

# Matthew Ruegsegger

*Special  
Olympics  
Illinois*



**Sport: Powerlifting**  
**Hometown: Montgomery, IL**  
**Age: 30**

## **1. How long have you been with Special Olympics?**

Matthew started the winter of 2009. He has medaled in cross country skiing, snowshoeing, swimming, track and field, bowling, power lifting, Unified golf, flag football, basketball and volleyball. For many years, Matthew has volunteered as the polar bear mascot for the Polar Plunge.

## **2. How has Special Olympics changed your life?**

Special Olympics has helped me focus on what I can do instead of what I can't do. It has also given me confidence to try new things. I now understand more about other people's disabilities and how to include them as a team member.

## **3. What has been your biggest obstacle to overcome?**

Remembering always, "If I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

## **4. What makes you most proud?**

I was able to bring my dad and grandad to Rich Harvest Farms Golf Course where I got to play golf with Chicago greats Scotty Pippen and Robbie Gould.

## **5. What are some other accomplishments you are proud of?**

Matthew went to state with his artwork. He won first at his local civic center and received a critics choice award at state.

## **6. What other interests or hobbies do you have?**

I have a love for rocks, crystals and gemstones. I have been collecting my Rock Around the World for many years. I have been lucky that friends and family brought me treasures from all over the world. I also collect foreign currency. I would love to be a video game tester. I love action-adventure movies, anime and anything Star Wars. I collect Yu-Gi-Oh and Pokémon cards. I love crafting my own swords. I love to draw and paint for gifts. I also like football, basketball, sports cars, music, wood working, and swords.



**SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
USA GAMES  
ORLANDO 2022**

**7. Who do you admire most and why?**

My parents who always support me in everything including my victories and losses in life. My granddad for getting me into sports early.

**8. What does attending USA Games mean to you?**

I get to represent myself, my team, my family, and friends. Especially the teammates that I have lost to COVID in the last two years. I am dedicating my performance to all those that cannot compete anymore.

**9. How are you preparing/training for USA Games?**

I joined my local gym. Also, I have workouts with teammates. Working on eating healthier.

**10. Have you been to a World Games or USA Games before?**

This is my first games other than state.

**11. Are you employed? If so, where at and what's your role?**

Not employed right now

**12. Are you currently a student? If so, where and is it a Unified Champion School?**

Not a student

