

Lowis Leads Cougars with Career-High 23 Points, SIUE Falls in Final Seconds

by Owen Hetherington
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CHICAGO – [Molly Sheehan's](#) three-pointer with 13 seconds to go knotted the contest at 74, but Loyola Chicago answered with a three of its own to down the Cougars, 77-74, on Monday afternoon at Gentile Arena.

"We are so proud of our women for fighting back to tie this one on the road," Head Coach [Samantha Quigley Smith](#) said. "It hasn't been an east last week, so to see their resiliency and true want to win on someone else's home floor in front of 4,000 screaming kids was really something special."

SIUE falls to 2-10 overall in its nonconference slate while the Ramblers improve to 6-4.

With just under three minutes remaining in the first, [Sofie Lowis](#) gave the Cougars their first lead of the game on her own 5-0 run following three consecutive free throws and a turnaround jumper just outside the paint. SIUE took its largest lead of the contest at 13 with 7:28 to go in the second period before the Ramblers cut the Cougars' advantage to six points after a 7-0 run with five minutes remaining in the first half. Both sides played back and forth until SIUE entered the locker room up four.

SIUE shot 46 percent (11-24) in the opening half while going 4-8 from three-point territory and a perfect 8-8 at the free throw line. The Cougars held Loyola Chicago to 27 percent (9-33) overall in the first half. Lowis led the Cougars' scoring efforts heading into the break with 13.

The Ramblers regained momentum with 4:25 remaining in the third, capturing their first lead since midway through the opening quarter at 43-41. Loyola Chicago would go up eight with 2:23 remaining in the third and take a four-point advantage heading into the final quarter of play.

The Cougars trailed by as many as nine before Sheehan's 8-0 run brought SIUE back to within one point at 68-67 with 3:16 to go. Loyola Chicago went up five over the next minute of play before freshman [Ava Stoller](#) brought SIUE to within three on a driving layup in the paint with 1:36 remaining. Both sides would go scoreless over the next minute of play.

With 13 seconds remaining, Sheehan tied the contest at 74 on a deep three-pointer before the Ramblers called a timeout. Loyola Chicago's Alyssa Fisher countered with a three-ball of her own with four seconds remaining to take the victory and 8-0 advantage in the all-time series.

Overall, SIUE shot 51 percent (26-51) while converting on eight of its 17 opportunities from long range. At the line, SIUE went 14-17 while forcing 12 turnovers from the Ramblers. Loyola Chicago shot 39 percent (26-67) in the contest while outrebounding the Cougars, 38-30. The Ramblers grabbed 20 boards on the offensive glass and scored 15 points on second chance opportunities.

Offensively, Lowis paced SIUE with a career-high 23 points. She shot 7-13 from the floor, 4-9 from deep, and went a perfect 5-5 at the stripe. The guard also led the Cougars with four assists and two steals while contributing a pair of rebounds. She has scored in double-figures in five of her last six games.

Stoller added a season-best 19 points, shooting 8-13 overall and 3-3 at the charity stripe. The freshman grabbed four boards while dishing out an assist.

Sheehan added 11 points, all of which came in the second half. She went 3-5 overall, 2-3 from three-point range, and 3-3 at the free throw line. The junior also collected three rebounds while handing out three assists.

[Olivia Clayton](#) commanded SIUE on the glass for the second time this season, leading the Cougars with five. [Lezhauria Williams](#) added four rebounds while leading SIUE with two of the Cougars' six blocks.

The Ramblers were led offensively by Fisher's 26 points. Sitori Tanin led all rebounders with 11.

"Getting contributions from multiple women is what we have talked about all year," added Smith. "We shared the ball, defended at a high-caliber, and made plays down the stretch. Overall, this trek is only preparing us for league play, and we cannot wait for that opportunity."

SIUE returns to First Community Arena on Wednesday, Dec. 20 against Harris-Stowe. Tipoff is scheduled for 7:00 p.m.