

2026 Women's College World Series

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Nebraska Cornhuskers Coach Rhonda Revelle Ava Kuszak Jordy Frahm Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Nebraska head coach Rhonda Revelle and players Ava Kuszak and Jordy Frahm. We'll begin with an opening statement from Coach.

RHONDA REVELLE: First of all, I want to congratulate all the other teams. I think it's a really incredible year of softball. I think there's a lot of parity. I think this tournament is wide open. I've heard several people speak that play the game, coach the game, watch the game, that they think it's going to be a really, really competitive series and really exciting series.

We're just thrilled to be a part of it, especially with this team we're bringing down this year.

Q. Rhonda, I know it's awkward because I'm asking you about Jordy when she's like sitting right there, but with her winning the USA Softball National Player of the Year Award, I know you've known her for a really long time. So when you think back to last night, what memories come to mind for you when you see her go up and accept that?

RHONDA REVELLE: It's kind of like a movie that plays through my head. I've been talking this week about being really calm. When she won it last night, I had that same sort of calmness. The memories of -- I remember Darren Dubsy sending me a picture of Jordy when she was 8. She had jeans on, this little crop top, and she was in her basement throwing against a brick wall, and it started there.

She just kept working, and it just shows you that dreams can and do come true when you just really put your mind to something and really work hard.

The tenacity of her work, she's just never satisfied. She

just does things that are at a different level. I've coached a lot of players, but I don't know that I can say I've coached a player that has just more intention on what the end goal is for her -- and not even necessarily with awards. I'm not talking awards at all. The end goal of how she wants a pitch to feel or how she wants it to look.

There have been times in a bullpen where she kind of shot me that look, and I'd say, "Good pitch," and she's like, "No, it's not." I've just smartened -- I only have to hear that so many times. Now I'll just say, "Did you like that pitch?" See, I've gotten smarter. She'll say, "Yeah, it was all right." Hardly ever was it a good one. Sorry, J.

Q. Jordy, wanted to ask you about Hannah. What's it been like for you this season? I know that's something you're really close with. Having come over from Oklahoma as well, what's it been like for you to see her take advantage of that opportunity this season?

JORDY FRAHM: Just knowing her story and being there for a good chunk of it, the Hannah Coor we have on our team this year is a totally different Hannah Coor I have spent time with in the past.

Seeing this new her, she was so happy, playing so free. She's so on fire for the Lord. It makes me so happy for her because she has worked so hard, and she is getting to experience these things now that she has kept her head down and been working for it for years. And she is just absolutely loving life. That's all I would want for any of my teammates ever. It's cool to get to see her experience that.

Q. For the three of you, what's it like to be here finally? Ava, we talked earlier in the season about the goal of being here after being so close last year. Now you're here. Jordy, you're back here with your journey, your story. Coach, you're back here after a minute. What's it like to be here?

JORDY FRAHM: It's pretty surreal. This whole year, we've been so focused on winning the pitch that we're in, winning the pitch that we're in. This is a goal our team had from the very beginning, but it was never something that we spent all this time talking about because in order to get

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here, it's really hard. A lot goes into that, and a lot of the right things have to happen.

We were just so focused on taking it one day at a time so those things would happen. Now that we're here, we're just so excited to get on the field and practice later today and let it set in even more.

Yeah, it's awesome. We're just soaking in the environment. Now that we are here, it's right back to the same thing: head down, one pitch at a time, one pitch at a time.

It's pretty cool because this team has worked really hard and grown a lot to be here.

AVA KUSZAK: I was going to say, honestly, the exact same thing. I think our team is just ready to be on the field and start playing and, honestly, just take in this whole new environment. We've talked a lot about just taking in that environment. And we have been the same the whole year, but wherever we go, it can change, but we don't change.

We're just excited to enjoy this moment and enjoy this with each other and play more softball.

RHONDA REVELLE: I'll just add a little different perspective. I think, because I have been here before in different decades and listening to alumni talk about years and sometimes decades later, that these are some of the memories they remember the most. Knowing that this group will have those memories to talk about too is really special.

Q. Rhonda, you guys really wanted to schedule hard, and it seemed to really pay off. Sometimes that's backfired on other teams. Why do you think this group lived up to that and played so well and you kind of have that experience going up against these teams that are here already?

RHONDA REVELLE: First of all, when we talked about building the schedule, we talked about building it hard. That wasn't just done blindly. Like I didn't do it without talking to some of our leaders. Then when we put the schedule together, they were all in. It was like, yes, this is exactly what we have to do.

I've said it all along, it was a little bit high risk, high reward, especially being a northern school, playing a lot of those teams that are southern schools in February when we haven't been outside a lot.

I felt like, if we could compete well enough, early enough, it would really not only build and continue to build our belief,

it would make a statement that Nebraska softball can play and play with anybody.

Q. Coach Revelle, you've had a couple days to look at Arkansas a bit deeper. What are your thoughts on their lineup?

RHONDA REVELLE: I've said this before. They're really a balanced lineup. They have power. They have some speed. They remind us of our lineup. They have a couple more lefties that they run consistently in the lineup, but they really remind us of our lineup.

Everyone up and down through the order is hitting over .300, kind of like ours, and everybody can take one over the fence, but they can also hit for average as well. Then in the circle they've got a righty and they've got a lefty, and they both win a lot of games. Then they've got another kid that has some innings and comes in in relief. Both of their pitchers have played in big moments and pitched really well in big moments.

So I just think our teams are really, on paper, really equal. I think it's just going to be a matter of who can get out there and win more pitches and execute in the moment a little bit better.

Q. I have a question for Jordy. You're obviously very familiar with UCLA's Jordan Woolery. As one of the other best players in the country, I want to ask you a question about her. When you look at her numbers -- 34 home runs, 112 RBIs, a .500 batting average -- you pitch, you hit, you know how insane that is. What do you think of those numbers, and what made her a tough matchup for you?

JORDY FRAHM: She's definitely one of the most feared hitters in the country. Every time we play them, I just think she's going to hit the ball hard, just try to keep it in the park. Insane numbers for the power, for the average, everything. She's such a tough player to pitch to because she can hit so many pitches. There's no holes in her swing. She can get to anything.

It's really hard to keep a hitter like that off balance and to try to find a weakness because there's not one. Yeah, trying to keep her in the park is the biggest thing.

Q. Jordy and Ava, the game tomorrow is a late one. I know you guys are familiar with that, but what do you plan to do tomorrow in the lead-up to the game? That's a long time to wait.

JORDY FRAHM: I think the biggest thing will be keeping a routine. Like you said, we have played late games like that

before. So we kind of know what we need to do in order to stay ready, in order to conserve energy, in order to maintain adrenaline and just excitement throughout the day. So we've talked a little bit about that and just keeping your team, keeping things consistent.

Even though we're not home, trying to stay as familiar as what we would be doing if we were at home.

AVA KUSZAK: I think the biggest focus is just staying constant with what we've been doing during those long games and just getting our bodies moving. You have a long day to sit around if you really want to, but I think the biggest thing is just getting up and getting your body moving and getting ready for the game.

Q. Coach, Coach Deifel talked a lot about how you meant a lot to her coaching career, how you invited her to some of your practices and how you run your program. Just talk about her being here for the first time as a head coach in the World Series. What did you see in her when she started her coaching career?

RHONDA REVELLE: I might get a little emotional about this because I -- as a friend, I just really admire and respect and adore Courtney Deifel. I think she's a tremendous human being.

I like to talk about the person before I like to talk about the athlete or the coach, so I want to do the same with her. Thrilled for her. I know they've been so close so many years and just got punches, and that's really difficult to endure.

I think I heard in one of her press conferences when she came to Arkansas, it wasn't a matter of if, it was a matter of when, and this is their when.

So as much as you don't want to compete against your friends, I'm honored and thrilled that we're going to hug at home plate tomorrow night because I think the world needs to see that in athletics, that we can get together and compete and fight or our teams tooth and nail and hope that we're at opposite ends of the victory and loss tomorrow, but yet be able to have that kind of affection and respect for each other.

Q. Jordy, I'm kind of curious about your perspective, seeing it from both ends, one of the themes of the year, such an offensive year, so many home runs hit across the country. What do you kind of attribute that to? Do you see that as hitters getting better as the sport kind of grows? Do you see that as strike zones getting tighter with umpires?

What did you look at it as?

JORDY FRAHM: I just think the talent in our game is growing so fast. Hitters are just stronger with all sorts of information now. You're able to really hone in on a game plan, have a more specific game plan. You're able to prepare so much differently than you were even ten years ago.

So I think just a lot of that, just a lot of really talented, disciplined athletes who are doing everything they can to make themselves as athletic and strong as possible, but then also just strong-minded athletes who are trying to win on the mental side of the ballgame and really have whatever edge they can with preparation and scouting and all things like that.

Q. Rhonda mentioned that you and Hannah Coor talked to the team about what to expect here. What was the message from two players that have been here quite a bit and been pretty successful?

JORDY FRAHM: I just think there's a lot of excitement around the World Series because obviously only eight teams make it and it's a really exciting thing. With that, there can be a lot of outside noise, a lot of outside distractions. So it's really important to protect your peace and to keep things consistent when you can, but also to just absolutely soak in the environment.

There's so many people here. It's so loud. It smells like funnel cakes all the time. There are so many cool things. This is the pinnacle of college softball, right? Take the time to soak it in, but then also once that first pitch comes, you very quickly fall back into this is the same game we've played for such a long time.

So enjoy the environment, soaking it in, but also just realizing, when it's time to go, this is the same exact game.

Q. Ava, a lot of your teammates came home and wanted to represent Nebraska. Why has that jersey been the perfect fit for you and just watching them do what they do?

AVA KUSZAK: I sit back, I think about as first when I was little, both of my parents are from Omaha, Nebraska. I've been a Nebraska fan for a long time, just growing up watching Nebraska football, watching Nebraska softball.

So coming back and having my visit with Coach Revelle, I was feeding baby bunnies and hanging out with Jordy, like someone that I said good-bye to in high school and club and was like go kick some butt in college, not thinking I'd ever get to play with her again, and I'm sitting right next to

her having that chance.

So I think on that visit t just felt so right. My heart just felt right at home, and I just felt like I was seen as a person and a player, and it made me feel so free. I've just been so incredibly grateful for this chance.

Q. Dugout cows, I know they were a thing last season. What kind of role have they played -- first things first, how did it start? Do they have names? Do they have keepers on the team? What kind of role has that played for you guys this season?

JORDY FRAHM: I'm actually going to let Ava answer this because she's the whole reason for the cows.

AVA KUSZAK: Coach Revelle started it because she introduced me to Dr. Jo, and Dr. Jo brought a cow, a baby cow bull into one of our practices that was born during one of our games, and she was a twin. Then I'm an animal science major, pre-vet, so Coach Revelle introduced me to Dr. Jo and said you should start an internship, just start working with her. And I'd had no experience with large animals before. So that was a completely different environment for me. I completely fell in love with it.

Then Coach Revelle and my mom bought some stuffed cows, so we have Bowlin and Gordon, who are the two twins. And then Chick-Fil-A, actually, after we won the Big Ten tournament, we went there and got some food after, and he came out with a huge stuffed cow, and he was like, You guys have to have this in the dugout. So that one is Rho Rev for Coach Revelle.

RHONDA REVELLE: I didn't know his name.

AVA KUSZAK: Yeah, it's Rho Rev. Dr. Jo always comes to our games, and you can hear that lady yelling and cheering us on. I love her as a human being, and I honestly want to be her when I grow up because to me she's an amazing human. So to me the cow is just giving a little something to Dr. Jo as well.

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