Sara Curtis: the new backstroke queen is an Athlete of the Italian Army

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Sara Curtis emerged from the European Short Course Championships in Lublin as a true standout. The 19-year-old from Piedmont, **athlete of the Centro Sportivo Esercito (Italian Army)**, turned her first major continental event as an adult into a collection of medals and records that propel her into the international elite.

The signature race of her showcase was the 50 backstroke: an almost perfect final. Curtis is explosive at the start, precise in the underwater phase, untouchable in the water. She finishes in 25"49, a time that means gold medal, European record, and new Italian record. Behind her, distanced, are the French Analia Pigrée and the Dutch Maaike De Waard.

In the pool, she shows no signs of weakness, despite the previous days not being easy physically. For Italy, this gold has the taste of confirmation: the speed sector is alive and has found a new leader, who carries the tricolor and the beret of the **Italian Army**.

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The Speed Triptych and Records

Sara Curtis's masterpiece is not limited to backstroke. In Lublin, she built a true individual “triptych” in speed.

In the 100 freestyle, she wins a historic bronze in 51"26, after already improving the Italian record in the semifinals. With this time, she definitively erases the old national record and makes her mark in the queen distance of freestyle. It is a significant result, both for technical value and symbolic meaning: such a young Italian climbing the continental podium in the 100 freestyle is a sign of a great future.

In the 50 freestyle, she then confirms her status as a pure sprinter: silver in 23"41, personal best lowered, and a tie finish with the French Beryl Gastaldello, behind only the Polish Katarzyna Wasick. In just a few races, Curtis finds herself with a gold (and European record) in the 50 backstroke, a silver in the 50 freestyle, and a bronze-record in the 100 freestyle.

All this bears the name and symbol of the **Italian Army**, of which Sara is one of the shining stars: every podium, every record, also represents the success of the Centro Sportivo Esercito, which welcomed and supported her in her growth journey.

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Relays, Identity, and Blue Future

At the European Championships in Lublin, Curtis was not only a star in individual races: she also became the cornerstone of the Italian relay teams. She contributes decisively to medals and results in the 4x50 freestyle and medley relays, both female and mixed, confirming herself as a complete, reliable athlete capable of excelling when swimming for the team.

Born in Savigliano in 2006, raised under the guidance of coach Thomas Maggiora, Sara transitioned from a flood of youth medals (world and European) to a reference role in the senior National Team, without ever losing her composure and smile. Her dual identity – daughter of an Italian father and Nigerian mother – also makes her a new and important face for Italian sport, capable of representing a modern, inclusive, and winning Italy.

But there is one element she herself often feels and emphasizes: the pride of wearing the uniform of the **Italian Army**. Belonging to the Centro Sportivo Esercito is not just a logo on the cap or a writing on the suit, but a part of her sporting identity: discipline, team spirit, service spirit.

The European Short Course Championships in Lublin thus mark her first major coronation: from promise to established champion. A champion that, from today, European swimming knows well and that Italian swimming – and the **Army** – can consider one of their brightest symbols for the years to come.

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