us an opportunity to go up and score some runs for them, yeah.

Q. Maya, I saw you embracing Tiare before her game on Thursday. What was it like seeing her today?



MAYA BRADY: Yeah, I always love seeing her. Obviously, us not going to school together, this is kind of the arena that we get to see each other play a lot.

So it's really cool. I love watching her do her thing and live out her dream. I told her -- she sent me a nice text today, and I told her, When you win, I win. No matter the outcome, we love each other.

So it's just awesome to see her do her thing.

Q. Sets you up with the rematch of Stanford. Could you speak about facing them again, opportunity against NiJaree.

MAYA BRADY: Yeah, I mean, they're a great team. We faced them three times obviously. Faced NiJaree twice. She's a great pitcher. We're just going to have to go out and have quality at-bats and be one pitch better than we were today.

SHARLIZE PALACIOS: Yeah, I think we're just excited to play with each other. Not really looking to the opponent. I think we're all excited to play another seven innings with each other.

JORDAN WOOLERY: Yeah, I would agree. I'm just excited to play with these girls for another day. I want to keep continuing to play, too.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, players. We'll continue with questions for coach.

Q. Can you talk about seeing an offense go through what yours did today. The pressure that comes with going against a pitcher pitching as well as Maxwell.

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I saw just softball. The stage is big, there's big at-bats, there's a lot on the line. For us it's about quality at-bats. Our ability to slow the game down is something we've been good at. I didn't see a lot of that in the early parts of the game. They did slow the game down. We did get some runners on and put some pressure on them, as well.

I'm not really sure what you saw, but what I saw was we came out aggressive and we didn't really square up balls. We were swinging and missing a lot. We slowed the game down, had some better at-bats, got some runners on, put ourselves in a position to win the ballgame.

It's the game. You have to clutch up with runners in scoring position. Like I say, they had one pitch, they capitalized, we didn't. As a result, we're going to take a

different path.

We're still on a mission. Like I say, I think it's a good thing that we're going to get more at-bats, because we're better than that. I believe our best is yet to come. We've just got to continue to play softball.

Q. Offenses have been down throughout the tournament, especially in the World Series. Is it as simple as every team has an ace? Do you have any other explanations for it?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I think you just said it all. This is the best of the best. Offense is not something that you have. Everybody would love to run rule teams on this stage. It's not something you can come in and expect when you're facing the best pitchers in the country. I'm not blaming umpires, but we have to get used to and get what the zone is and get more comfortable. We were inconsistent with what we were trying to do at the plate today.

But defense wins championships here. We did some great things on defense. Runs are a bonus. You're facing the best pitchers in the game. But the best teams will find a way to make adjustments against these pitchers.

I've been here a long time. We've had some great games where we've blown out some teams. That's a lot of fun. You also have to understand we're facing the best of the best. Being able to come through with runners in scoring position is what you have to do if you want to win championships. We have to be one pitch better.

Q. You mentioned those pitchers for KT after giving up that home run. What did you see from her demeanor and what makes you confident about what you can get from her?

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: She is unique in a sense. She reminds me a lot of Rachel Garcia. Rachel was unfazed. KT is very similar at such a young age. It's very impressive for here to really kind of play her own game.

She's a competitor. She's accountable. She's developed in a very short time. But to have that confidence is something it's tough to teach, especially on this kind of stage against that kind of offense. She won't let people beat her. She was very convicted.

There was a time she shook a pitch in the middle of the game. She really hasn't done that. She ended up getting the batter out. No, I know how to get her out. She hasn't even played this team. She doesn't even know at the end of the day.

I think a big part of it early in the season, I had them actually not look at a lot of video. It's not about who they are, it's about your ability to come up with pitches. That's why I say the one pitch that she gave up, we wanted a stretch begins Tiare, it wasn't a miss, it was on me calling a pitch that was too close to the zone. There's no fear. There's no fear for her. I think that's impressive.

She's going to have a great future simply because she loves to compete and she gets stronger and stronger. She doesn't like coming out of a game either, which I love. I love that. That's what you want to have, that mentality, grit, ability to compete. That's something that makes the best of the best in that circle.

THE MODERATOR: That will wrap things up.

KELLY INOUE-PEREZ: Thank you.

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