

Cougars Welcome Western for Weekend Series at Simmons

by Joe Pott

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WIU Leathernecks (1-7) at SIUE Cougars (5-2)

March 4-5

Roy E. Field / Simmons Baseball Complex

Edwardsville, Illinois Probable Pitchers

SIUE RHP [Jake Bockenstedt](#) (1-0, 3.38) vs. WIU RHP Jake Armstrong (1-1, 9.31)

SIUE RHP [Hayden Cooper](#) (0-2, 7.56) vs. WIU LHP Tyler Kapraun (0-1, 7.71)

SIUE TBA vs. WIU TBASCHEDULE CHANGE: The Original schedule called for a Friday series opener. That game was postponed due to weather. The Cougars and Leathernecks will play two games Saturday and a single game Sunday.

LAST YEAR: With 27 wins in 2022, SIUE had its most wins under [Sean Lyons](#) and the second most wins since moving to Division I. The most wins at Division I is 28 by the 2011 team, which was the year before SIUE played a conference schedule. The Cougars finished fifth in the Ohio Valley Conference. SIUE returned to the OVC Tournament for the first time since 2015. For the first time ever, SIUE won at the tournament, finishing 2-2.

WEEKEND WINNERS: The Cougars have won each of their first two weekend series, taking two of three from Incarnate Word and Louisiana-Monroe.

WALK-OFF WINNER: SIUE opened the home season Feb. 21 with a 6-5 win over Illinois State in 10 innings.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK: Senior starter [Jake Bockenstedt](#) earned OVC Pitcher of the Week honors following opening weekend. He threw six shutout innings (seven strikeouts) to lead SIUE to an opening day win at Incarnate Word.

CENTURY MARK: The April 3 win over UT Martin last season was Head Coach [Sean Lyons](#)' 100th for his career. He has a career record of 115-160 all at SIUE.

PRESEASON ALL-OVC: Designated hitter [Brady Buntin](#), outfielder [Brennan Orf](#) and third basemen [Josh Ohl](#) each were named to the All-Ohio Valley Conference preseason team.

LEAGUE LEADERS: SIUE hitters are fifth in the league with a .252 batting average, but lead the league in doubles per game at 2.0. SIUE pitchers are second in the OVC with a 3.92 earned run average. The Cougars also hold the highest fielding percentage in the league at .992, good for No. 6 in the NCAA.

ROUNDTRIPPER RECORD: SIUE's 99 home runs last year set a school record. The 1998 team held the previous record with 69. The Cougars were second in the OVC and No. 21 in the NCAA. at 1.8 home runs per game, the Cougars were No. 15 in the country.

EXPERIENCE MATTERS: In addition to SIUE's All-OVC picks, the Cougars return [Avery Owusu-Asiedu](#), [Ole Arntson](#), [Brett Pierson](#), [Drew Mize](#) and [Braedyn Brewer](#), all of which played in at least 30 games in 2022.

CLOSING IN ON CAREER MARK: Buntin is closing in on SIUE's career home run mark. With another home run against Louisiana-Monroe, Buntin now has 32 home runs (fourth). SIUE's career record for home runs is 35, held by Brock Weimer (2016-19). Buntin also is among the top 10 in career RBI's in SIUE's Division I era with 107.