

June 3, 2014



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An interview with:

Alabama

THE MODERATOR: Here with Alabama we have Head Coach Patrick Murphy, Jaclyn Traina, Sydney Littlejohn, Jadyn Spencer and Kaila Hunt. We will begin with an opening statement.

COACH MURPHY: Congrats to Tim and the Florida Gators. Everybody told me if you keep coming back, keep coming back, eventually you're going to win one and the statement goes for them. I think it was the sixth time at least that they've been here and it's nice that another SEC school can now hold that trophy high.

I think the biggest thing in the two games was they just got -- they continued innings and they got key hits. You know, the four runs in the second and, you know, it was -- the other night I think it was three hits or four hits combined with two outs, just back to back to back and we just couldn't get that big inning. We hit into way too many double plays; you know, unlucky. But I'm really pleased with my team. I thought it was one of the easiest teams I've ever had to coach, absolutely no discipline. You know, there were five academic All-Americans playing in this tournament and four of them wore Alabama across their chest. That's a remarkable accomplishment for these young ladies.

Q. Jackie and Kaila what was that moment like on the outfield, you guys had a meeting between the team and the coaches, what was that moment like for you guys?

JACLYN TRAINA: It was a good moment. Just being able to be around these people, they're great people. And to -- the best thing that I'm going to take from this is the memories and the relationships that I built with these -- you know, my

family. And we didn't come out with a win, but, you know, all I can ask is to have great memories with them and that's what I did.

KAILA HUNT: I think I would have to say the same. Obviously, it's a surreal moment. We all want to end our career with a win but the biggest thing I'm going to take away from this is the relationships and the friendships that I've built over the past four years with these people, because it's not going to matter in 20 years whether I ended my career with a win or not. And Murph made sure to make that point. You know, that the biggest thing you can take from this whole experience, is the relationships and how much we do care about each other. So that was the biggest thing about that moment.

Q. For Patrick and Jadyn and Kayla, looked like you had a plan for Rogers when you finally saw her. Were you surprised by the pitching decision and how did you try to adjust to the other pitchers?

COACH MURPHY: Well, you know, I wish it wouldn't have been such a big surprise to everybody. That's the problem with college softball. There are three pitchers on our team, he has three. Let's all use 'em. You know? It's a staff. It's not a one pitcher. We were -- we had seen Haeger, we've seen Gourley. We were ready for all three. You know, he decided to throw the one he did.

We saw all three today. So I think more coaches need to use everybody. So kudos to Tim.

JADYN SPENCER: I definitely agree with that statement. I think our coaching staff does a great job preparing us for the pitching staff we're going to face. We don't necessarily hone in on one pitcher, because especially with a team like Florida they have three capable pitchers just like we have three capable pitchers. You have to be ready for anything and I wouldn't necessarily say it's a surprise, because we've seen her before. All three of them do a great job so we were ready for whatever they were going to throw.

KAILA HUNT: I agree. Obviously, we had watched film on all three and we had a plan going

into it, so it wasn't really a surprise. We were ready for whoever they were going to throw. We had a plan for each one of them, and I thought we did. Especially against Haeger in the first inning; we kinda jumped on it.

So it's not really a surprise. And we had watched film and we had a plan for each of the pitchers.

Q. Jackie, did you just run out of gas, use up everything you had to get to the final? And for Jackie and Sydney. Jackie, what do you see in this kid? And Sydney, what did you learn here in the postseason that you'll take into next year?

JACLYN TRAINA: You know, it happens. You know, my pitches might have not been as sharp as they were, but I was -- I have full confidence in both Leslie and Sydney. I'm really proud of her for what she's done here. She is going to do a lot of great things at Alabama.

SYDNEY LITTLEJOHN: Learning everything that I have from Jac is definitely going to carry me over through the next three years. She has been a great leader not only for me and Leslie, but for this entire team. What she has done for this team is truly remarkable, and we're just going to try to carry on her legacy.

Q. Patrick, can you talk about what you lose with this group of seniors and what you look at going forward? And what does making another run with this group do for the nine who hadn't done it before?

COACH MURPHY: I'll start with that. I think it's terrific because those nine newbies got to experience a ride of a lifetime. They've got that experience now, they're going to have that hunger when we come back in the fall. And to have Sydney and Leslie both get to pitch this week was awesome, too, and I think a lot of people got to see what Sydney is capable of. It's going to be a lot of fun with her.

The five seniors -- they've been the easiest kids to coach. Not one issue off the field. Everybody is above a 3.4 GPA, four of the five are going to graduate in four years with Kaila being the lone one because she's got to student teach; and it's impossible to student teach and play at the same time.

Just the best group of young ladies. If I had a daughter I would want those five, that's how great of kids they are.

Q. Jackie, you were drafted by the MPF; right?

JACLYN TRAINA: No. I did not put my name in. I don't want to go pro.

Q. Since I was wrong on one question, the next question is, what do you do next?

JACLYN TRAINA: Right now I'm just trying to figure that out. I'll go with the flow. Oh, grad school for sure! Got to get my master's in social work.

Q. Patrick, how has Florida changed during the time Tim has been there? What do you see in them over the years?

COACH MURPHY: I think the biggest difference is he's more balanced up and down the lineup. I remember when I first started I had nine righty hitters and I was praying for a three-run home run every time we got up. We came to the World Series the first time and didn't do very much, and I had to adjust my lineup and he's done the same thing. Used to be a lot of power hitters and no speed, no short game and now he's got a little mix of everything. And I try to go a third, a third, a third, and it's similar to what he has. But I think he has evolved offensively because I really think it was the Bash Brothers early on and now he's got some speed at the top of the order and some lefties and some short game. So I think he's done a great job.

Q. Coach, I know you had a little bit of a background in baseball, and obviously Coach Walton does as a college player himself and he played in the College World Series. For both of you, did your baseball background impact -- did it impact your coaching or Coach Walton's at all? I don't know if you've ever thought about how it might impact it differently.

COACH MURPHY: I coached five years of high school baseball in Iowa, and then I went to Louisiana Lafayette with Yvette Girouard, and she got me going in softball. I think I took a little bit of both. The short game and all the strategies of softball and then the home run and the power hitting of baseball. I tried to combine the two. I think both have -- I mean, I used to coach softball and go home and coach baseball in the summer and I think both helped the other sport tremendously.

Q. Do you see that at all with Florida and the way he coaches?

COACH MURPHY: No. I mean, sometimes he won't bunt with a runner at first and no outs. I think that's all baseball but, you know, he's got the hitters so he can do that.

One last thing. I appreciate the media because when you guys put the effort and the time into this, this shows to our ladies that you guys think this is important. And with the crowds this week and all the tremendous support from Oklahoma City and All Sports, ASA, USA Softball and the University of Oklahoma, it's been one heck of a good ride for all of us at Alabama. So thanks to everybody in the room.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys.

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