



St. Mary's Eighth-Grade Girls Shine Again, Capture Conference Tournament Title

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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ALTON - St. Mary's in Alton has a great girls volleyball tradition and the eighth-grade Chargers squad recently won the first-place trophy for the Southern Athletic Conference.

The Southern League has had the tournament since 2006. Each year a winner is determined for the conference championship and a winner for the conference tournament.

This is the second consecutive conference tournament victory for St. Mary's. The Chargers won a first-ever program victory in 2019. There was no tournament in 2020, and 2021, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The Chargers close out with an 8-1 record in the conference, and an overall record of 21-2. St. Mary's Edwardsville won the conference championship banner with a 9-0 record. St. Mary's Alton wins the conference tournament banner and the trophy.

The eighth-grade unit is coached by Chrissy Certa (head coach), Chris Marshall and Phil Hamilton (assistants).

Assistant Coach Phil Hamilton said the highlight of the season, perhaps, was the Chargers win in the annual Ss. Peter and Paul – Collinsville Volleyball Tournament.

"The Chargers faced some very tough competition to post their first-ever win in that tournament," the assistant coach said. "The STPP tournament draws schools from Madison, St. Clair, and Clinton counties."

St. Mary's eighth-grade players are Liv Certa – setter; Mack Cochran – libero; Sharon Dugas – middle hitter; Laci Fischer – setter; Sofia Lamere – outside hitter; Mel Marshall – defensive specialist; Olivia Prediger – outside hitter; Annie Rea – defensive specialist; and, Josie Strack – middle hitter.

The St. Mary's coaches have big plans for this year's Summer Volleyball League 2022 which is open to players from local schools entering fourth through 12th grades.