

# 2025 Women's College World Series

Friday, June 6, 2025

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

**Texas Longhorns**

**Coach Mike White**

**Teagan Kavan**

**Katie Cimusz**

**Mac Morgan**

**Sophia Simpson**

**Joley Mitchell**

**Vanessa Quiroga**

Postgame Press Conference



And the team that Gerry Glasco has put together is first class. Heck, first time as a head coach making it to the College World Series, I don't know, that's pretty awesome. Took me eight times to finally -- I've been to the World Series eight times. Finally won one.

It's kind of surreal right now. But thank you to all these ladies, the seniors, especially, for their contribution to the program. We talked about leaving the jersey in a better place. And they've certainly left the jersey in a better place. And Texas softball is better for them, having been part of this program. And we can't wait to start again next year.

**Q. Teagan, I know he's sitting right beside you, but I wanted to ask you about Mike and just how -- I know he would defer and say it's all about what you guys have done -- but how would you describe the fingerprints that he's put on this program to get you guys to this national championship?**

TEAGAN KAVAN: Without Coach White, I don't know if we're here. He's the best. He's so competitive. He wants it just as bad as we do, of course. And he pushes us to be better every day.

He makes me a better pitcher mentally and physically. And so there's no one else I'd rather play for. He's the bomb, and I'm glad we got it done for him.

**Q. Katie, you're a senior, you've been through two series that you guys lost. Now you win this. Can you put in perspective what this means especially after losing the two previous championship series?**

KATIE CIMUSZ: It just means so much. And all the seniors up here, you know, to go out like this is the best thing you can ever dream of for your softball career.

And I think Vanessa, Sophia and me, we were all together that first year. And losing to OU in that first series and again last year, we didn't want to go out like that this time, so we fought as hard as we could, no matter what our role was. And I think we were all just so happy.

Texas - 10, Texas Tech - 4

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas head coach Mike White, Most Outstanding Player Teagan Kavan and Longhorn seniors.

MIKE WHITE: Obviously I want to thank everybody that organized the tournament. The umpires did a great job and the grounds crew as well. Obviously there was a little bit of weather to deal with. But it went well.

I'd like to thank my administration, Chris Del Conte Sarah Baumgartner, and just everybody. There's so many people to thank. You start thanking people, you forget some and you leave them out.

Hats off to my team. We faced adversity early on in the season losing Vivi Martinez to an ACL injury. Went through some trials and tribulations but finally we came through. We went through a patch where we didn't play very well, but we stuck together and they came together as a team and they had each other's backs. And they were determined.

And same thing happened last night, and that was the talk this morning was having each other's backs and being ready to play and compete against one of the best pitchers in the country.



**Q. Mac, you guys were so close to being knocked out of the tournament in your own house. How big was that win over Clemson, and did that galvanize you guys to get you to this point?**

MAC MORGAN: It was a big win. We did what we did all year, relying on each other and going out there and competing. We wanted to go out in a good way and we did what we wanted to do.

**Q. Teagan, I think you're 5-0 now against NiJa. Do you feel like you've gotten enough due or credit for the pitcher you are? And do you feel like you're the best pitcher in softball?**

TEAGAN KAVAN: No, I think there's plenty before me and plenty right now. We're all great and happy. I think it's my team. That's who gets the wins, not just me. It's our whole team. That's what we kept talking about, we're talking about the whole team. I just love this team.

**Q. This season has been a roller coaster. Had a slump in the middle. Took some series losses, didn't have Vivi, lost in a C tournament. Do those moments make this championship that much sweeter? How were you all able to come together as a team and peak at the right moment?**

JOLEY MITCHELL: I would say there's not anything good that comes out of whatever this is without any adversity. So I mean everybody has their own things that they go through, but we stuck together.

So even just a couple weeks ago, when we were in the SEC Tournament, we were just, like, how are we going to do this? We sat down and we said, we're going to do this because we believe in each other and we believe in ourselves.

And the last couple weeks was what's most important. It was a new season, and you look back now and laugh at the things we ran into throughout the year. This is what's most important right now.

**Q. What was it like watching her pitch this week? She went 37-plus innings without giving up an earned run.**

MAC MORGAN: I think it was awesome just watching her do her thing out there. Very inspiring. Very proud of you. It's very fun to be her teammate. Very loving, kind person. Someone you're going to miss a lot.

KATIE CIMUSZ: Even though she's a sophomore, she plays like a fifth-year. Seems like she's been here a long

time. And not many people can go out there their second year and play like a super senior.

She does that every single game. And like Mac said she's just a great person. This week, we were kind of playing for her. She had the loss of her grandmother, and I think that just really fueled us a lot was to go out there and play for her and just be able to say that we were able to do it.

**Q. Joley, you guys have seen NiJa a lot. You finally got to her today. What was the difference, what made you guys as a team touch her a bit today? What did you see her from her throwing? And what was your mindset when Leighann hit that home run and NiJa didn't come back out? What were you thinking?**

JOLEY MITCHELL: Plans can't really change. You have to just attack. What we did change was recognizing that we did well late in the game yesterday. We said, hey, why don't we just turn around and do that the first inning tomorrow.

So our plan really didn't change. We were talking about being out front, being on time, picking good pitches to hit.

When Leighann hit the home run, we had already sparked a little bit of a fire, but that's a huge fire. That's big from Leighann. Leighann is a huge part of this team. I'm really happy that she got that at-bat and did that for us.

Then, again, the game still doesn't change if NiJa is not out there. You still have to go out there and play, you have to pick good pitches to hit and be on time.

I'm not going to say it made the game a little easier. We ran into some adversity today, but we came out on top.

So I just think that this team has been through a lot. And for them, and all of us, to go out there and do our thing is what's most important. And I love this team with every bit of me.

**Q. For each of the seniors, how does this feel especially the third time and just your first one to cap your career?**

SOPHIA SIMPSON: It's surreal. It's a surreal moment. I mean, every little kid dreams of winning the World Series, let alone going to it. We've been fortunate enough to go three times.

The four seniors -- four, five -- four of us that have gone three times now. And it's just so much fun. And I think that we can all agree as seniors, we are definitely leaving this program, not only just the jersey in a better place.



MAC MORGAN: It's a great feeling, knowing this is how my career ends as a softball player. I'm going to miss every one of these girls I play with each and every day. It's such a good feeling we've relied on each other thus far and we've got it done.

JOLEY MITCHELL: This is why I came to Texas. Traded in my green and gold for the burnt orange and went through a lot. Being sick and remembering laying there and thinking I'll never play softball again.

And I'm really grateful for this program. I'm really grateful for Coach White and Coach Sing calling me within, like, 15 minutes of entering the transfer portal.

This is everything I dreamed of as a kid. I can't imagine doing it with anybody else.

The 19 girls beside me and the staff we have, this is the people you want to be beside. I'm glad I get to share this moment with them for the rest of my life.

KATIE CIMUSZ: I don't think I could have ever dreamed that it would have ended this way. I've got a lot ahead of me in my life, but these four years are going to be the years I remember the most.

These girls have just been the best. And even some of the alumni who I played with throughout the years, they'll be my bridesmaids in my weddings and I'll be in theirs. There's no better way to end this. I can't thank the girls, especially my class, being there all four years. We went through a lot but we made it here. It's a dream come true. That's all I can say.

VANESSA QUIROGA: Nine-year-old Vanessa would have never thought that she would be in this place. I'm just so eternally grateful for the experience and journey that I've had. And I'm so blessed to call these girls around me my teammates.

It's been a roller coaster just going from my freshman year to now. So, I mean, I'm just grateful and blessed. That's all I can say.

**Q. If you could just put into words what this means to you, I know girls were just talking about how emotional it is for them. I assume it's got to feel similar to you.**

MIKE WHITE: Yeah, I'm still trying to process the whole thing. Actually, it's something you dream about. First of all, you start dreaming about going to the World Series, that's never easy.

And then finally achieving that, actually when we beat Texas at Texas in the super regionals to go to the first College World Series in 2012, I think it was. And that was like stepping onto another thing. It was completely different. It was like the big major leagues, basically is what it was.

Now to fast-forward to this point in time, having been here eight times to three national finals and then to finally win it, it's amazing.

You can't do it without good people behind you. I've had great administrations at both places, excellent coaching staffs. That's just really important.

Coach Sing, our associate head coach; Kristen Zaleski; and Pattie Ruth Taylor have all played immense parts in this.

It's really a combination of everything. And I'm just the lucky one to be sitting here right now.

**Q. When you are going through that first inning, I was trying to think what your emotions were when you put up a five-spot. Would you say this is your best team ever, or is this the team that played the best?**

MIKE WHITE: That's a really hard question to say. It's like the question I got asked about, the best pitcher. It's really hard to say. It's really, can you produce on the day and do what you need to do.

Obviously this team produced. And I got asked that question. I got asked that question from Gwen Svekis from Oregon because we went to five of them. They said, what's the difference between this team and Texas' team.

And to tell you the truth, I didn't know. Maybe it's something like I learned something along the journey, maybe I coached them a little bit better way. Everything kind of gels together. And you can't really put your finger on one thing, to tell you the truth.

It's just a combination of all the experience that you gained. And I've said this before, you can't practice being here, you've got to be here to do this. My journey of eight years has finally paid off. And I'm so proud of these young ladies for helping me achieve that part of my goal. And I look forward to hopefully doing it again.

**Q. The first inning, your emotions.**

MIKE WHITE: The first inning, it was, like, holy cow, what's going on. We haven't had the lead yet. Someone asked me that, we want to get a lead.



But to put up five, obviously NiJa was tired. If that was a fresh arm, so I don't know if our strategy of playing off on game two by throwing the rest of our staff -- which we thought we could win with them, too; don't get me wrong -- it just didn't turn out that way. But saving Teagan for this opportunity obviously it paid off. So the players can make you look good in those decisions.

**Q. You've talked a few times already about being able to get this win after several tries. But in that time, a lot has changed in the NCAA and, of course, in softball. And a lot came to a head with this match-up with Texas Tech. When you were thinking about how you were able to win, do you think that's something that can be replicated by your program or other programs given how much is changing in college softball?**

MIKE WHITE: That's the great unknown right now. My athletic director Chris Del Conte said it's like sailing out on a flat world and coming off the edge; we just don't know what's going to be out there yet, especially the way the landscape is changing. Who knows what it's going to be? What it is right now is just what it is.

But what makes it difficult is not knowing what you're competing against, in some respects. It's great that these athletes are able to kind of earn a living now, which is great, or get paid for what they do. That's awesome.

But it's also hard to compete. I mean, it started with the transfer portal. And we're certainly, my first year at Texas we were able to bring in four transfers from Oregon.

It's just changed, and we just gotta change with it. And, like it or not, it is what it is, and as you can see, the sport itself is still growing. And that's what I'm most proud about, is being part of the sport right now.

**Q. To see you guys knock NiJa out of the game and Teagan is the last pitcher standing, how gratifying is that to you to see her come of age this season?**

MIKE WHITE: Just watching her mature. She's never really been rattled per se. Even when shows giving up some runs, you don't see the emotion on her face. Obviously she cares about it and she doesn't want that to happen but she doesn't get down. She doesn't dwell on things. She's able to bounce back with resiliency, which is great as a pitcher.

**Q. Building off of that, can you put into words just how special what she just did the last 10 days was?**

MIKE WHITE: I mean, to beat the teams we beat, anytime

you can beat Oklahoma in Oklahoma, it's a feat. So NiJa Canady was able to do that after we did it.

As I said before, they're always number one until someone knocked them off. And they were still number one until Texas Tech took them out of the tournament.

I mean, I didn't know who I wanted to win that game, to tell you the truth. It was like the devil or not. (Laughter).

But fortunately it worked out for us, and we were able to beat some really good teams.

And Teagan Kavan pitching just amazing, and the rest of the staff kind of helped out as well. We were careful throughout the year not to overthrow her and enable her to have the energy at the end. We checked, I think, before the postseason it was 140 innings which ranked her about maybe 15th or 16th in number of innings thrown. So we were careful not to overthrow her. And so that enabled her to kind of have the stretch run.

**Q. When you first got to Texas and you took a look at the program, what were some of the priorities for you long term, and how have those manifested themselves, winning a title?**

MIKE WHITE: One of the things I wanted to do was recruit the best kids, keep the best kids in Texas. A lot of our best kids were playing for other programs. It was difficult because you had the early recruiting was happening. Seventh graders were committing.

So if you missed out on that cycle, it took you a while to get that through. Finally, Keagan Rothrock was, like, one of the last ones in the recruiting early cycle at Florida coming out of it. Now, of course, we have the juniors September 1 we can contact now. So that's changed things a little bit.

It took a while to develop that. Because of the recruiting rules, you have to wait for things to go through. You start getting the top recruits. We feel like we're starting to get into that with top recruits coming in, we had a small class this year. We have a bigger class coming in next year, even bigger coming on. We hope we can continue to build this as we go.

**Q. You talk about the changing landscape. And a federal judge has signed off on that settlement agreement that schools can now pay athletes as much as \$20 million beginning next month, I believe. How does that further change the landscape for you and your program?**

MIKE WHITE: If that happens in softball, we're in trouble.



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I mean, I don't really know, per se. Is that something that just happened? I didn't know about that. It's news to me. I haven't had a chance to comment on that bit. As I said, the changing landscape does change all the time when you have to adapt to it.

It's kind of crazy, but it is what it is right now, and we'll have to find a way.

**Q. You spoke about how many tries it took to get to this point to be sitting here with this trophy. I'm curious if along the way, personally, there were any doubts or moments where you wondered if you would be sitting here; and as you get back to Austin after this, what is different for the program now that moving forward that you've done this?**

MIKE WHITE: I mean, doubts. No, not really. It's always a dream and it's always pushed me up. I love the way up. On the way up, you just grind and you go for it and you just keep changing and you remix the formula and you just keep trying.

Now the next thing is the next step, can we come back and repeat and get back here again?

But no doubts. No doubts. I believe in myself and I believe in the coaching staff I have and I believe in the athletes we recruit. And my dream is, like I tell the players, champions are not born that way, they're made.

It's our opportunity to make them into better athletes, more mentally strong, tougher, and the ability to play the game.

**Q. Kind of to that point, I mean, your job is year-round now with the portal. I believe it's open now or it's going to open. You don't really get to enjoy this because you have to think about building your team next year. From a coach's perspective, do you wish the portal schedule would change with softball?**

MIKE WHITE: I wish it would. Truthfully, we've already been contacting some players because you have to. It's open. So what else are you supposed to do? And then recruiting starts this Saturday, you know. So that's the first opportunity to go out.

It is very condensed, and then it goes through the second week of August and then you finally get a little bit of a break and it's back into school. It's like getting on this treadmill, you keep trying to catch up and keep going, there's very little time to sit back.

But I do wish they would do something with the transfer portal as far as allowing it to not open until after the

College World Series so we can really concentrate on playing our opponents.

**Q. How are you going to celebrate?**

MIKE WHITE: I've got a trip to Hawaii in the middle of August, so that's going to be my downtime. And then I think I'll think about playing a little bit of golf, too.

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