

Marlins Capture SWISA Girls Meet, Marlins Close Second In Boys Competition, Sharks Post Top Performances

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - The Montclair Swim Club of Edwardsville won the Southwestern Illinois Swimming Association championship in the league's 60th annual meet, scoring a total of 2,056 points to win the overall crown Sunday morning and afternoon at the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center at Edwardsville High School.

The Marlins outdistanced the Collinsville Swim Club, who had a total of 1,787 points, with Paddlers Swim Club of Granite City coming in third with 1,525, Summers Port Swim Club of Godfrey came in fourth with 1,396 points and Sunset Hills Country Club of Edwardsville was fifth with 620 points.

In the boys meet, Collinsville pulled out a very close decision over Montclair, with the Gators scoring 864 points to the Marlins' 855 points, with the Pirates right behind with 797.5 points, the Sharks came in fourth with 693.5 points and the Stingrays were fifth with 283 points. In the girls competition, Montclair won with 1,201 points, with Collinsville second at 923 points, Paddlers finished third with 727.5 points, Summers Port was fourth with 702.5 points and Sunset Hills came in fifth with 337 points.

In interviews held during the meets, the team coaches felt that their clubs were swimming very well and all had good performances during the meet.

"I think that the team is doing really well," said Montclair head coach Allison Naylor. "We've had a few hurdles, but we're doing really well for the most part, which is really good."

Naylor thought many of her swimmers were standing out in all age groups, with some having their best performances of the season.

"In our nine-10 girls, we've had Ashley Hong that's a standout," Naylor said, "and in our 11-12, we've had Laine Curry and Kyla Calvin and Scout Jackson; we've had a lot. But also, like we have in our older group, we have Evan Grinter, Cohen Osborn, we have Reilly Curry, Scout Jackson and all of them."

The Marlins have had another great season as one of the top teams in the league, and Naylor is very proud of the swimmers' accomplishments.

"It has been a really great season, yep," Naylor said. "I think just that being able to get to know the kids better, as having them every day at practice and getting to hang out with them and swim with them is a lot of fun."

For the remainder of the meet, Naylor was hopeful of maintaining the swimmer's performances and swimming their best times of the season.

"I hope that we keep getting best times," Naylor said, "that we keep getting first places and getting high places in the events, all that good stuff," she said with a smile.

For Paddlers, first-year head coach Macie Sparks was also pleased with how things were going for the Pirates.

"Placewise, I'm not sure what, but I'm so proud of our swimmers," Sparks said. "We've had a lot of, lot of time drops, which I'm so proud of. We've been keeping track of how much time we dropped and the kids have been doing so great and their strokes have improved so much since the beginning of the season."

The summer season is very much two-fold for the coaches. They want their swimmers to improve as the season goes on and have fun at the same time.

"I think they've been having a lot of fun at practice," Sparks said. "We've had a good mix of work and fun and everyone gets along great and it's a really good atmosphere this summer."

That's one of the big differences between the club season in the summer and the high school season in the fall and winter. Summer swimming is emphasized on fun, while the high school season tends to be much more competitive.

"Yeah, I think summer season is always a bit more relaxed," Sparks said. "Everyone doesn't take it quite so seriously like you have fun, but you're still competitive."

Sparks felt that the Pirates had a good season, and saw improvement throughout each dual meet during the season.

"It's been really good," Sparks said. "I think we've had a lot of improvement in each meet. We've seen so many kids improve. I think they've been really proud of themselves watching them drop times for us and it's been super great."

Sparks was hoping to see her swimmers drop more times and perform well throughout.

"For the rest of the meet, we hope more time drops, mainly," Sparks said, "for our kids individually. It's such a confidence booster for them, so as much time drops as we can and good finishes."

For the Sharks, head coach Maddie Monroe thought her swimmers swam well throughout the meet and also felt that the Sharks adjusted well to being indoors, rather than being outdoors, where the dual meets were held during the regular season.

"I think we've had a lot of good swims," Monroe said. "It's a little bit of an adjustment being indoors than outdoors, so I know some of our younger kids who have never swam inside had a little bit of first race jitters, but coming through the mid-meet, it sounds like everybody's settling in and we're having a lot of good swims."

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Sunset Hills had the smallest contingent at the meet, but the Stingray swimmers kept plugging away as they had done all season and had some good performances in the meet.

"I think we're doing really great for being so small," said Sunset Hills head coach Phoebe Gremaud. "We're having a lot of time drops, so I would say it has been a pretty good season."

Although the Stingrays didn't have as big of a team as the other league clubs, Sunset Hills kept hanging in and had good performances during their dual meets.

"We don't have many swimmers at the meets or on our team to begin with, but we have a lot of fun at the meets and that's the most important part about summer swim meets," Gremaud said.

The Stingrays had a number of swimmers have standout seasons as well.

"We've had Owen Gruben; he'll be a senior in high school," Gremaud said, "and he's been one of our strong players. Then, we don't really have many older girls, but Greta Deist has been a huge role for us in our swimming this year, as well as our little eight-year-old, Hildi (Deist). She's been rocking it today, too."

Looking back at the 2022 season, Gremaud has one special memory of her team as well.

"My favorite part is getting to hang out with the kids at all the meets," Gremaud said, "and getting to know them, because they're all a great bunch of kids."





In the boys' results, starting with the eight-and-under age group, Montclaire's 100-yard medley relay team won with a time of 1:53.69, while the Marlins' Ashton Eastman won the 25-yard freestyle, coming in at 19.62 seconds and Evan Osborn of Montclaire took the 50-yard freestyle at 52.44 seconds. The Pirates' Parker Dodds won the 25-yard breaststroke with a time of 28.53 seconds, with Carter Wolters of the Marlins taking the 25-yard backstroke at 24.62 seconds, Eastman won his second event of the day in the 25-yard butterfly at 25.64 seconds and the Marlins won the 100-yard freestyle relay at 1:36.90.

In the nine-and-10-year old division, Caiden Calvin of Montclaire won the 100-yard freestyle at 1:15.91, while Summers Port won the 200-yard medley relay at 3:17.62, Calvin was the winner in the 50-yard freestyle at 32.69 seconds, with teammate Jayson Plogger taking the 100-yard individual medley at 1:38.18, the Stingrays' Jack Willis won the 50-yard breaststroke with a time of 49.15 seconds, Calvin won his third race of the day in the 50-yard backstroke at 39.78 seconds, Eli Aldridge of the Sharks won the 50-yard butterfly at 44.45 seconds and the Marlins won the 200-yard freestyle relay at 2:48.02.

In the 11-and-12-year-old races, Noah Aldridge of the Sharks won the 100-yard freestyle at 1:06.75, while Montclaire took the 200-yard medley relay at 2:31.94, Jackson Suhre of Paddlers won the 50-yard freestyle with a time of 27.67 seconds, then

came right back to take the 100-yard individual medley at 1:10.51. Boden Rives of the Marlins was the winner in the 50-yard breaststroke at 37.72 seconds, teammate Braxton Tite won the 50-yard backstroke at 42.46 seconds, Suhre won his third event of the day in the 50-yard butterfly with a time of 30.38 seconds and the Gators won the 200-yard freestyle relay at 2:23.01.

In the 13-and-14 age group, Stephen Stobbs of the Sharks won the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 2:11.83, while Collinsville's Luke Berger won the 100-yard freestyle at 52.88 seconds, the Gators' 200-yard medley relay team won its race at 2:00.91 seconds and Tyler Brooks kept Collinsville's winning streak alive with a win in the 50-yard freestyle at 26.18 seconds. Berger won his second event of the meet by taking the 100-yard individual medley at 1:03.01, then went on to win the 100-yard breaststroke at 1:10.71, Brooks won the 100-yard backstroke at 1:05.66, Stobbs won his second race of the day in the 50-yard butterfly at 29.71 seconds and the 200-yard freestyle relay went to the Gators at 1:47.33.

In the 15-18-year-old division, Osborn won the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 1:47.58, with Grinter winning the 100-yard freestyle at 51.65, the 200-yard medley relay went to Paddlers at 1:55.79, Grinter took his second event of the day in the 50-yard freestyle at 22.61 seconds, Osborn won the 100-yard individual medley in a pool and meet-record time of 53.29 seconds, Maddox Kennedy of the Pirates won the 100-yard breaststroke at 1:08.29, Osborn set his second meet record of the day in the 100-yard backstroke with a time of 51.19 seconds, Grinter won the 50-yard butterfly at 24.61 seconds and the 200-yard freestyle went to the Pirates at 1:42.02.

In the girls' results, starting with the eight-and-under races, Summers Port took the 100-yard medley relay with a time of 1:33.54, while Hildi Deist won the 25-yard freestyle at 18.36 seconds, Ellie Forman of Collinsville won the 50-yard freestyle at 38.11 seconds, Ava Therien of the Marlins won the 25-yard breaststroke at 24.91 seconds, Forman won her second race of the meet in the 25-yard backstroke with a time of 21.30 seconds, then came right back to win the 25-yard butterfly at 19.50 seconds and the 100-yard freestyle relay went to Collinsville at 1:17.07.

The nine-and-10-year-old events started out with Hong winning the 100-yard freestyle at 1:09.44, while Montclair won the 200-yard medley relay at 2:47.40, Avery Finch of the Gators won the 50-yard freestyle at 35.79 seconds, Hong won her second race of the day in the 100-yard freestyle relay at 1:15.67, coming right back to win the 50-yard breaststroke at 41.58 seconds, Finch won her second race of the day in the 50-yard backstroke at 42.50 seconds, Alexandria Suhre of the Pirates won the 50-yard butterfly at 37.58 seconds and the 200-yard freestyle relay went to the Marlins at 2:36.08.

Curry got Montclair off on the right foot in the 11-and-12-year-old events by winning the 100-yard freestyle in a meet-record time of 57.06 seconds, while the Marlins won the 100-yard medley relay at 2:12.03, Calvin won her first race in the 50-yard freestyle at 27.83 seconds, while Greta Deist won the 100-yard individual medley at 1:12.04, Curry won her second race of the day by taking the 100-yard breaststroke at 35.42 seconds and came right back to take the 100-yard backstroke at 29.93 seconds, Calvin won the 50-yard butterfly at 30.76 seconds and the 200-yard freestyle relay was won by the Marlins at 1:54.19.

In the 13-14 age group, Montclair's Karissa Osborn won the 200-yard freestyle with a time of 2:14.93, with Jackson taking the 100-yard freestyle, setting a new meet record time of 54.83 seconds, the Marlins won the 200-yard medley relay at 2:04.64, Curry won the 50-yard freestyle at 27.21 seconds, then won the 100-yard individual medley at 1:07.94. Jackson took home the title in the 100-yard breaststroke at 1:12.02, Curry won her third event of the day in the 100-yard backstroke, coming in at 1:04.71, Jackson set a new meet record in winning the 100-yard butterfly with a time of 27.58 seconds and the Marlins won the 200-yard freestyle relay at 1:49.37.

In the 15-18 age division, the 200-yard freestyle went to Summers Port's Anna Moehn in a meet-record time of 1:52.59, with teammate Claire Paule winning the 100-yard freestyle at 59.81 seconds, Collinsville won the 200-yard medley relay at 2:03.27, the Gators' Kylee Strong-Chasteen won the 50-yard freestyle at 25.11 seconds, Moehn won the 100-yard individual medley at 1:01.85, Karis Chen of the Marlins won the 100-yard breaststroke at 1:11.48, the Gators' Amanda Beuth took the 100-yard backstroke at 1:02.07, Moehn won her third race of the day in the 50-yard butterfly, breaking her own meet record with a time of 26.60 seconds and in the final race of the day, the Gators won the 200-yard freestyle relay with a time of 1:48.06.

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