

# Cougars Earn Split in Nashville

by SIUE Athletics  
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NASHVILLE, Tenn. – SIUE garnered a split on day one of the [Ohio Valley Conference](#) men's tennis season with a 4-1 loss to Belmont and a 5-1 victory over Tennessee State.

SIUE Head Coach Jason Coomer said it's not necessarily normal to play two dual matches in conference season on the same day but was pleased with how the team responded for the second match of the day Sunday against Tennessee State.

The Cougars completed the day with a 6-6 overall record and a 1-1 mark in OVC play.

"Our depth coupled with our conditioning allowed us to be able to find a way to get it done today," Coomer said.

SIUE freshman [Jack Desse](#) earned the clinching point for the Cougars. His 6-2, 6-0 win over Tennessee State's Grant Maddox gave SIUE's its first OVC win of the season.

The Cougars won five singles matches in all against the Tigers. [Nicolas Vincent](#) bested Darryl Hale at No. 1 singles 6-2, 7-5. [Jacob Perkins](#) downed TSU's Joseph Daniels 6-1, 7-5. [Stephen Washuta](#) outlasted Kyle Burton 6-4, 5-7, 10-2 at No. 4 singles. [Mikey Raymonde](#) earned a win by forfeit at No. 6 singles.

Earlier in the day, SIUE got off to a fast start in doubles against Belmont.

"We played extremely well, and it showed in the result of the doubles point," said Coomer.

SIUE won the doubles point as Vincent and Washuta defeated Cedric Dujacquier 8-3 at No. 2 doubles while [Matthew Hutchinson](#) and [Patrick Gaffigan](#) beat Caio Niel and Geoff Bulloch 8-2 at No. 3 doubles.

Belmont, 6-5 overall and 1-0 in the OVC, won four singles matches to clinch the victory.

"We were right there with them in singles," Coomer said. "We were playing very strong at the bottom and playing very tough in a couple other spots. If we see this team again, we are confident that if we play well we will have another opportunity to overcome this loss."

SIUE was in the lead in two matches that were still playing when the Bruins earned the fourth team point. [Tristan Houle](#) was leading Bruno Russo 6-1, 2-3 at No. 5 singles. Gaffigan had won the first set 6-3 over Belmont's Hans Nardelli.

The start of the OVC home season is Friday when the Cougars welcome Murray State for a noon match at the SIUE Tennis Courts. SIUE also has Austin Peay at home for a 2 p.m. Saturday match.

"We have a big weekend at home next week, and we need to be ready to protect our home court," Coomer said. "Our team understands the importance of every opportunity to step on the court. We will treat each match as the last and value every opportunity we have to play ourselves into the postseason."

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