

# Local Gymnasts Competing in National Championships

By Alejandro Barron

**ELK GROVE, CA (MPG)** - Several local gymnasts who train at Elevate Gymnastics Academy in Elk Grove will be traveling to Daytona Beach, Fla., to compete in the 2024 Men's Development Program National Championships from May 9-12.

The four gymnasts include Ryan Jacobsen, Jacob Miguelino, Luke Rodriguez and Matthew Zeigler, who are competing at Level 10, the highest level in the USA Gymnastics Junior Olympics program, although many hardships came with this journey.

"I think this year was a little bit different than last year because this time there were a lot of injuries that I was facing and I could tell from the entire team that it was a rough year because of injuries and all of us suffering from our own battles," Miguelino said.

Every gymnast mentioned injuries as part of this journey toward Nationals, including Boys' Team Head Coach Ron Howard.

"This was an interesting group because they were a really young group from what I've had in the past and they went through a lot of growing, physically,

and that made it really difficult," Howard said.

All these athletes have qualified for Nationals in past years and spoke about how their past experiences will help them this time around. One, Jacobsen, qualified to Nationals for the fourth time in his junior career and is an Air Force Academy commit.

"All the experiences I've had are going to help me to have fun this year because the first year is nerve-wracking, but this year I'm just going to have fun and hopefully be a good role model for my teammates," Jacobsen said.

As for Zeigler, he said his past experiences at Nationals will help him enjoy this time around and to give everything he has. This is the last meet so there's no harm in going all out.

The owner of Elevate is Rodriguez's mother, so he was set on a path toward gymnastics at an early age by her, a collegiate competitor at Cal State Fullerton.

"I got put into it immediately, so I've been here (Elevate) my entire life," Rodriguez said. "This is what I want to do when I'm older, so I want to keep growing my gymnastics skills and knowledge."

Each gymnast shared their experience on how

Elevate has helped them reach Nationals this year, with Rodriguez sharing his praise for his coach, Howard.

"Well, we have Ron, our coach, who's amazing and very encouraging but will get on all of us to make sure we're working our hardest so we can get to our best abilities and they're helping us with what we're really passionate about," Rodriguez said.

Zeigler said that he is happy and honored to be able to go to Elevate almost every day to work with those he calls some of the most talented and dedicated people in the country.

As far as expectations go, each of these gymnasts shared different answers but all hope to do well on the national stage.

"This year is really special to me because I'm coming back from an injury, so it's really cool to come back and make it this year," Jacobsen said.

Miguelino is hoping to make it to day two at Nationals, to medal or even win some events, while Rodriguez wants to do good at the events that he excels at like floor and vault.

Zeigler hopes to go far in Nationals because he said he wouldn't mind spending as many days as possible at Daytona Beach.



Matthew Zeigler, left, Jacob Miguelino, Luke Rodriguez and Ryan Jacobsen pose at Elevate Gymnastics Academy on April 23. This is ahead of their trip to the 2024 Men's Development Program National Championships in Daytona Beach, Fla. Photos by Alejandro Barron



In the bottom row, from left to right: DJ Madeiros, Isaiah Le, Arsenii Yanovsky, Anthony Bongcaron, Vince Zakar, Martin Levine and Caiden Gilbrecht pose at Elevate Gymnastics Academy on April 23. These gymnasts competed at USA Gymnastics' Men's Development Western Championships from April 26-28.

"I'm hoping to have a good time, hopefully make the second day and since it's in Daytona Beach, Fla., so I wouldn't mind spending a couple of extra days there," Zeigler said.

On top of the gymnasts that Elevate will be sending to Nationals, they also had athletes participate in the USA Gymnastics Men's Development Western Championships

from April 26-28.

These gymnasts include DJ Madeiros, Isaiah Le, Arsenii Yanovsky, Anthony Bongcaron, Vince Zakar, Martin Levine and Caiden Gilbrecht, who were in Chandler, Ariz., this past weekend representing Elevate. Nelli Rothfuss and Michalynn Eastman are also Western National qualifiers.

As for the boys heading

to Nationals, training will begin at the 2024 Men's Development Program National Championships on May 7, and competitions begin on May 9 at 8:45 a.m. EST.

Details on live streaming of the competitions are still to come, but for more information, visit [usagym.org/events/2024-mens-development-program-national-championships/](http://usagym.org/events/2024-mens-development-program-national-championships/). ★