

# Cougars Open Baseball Championship with Austin Peay Wednesday

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Ohio Valley Conference Championship

Game 1, Wed. May 25, 9 a.m.

No. 5 SIUE Cougars (25-26, 12-12 OVC) vs.

No. 8 Austin Peay (19-36, 10-14 OVC)

Wild Health Field, Lexington, Kentucky

Game 1 - SIUE RHP Brant Glidewell (4-2, 5.69) vs. APSU RHP Tyler DeLong (4-3, 5.88)

**THE COUGARS:** With 25 wins, SIUE has its most wins under Sean Lyons and the most wins since the 2012 team won 27 games. The most wins at Division I is 28 by the 2011 team, which was the year before SIUE played a conference schedule.

**COUGARS AT THE TOURNAMENT:** SIUE is making its third overall appearance at the Ohio Valley Conference Championship. The Cougars are seeking their first win (0-4). The Cougars previously played as the No. 4 seed in 2014 and the No. 3 seed in 2015.

**HOMER HAPPY:** At 88 home runs, SIUE is second in the OVC and No. 21 in the NCAA. At 1.73 home runs per game, SIUE is second in the league and No. 15 nationally.

**ROUNDTRIPPER RECORD:** The 88 home runs are a school record. The 1998 team held the previous record with 69.

**JOHNSON BREAKS SEASON MARK:** Junior Brett Johnson has hit 23 home runs this year, breaking SIUE's single-season record, which previously stood at 15. He leads the league and sixth in the NCAA.

**CLOSING IN ON CAREER:** Both Johnson and Brady Bunten are closing in on SIUE's career home run mark.

Johnson has 33 career home runs (2nd) while Bunten has hit 28 (5th). SIUE's career record for home runs is 35, held by Brock Weimer (2016-19).

**GOOSE EGGS:** SIUE shut out UT Martin in back-to-back games April 2 and 3, marking the first time the Cougars have recorded shutouts in back-to-back OVC. It is just the second time since SIUE moved to Division I that it has recorded consecutive shutouts.

**PLAYER OF THE WEEK:** Brennan Orf was named OVC Player of the Week for the second time this season on May 16. He hit .563 with three home runs and 10 RBIs for the week. Orf earned the award, and also was named as one of Collegiate Baseball Newspaper's National Players of the Week, April 25.

**PITCHER OF THE WEEK:** Kaid Karnes earned Pitcher of the Week honors April 4 after tossing seven scoreless innings against UT Martin. He struck out a career high 11 hitters which is the most for an SIUE pitcher this season.

**CENTURY MARK:** The April 3 win over UT Martin was Head Coach Sean Lyons' 100th for his career. He has a career record of 113-158 all at SIUE.

**HITTERS:** As a team, SIUE is second in the league in hitting with a .301 batting average, which ranks 30th nationally, and is the highest for SIUE in a Division I season. The Cougars are second in the league in slugging percentage at .514, which is No. 16 in the NCAA.

**HURLERS:** SIUE pitchers are seventh in the OVC in earned run average at 6.86. Kaid Karnes leads the league lead in ERA at 2.65, which ranks 50th in the NCAA. He is eighth in opponent's batting average at .274.

**STRIKE FORCE:** SIUE pitchers are averaging 7.88 strikeouts per nine innings, which is fifth in the OVC. Karnes is ninth in the league at 8.45.

**STREAKING:** Johnson opens the week on a seven-game hitting streak. Johnson (30), Connor Kiffer (27) and Orf (26) currently have the longest on-base streaks on the team.

**PRESEASON PROGNOSTICATIONS:** Before the season, the OVC's head coaches and sports information personnel tabbed SIUE for a sixth-place finish. D1Baseball.com picked SIUE for a third-place finish.

**AGAINST THE GOVS:** The Cougars swept a three-game series from Austin Peay April 22-23 in Edwardsville. SIUE scored 54 runs and hit 14 home runs in the series, including a 17-run first inning in the finale. All-time Austin Peay has a 23-15 edge in the series. The two teams have not previously met in the OVC Tournament.