

# 2026 Women's College World Series

Monday, June 1, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

**Alabama Crimson Tide**  
**Coach Patrick Murphy**  
**Marlie Giles**  
**Jena Young**

Postgame Press Conference



Texas Tech 2, Alabama 0

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Alabama head coach Patrick Murphy and players Marlie Giles and Jena Young.

PATRICK MURPHY: Just want to say thanks to everyone for a very long day. I know you got your money's worth for two double-headers. Unfortunately, it didn't go our way, but I told the team in the locker room I was very proud of everybody. They represented the school, themselves, the state so very well all year from August 20th to June 1st today. I couldn't have asked for a better group.

I think you guys saw that they played with joy and love for each other, and they were filled with mudita, and that's exactly what I hope for. When you play for something bigger than yourself, you look back and have could-a, would-a, should-a, but we really don't need to do that this year. We have love for each other.

Our theme at the beginning of the year was fully known, fully loved. I told them to be fully known, you could be yourself. That's what everybody asks for, just I want to be myself around people, and you can love all my weirdness or whatever it is. And then fully loved is whether you go 0 for 4, 4 for 4, I'm still going to love you unconditionally, just like your mom and dad would, and that's the case.

**Q. For either of you, what was the mood or vibe in between games and then going into Game 2? You have an up-and-down moment with your home run and then the game ends. What were the vibes going into the second game?**

JENA YOUNG: I think we were feeling confident just knowing we needed to come out and compete like we

were. We have good vibes in there. We like to have fun. So that's what we've been trying to keep up like we've been doing all year.

**Q. Question for the players. What did NiJa do in the second game that made her tough to hit against?**

MARLIE GILES: I think she just controlled the zone really well. She started off getting a lot of first pitch strikes and then would make us chase, whether that was change, whether that was up in the zone. She's a really good pitcher, and she had a really good game against us, and we just didn't adjust fast enough.

**Q. Marley, you're a Chilton County native. I know you lived and breathed Alabama softball growing up, to be here in your senior captain season and to be the catalyst that started scoring in each of these games up until the end, what did it mean to do that on this big stage?**

MARLIE GILES: It meant so much to me to come through for my team. I think really the biggest thing this week and really the whole postseason is my relevance and identity isn't found if I have success on the field. I just wanted to go out there and have love for my teammates and know that I'm blessed to be here and that God's got me thus far and He's got a plan and just trusting that.

He was with me and allowed me to come through a couple of those times. I wish it would have been one more time at the end of the game, but beggars can't be choosers, I guess.

**Q. Jena, you were on a team that went through a unique experience last year, but to go from that to hitting a game-tying home run in the World Series, what was that moment like for you?**

JENA YOUNG: It was just amazing to do that for my team and for this coaching staff and the fans up there. It just felt really special. I wouldn't have wanted to spend this year with anybody else, playing for anybody else.

**Q. For both players, what are you going to remember**

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**most about this team and this season?**

JENA YOUNG: Probably just all the fun we had and all the grit we showed. Even like in that last inning, we still were fighting, and that was the case all year. So just all the fun we had and all the success we had.

MARLIE GILES: Mine would definitely be just the people that was around. We had personalities like you could never imagine, and it was from one end up here all the way to one end down here. It was really awesome to be able to be on this team and get to know each and every girl.

Especially JY. She was shy at first, and it's been awesome getting to know her and watching her flourish into who she is.

**Q. What did you see from Vic in her first appearance on this big stage today, and what do you think she can take from that confidence and that performance into next year?**

PATRICK MURPHY: I think she's got a lot of potential, and I hope you guys get to see her for three more years or four, depending on the rule change. That would be cool. Let's make that happen.

Seriously, you guys see how electric she is. We were hoping she wouldn't be too nervous because that's your first time, you're playing to go to the Championship Series, and Vic lets go.

She's just a joy to coach. She's a sponge. She takes everything that Lance gives her and wants more. I'm really hoping that she owns OKC here for the next three or four years because she's got the potential.

**Q. What were you kind of seeing from Jocelyn that first game? It didn't seem like things were as sharp as they have been.**

PATRICK MURPHY: I think her timing was off a little bit unfortunately, and that happens. She gutted it out as much as she could. I mean, we were watching perfection basically for the last four weekends, and unfortunately, we needed to score some more runs this game. That would have helped.

But she gave us everything. You lose 2-0, and it was a weird play on the second run. She had only given up the one. So she gave us an opportunity, and I think I said this at the very first press conference, we played 65 games, we had one bad start by a pitching staff, which is unbelievable.

**Q. Similar question to the players, NiJa, what did you**

**see from her that made it really tough to get hits against?**

PATRICK MURPHY: Like Marlie said, you try to pick something. Her change-up was really good. She got a couple on that today with two strikes. Screwball, you try to look back up at the scoreboard to see whether it was a strike or not. It moves, so it was about seven to eight inches off the plate, and we swing and miss by six inches. And that's what a good pitcher does, you know.

When somebody is moving the ball that much, it's very difficult to square up. If she throws a mistake, you cannot miss it. You cannot foul it back, and we had a couple of those. She's only going to probably throw four mistakes a game, and you've got to capitalize.

You can't take it either because, if you take it, she's probably going to throw a rise, drop, screwball, curveball, change-up after that, and it's not going to be a strike.

**Q. Before a pitch was even thrown here, you said you always wanted to go to Oklahoma City, but especially with this team, not only success on the field, but who they are as people. What did this group mean to you and to this program this year?**

PATRICK MURPHY: I wish all of you could be in the locker room after because I have three alums that won a National Championship and now they're on the coaching staff. Kayla Braud started, and she said that this was the team that made the alums proud.

I had that all year long too. They would text or e-mail or call and say that's 'Bama U. That team is 'Bama U. So they brought this love back to the game for each other. It's one of the best player-led teams I've ever had in 28 years, and it was this one right here.

As a coach, that's what you hope for is the players lead the team because it makes my job easy. I don't have to discipline anybody. I mean, it's very, very enjoyable as a coach to watch that happen. Basically, you just, you hope you don't screw it up. Just a great group.

**Q. How do you after the moment, at the end of the first game, how do you regroup them? Did you feel like they were in a good spot heading into that second game?**

PATRICK MURPHY: You guys know, it's where legends are made, the University of Alabama. And Jena Young just had a legendary moment there to tie it up, and unfortunately, they had one of their own, but it happened so fast.

You know, you still have another game to play. 45 minutes is a good time. You go back, change uniforms, get something to eat, drink, and then we have to forget it. It's one of the hardest things to do, but you have to have the shortest-term memory possible in sports, especially softball, baseball. If you dwell, you're not going to be very good.

So we had to go on, move on, and learn from whatever happened, and then start competing again. I thought Briski gave us a great start. I really did. I still thought Ambrey Taylor was going to hit a bomb, and we'd be here for another two hours. When Audrey hit the double, I'm like here we go. She got a piece of it, but she made a good play in right field.

**Q. Mudita is a program staple now, but it seems like this team in particular has really personified that. Can you talk about specific moments, whether it was Mari being so happy for Brooke or whenever she had that home run the first game or any specific moments where they really personified that in Oklahoma City?**

PATRICK MURPHY: The pitching staff too, everybody was happy for Briski the first two games. Because you have a staff, and everyone wants to play. If they're a Division I athlete, they're competitive, they want to play, but when somebody does well, you're as happy for their success as if it's your own. That's what mudita is, having vicarious joy in someone else's success, and it happened the whole time.

I mean, Marlie for sure, what a great way for her to go out. She was terrific. Jena. It just fills a coach's heart when you see that. And it's genuine. You get rid of jealousy and envy on a team, and it's genuine love for the success of somebody else on your team. That's what it's all about.

**Q. This team is slated to bring back a lot of these pieces. Why is this experience here just so valuable for that as you try to stay for the ultimate goal towards the end?**

PATRICK MURPHY: It's huge because there's a lot of girls that have not stepped foot in the stadium before. So they get a taste of it. Afterwards, again, I said, okay, the last thing I'm going to say is everybody that returns now sees that that's what it's supposed to look like. So you have the blueprint 2026. Now what are you going to do about it next year?

You have a whole summer. We have five really good high school kids coming, and I'm pleased that all five are coming. They're going to be very, very good. Everybody

needs to improve, get a little better, do something over the summer, and hopefully you'll see us here again next year. That would be awesome.

**Q. How do you turn a moment like this that can be disappointing into, with all the pieces you have coming back next year, something they can build on?**

PATRICK MURPHY: Easy. You just show them a bunch of highlights this week of the people that are returning and say, okay, you want to do that again, right? I mean, just to be up here with you guys, this is incredible. I mean, it's past your bedtime. It's midnight. It's past my bedtime. I cannot thank you enough, every single one of you. And all the people on the outside, all of you.

Jessica, thank you so much for being our NCAA person this week. You are terrific. Jeremy Hammond, thank you for being here. Jill -- and if I could pronounce your last name correctly -- thank you for being here from the SEC. My boss is here. My real boss is here. The president was here. The head football coach for Alabama was here. It was a helluva good week, right? There's no such thing as a bad day at the Women's College World Series.

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