

2026 Women's College World Series

Thursday, May 28, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Arkansas Razorbacks

Courtney Deifel

Kailey Wyckoff

Payton Burnham

Postgame Press Conference



Nebraska 5, Arkansas 3

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Arkansas. We'll start with an opening statement from head coach.

COURTNEY DEIFEL: Yeah, I just thought it was a heck of a game. It was a big-time World Series game that we just weren't on the winning end of.

I was proud of our players' fight. I was proud of how poised they were on this stage. We will turn the page and get ready to fight our butts off.

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

Q. Kailey, two years ago we were here when you hit a walk-off home run in this stadium. Tonight you hit the two-run shot to get off. Take me through that at-bat.

KAILEY WYCKOFF: Yeah, I think when I just got up there, I just tried to calm my nerves. It's a pretty big stage. Like we said, we always just try and let it happen, not make it happen.

Yeah, when I just went up there, I looked for something belt high. She gave it to me first at-bat. So yeah.

Q. Payton, could you show us as a pitcher what it's like having Ella have the night she did defensively?

PAYTON BURNHAM: Yeah, I mean, they've come up clutch so many times. As a pitcher, it's go in there and throw your game, and they got you. Tonight Ella made some amazing plays that changed the momentum of the game. Just the whole infield in general, having them behind me is super confidence-building.

Q. How much do y'all rely on your experiences this season going into a game tomorrow that you know you got to win?

PAYTON BURNHAM: Yeah, I mean, we've had our backs against the wall quite a few times. Now it's just digging deep and fighting it out.

I mean, we're still here, so... There's another pitch, there's more fight left in us.

Q. Could you feel the atmosphere? This is a record attendance for this session. A lot of Arkansas fans making the trip. What was it like?

PAYTON BURNHAM: It was electric. For me, I didn't really realize what was happening until you come off the field. Then you're like, Whoa.

No, it was very electric. It was a lot of fun.

KAILEY WYCKOFF: Yeah, same here. I would describe it as Bogle. I think Bogle is electric, as well. Obviously we can't fit 10,000 fans in our stadium, but if we could, they would be there. We know that.

Yeah, it was just a really good experience. Walking off the field, it didn't really hit me until afterwards, I guess, yeah.

Q. Kailey, I'm curious on your element to this, because I know you're focused on Arkansas, but your former team, head coach, teammates also here, but how has your journey brought you to this point to be able to deliver in that moment?

KAILEY WYCKOFF: Yeah, well, when I decided to transfer, I knew that when I came on my visit to Arkansas that, like, I love Coach D. When I visited the campus and everything, it just made it even more real. Once I got here, even last year, seeing how much the coaches and the team, like, brought out the best in me, they just have so much faith in me, have really changed my life. It's so awesome.



I think, like, they just have really prepared me for this moment because they know me so well. They know when I'm up, when I'm down. Yeah, they just took in the best in me.

COURTNEY DEIFEL: To be fair, too, she didn't play for Gerry. Most of those teammates, most of those girls, new, too, so... But she did play at Texas Tech.

Q. What was your mentality for the whole team really defensively when you had to get the crucial outs to keep the game alive?

PAYTON BURNHAM: For me it was just pounding the zone and trusting my defense. They've had my back all year. Just another game for them to have my back for them. They definitely did.

But yeah...

KAILEY WYCKOFF: I think as a group, we're just very experienced and we just have that confidence in each other. We have that faith in our pitchers to just give us the fly balls, the ground outs that we need. We deliver for them.

THE MODERATOR: That will wrap-up questions for players and we'll go to questions for Coach now.

Q. What did you see from Payton and Robyn, for both of them, as the game went on?

COURTNEY DEIFEL: I just saw a lot of fight. I saw comfort in the moment. I saw competitiveness in them. I just think they gave it all tonight.

I think the change that I called for Hannah Coor, against Hannah Coor, is going to haunt my dreams. She executed the pitch. That is on me as the pitch caller.

I was just proud of our entire team tonight. They fought their butts off. They put it all out there. That's all we could ever ask. It just didn't go our way.

Q. How do you as kind of a coach balance the fact of the game that you did play, the kind of historic element of it, then regrouping for tomorrow now?

COURTNEY DEIFEL: Yeah, I think this stings for us. I think while we were waiting our turn to come in, you're going through text messages and seeing the record attendance, knowing that both teams were going to travel, and they're going to show up for us. I was so impressed. That's what they've continued to do. Our fans were incredible.

You could hear, just like P said, it was electric. I think, considering all that, this being our first time, I cannot say enough how proud I am of this team and the way their composure, their fight, just putting their hearts out there.

It's an emotional loss for us and a quick turnaround. I think for us it's just turning the page and diving into the prep and resting. Our players need to get home, they need to rest, eat, do all those things, then we'll go about it like we do every other day and fight for our lives.

Q. The margins between these two teams seem so close. Is that what you expected?

COURTNEY DEIFEL: Yeah, I think you look in the prep, they're explosive offensively, they have pitchers that are just dialed that they have the ability to keep you off balance. They defended as well as we do. We knew it was going to be a battle.

I thought both teams just played exceptionally well. They both put their hearts out there, as we would expect from a team coached by Rhonda Revelle and her staff.

Q. A loss that stings. Knowing that your team, y'all haven't lost back-to-back games, do you take any comfort in that?

COURTNEY DEIFEL: I don't think 'comfort' is the right word (smiling).

Our team has responded so well all year. I know this is sitting with them. You could see it on their face. So I think that we expect that the sun's going to come up tomorrow. Like P said, if we have an out, we have a chance.

Seeing how this team fought tonight, I'd choose them every day. We're going to give it everything we have tomorrow.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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