



EMMA LACINE sets new personal record in 25yd breaststroke, dropping 1.31 seconds. Photo by Margie Carter.



EIGHT TUSCOLA TORPEDOES qualified for 2022 Illini District Championships. From left, (back) Sami Walker, Gracie Walker, McKenna Lacine, Olivia Witheft, Ainsley Rennert, (front) Emma Carter, Mackenzie Carter, Emma Lacine. Photo by Margie Carter.

Tuscola swimmers qualify for state championships

By Margie Carter
For most people, when they think of the pool, they think of summer fun, sun block, donut

floats, and cannonballs off the diving board. However, there's a whole world that revolves around the complete opposite.

Hundreds of children in Central Illinois spend the coldest months of the year perfecting their dives, breathing, and stroke techniques in what is known in the competitive swimming world as Short Course Season.

The Tuscola City Pool is home to the Tuscola Torpedoes in the summer, but Tuscola swimmers who wish to compete in the winter have the option to join YMCA teams in nearby Mattoon or Champaign.

Though swimming is considered a team sport, with higher individual placing earning teams more points, most swimmers will tell you that they are racing their own times; always pushing to achieve a new personal record, aka PR. Records aren't the only reason why fast swimming times matter. Meets at this level of the sport can sometimes require swimmers meet specific time standards to enter.

For eight Tuscola swimmers, last weekend kicked off championship season with the 2022 Illini District Championship. Fifteen swim teams sent a total of 449 swimmers to Districts, all having made the cut with qualifying times in individual events. Unlike summer championships where swimmers only need one qualifying time for meet entry with unlimited event selection once in, for Districts swimmers can only swim in events that they have qualified for.

Swimming for the Champaign YMCA team, The Heat, was Emma Lacine (8), Mackenzie Carter (9), Emma Carter (9), and McKenna Lacine (12).

Swimming for the Mattoon YMCA team, The Samy Seals, was Sami Walker (10), Gracie Walker (10), Ainsley Rennert (11), and Olivia Witheft (11).

In 8 & under, Emma Lacine qualified for 2 events and came away with a new PR in 25yd freestyle.

In 10 & under, Mackenzie Carter swam 5 events, set 2 new PR's, and placed 7th with her 200yd freestyle relay team.

Emma Carter swam for 6 events, set 2 new PR's, and placed 6th with her 200yd medley relay team and 7th in 200yd freestyle relay.

In 12 & under, McKenna

Lacine swam 8 events, set 4 new PR's, and placed 3rd in both her 200yd medley and freestyle relay teams. She also placed 10th in 200yd freestyle.

Sami Walker swam in 2 events and placed 7th with her 200yd freestyle relay team.

Gracie Walker swam 3 events, set 1 new PR, and placed 7th with her 200yd freestyle relay team. She also placed 10th individually in 100yd backstroke.

Ainsley Rennert swam 5 events and set 4 PR's. She also placed 7th individually in 50yd butterfly with a time of 33.10

seconds, qualifying her for the YMCA Short Course State Championships.

Olivia Witheft, a Torpedo from Pesotum, swam 3 events, set 2 new PR's, and placed 7th with her freestyle relay team.

In addition to Ainsley Rennert's State cut, she will also join the Samy Seals relay team at State along with Gracie Walker and Olivia Witheft.

The Heat's 10 & under group placed 1st for their age group, and the team overall placed 4th. State eligibility has yet to be updated and relay teams have not been announced.



EMMA CARTER (left-bottom) and Mackenzie Carter take their place on the podium with their 200yd freestyle relay team after being awarded 7th place medals. Photo by Margie Carter.



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