

2025 Women's College World Series

Saturday, May 31, 2025

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Texas Longhorns

Coach Mike White

Teagan Kavan

Joley Mitchell

Kayden Henry

Postgame Press Conference



Texas 4, Oklahoma 2

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas head coach Mike White and student-athletes Teagan Kavan and Joley Mitchell and Kayden Henry.

MIKE WHITE: So exciting to be able to finally beat the Sooners in Oklahoma, first time since I've been part of the program. And they're such a tough team year in, year out. And they didn't go away this time either. We scored two, they scored two. We get up by a couple of runs and they come back and really had the winning -- or the go-ahead run at the plate.

Fortunately we had a tough pitcher in Teagan Kavan today. We didn't help her early on, but she battled on and kept her mind in the game, was a warrior throughout the game. And of course the two ladies to my right here came up with some big hits that we needed in the situation.

But we know it's not over for sure. Whoever comes through is going to be tough to beat. But that's what's making softball great right now. Exciting game for sure.

Q. Teagan, I understand it was an emotional day for you. Just what's it been like today going through this and what was it about you that helped you be able to get through this the way you did?

TEAGAN KAVAN: I mean, it's not easy obviously. But I think what helped me is at the end of the day it's just a game. And I think it put into perspective just chucking a yellow ball and people are running turning left, and I just wanted to have fun, just have fun.

Q. Any thought of not playing today?

TEAGAN KAVAN: No, I knew -- they told me it was my ball if I wanted it. I said, yeah. That was it.

Q. Teagan, what was talking with Pattie Ruth coming into the game and how you wanted to attack, especially the regular season win against OU? Was it more effective drop ball, changing speeds more? If you could go into that.

TEAGAN KAVAN: I think honestly nothing necessarily changed much on I guess like scout. Obviously you just have to mix with them. And I think it was just execution of pitches. I think that could have been better earlier in the season. I'm glad to execute it here and that it worked in our favor today. But just one pitch at a time. And she calms me down a lot.

Q. Knowing what Teagan was going through today, how did you guys have her back, did you say anything to her, or how did you help her off the field?

KAYDEN HENRY: I would say for sure just having the energy, making sure to have her back, I mean emotionally and physically here today. (Indiscernible) wasn't personally my family by blood, but I loved her a lot. I lived with Teagan last year and she was like another grandma for me.

As emotional as it was to win this game for her, even to hit the home run to help us go up helped a lot and I almost cried doing that as well.

Today was just for Teagan and for her family. It was a whole lot of love on the field today. It was just a different meaning.

JOLEY MITCHELL: When Teagan told us this morning, it was honestly my worst nightmare. I was scared that's what it was when she texted us this morning. But she told us, the first thing she said she's good and she's ready to go today. So Teagan Kavan is my hero today.

Q. Teagan, take me through that seventh inning where OU gets two runners and you strike the next two batters out?

TEAGAN KAVAN: I've said it on the field, but I was telling myself to execute one pitch at a time. Obviously a tough day. I wanted to take it pitch by pitch, minute by minute and slow things down. Just executed one pitch at a time.

Q. Teagan, you had a rough time against Oklahoma in the regular season, and some rough times after that, too, but you're pitching wonderfully here. Did you have a talk with yourself? Did you figure something out, or do you attribute anything?

TEAGAN KAVAN: I think, I mean, it's a new season. Postseason is a new season. I think recognizing that every day is a new day. So I think honestly just throwing it away, not thinking about it.

Q. These guys have beaten you so many times up here in Oklahoma. What was going through your minds kind of late in the game when you had a lead? And what was key mentally to holding on for the lead?

JOLEY MITCHELL: I think the big thing today was we were still communicating with each other. We've talked about the last couple of weeks that's been the big thing for us. I trust every person out there. I know we trust each other. We were communicating when we came back in the dugout.

When things went bad, maybe we had a moment but then we came back together. Today was just about a playing a ball game. I think we did a great job focusing on us. We weren't focused on the crowd or what Oklahoma was doing. We were focusing on what Texas softball was doing. We went out there and played ball.

KAYDEN HENRY: I agree. It was a big part of communication today and trust. There were a lot of moments I looked to my right and I see Stewie and I looked to my left and I see Ash. And it was just knowing where we were on the field, knowing where our middles were, knowing that if you go catch this ball I'll back you up, that we're not going to let them get anything more than what they deserve on the bases.

And just having Teagan's back and having our infield back -- we go out there and we get one runner on and it's, like, hey, how can we push for another?

I think today was big on trusting each other and communicating, just doing this for us and doing this for another chance to get that natty for our school.

Q. I want to expand on what Thomas asked earlier. A lot of emotion from you. We talked with you before and nothing makes you more emotional than this team and this sport. Just expand on how you're feeling and what this means for you?

JOLEY MITCHELL: I'm beyond grateful. I came to Texas to win a national championship. I've got this team behind my back. I've got their back. I would pick this team in every single lifetime.

I'm proud of the way we came out today. We wanted to play for (indiscernible). Teagan went out there and pitched fantastic. We were being good, being selective, being disciplined at the plate and making things happen. I just want to keep doing it the rest of the week. The job's not done.

KAYDEN HENRY: We're more than thankful to have her on the squad. She brings a veteran presence, besides today and what she's gone through, even at Notre Dame, she's a huge part of our team, a huge leader.

Q. What does it say about Teagan to go through what she had, the crowd against her and just all the noise that could possibly be there and she went out there and was just kind of lights out all day?

MIKE WHITE: It's been in her demeanor right from the start. She's been very calm, very level-headed. Sort of sometimes you want to prod her a little bit to get a little more out of her, but that's what makes her the great competitor she is. Having her grandmother die and being able to come out, be able to pitch a great game and just have stuff happen early in the game, and then at the end stuff happening. She just held it all together, like a true warrior.

Q. Beating Oklahoma here for the first time in program history, is that overcoming almost a mental hurdle for you guys? Because you've been close talent-wise for so many times. Just what can this do for your program?

MIKE WHITE: We have talked about that for sure, being a little bit of a mental hurdle. It's tough. There's a lot of pressure out there. They always have great teams. If you make a hiccup, they make the most of it.

Just like we saw the other night, they're never out of anything. They come back and hit a three-run homer, you always think that's in the back of your mind that can happen.

But our kids, like Teagan said, reverted back to one pitch at a time. I know it's cliché, but that's really all you can control, and I'm glad to see she leaned on that.

Q. Couple of coaching moves, I think one inning you had Steve Singleton at third base, you were at first. And then before Kayden's home run, I think you were questioning the legality of an OU defensive shift maybe?

MIKE WHITE: Yeah.

Q. What were you hoping to accomplish with those two moves, and did they work?

MIKE WHITE: Well, the defensive shift, Coach Z takes care of those, the Oklahoma substitutions. She thought it was an illegal shift. In fact, we may have to look at it because the umpire said there was nobody in left field. You make that shift and you have somebody in left field; so how can that happen?

It's kind of interesting. We have to get to the bottom of that to figure out what happened. But you can't argue once they made the ruling.

Secondly, putting Steve at third, sometimes he can see some stuff with different pitch tendencies. He was over there to see if he could find something.

She's too smart for that. So she covers things up and does a pretty good job.

Q. Obviously Teagan really struggled in the regular season series against the Sooners. What was it that she was able to execute or do differently today to be successful versus when you all saw them a couple months ago?

MIKE WHITE: I think they're going to punish you when you make mistakes. We just had some (indiscernible) over the plate. And she was losing a little movement on pitches. So really focused on making the ball move through the zone, not only just throwing hard but making it move through the zone. When you looked at it, she had good velocity, but she didn't have the location and also the movement on the pitch.

Q. Talk about Joley Mitchell and Kayden Henry. Both hit big home runs today. Feel under the radar at times when people talk about your team. Their value to your team was enormous, it always has been?

MIKE WHITE: That's what you need if you're going to go far in this championship; you need different people to step

up at different times. It can't always be a reset, can't always be your superstars or Mia Scott. To have Kayden break out a little bit of a mini struggle there to get that home run, it was great. It was awesome. And usually you like to see her speed. Hitting a home run was bonus for us at that time.

Then, of course, Joley Mitchell has been crushing it lately, has really been able to protect Reese in that 5 position in the lineup. Like the lady said, she's a warrior. She's been there, done that.

If you know the history about her, she was very sick at one time right through the COVID era, that time, COVID, had an autoimmune disease and really had to battle through some things. So there's some history there you guys should probably look at, how tough that kid is.

Q. Early on seemed like you wanted to challenge really behind the plate. How much does the speed also play into your team when you kind of get obsessed with the home runs the power in the middle of the lineup?

MIKE WHITE: Obviously whoever plays Oregon can see how dangerous speed is. I mean stolen well over 100 bases puts pressure on. We fortunately have a couple. I think the rule where you're leaving early kind of dampens things a little bit. Careful not to steal as much as what you used to. But we felt we could steal today, and it set up those first couple of runs, for sure.

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