

2026 Women's College World Series

Wednesday, May 27, 2026
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Texas Tech Red Raiders
Coach Gerry Glasco

Jackie Lis

NiJaree Canady

Kaitlyn Terry

Press Conference



talent on all eight teams are unbelievable. There's literally -- I think anyone in the field can win it, and I just don't see anybody that's going to be a clear-cut favorite. I think it's going to be a war from start to finish. There's just so many teams that are really good here.

Q. You guys came so close to getting your hands on that trophy last year. What have you talked to your team about what it takes to take that last step to finally win the championship?

GERRY GLASCO: We've really not had time to -- we got home from Florida 1:00, I think, in the morning, or midnight, 1:00, and then we had a real -- we let the kids rest on Monday morning. We had a light meeting, very minimal talking.

They've all been here, that's the good part. We've got 13 girls that's been in the World Series before, and I think they may know more about what it takes to win it than I do. They're very professional. They're very mature in their approach to the game of softball.

I've really -- like one of the keys is I try to get out of the way and just let them play and try to minimize what I try to do as a coach.

Q. Jackie, you're one of the players that hasn't had this experience yet. What's it been like so far, and what are you kind of anticipating throughout your stay here?

JACKIE LIS: I've just been kind of leaning on the other 13 players that have been here, like just talking about the atmosphere, the pressure, and just trusting that this team was built for the postseason and just trusting all the preparation that we've been doing.

For me, it's very exciting to be here. It's my last year playing collegiate softball. So I'm just trying to take it one game at a time to try to get as far as we can.

Q. KT, what's it like being back here wearing different colors? How much do you think you've evolved since being here last year as well?

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas Tech head coach Gerry Glasco and then players Jackie Lis, NiJaree Canady, and Kaitlyn Terry.

GERRY GLASCO: Super excited to be back and super excited to be here this week. You start working in August for the opportunity to get here in June. We're just thrilled to be here. Extremely proud of my team, the way they came together and developed into a team, because you have to have a team to win.

It's been a really fun spring. It's been a fun year because it's just been a great group of young women, very professional about what they do. We've had literally no issues, and team chemistry, and they've just played better and better throughout the year. I think they're coming into the World Series in a really good spot to take advantage of the opportunity in front of us.

Q. Gerry, I'm wondering if you could kind of give us an idea what you're expecting from just this event? No Oklahoma for the first time in a while, but obviously a lot of star power -- the gal sitting next to you, but there's also a lot of really great players on other teams. What are you just expecting about what this event will look like this week?

GERRY GLASCO: I think that Mississippi State and Arkansas getting here is going to be like first-time experience. I think the fan bases are going to show up, especially Arkansas being so close. But I think Mississippi State will have a lot of fans here, a lot of Oklahoma fans will come and cheer for Sam.

So I think that it's going to be a really super event. The



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KAITLYN TERRY: Yeah, it's definitely very fun to be back, different jersey on, but I think it's been insane the way that me and this team have evolved from the fall until now.

Like Jackie said, this team is built for postseason, but I think it's just going to be very fun, and it is going to be challenging.

Q. NiJa, five years ago, Odicci Alexander came here and took the thing by storm, beat Oklahoma on opening day and led James Madison to the national semifinals. As a Black woman and as someone who gets in the circle, what did that mean to you? If you could also add what it means to you to be in that spot now.

NIJAREE CANADY: Yeah, it meant everything to see someone like me pitch in the World Series and do it successfully, and just seeing how she grew the game for people who looked like us, it meant a lot.

Honestly, that's what I'm trying to do too. I've had so many parents reach out to me, and honestly people at away games, and just say how much their daughter started softball and started pitching because of people like us. So it means a lot.

Q. NiJa and Coach, what can you take from last year's meetings with Mississippi State, and what did you learn from them a year ago that you can kind of use tomorrow?

NIJAREE CANADY: Yeah, they're a really good team. I feel like especially pitching-wise they're really good. I feel like just knowing we can, of course -- the people who were here watched last year's at-bats, things like that. They have a couple of returning pitchers. So just seeing sequences like that and trying to get a good idea of what they'll do tomorrow.

GERRY GLASCO: I don't know that last year has a whole lot to do with this year. I think that what I do know is Sam Ricketts is one of the top young coaches in the country. What she's done with that program is unbelievable. Tyler's been -- Coach Tyler Bratton has been there for a long time, and they're a sort of veteran staff. They're a great staff, and they've got hungry players.

And I know this, they're confident right now, like they're going to be dangerous. When you win a series like they did with Oklahoma and you get the momentum out of that and the maturity of the girls, the maturity that the team, its players experienced, they're set up. They're going to be a dangerous ball club tomorrow night.

Momentum early in the game is going to be extremely critical for both of us in this game.

Q. NiJa, what's just your view on this field being filled with so many of the top arms in the sport and just the competition between all of you guys throughout the week?

NIJAREE CANADY: I think it will be exciting. I feel like this class, there's a lot of seniors graduating right now, and there's a lot of top talent. I'm excited that, one, all of us can end our career here, but also just seeing us all compete against each other.

Q. Gerry and then maybe Jackie and Kaitlyn, if you guys could talk about this. Two years ago today Texas Tech softball was an afterthought. I don't know what that proper word is. Now you guys are not only a team to be reckoned with, but I think a lot of people sort of see you walk in with all black and the villainous sort of side of things, I don't know. How have you guys sort of experienced that transformation from, Gerry, when you took over to now being a team that people sort of mark on a calendar? What's it like to be inside that?

GERRY GLASCO: Phenomenal. It's just fun, and it's really hard for people to understand, like Holly was talking about 15, now 23 players are transfers. I only had three. So what am I going to do? You have to grow the program.

I think it's confusing because we're doing things that maybe never been done before or at least not been done in a similar fashion. It's confusing. But for us on the field, it's just every day. We just work every day. We work really hard. I'm enjoying every moment.

If softball needs me to be the villain, I'm all about it. Let's go. It's fun. I embrace that role, like that's fun. It's a unique opportunity. When I took the job at Texas Tech, I understood in the interview process that they wanted to be a national power. If I interviewed at 20 schools, all 20 would have said that.

The way they backed it up from the day I got on campus, from just like the grounds crew coming to -- I call them at noon, and have it cleaned up, all the flowers are pruned and the yard's mowed for NiJa's visit in 24 hours on a hot day when everyone is on vacation.

The commitment they showed me from every level of the athletic department of the university has been exceptional and beyond normal. It's been a phenomenal experience.

KAITLYN TERRY: Yeah, it's definitely a blessing being

here, just watching them grow -- watching them last year and even playing them last year, watching them grow from then until now, it's insane to see the Lubbock community, honestly.

JACKIE LIS: Yeah, the amount of support that just immediately jumped to back up Coach Glasco and NiJa when they joined the program is amazing to see for somebody from the outside. So when I got a chance to be a part of it, that's just not something you can really say no to. So it's really just amazing to see the support from Texas Tech fans and even everybody else who doesn't exactly support it, that's just how the college sports world is now.

It's just like we like being Texas Tech. No matter what role we're going to get, we're going to thrive in it, and we're going to do us.

Q. Nebraska's Jordy Bahl won the USA Softball Player of the Year last night. Having played against Nebraska earlier in the season, and I know it was a long time ago, but what challenges does she present when you were scouting her and playing against her?

GERRY GLASCO: Jordy is unbelievable just what she's meant to the sport of softball. She became a legend at 14, 15 in travel ball circuits and then goes to Oklahoma and then goes home. What she brought to the sport on the mound, in the batter's box, her enthusiasm, her hustle and the speed, the way she plays the game is unbelievable.

Jordy, she presents as many obstacles as any one player could present. She's just a multi-talented athlete and unbelievably fierce competitor. So a lot is the answer to your question.

Q. NiJa, I know that your faith is important to you. In what ways have you seen God at work in this journey?

NIJAREE CANADY: I feel like the biggest thing for me is just knowing like softball's not my ride or die, like it's not -- yes, I work hard for it, but at the end of the day, like I feel like my job here is just to spread my faith to as many people as I can, and right now I use softball to do that.

Just knowing that this world is not going to be my final place, like the end goal is to be with my Savior, Jesus Christ, and I'm just using softball to spread that message.

I feel like you can play freely too just knowing that. There's been times in my career where I feel like a lot of pressure, but I feel like, as I got older in my junior and senior year, I'm just relying more on my faith and just knowing that this game doesn't define me.

Q. For the players, I'm wondering how you each feel about that kind of villainous tag? Because there's the argument that people are tired of kind of super building in college, but certainly there's the argument that your coach made that sometimes what else are you supposed to do because the transfer portal is what it is.

KAITLYN TERRY: Looking at us as like villains, it's just something that we kind of figured, or I kind of also figured walking into Texas Tech. It's also that doesn't define us. Like the way we play or what does happen, we're all playing softball at the end of the day. It doesn't matter what team you're on or anything that happens outside of that.

I just think that, as long as we play the game, we're fine.

NIJAREE CANADY: I feel like everyone talks about wanting to grow softball and wanting more eyes on softball, wanting people to watch softball and wanting just female sports to be as big as male sports. At the end of the day, transfers happen in male and female sports, so if you want the game to grow, this kind of stuff comes with it.

I just feel like it gets more eyes on softball, and at the end of the day, I feel like that's what everyone wants.

JACKIE LIS: Yeah, we can't control what people are going to say about us. They don't know our journeys like I do and the rest of the team does. We know why we're here, what we're supposed to do here, so we try to control that side of things and not really focus on what everybody else might think of us.

Q. If you look at this field, lots of -- got two teams who have never made it before, teams that have never won championships before, and then there's UCLA, sort of the grand holdover, one of those early powerhouses that has remained. I know they're not your focus, but what about them has enabled, in your mind, them to remain relevant even as the sport has changed so much?

GERRY GLASCO: There's so much, like the transition, like the foundation that Sue Enquist laid. Other coaches obviously, but I'm starting with Sue. Obviously the coaches there now had great influence from Coach Enquist, and they've done a great job of maintaining the traditions of UCLA and the status of UCLA.

Extremely talented. The power that they've had and shown this year -- I never thought it was possible for a team to hit 200 home runs. The things they've done is just incredible.



So they just did a great job of never letting it slip away and keeping that foundation that they established back in the '80s and '90s to keep growing and growing, and here they are today, like they're a power.

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