

EHS Grad Macy Silvey Scores Career-High 22 Points To Lead SIUE To Win In OVC Tourney

by Owen Heatherington
March 2 2023 11:00 AM



Team	1	2	3	4	F
Tennessee St.	17	10	19	18	
SIUE	26	15	15	15	

EVANSVILLE, Ind. – SIUE grabbed the first five points of the contest and held its lead for the remainder of the game to down Tennessee State 71-64 on Wednesday afternoon in the first round of the Ohio Valley Conference Tournament. SIUE shot 43 percent (28-65) in the game while outrebounding the Tigers 46-33.

With the win, SIUE moves onto quarterfinals to face #3 Tennessee Tech.

"It's really hard to play a team like Tennessee State so quickly," Head Coach [Samantha Quigley Smith](#) said. "We just finished the conference season with them at their place, and they really handed it to us. I'm just so proud of our team's effort and start of the game."

SIUE caught fire in the first quarter to outscore Tennessee State 26-17. The Cougars shot 61 percent in the opening period with [Macy Silvey](#) scoring 14 of SIUE's point total. She was 4-5 from three in the first.

"That was a great start," added Smith. "That's exactly what you want to do in a postseason tournament game."

SIUE entered halftime with a 14-point lead at 41-27. The Cougars distributed the basketball well, dishing 11 assists in the first half of play. SIUE finished the game with 20 assists, tying a season-high set earlier this season against the Tigers.

"We had contributions from the entire team," said Smith. "Twenty assists are huge. That's sharing the basketball."

Tennessee State cut their deficit to single digits midway through the third period on a 10-2 run. However, SIUE would finish the third on a 7-2 run to take a 10-point lead at 56-46 entering the final quarter.

"I wasn't sure how the third and fourth quarter were going to play out," said Silvey. "But I knew our team has the capability to push through anything. We've been working hard all season for these moments."

Leading by 11 with 7:05 to play, the Tigers used a 7-2 run to cut the Cougars' lead to six. Less than five minutes later, Tennessee Tech cut its deficit to three to put pressure on SIUE. However, the Cougars took the next four points to lead by seven with just 35 seconds remaining.

"We've been in this position before," said Thatha. "Every time they pushed us, I knew we would push back."

The Tigers got to the line with 23 seconds remaining, but went 1-2 at the line, allowing SIUE to grab a defensive rebound. Tennessee State was forced to foul, sending Silvey to the line where she went 1-2 at the line to put the game out of reach. The Tigers attempted last second shots from three, but the Cougars applied pressure to secure the victory.

"Tennessee State brought pressure," said Smith. "They weren't going to make things easy for us. But down the stretch, we did a great job of continuing to attack and run our primary."

SIUE grabbed 21 offensive rebounds in the game, the most by the Cougars this season, and scored 21 points off second chance opportunities. The Cougars' 46 rebounds were the most in a game this season.

SIUE's scoring was led by freshman guard [Macy Silvey](#). She finished the contest with a career-high 22 points. She shot 8-15 in the contest while draining five from deep, the most three pointers by an SIUE player in OVC tournament history. She also added three rebounds while securing four steals.

"Once I saw the first one go in, I was hoping it would be a good shooting day," said Silvey.

"That's awesome confidence in a freshman," added Smith.

[Ajulu Thatha](#) added 16 points while leading SIUE with 11 rebounds. Four of her rebounds came on the offensive end. She finished the contest 7-13 from the field and 1-2 from behind the arc.

[Mikayla Kinnard](#) contributed 13 points off the bench. She was 4-7 from the field, 5-6 at the line, and collected nine boards. Her six assists led the Cougars.

"She was a lift and a life for us," said Smith. "She came in the game and helped give us balance."

[Olivia Clayton](#) grabbed seven rebounds in the contest while scoring nine points. [Sofie Lowis](#) and [KK Rodriguez](#) added rebounds, with five and six respectively.

SIUE continues its postseason journey on Thursday, Mar. 2 against #3 Tennessee Tech. Tipoff is scheduled for 3:30 p.m. and will be streamed on ESPN+.