

# **Montclair Girls Lead The Way As Marlins Win Historic SWISA League Meet Indoors At Chuck Fruit Center**

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## **SEE VIDEO:**

EDWARDSVILLE – The girls team of Montclaire Swim Club led the way by scoring 1,197 points as the Marlins won a historic Southwestern Illinois Swimming Association league meet hosted by Paddlers Swim Club of Granite City and held at the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center at Edwardsville High School.

The Marlins outpaced Summers Port of Godfrey for the team championship, with Montclaire scoring 2,098 points to the Sharks' 1,952. Paddlers, the defending champions, would up third with 1,656, Gas Light Swim Club of Collinsville, formerly known as Splash City, was fourth with 1,493 points, and Sunset Hills Country Club of Edwardsville was fifth with 625 points.

Montclaire won the girls division with their 1,197 points, with the Pirates coming in second with 818 points, Summers Port was third with 786, the Gators came in fourth with 710 points, and the Stingrays were fifth at 431 points.

The Sharks won the boys side of the meet, scoring 1,166 points, with Montclaire coming in second with 901, Paddlers finished third with 838 points, Gas Light was fourth with 783 points, and Sunset Hills was fifth with 194 points.

It was a historic meet, in that the SWISA championships were held in an indoor facility for the first time ever, and it made a big difference, as many swimmers' personal best times were set during the meet, and in a few cases, new meet records were set as well.

In interviews just past the halfway point of the meet, area coaches felt that the meet was going well for each of their teams, and the atmosphere inside the pool was very special indeed.

"I think the meet's going great," said Montclair head coach Porter LeVasseur. "We've had a lot of great swims, we've minimized our (disqualifications); I think so far, we've had one DQ, and that's been amazing. We've done a great job, all our coaching staff, really make sure everyone's been able to swim well and swim correctly, and so far, we've had a bunch of best times, a lot of move-ups, and I think the meet's gone extremely well."

LeVasseur thought having the meet indoors would make a difference, especially with the hot weather that's hit the St. Louis area in recent days, and his expectations were definitely met.

"Oh, yes, a thousand percent," LeVasseur said. "It's hot out there on the pool deck, but I walked outside earlier to grab something from my car, and it's so hot outside. It would be terrible to swim out there, especially right now. You know, with the shade or anything, just the humidity and everything would just drain everybody out of energy, so this is helping everybody swim a lot faster, and it's making it more competitive a meet."

There were plenty of surprises during the meet as well, and the indoor atmosphere made a difference, as far as the enthusiasm both in the pool and in the stands as well.

"Yeah, the enthusiasm has been bumped up a bunch from this indoor atmosphere," LeVasseur said, "because the sound gets echoed around, instead of just going everywhere at the outdoor pools, and it just makes everything a little louder. And when someone else hears a cheer, if someone else wants to cheer, it just gets louder and louder. It's a great atmosphere to have."

Long-time Summers Port head coach Nancy Miller felt that her team was swimming very well also, and was very happy with her team's efforts.

"I think we're doing very well, and I'm pleased with the quality of effort," Miller said, "and how people are performing at their very best times, have their jumping in places, too."

Miller wasn't sure that the atmosphere indoors was helping the swimmers, but was happy with the enthusiasm displayed by the swimmers and fans.

"I'm not sure it is. It's very hot in here," Miller said with a laugh. "Well, yeah, you can hear the sound of the cheering, and that's a good thing. And at least the sun's not beating down on us, but it is quite warm."

Miller felt that her older swimmers were helping lead the way for the Sharks in the meet, and gave credit to them.

"Oh, gosh, so many kids," Miller said. "Our older boys and our older girls; Anna Moehn was outstanding, Caden Akal, Noah Clancy, Erick Humphrey, I mean there are way too many to name, but those are some of the highlights."

Sunset Hills head coach Drew May felt his Stingrays swam well also, despite limited numbers on his team.

"It's been an exciting meet," May said. "We didn't come here expecting to win with our numbers, but we have had lifetime bests, and that's all we can ask for from the swimmers. They're having a good time, we're having a good time, and I think everyone's pretty happy with how we've done."

May felt Greta Deist was his most outstanding swimmer of the meet, citing her accomplishments in her age group.

"Swimming-wise, Greta Deist has been doing really well," May said, "she's had a few lifetime bests. She's at the bottom of her age group, but she's still placing well too. It's tough as little young nine-year-olds going up against some of the larger 10-year-olds, but she's small, even for a nine-year-old, so I'm really impressed with how she's doing."

May did feel that the indoor atmosphere helped make a difference with the times.

"Yes, I do," May said. "It's a pretty nice facility, and it definitely shows. I think it's been a factor to some of the swimmers going their lifetime bests, and those times they were competing against have been in this pool, as well, because we're not just looking at their summer times, we're looking at all of their times from the year as well."

And May was also pleased with the atmosphere and enthusiasm displayed during the meet.

“I am. It’s very exciting to hear all the cheering,” May said, “and to barely be able to talk to the people next to you because of everyone’s racing. It’s great.”

Montclair jumped out early in the meet to win the opening freestyle races, with wins from Cohen Osborn, Maddie Milburn, Josie Bushell, Emily Moody, Evan Grinter, LeVasseur and Autumn Grinter, while Summers Port got wins from Akal, Humphrey and Nathan Kotzamanis. Paddlers received wins from Reilly Curry and Alivia Upshaw in the opening freestyle races.

In the medley relays, Gas Light got their first two wins of the meet in both the boys and girls seven-and-eight-year-old 100-yard relays, while the Sharks took wins in the boys nine-and-10-year-old, 11-and-12-year-old and 15-18-year-old boys 200-yard relays. The Pirates took first place in the girls nine-and-10-year old 200-yard race, while the Marlins won the boys 13-and-14-year-old 200-yard relay, and the girls 11-and-12-year-old, 13-and-14-year-old and 15-18-year-old relays.

In the freestyle sprints, Grant Schultz, Vivian Johnson, Hadley Gimple and Kylee Strong-Chasteen took wins for Gas Light, while the Marlins had wins from Matthew Lueking, Evan Grinter, Jenna Garella, LeVasseur. Autumn Grinter and Boden Rives, while Laine Curry won for Paddlers and Nolan Buss took a win for Summers Port. In the individual medley races, Chase Milburn, Emily Moody, Osborn and Maddie Milburn won for the Marlins, while the Sharks got wins from Moehn and Clancy, and Reilly Curry won for the Pirates.

Moving to the breaststroke races, the winners for the Marlins were Rives, Elliana Moody, Karis Chen, Maddie Milburn, and Bushell, while the Sharks got wins from Humphrey, Jack Rea and Clancy, with the Pirates gaining wins from Laine Curry and Maddox Kennedy. In the backstroke races, the winners for Montclair were Caiden Calvin, Liam Oertle, Karissa Osborn, Grace Oertle, Evan Grinter, and Garella, while the Summers Port winners were Kotzamanis, Clancy and Moehn. Claire Berger was the sole winner for the Gators.

Paddlers started out strong in the butterfly races, getting early wins from Laine Curry, Jackson Suhre and Reilly Curry, but the Sharks came back with a win from Kotzamanis. The Marlins won the remainder of the races, with Emily Moody, Cohen Osborn, Grace Sponeman, LeVasseur and Bushell coming out on top. Eli Linenfelter was also a winner for Gas Light.

In the final freestyle relays races, the Gators and Pirates traded wins in the seven-and-eight-year-old and nine-and-10-year-old relays, with Gas Light taking the boys 100-yard and 200-yard races, and Paddlers winning the girls races in those age groups. The

Pirates won the boys 13-and-14-year-old relay, while the Sharks won the boys 11-and-12-year old and 15-18-year-old races, while the Marlins won the girls 11-and-12-year-old, 13-and-14-year-old, and 15-18-year-old relays to finish the meet.











[Chris Rhodes also contributed to this story.](#)