



Marlins' Whitaker ends rookie season with two wins in SWISA meet

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GRANITE CITY – WaterWorks' Ava Whitaker had a big day for the Marlins in Sunday's Southwestern Illinois Swimming Association Championship meet at Paddlers Swim Club in Granite City Sunday afternoon.

Whitaker was on the winning 4x50 medley relay team with Jenna Garella, Camryn Mills and Grace Sponeman and took wins in the 50 freestyle and 50 breaststroke, enabling her to be the day's leading scorer in her age group with 45 points, a point ahead of the Pirates' Alivia Upshaw.

“I was very surprised I won my (individual events),” Whitaker said. “I got second in my 50 butterfly; I did better than I expected.”

What made the achievements even more remarkable is that Whitaker's first year of swimming. “This is my first year swimming,” Whitaker said. “I was really excited. I get to hang out with my friends (thanks to swimming).”