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An interview with:

**MICHIGAN COACH CAROL HUTCHINS**  
**SARA DRIESENKA**  
**ASHLEY LANE**  
**SIERRA ROMERO**

THE MODERATOR: We are joined by Michigan head coach Carol Hutchins and student-athletes Sara Driesenga, Ashley Lane, and Sierra Romero. We'll start with Coach and go to the floor with questions.

COACH HUTCHINS: Well, congratulations to the University of Washington. They got it done. We certainly wish them the best in the rest of the tournament. For my kids, we just had a great run. It's been a great season. I told them I love them. I've really enjoyed Team 36. We had a lot of fun together, and their commitment to Michigan has been outstanding.

Although the loss always hurts, I've got to tell you what -- I'm proud of this group because they're great Michigan women and they represent this University with class. They play hard. They play hard for Michigan and they play hard for each other. They've been a great team, and I'm very proud of them.

**Q. Ashley and Sierra, can you talk about the emotions of having gone from taking a 1-0 lead and watching it slip away just less than 30 minutes later?**

ASHLEY LANE: I mean, always when a team kind of gains the lead back on you, obviously it's not a great emotion, but you just come back with fight. We didn't give up. We kept coming at them, and it just didn't happen in our favor.

SIERRA ROMERO: Yeah, it's not the best feeling, but our team knows how to fight and we're known to come back. We just didn't get the job done.

**Q. Bryana seemed to be working her drop ball very well, and got you guys to strike out seven times. Can you tell me, was it the drop ball that was working for her or what was working for her? What kind of stymied you guys?**

ASHLEY LANE: I mean, yeah. She's a great pitcher. We definitely were chasing her pitches. Credit goes out to her. Yeah, I mean, I guess that's what was working for her. But we did get some great cuts on her, I'll definitely say, just missing balls. We were on her, but obviously we didn't catch any breaks.

SIERRA ROMERO: She did a great job pitching. It didn't fall in our favor. She did a good job mixing up speeds. She's one of the slowest pitchers we saw, so we just had to adjust.

**Q. Coach, you want to talk about Sara's performance not only today but in the tournament and recently. She seemed like she did a really good job of getting at people and being efficient. She just ran into a little trouble there in the sixth?**

COACH HUTCHINS: I think Sara's been outstanding for us all year. She's put this team on her shoulders so many times, throughout the pre-season, the early season, and in the big games. When she didn't have her best moments, she always came back really tough. She's a tough kid, a tough pitcher, and she's only going to get better and better. But she's a large reason why we're here.

Our offense, which carried us so often throughout our whole season, it's interesting because we really get here and we compete here with our pitching and our defense.

**Q. Sierra, the first two runs, kind of a lot of crazy stuff happened and you were involved in a couple aspects of that play. What did you see during that sequence of events that allowed them to score those two runs?**

SIERRA ROMERO: The ball was hit off Sara, and where the ball landed, it was just a good landing spot. There was nobody playing there, and I got to the ball as fast as I could. We just had to try to get outs.

**Q. Ashley, can you talk about the emotions going through your head right now? Four years and you're finally here. You've made it this far. It's still a big moment, but obviously not the way you want to go out?**

ASHLEY LANE: I wouldn't say that's not the way I want to go out. Obviously, we didn't accomplish our full goal, but I mean, I couldn't ask to be with a better group of girls. Yeah, we fought. We fought this entire year in this tournament.

I'm happy. I'm happy with what we did. My emotions? They're all over the place, but just mostly because I just don't want to be done. I just don't want to be done playing this sport with these girls next to me with this coach. It's kind of heartbreaking. But you know what? I will forever stand by this team and cheer them on for the rest of my life.

**Q. Sara, Ashley and Sierra, can you talk about going from last night when you're up until 2:00, 2:30, 3:00, I don't know how late you stayed up. 4? Okay. Then to get here to play a game like this, what's that experience been like for you?**

SARA DRIESENKA: I think being here is such a great experience in itself. It's such a blessing to be here with all these girls. We just have to remember no matter when we play our motto is always whatever it took and however long it took, we were going to do it. I mean we didn't get it done today, but last night we did and we stayed up until however late.

COACH HUTCHINS: Past curfew.

SARA DRIESENKA: Coach always says nothing good happens after midnight, but last night she took that back.

COACH HUTCHINS: I did.

ASHLEY LANE: Obviously, we stayed up really late. That's not an excuse either. We knew that. We went out there and did our thing. We took it for what it was, and we really embraced the moment.

Honestly, I didn't even realize that we didn't get that many hours of sleep. We all woke up this morning energized as ever, so it was not a problem.

SIERRA ROMERO: When you're in the World Series, I don't think sleep matters. Sleep is overrated. Whatever it takes, you're going to do it. I think we did a great job last night, and I think we fought really hard to today, so I'm happy with it.

**Q. Coach, I guess this has been kind of a memorable trip to Oklahoma City considering all that's happened Friday with the storms and last night with the long game. Just kind of explain maybe what you guys will remember out of this?**

COACH HUTCHINS: Well, any time you're in Oklahoma City, it's memorable. To get here is a huge achievement. It is really difficult to get here. I don't think anybody realizes how difficult it is. These days there are more than eight teams that are capable every year, and to still be standing after 300 teams are out is an amazing feat.

So they'll remember that they committed to all the values of this program, and they committed to Michigan, and they have sacrificed a lot of their own personal things to be a part of this great team. Those are the lessons that take them to the next level in their life. They're a part of something bigger than themselves, and they just do a fantastic job of it. Our seniors in particular, they really grew up here as young girls to great women. I can tell you, they'll remember their experience at Michigan very well, and that makes me very proud and very happy.

**Q. Sara, you seemed to be pitching to a lot of contact today. Was that the game plan going in and just talk about the game plan and what you did well?**

SARA DRIESENKA: Yeah, the game plan was the same. Just go right at them and trust the defense, trust myself, and trust the movement on my pitches. I mean, there is a lot. The defense did a great job today too making some big outs and some tough plays.

**Q. Sara, so talk about how this will impact next year? I don't want you to look too far ahead, but I want you to talk about how much confidence you gained going from here**

**and being battle tested? I think this could go for Sierra as well, how much confidence you gained just being here alone?**

SARA DRIESENKA: We were talking earlier, too, and the only thing that -- if you don't get what you want, at least you got the experience, and that's what we got here. I think we believed that we could be here and we could compete and we proved that too while we were here. And that's going to be huge for the next few years for this program.

SIERRA ROMERO: I think our team has gained a lot of confidence, and what Hutch will tell you, swag. I think we're going to carry that into next year, and I'm really excited to see what happens next year with the team.

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