

# 2017 Women's College World Series

Saturday, June 3, 2017  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



**Kelly Inouye-Perez**  
**Rachel Garcia**  
**Gabrielle Maurice**  
**Kylee Perez**  
UCLA

UCLA - 8, Texas A&M - 2

**KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ:** Yeah, absolutely. First I really want to be able to just say how much respect I have for that Texas A&M program and Jo Evans. Also the pitcher (Trinity) Harrington and what she has overcome to be able to get her team here is just unbelievable. So hats off to Texas A&M. Once again, I have a lot of respect for them, know they're a quality team, and I knew it was going to be a battle.

For today, very proud of my team. I think the way that we came out was the plan, to be able to have the ability to be in control and put ourselves in a position to play UCLA softball, and you got to see that. It was outstanding for -- I just shared with the team for Kylee Perez to be able to show great leadership and have Delaney's (Spaulding) back and throw that first punch and be able to get on the board, it kind of set the tone that we're here to play. But a lot of great things. We executed great ball. Pitchers pitched, played great defense, we moved runners, we clutched up, we just played UCLA softball, and I'm very proud because like I said, we're nowhere near being done with our season and we just put ourselves in a position to be able to get after the next game.

**Q. This sport is really all about momentum, and it looked like the momentum really went to your favor after the play at home; do you have any comment about that?**

**KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ:** I definitely agree. You can have big debates about what momentum is, but I think you got to see is there's a really strong belief of having each other's backs, and I think that is something that is very, very powerful. We're in a battle, and anytime somebody potentially is put in a position to get hurt or in any position that may put themselves in the need to be able to have their team be able to have their back, this team steps up. So you got to see a very strong,

convicted Bruin program.

Yeah, we can be a little frustrated about some of the emotion of it. What you saw with myself and Coach (Lisa) Fernandez is I'm not going to tolerate allowing the players to put themselves in position to possibly getting hurt. That is ultimately the job of the officials. We all simply had each other's backs.

And then the best part about it is it's one thing to have each other's backs, and there's the other way to go, and that's just playing great softball, and that's what I think you got to see. This team is very, very focused. They're very, very determined, but they're playing together as one, and yeah, that kind of sparked a little bit of a fire, but I'm just most proud that they pulled themselves together and slowed the momentum down. They did just the opposite; they pulled the team together, and if you would have seen in the dugout, they took a deep breath and they're like, nope, we're not going to let this get out of hand, so we controlled the momentum, and I think that's very powerful.

**Q. Kylee, your home run there early on in the game, how big was that for you and your team to really get that first run?**

**KYLEE PEREZ:** You know, I think that we're always trying to do our best to get the ball rolling right from the bat. And D (Delaney Spaulding) does a great job of getting us going, and I know if D doesn't, then it's my turn to step up, so I think that just being able to step up for my team and get something going was important and kind of gave us the confidence to -- just to get the ball rolling, like we said.

**Q. Rachel, not a lot of strikeouts. Could you take us through the game plan and how you were able to execute it against their hitters?**

**RACHEL GARCIA:** I definitely think that started off with my strength pitches, and then once we get through the lineup a couple times, I think just working in those off speeds just to keep them off balance, keep them on their toes.

**Q. Gabrielle, what kind of happened from your perspective on that tag play at home?**

**GABRIELLE MAURICE:** You know, Texas A & M is a great program, talented pitcher, really great catcher. It's a tough play to make and judge. We're just here to

play ball and have some fun with it.

**Q. You mentioned the players not putting themselves into position to get hurt. With the argument for obstruction --**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: Well, the rule is stated that if the runner has to alter her path to the plate, then obstruction is definitely an option, is a judgment call. Gaby (Maurice) clearly altered her path to the plate. Gaby clearly had to go back door and literally pounded her head trying to get around the catcher to get to the plate. So I'm obviously not very clear about how that call is being made.

The rule came into play to avoid the collision, to avoid that type of play, and I think because it's gotten heightened, the judgment has been something that can be -- you know, it can go either way. I'm just going to say it like that. My biggest thing is my concern for my player, and she had to clearly alter her path, and the umpire said she didn't, and that's what I was arguing about. She said she didn't have to alter her path, but she clearly saw she had no path to the bag. She had to jump over the catcher, try to reach the plate, almost did, and put herself at great risk to be hurt, and that's ultimately what we don't want to see is great athletes doing whatever they can and that's where I believe the umpires have to come into play. I haven't replayed the tape, but once again, I will defend my athlete because she's doing everything she can to score a run for her team, and the fact that she had to go to that extreme with no call was disappointing.

**Q. You've been to this tournament several times; it seems like there's been more calls at the plate in the short amount of time that we've been here.**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: I have been to the tournament, super fortunate for that, and I can tell you it's the game. We see it. I will say that it feels even bigger on this stage, and you want the best to be here to be able to represent and neutralize it. But it is part of the game. You know, everything -- the stakes are higher here, so you want them to make those calls. But when it comes to avoiding injury, I think that's where I really am going to make sure that I let them know how I feel.

**Q. Rachel, how different is your first World Series pitching ahead, when your team is ahead as opposed to behind?**

RACHEL GARCIA: I definitely think it takes a lot of stress off me, knowing that if we come out with the first run, just knowing that we're going to after that get some more, and just being confident in our team.

**Q. Coach, about Lisa Fernandez, as far as the ramifications of her being ejected from the game,**

**will she be back in the following game?**

KELLY INOUYE-PEREZ: You know what, I haven't even gone any further. Yes, I believe that she will be back in the game. I'm going to be honest with you; that's a first. That's a first. And I have no regrets because what Lisa did -- and if you knew how much she had Gaby's back, I'm glad that it only got to be an ejection. But Lisa, she has great respect for the game. Lisa is an icon in our sport. Lisa is the epitome of a role model when it comes to understanding her responsibility.

We don't necessarily condone -- that's not who we are, yet once again, it's an opportunity to fight for our players. I can't tell you exactly. I need to figure that out because it's not something that I really want at this point, but once again, that's one thing you're learning about our program is we will definitely have each other's backs.