

# Katie Shashack hits 1,000-digs mark, SIUE blanks Morehead State in OVC opener

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MURRAY, Ky. – No. 2-seeded SIUE volleyball opened the 2016 [Ohio Valley Conference](#) Tournament with a three-set sweep over seventh-seeded Morehead State.

The Cougars ran their overall record to 21-7 with a 25-16, 25-21, 27-25 victory over the Eagles at Racer Arena. SIUE next faces third-seeded Austin Peay at 4:30 p.m. Friday in the tournament semifinals. The Governors defeated sixth-seeded Tennessee State in four sets earlier Thursday.

"I like the way we came out strong in set one," said SIUE Head Coach [Leah Johnson](#), who was named the league's Coach of the Year Wednesday night. "We like to impose our style of play on our opponent and force them to respond."

[Taylor Joens](#), who was named first team All-OVC, led the Cougars with 12 kills and a .545 hitting percentage. [Taylor Held](#) and [Emily Harrison](#) each finished with eight kills.

"We're trying to be balanced, but when someone is hot you have to give them the ball," said Johnson.

SIUE's defense collected nine blocks, including five from Joens. The Cougars also had 45 digs with 13 from [Dylynn Otte](#) and 10 from [Katie Shashack](#). The 10 from Shashack was enough to make her the 11<sup>th</sup> player in school history to record 1,000 digs.

The Cougars took control of the match behind the serving of Shashack, [Mallory Mangun](#) and [Jackie Scott](#), grabbing a 9-3 lead early. The first set lead grew to as big as nine points before Joens closed out the opening frame with her seventh kill of the set.

SIUE, which hit .265 as a team for the match, showed the balance that has followed the team all season in set two.

The Eagles made several adjustments to their lineup in set three to catch the Cougars off guard.

"I thought the team responded well," said Johnson. "We countered their strength with our strength."

Harrison helped the Cougars close out the third with five kills.

Morehead State, 11-20, was led by 10 kills each from Merideth Jewell and Sydney Schuler.