

Carol Hutchins

National Champion Head Coach

University of Michigan

Head coach Carol Hutchins wrapped up her 38th season at the helm of the University of Michigan softball program in 2022. The winningest coach in NCAA softball history, Hutchins has guided the Wolverines to an NCAA title and 22 Big Ten Conference titles and solidified Michigan among the top softball programs in the country. She was inducted into the National Fastpitch Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2006.

With a career record of 1,707-551-5 over her 39 total seasons as a NCAA head coach, Hutchins is the winningest coach in NCAA softball history. She reclaimed the mantle with the Wolverines' 3-0 win against Northern Kentucky (Feb. 25, 2022) to pass Arizona's Mike Candrea's record of 1,674 career wins. Hutchins previously held the top spot for more than two years after surpassing former Fresno State coach Margie Wright's longtime record of 1,457 in 2016. Hutchins is the winningest coach -- male or female -- in Michigan Athletics history.

"Hutch" has been a part of the Michigan softball program since 1983 when she joined the staff as an assistant coach under Bob DeCarolis. She moved into the head coach position in 1985 and, in each of her 38 head coaching seasons, has continued Michigan's tradition of softball success. Michigan has never suffered a losing season in program history.

Hutchins has led the Wolverines to the Women's College World Series on 12 occasions, and, in 2005, the Maize and Blue became the first program east of the Mississippi River to claim the NCAA national championship when it defeated UCLA in the championship series. Michigan's record-setting 2005 season was the culmination of two decades of dedication for Hutchins and her current and former players and coaches. In that magical season, Michigan set records in a number of categories, including:

- First softball national championship
- A program-best 65 wins
- A program-best 32 consecutive victories (spanning 47 days, from Feb. 13 to March 30)
- First No. 1 ranking (March 22)
- First No. 1 seed in the NCAA Tournament
- First victory over a top-ranked opponent (6-2 win over No. 1 Arizona)

The 2005 season took on added significance when Hutchins was selected to be included in a pool of coaches for USA Softball's Summer Tour. Hutchins helped select both the USA Softball National and Elite teams and was appointed head coach for the Elite Team at the Canada Cup and made assistant coach for the National Team at the Japan Cup. The Elite Team posted a 10-1

record at the Canada Cup to earn the silver medal, while winning the Sendai Series at the Japan Cup.

Michigan returned to the WCWS championship series in 2015, ultimately settling for NCAA runner-up honors after falling to Florida in the third game of the best-of-three series. The 2015 Wolverines boasted a 60-8 record, led the nation with 118 home runs, also set program records in runs scored (540) and runs-batted in (504) and boasted a program-best five NFCA All-Americans.

Hutchins' squads have also captured 22 Big Ten regular-season titles, 10 Big Ten Tournament championships and qualified for the NCAA Tournament 29 times (1992-93, '95-2019, '21-22), earning 18 NCAA Regional crowns and making 12 appearances in the NCAA Women's College World Series (1995-98, 2001-02, '04-'05, '09, '13, '15-'16).

She has earned 18 Big Ten Conference Coach of the Year honors, eight NFCA Regional Coach of the Year awards and a pair of NFCA National Coach of the Year honors. The Hutchins-led Michigan coaching staff has garnered Great Lakes Region Coaching Staff of the Year honors in 15 of the last 24 seasons (1998-99, 2001-02, '04-'05, '08-'10, '13-'16, '18, '21) and was named Speedline/NFCA National Coaching Staff of the Year for the first time in 2005. In 2016, Hutchins was named the inaugural recipient of espnW's Pat Summitt Coaching Award, presented to the coach who "exemplifies the character and courage" of the legendary basketball coach who led the Tennessee Lady Vols.

The Wolverines have received 69 total All-America citations under Hutchins, including 23 first-team nods, while 14 have earned Academic All-America accolades. Michigan players have claimed 20 Big Ten Player of the Year awards, 16 Big Ten Pitcher of the Year awards, and 13 Big Ten Freshman of the Year awards during her coaching tenure. Wolverine players have accumulated 202 Academic All-Big Ten awards, 212 All-Big Ten citations and 154 All-Mideast or All-Great Lakes Region certificates. Four former Hutchins-coached Wolverines -- Jenny Allard, Vicki Morrow, Alicia Seegart and Bonnie Tholl -- were named to the Big Ten's All-Decade (1990s) team -- the most from any conference school.

Hutchins' players have also excelled at the international and professional levels. Amanda Chidester contributed to Team USA's silver-medal performance at the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, delivering two game-winning RBI hits, and gold at the 2016 WBSC World Championship and, along with Sierra Romero, the 2015 World Cup of Softball and Japan Cup. Former Michigan players Morrow (1987), Patti Benedict (1995) and Jordan Taylor (2011) were members of U.S. Pan American Games gold-medal teams. Maggie Vieffhaus claimed gold with the USA junior team at the 2007 Junior Pan Am Championships and again at the 2007 Junior World Championships. Samantha Findlay, Tiffany Haas, Jessica Merchant and Jennie Ritter played for Hutchins during the 2005 Canada Cup and International Cup, while Findlay and Ritter joined Hutchins again in 2006 as the Wolverine trio led the USA squad to gold at the World University Games.

On March 31, 2000, Hutchins moved to the top of the all-time win list for University of Michigan coaches -- female or male -- with win No. 638, a 1-0 victory vs. Indiana in the conference season-opening game. On February 28, 2007, she became just the seventh coach in NCAA softball history -- and the sixth in Division I -- to reach 1,000 career wins. She became the first collegiate coach to 1,500 wins with an 11-3, six-inning win over Kent State on March 19, 2017, and similarly, the first to 1,600 with a 6-2 win at rival Ohio State on April 13, 2019.

Before becoming Michigan's third softball coach, Hutchins spent one year as the head coach at Ferris State University (1982). While at Ferris, she led the Bulldogs to the NCAA Division II National Tournament and was selected Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference Coach of the Year. Hutchins was an assistant coach at Indiana University (1981) -- under legendary coach Gayle Blevins -- and at Michigan (1983-84).

A 1979 graduate of Michigan State University, Hutchins displayed her athletic talents in both basketball and softball (1976-79), helping the Spartans to the 1976 Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) National Softball Championship. In 2003, she was chosen as the recipient of the Nell Jackson Award, considered the highest honor the Michigan State Varsity "S" Club can give a female alumna for professional accomplishments and community service and was inducted into the Michigan State Athletics Hall of Fame in 2021. She was also inducted into the Greater Lansing Athletic Hall of Fame in 2000 and the Michigan Sports Hall of Fame in 2011.

Hutchins founded the Michigan Softball Academy in 2010 in conjunction with the program's annual "Pink Game." The academy is a one-night on-field clinic for adults that raises funds for the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer organization. Hutchins and the Michigan softball program initially formed an affiliation with Making Strides Against Breast Cancer for its annual walk in 2007. Since then, the Wolverines have raised more than \$1,000,000 for the American Cancer Society.

A native of Lansing, Michigan, Hutchins also holds a master's degree in physical education from Indiana (1981).