

Ritter breaks own marks

Senior sets U-M single-game, season strikeout records

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University of Oklahoma softball coach Patty Gasso didn't need statistics Sunday afternoon to reiterate what she had already said the day before.

"We had the bases loaded. We had runners at first and second. We had our chances," she started. "But when you have a senior All-American who wants to defend her title, you're up against something tough. We've faced (Cat) Osterman. (Ritter) is right there.

"Ritter, she's, she's, she's incredible."

University of Michigan fans saw that at Alumni Field for the last time Sunday as Jennie Ritter added to her accolades with another record-breaking performance in the Wolverines' 5-2 NCAA regional title game victory over Oklahoma.

The Dexter High School graduate struck out a Michigan single-game record 19 batters, breaking her own record of 18 from earlier this season. In the process, she broke her own Michigan single-season record of 410 strikeouts by moving up to 427.

Her numbers so far this postseason might appear to be unreal. In 43 innings she has an ERA of 0.33, a WHIP of 0.56 and 78 strikeouts. Opposing batters are hitting .110 against her. Before Oklahoma's seven hits on Sunday, that number was 0.78.

"She's been outstanding, but she had to gut through it today," Michigan coach Carol Hutchins said Sunday. "She had some moments when some pitches weren't working. She's all guts and heart. That's how she won a national championship last year."

Don't forget Leutele

Senior third baseman Grace Leutele ended her career at Alumni Field pretty well, too. Not only did her two-run home run in the eighth inning give the Wolverines all the runs they needed, it also put her in second place on Michigan's all-time home run list - breaking a tie with

sophomore Samantha Findlay. Leutele also leads this year's Michigan team with nine game-winning hits.

This is getting familiar

This will be the third straight postseason Michigan has been at the same site for a postseason competition as Tennessee. The Wolverines will travel to Knoxville to play Tennessee in a best 2-of-3 Super Regional on Saturday and Sunday. They faced the Volunteers in the semifinals of last year's Women's College World Series. Tennessee won the first game 2-0 in 11 innings to force another game that would decide which team advanced to the championship series. Michigan won that game 3-2.

Two years ago, before the NCAA switched to a Super Regional format, Tennessee came to Ann Arbor for an eight-team regional. The teams did not face one another as Tennessee was eliminated.

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