

Murray State Outlasts SIUE 84-82

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EDWARDSVILLE – With a flurry of action in the final seconds Monday, Murray State edged SIUE women's basketball 84-82 in Ohio Valley Conference play at First Community Arena.

"I'm just really proud of our group," said SIUE Head Coach [Samantha Quigley Smith](#). "And so just really proud of our effort and I know it really stinks and it hurts when you lose by one basket. I know that pain and that feeling, and it's hard to get past it. But for us, it's so much about failure leading to success. Our team just has to understand that and not hang their heads. This was a hard-fought game against a really good Murray State team who is competing for an OVC title just like we are."

SIUE, 7-11 overall and 3-4 in the OVC, was down by as much as 11 points in the fourth period but cut it to a one possession game in the final minute of regulation. [Gabby Nikitinaite](#), who led all scorers with 23 points, hit a three-pointer to cut the lead to two (82-80) with 34 seconds left.

The Cougars caught a break when Alexis Burpo travelled with the ball in the frontcourt with 22 seconds left.

SIUE would tie the game on a wide-open layup by [Allie Troeckler](#) on an assist from Nikitinaite with 14 seconds left.

Murray State, 14-6 overall and 6-3 in the OVC, charged down the lane as Macey Turley drove the left side and laid it in with 5.1 seconds remaining.

SIUE's final shot by Nikitinaite was off the mark as Murray State held off the Cougars.

"That was one of our better team-fought games," said Troeckler. "There haven't been many games where we've fought back that hard, so it was definitely a success in that aspect."

Both teams finished with four players in double figures.

Nikitinaite scored 23 and grabbed 11 rebounds for her first double-double at SIUE. Troeckler finished with 16 points, including 7-of-7 shooting in the first half. [Prima Chellis](#) scored 15 followed by 10 from [Mikia Keith](#).

Murray State's Katelyn Young led the Racers with 20 followed by 19 from Turley, 17 from Burpo and 16 from Hannah McKay.

Both teams shot the ball well from the field with Murray State finishing at 50 percent (33-66). SIUE completed the game 32 of 66 (48.5 percent).

Smith said Monday's game is only preparing the Cougars for more close games down the stretch.

"That's what we're going to see this week against Tennessee State and SEMO," she said. "It's taking lessons and learning things from this game to be ready and more prepared for the next opponent and the next game."

SIUE faces Tennessee State in a Thursday home game at 5:30 p.m. at First Community Arena and then travels to Southeast Missouri Saturday.

