

# **Porter LeVasseur Takes Reins Of Montclair Swim Club, Has Talented Group Of Swimmers**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE – There's some major changes made to the Water Works Swim Club in Edwardsville as the Marlins opened up their Southwestern Illinois Swimming Association season Thursday night.

The club has returned to its original name of Montclair Swim Club, but has kept the Marlins nickname, and will have standout Edwardsville High School swimmer Porter LeVasseur as the team's new head coach.

LeVasseur expressed optimism for the Marlins as the club swam against Summers Port Swim Club of Godfrey in the SWISA season opener, won by Montclair 463-232. LeVasseur thought the Marlins were swimming very well early on.

"I think it's going really well, and I'm really excited," LeVasseur said in an interview done during the meet. "Came in with a little bit of nerves, being my first head coaching meet, and I came in a little nervous, but I realized this is another swim meet. I've been coaching before, it's all normal," LeVasseur said with a smile and laugh. "It's not different, and I should not have been nervous, but coming in, we're all swimming really well. We're really excited; we have some people trying some new events, and they're doing really well in it. We have some people doing well in events they've already done, so it's been really exciting so far."

LeVasseur takes over for Spencer Sholl, who lives in Carbondale, and would have had troubles getting over to the club for practices and meets. The duo had coached together for the Edwardsville YMCA Breakers program, and are very close friends.

"I love coaching, like, if you'd think it'd be OK, I'm going to talk to (the club director), and Spencer told me 'Man, I think that'd be great. I would love to have you there, and I think you would do great with the team.' So I got offered the position for head coach, and I ended up getting it."

LeVasseur is looking towards the younger age groups and some of the older girls as the Marlins' strengths, plus an influx of talent that will help Montclair tremendously.

"Our strengths this year are definitely some of our younger age groups, some of our older girls," LeVasseur said. "We just have just so many talented swimmers coming in. Tonight, I know we've already broke one of the pool records in our 11-12 girls relays. And we have a super-talented group of girls in some age groups, and we have a talented group of guys in some age groups. We have just some really fast swimmers, and it's got me really excited this year."

Individually, the Marlins have a lot of talent returned to the team in many of the age groups.

“The 13 to 14 boys, Cohen Osborn and Evan Grinter,” LeVasseur said, “and then for the younger kids, such as Emily Moody, Karissa Osborn, and Vivian Lu, those are some really great swimmers, and over here, like Ava (Whittaker), Maddie (Milburn), Jenna (Garella) and Grace (Sponeman), who have been really swimming fast as of late.”

Osborn and Grinter got off to a great start for their season, and they were triple winners of the evening. Osborn won the 13-14 200-yard butterfly, 100-yard individual medley and 50-yard butterfly, while Grinter took the 13-14 50- and 100-yard freestyles and the 100-yard backstroke.

LeVasseur himself won two events in the 15-18 division, taking the 100-yard freestyle and 50-yard butterfly, while Matthew Lueking was also a double winner in the 9-10 age group with his wins in the 50-yard freestyle and 50-yard butterfly. Boys individual winners were Grant Lu, Jack Osborn, McLane Oertle, Boden Rives, Daniel Sanchez, Caiden Calvin and Luke Jones.

On the girls side, Whittaker was a triple winner with firsts in the 13-14 200-yard freestyle, 100-yard freestyle and 50-yard butterfly, while Lu won the 9-10 100-yard freestyle, 100-yard individual medley and the 50-yard butterfly. Milburn followed suit by taking the 13-14 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard individual medley and 100-yard breaststroke. Allison Naylor became the fourth triple winner on the evening with her wins in the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard individual medley and the 50-yard butterfly. Moody was also a triple winner, taking the 11-12 100-yard freestyle, 100-yard individual medley and 50-yard butterfly.

Sophia Randone was a Marlins’ double winner in the 8-and-under category with wins in both the 25- and 50-yard freestyles. Girls individual winners were Josie Bushell, Sophie Osborn, Karissa Osborn, Caroline Moody, Elllianna Moody, Karis Chen, Isabella Grinter and Grace Oertle.

The relay teams were dominant on both sides, as the Marlins took the 200-yard medley relays in the 9-10, 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18 categories, while the boys’ relay teams won in the 8-and-under 9-10, 13-14 and 15-18 200-yard freestyle relays and the 8-and-under 100-yard medley relay.

In the girls relay races, the 9-10, 13-14 and 15-18 teams won their 200-yard freestyle races.

LeVasseur has some very lofty goals for his team to achieve this coming season.

“Our goals for this year is to definitely go undefeated in the dual meet season this year,” LeVasseur said. “That was one of our top priorities for this year, below-having fun and



learning how to swim completely. But that's one of our main competition goals, and then, going into SWISA, having a disappointing run last year, because we had so many people on vacation. First thing, we came in and said 'this is the date SWISA's going to be; try and schedule your vacations around it.' We're trying to get as many people as we can get at SWISA, and I think we're going to do a lot better this year, and our goal is to get top two, and just move up from that fourth place finish last year, because I know everybody's really disappointed with that last year, and so, we're trying to move up in the rankings this year.

And LeVasseur is very much looking forward to the Marlins' season ahead.

"Yeah, I'm super excited," LeVasseur said. "Just really excited for this first meet; I'm glad it's going so well."





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)