

2026 Women's College World Series

Thursday, May 28, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Tennessee Lady Volunteers

Coach Karen Weekly

Sage Mardjetko

Elsa Morrison

Postgame Press Conference



Tennessee 6, Texas 3

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Tennessee. We'll start with an opening statement from Coach.

KAREN WEEKLY: Great game against a great opponent. Texas is as good a team as is out there. I'm really proud of our team. I'm really proud of how we came out with a really good balance of being excited to be here and calm. I thought because of that we just played with a lot of joy, played with a lot of heart, played with a lot of passion.

I feel like they kept looking to their left and right, drawing energy and inspiration from each other. This morning we talked about 2 Timothy: God does not give you a spirit of being timid. Instead, God gives you a spirit of power and love and self-discipline.

I felt like you saw that on the field today just in the way our team engaged with each other and the game.

I couldn't be more proud of how they played.

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions for the players.

Q. Elsa, first time at OKC, freshman. Take us inside your mind, the three-run shot.

ELSA MORRISON: Everything we prepared for was that up-spin speed, trying to win the belt today. We had talked about being aggressive early in the count because we knew she would want to try and get up on us early. Just working down through the ball.

Q. Elsa, three-run shot, your first at-bat for your hometown team. Take us through that at-bat.

ELSA MORRISON: It means the world getting to have an at-bat with the girls that I love and go to war with every single day.

Everybody was talking about nerves, breathing, whatnot. I had complete peace in the box knowing that the girls in the dugout would have my back no matter the outcome.

Q. Elsa or Sage, these guys get you in the game right before the championship series last year. Stakes aren't quite as high yet. Any kind of vengeance?

SAGE MARDJETKO: Yeah, I mean, obviously every team out here is good. It doesn't matter who it is. We're focused on us, sticking to who we are, our core values and just going out there and playing Tennessee softball no matter who is across the field. That's what we plan on doing all season, then the rest of the World Series.

Q. Sage, you kept the top of the lineup hitless. What was so important trying to limit the damage from them?

SAGE MARDJETKO: Yeah, just goes back to trusting yourself and the preparation that these coaches put in.

Megan does a great job scouting our hitters, just trusting what she calls, then executing my pitch, keeping them off balance, mixing spins and locations, also throwing the change-up so they can't feel settled in the box.

Q. Sage, how great was it to see Elsa get up there while you're in the circle pitching the way you are, then her to hit that three-run home run? And how crucial is this day break?

SAGE MARDJETKO: Yeah, I'm incredibly proud of Elsa. She has had quite the season. It doesn't always show, but she's put in so much work. Especially as a freshman, just coming out here and playing free is not easy to do. She's done that.

So I'm just super proud of her and all she's done.

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Having that day off tomorrow, it means everything 'cause you need to get all the rest you can when you're preparing for these big games.

Q. Sage, last year you came out, one appearance, gave us three runs to Florida. This year, a shutout game against Texas. How do you feel more mature from last year?

SAGE MARDJETKO: Yeah, it just goes to the confidence and preparation that I've had all season. All these teams we face, yes, they're good, but they're not going to do anything that's crazy unheard of, nothing you've never seen before. Softball is softball. It just goes back to trusting yourself, the preparation you put in day in and day out.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, players. We'll continue with questions for Coach Weekly.

Q. You knew once Elsa got on the campus that she had game-changing power. How have you really seen her develop as a true hitter?

KAREN WEEKLY: It's really her maturity. The season hasn't been easy for her. It's not like she's batted .400 all year. You can tell everything about somebody when a they're struggling. When you watch her to continue to work, there's no drama with her. She's just really analytical about things. She's an engineering major. She just kept going to work.

She'd show up the same every day. Watching her mature from the beginning of fall to now has been really, really cool. She used to take a lot of pitches early and get behind. She responded to the challenge. If they're going to throw you something good early, you need to get on it, and you're going to get results. Today that's what she did. She got a pitch right away. She drove it for us.

She doesn't play like a freshman. She has a full season under her belt. Her maturity has always been ahead of her age group.

Q. You have a good problem to have when you have so many talented pitches. Talk about the decision to start Sage and bring Karlyn out of the bullpen?

KAREN WEEKLY: We have this deep pitching staff. You want to leverage that to the best of your ability. I think it's hard for any pitcher in today's game to go seven innings, getting back to the top of the order for the fourth time. Anytime you do that, no matter who you are, the advantage starts to shift to the hitters.

We planned on splitting the game. It was just a matter of finding the moment we thought was the best one. It is out of respect for our opponent. It has nothing to do with Sage. Sage was dealing. It's out of respect for our opponent to try to keep them off balance, knowing what a great offense they have.

Q. You didn't play Texas in the regular season this year, but you went against Kavan last year. What did you learn in last year's game against Teagan that may have helped tonight?

KAREN WEEKLY: That she's darn good. Last year she just threw a phenomenal game against us. What you see with her is she really rises to the occasion. She's thrown so many innings for that team, really carried them this year. Every big game she has stepped up for them.

I think it probably helped for some of our players to just face somebody that they had faced before. That doesn't make it any easier, because she's still really, really good, but I just think that familiarity gives you a little bit more settled-in feeling.

Q. What problems does Texas Tech pitching and offense pose for you guys this weekend?

KAREN WEEKLY: I mean, just a super talented team. Again, a team that can go deep in pitching. Haven't had to rely on one arm, just like we haven't had to. A stacked lineup. Up and down all the way through, one through nine.

Yeah, I mean, they've got everything you would want from a talent perspective.

Q. A lot of softball being played over the next few days. You had to play on Friday last year. How crucial is it to stay in this winners' bracket?

KAREN WEEKLY: It's a really big deal. It's not just for the rest, but just staying in the winners' bracket so you're not immediately turning around knowing your back's against the wall and your season could end.

It will be nice tomorrow to just kind of breathe a little bit, and tonight as well, get a good plan together for what we're going to do tomorrow. Probably have a little workout. Get ourselves ready for our next game on, what, Saturday.

Q. Rough outing from Karlyn run-wise. What did you see out of her today? What would you have liked to see her done a little bit better?

KAREN WEEKLY: Just get the toughness. Even when

they put up runs, you just know that Karlyn is always going to bear down even more when she needs to.

What I really loved was how our team responded. Every time they scored, we came back and scored to kind of keep that cushion.

I'll have to go back and look at it because I obviously haven't seen where the pitches were. I think they got some barrels on some things that might have been a little bit too much over the plate. When she started landing her rise ball and her change-up a little bit better, I mean, that's the key.

Q. The way the bracket shapes up now, it has you guys and Texas Tech. A future showcase on ABC. How cool of an aspect is that to have that showcase for our sport?

KAREN WEEKLY: I don't think it would matter who it is because this is the World Series. Everybody here is really good. It's really a reflection of the growth of softball in general. The fact that we're on ABC, that's not about Tennessee or Texas Tech, that's about college softball, what an awesome sport it is, how many people have fallen in love with it.

To come out here, this place is packed on a Thursday for an 11:00 and 1:30 ballgame, the most local team that would draw the fans the easiest isn't here, that says everything about how much people love college softball.

Q. Coming off a super regional where it was heavily relied on the pitching to keep you guys in it, pull through, how did it make you feel today to see the offense come out and jump up like they did?

KAREN WEEKLY: Good offense this time of year is about stringing things together. We get the two walks. What big at-bats for -- well, Alannah got hit by a pitch, and then Mak drew a walk.

What an awesome at-bat. Elsa is opportunistic, she gets her pitch, and she goes. There's so many moments like that in a game, where if you go, get it right, there you are with the three-run lead. If you don't go right there, things can go different.

It's not about looking down and seeing this crazy number in a hit column. This is the time of year where everyone is going to have good pitching. It's about everybody being productive in their at-bat.

You look at how the last run scored, on Tae walking, coming around on a sac fly, us laying a good bunt to move

her over. Gabby with two outs, getting the ball in the hole hard enough that we were able to score on it.

It's about doing all those little things and, just when you get runners on, getting enough timely hits.

THE MODERATOR: That will wrap things up for Tennessee.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

