



# Home Opener for SIUE Softball Set for Wednesday vs. Saint Louis

by Eric Hess

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**SIUE COUGARS (7-11) VS. SAINT LOUIS BILLIKENS (4-12)**

**Wednesday, March 8, 3 p.m.**

**Edwardsville, Ill. / Cougar Field**

**Follow the Game**

Video: None

Audio: [SIUECougarNetwork.com](http://SIUECougarNetwork.com)

Live Stats: [SIUEstats.com](http://SIUEstats.com)

**OVC PITCHER OF THE WEEK:** [Lexi King](#) tossed a six-inning, one-hit shutout Sunday over Drake and was named the Ohio Valley Conference Pitcher of the Week.

**JUST LIKE LAST WEEK:** [Sydney Baalman](#) was the previous OVC Pitcher of the Week when she had a six-inning shutout against DePaul. Baalman leads the Cougars in wins with four and earned run average at 1.94.

**SERIES VS. SLU:** SIUE holds a 36-20 advantage in the series with the Billikens. The Cougars won last season's matchup 3-2 in St. Louis.

**HOT BAT:** The team lead in hitting keeps going back and forth between King and [Paige Rocha](#). It is Rocha who currently leads SIUE with a .404 batting average. That also is second overall in the OVC. King currently is hitting .386 with a team-leading 22 hits.

**DOUBLE TROUBLE:** King leads the OVC in doubles with seven and is ranked 17th nationally.

**TOP OF THE ORDER:** Rocha has scored 16 runs in 18 games. Not only does that lead the Cougars, that leads the OVC.

**DRIVING THEM HOME:** Lauren Yslava, who leads the team with three home runs, also is the current leader in RBIs with 14 and is followed closely by King with 12.

**MORE HITS:** Despite its overall record, the Cougars have out-hit their competition 125-113 after 18 games.

**SHUTOUTS:** SIUE is coming off back-to-back shutouts Sunday against Drake and Memphis. The Cougars have four shutouts for the season.

**AND SAVES:** [Kelsey Ray](#) leads the pitching staff in saves with three. [Rylie Pindel](#) also has had a save this season.

**BURNING THE BASEPATHS:** [Sherri Mason](#) leads the Cougars in stolen bases with five and has not been thrown out. The Cougars have 20 stolen bases in 18 games. Nine different players have recorded a stolen base this season.

**GETTING THE LEAD:** SIUE is 7-3 this season when scoring first and 0-8 when opponents score first.

**START OF AN ERA:** After spending nearly the last decade as an assistant coach in the Big Ten Conference, [Ben Sorden](#) was tapped as the new leader of the SIUE softball program. Sorden comes to SIUE after holding positions at Michigan State and Indiana, helping the pitching staffs to national honors and top-notch results. The Lone Tree, Iowa, native most recently spent five seasons at Michigan State, where the Spartans sported a 2.38 earned run average and a 1.11 WHIP over 350 innings of play.

**THE NEWCOMERS:** The Cougars welcome six new players for the 2023 roster. They include freshman infielder [Macy Mikulich](#) (Lewiston, Illinois), sophomore transfer infielder [Paige Rocha](#) (Platte City, Missouri), freshman pitcher [Rylie Pindel](#) (Las Vegas, Nevada), junior transfer infielder [Kate Crombar](#) (Carbondale, Illinois), senior transfer outfielder [Madisyn Webster](#) (Pontiac, Illinois), and junior transfer outfielder [Hayley Palm](#) (Aviston, Illinois).

