

Short-handed SIUE Men Fall To Murray State 89-62, Close Season With Three Home Games Starting Monday

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MURRAY, Ky. – SIUE men's basketball completed its road schedule Saturday, falling to Murray State 89-62 at the CFSB Center.

The Cougars slipped to 8-14 overall and 6-10 in the Ohio Valley Conference. SIUE has lost four games in a row for the first time this season.

"I just went around the locker room and shook everyone's hand in the locker room and let them know how much I appreciated what they're giving to our program right now," SIUE Head Coach Brian Barone said. "The circumstances that we are under right now

are absolutely ridiculous. They're not batting an eye-the guys who were out there tonight. I have nothing but respect for that locker room right now."

Murray State, which improved to 13-10 overall and 10-8 in the OVC, seized control with a 13-0 run early in the first half. The run pushed the Racers' lead to 36-14 with 6:00 minutes to play before halftime. Mike Adewunmi snapped the run with a three-pointer.

Murray State took a 46-21 lead into halftime.

"Unfortunately, we didn't play the way we needed to past about the 5-6-minute mark tonight," Barone said. "We got stagnant offensively. Murray has kind of hit its stride as of late. Coming off a loss (Thursday) they wanted to protect their home court."

Bolstered by seven second-half three-pointers, the Racers built as much as a 35-point lead. Murray State finished 13-26 from three-point range and 18-28 (64 percent) overall.

Tevin Brown scored a game-high 29 points and was 7-9 from three-point range.

Three players finished in double figures scoring for SIUE, which finished at 38 percent shooting and 29 percent from three-point range.

Courtney Carter, Iziah James and Shamar Wright each scored 10 points for the Cougars. Mike Adewunmi scored nine points and Desmond Polk scored eight. Lamar Wright scored seven points. Michael Matas added six and Zane Butler scored two. Elochukwu Eze grabbed a season-high three rebounds.

"Our guys are battling," Barone said. "We have put ourselves in position to still be battling for something next week and that should not be forgotten."

SIUE is eighth in the OVC standings and has three games remaining in the regular season. The top eight teams qualify for the OVC Tournament.

"The difference in our day-to-day is unique," Barone said. "I know there are other teams probably figuring out their roster and their situation as well, but I'd be hard-pressed to believe that our situation isn't as unique as anyone's across the country."

The Cougars finished the road schedule 6-7, winning more true road games than any previous team at the Division I level.

"We have won at places we have never won before," Barone said. "We won more games on the road than we have won before and under circumstance that no one has had to deal with anywhere ever before."

SIUE will finish its season with three home games beginning Monday against Morehead State at First Community Arena. Tipoff is scheduled for 5 p.m.