



**Florida State-South Carolina Quotes**  
**Sunday, May 19, 2019**  
**2019 NCAA Regional Softball Press Conference**

**Lonni Alameda, Florida State Head Coach:**

**Opening Statement:**

"What a regional. I want to congratulate Bethune-Cookman, USF and South Carolina for getting to a regional. It's really hard and it's getting harder because our game is so much better coast to coast and the parity is awesome. I'm a big fan of South Carolina and always have been. They're a good coaching staff and their players play hard, and that was a hard-fought game every pitch. I am really proud of our team right now; of course's we're happy to be on the 'W' side. We got sucker punched and got down in the fifth inning – Kat (Sandercock) had to sustain us a little bit, defense came in, we got a few at-bats in the beginning that got us going and then they had to get going again. Meghan King was in my ear the whole time 'I want in, I want in, I want in,' and she got it and took it and I was real proud of that mature moment."

**On how the team battled back from being down:**

"When they went ahead, Carsyn Gordon brought the whole team together and calmed them down. When you see leadership start to show within the team, if it's a player-led program and they have ownership and they're playing for themselves – it's *our* program and it's *their* team. When you see that this time of year, you get pretty excited about it because it means something to them. Doesn't mean the result will always be what you want, but you know it means something to them. I was proud of Carsyn to do that. Experience plays a big part of that, last year plays a big part of that. I can tell Makinzy Herzog has grown tremendously from that leadership and she came up big for us today. We're one unit, and team 36 is getting after it right now."

**On Makinzy Herzog coming through in the big moments:**

"When you're recruiting kids to bring to the program you have expectations of them. Probably the best part of that is that the coaching staff, you're trying to figure out how to push the buttons to get them to go and produce what you think they can produce. You look at Syd Sherrill and what she did last year as a freshman. I think the greatest thing Makinzy has done is she has come in and asked for help. She comes in and hits before practice. She comes in and listens to Meghan's plans and what she's going to do as a pitcher. She's not that freshman going through the motions – she's taking control of it and trying to learn. She knows there is upperclassmen here leading her, and that she's supposed to learn but also trust what she does. That's probably why she's so comfortable in those moments right now."

**On the impact of Herzog:**

"I think sometimes when you're in the bottom of the lineup, you allow yourself to grow up a little bit and there's a lot of expectations in the top part of the lineup. You get to the bottom, and all season long we've had Mak in there to do some pitching and be in the outfield and hitting, and there's going to be a lot on her plate as a freshman and let her work at something. The minute we saw she was foggy-eyed and freaking out, to have a conversation and bring her back down and let her go again. She's very athletic and smart, and I feel like we did a good job of that. She smiles now and is having fun. She's a tremendous athlete and she's growing as a smart ballplayer too."

**On Florida State battling adversity:**

"One – you have to be able to play and have the skill sets. Two – you have to play as a team and we played as a team today. And everyone was playing for somebody else. We had a lot of failure today, they could have easily sunk down and they didn't allow that. And three – I think you always fall back to your values and your culture. You're never going to rise to the occasion, you're going to go to your training. Our training has always been about the team and team effort. Those are the three things we hound on all the way through."

**Makinzy Herzog – Freshman pitcher/outfielder****On honing in on the moment:**

"We've talked about not getting too high for the moments. I've been trying to stay pretty level and know that no matter the outcome for anybody, our team can get it done. They'll always be there to back me up no matter what happens in the process."

**On how the team battled back:**

"We were down, but Lizzy and Dani got on and that struck the energy and passed it down. I wasn't getting too high in my emotions – I just stayed where I was at. I was looking for a good pitch to hit and found one and drove it up the middle."

**Meghan King – Redshirt senior pitcher****On how she came back:**

"Obviously, you don't want that start to the game. You're looking forward to this game all weekend, you're looking forward to a potential super regional. As a senior you don't want your games to end, and I had to get my head out of my butt honestly. I took some good spins in the bullpen, drank some water and got in the fan and knew that if an opportunity came where I needed to be back out there, I would be ready to compete."

**On closing out a tight ballgame:**

"I feel like I've been in that situation a lot. We've gotten walked off a few times this year with me on the mound unfortunately. But I've used those moments that I've been in this season, and unfortunately negatively ended, and used them to prepare to just spin it one pitch at a time instead of 'what could happen,' or 'could we win this game or could we lose this game.' I stay present by spinning one pitch at a time no matter what."

**On Makinzy Herzog coming through this weekend:**

"I think Mak's been huge for us all year. I joke that she's famous because she's been in the press conference three games in a row, and she hates me for saying that. I'm just so proud of her – she's been huge for us in all situations. She had a huge hit when he played Kelly Barnhill of UF, and I think all those moments really prepared her offensively and on the mound. I couldn't be more proud of her honestly."

## **Beverly Smith, South Carolina Head Coach:**

### **Opening Statement:**

"First, I would just like to say thank you to Florida State for being such great hosts for us this weekend. Today certainly didn't come out like we wanted it to but I couldn't be more proud of my team and how we fought in that last game. I think it was a great team effort. We had some outstanding performances from Cayla Drotar coming in in relief and having two hits in the ball game. But really it was the whole team that came through. I thought we put a lot of runs on the board against a really tough FSU pitching staff. Second for me, the downside of the seasons ending is that you have to say goodbye to some seniors, and I couldn't be more proud of Kennedy Clark and Dixie (Raley). I think we were senior led this weekend. They both had outstanding performances, and for me - I'm just really proud that both of them had outstanding senior campaigns as well. I think they've had probably their career best in terms of their performances but they leave that gift with the rest of the team that will return for us next season."

### **On whether or not another starting pitcher was considered:**

"Not one thought. Dixie communicated that she was sore, but she wanted the ball. To me, she's been our ace and I was going into the game to win it. I think Dixie went out there and pitched with a lot of guts. Florida State certainly put some good swings on her early, but I thought that was a gutsy performance from Dixie today."

### **On how Cayla pitched today in relief:**

"I tell you, it was a tough strike zone today. I thought she came in and did a great job just being commanding in the zone. She was ahead in counts on batters and really, she talks about her job as coming in and getting ground balls. Like I said, she just stayed ahead of hitters and really kept them off balance."

### **On what this senior class means to the program:**

"They have really left their fingerprints on it. I talk about Kennedy- we recruited her early on, and she really has come in and been somebody that's been an everyday player for us. I consider her kind of our glue. Our 'glue gal' is what I've called her. She's got relationships with all of the players, she has led by example, and she has literally been in the lineup every single day since she started here. I'm so happy for her - that's she's leaving on top - having had a tremendous career. I think she's left her fingerprints all over the culture of the locker room and the players that are there. For Dixie, she's been with us two seasons. She transferred in, and I think that she really brought a competitive spirit. There's probably not anybody as competitive as Dixie on the team - which we've learned over two years - but that sparked us. I think she really came in and won ballgames for us, but she also left her fingerprints on the locker room about how we can be open and honest in conversations, compete, and still love each other. They both leave a lot in terms of culture for the Gamecocks."

## **Dixie Raley, Pitcher:**

### **On how badly she wanted the start today:**

"More than anything. Definitely."

### **On transferring to South Carolina:**

"Every player dreams of playing in the postseason and to make these runs for two years has been more than I could ask for. This is the biggest stage and I've had a lot of fun."

**On how Cayla pitched today in relief:**

"She was lights out. We talk about having each other's backs all the time, and she came in and she did that. She shut it down - coach said two hits- I couldn't ask for more from her. She was amazing."

**On what she will take away from her two years at South Carolina:**

"Best two years of my life, for sure. Best decision that I made coming here - the relationships that I have, the friends that I have, the memories that I have from this program, and the games I've competed in. It's everything I could've asked for and more."

**On how close she has grown with her teammates:**

"Very close. Even off the field, we're together all of the time. I talk to almost all of them like every day. We're really close friends and I love those guys more than anything."

**Kennedy Clark, Outfielder:**

**On the team's fight until the end this weekend:**

"I couldn't have asked for more from this team. We were in it every pitch and you saw out there what we can do when everybody is hitting throughout the whole lineup, and our pitching. I'm sad that we're out but there was no better way to go out - just fighting until the very end."

**On what she will take away from her four years at South Carolina:**

"I don't regret my decision one bit. I'm happy I came here. My goal was to make an impact on the softball program and I feel like I've left my impact on this team. I can't wait to see what they do next year, because they're one hell of a ball team. I'm just glad I made this decision. I made friends and teammates that are life-long. I'm really happy about my four years here."