

Emily Grahl taps in game winner for SIUE women

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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MOREHEAD, Ky. – [Emily Grahl](#) tapped in the game winner in the 103rd minute Thursday, propelling SIUE women's soccer to a 2-1 double overtime win at Morehead State.

The Cougars improved to 4-1 in [Ohio Valley Conference](#) play and 6-5-2 overall with the win. The win is their second straight road win and their fourth win in the last five games. Morehead State fell to 0-4-1 in OVC play and 3-9-2 overall.

"To come away with three points on the road is great," SIUE Head Coach [Derek Burton](#) said. "To do it two games in a row gives us a good feeling and great confidence ahead of a home weekend against two good teams."

The win moved the Cougars to a league-best 12 points. SIUE is two points better than Austin Peay and Murray State, both of whom will play at Edwardsville next weekend.

"I told the team that we were at the halfway point after today and that the opportunity was there to start to create some separation," Burton added. "All we were focused on today was getting the W."

The overtime winner came after [Caroline Hoefert](#) carried the ball down the right side. Hoefert was able to get the ball to the end line and eventually to [Courtney Benning](#). Benning got a shot off which was turned aside by MSU goalkeeper Eva Ýr Helgadóttir. Grahl was waiting to slide in the rebound.

The Cougars struck first, albeit late. Following a scoreless first half, the Cougars began turning the pressure up midway through the second period. Sydney Moore and Benning each had near misses. Moore put a free kick on goal which was saved. Benning got her head on a corner kick but her shot was cleared off the line by an MSU defender.

Then in the 65th minute, Corey Levels unleashed a long throw into the box where Hoefert was able to get a head on it and hit it over Helgadóttir at the back post to put the Cougars up 1-0.

"Corey Levels was especially good today," Burton said. "She saved us on a couple of occasions and obviously picked up the assist on the throw in. She did a little bit of everything tonight and was outstanding."

Levels and Hoefert nearly hooked up on long throws several other times in the half.

"Credit to Corey and Caroline," Burton said. "They were dangerous all game."

Burton said the idea for the long throw-in came up during the team's morning walk-through at Morehead State's Jayne Stadium.

"Their field is quite a bit narrower than ours and narrower than most fields," Burton explained. "I asked who thought they could get a throw into the six-yard box. Corey consistently put the ball there, so we drew up plays showing where everyone should be."

It looked as if the Cougars would hold the 1-0 lead, but the Eagles scored a late equalizer after a giveaway in the midfield. Ashley Ritchie pushed the ball into the

middle of the box where Morgan Vonderheide was able to score far post past SIUE goalkeeper [Natalie Freeman](#).

Freeman, who was making her SIUE debut, made two saves for the Cougars.

"For her first college start I couldn't be more proud," Burton said. "It's a shame we couldn't get her a shutout."

Freeman came up big in the 26th minute, parrying away a shot by Ritchie from 20 yards out.

The Cougars outshot the Eagles 18-9 and held a 9-0 advantage in corner kicks.

SIUE is off until Oct. 14 when the Cougars play host to Austin Peay at Korte Stadium.