

SIUE Women's Basketball Falls in Season Opener at Saint Louis

by Owen Heatherington
November 12 2022 2:17 PM



ST. LOUIS - Freshman [Destine Duckworth](#) led SIUE with eight points in her collegiate debut, but the Cougars opened the 2022-23 season with a 95-38 loss on Friday night to Saint Louis at Chaifetz Arena.

[Ajulu Thatha](#), [Olivia Clayton](#), and [Molly Sheehan](#) added six points each for the Cougars, who fall to 0-1.

The Billikens jumped out to a quick advantage over SIUE, leading by 18 at the end of the first quarter.

"They were a tough team," Head Coach [Samantha Quigley Smith](#) said. "They outplayed us and did a great job of getting to the basket early on."

SIUE shot 20 percent (6-30) heading into the locker room at the end of the first half and trailed by 37 to Saint Louis.

"We talked about playing tougher at halftime," added Smith. "I thought we had a good stretch in the third, where we held them in that 60-65 range for a little bit, but then they went on another big run. It's about stringing together a lot of stops in a row. We call kills three stops in a row and they're very important, but we didn't get a ton of those tonight".

The Cougars shot 50 percent in the third quarter (7-14) but concluded the game shooting 25 percent (14-56) from the floor. SIUE was 7-10 from the free throw line.

Senior forward [Ajulu Thatha](#) led the rebounding efforts for the Cougars, finishing with six.

Nine players made their SIUE debuts tonight, including four transfers and five freshmen. [Niya Danfort](#), [Olivia Clayton](#), [Molly Sheehan](#), and [KK Rodriguez](#) suited up for the first time as a Cougar with prior collegiate experience as transfers. [Macy Silvey](#), [Destine Duckworth](#), [Anna Blank](#), [Taylor Goss](#) (redshirt), and [Sophie Sullivan](#) all made their collegiate debuts.

"The young players that are getting experience right now is vital for our future and what we are doing as a program," said Smith. "It's a quick turnaround with Eastern Michigan on Sunday with only a day in between. Hopefully, we will learn a few things from tonight and take that into Sunday."

Saint Louis was led by Kyla McMakin's 31 points and five three-pointers. Brooke Flowers scored 14 and grabbed 13 rebounds.

SIUE returns home to First Community Arena when it hosts Eastern Michigan on Sunday, Nov. 13. Tipoff is slated for 1:00 p.m. and will be streamed on ESPN+.