

2011 State Farm MVC Tournament -- Game Notes

Game 1 ... 6:05 p.m., Thursday, March 3 ... St. Louis, Mo. (Scottrade Center)

#8 Southern Illinois (57) vs. #9 Illinois State (54)

Southern Illinois: The Salukis moved to 13-18 with the win, snapping two-game losing streak and winning in the tourney for the first time since 2007. SIU is 32-26 in MVC tourney, including 2-3 in first round. SIU leads all-time series vs. ISU, 74-65, and Salukis are 5-3 vs. ISU in MVC meet. SIU was 2-1 vs. ISU this season. Coach Chris Lowery is 137-92 in his 7th year at SIU and overall as a college head coach.

With tonight's game, SIU has held its foes below 60 points in 103 of 229 games under Chris Lowery. Troy Long, after playing zero and 6 minutes in the first two ISU-SIU meetings this season, came off the bench with 8 points in 6 minutes tonight in the first half, and then left the game with a left knee injury with 8:30 left in the game. He'd had 8 or more points in just three games this season. SIU season scoring leader and MVC #3 league scorer Carlton Fay came into game tonight below double figures his last two games and was 1/7 from the floor with two points in first half tonight. Kendal Brown-Surles, held scoreless in first half, scored eight of first 10 SIU points in 3:26 minutes to start second half and all 10 of his points in second half. SIU allowed ISU .577 (15/26) second half shooting, the 13th time this season Salukis have allowed a foe to shoot above 50% in the second half. This was only the third of those games Salukis have won. Austin Hill and Tony Lewis each had eight in second half for 16 of SIU 33 points. John Freeman had career best 4 steals.

Illinois State: ISU finished season with two straight losses, lost eight of last nine and wound up 12-19. Coach Tim Jankovich is 83-50 in his 4th year at ISU and 186-121 in his 10th year overall as a college head coach. He is 5-4 in MVC tourney. This is the first time ISU has failed to win a game in MVC tourney since 2007.

ISU's 21 first-half points were within one of the Redbirds' season low. ISU is 3-14 when trailing at halftime. Jackie Carmichael led ISU with six points in first half but was scoreless in second half.

First Half: SIU used a 5-0 run to take a 12-8 lead at the second media time out. ISU pulled even at 17-17 and retook the lead at 19-17 with 5:20 to play on a 5-0 run. SIU broke from a 20-20 tie with 6-1 run for 26-21 halftime lead after first two SIU-ISU meetings had seen a tie and a one-point halftime margin. ISU had four misses and two turnovers on its last six possessions of the half, going last 5:19 of half without a FG. SIU bench outscored ISU bench 16-5 in first half.

Second Half: SIU stretched its lead to nine at 34-25 to open second half and took 10-point lead for the first time at 40-30 and also 42-32 before a 6-0 ISU run got Redbirds back within 42-38 at 8-minute mark. ISU hit 8/14 from the field the first 12 minutes of the half. ISU offset a two and a three from Carlton Fay to pull even at 46-46 with six minutes left before Justin Bocot scored out of the deep right corner to make it 49-46. ISU closed to 49-48 at five-minute mark and stayed within a point on a reverse layup by Tony Lewis with 41.7 seconds left. Mamadou Seck hit two free throws with 26.9 seconds left to make it 55-52. Austin Hill took an inbounds pass and buried a two from the top of the circle with 12.5 seconds left. John Freeman got behind the defense for a breakaway layup with 6.7 seconds left for a 57-54 lead. Alex Rubin missed a long trey try from left wing with 3.0 seconds left and SIU got the rebound to win.

Records and Tournament Notes: Illinois State remains one of only two teams (Missouri State is the other) to have played in the tourney all 21 years it has been in St. Louis. There is no tourney record for fewest team turnovers in a game but SIU's four tonight is the Salukis' season low. Previous SIU turnover low was six vs. Chicago State 12/4/10. This is the first time the first game in the tourney has been decided by a three-point margin and sixth time tourney opener has been decided by three or fewer points.