



# **Men's Basketball Opens Home Season with Knox Monday, Taylor Pours In Career High 24 Against Chicago State**

by Joe Pott

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OVC) vs.  
Knox Prairie Fire (2-1, 0-0 Midwest)

Monday, November 15, 7:00 p.m.

First Community Arena (4,000), Edwardsville, Illinois

## OPENING NIGHT

The Cougars open the home season Monday. It is the 54th home opener for SIUE and the 14th home opener since the move to NCAA Division I. The Cougars are 36-17 in home openers including a 6-7 mark since the reclassification.

## LAST TIME

SIUE struggled to find its shooting touch Friday, falling at Chicago State 67-56. After shooting near-50 percent in its opener, SIUE connected on just 15-48 (31 percent) shots. SIUE was 5-28 from three-point range, including knocking down just one of 15 three-point attempts in the second half.

## SHARP SHOOTERS

SIUE hit 47 percent of its shots in the opener at Marquette. Last year, the Cougars shot a season-best 58 percent against Tennessee Tech and shot at least 50 percent in a game eight different times.

## LAST SEASON

SIUE finished 9-17 last season and 7-12 in Ohio Valley Conference play. The Cougars returned to the OVC Tournament for the first time since 2019, marking the program's fifth trip to the Championship.

## ROAD WARRIORS

With six road wins, SIUE set a new mark for road wins in a season in the Division I era.

## WINTER BREAK

Hampered by Covid-19 issues, SIUE postponed nine games between Dec. 18 and Jan. 21, making 33 full days between games.

## GAUNTLET

SIUE returned to play Jan. 21 and finished the season with 18 games in the season's final 37 days.

## BLOCK PARTY

SIUE blocked at least 10 shots in a game four times last season. The Cougars had 11 blocks twice, including against Belmont in the OVC Tournament, matching the school record. At 4.7 blocks per game, the Cougars established a new school record. SIUE was second in the OVC and 27th nationally. [Lamar Wright](#) led the league at 1.9 blocks per game, finishing 36th in the NCAA. His 50 total blocks were good for No. 29 nationally.



## Men's Basketball Drops Contest at Chicago St., Taylor Has Career High 24

CHICAGO – SIUE struggled to find its shooting touch Friday, falling to Chicago State 67-56 at the Jones Convocation Center.

"We came into the game down a few guys, but we have enough on our team," SIUE Head Coach [Brian Barone](#) said. "I believe in these guys and our depth."

[Ray'Sean Taylor](#) set a new career-high, scoring a game-high 24 points on 6-of-13 shooting. He was 9-11 at the free-throw line.

"Ray'Sean did a good job in a variety of areas," Barone said.

After shooting near-50 percent in its opener, SIUE connected on just 15-48 (31 percent) shots. SIUE was 5-28 from three-point range, including knocking down just one of 15 three-point attempts in the second half.

"As a team, we forced too many shots," Barone said. "That hurt us in our percentage."

Chicago State was 23-49 overall and 7-20 from three-point range, but successful on five of nine long-range shots in the second half. Chicago State outrebounded SIUE 33-22 and scored 13 second-chance points.

"When you give up baseline out of bounds baskets, you give up 50-50 balls, you miss free throws and you go 5-28 from three it's hard to win a road game against a team that plays with as much passion as Chicago State does," Barone added.

After trailing 27-23 at halftime, SIUE opened the second period strong, scoring the first seven points to lead 30-27 just three minutes into the half. SIUE lead 33-31 when Chicago State made a push. A 10-0 run gave the home Cougars all the momentum they would need. SIUE got as close as three (55-52) with 4:00 left, but another runs, this time 10-1 by Chicago State pushed the game out of reach with a 12-point lead and under a minute to play.

Sean Doss, Jr. scored 10 points and led SIUE with seven rebounds. [Shamar Wright](#) added eight points and [Lamar Wright](#) scored seven.

Bryce Johnson (17) and Brandon Betson (16) led Chicago State, which improved to 2-0 for the year.

SIUE finished its season-opening trip 0-2 and returns to First Community Arena to open the home season Monday night.

"We have an opportunity to play on Monday-this team needs to play on Monday," Barone said. "We need to regroup and look within ourselves and see what our next step is as a team. I am excited about that.

"I don't just say I believe in this team because it is the right thing to say," he continued. "I truly believe in this team. And at the end of this week, we're going to believe in ourselves and each other even more because of the way we respond."