

# SIUE Men's Soccer Plays for OVC Title, NCAA Berth Saturday

by Joe Pott

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EDWARDSVILLE - No. 1 SIUE (15-0-3) vs. No. 2 Incarnate Word (7-7-5), Saturday, Nov. 11, 2023, Ralph Korte Stadium, 6 p.m. **OPENING ACT:** SIUE is unbeaten through its first 18 games. The last unbeaten team at SIUE was the 1972 National Championship team. SIUE and Saint Francis (Pa.) are the only unbeaten teams in the NCAA. The Cougars' .917 winning percentage is the best in the NCAA. SIUE has won eight consecutive games, which is the longest current winning streak in the country.

**RANK AND FILE:** SIUE checks in at No. 24 in the most recent United Soccer Coaches poll. The Cougars are No. 25 in the TopDrawerSoccer.com poll and No. 27 in the CollegeSoccerNews.com Top 30.

**ALL WE DO IS WIN:** SIUE's 15 wins currently are the second most in the country (Marshall, 16) and the most in a season for a Cougar team since the return to Division I.

**TITLE TOWN:** The regular season Ohio Valley Conference championship marked the first men's program at SIUE to win an OVC title of any kind. The last tournament title for men's soccer came in the Missouri Valley in 2016.

**GOALS, GOALS, GOALS:** The Cougars are No. 6 in the NCAA in total goals with 43. The six goals Sept. 28 at Southern Indiana were the most in a game for the Cougars since a 7-0 win against Saint Joseph's in 2006.

**DE-FENCE:** SIUE also boasts the top defense in the OVC. Its team goals against average of 0.56 ranks second in the NCAA. The Cougars' goal differential is +33, which is tied for third in the NCAA.

**TAKE YOUR SHOT:** SIUE unleashed a season-high 26 total shots Sep. 22 against Webster. It marked the most shots in a game since a 2016 game against Central Arkansas (29). Sept. 28 at Southern Indiana, SIUE put a season-best 17 shots on goal.

**THE SERIES:** The OVC Championship game marks the second ever meeting between SIUE and UIW. The Cougars won the first meeting 3-0, Oct. 12 in Edwardsville.

**PLAYERS OF THE WEEK:** SIUE players earned 17 weekly awards from the OVC during the league's first season. Four players earned multiple awards during the season. The entire list is on page four.

**BETWEEN THE PIPES:** Gomez returns as the No. 1 goalkeeper after splitting time last season. He leads the OVC with a 0.59 goals against average, which ranks fourth in the NCAA. He also leads the league with an .859 save percentage, which ranks fifth nationally.