

# Cougars Basketball Team Tabbed Seventh in the OVC In Preseason Poll

by Joe Pott

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BRENTWOOD, Tenn. – SIUE men's basketball has been picked for a seventh-place finish in the Ohio Valley Conference in the preseason poll voted on by the league's head coaches and sports information personnel.

The poll, released Tuesday, has Belmont picked to repeat as regular season champions. The Bruins picked up 161 points and 17 of the league's 20 first-place votes. Morehead State, which captured the tournament title a season ago, is picked second with 141

points and grabbed the other three first-place votes. Murray State (136), Southeast Missouri (101), Tennessee State (84) and Austin Peay (76) rounded out the top six in front of the Cougars.

"Preseason polls are always exciting because it means the season is about to start," SIUE Head Coach [Brian Barone](#) said. "I'm looking forward to competing in the Ohio Valley Conference this year with our group of guys."

SIUE returned to the OVC Tournament following a trying 2020-21 season. The Cougars finished 7-12 in OVC play, winning their most league games since the 2014-15 season. SIUE was 9-17 overall.

Tennessee State, Eastern Illinois and UT Martin completed the poll.

"The league has great depth this year from top to bottom," Barone added. "Teams are filled with experience and college basketball veterans which will create great competition throughout the season."

Belmont guard Grayson Murphy and Morehead State forward Johni Broome shared OVC preseason Player of the Year honors.

### **Predicted Order of Finish**

1. Belmont (17 first-place votes) 161
2. Morehead State (3) 141
3. Murray State 136
4. Southeast Missouri 101
5. Tennessee State 84
6. Austin Peay 76
- 7. SIUE 65**
8. Tennessee Tech 62
9. Eastern Illinois 43
10. UT Martin 34