

Written by John Crumlish

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International Gymnast Online's annual year-end tradition of holiday-themed features continues with this update on fast-rising Israeli gymnast Artyom Dolgopyat.

After coming close to podium finishes at this year's Challenge Cups of Baku and Varna, **Artyom Dolgopyat** of Israel is confident he can be a medal candidate at future competitions if he boosts his scoring components.

"I think that I still need to work on the D-score and the E-score, and then it will be possible to fight for medals not only at World Cups, but at the European and world championships," he said.



Artyom Dolgopyat (Israel)

Dolgopyat said competing at this spring's European Championships in Bern was the highlight of his year.

"The most memorable events are the European Championships, the World Championships and of course the Olympic Games, and since this year there was no World Championships and I did not get to the Olympics, my most memorable was the European Championships," he said. "This is a great competition, and the best of the best come to it from all over Europe."

Born June 16, 1997, in Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, Dolgopyat moved with his family to Israel in 2009. He finished 10th all-around, fifth on vault and eighth on floor exercise at the 2014 Youth Olympic Games in Nanjing.

Last year Dolgopyat placed 22nd all-around at the European Championships in Montpellier, won gold on floor exercise at the Challenge Cup of Osijek and was fifth on floor exercise at the Challenge Cup of Varna.

Dolgopyat's standout performances in 2016 included fourth place on pommel horse and seventh place on floor exercise at the Challenge Cup of Baku, and fourth place on floor exercise at the Challenge Cup of Varna. He was also a member of Israel's 17th-place team at

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Europeans, where he competed on every apparatus but rings.

December has been a busy month for Dolgopyat, in and out of the gym. He and some of his Israeli teammates spent time training in Minsk. Dolgopyat is celebrating Hanukkah (which begins Saturday evening) and New Year's Eve with his family.

Although a clip of Dolgopyat training a triple front on floor into a pit went viral this year, his focus is on other skills as he prepares for 2017.

"I am working on a new combination, but the combination has not yet been confirmed," he said. "Regarding the triple front, I cannot say anything. At the moment I'm working on a triple back."