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Florida: 6
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An interview with:

Baylor

THE MODERATOR: We're with Baylor. We have Head Coach Glenn Moore, Whitney Canion, Jordan Strickland and Kaitlyn Thumann. We will begin with a comment from Coach Moore.

COACH MOORE: Well, I'm extremely proud of my team. We came here to win this thing, and were dealt a big setback on the first day and had to recover from that. I thought we showed incredible fight, pride as we worked our way back to today and won an incredible come-back last night, of course. We didn't take the easy road to get here. I think it prepared us for this, but I doubt many people, other teams, had the road we had throughout the season, including travel adversity and playing on the road against tough teams, strength of schedule and then postseason.

I'm just really proud of the way the girls played both sides of the ball, but I have to point out a kid that has given everything she has to our program. Had to endure a lot of joking, because she is on Social Security now, apparently. (Laughter.)

She has spent her entire six years and milked everything her body had to give her. She gave it to our program, because she had such a passion to play and to pitch, with little reward after, other than the fact that she just loved the play the game.

We, of course, have benefited from that, our players have. And this year I'm really proud of the fact that we were able to put a good offense behind her and break a lot of records offensively and give her the support she needed. But we wouldn't be here without Whitney Canion. She got us here twice in her career, and I'm very proud of

her as I am the rest of the seniors. But I'm extremely proud of Whitney.

Q. Whit, how did you feel out there today? It looked like you had your stuff a little more together than yesterday.

WHITNEY CANION: I've been struggling a little bit with not getting my rise ball where I wanted. Today I thought I came out and really used my other pitches a lot. Used my screw ball, drop curve and change-up and relied on those and got a lot of foul balls and pop-ups and ground outs because of that. I was trying to work ahead and get them to foul pitches off and get them to chase after that. My body felt better today and just felt like, at the same time, toward the end of the game, I was really just going off adrenaline and knowing that this team, we could come back and score 6 or 7 runs in the last inning. So I just had to keep the team in it.

Q. Glenn, you talked about everything that Whitney has given the program. Was there any internal debate or maybe a debate with you and the coaching staff on whether to start her or Heather, and how did you feel about just her performance specifically today? Because like John said, it did seem like she was sharper today.

COACH MOORE: I mean, we -- she is, I think, the best pitcher in the nation. She's worn out. She has given everything to our sport, our program. You know, she didn't throw a ton of pitches. We thought we had the inside track on this thing. We knew she wasn't throwing her best ball. She knew she wasn't. There was never a doubt as long as she could go whether we were going to go back with her today. I thought she threw a good game overall; didn't have her best stuff. She's dominated lineups that are very strong for her entire career and taken the bat completely out of lineups that are hitting .350, .360.

She is very capable. She has given everything she has and that's what she had left. She left it all on the field. She can hold her head

up high and walk away having set records that will never be broken.

Q. For Jordan and K.K., the magic started a little bit early this time. You guys started in the 5th inning. Talk about that, because I think Hannah Rogers had like 32 and a third scoreless innings in a row. Talk about getting it going and getting you guys back in it.

JORDAN STRICKLAND: We just fight. This team, we just work together so well and after last night and that unbelievable game we felt like we could accomplish anything. And we can. So today we just kept fighting, and we had a lot of senior leadership in the huddle telling us to keep pushing, keep pushing. We had some good swings on Hannah, and so it was nice to finally break through in whatever inning that was. We tried to keep that really going but just kind of fell short.

KAITLYN THUMANN: I think that shows a lot about the fight of this team and it really is incredible. And that inning that it started I think Jordan had a really good hit—Sarah started it. Anyway, hitting is contagious, and I think with this team we are really good at passing the bat. I knew I hadn't gotten a hit off Hannah in the past whatever week, and I was determined when I got up to beat her. And it happened. So just passing the bat.

Q. Whitney, what have you learned about perseverance in your six years at Baylor, and does that help when you get into jams in games where there are runners on base?

WHITNEY CANION: Yeah, I feel that word is capitalized, in all caps for me, just through all the adversity and knowing my knee was the toughest thing I've gone through. So that was probably really when I learned what that was.

I've been in a lot of jams, I've left a lot of runners on base. I kind of feel like sometimes I get more amped up once they get on base. That's how I've been my whole career. You kind of see me -- I may throw a little harder when runners are on base. I just feel like I'm always trying to leave them on base no matter what happens. I'm going to give up hits here and there, I'm going to walk some people and everything, but really just trying to leave 'em on.

This team kept me -- like I'm gassed, but this team, knowing their fight this week, kept me pitching because I know I didn't have my best stuff. But to see last night's game, how could you not

give it your all, just because of how they performed.

Q. Whit, in the fifth inning you got the first 2 outs, you got an infield single, then you hit a couple. Were you starting to get worn down by then or were they just crowding the plate?

WHITNEY CANION: No I was -- kept trying to jam 'em to get them -- the right handers -- to get them to foul 'em off. Really, I lost a little bit on my drop curve. My arm came out and I was really just trying to get them to foul it off where they were out on the plate. I would say I was trying to keep working 'em in and working 'em in, and I hit a batter -- hit several, which isn't like me. But I'd rather hit them than give up a home run, so I think that was what I was really trying to do was just jam 'em.

Q. Glenn, your thoughts on Florida's pitcher and how well Florida is playing right now?

COACH MOORE: They're hitting on all cylinders. I think they have a thousand fielding percentage, a pitcher throwing like Hannah's throwing; hard to beat. It wasn't the team we wanted to pick, I guess, to start the tournament off with, and then have the type of game we had, for sure. But Tim's got 'em playing really well and a talented bunch of athletes. I could go on and on about the way they're playing. They're playing with a lot of confidence and made us work really hard for anything we were able to get off them today.

Q. Glenn, I think Coach Walton talked about a game like last night can be so emotionally draining. It can take a lot out of a team. Were you worried about that, and what did the team show you the way that they fought?

COACH MOORE: He's exactly right. It's typical when you win a big game. You see it a lot in football; you win a big game, and the next week you get upset by a team who is not nearly as good as your previous opponent the previous week. It can be draining.

I felt like we were a little quiet this morning. I don't know that it concerned me. I thought we were -- I guess probably thinking back to Thursday's game when I felt we needed the edge knocked off a little bit; I thought it might benefit us

a little bit. We just got beat by a team that was better than us today. I'm not sure we were playing our best ball right now, but we have played it to get here and at times we've seen it. But they're playing great ball. They're playing exceptional and we really needed them to not be on their best game and us have a good game to have a chance to move on out of this two-game day.

Q. This question is for Whitney. Talk about what you've meant to the program and what has the program meant to you?

WHITNEY CANION: I've absolutely loved playing here. I've loved this coaching staff. This is my life and I've been here six years; like you said, it's a joke. But I have absolutely loved playing here, loved my decision at Baylor. Each team I have great memories; still have friendships I will have forever at Baylor. I love Waco, everything about this team. This team this year was special and what a way to go out my senior year. So very happy in my career.

Q. Glenn, your third World Series appearance, second time to make the semifinals. You gotta feel great about where the program is.

COACH MOORE: I want to win the dang thing. I'm happy with what we've done, but I'm not satisfied. You know, you just want to win it. That's why you play it. Years you don't get here, and I have trouble watching it on TV. I had some warriors this year, and I thought we had a shot at it. But God's been good to us. He's blessed us with not only our great facility -- Baylor in all sports is on the rise and has been for quite a while. It's just a higher standard there, and I'm just -- I'm just blessed to be a part of this program and great university, and I look forward to what the future holds because we have some good athletes coming down the line.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys.

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