

2015 Women's College World Series

Saturday, May 30
Alabama 2 - Oregon 1



Oregon

An Interview With:
COACH MIKE WHITE
JANIE TAKEDA
JENNA LILLEY
CHERIDAN HAWKINS

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Oregon head coach Mike White, student-athlete Janie Takeda, student-athlete Jenna Lilley and student-athlete Cheridan Hawkins.

COACH WHITE: As usual, I congratulate the winner, which is Alabama. Did a good job. (Alexis) Osorio pitched a great game against us, and they were very opportunistic again with some timely hitting there in the lower order. I want to thank our athletic director, Rob Mullens, senior women's administrator, Lisa Peterson, and all our support staff for really getting behind us this year throughout the whole year and especially in the postseason. I don't know what it is: We're a very consistent team. Over the three years we've played extremely well. We won three 12 Pac championships in a row which puts us on the level playing field with Arizona and UCLA. But unfortunately we haven't found a way yet to get over the hurdle here at the big one but that doesn't mean we didn't try. I'm very proud of our team, the way they conduct themselves both off and on the field, in the classroom, and as a family. I think that's one of the things a lot of our recruits say, we're a family and we care about each other, and I think that's very true. And again just very proud of our team the way they left it out in the field, didn't work the way we wanted, but we're sure as heck going to try to be back here next year.

Q. Coach, can you share your thoughts on your hitters against Osorio?

COACH WHITE: We had a game plan. And unfortunately we just didn't have the discipline at the plate. And we expanded the strike zone. I'm not sure if that was because of the umpire's strike zone. I think it was pretty inconsistent. And that's all I'll say on that. And kind of made it a little tough for us. Obviously we can't blame that person for that. That happens. We've got to be better than that. But we still chased some balls out of the strike zone, which is not going to do well against any pitcher the level of (Alexis) Osorio.

Q. Cheridan, talk about that struggle early at least in the second and gave up the two runs but you settled down the rest of the game, what was the difference for you?

CHERIDAN HAWKINS: I think I made a mistake, and I missed my spot, and that ball just happened to land. And it was unlucky, but I think I just realized if I really wanted to give my team and our offense a chance to win I had to keep it at two runs. So I definitely just tried to limit the number of people on base and do the best I could to give our offense an opportunity.

Q. Cheridan, when you said you missed your spot, are you talking about to (Chandler) Dare, on the single, the two-run single?

CHERIDAN HAWKINS: Yes.

Q. Secondly, it appeared that there were some inconsistencies with you getting the outside corner call. Did you have kind of a time dealing with that in the first couple of innings before you found your rhythm?

CHERIDAN HAWKINS: I think it's just best to try not to let things you can't control get to you. I just tried to ignore it the best I could, keep attacking the strike zone and throw the ball where I thought I might get the calls.

Q. Jenna and Janie, you're at different spots in your careers in terms of this experience and how it fits in the continuum. Could you each reflect on this, Janie, what it's like to get here three times? Did you feel much more comfortable? Did you feel like you benefited from that experience at all this time, and Jenna what you took from this and what you'll take going forward?

JANIE TAKEDA: I think every time we come back here we'll learn something new. Coach says no loss ever goes in vain. So we take what we learn and apply it to next year. Unfortunately you have to wait a whole year to get back here. But I mean, I just think our players are amazing people, amazing players, and I think they'll just keep working because that's what our team does. And I think that they're going to figure it out hopefully next year. And I think that hopefully the seniors left them with something to take with them.

JENNA LILLEY: I would say that wherever you are, the game always stays the same. And I just want to thank

being around people like Janie (Takeda) has made me a better player, teammate, and person. And I've learned a lot from her, playing with her, just seeing everything that she does. So having people like Janie as your teammate, definitely a blessing.

Q. Janie, wonder if you could put in perspective for us the type of year that Jenna Lilley had, maybe focus on something a little more positive here. I know you guys are pretty crushed with the loss. But for a freshman to come in and impact you guys with such electricity and it's obvious how much this loss has crushed her. It's great to see that from a freshman. So just summarize that.

JANIE TAKEDA: I think Jenna (Lilley) as a player is more mature beyond her years. She inspires everyone on the field with her work ethic. And just the focus she has up to bat is not a freshman. And I've said since January she's going to be a four-time All-American. She's just incredible. Like I just wish that I was at that level as a freshman. It's incredible. And I just can't wait to see what she does over her four years and after that.

Q. Jenna, just from your perspective, from what I understand, Lauren Lindvall may have seen from the summer circuit the pitching of (Alexis) Osorio a little bit. Did she pass along anything to you; and just from your hitter's perspective, can you describe what you saw from her on the mound today, in the circle?

JENNA LILLEY: I actually faced her last summer. I want to say once or twice. But, yeah, very similar, improved a lot. But definitely a similar game as she did last summer.

Q. Velocity?

JENNA LILLEY: Yeah, velocity. It's all relative as to what you see every day. So I think she definitely matured as a player. Hats off to her. She did a nice job.

Q. Can you just talk about the season in general, even though obviously exiting a little bit earlier than you wanted to, Coach, but talk about how the season has gone, especially coming into the tournament?

COACH WHITE: Well, I think, you know, having, starting off, starting last year, the end of last year was supposed to be a rebuilding process. And we were able to pick up a couple of nice transfers in (Hailey) Decker and (Geri Ann) Glasco, and then all of a sudden we changed from a rebuilding year to, hey, we have a shot here. It took us a little while to get clicking. And I thought halfway through the season, starting with that pivotal series against UCLA, I thought we were really starting to hit the ball pretty well, pitched well,

and everything was coming together. The last weeks of the postseason we were really fielding well, we were making some great plays and everything was starting to go, hey, this is good, we're doing well. But unfortunately, sometimes it's the luck of the draw and having to play against a team that knows us very well, and they kind of got off to a great start and having to play at 10:30 at night. I'm not trying to make excuses, but there's a lot of things that goes into these types of stuff and the luck of the draw and the luck of the play of the game, and so it just didn't turn out for us. I don't know the reason for it. But we're playing here for a reason, it's going to make us better and stronger and be able to come back and finally bust through. We have to come out with some determination and we have to make it happen because right now we're just leaving our best game not in this environment. And that's what we've got to change. We've got to find a way to elevate our game to the game we can play in this environment.

Q. Janie, as a senior on the team of a school that devotes itself to football, is there now an awareness that you've got one of the best softball teams in the country on that same campus?

JANIE TAKEDA: I definitely think so. I think Howe Field has become a mini Autzen Stadium, that's where our football team plays. It's a great college town, and becoming a Duck was the best decision I made in my life because you don't get that all the time. And I think just living in Eugene with that community and how much support they put behind our softball program for the past few years has been incredible. Especially because football dominates people's interests usually in that town. So I definitely think Oregon softball is growing exponentially in Eugene.

Q. Janie, you're part of a senior class that's had more career victories than any other class in program history. What does that mean to you?

JANIE TAKEDA: I think it's a testament to Coach White. We're his first recruiting class. It's a huge honor just getting anything we could do to get the team closer to a national championship and the more you win, the closer you get to that. So we just all feel really honored to be a part of this program.

COACH WHITE: I'm honored to be their coach. It has been a pleasure to have these players starting from very first year six years ago to start to buy into new concepts. It takes a little bit -- it doesn't just take a little bit, it takes a lot of trust to do things that are against some conventional wisdom. But starting with this class and what's made it easier for us as coaches and coaching staff is, are these players, are these seniors because they help revolve things around, they turn it around for us without having for us to do everything

ourselves. And so I want to thank them again, the senior class of Janie Takeda, Jamie Rae Sullivan, Sara Goodrum and Karissa Hovinga, because they've been tremendous athletes and people. That's the best thing I can say. I'm proud of this team, over and beyond, on and off the field, they've been tremendous for this university and for this program.

Q. Alabama, they're a nemesis, they're a thorn for you, aren't they?

COACH WHITE: Them and Florida. But they've been here a few more times than us. And I think we match up very well on paper, but the difference is they had the big hit at the big time and had some big pitches at the big time. That's the difference in this game sometimes. And again we've got to go back and figure out a way to make this work. We'll get it done. It's going to take us a while maybe, but we'll get it done.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.