



Talented Emerson Weller Signs Letter Of Intent To Play Basketball At UMSL, Is An iCAN Clinic Female Athlete of Month

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EDWARDSVILLE - Senior center and forward Emerson Weller, who will return to the Edwardsville team after missing the 2021-22 campaign due to a knee injury, signed a letter of intent to play college basketball at Missouri-St. Louis in a ceremony held Thursday evening in the high school's Media Center.

Weller, who averaged 6.5 points and 3.9 rebounds per game as a sophomore in 2020-21, will be bringing much to the table for the Tritons, who are one of the better teams in the Great Lakes Valley Conference, considered one of the top Division-II leagues overall in the nation.

Weller is also spotlighted as an iCAN Clinic Female Athlete of the Month.

"I hope I can just work really hard and kind of work my way up," Weller said during a post-signing interview, "and just really be a good teammate coming into it."

Weller's work ethic is very superior as well, and it's an intangible that she'll also bring to UMSL.

"I just want to contribute as much as I can, wherever they need me," Weller said.

Weller, who'll play for head coach Katie Vaughn at UMSL, was attracted to the campus early, and it helped play a role in her decision to attend the school.

"Well, actually, about a year or two ago, I was kind of getting interested in them," Weller said, "and hoping they would show some interest in me. Over the summer, at one of my tournaments, they started to have an interest. I learned more about the school and I really, really like it."

It also helped that her older brother Brennan, himself a standout basketball player for the Tigers, also attends UMSL and plays for the men's team.

"Yeah, it definitely does," Weller said with a smile. "He's my best friend, so I'm really excited about that. It'll definitely find my way around a lot easier."

Weller had some good options in her choice of schools, but always knew that UMSL would be her first choice after having the opportunity to talk to the Tritons' coaching staff and touring the campus. She's planning on majoring in psychology and is currently leaning going into either sports psychology or children's psychology.

It's another big signing for the Tigers, who continue to produce good players, and Weller will bring much to the table for the Tritons as well.

"She's an extremely hard worker and competitor," said Edwardsville head coach Caty Happe, "so she's going to, day in and day out, compete for a spot at UMSL right away."

Weller brings three important traits to UMSL right from the start.

"She brings a lot of talent, a lot of effort, and a lot of smarts," Happe said. "So, she's going to do whatever she can to contribute to the team and she's a total team player."

Happe also believes that the UMSL program is the right fit for Weller and will fit in perfectly.

"It's a great fit," Happe said. "It's close to home, Brennan goes there now. I think it's the perfect level for her. So I think she made a great choice in where she went."

Weller will have a chance to help lead the Tigers in the upcoming season after having missed this past season due to injury.

"Emerson really has an opportunity to kind of pave the way for us this year," Happe said, "coming back with an ACL from last year. She's worked extremely hard to get where she is right now. So I think she feels like she's got a lot to prove and she's totally capable of doing that."

Weller will bring a lot of leadership to the Tigers this coming season as well.

"Emerson and four other seniors who are going to come in and they're really showing the younger kids how to work hard," Happe said. "She has the most basketball experience on the team for us, so that's an awesome thing when you've got such a great kid and a good leader as well."

For Weller's part, she's very excited to get back at it and have a big senior season.

"Oh, I'm more than ready," Weller said with a smile. "I can't wait. I haven't been to play a high school game since my sophomore year, so I can't tell you how excited I am."

The Tigers had some big losses to graduation, most notably Syd Harris, who is now playing for Central Michigan. Edwardsville also has key returning players, including Weller, and they're raring to go and have another great season.

"Yeah, I think my teammates and I can definitely step up to the challenge," Weller said. "I love playing with those girls. We definitely lost a lot of very talented players and we'll miss them. But I think we can rise to the challenge."