

Women's College World Series: Baton Rouge Regional

Friday, May 15, 2026

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA

Tiger Park

LSU Tigers

Coach Beth Torina

Jayden Heavener

Kylee Edwards

Sierra Daniel

Postgame Press Conference



LSU 8, Akron 0

BETH TORINA: I think it's really important for us to come out and set a tone today, to start the postseason on the right foot. I think that was obvious by the lineup we wrote and the way we approached the game.

We knew we had a really quality opponent in Akron. And this season they put together, we respect it. We wanted to make sure we showed up and gave them our best game. And I think we did that. I think Jayden started -- the three strikeouts in the first inning set the tone, the way our offense came out, scored early, which I think was a big lift for us, but then continued to score throughout the game.

Some big swings, some things that went our way, some great base running, really a great example of who we are, very complete game, I think, and the way we wanted to start this tournament. And I think they did exactly what we set out to do.

Q. Jayden, did you feel as sharp as you looked? Looked like everything was working for you, especially in those first couple of innings?

JAYDEN HEAVENER: Yes, sir, I did. I feel like this week's preparation that we worked on little things mechanically and just hitting my spots and just working on little things, my spins and everything. Just coming out there with confidence and knowing the things that I've done in the past, just knowing who I am, and just playing for LSU.

Q. Kylee, how much of a big deal is it to not just win but come out here and kind of know (indiscernible)?

KYLEE EDWARDS: Yeah, today was fun. We were just out there playing Tiger softball. We did a lot during the season. So going out here, playing free, just being ourselves, I think that was our main goal today. That's what we did.

Q. Kylee and Sierra, how much did Coach kind of preach getting off to the fast start especially with the bats, how crucial was that?

SIERRA DANIEL: We talked a lot about starting fast and it sets the tone for the rest of the game. She told us before the game to play big and free. So we just tried to do that.

Q. When you started off a game like that with so many strikeouts, do you get irritated when they finally touch the ball? Do you envision, you know, 21 strikeouts or something like that?

JAYDEN HEAVENER: I definitely did go into this game after the first inning and I was like, okay, I'm not going to tell myself too much, coming out with a lot of strikeouts. It's more I get frustrated with myself kind of spots-wise. I know that my best stuff is still working and I have a defense behind me. They're all amazing. So I know whatever ball gets put in play is going to get out or get caught.

Q. Kylee and Sierra, what was the plan against this pitcher? What kind of things did she do to try to get you all out? Looked like you were going right from the very beginning.

KYLEE EDWARDS: I think it was just taking our swing to what pitch we were hunting. See the ball, hit the ball, put a good bat on it, and the outcome is the outcome.

SIERRA DANIEL: Going over and just trying to eliminate her pressure pitches and (indiscernible).

Q. Before they even took the field, did you get a vibe from them? Did you feel something that like this might happen the way it did?

BETH TORINA: I thought they were prepared. I think they



were targeted in practice. We had a lot of days to get ready. I think they were ready to play. I didn't think we had a great practice yesterday, but I thought some of that was just they were over it. They were ready to go. They were ready to play the game and then a lot of days of seeing the same things.

I thought I'm unconcerned about it. I thought they were ready to go, and they showed up and started fast at their job.

Q. As far as your decision to start Jayden in the opening game, was that a no-brainer?

BETH TORINA: Probably, yeah, a lot of respect for our opponent, what they did. I know they had a great tournament run coming in the year. They hit some big home runs. They've done a lot of things with their offense that they respected. We started doing there.

But we also wanted to set the tone for this tournament. We fielded a million questions about how it's gone for us in the past, and I think we just wanted to make sure we had a good solid start, put it under our belt and set the temperature for the rest of the weekend.

Q. What did Jayden do today that maybe she hadn't been doing as consistently lately? What was her strength today?

BETH TORINA: She's located really well today. And I think that's something that it's hard when you have as much movement she does, the velocity she does, but she located really well today.

I think after the game I think one of the players nominated her for -- we nominate players in the game every game, and I think somebody nominated her saying they hadn't seen her throw it like that ever. That was one of the best games she'd ever thrown.

I also thought we had a good match-up with a left-hander from some of the things that we'd seen on film. So there were a lot of things that went into it that I think helped her be successful. I didn't know that they'd had as much experience with left-handers, just the season they played. That's such a luck-of-the-draw thing. You can't plan that out. So I thought we had something there too so that went into the decision as well.

Q. Obviously the last thing you wanted to do is give the underdog team reason to hope (indiscernible) inning after inning. The fact that you guys jumped up 3-0 to 6-0 very quickly, how big was that?

BETH TORINA: Yeah, it was huge, just continuing to score. The team's done a nice job of that. They haven't looked past any opponent all year. I've never felt that way with this group. I think they've answered the call every time, every mid-week, every game, we should have won, we did.

There's probably some that we could have that we'd like to have back. But for the most part, they've done a really good job of not looking past any opponent, respecting everybody that takes the field against us and playing hard at all times.

I did ask them at the end of the game continue their energy, to keep it up. Like if we have a chance to get off the field early, let's do it. Save pitches on Jayden's arm, just save things on their legs, if they have a chance to finish a ball game. So it was nice to see us save an inning there. They've been able to do that at the end.

Q. Virginia Tech, obviously they have an excellent record and known for their power, which they showed today in the first meeting?

BETH TORINA: Really a complete team. Obviously, I don't know what they are up to, 107 home runs, but who is counting. It's a lot. They have a ton of power. But you add that to the pitching staff that they have, a couple different looks on the mound, some spin, some speed, a lot of things.

They have some great arms on top of the offense. They're a really complete team, well deserving of being in the postseason, and they put together a great season. So we'll have to bring our best game.

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