

Strong Second Half Leads SIUE Men's Soccer to Home Opener Win

by Joe Pott

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EDWARDSVILLE - [Alsadiq Hasan](#) scored twice in the second half Sunday to lead SIUE to a 3-1 win over Butler in the Cougars' 2023 home opener at Korte Stadium.

The Cougars have won six consecutive home openers and improved to 2-0 this season. Butler dropped to 0-2.

"To start the season 2-0 and finish the weekend at home is special," SIUE Head Coach [Cale Wassermann](#) said. "That's a really difficult Butler team to play against. The way they move and possess the ball, they can wear you down. Our guys were brilliant tonight and deserved the result."

The Cougars opened the scoring in the 19th minute when [Sam Layton](#) got us head on a corner kick from [Mitchell Murphy](#).

"Our team has been really strong with set pieces lately," Wassermann said. "It's another threat we have added with our service and our big bodies in the box."

The goal marked the second straight game that SIUE has scored first.

"It's huge," Wassermann said of scoring first. "It's something we have struggled with in the past. Our defensive organization has led to that success. It's vital to score first and not have to chase the game."

For Layton, the goal was his first of the year and the second of his career.

"[Sam Layton](#) was phenomenal in midfield in both the attack and defending," Wassermann said. "He was our stalwart in the 80 minutes he played."

Butler's Palmer Ault leveled the game for the Bulldogs in the 34th minute after SIUE had a goal called back for an offside call just a few minutes prior.

Hasan netted his first Cougar goal in the 50th minute after a foul in the box led to a penalty. Hasan chipped a shot into the left corner for the 2-1 lead. Hasan didn't have to wait long for his second. Butler goalkeeper Caleb Norris came to the top of the box, with the ball at his feet, when it was taken away by Murphy. Murphy left it for Hasan, who slid into the empty net for the 3-1 lead

"He's an amazing leader, captain and person," Wassermann said of Hasan. "He deserved every bit of both of those goals and I'm sure they won't be the only two."

Butler finished with an 11-8 advantage in shots. The Cougars turned away all six shots Butler took in the second half.

"We had to make some adjustments in the second half," Wassermann said. "They wore us down at the end of the first half. We were a little more aggressive with our press. We knew they'd try to play through us at times and we were fortunate to get on the end of a turnover or two."

[Sam Gomez](#) made four saves in goal for the Cougars. Norris made two for Butler.

SIUE next faces Saint Louis Saturday night at CITYPARK in St. Louis. The Cougars will face the Billikens with the Bronze Boot on the line.