

CM Grad Troeckler's 1,000th Point Helps SIUE Women Seal 62-58 Win

by Eric Hess

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MARTIN, Tenn. – [Allie Troeckler](#) scored her 1,000th career point on a key free throw in the final minute of SIUE's 62-58 victory over UT Martin at the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Saturday's win broke an eight-game slide against UT Martin and is the first road win for the Cougars in Martin, Tennessee, since an overtime victory during the 2016-17 season.

Troeckler scored a team-best 16 points on New Year's Day, helping the Cougars and Head Coach [Samantha Quigley Smith](#) win their first Ohio Valley Conference matchup of the season and the first road OVC contest. Troeckler shot 6 of 9 from the field and 4 of 5 from the free throw line.

"I could get emotional talking about her because of the impact she has had on this program and specifically this year," said Smith. "I know it's not easy to be a fifth-year senior and have a new coaching staff come in. She is one of the hardest workers if not the hardest worker I have coached in my 10 years as a head coach."

[Gabby Nikitinaite](#) and [Mikia Keith](#) joined Troeckler scoring in double digits with 11 points each. Nikitinaite added a team-leading nine rebounds. SIUE improved to 5-8 overall and 1-1 in the OVC.

The two teams were close early with the Cougars taking an 18-16 lead after one period. Once UT Martin tied the score 20-20 with 7:48 to play in the first half, SIUE raced to a 13-0 advantage over the next four minutes of play. That set up a 38-24 lead at halftime.

UT Martin climbed back into the game in the second half behind Paige Pipkin, who had 16 points and 10 rebounds. Shae Littleford scored 14 overall, and Kyannah Grant added 13 for the Skyhawks, which dropped to 4-9 overall and 1-1 in the OVC.

Despite the lead being as much as 19 in the second half, UT Martin pushed back to within four points as the Cougars held them off with a basket by [Mikayla Kinnard](#) with 43 seconds left and free throws from Troeckler and Keith in the final 20 seconds.

"We have to be an aggressive team all the time – on the offensive end and on the defensive end," said Smith.

The Cougars commanded 22 assists in the game and outrebounded UT Martin 33-31. SIUE's defense held UT Martin to 1-of-13 shooting on three-pointers.

"We did a really nice job of keeping someone in front of us," said Smith. "A lot of time three-point shots occur when you have to go and help your teammate. UT Martin didn't get that many attempts so that was us with our one-on-one defense."

Smith believes many more close contests are to come.

"A lot of the league is up in the air right now," said Smith.

SIUE's next contest is Thursday at Austin Peay as the Cougars face off against the Governors in a 5 p.m. game in Clarksville, Tennessee.