



SIUE Volleyball Welcomes Eastern Illinois for Midweek Matchup, Drops 5-Set and 4-Set Heartbreakers To UTM

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SIUE (5-17, 2-9 OVC) vs. Eastern Illinois (7-14, 0-11 OVC)

Date: Tuesday, October 26, 2021

First Serve: 6 p.m. CT

Location: First Community Arena, Edwardsville, Ill.

WHERE WE'RE AT: SIUE volleyball currently sits at 5-17 with non-conference wins over Purdue Fort Wayne (Aug. 27), Eastern Kentucky (Sep. 4), and Western Illinois (Sep. 18), and a pair of Ohio Valley Conference victories over Eastern Illinois (Oct. 5) and Belmont (Oct. 9).

THE TASK AT HAND: The Cougars will look to snap their longest losing streak of the season on Tuesday when they welcome the Eastern Illinois Panthers to First Community Arena. The match will mark SIUE's last of its three-match homestand, as the Red & White will embark on a four-match road trip to Morehead, Ky. and Nashville.

SCOUTING THE PANTHERS: The Eastern Illinois Panthers enter Tuesday's contest at 7-14 overall and winless (0-11) in OVC play. The Cougars and Panthers have met once this season, with SIUE leaving Charleston with a 3-1 victory. The Panthers were picked to finish last in the OVC.

LAST TIME OUT: The Cougars welcomed one of the OVC's top volleyball squads in UT Martin to First Community Arena last weekend. The Cougars came close in both fixtures, including a five-set thriller on Saturday; however, SIUE could not fend off the Skyhawks' potent attack and dropped both matches.

IRON SHARPENS IRON: The Cougars put together one of the most competitive non-conference schedules in program history this fall, standing toe-to-toe against three squads currently ranked in the RPI Top 100 and eight ranked in the RPI Top 150.

SPRING RECAP: SIUE volleyball put together one of the most successful campaigns in program history last spring, compiling the third-highest conference winning percentage in the program's Division I era (.714) and earning one of just four spots in the 2020-21 Ohio Valley Conference Volleyball Championship. The season also saw four different Cougars earn All-OVC honors, including an All-OVC Second Team nod for redshirt sophomore middle blocker [Savannah Christian](#).

LOOKING AHEAD: Following the weekend's fixtures, the Cougars will begin their four-match road trip when they head to Morehead for a series against the defending OVC champion Morehead State Eagles.

Volleyball Drops Five-Set Heartbreaker

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. - The Cougars did all they could and pushed the visiting Skyhawks to their limit on Saturday afternoon, but UTM narrowly emerged victorious over the Cougars in a five-set affair.

The Cougars started off strong in the opening set, holding the visitors to a hitting percentage of just .089 en route to a 25-22 first-frame victory. The Cougar attack remained consistent in the second, but the defense could not find their footing - the Skyhawks registered 12 kills in the set and put together a number of service aces to claim a nine-point set win and even the set score at one each. The third set belonged to the Skyhawks, as UTM hit .409 and held the Cougars to their lowest percentage of the afternoon to emerge with a dominant 25-12 win. SIUE would recapture the momentum in the fourth set, as the Cougar defense notched a trio of blocks and held the Skyhawks to their lowest hitting clip of the match to earn a 25-21 set win and send the match to a decisive fifth set. After the Cougars put together a pair of 3-0 scoring runs, the Skyhawks showed why they're among the top squads in the Ohio Valley Conference and cap off the match with a five-point win.

[Julia Treichel](#) led all players with 17 kills on the afternoon and fell just one dig shy of notching a double-double. [Savannah Christian](#) once again proved her formidable skill in attacking position, registering 10 kills, a pair of blocks, and a pair of digs. [Annie Ellis](#) notched six total blocks and eight kills, while [Jenna Taphorn](#) led the Red & White with an impressive .385 hitting percentage on seven kills. [Alyse Drifka](#) once again eclipsed the 30-assist milestone, while [Nicole Kijowski](#) recorded a team-best 23 digs.

The Cougars, who fall to 5-17 overall and 2-9 in OVC play, will cap off this three-match homestand with a Tuesday night showdown against in-state rival Eastern Illinois. First serve from First Community Arena is scheduled for 6 p.m.



Cougars Fall to Skyhawks In 4 Sets

EDWARDSVILLE, Ill. - SIUE volleyball gave the visiting Skyhawks all they could handle, but the Cougars came up just short in a four-set loss to UT Martin on Friday night.

A pair of services aces from [Grace Beekman](#) and a kill from [Annie Ellis](#) gave the Cougars the early lead. Shortly after, a 4-0 Cougar scoring run sparked by back-to-back aces from [Alyse Drifka](#) forced the Skyhawks into calling the match's first timeout. Both squads would trade points through the remainder of the opening set, but a pair of unlucky bounces gave the visitors the first frame victory. The start of the second set began in a similar fashion to the end of the first, but a 5-0 UTM scoring run proved to be the difference in the end, as the Cougars dropped the second set, 25-18. Following the second-set intermission, the Cougars returned to the court with renewed determination, holding the Skyhawks to a hitting percentage of just .000 en route to a 25-19 third set victory. However, the comeback effort would fall short, as UTM would claim the fourth set and the match.

[Julia Treichel](#) led the Red & White with 12 kills and 13 digs, while [Savannah Christian](#) followed close behind with nine kills. [Nicole Kijowski](#) led the Cougars with 18 digs, while [Alyse Drifka](#) once again eclipsed the 20-assist mark with a team-best 23.