

Cougars Blank Panthers, Move into Tie for Second Place in OVC

by Joe Pecoraro

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CHARLESTON, Ill. - The Cougars put together their fifth shutout of the season on Tuesday afternoon, as SIUE women's soccer claimed a 2-0 victory over in-state rival Eastern Illinois.

The first goal of the afternoon came in the 36th minute, when fifth year senior defender [Myah Diekema](#) buried the ball into the back of the net. Diekema, who has donned the Red & White in nearly 6,000 minutes of collegiate action, netted her second career goal and first since September 2019. The Cougars commanded possession in the opening half, registering 13 total shots while holding the host Panthers to just one.

The second half saw a continuation of the Cougars' impressive performance, helped by a 51st minute strike from [MacKenzie Litzsinger](#). Litzsinger took passes from Diekema and [Maria Haro](#) to net her eighth of the season, furthering her lead at the top of the Ohio Valley Conference in goals scored and points.

"It was always going to be a tough task with a quick turnaround," said SIUE Head Coach [Derek Burton](#) following the match. "But we were able to get the job done and get those three points on the road."

The Cougars, who improve to 7-6 overall and 4-2 in OVC play, now sit tied with Belmont for second-place in the conference table. SIUE will return to the friendly confines of Korte Stadium once more in the 2021 regular season, as the Red & White welcome Southeast Missouri in a rematch of last spring's OVC Championship final. Kickoff against the Redhawks is scheduled for Thursday at 7 p.m., and tickets will be available both online and at the gate.

"Happy with the adjustments we were forced to make," added Burton. "The players took instructions to the field and applied them. A big part was our experience - experienced players have an idea how to grind, which we definitely had to do today."