

May 31, 2014



Baylor: 7
Florida State: 2

An interview with:

Baylor

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon. Would like to welcome you to Day 3 of the 2014 Women's College World Series. With us is Baylor Head Coach Glenn Moore, Jordan Strickland, Heather Stearns and Linsey Hays. We will begin with an opening statement from Coach Moore.

COACH MOORE: As a team we loaded the bus when we left Waco and we certainly knew we were a better team than showed up here in Oklahoma City. We're glad to have an opportunity to do that. I'm extremely proud of Heather Stearns, who hasn't thrown in a long, long time. We have tried to create game-like situations for Heather and Liz both in practices and we have been playing so well we haven't had to go deep into our bullpen, but for her to sit and watch and warmed up and warmed up and came back out and didn't get to pitch. For her to come out and throw a game like that against Florida State, a great-hitting team, just -- I can't say enough good things about her. It was an exceptionally well-pitched game and, you know, it's Jordan swinging the bat. Really stepped up.

I think our whole team was more relaxed this time, for whatever reason. We were uptight and dug a hole quick and weren't able to climb out of it and it just continued to snowball. That's not who we were. We knew that wasn't who we were against Florida. This is a team that we have had all year and I'm very proud of the way they played.

Q. Heather, like Glenn mentioned, you hadn't started in almost a month. Were you surprised at all that you got the start? What was your mindset going out there?

HEATHER STEARNS: I got the text from Coach Moore last night and maybe a little bit surprised, but really excited. I've been waiting for

my turn and just excited and ready to go and kind of get out there.

Q. What was working for you?

HEATHER STEARNS: Really just mixing all my pitches. Felt like I had good command, good placement. Just go right at them. Don't have fear and just work my pitches in all zones.

Q. Heather, you had the great regional last year. How much did that help? In particular, coming out and striking out the side in the first, how much of a lift did you get from that?

HEATHER STEARNS: Definitely you know the regionals last year helped me, just being in this environment.

You know, there is nothing like it. You have to have that experience, and regionals last year helped me with that. Also, getting a little bit in the Florida game helped those nerves go down a little bit.

Q. Glenn, what do you text her? "You're starting tomorrow"? Or is there more to it, and Heather, what was your reply?

COACH MOORE: We put a lot of thought into this. Our sport sometimes lends you to go with your ace until her arm falls off, literally. But we knew we had a long road ahead of us, so we were going to have to use her at some point in time. I shouldn't say "have to." Heather is an outstanding pitcher. Anybody that followed Baylor softball saw what she did as a freshman last year and this year as well, dealing with aggravating injury issues early; nothing big, but something that kept her from being the pitcher she could be early on.

But to answer your question, just basically said, "Hey, been some great sophomore pitchers throw this weekend, it's time to let one shine for Baylor," and she responded she's ready. That simple. You would like to do that face-to-face, but when you're here at the World Series and they are pulling you about 15 different directions, sometimes you don't meet with your team as often

as you like. They respond well to text messages, these days. (Laughter.)

Q. Glenn, following up on that, you talked the other day about you don't feel like the days of one pitcher going through this tournament are necessarily over, but now that Heather has given you some innings, how well does that set you up, maybe that you have a second game today and going forward?

COACH MOORE: I said that because when you get in the losers' bracket it is difficult. So I think people are still going to recruit and try to develop that power pitcher, that number one and ride her as long as you can until she starts fatiguing. That doesn't mean the need for a bullpen is not there. Obviously you're going to have bad games and you're going to need it.

Heather knows how much confidence we have in her. She's No. 2 to an All-American that's written every record at Baylor. Maybe the percentage is small, but it gives you a little bit of an advantage to go with Whitney most of the time. She has a completely different look. It's a nice weapon to have. I have total confidence in her. We've used her throughout her career so far many times. Last year she went to College Station and most people didn't know it -- she broke her hand the day before. And beats Arizona two days after she breaks her hand. She has something internally that's pretty valuable as well.

Q. Jordan, good day at the plate today. After the lack luster performance teamwise at the plate (Thursday), what was your approach going into the day and how does it feel to hit two home runs in the college World Series?

JORDAN STRICKLAND: We had a completely different approach today. It was one-and-done and we weren't ready to be done yet, and we came in with intensity today and were working to put it all together. For me, when I stepped up to the plate in the 7 hole it was easy because -- not easy, but it was a lot more relaxed. Because the hitters in front of me had been doing their jobs and were on base, and I saw they were hitting her hard. It was a self-esteem booster for me to see that my teammates were all rallying together and putting something together. That was nice, because we didn't see that (Thursday).

Q. Lindsey, can you talk about getting things started? You went 3 for 3 for the day, had a couple of stolen bases, scored ahead of

her a couple times. Talk about the way the offense got going.

LINSEY HAYS: Like Jordan said, we came with a whole new approach today. We were much more intense, ready and aggressive. That was not us two days ago against Florida and I think that's evident now. We studied Waldrop and we knew what she was going to throw us and we were well prepared to go in there. Clare was phenomenal today starting us off two innings, just getting on base and rolling. When leadoff gets on, it's easy to roll.

Q. Coach, I know sometimes you don't want to talk too much about the opposing pitcher in case you see 'em again, but now that Florida State has been eliminated, and the hitters, if anything you can throw in, your approach with Waldrop -- did it help seeing her live the other day and what was your game plan against her?

COACH MOORE: I have to credit Oregon. I thought they had a great approach versus Waldrop; staying patient and making her come over the plate a little more. She is a phenomenal pitcher. She changes speed, has good movement and gets a lot of mishits, if you will. She got some from us as well. That was kind of our approach. You always want to be aggressive, but not overly aggressive.

JORDAN STRICKLAND: Like he said, part of our approach is to be patient. We knew she wanted us to chase a little bit, so today it was a matter of being patient. She throws a lot of off-speed stuff which is beneficial for her, so a lot of us today went to the slash and worked the counts well and made her bring a pitch that we could drive. I thought we did a great job as an offense doing that.

LINSEY HAYS: I thought we did a great job. She is not National Player of the Year for no reason. She kept us guessing we stayed aggressive at the plate and we were patient and hit our pitches. I think that really made the difference.

Q. Coach, I know it's a little too soon, but looking forward to Kentucky later tonight. Give us a preview and who will be starting on the mound?

COACH MOORE: Well, Whitney will be starting on the mound -- in the circle. It's not baseball. (Laughter.) I make that same mistake.



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We haven't looked a lot -- we watched 'em play last night. We're going to watch film as soon as we get away from here, eat a little bit. We have a quick turnaround; I think we play in four hours. They're a good team. They play with a lot of adrenaline and excitement. They made a game last night and thought they had a chance.

They're going to be tough. We haven't looked a lot at them, because we had to win this one. But we're going to zero in on them right now.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys.

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