

# 2026 Women's College World Series

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

**Texas Longhorns**

**Coach Mike White**

**Viviana Martinez**

**Katie Stewart**

**Teagan Kavan**

Postgame Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: We'll start with an opening statement from the head coach. We are joined by Texas head coach Mike White and players Teagan Kavan, Viviana Martinez, and Katie Stewart.

MIKE WHITE: We're through to the Championship Series, very excited to play another team from Texas. It's being billed as the rematch, but should be an exciting series of softball for everyone to watch and be a part of.

We'd like to thank the committee of the NCAA and NFCA for all the help they've given us through the tournament and postseason. There's been some exciting games of softball, and we're excited to be one of the last two teams standing.

**Q. Teagan, it was easy to see your growth from freshman to sophomore year, but how do you think you've grown since the last time you guys were here at this stage?**

TEAGAN KAVAN: I think I've grown a lot mentally and then also physically with the implementation of more confidence in my other pitches to complement my rise ball that we all know. But, yeah, I think just the confidence in that piece. I think last year at the World Series was the first time I really trusted my drop ball and was able to use it more. And so I think I carried that into this whole season. It made me a better pitcher.

I think the experience is huge, and experience always helps, and our team is super experienced. Yeah, just as a whole, yeah.

**Q. For any of the players -- well, first, Katie, how's the**

**lip? Then for any of the players, you all played together for a few years. How does that help you in some of these tight moments, especially these string of elimination games?**

KATIE STEWART: My lip's good. It's fine. It makes it look like I was being dramatic (laughter). Just playing with these two the last three years, like we have full trust in each other. We know what each other's capable of. So there's never a doubt, it's just like when it's going to happen.

Especially the last few games with the hitting, Teagan never lost faith in us. She continued to say I believe in you all. I'm going to keep us here, and you can do it. So just trusting we were going to do it and having full faith in each other's abilities.

VIVIANA MARTINEZ: I think along with the trust, it's the love, wanting to do it for each other more. Just because we love each other so much, and we want to keep together till the end.

TEAGAN KAVAN: Second to all of that. These two are some of my best friends, and the team is full of best friends. It's fun to compete and do all the things together with all the people we love. I'm excited this year for Vivi to be on the field for it and get to experience this in a different way and to see her go compete out there with all of us.

It's super special with the bond we've had and especially Stewy being together all the years we've had, it's special.

**Q. Viviana, I want to build off of what Teagan was just talking about. You were obviously part of the team last year but in a different way. I know you've talked about sort of adopting things that put you in a head space where you were part of it, but obviously a player wants to play. What's it been like for you to now be on the field and have a chance to win a championship with the jersey on and the dirt and all that?**

VIVIANA MARTINEZ: I'm just taking it all in game by game. I'm so excited to be out there on the field this time with all the girls. Just embracing it, taking -- of course, like



... when all is said, we're done.®

being appreciative and grateful for every moment and taking in even the environment, being on the field, the dirt, all of it. Just excited to be out there again.

**Q. Mike, what's it been like for you to watch Viviana get healthy and back to being on the field where she wants to be and you all want her to be?**

MIKE WHITE: It's been tremendous to watch her have the ability to kind of contribute to the team on the field. She did a lot last year off the field, and now just having the opportunity to be with her teammates and hopefully experience the joy of winning a National Championship.

Either way, what she's done this season has been incredible. Just full confidence in her teammates and being there for one another. She's one of the leaders on our program without a doubt.

**Q. Coach, Texas Tech has obviously gotten a lot of criticism about the way they've built their roster, but from your perspective, how much has the money and the transfer portal really changed the sport in the last few years, and what does it mean to you that so many of your players choose to stay at Texas?**

MIKE WHITE: I'll focus on the last part of that. Our players do choose to stay not only for the culture that we've built within the program, but also for the academics, the value of the Texas degree, and what we learn. Also, being part of a strong academic -- I mean, athletic institution, having won the Directors' Cup a number of years. It built a lot of friendships within the community around the University of Texas. Our fans are great. It's just an awesome thing to be a part of.

The transfer portal has been difficult because it's not really like scholarships. It's not one for one, like before we had -- it was 12 scholarships with each program, and you could kind of figure out what it is.

I also think it's a good opportunity for young women to be able to get in on NIL and the true meaning of the word NIL. I think that's where the growth of the sport is going to continue to grow the opportunities, and we've done a really good job of that with our program.

**Q. Mike, NiJa clearly wore down as that series went on a year ago. How much different do you expect them to look with Kaitlyn Terry there to also be available to pitch quite a few innings?**

MIKE WHITE: Yeah, that's something we took advantage of for sure was the ability to wear them down. That's not going to happen this year, I don't think. It seems like the

temperature is going to cool down as well, which should help everything in night games. So the wearing down won't be too much of a factor.

We'll be able to adjust quickly to the strategy of using two pitchers in a game or even an inning. Just don't know what Gerry is going to bring. We've got to focus on what we can control and not worry too much about what they're going to do.

**Q. Mike, to kind of piggy-back off that earlier question about transfers, how do you balance bringing in transfers and kind of retaining the culture of the squad? Some years you brought in a few. Other years, not so much.**

MIKE WHITE: It is a strategy opinion on how your recruiting is going, what you see, and what pieces you need to be competitive in this environment. We'll look in the transfer portal again this year to bring in some pieces that we think we need to improve as a program because you have to continue to improve.

The tide is lifting all boats here, and it's getting tougher. So we've got to address that, some of our weaknesses once the season gets done here and figure out a strategy going forward.

But we do like to keep our recruits in the game, so to speak. We like to build from within, that's our main strategy.

**Q. Teagan, you had success against Texas Tech in the circle last season, but obviously a lot of new faces. What changes do you notice out of that lineup that's one of the top-scoring teams in the country?**

TEAGAN KAVAN: We're going to have to mix it up again. I'm sure we'll use multiple arms. I'm excited to just go compete. We haven't faced them yet, so it will be really fun. It's going to be a fun matchup. It's going to be fun softball. I'm just really excited to go compete against a really, really good offense and a really good team.

**Q. Mike, with the core together so long, in what ways have you seen them strengthen that has led you back here that maybe wouldn't happen if you had so many players, new players in every year?**

MIKE WHITE: The ability to stay within themselves, like not panic, like trust in each other. I think that we've had our ups and downs without a doubt. We had that last year as well. To be able to fight through it and trust in one another and pull the big games out when it really matters.

Tech's done the same thing. Their back's been against the wall, and they've been able to pull it through. That's what good teams do.

I think that's the main thing I've seen from this program is their resilience.

**Q. Katie, to kind of an earlier question, just how much is the prep different this year going into the series knowing that they do have a second reliable arm that they didn't really have last year?**

KATIE STEWART: Yeah, just knowing that ball's coming in from different sides. Obviously Kaitlyn Terry is a lefty, so just being able to make the adjustments when they do make those switches.

Really it's more just focusing on what we can control, being able to adjust pitcher to pitcher, inning to inning. So just staying within ourselves and knowing what we have to do and what our job is.

**Q. Katie and Teagan, what do you guys remember the most about the Red Raiders squad from last year that maybe you could take into this Championship Series?**

KATIE STEWART: Just knowing that they're a very scrappy squad, especially like they're fast, they hit the ball hard, they're going to hit home runs. So just being able to do what we can, what we can control, and just making sure we play good defense. We have our bats going.

Really, I think, if we play good softball, it's going to be a really good game.

TEAGAN KAVAN: Yeah, they're scrappy. They were an all-around good team last year too. I think they got better in areas this year, but last year they were still obviously one of the best teams to be in the finals. They're coached really well, and they have a lot of different tools that they use and they like to pull out. I agree it's going to be fun.

**Q. Vivi, I think you've gone against NiJa as a sophomore maybe. What did you guys learn about going against NiJa before? What do you know now that you didn't know before? And what have you seen of Terry just watching on film?**

KATIE STEWART: Just making sure that we're attacking pitches that we can handle. So just not really getting out of our zone and chasing because it makes her even better than she already is. Just making sure we stay within ourselves and not making any moment too big.

Then we haven't really faced Terry in a while. I think we hit

off her my freshman year two years ago. She's obviously developed since then and she's really good now. So just kind of seeing what we see on film and going from there.

VIVIANA MARTINEZ: Yeah, I think since sophomore year, NiJa's been starting to use her change-up more. Now just developing more pitches. I think what we do is just making adjustments early, hunting pitches early, and making sure we're swinging at strikes, not balls.

Like Coach White says, the three things of hitting is being on plane, being on time, and getting a good pitch to hit. I think that's one of our main focuses for Kaitlyn Terry and NiJa.

**Q. Could you guys talk about Viviana last year, just what her presence meant for you guys. Teagan, the fact you brought her up out of the clear blue sky makes me think it's a pretty big impact. Have you had a favorite memory having her back in uniform this year?**

KATIE STEWART: Just last year having Vivi, like she was our biggest cheerleader even when she couldn't be on the field. She was there to support us through every little moment, every struggle. Having her own things to deal with going through therapy and all that, even if she didn't have her best day, she was there for us and was going to keep supporting us. Having her back on the field and her leadership, just learning from a different perspective and bringing that to the infield and just making sure that she's like a hard place for us to go to when we need her.

TEAGAN KAVAN: Vivi was instrumental last year and still is this year. She gives so much energy to us in the dugout. I don't think there was a time we would gather as a team when she wasn't saying something to us and feeding us with so much energy and so much heart and passion for the game.

I think it's really cool that she can -- she just chose to take that outlook on it and just build the team and make us better. She's a huge reason as to why we won last year. I'm excited to have her on the field this year and hearing her behind me instead of hearing her on the dugout and hearing her on the field this time.

Yeah, she deserves it. She worked so hard, and she's worked so hard to get back into this position and be even better than she was before.

But I think my favorite memory would just be having her behind me when I turn around and she's always talking to me. It's fun to hear that again. It's fun to have that constant communication with her on the field.

**Q. Coach, a lot of great softball in this country, but to have two Texas teams back in the championship, and this time coming through the elimination round, what does that say for the state of Texas?**

MIKE WHITE: I think it says a lot. We see that week in and week out from the fans that come to our games. Of course Gerry's built a big program there and getting a lot of people to come out and watch the game. I think it's building softball itself. People love it.

The hardest part has always been getting people to the game. Once they come, they say, oh, I love this. This is so exciting and everything else. It's not only great to have two teams from Texas, but representing the sport of softball as well has been big.

**Q. Katie and Teagan called Texas Tech scrappy. I don't envy the NCAA, but do you think they're probably the best 11 seed that's been in this tournament in quite some time, maybe even ever?**

MIKE WHITE: I have to argue that we were the best team in '22 that wasn't ranked. That's part of the process of going through a season is to -- obviously putting a team together like Gerry had, it takes a while to gel. Some of their RPI numbers weren't there. And that's kind of an uncontrollable if you can't get the player to the teams in the conference that are going to help you with that.

That's part of what happens off the field, and you have no control over that other than how you do on the field. Once it gets into that room and they decide where you're going to go, it is what it is. I would argue that Texas A&M was a pretty good 15 seed too. So you could go through the lineup and say they're good, but that just says a lot about the parity of the game right now and where it stands.

**Q. When postseason started, nobody could agree on where the favorite was. There were a lot of teams there. You and Tech had similar paths, three-game Super Regionals, coming through the eliminations to get back here. Do you see a commonality between your team and Texas Tech to wind up back where we were this time last year?**

MIKE WHITE: Yeah, obviously we have a few more players back from the same squad to build on, where Gerry had to kind of mesh and build and kind of create that way. But his strategy of using two pitchers has been a little bit different than ours. There's different strategies within the squads with using the personnel you have, but a similarity in that they're both resilient teams.

We've been able to fight back from adversity when needed. Who comes back from eight runs down with two out? I've never seen that before. That just alone says a lot about their squad and what they can do.

Again, we've just got to control what we can and worry about what we're doing, but we also have a lot of respect for that university of Texas Tech.

**Q. Katie, you've been so clutch in so many moments, not just here, but also throughout the entire season. Can you walk me through your mental approach at the plate and how you've worked on that off the field as well?**

KATIE STEWART: Just working with our mental coaches in the off-season, just thinking about what I need to go -- what mind space I need to be in to be able to execute in those moments.

So especially like recently I've just kind of had my process going into the box, like I'll take a deep breath, look at my focal point in right field just to have one final thought before I get in the box and just be focused one pitch at a time, be in the present, not really focused on the past.

So just not being too worried about making the moment bigger than it needs to be and just doing what I can do in this moment for my team.

**Q. For any of the players or all the players, you guys look like you have so much fun in the dugout. Yesterday in between games you were doing that little line dance. When did you know this season, like was there a specific moment where you were like this team is special? Obviously you all love each other, but if you could share any memories that stick out throughout the season where you're like, yeah, this is it, that would be great.**

KATIE STEWART: Yeah, just in the fall like we all were really close from the start. We have like team bonding at like the first week where we'll do a bunch of different sports. We all had a lot of fun with each other. You didn't really see any nervousness from the freshmen. So we all just kind of meshed really quickly and became really close friends.

It's really just gotten deeper since time has gone on. Like we're not nervous around each other. We're just here to have fun with each other and keep playing for another day.

VIVIANA MARTINEZ: I would have to agree with Katie. I don't think there's an exact pinpoint of when we all just meshed together. I think as time went on, we just got

closer and closer. Just building and connecting with each other and loving each other, we just became so close, and we could have fun and stay loose and still be very strong and like be able to lock in when we need to.

TEAGAN KAVAN: I was going to bring it back to that week that Stewy was talking about, we call it Longhorn Olympics. In the first week we're back on campus, we do everything but softball. We get put on teams with each other, and it's just a really fun way to get to know each other and have fun and challenge ourselves to do things we're not very good at and have fun in that.

Yeah, it's a super fun way to get to know the girls and get together as a team like outside of softball to start. I would say it all starts there.

**Q. Mike and then Teagan, if you could throw in too. I remember midseason you talked about trying to find a No. 2 behind Teagan. Citlaly has really stepped up, especially in the postseason. Was there a moment in the year when you really looked at her and said, okay, we found our No. 2? What kind of got you to that point?**

MIKE WHITE: I think it started about four weeks ago where we could see a difference in her demeanor, just the way she was taking the mound. You could see less nervousness, more confidence, her ability to control the pitches better and just kind of built.

She had one lapse against Wagner in the regional, but other than that, she's pitched without a blemish and done a really good job. The game she threw yesterday was different, the best game of her career to date, other than maybe OSU, we played them on a road trip, and she pitched really well there.

We always knew she had the ability, but it was just a matter if she could bring it out and perform to her capabilities.

TEAGAN KAVAN: She's huge for our team. We all see her stuff every day in practice, and her stuff is unlike anyone else's, I think, on this stage right now. She's a special pitcher, and she has so many tools that are able to get a lot of hitters out. I think we complement each other really well. She just gives her all in her performances.

I agree, I think I've seen her with a different attack mindset and kind of remembered who she is and how good she is recently, and that's really helped us and helped our whole team and her.

**Q. Mike, what was made midseason to push when the**

**portal opens, and just wanted to know what those benefits are as you are allowed to just focus on the games and not recruiting while trying to win a national title here?**

MIKE WHITE: Well, we'll find out. Obviously it opens, I believe, Monday, right? It's going to be frantic finding out who's on, who's not, and what needs there are. Then you've got to have your exit meetings with your players and figure out who wants to make a move and who doesn't want to make a move. So there's a lot happening all in a short period of time. Then you've got recruiting trips to make.

It's something we're just going to have to kind of look at. I haven't looked at it per se. You hear a lot of rumors about what's happening and who's moving and who's doing what, but we won't know until coming up this next week. I think it's open for two weeks, right? It's going to be fast and frantic.

**Q. None of you guys are from the state of Texas, but what have you all learned about the rivalry with Texas Tech? Especially considering the chatter between football or fans or boosters or whatever. And this for Mike and any of the players.**

TEAGAN KAVAN: I think, yes, I'm not from Texas, but I think there's a rivalry with everyone with Texas. I think it's fun. It makes every game fun. It's a lot of energy. It's a lot of fan engagement and everything.

Yeah, I'm excited. I think I've gotten to play Texas Tech every year now. My freshman year in the Big 12 against them. Yeah, good program. Obviously a rivalry within the state. Just like all schools in the state and a lot of the schools in the country. But it's fun. It makes the games more fun.

MIKE WHITE: Obviously it's an honor to have these kids come play from different states. That's one of the reasons I moved to Texas was the ability to recruit from all parts of the country. Just to get the faith and belief, obviously one from Illinois, one from Arizona, and one from Iowa, that's pretty well spread out. So using that strength and ability to recruit and get people to come into the program.

I think they'll all say they love Texas. Austin is a special place, and we love being part of their family there.

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