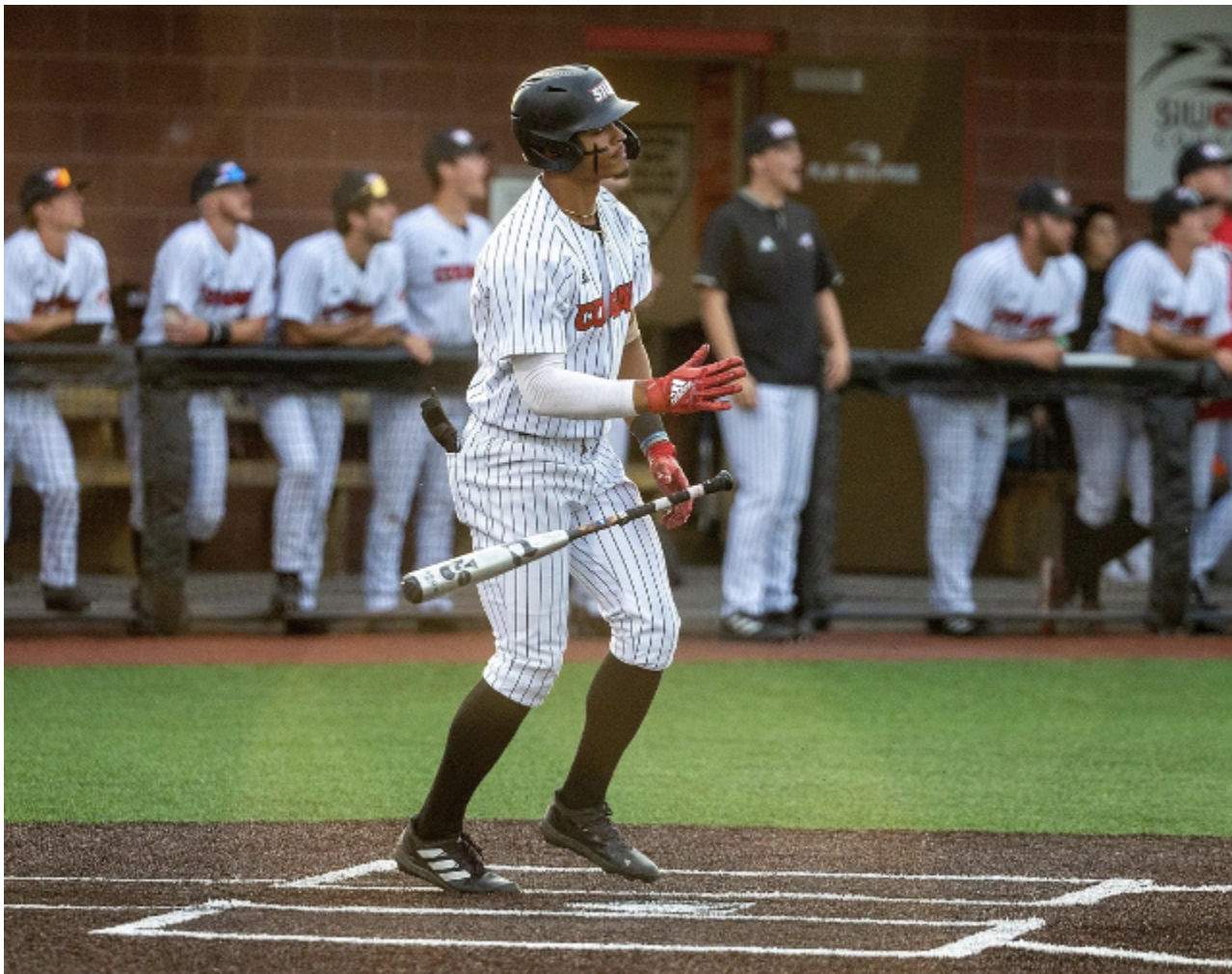


# Big Hits Lift Cougars to Series-Opening Win

by Joe Pott

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EDWARDSVILLE – SIUE baseball scored five runs in the fourth inning and added four more in the sixth inning on its way to a 10-3 win over Southern Indiana open a three-game Ohio Valley Conference series at Simmons Baseball Complex.

The Cougars improved to 23-18 overall and 6-7 in the OVC. USI fell to 14-27 overall and 5-11 in league play.

USI, making its first trip to SIUE since 2008, scored a pair of runs in the first inning on back-to-back home runs from Ricardo Van Grieken and Tucker Ebest off SIUE starter [Tyler DeLong](#).

SIUE pulled a run back in the bottom of the inning after loading the bases with one out. [Brennan Orf](#) came home on a wild pitch to cut the lead to 2-1.

[Braedyn Brewer](#) opened a five-run inning with a double and [Nick Terrell](#) followed with a one-out, two-run home run to give SIUE a 3-2 lead. [Josh Ohl](#) reached on an error and [Drew Mize](#) singled before [Brennan Orf](#) hit the first pitch from USI reliever Adam Weihe out over the right field fence for his 15<sup>th</sup> home run of the year, to give the Cougars a 6-2 advantage.

USI picked up a run in the fifth before SIUE added four more in the sixth. [Josh Ohl](#) bunted his way on to start the inning and [Drew Mize](#) singled up the middle. Orf grounded out to drive home a run before [Avery Owusu-Asiedu](#) doubled in another. [Kyle Ratliff](#) hit a two-run home run out to left for the 10-3 score.

"The offense got going there in the middle innings," SIUE Head Coach [Sean Lyons](#) said. "We got a spark from [Nick Terrell](#), who was a late addition to the game and Josh got us started in the sixth inning with the bunt hit, which then started into a big inning."

DeLong (5-3) worked 5 2/3 innings striking out six, while allowing three runs.

"They took two good swings in the first inning and hit a couple of home runs," Lyons said. "Tyler is a vet and he knows what he is doing. He was able to minimize the damage and get us five-plus innings. We needed that on a Friday night."

[Jacob Kampf](#) threw 2 1/3 scoreless innings and [Ian Benner](#) worked a scoreless ninth to close out the win.

Ratliff finished the game 3-4 and a triple shy of the cycle. He drove in three. Orf was 1-3 with a pair of walks and four RBIs. [Drew Mize](#) and [Nick Terrell](#) each had two hits.

"We got some big swings out of [Brennan Orf](#) and [Kyle Ratliff](#) and that was the difference in the ballgame," Lyons said.

Ren Tachioka finished 4-5 to lead the Screaming Eagles.

The teams will play the middle game of the series Saturday at 1 p.m.

"You start getting some momentum on your side and then you get some positive thoughts going," Lyons said. "We need the guys into the dugout to stay positive and keep the energy going. We'll need that throughout the weekend."