

Record Four SIUE Baseball Players Earn All-Ohio Valley Conference Honors

by Joe Pott

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BRENTWOOD, Tenn. – A record-four SIUE baseball players have earned All-Ohio Valley Conference honors, announced Tuesday by the OVC.

Outfielder [Brett Johnson](#) (Joliet, Illinois), designated hitter [Brady Buntin](#) (Cedar Rapids, Iowa) and starting pitcher [Kaid Karnes](#) (Quapaw, Oklahoma) were each chosen to the All-OVC first team and first baseman [Brennan Orf](#) (Wildwood, Missouri) was selected to the All-OVC second team.

SIUE has never had more than three honorees and has only had three previous first team selections since the Cougars were eligible for All-OVC awards in 2012.

Johnson led the OVC in home runs during the regular season hitting a team-record 23. He is fourth in the OVC in total RBIs with 61 and leads the league in slugging percentage at .779. He is third on the team and seventh in the league with a .352 batting average. This is Johnson's second honor. He was a second team pick in 2021.

Bunten, who also was a second team selection a season ago, is third on the team with 11 home runs. He has 37 RBIs and is slugging .521 for the season.

Karnes is the OVC's earned run average leader at 2.65 and is ninth in the league at 8.45 strikeouts per nine innings. He is tied for fifth in the OVC with six wins and is 10th with an opponent's batting average at .274. Karnes earned OVC Pitcher of the Week honors April 4. This is his first All-OVC selection.

Orf is second on the team with a .357 overall batting average. In OVC games, Orf is batting .410, which is second best in the league. His .543 on-base percentage in conference games is the best in the league, while his slugging percentage of .705 ranks 10th. Orf was twice named as the OVC Player of the Week (April 25, May 16). This is his first All-OVC award.

Belmont outfielder Guy Lipscomb was selected as the OVC Player of the Year. Bruins' starting pitcher Andy Bean was picked as the Pitcher of the Year. Eastern Illinois shortstop Chris Worcester was named the Freshman of the Year. Belmont Head Coach Dave Jarvis was chosen as Coach of the Year.

The Cougars, who earned the fifth seed in the upcoming OVC Tournament, are making their first appearance in the Championship since 2015. SIUE opens play with Austin Peay with an 8 a.m. CT game Wednesday morning in Lexington, Kentucky.