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# **Sophomore Volleyball Player Sidnee Schwarz Is Ronald Harris Farmer's Insurance Female Athlete Of The Month For Metro-East Lutheran High School**

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Sophomore girls volleyball player Sidnee Schwarz has emerged as one of the key players for Metro-East Lutheran's team, and has made major contributions to the Knights so far this season in a sport she's loved playing since grade school.

For her efforts both on and off the court, Schwarz has been named the Farmers Insurance Ronald Harris Female Athlete of the Month for Metro East Lutheran High School.

Schwarz, who plays for head coach Jenna Ward, took up volleyball at a young age, and enjoys the fast pace of the sport and its rally scoring system, where there's a point up for grabs at every service.

"Going back to my days playing in the Edwardsville YMCA league, I have been playing volleyball for seven years," Schwarz said. "My favorite thing about volleyball is the fast-paced nature of the sport, and the intensity that comes from a point being awarded on every play."

Schwarz thanked her family, teammates, and coaches for all of their encouragement and support both on and off of the court.

"I would like to thank my parents for the time and money they have put into my volleyball career," Schwarz said, "and for the countless late nights, early mornings, and long days at tournaments. I also want to thank my extended family and my friends for always being there for me and cheering for me and my teammates. Also, thank you to coach Ward, who has been a major influence on my volleyball career. As a player herself, coach Ward played for the Bradley Braves (in Peoria) for four years. I would like to play college volleyball, so I think I have a great opportunity to learn from her and grow as a player and person."

Being a volleyball player for the Knights has helped her develop greatly, especially on the spiritual side.

"I think being on a club or a team is very important in learning how to put the team before yourself," Schwarz said, "and how to be accountable to others, coaches, teammates, and school. As a player, I not only represent my coaches and teammates but also Metro-East Lutheran and the Christian values we learn and talk about daily. I see volleyball as an outlet to proclaim my faith in my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

Schwarz is hoping to continue on with her volleyball career after graduation and hopes to play for a major NCAA Division-I program in the future.

"Yes, I would love to have the opportunity to continue playing volleyball in college," Schwarz said, "Every young girl that follows college volleyball would love to play at Texas, or Kentucky, or Nebraska or Penn State. As an athlete and a competitor, you always see yourself playing on the best teams and in the biggest moments. I just want an opportunity to use my God-given ability to reach the highest level in college."

Off the court, Schwarz is your average teenager, one who enjoys music, watching Netflix, and spending time with her friends. She enjoys watching volleyball and going to other activities at the school with classmates and friends. She's also sophomore class president and serves on the MELHS Student Council, and has achieved honor roll status in both her previous semesters.

Schwarz is also a striker on the girls' soccer team, and as far as college plans, she hopes to major in gastroenterology for a very specific reason.

"I was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis in 2018," Schwarz said, "and ever since, I have been interested in going to school to become a gastroenterologist to help other people with similar IBD diseases."

Schwarz's biggest fan maybe her younger brother Alex, who's been adopted by the Knights as a team mascot.

"I have two little brothers that love coming to my matches and cheering on me and my teammates. My oldest brother, Alex, was diagnosed with Down's Syndrome at birth. He always assumes the role of team mascot."

And there's also a family connection with Schwarz on the Knights' volleyball team as well.

"My cousin Emily (Class of 2018) holds the single-season record for digs at MELHS," Schwarz said, "and I have a goal of breaking her record."

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