



## NKU women refuse to let USI repeat '01 upset



NKU's Jessie Slack (left) drives past Southern Indiana's Lauren Meneghetti (24) during the second half of Thursday night's 62-48 victory in the PAC Arena. On the right, Cassie Brannen challenges the Southern Indiana defense. Slack and Brannen each scored 16 points in the win.

## Top-ranked Norse improve to 12-0 by rolling past Eagles, 62-48

EVANSVILLE, Ind. - The Northern Kentucky University women's basketball team made sure that history from eight years ago did not repeat itself Thursday night in the University of Southern Indiana's PAC Arena.

Defending NCAA Division II national champion NKU arrived in town sporting an unbeaten record (11-0) and the nation's longest winning streak (17) during the past two years. The Norse were also ranked No. 1 in the national poll.



Karen Brackman

Now, rewind back to Jan. 6, 2001, when defending NCAA Division II national champion NKU arrived in the same town sporting an unbeaten record (10-0) and the nation's longest winning streak (34) during the previous two years. Then, as now, the Norse were also ranked No. 1 in the national poll.

In that game eight years ago, Southern Indiana pulled off the upset, knocking off NKU, 72-62.

None of that mattered Thursday. NKU shot 57.8 percent from the field and coasted to a 62-48 win against Southern Indiana. The Norse improved to 12-0 overall, 4-0 in the Great Lakes Valley Conference. NKU also

presented head coach Nancy Winstel with her 599th career victory.

Winstel owns 560 wins on the NKU sideline, and she collected another 39 victories as the head coach at Midway (Ky.) College.

Cassie Brannen and Jessie Slack each scored 16 points to lead NKU.

Karen Brackman added 13 points and six assists for the Norse. Brackman also collected four steals and was 6-for-6 from the field.



Brandi Rayburn (left) avoids the defense of Southern Indiana's Abby Williams.

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NKU held Southern Indiana (8-6, 1-4 GLVC) to 29.4 percent shooting from the field. NKU closed the first half with a 13-0 run to take a 30-17 lead at the break. Brackman scored five points during the spurt, and Brannen added four.



NKU's Nancy Winstel talks with Casse Mogan on Thursday night.

NKU led by as many as 19 points in the second half and finished with a 24-10 advantage in points in the paint. The Norse made 66.7 percent of their shots in the second half and knocked off the Screaming Eagles for the fourth straight time. NKU has also defeated Southern Indiana the last three games played in the PAC Arena and now holds a 35-16 advantage in the all-time series.

Brandi Rayburn scored six points and grabbed five rebounds for NKU, while teammate Rachel Lantry added six points and two assists.

Amie Newhart led Southern Indiana with 12 points. The Screaming Eagles kept the game from being a blowout by chasing down 16 offensive rebounds and finishing with a 13-2 edge in second-chance points.

NKU's 11-0 start is the best since the 1987-88 season, when the Norse began the campaign 18-0.

NKU plays host to Missouri-St. Louis at 1 p.m. in The Bank of Kentucky Center. The Norse will have an opportunity to give Winstel her 600th career victory in front of the home fans before heading west the following weekend for games at Rockhurst and Drury.



NKU's Karen Brackman (20) finishes off a baseline drive for a basket in the second half Thursday night against Southern Indiana.



NKU's Nancy Winstel (left) shouts instructions during the Norse's 62-48 win at Southern Indiana on Thursday night. It marked the 599th career coaching victory for Winstel. On the right, Norse defenders Cassie Brannen and Karen Brackman contest Ellen Young's jumper.