

2025 Women's College World Series

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Texas Longhorns

Coach Mike White

Katie Cimusz

Katie Stewart

Leighann Goode

Postgame Press Conference



Texas Tech - 4, Texas - 3

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas head coach Mike White and players Katie Cimusz, Katie Stewart, and Leighann Goode.

MIKE WHITE: An exciting game. A tough finish to it. Getting down against NiJa 4-1, we made a good fight to come back, but we got down with some uncharacteristic errors there and some missed plays that they took advantage of, some good base running and everything else.

Very exciting game for TV again. Obviously a team never gave up, fought back. Real proud of the way the team did that.

We've got to come back now and face NiJa again for sure, and we're going to have to kind of work really hard to get some runs and then obviously shut them down as well.

Q. Katie, or Leighann or Katie, is there anything you've learned against NiJa in two games that could help you tomorrow, and what would that be?

KATIE STEWART: She's going to attack the zone. So just be ready to hunt early and get my pitch, not chase too far out of zone, and just be ready to attack. Because she's just going to come at us. She's not going to dance around the zone. So just be ready to go from inning one.

KATIE CIMUSZ: I think very similar. She's going to go right at you. She's not afraid to throw her pitch early on and even later on in the count. So she's very fearless out there. You have to be the same going up there.

LEIGHANN GOODE: She mixed speed well, and so just going up there and picking a pitch, you have to take risks. So sitting on one or sitting on fast, you have to take risks at this level and especially at this time.

Q. Leighann, is this infield playing faster than the infield at McCombs? There's been some hot shots, and it seems like the ball is bouncing a lot faster up.

LEIGHANN GOODE: Yeah, it is, but still no excuse. As an infielder, you know to attack the ball. So just having that mindset even though we may know the field is playing faster, just going in and attacking the ball.

Q. For any of you, what do you expect Teagan's mentality to be like tomorrow? You've seen her in big moments. Can you kind of take us into what she's going to be thinking and why you have so much trust in her for tomorrow?

KATIE STEWART: She's going to compete. She's been in some of our biggest moments. She's not going to shy down from it. She's going to give us her all for however long we need her or however long she's ready to give us.

Trusting her and she's going to trust herself and trust her defense and being there to back her up so she can throw what she needs to throw.

KATIE CIMUSZ: I agree with Stew. Every game she comes into, she has a super tough mentality, and I don't think it's going to change in Game 3 of this series. If anything, it's going to make her stronger. I know she wants it for herself as well as the entire team. I think she comes out tomorrow with the toughest mentality she's ever had.

Q. Leighann, you guys, as your coach said, made some uncharacteristic errors last night and tonight, and they got some runs on bases-loaded stuff, as you know. Do you feel like you all didn't make Tech earn it enough tonight?

LEIGHANN GOODE: Yeah, I think we beat ourselves at

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the end of the day. Coach White always says bend but don't break, and we broke down. Just coming together tomorrow and banding together. I think that's what we needed the most. What happened happened, but coming out tomorrow and banding together as a defense.

Q. Leighann, when you have a freshman pitching like Cambria, what can you say to them to help them as opposed to a more veteran pitcher like Mac or Teagan?

LEIGHANN GOODE: I think the whole time I was just saying: You're meant to be here. You want this. You want to win this. You're going to win this pitch.

I think she was looking at me, nodding her head. Honestly, I think she was in it the whole time. I didn't see any fear on her face. I'm really proud of her the way she came out and pitched for us.

Q. Katie, are you wondering when NiJa is going to break down or wear down? Do you think she's just a machine at this point?

KATIE STEWART: No, I think she's just ready to go. She's going to give it all for her team. She's not going to back down from this moment. I've heard her in an interview in the past that she said she's got summer to rest. She's just going to keep fighting for her team and the history that they're looking for.

It's just keeping our game what we want and how we're going to attack her, staying together, and just keep fighting.

Q. How do you guys describe this opportunity in front of you tomorrow, what this means, and what it's going to take to actually bring it home?

KATIE CIMUSZ: For me at least, we may have lost this game, but I'm still smiling because we get another opportunity to go out there and win. I think this team is just so excited to get out there again.

We know this wasn't our best game, but we have a new opportunity to come out with a fresh start tomorrow, a new 21 outs to play with. We want to win this so much, especially my class. We've done this three times, and we don't want to lose it a third time. I think all of us just have that fire in us to win it.

LEIGHANN GOODE: Yeah, even though the score said 4-3 at the end, we took the momentum in the top of the seventh. Just taking and running with that. We have the momentum.

KATIE STEWART: We showed how badly we want this in

our fight in the seventh inning. I think just using that momentum that we gained from that inning into tomorrow and starting out early instead of waiting entirely too long to fight while our backs are against the wall.

Just keep going at it. We want this really bad. Both teams want to make history. It's just whoever wants it more.

Q. You mentioned that uncharacteristic errors not only tonight but yesterday as well. What do you attribute that to?

MIKE WHITE: That's a good question. I think maybe some indecision, some miscommunications between the infielders. There's been some different types of plays. Obviously there was a couple of -- KB had one last night, and so did Leighann where she didn't charge, wasn't aggressive. It's like I said, they've got to be aggressive.

The squibbers and those funny ones, those things can happen sometimes. We've got to pull it together and understand we made those plays before, and we've got to communicate better than what we're doing.

Q. Your freshman was thrown into the fire. Did you think about bringing Teagan in when they had the runners, I think, on the corners with the two outs, bases loaded, two outs? And what was the plan on using Teagan tonight?

MIKE WHITE: It was a little earlier than I wanted to bring her in. I was hoping to get a lead and bring her in to close the door. We wanted to extend NiJa a little bit. I know she's a workhorse, but we got to look at her three, four times through the orders tonight. So it's another couple of good looks. They got to see Teagan, just three or four batters. So I'm hoping that's going to play in our favor tomorrow.

Q. Katie Stewart said you guys took the momentum back in the seventh inning. How do you carry that over even the results didn't speak in your favor?

MIKE WHITE: I'm not sure what else she was planning to do with that. So you've got to be confident in what you're doing. We hit the ball pretty well. We scored two runs in the seventh inning off one of the best pitchers in the country.

Like the lady said, we just waited too long with our backs against the wall. We've got to come out and understand do we want this or not want this. Are we going to fight or not going to fight? It's all about Texas fight, and we need to stand up for each other, play together, and play tough right from the first pitch.



Q. Obviously Teagan on this stage somewhere, she's used to this. She's been in big moments. Her tomorrow, how excited are you to see her in that moment, and why is there so much trust in her?

MIKE WHITE: It's just the consistency she's shown here in the postseason. We know she's going to do her stuff. She's got available three different types of pitches. It's hard for them to sit on her. When she has her stuff, she's as good as anyone in the country. So we feel real confident in that.

That's going to give our team more confidence and buoyancy behind her and that feeling of we've got each other's backs. I think they feel more confident with Teagan on the mound than anybody else.

Q. Do you feel like there are any nerves because the stakes are so big in this game since you all have made some weird plays that you usually haven't?

MIKE WHITE: I'm not so sure about nerves. They want to be perfect. So when they make a mistake, sometimes they can't release it, so the things compound. That's something that's happened this year.

They've played on this stage before. We've got 16 players who have been out there before. Then sometimes you can think about there's more to lose than there is to win. So we've got to kind of understand this is a game right here. It's going to require our best effort in the biggest moments.

So that's all they can really look at is go out and give their best effort and live with the results.

Q. You're in a position to close out Texas for the first time. How does that change the way you approach a game, whether strategically, philosophically, as opposed to facing elimination?

MIKE WHITE: I like having the opportunity to have the last at-bat for sure. That gives you an opportunity to kind of like finish the game, so to speak, the way we did the other night.

Really we talked all year about the game doesn't know, and the game's not going to know this is the finale and whatever it is. It's going to reward the team that plays the best. Sure, we've got some momentum, but if we don't back it up with good quality at-bats, some quality defense, and some quality pitching, it's not going to matter. The game will know who's the better team on the day, and that's what's going to really count.

We've got to make sure we come out, know what we're going to do, have a game plan, stick to our game plan, and attack. I think we got a little defensive at times, especially late in the game. With our defense we were on the back foot instead of being a little more aggressive and making the plays when we need to make the plays.

Q. Teagan's always seemed really good at harnessing her emotions in the circle. What kind of poker face do you expect from her tomorrow, or what kind of emotions do you expect her to show during the game?

MIKE WHITE: I think she'll be guarded. She's not going to wear her emotions on her sleeve, but there's going to be moments when she's going to pump up and fire and show her emotions to her team to let her team know she's giving it everything she has. I think she's going to do a little more than what she's done in the past.

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