Edwardsville hosts Heartland Area Swim Championships this weekend

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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Edwardsville is hosting a YMCA Heartland Area Swim Championships Meet this weekend at the Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center.

It is the first time Edwardsville has hosted this type of meet in the new facility and it is creating excitement around the area.

The Edwardsville Breakers, the Tri City Tidalwaves, and YMCA Of Southwest Illinois (YOSI) have the most swimmers qualified for the meet and are favored to contend for team titles in both boys and girls divisions.

"We are going to have 800 to 900 athletes at the meet," Edwardsville Breakers coach Bob Rettle said. "There are 21 teams. The cuts are a little tighter for the Area meet this year. Our team goal for both the boys and girls is to win the overall championship. We expect it to be a challenge."

Rettle said he loves the new Chuck Fruit Aquatic Center and what it offers not only his swimmers, but others throughout the area and beyond.

"It is everything we hoped it would be," he said. "I sit here and look at this place and it is terrific."

Tidalwaves head coach Nancy Miller said she thinks the championship for boys and girls will be a battle between Tri City, the Breakers and YOSI. She said YOSI has 86 qualifiers, the Breakers have 80 qualifiers and the Tidalwaves have 61 qualifiers.

"We did extremely well this season," she said. "I have very high hopes for the individual performances and the team as well this weekend. This meet is truly the highlight of our YMCA year. For us to get first place as a team, it will take tremendous relay swims and everybody performing to the best of their abilities."

On Friday night, some of the events held were the 500 free and 400 intermediate races. Saturday and Sunday morning, the upper age group will swim prelims; then there will be distance events. The 8-to-10-year-olds will swim timed finals in the afternoon Saturday and Sunday. Finals for the upper age divisions will be Saturday and Sunday evening.