

# Gym mentor's spun out

Lachlan Onions

Gold Coast gymnastics mentor Michael Dobroskok has been named as the region's top junior sports coach of 2025.

Dobroskok, who came out on top after a month of voting, said he was honoured to have received such recognition from the community.

"It's crazy. I was so appreciative and grateful for the families and the parents for putting my name out there," the 20-year-old coach said.

"I was pretty surprised."

Dobroskok has been a gymnast for 16 years and began

## GC's best junior sports coach of 2025

coaching in 2019 when he realised that he wanted to pass on his expertise to the next generation.

He is currently studying psychology, which he believes has helped him as a coach.

"Being able to learn different teaching and coaching methods and styles has helped me adapt to all the different athletes I've coached across the years," he said.

As a coach, Dobroskok tries to bring the best out of his gym-

nasts, but his primary focus is on ensuring his prodigies are enjoying their craft.

"The highlight of coaching for me is seeing kids achieve their goals; seeing smiles on their faces after they do a new skill or get a new high score at a competition," he said.

"Just coming up to me with a massive smile, super positive and them saying that they enjoy the sport."

"I just love when the kids actually start enjoying a sport

rather than focusing on achievements and stuff like that."

Dobroskok said gymnastics had helped him develop physically and mentally over the past decade-and-a-half.

"It's been my whole life and it really makes you a better person in many different ways," he said.

"It makes you really resilient and it's a unique sport in that everyone's just this big community and everyone supports each other and creates this positive environment."



Gymnast Michael Dobroskok. Picture: Grace Knight

# Invitational event just 'a little bit crazy'

Lachlan Onions

Hundreds of football teams from across Australia and beyond are set to descend on the Gold Coast this month for the annual Premier Invitational.

The event kicked off in 2012 with just 32 teams but is set to welcome a record 670 teams this year.

Premier Invitational director and Magic United chief executive Adem Poric said he was blown away by the growth of the competition.

"We've turned it from a tiny little event that was just catered to a select few into something that's now (got) teams from Japan, New Zealand, all across Australia coming," he said.

"I thought we'd get to 300 (teams), that was where we would cap out because of the space and logistically trying to get it all sorted."

"Then last year when we hit 300 in March, we started to go 'this is going to go a little bit crazy'."

"So 500 was uncharted territory, 670 we have no idea what's going to happen."

The 2024 competition was a game-changer for not only Magic United, but the Queensland economy as a whole.

More than 100,000 people attended last year's event with the competition generating more than \$20m to the local economy.

Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate was excited to see the city continuing to host such a massive sporting event.

"When it comes to junior football tournaments, nothing beats the Premier Invitational," he said.

"This 10-day tournament is the breeding ground of Australia's future Socceroos and Matildas and a chance for our city to showcase its facilities and support services to thousands of football supporters."



Magic United juniors Bentley Woods, Alberto Scutri and Spencer Magno are excited for the 2025 Premier Invitational.



The eyewear of Mason Cox is knocked off by Dayne Zorko. Picture: Getty Images

# Zorko stands his ground on Cox clash

Brisbane Lions veteran Dayne Zorko makes no apologies for his scrap with Collingwood's Mason Cox in last week's preliminary final.

The AFL fined Zorko \$5000, which was reduced to \$3125 with an early plea, for grabbing at the protective eyewear of the 211cm Magpie at the MCG last Saturday night. It was frowned upon by plenty and not the first time Cox's eyewear had been targeted, which prompted a

memo from the AFL to clubs before this year's finals series to remind them that such behaviour wouldn't be tolerated.

Zorko was unapologetic when asked about the incident on Tuesday.

"If a seven-foot guy comes running at you in the streets, what are you going to do?" said Zorko, who at 175cm is close to half a metre shorter than Cox.

"It doesn't really make sense to me that someone can in-

itiate it, then you're just standing up for yourself and protecting yourself."

"Should I have grabbed his glasses? Probably not."

"You can see the AFL are having such a great year with all this stuff that a \$5000 fine seems suitable."

"I don't really care. I get to play in a grand final this week."

Zorko, 36, and the Lions are preparing for a fourth straight grand final and won the flag

last year. Two-time Brownlow medallist Lachie Neale remains under an injury cloud but Zorko is hopeful the superstar midfielder will play.

"He's done everything he could possibly do so far," Zorko told SEN. "I know the medical staff didn't give him much of a chance but he's looked after himself really well over the last few weeks. He'll have to do some pretty hard training to get the final tick of approval."