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DISTRICT ATTORNEY
ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
TODD SPITZER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Date: December 16, 2025
Case # 23HF0666

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**Former Orange County Cheerleading Coach Convicted of 23 Felony Counts for
Molesting Ten Young Girls**

***Erick Kristianson is also charged in Florida with exposing himself
to three young athletes he coached, sexually assaulting one of them.***

SANTA ANA, Calif. - A former Orange County competitive cheerleading coach has been convicted of 23 felonies for molesting ten girls as young as nine years old while serving as a camp counselor and coaching at a competitive cheer club and a Mission Viejo High School in the early 2000's. He is also facing child molestation and child exhibition charges in Florida related to three young competitive cheer athletes he coached in Daytona Beach.

Erick Joseph Kristianson, 46, of Antioch, Tennessee, was arrested in 2023 in Fargo, North Dakota on a warrant in the Orange County case and extradited back to Orange County to be prosecuted.

Kristianson was convicted on Monday of eleven felony counts of lewd or lascivious acts upon a minor under age 14 years of age, four felony counts of lewd or lascivious acts upon a child age 14 or 15, six felony counts of sexual penetration by foreign object of a minor under 18, and two felony counts of sexual penetration by a foreign object of a minor under 16.

He is facing a maximum sentence of 165 years to life in prison, plus six years and eight months in state prison when he is sentenced March 19, 2026, in Department C42 at the Central Justice Center in Santa Ana.

Kristianson worked as a competitive cheerleading coach at Magic All-Stars from 2002 to 2005 and as an assistant cheer coach at Trabuco Hills High School from 2004 to 2006, where he is accused of gaining access to eight young girls whom he molested in Orange County. Two additional victims knew Kristianson through a family member and through his employment in 1999 and 2000 as a South Orange County YMCA sleep-away camp counselor.

The majority of the allegations against Kristianson involving Orange County children came to light in 2022 after he was arrested in Daytona Beach, Florida on suspicion of masturbating on camera to three children between the ages of 11 and 13 and touching the private parts of another 13-year-old girl. All of the Florida victims were students of the competitive cheer club where Kristianson worked in Daytona Beach, Champion Elite Legacy.

After news reports regarding Kristianson's arrest in Florida, a young woman contacted Orange County authorities to report she was molested by Kristianson beginning when she was 14 years old while he was her cheer coach. Kristianson is accused of routinely meeting up with the girl during school for lunch, taking her to his home or to the beach and engaging in sexual activity with her through the age of 15.

Kristianson is accused of molesting seven other Orange County girls he coached between 2002 and 2006, routinely taking some of the girls to non-cheer-sanctioned events and to his home where he would molest them. The girls ranged from nine to 16 years old. Two of the girls ultimately disclosed that they left cheerleading after Kristianson repeatedly molested them but that they did not report the abuse at the time it was occurring out of fear and embarrassment.

In August 2022, Kristianson was arrested in Kansas on a warrant and extradited back to Florida to face charges for exposing himself to three teenage girls during a FaceTime call. He posted a \$300,000 bond and was released without any restrictions on leaving the state.

Kristianson was arrested in 2023 in Fargo, North Dakota on a felony warrant in connection with the Orange County case.

"For decades, Erick Kristianson used cheerleading gyms in Orange County and across the country as a kind of perverted catalog from which to select the next young girl he was going to molest," said Orange County District Attorney Todd Spitzer. "He was hiding in plain sight, a trusted coach banking on the fact that he could trust his young victims not to say anything about the abuse they were enduring. Pedophiles will never stop until law enforcement stops them. And this conviction ensures that these young women have a voice to speak out against the sexual abuse they endured as children."

Senior Deputy District Attorney Juliet Oliver of the Sexual Assault Unit is prosecuting this case.

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