

# **SIUE's volleyball team comes back, captures five-set thriller over Southeast Missouri**

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CAPE GIRARDEAU, Mo. – SIUE volleyball came from a set down Friday against Southeast Missouri to earn its third straight victory in a five-set thriller at Houck Field House.

The Cougars improved to 22-5 overall and 12-3 in the Ohio Valley Conference with a 25-18, 17-25, 11-25, 25-19, 15-9 win. Southeast Missouri dropped to 10-19 overall and 5-10 in the OVC.

"I was glad to see us bounce back and really start fresh going into set four," said SIUE Head Coach Kendall Paulus.

Taylor Joens recorded five of her team-high 15 kills in the fifth set. She started the set with three kills and a block that gave SIUE a 5-0 lead in the fifth set.

Southeast Missouri would battle back to come within 10-9 but never took the lead from the Cougars in the deciding set. SIUE would score the final five points of the fifth set, including two kills by Jackie Scott, one from Joens and a service ace by Katie Shashack.

"They stayed in it and chipped away at us," said Paulus. "Katie's service ace after a SEMO timeout really kept us rolling."

As strong as SIUE was in the opening set, Southeast Missouri pushed back in sets two and three. Paulus said she was pleased with how the team responded heading into set four.

Paulus said the Cougars gained a big lift off the bench from freshman Gabby Wimes, who finished with a season-high six kills and one block.

"She stepped in and did a really nice job for us," said Paulus. "She added some physical energy to the lineup. Sammi (Knight) immediately felt comfortable setting her which helped keep us in balance."

Krissa Gearing led SEMO with 15 kills and 15 digs.

The Cougars' defense had four players in double figures digs with 19 from Shashack, 14 from Scott and 10 each from Jordyn Klein and Mallory Nicholson.

SIUE closes out the regular season Saturday evening at 6:30 at UT Martin.