

# 2026 Women's College World Series

Thursday, June 4, 2026

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

**Texas Tech Red Raiders**

**Coach Gerry Glasco**

**NiJaree Canady**

**Jackie Lis**

Postgame Press Conference



Texas 4, Texas Tech 1

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Texas Tech head coach Gerry Glasco and players NiJaree Canady and Jackie Lis.

GERRY GLASCO: An incredible experience again to get to be at the World Series in Oklahoma City and play in this venue, the organization, the way it's managed, everything is first class. The town of Oklahoma City has been phenomenal, and we've been welcomed at every store, every restaurant, everywhere we've been.

Can't say enough about the crowd again tonight. The attendance has been so good even after the elimination round was over, and we're very fortunate in the sport of softball to have a stadium and venue like this to showcase a National Championship.

Texas, congratulations to Texas. They've got a great team. They've got a great coaching staff. They've got great pitchers. They've got great talent, and they've got great kids. If you know their kids, they're really good kids. They're not just great softball players, they're really classy, and they're really nice.

I want to give them credit for playing two absolutely tremendous games here the finals and winning the championship. Happy for Coach White. I didn't want to let him win two over me. I was so tickled last year when he got his first championship. I don't feel that way this time. He'll understand that. But I am happy for his family.

I want to congratulate him and Ehren Earleywine, who I have great admiration as a softball coach, and Coach Zaleski as well.

For my team, I want to say I couldn't be prouder of this team. You always want to win one more, and you want to win the championship, and you want to see the career of NiJa Canady end with a championship. I think that when I look at this century, the last 26 seasons, you've got the greatness of Monica Abbott, Cat Osterman, and now NiJaree Canady.

That's our goal, I want to just separate. Maybe it's more fitting because that's two great, great talents. I have such great admiration for both Monica and Cat, got to coach them in the Pro league. And NiJaree, her talent, her leadership -- the thing I always most admired about Cat wasn't how good she was but how hard she worked. NiJaree was the same. She worked so hard. Her work ethic was incredible.

Her kindness to the fans. The way she signs every autograph forever. She stands out there and signs and signs and signs. She's given so much to the sport. That's going to be a great legacy that she's impacted our sport in so many ways. All these little kids, little young women, little girls, young girls that line up to ask her to sign. She won't leave until the last one's signed.

It's heartbreaking to see a great athlete like NiJa graduate and a great athlete like Jackie and Mihyia Davis and Chloe Riassetto and Vic Valdez, those are my seniors. Heartbreaking to know their career come to an end and we couldn't get that championship.

I want to give credit to those kids. I've been on this journey for 24 months with all of them. 12 months with Jackie. It's been special, like every day so special. They're not just good ballplayers, they're great people and great young women that's going to continue to make impacts in their lives without any doubt because they're just classy on the field, they're classy off the field, tremendous students, and they just know how to win.

As far as our team, I thought we just come up short tonight. I thought we had it right where we wanted. We had a play where we could have got that forced out and kept it 1-0. We only had six outs to go at that point. We could have just got that out, and we couldn't make the play.



Then give Texas credit. They kept attacking. They kept attacking. I thought Logan Halleman made two phenomenal catches in left field. That was the kind of effort you have to have in the World Series, and we just come up short on some other plays.

I thought NiJa threw really good tonight against a really talented team that was well prepared to face her. They knew they were going to get her tonight, and I thought she held -- just pitched an outstanding performance. I wish we could have kept that score where I think it should have been.

I think that's all.

**Q. Jackie, this was your first experience here. Obviously everybody wanted to win, but not every story has a happy ending. What kind of stands out to you throughout the season? What are you going to kind of take with you as you move on to your next stages of life?**

JACKIE LIS: This is just somewhere I never pictured myself finishing my career. I'm just very grateful for the opportunity to finish top second in the nation. Like I'm used to finishing playing in my conference tournament, maybe going to a regional, but just getting to finish the national runner-up, that's just unreal for me, and I'm just so grateful to finish my collegiate career like this.

**Q. NiJa, what you've accomplished in this game at Stanford and Texas Tech, how do you balance that with the disappointment of these last two years? Does it help ease the pain a little bit?**

NIJAREE CANADY: I don't think someone's whole career is defined by a National Championship, of course. I don't think that's the goal. I don't think not winning that game diminishes everything else.

**Q. NiJa, what were the conversations like with you guys after the game since this is your last go-round?**

NIJAREE CANADY: I think it was honestly just like joy. I feel like this team, especially this -- like this postseason we've just come together. It's just -- I don't know. It was just like joy in the locker room.

We know -- of course everyone's sad, a lot of tears, but I feel like we all came together.

**Q. NiJa, how did this experience in the circle tonight differ from your experiences with your short time last night and then last year?**

NIJAREE CANADY: Just trying to leave it all out there. I knew it could be my last game. So just trying to leave it all out there.

**Q. NiJa, what have these last two years in Lubbock meant to you, and what will you take away from your time in west Texas and the decision you made to come out there?**

NIJAREE CANADY: I've loved my time in Lubbock and just the Texas Tech community and all the fans and all the support we've gotten. I feel like that's something that makes Texas Tech really special, just the community there and just the support they have for us.

**Q. NiJa, first of all, congratulations on a phenomenal career.**

NIJAREE CANADY: Thank you.

**Q. It seemed like this year might have been harder than the last three for you, especially in the postseason. I'm just wondering, as you look back, what contributed to that? If you felt that way, like this was more challenging this year.**

NIJAREE CANADY: I don't know, I feel like this whole year has been hard. A lot -- I think I've talked about this before. Me and Coach Tara kind of looking at the stats of other pitchers, and it was an offensive heavy year too. I think that contributed a lot to it. I don't know the last time girls had 40 -- actually, no one's had 40 home runs. I think that was a record.

But a lot of it was an offensive heavy year, yeah.

**Q. NiJa, when you came to Tech, Tech put an investment in you, they put an investment in the whole team. Do you have a sense that pushed softball to another level when it comes to the financial realities of college athletics?**

NIJAREE CANADY: Yeah, I definitely think so, and I think a lot of people that watch Texas Tech especially because of that attention we brought, but it also set a new standard for just female athletics too. Like we'll invest in female athletics. We'll draw crowds. I don't know how many viewership numbers have been up, like fan numbers have been up.

I think we just helped pave the pathway to hopefully more investments coming.

**Q. Jackie, can you just talk about how special this**



## group of seniors is?

JACKIE LIS: Yeah, I've only got to be around them for a year, but they're people I'm going to talk to for the rest of my life. I love all of them to death. I can't wait to see what they all accomplish in the future and hope that, when we get together to celebrate this team, that we all get to be there and just remember how proud we are of ourselves for getting here.

**Q. For both of you, you obviously have talked about growing up playing travel ball together, and this was a dream for you to get here, Jackie. If you all can just speak about what it meant, what it felt like to be out there on the field and be on this stage together?**

NIJAREE CANADY: Yeah, it meant everything, I feel like, just to reunite and come back together. Like Jackie will be one of my best friends for life. So to be able to play on that stage with her meant a lot.

JACKIE LIS: NiJa is somebody, even though I'm the same age as her, I'm a month younger than her, I admire the way NiJa plays softball. So just get to finish my career watching her and playing with her is just something I couldn't have dreamed of.

**Q. Getting here twice, Tech has never been there. How do you balance that sense of achievement with any kind of disappointment considering what Tech has invested in the program?**

GERRY GLASCO: I think that anyone that understands our sport knows that you can't buy a championship, and I think our investors are like beyond thrilled with where we're at.

I think that the families and the businesses that are supporting us, I think they're elated beyond what -- they couldn't imagine what we did happening 24 months ago. Only if you're naive and don't understand the difficulty of this sport and the difficulty, and then give your opponents respect, could you think this was disappointing.

Although me as a coach, to get here twice, you hate to lose that opportunity. You understand, especially at my age, you understand how rare these opportunities are, and you want to take advantage. You wanted to get that ring. You wanted to get it done.

So I'm not making light of it. I'm not happy with it. But I can tell you our supporters and the recognition that we brought to Texas Tech University, the recognition these young women have brought to our sport, brought to our university, and then just the way softball has become a

favorite among Texas Tech fans and the legacy that these two teams are going to leave is going to be there for -- I just told them they're going to come back 20 years from now, and the football crowd in October is going to give them a standing ovation because 20 years from now because of what they did now.

It's not a little thing, it's a big thing. Thank goodness, I think it's a huge accomplishment to get here two years in a row.

**Q. You've seen a lot of great pitchers. You've had a bunch. But at this point, do you think we can call Teagan one of the best that we've seen in this sport?**

GERRY GLASCO: Yeah, Teagan Kavan was outstanding. I thought the way Whitey used her tonight, it was such a great coaching job by Coach Whitey to do what he did. And once he got the lead, he brought her in, and she was lights out. She threw all rise balls to everybody except for the last two hitters, she switched on Mia and Mihyia. She came in and threw rise balls, and nobody could get above her ball, it was moving so well.

One of the elite talented pitchers, and every once in a while, I felt like, especially early in the middle of the year maybe, she wasn't getting the respect she probably deserved. In the postseason, she steps up so big every year.

Again, if you know softball, you know how rare and special a talent she is.

**Q. The score doesn't indicate how close this game was. It was way closer than a three-run game. That one play with the error, kind of what did you say to your team in between innings? It was still kind of a ballgame, but it could have been still 2-1.**

GERRY GLASCO: I thought it was really important we get right back up. At that point, we had nine outs left, and I thought we had to attack. I thought we really missed a chance because, as soon as they got the lead, they had Teagan got down to the bullpen.

Those three outs in the 15, to me, I knew right then, we got to do something. And we didn't adjust to the umpire's strike zone. I thought we missed a golden opportunity right there to strike back quickly. We left runners. We left runners in scoring position early in the game, seven for the total game. I thought there was a chance or two early when we just missed that opportunity to extend the lead, and that come back to haunt us again.

Yeah, I just -- that's all I told them was like get up there and

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

attack. Let's go up there and attack the ball right now, this inning. I think the first hitter we struck out looking. I think they were just so numb they didn't hear what I was saying.

**Q. Coach, after that, you also had the foul ball down the line where two players, neither one got it. Had a play in right field later. Did it feel like once the lead got away, the pressure started to build on them?**

GERRY GLASCO: Yeah, I was shocked when I only saw one error because I felt like there was four plays we should have made that we didn't make down the stretch. That's part of the game. We also -- Logan made a couple of unbelievable catches in left field, and I think that's got to be the standard. When you get to this level of play, you have to make plays.

We got -- I don't know if it was rattled or we just wasn't prepared for the pressure, but there was plays we should make that we didn't.

**Q. When you think back to last year when you lost to Texas and you think of NiJa, all the pressure going into this season and coming to this moment, what growth have you seen from her just physically and also mentally dealing with that pressure, all those eyes?**

GERRY GLASCO: I think not only NiJa, I think this whole team there's a difference. Like last year's journey was kind of a Cinderella story. We got here, and I think everybody thought we really got lucky when we got here. We got a 12 seed, so nobody really thought we were any good or we wouldn't have got a 12 seed. Then we got to the runner-up, and everything was kind of like a fairytale.

Then this year we start out with a No. 1 -- tied with Texas actually. We were tied with Texas for the No. 1 seed in the preseason polls, and this team had to deal with expectations and pressure that we've never had to deal with in that first 12 months.

I think the kids did an amazing job, they started out No. 1, and I don't think they were ever ranked fourth or fifth the entire year. We got the 11 seed. So we didn't have respect from the committee, but we had respect all year from the NCAA poll and the coaches polls. I think the girls did an absolutely great job of not letting pressure and expectations get to them and keeping it to the field and proving that they were a good ball team with the balls, bat, and glove.

**Q. Do you think NiJa carried a weight that no other player's ever had to carry in this sport just pressure-wise?**

GERRY GLASCO: I think NiJa has become the face of softball. Not just college softball, but softball. That's how big an impact. And you have to travel with her and see the little kids coming from five states away, like kids coming from Ohio or -- you know, it's weird places, like they're from all over. They love NiJa Canady. And not just girls, little boys. Little boys. It's amazing to me how many 9-, 10-, 11-year-old boys come and want to see NiJa and want NiJa's autograph.

A little boy named Easton that I coached his mother: NiJa's my favorite player. I want to get her autograph.

He's a 9-year-old baseball player. That just happened today. It's like that. It's amazing what she's done.

It's not just because she's a great softball player, it's because she has an amazing heart, an amazing concern for others that you see every time she does an interview and every time she does a public appearance or when she's signing autographs.

Her legacy is enormous, and there's greatness all around her. In the classroom, she's straight As. She's never late for anything. She's always early. She's always organized, and she'll never turn down an opportunity to make a public appearance, to do something in the community for someone.

She just -- how she accomplishes and finds time to do all the things that she's done is amazing to watch. Just greatness, greatness, greatness. The opportunity to have got to be around her, the privilege to have got to be around her for two years, I don't know how to describe it.

**Q. You talked about the expectation of being here and getting the title, about how your team kind of navigated that, but you've even kind of joked that you're embracing this villain label that's kind of coming with you. Did you ever see that wear on the players as the season has kind of gone on, or did it ever kind of wear on you to navigate those waters?**

GERRY GLASCO: No, I don't see that with our players. I think the players know -- I think they feel very fortunate, I think they feel very privileged to get to be among a special, select group of female athletes. It's being rewarded in a really great way from the financial side.

I think part of NiJa's legacy, like for a female athlete would be similar to Curt Flood. Most of you probably don't know. I was 10 years old with Curt Flood, and he was a Cardinals center fielder, and I was a Cardinals fan. So I can relate for a female athlete, and for an African American female

athlete, I think her legacy is way beyond the softball field when people see what it does for the female athlete and African American female athletes in the coming years.

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