

Montclair, Paddlers Swim Clubs Both Have Good Performances As Marlins Defeat Pirates In Dual Meet 439-253

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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GRANITE CITY – Both Montclaire Swim Club of Edwardsville and Paddlers Swim Club of Granite City had great performances in their Southwestern Illinois Swimming Association dual meet on Thursday night at Paddlers in Granite City. The Marlins were able to overcome numerous absences in their lineup to post a 439-235 win over the Pirates in the next-to-last dual meet of the season.

The Montclaire boys won their meet over Paddlers 226-118, while in the girls meet, the Marlins won 213-135.

Marlins coach Porter LeVasseur felt that his team was swimming particularly well, with good performances by a number of his swimmers.

“My impression is that the meet’s going really well,” LeVasseur said. “We have a lot of absentees today, just some parents’ birthdays, and vacations and everything, so we were a little worried coming into the meet, and so far, the meet’s going really well, and we’re happy with the results we’ve been getting.”

LeVasseur named a number of his swimmers as standouts in the meet, including one who was swimming with a cast on his broken left arm.

“Definitely standing out are Ava Whittaker, Izzy Grinter, Gabe (Csaszar), Logan Oertle, and Josie Bushell. And Liam (Csaszar) right here, he’s been swimming with a broken arm; he’s been killing it out here, getting first and second in a couple of his races. And all those guys have been doing really well, including some other people.”

Paddlers’ head coach Erin Furmanek also felt her swimmers were performing well, also, with good times, including a new record in one of the relay races.

“I think we’re doing really good,” Furmanek said. “We’ve had a lot of really good swims, and we’ve got a couple of records broke tonight, so it’s been a good meet; a lot of kids are real excited.”

The strength of the Pirates’ team, according to Furmanek, lies in its team leadership.

“I think we just have a lot of good leaders on the team,” Furmanek said, “and good swimmers. They get real excited. The little kids are really strong, they want to do, swimming fast every meet to break their time from the meet before, so they’ve really, really pushed themselves.”

And the Pirates’ older swimmers performed well, also.

“Yeah, the older kids are doing really good,” Furmanek said. “They’re pretty steady every year, so you can always trust them to get in there and swim hard, and be good leaders on the team.”

Furmanek named a number of her swimmers as standouts at the halfway point of the meet.

“You know, Macie Sparks always has a good meet every meet,” Furmanek said, “our 13-14 boys are doing really well; they’ve broken a record, I think, from 1984, so they broke a relay record there. And they always pull out a lot of points, and have really good swims, too. The Curry sisters, Laine and Reilly, they always kill it in the water, they’re always pushing themselves, and they get out and act like nothing happened, but they broke a record or got first. It’s business for them, so they always do great.”

The Marlins jumped out to the front in both divisions with win in the early freestyle races, with Whittaker, LeVasseur, Bushell, Jeremiah Watters, Karis Chen, Evan Grinter, Oertle, and Autumn Grinter bringing in wins for Montclair, while Alex Weaver, Jackson Suhre, Madelyn Pamatot and Alivia Upshaw winning for the Pirates. The two teams split the seven-and-eight-year-old 100-meter medley relays, with the Marlins taking the boys race, while Paddlers won the girls race, but in the 200-meter medley relays, Montclair won the boys nine-10, 11-12, and the 15-18 races, while Paddlers won the 13-14 relay. In the girls’ races, Montclair won in the 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18 relays, while the Pirates took first in the nine-10 race.

In the freestyle sprints, in the 25-meter races, Turner Stone, Lydia Fernandez and Abigail Kohl won for Paddlers, while Michael Becker was the lone winner for Montclair, while in the 50-meter races, Matt Lueking, Kyla Calvin, Chase Milburn, Alyssa Grant, Evan Grinter, Maddie Milburn, McLain Oertle, Autumn Grinter, and Boden Rives all won for Montclair, while Laine Curry won for Paddlers.

In the individual medley races, the winners for Montclair were Lueking, Chase Milburn, Chen, Maddie Milburn, and Allison Naylor, while Reilly Curry, Wyatt Loftus and Noah Cain took wins for Paddlers. In the 25-meter breaststroke races, Rives took the boys seven-and-eight-year-old race for the Marlins, while the girls’ winner was the Pirates’ Alexandria Suhre. In the 50-meter races, Alan Chen, Chase Milburn and Karis Chen were the winners for Montclair, while Paddlers got a win from Reilly Curry. In the 100-meter breaststroke races, McLain Oertle and Bushell won for the Marlins, while the Pirates’ winners were Maddox Kennedy and Peyton Hatfield.

In the backstroke races, the winners for the Marlins were Luke Jones, Watters, Alyssa Grant, Evan Grinter, Jenna Garella, LeVasseur, and Naylor, while the Pirates got wins

from Carter Watson, Colton Kelly, Laine Curry and Kohl. In the butterfly races, the winners for Montclair were Rives, Lueking, Calvin, Watters, Maria Beltramea, Whittaker, LeVasseur and Bushell, while the Paddlers winners were Laine Curry, Jackson Suhre, Lucy Roberts and Kennedy.

In the final freestyle relays, the Marlins and Pirates split the seven-and-eight-year-old 100-meter races, with Montclair winning the boys race, and Paddlers the girl's race. In the 200-meter relays, the Marlins took wins in the boys' nine-and-10, 11-12 and 15-18 divisions, along with the girls' 11-12, 13-14 and 15-18 relays, while the Pirates won the girls nine-and-10-year-old race.

The Marlins will conclude their regular season on Tuesday with a dual at home against Sunset Hills, and LeVasseur is looking ahead to the meet.

“We’re just hoping to refine some things,” LeVasseur said. “We’ve got a couple of DQ’s here and there, just little things to fix, and go finishing out this meet, we’re going to work on them. We talk to everybody, and going into Sunset Hills, we’re going to be see is this person trying to be really feel out, so we’ve been feeling out SWISA the entire year, but Sunset Hills, it’s going to be really big, trying to feel out what we want everybody to do in SWISA.”

The Pirates have one more meet remaining as well before the SWISA meet on July 21, which Paddlers will host at Edwardsville High School’s Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center. Furmanek is looking forward to the SWISA meet, where the Pirates are defending champions.

“Yeah, we really are,” Furmanek said. “I think a lot of kids are really excited about it. We’re really looking forward to it. We’ve had a lot of new swimmers that haven’t been to a championship meet yet, so they’re really excited and pushing themselves to get their best times, to get those seed times for the meet. We’re just really excited as coaches to get back at it. Everybody kind of picks it up for the championship meet, and see a lot of good swims that people don’t ordinarily swim at that time. So we’re looking forward to it.”





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