

Missouri Valley Conference Men's Basketball Tournament, Scottrade Center, St. Louis, Mo.

Game 2: #7 Missouri State Bears (61) vs. #10 SIU Salukis (53), 8:35 p.m., Thur., March 7, 2013

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Missouri State's win moves the Bears into Friday's 6:05 p.m. quarterfinal game against second-seeded Wichita State. MSU is 11-21 this season (2-1 vs. SIU), 27-21 in the MVC tourney (5-4 vs. SIU) and trails the all-time series vs. SIU, 34-39. It was the Bears' 9th win in its last 10 games vs. SIU. Coach Paul Lusk is 27-37 in his second year at MSU and 29-60 in his third year overall as a college head coach. Lusk is 4-1 vs. SIU (his alma mater in 1995), and he is 1-1 in MVC tourney.

SIU finishes its season 14-17 and 32-29 in the MVC tourney. Coach Barry Hinson is 14-17 in his first year at SIU and 219-157 in his 12th year overall as a college head coach. Hinson is 11-10 in the MVC tourney and his 11 wins (all at Missouri State, 1999-08) leave him tied with Nolan Richardson (Tulsa) and Jim Molinari (Bradley) for third in tourney wins. The loss snapped a three-game SIU win streak.

First Half: SIU jumped to an early 11-8 lead and the game then went 3:30 minutes with neither team scoring. There was another scoring drought of almost three minutes with the score 13-10. Marcus Marshall scored at the 7-minute mark to put MSU in front 16-15 for the Bears' first lead in over 11 minutes. An 11-0 run pushed the Bears' lead to 23-15 with 5:15 left before SIU ended a four-minute scoring drought with a basket. Anthony Downing's basket with 10 seconds left gave Missouri State its biggest lead of the half with the 32-22 intermission score. The Bears outscored SIU 24-9 over the last 11:41 of the first half. The team leading at halftime has won the two previous MSU-SIU games this season and MSU is 8-4 when ahead at the half. SIU is 4-12 when trailing at the half. MSU leading scorer Anthony Downing (13.7 average) had 10 points in the first half while SIU leading scorer Desmar Jackson (15.2 average) scored 2.

Second Half Notes: The Bears' lead stayed between five and 10 points the first eight minutes of the second half before a Marcus Marshall trey out of the right corner gave the Bears their biggest lead at 45-34 with 11:48 to play. Christian Kirk scored underneath to make it 47-34 with 10:24 left. The Bears had a 50-36 lead but SIU cut it to 50-40 with 6:45 left. The Bears maintained a double digit advantage the rest of the way until an SIU basket with five seconds left cut the final margin to eight.

Attendance: 7,537 - the fourth highest opening session attendance in tourney history.

Game/Tournament Notes: Marcus Marshall, MVC Freshman of the Year, had 18 points, his 19th double-figure scoring outing of the season. He came into the game needing 21 points to tie the Bears' freshman season scoring record of 346 points set by Blake Ahearn in 2003-04. SIU's Jeff Early was averaging 20.6 points per game in his previous five games before getting 8 tonight, all in the first half. With 7.4 rebounds per game, Early is the leading rebounder in the country among players 6'1" or less. The Bears' Christian Kirk had 10 points to reach double figures in points for the seventh time in 11 games. The Bears' final FG percentage of .488 was the Bears' best in their past 10 games since a .547 at Creighton Jan. 30. This was the Bears' widest margin of victory in an MVC tourney game since a 69-46 win over Evansville in an opening round game vs. Evansville in 2008. It was the Bears' best defensive effort in their past eight games. Anthony Beane and Desmar Jackson led SIU with 12 points each.