

2025 Women's College World Series

Thursday, May 29, 2025

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Tennessee Lady Volunteers

Coach Karen Weekly

Sophia Nugent

Taylor Pannell

Postgame Press Conference



need to reset for tomorrow to make sure you guys aren't out of here in two games?

TAYLOR PANNELL: I think just flush today. We were seeing the ball well at the plate. Things weren't going well. Just flush today and focus on playing Florida tomorrow.

Q. On that note, just is there anything you guys can think of right now in particular to try to -- because it is such a gut-punching loss, and to have to come back a day later, to change it? Anything in particular you might try to do, or just continue to follow what you guys have done all season?

LAURA MEALER: Yeah, I don't think much changes, if we're being honest. We've been in this position before, just losing a game and having to bounce back. The only difference is just being in post-season.

And I think we had a great talk in the locker room of just, yeah, it stings right now, and we can let it sting for a minute, but flush it right away because you don't have time to dwell on it.

Q. Sophia, until the last inning, Karlyn really shut down that offense. After the -- it looked like the first home run really kind of made her kick it into another gear. I don't know if it kind of made her mad a little bit, but what did you see from her today, and how impressive was it that for most of the game she really held one of the best offenses in the nation without much production?

SOPHIA NUGENT: I think that's what Karlyn is. She fights for us every single pitch, and she puts it all out on the line for us. Her bringing that energy really helps us every single day.

THE MODERATOR: More questions for players? Okay. Thank you, players. You're dismissed. Questions for Coach Weekly?

Q. Karen, what were you seeing from the offense today that obviously had a great start early and just

Oklahoma 4, Tennessee 3

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from Coach Weekly.

KAREN WEEKLY: Obviously that was a gut-punch. I thought our team played really, really well. Proud of how we came out. We don't have time to feel sorry for ourselves. We got to be ready to play tomorrow, and that's what we just talked about in the locker room.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for players.

Q. Sophia, what's your immediate reaction to the loss, and what do you feel like happened late with the offense? You guys had been able to get things going early and then seventh inning couldn't capitalize with the bases loaded.

SOPHIA NUGENT: My immediate reaction was we fought really hard and it didn't come out on our side. But there's another day tomorrow.

When it comes to offense, I think we were putting the ball into play. We just weren't cashing in on the runners on base.

Q. For the players, how frustrating is it to have those double-play balls there in those big moments, and how do you ensure that frustration doesn't linger into tomorrow in an elimination game?

SOPHIA NUGENT: I mean, it's going to happen. They have a very good defense. And sometimes you hit the ball into their defense and it works out for them.

Q. Taylor, what's the biggest thing you feel like you



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and what did you see in the seventh inning that you guys were able to capitalize and get some insurance runs?

KAREN WEEKLY: Yeah, I thought overall we had a good plan and for the most part we were executing that plan. And we just had a couple situations even before the seventh inning where, yeah, we could have put another run or two on the board and given ourselves a little bit more of a cushion.

Like Soph said, you're not trying to hit into a double play. Sometimes those things happen. It's a tough game, and hitting's the hardest thing to do.

Q. Karlyn got into quite a few three-ball counts. Is that more kudos to OU's preparation? Was Karlyn going through her spin a little bit? I want to know what you felt about that.

KAREN WEEKLY: I think it's a combination of things. You know, we had four walks. I think three of them might have been to lead off innings. So we got ourselves in a couple jams. She worked herself out of a lot of jams.

Part of it I think you could see their game plan shifting a little bit to being more patient, trying to get more base runners on by not swinging the bat. But, you know, it just comes down the execution.

Q. Karen, you spoke yesterday about the mentality that Karlyn has developed. I'm curious where you saw that over those first six innings today while she navigated some trouble and where you see that as you go into tomorrow knowing it's a must-win situation with her.

KAREN WEEKLY: Yeah, you see the same thing out of Karlyn for all seven innings. Karlyn is as steady as they come. She's the ultimate warrior. 99 times out of 100, she wins that game.

What I expect going into tomorrow from Karlyn and this entire team, we've been here. We were here last Friday. We lost the first game against Nebraska. We go into Saturday morning, win-or-go-home. Sunday, win-or-go-home.

That's the situation we're in right now. We're playing Florida tomorrow, and one team is going home. And it's really going to come down to which team can flush today the quickest and get their mind right for tomorrow.

Q. Talk about early getting some good traction off Sam and how that can help tomorrow, you will most

likely face a very good pitcher in Keagan, and how that can help tomorrow knowing that you have already, you know, early on beaten one of the better pitchers there is.

KAREN WEEKLY: Yeah, it was one of our better offensive performances, and I'm proud of them for that. The thing people don't realize is how young our team is. There is one person in our starting lineup that's a senior with four years starting in the SEC. That's it.

Everybody else in that lineup either didn't play SEC for four years -- Sophia Nugent, she's got two years playing every day under her belt. But before didn't, get every at-bat. We have a lot of sophomores who didn't play a lot last year.

So I'm really proud how they showed up here. They weren't fazed. The environment didn't faze them. They knew -- I don't know how many people this place holds, 10,000 -- that there were going to be 9,900 against them. That didn't bother them at all.

So there's a lot of things to really be excited about and proud of.

Q. Was there any consideration with walking Parker there in the seventh with Oklahoma having the momentum?

KAREN WEEKLY: Not really because it's 3-1. You have two runners on, and if you walk her, that means you put the winning run on base. So you have to make a decision there.

The key thing in that inning was Agbayani drawing a walk. You look at that, and strategy-wise you're like, okay, we can get through this inning and get out of here without ever rolling the order back around at the top.

When you walk her, you know you're going to face Pickering and Parker again.

Q. Obviously have to get through tomorrow, but how big is it knowing that Sage has also thrown really well this post-season?

KAREN WEEKLY: Oh, huge, especially right now. Sage has had some really good outings starting back to Ole Miss series. Great game against them. Great game against Texas A&M. Great game against Ohio State. We put the ball in her hands in big situations and she's come through for us.

Q. Speaking of some of your youth, Ella Dodge went deep into every at-bat she had today. She got two



walks out of it. What does that say about her maturity as a freshman to do that in this game, and how did she learn how to slide like that?

KAREN WEEKLY: Ella, we call her "Pigpen" because she's the dirtiest one at practice. Ella is going to fight and scratch and claw to do everything she can on the softball field. The girl absolutely just loves playing.

What I was really proud of was her first at-bat wasn't real good. She got herself in a 3-1 count and chased something high, and we would have drawn a walk there and kept the inning going a little bit more. But she bounced back right away and her next two at-bats were fantastic. When you can see a freshman do that, that's pretty cool.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the pre-game scout of Ella Parker and the swing she had today?

KAREN WEEKLY: She's a great hitter. Great hitters make adjustments, and Oklahoma is one of the best at making adjustments as the game goes along.

I think the first one she hit out, I think we missed our spot in that situation. The last one I think was a change-up, pretty sure. But they're just really good hitters, especially her and Pickering at the top of the order.

The more times they face you, the more information they have, the more adjustments they're going to make, and they're tough to beat.

Q. Coach, obviously Oklahoma has loads of talent every year, but even when the faces and names change, the moments seem to continue. Is there anything tangible about this program, over just the talent, that allows them to continue to do things like this that you've noticed?

KAREN WEEKLY: Well, there's a lot of talent out there. They have some of the absolute best players in the country. Patty Gasso is a phenomenal coach. You don't win that many national championships without being an exceptional coach.

And you also have 9,900 people on your side. It's an environment that you have to fight through, but I thought our kids did a really good job of that today.

THE MODERATOR: That'll wrap things up. Thank you.

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