

TALES OF THE MACCABIOT In the Beginning Was the Idea

In the beginning was The Idea, conceived by a 15 year old Jewish youngster, Joseph Yekutieli, against the background of the 1912 World Olympics in Stockholm. For the next ten years, he mulled it over until he formulated a detailed plan. After another decade of intensive efforts, endless lobbying and tireless knocking on the doors of rulers, secretaries, government officials, authorities and close friends, the plan, which had appeared to many to be too daring and pretentious, took shape and became a reality.

In 1928 Yekutieli presented a proposal to Menachem Ussishkin, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Jewish National Fund, for the first convocation in Eretz Israel of Jewish athletes from all over the world, symbolically timed for the 1800th anniversary of the Bar Kochba rebellion.

At that time the Maccabi Movement was in the process of setting up an internationally recognized body representing all Eretz Israel's sports, thereby paving the way for official participation in important international events. It was clear that the proposed Maccabiah could not be organized without the approval of the international sports associations, which accepted only recognized countries into their ranks. Only in 1928, after the Eretz Israel Soccer Association was founded and recognized by most of the international bodies, was the way paved for the organization of the first Maccabiah in Eretz Israel.

The organizers decided that the Maccabiada, as the Games were then called, would be held for members of the World Maccabi Federation, at designated intervals, patterned along the Olympic Games. The purpose of these worldwide Jewish competitions was to allow the various participating associations an opportunity to test their strength, prepare themselves for international and Olympic competitions and to glorify the sports achievements of Jewish youth.

The path towards the Maccabiada, which, at the suggestion of the writer K. Silman, was Hebraized to Maccabiah, abounded with arguments and was strewn with stumbling blocks. Alongside the differences of opinion which emerged in World Maccabi over the conduct and content of the Maccabiah, events in Eretz Israel took a grave turn, throwing doubt upon whether the games would ever take

place.

On the 9th of Av 5689 (Summer of 1929) an anti-Jewish riot broke out at the Western Wall, spreading to all the Jewish communities in Eretz Israel with the exception of Tiberias. Hundreds of Jews were murdered. Maccabi members volunteered for the Haganah, which was revealed in all its weakness during the riots. Lord Plumer, the High Commissioner in Eretz Israel was replaced by Sir John Chancellor of the British Colonial Service, who rapidly showed himself to be pro-Arab and blatantly hostile to Zionism.

The Maccabiah was finally held on the intended date. Sir Arthur Wauchope had replaced Chancellor as High Commissioner in the autumn of 1931, beginning the Golden Age: of the Jewish community in Eretz Israel. Wauchope admired Jewish sports and

the achievements of the Zionist movement in Eretz Israel and extended his patronage to the Maccabiah, on condition that it host Arab and English groups.

Two delegations of Jewish motorcycle riders set out from Tel Aviv for a Propaganda Tour (today we use the term Promotion Tour) throughout Europe; the first in 1930 from Tel Aviv to Antwerp, and the second a year later from Tel Aviv to London. Yekutieli himself participated in the delegation of young cyclists. On the second tour which began on May 10th and ended on July 16th 1931, the riders covered 9,375 kilometers, from the Sinai desert through Cairo, Alexandria, Salonika, Gorna, Sofia, Belgrad, Novisad, Osijek, Zagreb, Vienna, Linz, Nuremburg, Frankfurt, Metz and Paris to London, Brighton, Leeds, Manchester, Glasgow, Birmingham and Beirut. In all these cities, they announced the Maccabiah which would take place the following spring in Eretz Israel. Masses of enthusiastic Maccabi members proclaimed their desire to participate in the Jewish Olympics.:

Little Tel Aviv: of 1932 was unaccustomed to hosting an international event of any sort. The population of the city was only 50,000 out of a total Jewish community in Eretz Israel of 180,000. The Maccabiah was sandwiched between two important Tel Aviv events -- the Purim Adloyada Procession and the Oriental Fair Exhibit, scheduled to open that April on the banks of the Yarkon.

The many guests from the Diaspora who arrived for the games were, nevertheless, warmly received by Tel Aviv residents. The competitors were housed in tents, private homes, classrooms and in the neighboring towns of Rishon LeZion and Ramat Gan.

At the First Maccabiah there was no adequate sports equipment for several events; there was no suitable gymnasium; with only 500 seats and standing room for 15,000, the stadium could not accommodate all. In spite of this, however, all the events took

place as scheduled. The track was prepared from coal contributed by the Israel Railways. Gymnastic events were combined with boxing and wrestling and were held on a wooden platform in open-air Gan Rina. Swimming and water polo competitions were held in Haifa port in an area marked off by rowboats and buoys; spectators sat on rafts that bobbed up and down in the water.... the 10,000 meter race was run outside the stadium on the streets of Tel Aviv and along the seashore on a track: 70% paved and 30% sand.

There were competitions and games in 16 events -- track and field, gymnastics, boxing, wrestling, fencing, swimming, tennis, table tennis, motorcycling, grass hockey, handball, basketball, soccer, water polo, diving and equestrian skills.

Poland scored highest in the overall competitions (368 points). Austria was second (281 points) and the United States third (272 points.) Eretz Israel placed a mere fifth (243.5 points.) The competitions were conducted, by and large, in Yiddish, sometimes in Hebrew. Registration for the competitions was held, symbolically, in Immigrant's Hall and the staff ran the Maccabiah from the Allenby Hotel in Tel Aviv.

The estimated budget for the Maccabiah was 3,500 Eretz Israel pounds; the first Maccabiah concluded with a deficit of more than 1,038 Eretz Israel pounds.



Advertisements which appeared in the streets of Tel Aviv had proclaimed that the competitions were an opportunity which shall not arise until the Second Maccabiah to see the extolled champions.: And so it was. Hyman from the

United States set a record of 11.2 seconds for the 100 meter race -- one second from the world record. Kessler from Lvov was boxing champion in Poland. The tennis player Hecht, star of the Czech Davis Cup Team, was as famous in Europe as Bjorn Berg in the 80s and the Gottesman brothers became famous names in Israeli tennis. Among the wrestling champions were Chafetz of Egypt, Hershel of Vienna (The Wrestling Artist of Europe) and Kurland and Lazerovich of Denmark.

Officially the first Maccabiah lasted only three days. It concluded on the same exalted note as it began, marking fifty years since the aliya of the Biluim and the founding of the first settlements in Eretz Israel.





The Second Maccabiah: 5695 April 2 to April 10, 1935

1,250 sportsmen and women from 28 countries participated in the Second Maccabiah, competing in 18 events. For the last time in many years, delegations arrived from Central and Eastern Europe -- Estonia, Danzig, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary -- and from Arab lands -- Morocco, Libya, Egypt and Syria. The Danzig delegation marched neither with the Polish nor the German delegations, so as not to declare allegiance to either state in the confrontation between them which stirred up the European continent at the time.

Delegations from Italy, Belgium, Holland, Turkey, France and South Africa arrived for the first time. At the last moment, a sizable delegation from Germany surprised the Maccabiah organizers by announcing that they had received permission to join in the Games.

Hitler's rise to power in Germany (1933) had cast a heavy shadow over all Europe. The British continued to limit the number of certificates to Eretz Israel and many participants, from Bulgaria and Poland in particular, took advantage of the opportunity to remain. Even the Bulgarian band, which performed at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies, remained to the last man. When the flags were lowered from the masthead signifying the closing of the Maccabiah, the instruments were packed up and shipped back alone. In total only 61,000 Jews settled in Eretz Israel in that year.

The Second Maccabiah, like the First, was held in the spring. Many years later, the organizers decided to hold the games in the summer so that many students on vacation would be able to participate.

Whereas the First Maccabiah was organized in only three months, preparations for the Second stretched out over approximately one year, adding substantially to the cost. This Maccabiah was plagued by severe financial difficulties, The budget for Maccabi Israel barely covered the cost of stamps. Under the circumstances, the organizers decided that World Maccabi would have to assume the financial burden, responsibility for running the Maccabiah remaining with Maccabi Eretz Israel.

The Federation Presidium organized a massive fundraising drive for the Maccabiah Foundation, opening Maccabiah offices in London, Alexandria, Berlin, Warsaw, Prague and Tel Aviv. A separate drive to build the Tel Aviv Stadium was launched in South Africa. This Maccabiah proved that it was possible to fill an empty money bag with national, educational and sportive values. By the way, tickets for the games could be purchased at the piano shop and in drug stores.

That year Eretz Israel enjoyed a relative economic boom. Tel Aviv grew and the main thoroughfares were paved. The stadium was also enlarged to add more room for spectators. Over the objections of the Mandate Police, the planners staged an impressive processional through the streets of Tel Aviv. Lord Melchett, Honorary President of the Maccabi World Union, reviewed the parade. The Second Maccabiah built the Jewish community in Eretz Israel its first swimming pool (50 meters long) in the Bat Galim neighborhood of Haifa. Swimming competitions continued to be held there until the Fourth Maccabiah in 1953. Yigal Caspi's composition was chosen from among 15 entries as the official Maccabiah anthem and sung at the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

That year, many new, important competitions were added to the official list, among them: judo, cycling, weight lifting, rowing, volleyball and sharpshooting. Handball and basketball competitions were eliminated this time, only to reappear at the

Third Maccabiah. Equestrian skills and motorcycling were permanently eliminated from the competitions.

Among the outstanding athletes were Lillian Copeland who won Gold Medals for the discus throw (37.38 meters), javelin throw (36.92 meters) and shot put (12.32 meters.) In the final scoring, Austria placed first with 399 points, followed by Germany (375.3 points) and Eretz Israel (360.5 points.)

The first two Maccabiot were held during the Mandate period and were known as the Aliya Maccabiot because hundreds of athletes decided to remain in Eretz Israel after the games had concluded. Both Maccabiot were much more than mere sports events. They were part of the total complex of the Zionist National Cultural endeavor, more than a decade before the establishment of the State.

The Maccabiah That Never Was

The Third Maccabiah, the first in the State of Israel, was held in 1950, twelve years after the Second. It had been planned in detail as 1938 drew near. The ongoing crisis in Europe brought about the rise of Nazism and Fascism, Arab violence in Eretz Israel (the riots of 1936-1938) and British fears that the proposed Maccabiah would add substantially to the number of illegal immigrants in Eretz Israel -- all these contributed to the cancellation of the games. With only four members present, the Maccabiah Secretariat decided not to hold the games as scheduled.

The outbreak of World War II thwarted any attempt to revive the games in the coming years. Entire communities were destroyed in the War and the devastating Holocaust which followed in its wake. Millions of Jews perished at the hands of the Nazis, among them many members of the Maccabi Movement.

In 1939 the British Government, headed by Chamberlain had published the White Paper, curtailing Jewish immigration to Eretz Israel and severely limiting Jewish land purchases. Despite this, when the Jewish community in Eretz Israel was called upon to enlist in the British Army, many Maccabi members answered the call and served in the Maccabi Company.

Only after the declaration of the State, the departure of the red beretted British paratroopers and the conclusion of the War of Independence did the 10th World Congress of the Maccabi World Union decide to resume the grand undertaking which had been

cancelled under such tragic circumstances. Twelve years later, the Maccabiot were revived in Eretz Israel, this time on the soil of the free State of Israel.



The Third Maccabiah: 5711 September 28 to October 11, 1950

When the Third Maccabiah was held on Succot 1950, the cannons of the War of Independence had hardly been silenced. The enormous changes that had occurred in the Jewish world during the previous decade were immediately apparent. Strangest of all was the thundering absence of athletes from Eastern Europe and the Arab lands. Jews from countries which had sent the largest and most outstanding delegations to the First and Second Maccabiot were trapped behind the Iron Curtain. This Maccabiah bore witness not only to the destruction of the best of Polish, Czech, German, Hungarian and Romanian Jewish youth and the transfer of the center of gravity from Central and Eastern Europe to the English-speaking world and South America, but also to the beginning of our redemption. For this was the first Maccabiah held in the independent State of Israel. For the first time, the organizers were free to act as they wished without having to fear the opposition of the occupying power or the Arab reaction.

Approximately 800 athletes from 20 countries participated in 17 competitive events. Countries such as Canada, Argentina, Australia, India, Ireland, Finland and Sweden appeared for the first time. Handball and basketball reappeared on the list of events, whereas rowing, table tennis, and sharpshooting were eliminated to be reinstated in subsequent Maccabiot.

For the first time, the organizers decided to accommodate all the participants in one compound, on the pattern of the Olympic Games. They chose a recreation camp on the Tel Aviv seashore

opposite Nordau Street which had formerly been a British army camp. The men and women were housed in tents, ten in each. A national Olympic stadium, Maccabiah Stadium, had been erected in Ramat Gan. Even the Israeli Government was swept into the all out effort, contributing 25,000 Israeli pounds.

The Chairman of the Knesset, Yosef Shprinzak, attended the opening ceremony in place of President Chaim Weizman who had taken ill. Four cannons placed in the four corners of the stadium roared simultaneously, symbolizing the revival of the State and Yizkor was chanted in memory of the millions who perished in the Holocaust. That year Jerusalem was proclaimed the capital of Israel and the Knesset passed the Law of Return, permitting every Jew to immigrate to Israel and become a citizen. 170,000 Jews availed themselves of the opportunity, most of

them from North Africa. Due to the lack of facilities, many of them were housed in tent cities. That year, the Maccabi World Union also made an important decision: to open the games to all Jewish athletes including members of Hapoel. (Maccabiot were formerly open only to Maccabi members.)

Several of the outstanding athletes at the Third Maccabiah were destined to be Israeli sport stars in the 60s: soccer player Eliezer Shpiegel of the Israeli all-star team and father of Giora Shpiegel, the future soccer player for Maccabi Tel Aviv; Frieda Bearson Lichtbau, Gold Medal winner for the discus throw and mother of Aviv Lichtbau, future track and field competitor and all-star women's basketball player; tennis player Edith Cohen Mintz, mother of Tanchum Cohen Mintz, a future member of the Maccabi

Tel Aviv basketball team and grandmother of Uri Cohen Mintz who now plays basketball for Maccabi Ramat Gan and the Israeli all-star team. The outstanding foreign sportsman was heavyweight wrestler Henry Wittenberg, Gold Medal winner in the London 1948 Olympics.



The Fourth Maccabiah: 5714 September 22 to September 29, 1953

Eight days of thrilling competitions in 19 events with 892 athletes opened in Ramat Gan Stadium on September 20th, 1953. By then, the center of gravity had shifted to North and South America. Delegations from Zimbabwe, Brazil and Chile arrived for the first time. Table tennis and sharpshooting appeared once again on the list of events, side by side with a new sport, bowling. Grass hockey was dropped, to reappear in the 11th Maccabiah. A group of non-Jewish medal winners from the Helsinki Olympics and five American water ballet dancers put on a wonderful performance.

Most of the competitions were in track and field events (100 participants from 16 nations) and swimming (72 competitors from 13 countries). There were more soccer competitions than in any other team sport. Because of the lack of proper sports equipment, the Technical Committee was forced to hold the events in school and other public gymnasiums. Canadian wrestler Fred Oberlander won the Eliyahu Savislotsky Medal, presented for the first time to the outstanding athlete of the Maccabiah. This prize was awarded at all subsequent Maccabiot. Other outstanding competitors were the American gymnast Abe Grossfeld (6 Gold Medals) and Israeli swimmer Shoshana Rivner (2 Gold Medals), broad jump winner David Kushner, later one of the best trainers in Israel.

There were ten outstanding athletes in the United States delegation, members of the American Olympic teams in various sports, among them Perry Vavbrian (shot put throw), Harry

Laskow (walking), Bob Richards (Olympic pole vault champion), Harrison Dillard (110 meter hurdle race). Outstanding sportsmen from the British delegation were swimmer Roy Romaine and diver Peter Eliot.

That year the competitions were held in the shadow of the fedayeen raids on the Jordanian border, David and Paula Ben Gurion's retirement to Sde Boker, and the low rate of immigration -- a mere 11,000 Jews. In the background was the Hapoel Organization's demand that the Maccabi World Union give the Maccabiot a more uniform national character by transferring the management of the Israeli delegation and the general supervision of the Maccabiah to the Israel Sports Association. In the compromise arrived at through the mediation of Teddy Kollek, Maccabi



representatives agreed that the Israel Sports Association set up a coordinating committee to assemble the Israeli all-star teams and that a joint body be set up to maintain equipment.

The Maccabiah budget, approximately one quarter million Israeli pounds was raised, in part, from the Israeli government, the Jewish Agency and public foundations. The President of the State of Israel, Yitzchak Ben Zvi declared the games open. The torch was relayed from the Graves of the Hasmoneans in Modi'in to Ramat Gan Stadium and hundreds of pigeons were released in the manner of the Olympic Games. The Closing Ceremony at the stadium ended with a soccer match between the all-star teams of Israel and the nations of the world (Diaspora Jewry.)

After the Fourth Maccabiah, the organizers decided to hold the games every four years -- as was the custom with important sports events throughout the world, so that the Comite International Olympique would recognize the Maccabiah as a regional event. This recognition was, indeed, granted during the fifties.



Yitzhak Berger, Olympic medal winner in weightlifting, set a new world record at the Maccabiah. Other outstanding competitors were Grossfeld, U.S. champion gymnast (7 Gold Medals) and South African and Australian tennis champions Abba Segal and Ava Dolzig. Israeli David Kushnir won the broad jump once again and Deborah Turner from England the 100 meter dash. Agnes Kelti, winner of 5 Olympic Gold Medals, gave two spectacular gymnastic performances after the Games, immediately adding her name to the list of over 71,000 Jews mainly from Poland, Hungary and Egypt who immigrated to Israel that year.



who was first in the decathlon, the pole vault and the broad jump, won the Saviolsky Medal for Outstanding Athlete. Madeline Bergman from Australia (first place in 200 and 800 meter races) was awarded the Sports Authority Trophy for outstanding female athlete. The United States delegation received the Leip Meyers Trophy for the most gold medals (58; Israel won only 28-1/2). Their stars included swimmer Dave Krotsky, swimmer Jane Katz, sharpshooter Milton Friend and world champion wrestler Steve Friedman.

Outstanding members of the British delegation included Olympic athlete Dave Segal and world and Olympic fencing champion Alan Jay. The Italian delegation also boasted renown figures such as fencer Vera Montebani and boxer Roberto Fortaloni. The children of 2 Gold Medal winners, Philip Oberlander of Canada and Michael Wittneberg from the US, followed in their father's

footsteps and won medals. United States tennis player Dick Savett won 2 Gold Medals and Gary Gobner, also from the US, set a new record: 3 Gold Medals in shot put, discus throw and weightlifting (Mark Spitz would rival his record at a subsequent Maccabiah.) The guests of honor, Olympic champions Rafer Johnson (decathlon) and John Thomas (high jump) gave exciting showcase performances.

At the Closing Ceremony, Prime Minister David Ben Gurion declared, "I express your wishes and ours that we live to see delegations from North Africa, Eastern Europe, and the USSR at future Maccabiot.": The ceremony concluded with a soccer game between the Israeli all-star team and the Italian champions.





The Seventh Maccabiah: 5725 August 23 to August 31, 1965

With 1,200 athletes from 25 countries participating, the Seventh Maccabiah attained the highest level of achievement of all competitions since WWII. For the first time, delegations arrived from Venezuela and Peru and at the last moment, for the first and last time, Iran. The Turkish delegation, on the other hand, was absent since the Turkish Foreign Ministry refused to grant exit visas to the basketball team.

During this, the Seventh, 22-event Maccabiah, many records set at the Sixth Maccabiah were broken. The United States delegation, 200 strong, was outstanding, particularly in swimming, winning 14 Gold Medals in eighteen races. Israel won three and Australian John Stark, one. Fifteen year old Mark Spitz, appearing for the first time, won four Gold Medals and broke three records. Another outstanding American swimmer was Olympic Silver Medal winner Marilyn Rumnovsky. The South African gymnast, Lorraine Lutzoff, won three Gold Medals and Chana Shazifi, nee Tzadik, later one of Israel's great athletes, won the 800 meter run. Promising basketball player, 22-year old Tal Brody, played for the US team. Only when he returned to the United States did he abandon his amateur status to play for Baltimore.

By order of the Israeli Defense Forces, a synagogue was set up in Kfar Maccabiah for the athletes. Ramat Gan Stadium was enlarged to seat 53,000 spectators. Hundreds of thousands of square meters of earth were moved to build huge embankments and dig tunnels. The most highly perfected athlete track was dedicated.

The dressing rooms were also enlarged and renovated. Huge parking lots were prepared alongside the stadium, and, at the very last minute Galit Pool behind the basketball stadium in Yad Eliahu was readied for the competitions.

Baseketball games were held on six courts, mainly in Yad Eliahu Stadium. Soccer competitions took place in five different cities. Judo and boxing were held in rings set up on the modern basketball courts. This time, the 8 indoor sports events were held on the fair grounds. The first Israeli shooting range and alleys which met international standards were built in Ramat Gan. The judo matches were among the main attractions. Thirteen countries entered, in contrast to previous Maccabiot, when the turnout was so small that matches were held in Army bases. Golf matches and clay



pigeon shooting competitions were introduced for the first time at this Maccabiah.

West German television filmed all the performances and competitions and televised them in a special program, 'The Jewish Olympics: on the main channel. Holland, Belgium, France, Austria and Switzerland acquired television rights. Although the President of Israel, Zalman Shazar, opened the games in the traditional manner, a new element was added to the ceremony. The 12-man Color Guard now consisted of two outstanding athletes from each of the previous Maccabiot. Army parachutists staged festive landings into the stadium grounds. The Closing Ceremony ended with the traditional soccer game, this time between the Israeli all-star team and Torino Italy (2:1). For the first time, however, the athletes marched with comrades in their sport rather than as a nation. Four Kenyan track and field stars, among

them the best in the world, were invited to participate in the closing exhibition competitions at the conclusion of the official competitions.

As usual, the Maccabiah organizers were plagued by financial difficulties and institutional indifference. The Israeli government contributed only 8% of the budget, 4,200,000 Israeli pounds, despite the fact that the Maccabiah Games had brought at least 10,000 tourists to Israel. The Jewish Agency, the Jewish National Fund and Keren Hayesod did not contribute at all. That year, in the mid-1960s the new Knesset building was completed in Jerusalem and Teddy Kollek was elected mayor of the city.



The Eighth Maccabiah: 5729 July 28 to August 7, 1969

The Eighth Maccabiah was the first held after Jerusalem had been unified. The Israeli victory in June 1967 had given rise to waves of admiration in the Diaspora and many Jewish youngsters were drawn to Eretz Israel. 1,450 athletes from 27 countries participated in the Games, competing in 22 events. Neither the blood which was continually spilt on the borders and in the outlying communities -- even in the Golan Heights -- the hot pursuits in the Jordan Valley nor the War of Attrition at the Suez Canal deterred the athletes from coming to compete. The Opening Ceremony, which paid tribute to immigration and absorption, was more than a concrete expression of the slogan, "The show must go on.": As before, no representatives arrived from behind the Iron Curtain, Arab lands and Iran. On the other hand, athletes from Germany and Greece came, once again, to participate under their national flag.

This Maccabiah was hardly the modest sports event one would expect from a small nation with one finger on the trigger. The athletes underwent a tremendous emotional experience when, for the first time, they were permitted to approach the Western Wall in the Old City of reunified Jerusalem. After the pilgrimage to the Wall, they participated in an impressive ceremony on Mt. Scopus, attended by Minister of Absorption, Yigal Allon (Z srezinagro haibaccaM eht ,etad retal a tA .(L: decided to hold the Closing Ceremony in Jerusalem on a regular basis. For the first time, the torch was relayed from the actual graves of the Maccabees (until

1967, they were forbidden to begin the relay so close to the Jordanian border). Joseph Yekutieli was given the honor of lighting the torch. Outstanding basketball player, Amnon Avidan, carried the torch during the Opening Ceremony.

The Eighth Maccabiah was well covered by the world media -- press, radio and television. The Color Guard of the Maccabiah was composed of seven athletes from states which could not send delegations for political reasons. That month mankind won one of its great victories when Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin landed on the moon.

Swimmer Mark Spitz once again proved worthy of his title winning 3 Gold Medals in individual and 3 Gold medals in team races. (His future was, indeed promising. He was destined to capture 7 Gold Medals at the 1972 Munich Olympics.) Spitz's younger sister, Nancy, kept up the family tradition by winning several gold

and one silver medal. Israeli sprinter, Esther Shachamorov, overshadowed all her opponents by winning 3 Gold Medals in track events. Other outstanding athletes were: American sprinter Harold Rothman, Canadian sprinter Avital Hoffman, world champion backstroke swimmer Karen Myor, shot putter Steve Marcus, Wimbledon champion tennis player Julie Haldman. Outstanding basketball player, Tal Brody had set an example to all Jewish athletes in the Diaspora by immigrating to Israel immediately after his U.S. Army service, contributing to the most impressive victory of the Israeli all-star team against the Americans (74:70).

The overall budget of the Eighth Maccabiah was two million pounds. The Ministry of Education assisted the Organizing Committee in raising the necessary funds from the Ministry of the Treasury, Ministry of Absorption and the Jewish Agency, among others, and subsidized the Israeli all-star team. Sports foundations assumed the burden for approximately one half the budget.

For the first time, the organizers conducted an objective evaluation of the athletic competence of the contestants and the level of the Games. The findings indicated that the Eighth Maccabiah took place during a period of deterioration in the performance level of Jewish athletes throughout the world, strongly indicating the lack of Jewish candidates from the West who could qualify for international competitions (Jewish athletes from communist countries were forbidden by their governments to compete in the Maccabiot.) The findings also indicated that Israel did not invest enough in improving the performance level of members of the Israeli delegation. For example, since the Israeli all-star soccer team was playing in Cyprus at the same time, the official Israeli all-star team at the Maccabiah was, in fact, the all star youth team. The large number of Israeli athletes participating in the Maccabiah -- approximately one quarter of the total -- was referred to in the report as a quantitative answer to an unacceptably low qualitative level.:



The Ninth Maccabiah: 5733 July 9 to July 19, 1973

The Ninth Maccabiah took place one year after the Munich massacre of eleven Israeli athletes, coaches and judges and played an integral element in the celebrations of the 25th Anniversary of the State. At the Opening Ceremony, tribute was paid to the fallen athletes, a special yizkor written by Chief Rabbi Goren was chanted, and eleven torches were lit in their memory. As Tal Brody carried the torch into the stadium, he was joined by two survivors of the massacre, Israeli walking champion Dr. Saul Landy and sprinter Esther Roth Shachamorov.

Approximately 1,500 athletes arrived from 26 countries, including Costa Rica and Spain. Turkey, who did not send a delegation, would not participate for the next 24 years. Of the 335 strong Israeli delegation, several score were immigrants; the 38 from the USSR excelled primarily in boxing, wrestling, fencing and weight lifting. The athletes competed in 23 events, including an interesting new sport -- squash.

This extremely well-run Maccabiah was the most carefully guarded of all the Maccabiot. The sports achievements, however, were rather disappointing. In track and field, heretofore the queen of events, there were few top-level athletes. In swimming events, which usually attracted large crowds at the Maccabiot, the Americans seemed rather tired, notwithstanding the good all-star team and the Gold Medals they won. The Israeli delegation's performance was poor, particularly in individual events such as

track and field and swimming. The tennis matches, on the other hand, were on a relatively high level due to the superior performance of the Americans and the Australians. Israelis experienced a few moments of satisfaction during the basketball games, thanks to all-star Tal Brody, Barry Leibowitz and promising young Mickey Berkowitz. The Israeli all-star basketball team won a fine victory against the United States (86:80). The basketball games took place at the up-to-date, improved facilities in Yad Eliahu Stadium, the Holon enclosed stadium and Beit Barbour (Tel Aviv.)

One of the reasons for the deterioration in the performance of Jewish athletes throughout the world was the inactivity in the regional Confederations in between Maccabiot; in some cases they had completely broken off contact with Maccabi World Union centers. Many Maccabi clubs settled into athletic inactivity and

Jewish athletic competitions in the Diaspora were almost non-existent. As a result, most of the delegations at the Maccabiah were comprised of youngsters who had begun training, quite superficially, shortly before the Maccabiah. For them the Games represented a trip to Israel: and it was precisely in this sense that the Ninth Maccabiah succeeded: as a convocation of youngsters from all over the world and an opportunity to promote aliya.

In order to encourage the next generation of Maccabiah participants, the organizers held a Youth Jamboree, the first of its kind, where American and Jewish youth mingled. From the standpoint of Jewish identification, the Maccabiah was indeed a success. The athletes were housed in five different places: Kfar Maccabiah, the Ramat Aviv Hotel, Seminar Hakibbutzim, Wingate

Institute and Hakfar Hayarok. They participated in Jerusalem Day celebrations, toured the Old City and visited the Western Wall, the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum, the Knesset, Mt. Herzl and Ammunition Hill. Each of the 120 athletes who headed the delegations was presented with a commemorative album of the Western Wall.

As opening day drew near, the Ramat Gan Stadium was completely renovated. The lighting was magnified to nine times its former brightness, the Presidential booth was redecorated and the grass groomed. For the first time, a special entrance was built for the press. The Maccabiah budget was four million Israeli pounds and the Games concluded with a deficit of 200,000 to 300,000 Israeli pounds.

As always, there were outstanding athletes, South African tennis player Elana Close, for example, who left the prestigious Wimbledon Competitions in the middle in order to participate in the Maccabiah and Kenyan track and field champion in the 1968 Mexico Olympics, Amos Bewitt. In addition, there were: the Swedish swimmer Anita Zarnovitsky who participated in the competitions with her twin brother, Bernot; the American track and field star, Carry Kering (Gold Medal decathlon competition winner in which she broke the Maccabiah record and Gold Medal winner in the pole vault competition); Gary Cohen who set a new Maccabiah record for the 10,000 meter race and the outstanding Dutch athlete, Wilma Van Gol, who took the Gold Medal by outstripping Esther Roth Shachamorov in the 100 meter dash at a demonstration racing exhibition. Despite the fact that her hopes for an Olympic medal were dashed at Munich, Esther Shachamorov



continued to prepare herself
Mark Spitz was unable to

for the Montreal Olympics.

participate in the Maccabiah as a Guest of Honor (He had retired from sports after the Munich Olympics) due to a prior commitment. His sister Nancy, however, did the family proud by winning medals in her own right. The United States delegation came away with 76 Gold Medals, the Israeli 66. The Closing Ceremony ended with the traditional soccer game, this time between the Israeli and Uruguayan all-star teams (1:2).

The fledgling Israel Broadcasting Authority, headed by Dan Shilon and Alex Giladi (only one channel, remember) was praised for its coverage of the Maccabiah. This was the largest production that the Israel Television had undertaken since Munich. Approximately 400 journalists, photographers and radio and television personnel from all over the world joined them in covering the Games.





The Tenth Maccabiah: 5737 July 12 to July 21, 1977

The Tenth Maccabiah was held in July 1977, during an unusually hot summer. It was on the eve of a political upheaval which had begun when the right: headed by Menachem Begin assumed power and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat came to Jerusalem. The State of Israel had scored points: with the world media a year after the Entebbe rescue with Rina Moros coronation as Miss Universe and Maccabi Tel Aviv's unforgettable capture of the European Basketball Championship Trophy in a one point victory in the playoffs (78:77).

Almost double the usual number participated in the Tenth Maccabiah -- 2,700 athletes from 34 countries, including Norway, Japan, the Virgin Islands, Jamaica, Ecuador and even one track and field competitor from Bolivia. The number of events was increased to 28, including badminton, karate, mini football and even bridge and chess, games not usually played in the regions. (In comparison the Seoul Olympics of 1988 included only 23 events.) Bicycle riding competitions were eliminated from the list once and for all.

In the presence of the President of the State of Israel and Yitzchak Rabin, Prime Minister, 50,000 spectators viewed the impressive processional of delegations. The first members, the founding generation of Maccabeans, marched in a separate group. The Opening Ceremony concluded with a spectacular demonstration of free-style parachuting.

The competitions were held all over the country. Highest achievements were in soccer, swimming, tennis, table tennis, gymnastics and weight lifting. No less than 55 Maccabiah records were broken this time, among them, most of Mark Spitz's. Israel led in all team sports except basketball where they were beaten in the final playoffs against the United States (91:92).

The Americans were the unrivalled champions in the pool. In track and field, however, the Australian athletes were able to successfully challenge them. Tennis claimed the crown (as the most popular sport) with 18 countries participating in the regular tournament and ten in the Masters (for players over 45). Gymnastics aroused particular interest as, in addition to the competitors, groups of foreign gymnasts from Denmark, France, Germany and Holland put on special performances. The athletes competed in new facilities such as the Olympic pool recently built at Tel Aviv

University. Tennis competitions were held in Afeka, gymnastics in the Haifa Sports Palace and other competitions in Kibbutz sports facilities.

Among the large number of athletes, particularly outstanding were: K. Kering who set a new decathlon record (6859 points); the American swimmer Wendy Weinberg winner of the Bronze Medal for the 800 meter freestyle at the Montreal Olympics; veteran Canadian sprinter Abigail Hoffman, among the best in the world in the 800 meter race; the Venezuelan Elizabeth Popper, Caribbean table tennis champion; Ivan Katz, Australian weightlifting champion; and Ernie Greenfield, a member of the United States all-star basketball team that won the Gold Medal in the Montreal Olympics.

Great Britain put together a Maccabiah all-star team of outstanding soccer players, among them Ricky George who later played professionally for Hartford United. Among the outstanding Israeli athletes were: swimmer Anat Farkash who won 2 Gold Medals for the 100 and 200 meter breast stroke; track and field stars Mira Bolova, Diane Hoopert and Esther Shachamorov who dominated in track events (3 Gold Medals for Shachamorov); Israeli born Mickey Berkovitz, the hope of basketball fans and outstanding on the court, alongside his comrades Motti Aroesti, Barry Leibowitz, Steven Kaplan and Pini Chozaz.

The budget for the Tenth Maccabiah was 16-1/2 million Israeli pounds. Public institutions contributed 700,000 Israeli pounds and 100,000 pounds were raised from commercial advertisements in journals. Tickets brought in another 2,645,000 Israeli pounds, the price of admission varying from 50 to 75 Israeli pounds. Most of the tickets were sold for the basketball games, swimming events, the Opening Ceremony and the closing game. The organizers were left with a deficit of 870,000 Israeli pounds.

At this Maccabiah great emphasis was placed upon the social and nationalist aspects of this mass event. Hence, in addition to the sports events, the organizers planned social gatherings, meetings, gala performances and tours. Of note was the reunion of athletes from all over the world who had competed in the First Maccabiah, including General Res. Avigdor Ben Gal, Nicky Hershel and Yitzchak Hirschler. Immediately preceding the Games the organizers gave two professional courses aimed at familiarizing judges and coaches from Israel and the Diaspora with international sports rules and regulations. Another first was the children's art

exhibit which entries from 21 countries. During the Games international seminars on Sports Medicine, the History of Physical Education and Jewish Sports, were



well attended.

The Tenth Maccabiah highlighted a most painful phenomenon which ran counter to the spirit of past Maccabiot. In contrast to those aliya Maccabiot, this time the delegations from the Diaspora contained a high percentage of yordim and children of yordim reflecting the general trend toward emigration which developed during the 70□s. Needless to say, the Maccabiah organizers, as ever, did everything in their power to win the hearts of Diaspora youth for the Land of our Fathers.





The Eleventh Maccabiah: 5741 July 6 to July 16, 1981

The Eleventh Maccabiah in 1981 was dedicated to the late Pierre Gildesgame (Z lanoitanretnI eht fo namriahC dna noinU dlroW ibaccaM eht fo tnediserP ,L: Maccabi Committee, who had been killed in an automobile accident earlier that year. 3,150 athletes representing thirty three countries participated, including contingents from New Zealand, Bermuda and Puerto Rico who arrived for the first time. Two Egyptian observers came for the water polo tournament. This time the thirty two events included new sports such as sailing, softball and rugby. Boating competitions were reintroduced after a thirty one year lapse.

This was a Maccabiah with few athletic pretensions; its avowed purpose was to serve as a sporting gathering of the exiles.: The Jewish Agency Department of Immigration and Absorption evening events and an Immigration Expo 1981 were held at the Diplomat Hotel in Tel Aviv. In light of the troubling trend towards emigration from Israel, this Maccabiah was expressly intended as a magnet to draw former Israeli athletes back home. The Maccabiah organizers were relatively successful in accomplishing this; several athletes from abroad began official immigration procedures, including one black American basketball player who chose to remain in Israel following the Games.

Over three million shekels had been invested in renovating the Ramat Gan Stadium, making it possible for the first time in Maccabiah history to begin the impressive Opening Ceremony in

the evening. The highlight of the evening was the freestyle jump executed by students of the Israeli Defense Forces Paratroopers School; the darkened stadium field gradually lit up as the last paratrooper landed on the ground. At a signal fifty thousand spectators lit flares. During the processional, eighty four year old Joseph Yekutieli rode in on a jeep flanked by four generations of Maccabeans from the Ben Dror family of Petah Tikvah.

More than ever before, the Eleventh Maccabiah reflected the character of Jewish sports over the last decades -- a certain decline in the performance and in the number of participants in the classic sports (track and field, boxing, weight lifting) and a concomitant rise in the number of athletes participating in specifically Anglo-Saxon: sports such as hockey, golf, squash, badminton, cricket, softball,

lawnball and tennis.

Fourteen new Maccabiah records were set in track and field, sixteen in swimming, and eight in the various marksmanship competitions. Squash, karate, judo and wrestling contests were held in new rings and courts built at Kfar Maccabiah.

Despite the fact that there were no competitors of international standing, swimming races were the focal point of the competitions. The Israeli swimming team narrowed the gap between Israeli and American all-stars. The Israelis improved and broke eighteen Maccabiah records at the Tel Aviv Swimming Pool, sweeping nine Gold Medals, as opposed to fourteen for the Stars and Stripes. Leading Israeli swimmers included Lior Birkin and Madar Rubinstein (women) and Amit Daniel, Ron Kerman, Yoram

Kochavi and Yaron Elati (men). Outstanding among the Americans was Andy Zaltzman, winner of the 100 meter free style.

Track and field competitions were held in the National Sports Center in Hadar Yosef. This time Israeli athletes successfully challenged the previous supremacy of foreign athletes, the Americans in particular, in their respective sports. Israelis who distinguished themselves were: Yair Karmi, record breaker in the 10,000 meter race; Aryeh Gamliel, Manny Rosenberg, and Yoav Meckel (sprint) and Zvi Lauder (long distance running). The American athlete Brian Mendstein set impressive records in the 400 meter hurdle race (52.07 seconds) and decathlon. The British athlete Gary Wilson (Gold Medal for the 100 meter race) was crowned "The Fastest Jew in the World".

Outstanding tennis players were Shlomo Glickstein who ranked forty ninth in the world at the time, and Lonni Gilbert, who competed at the Tenth Maccabiah and ranked seventy second in the world on the list for women. While the performance level in the individual sports was outstanding, in team sports (soccer, basketball, volleyball and water polo) it left much to be desired. The Israeli all-star basketball team, basically an American team with Israeli tag alongs, was defeated in the playoffs. And for the first time in Maccabiah history, the Israeli soccer team did not reach the finals: the United States vs. South Africa, refereed by Israeli Avraham Klein.

All in all, 1,960 awards were presented -- 650 Gold Medals, 35 large shields of David (for team sports) and 108 small shields (for



competition involving individual and teams). The total budget for the Maccabiah was around \$1,750,000. Approximately 8,000 tourists arrived in Israel for the Games, adding six to seven million dollars to the State's coffers. Once again the organizers held an exhibit of children's paintings from nineteen countries, this time in Heichal Hatarbut (Mann Auditorium) in Tel Aviv. The impressive Closing Ceremony held in the Sultan's Pool in Jerusalem, included a moving audio-visual presentation projection, lighting up the walls of the Old City, accompanied by Prime Minister Menachem Begin's emotional plea to the athletes to carry out the commandment to live their lives in Israel.





The Twelfth Maccabiah: 5745 July 15 to July 25, 1985

3,700 Athletes from thirty seven countries competed in thirty events at the Twelfth Maccabiah. For the first time, contingents arrived from Panama, Guam, Gibraltar and Yugoslavia (one athlete). Colombia and Zaire, absent since the Sixth Maccabiah, renewed their participation after a twenty four year lapse. A new event, rhythmic gymnastics appeared for the first and last time. Boxing, a popular event in the first eleven Maccabiot, was eliminated from the list of competitions due to an insufficient number of competitors.

1,800 busses and 450 mini-busses transported the athletes during the Maccabiah. 82,000 telephone calls were placed from Kfar Maccabiah and 980 public figures participated. Mark Spitz, winner of seven Gold Medals for swimming at the Munich Olympics (1972) bore the torch accompanied by Shirley Shapira and Shulamit Romano, whose fathers were murdered by PLO terrorists at the Munich Games.

In thirty nine track and field competitions, nineteen Maccabiah records -- twelve men's and seven women's -- were broken, including the Israeli decathlon record. Israel won fifty four of the 117 medals awarded. At the pool, twenty one Maccabiah records were broken in thirty heats.

The United States won all Gold Medals but three, two went to Israel and one to Canada. Israel captured eleven of the ninety

swimming medals. In twenty two marksmanship competitions, eight Maccabiah records were surpassed. Israel came away with nineteen medals in the Men's Division, six of them Gold Medals and seven in the women's, three of them gold.

In the weight lifting contests, five records were set. Israel won thirteen of the twenty seven medals, four of them gold. The Israeli team triumphed in chess and the Australian team in bridge.

In the final Maccabiah tally, the Americans had won nearly half the Gold Medals, ninety Silver Medals and seventy four Bronze. In the playoffs the American men's basketball team beat the Israeli all-stars by one point (Israeli stars Berkovitz and Aroesti did not play this time). On the other hand, the Israeli soccer team, coached by Eliezer Shpiegel, beat Holland in the playoffs, 1:0. Thanks in

Medals in pistol shooting and Zvia Weissfield won the Gold Medal in the javelin throw. Table tennis Maccabiah champions were Israelis Dror Pollack, six time Israeli champion, and Iris Karni.

The Twelfth Maccabiah in 1985 was held against the backdrop of runaway inflation and a wave of labor strikes which threatened to paralyze the economy. The total budget for the Maccabiah reached four million dollars, and after the close, the deficit was forty thousand dollars.

As at former Maccabiot, Tour V^oAleh: of the Jewish Agency endeavored to exploit the Maccabiah to further Aliyah, setting up information centers at the athletes' quarters, organizing social occasions between the athletes and veteran immigrants and conducting tours throughout the country. Representatives of industry scouted among the athletes, extending job offers to potential immigrants with essential skills. In the last analysis, the Maccabiah proved to be a disappointment in this respect. With few exceptions, there was no real aliya. Once again, for the average participant, the Maccabiah was primarily a grand picnic, ten days of fun. Within the framework of accompanying events and in order to insure that there would be athletic reserves of youth for future Maccabiot, the organizers held a Junior Maccabiah, by all accounts a great success. Simultaneously, within a separate framework, competitions for veterans were held in several sports. For the first time, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Maccabiah organizers declared this year Maccabiah Year; all athletic competitions and championships in Israeli educational institutions were held marking the Maccabiah.:

In addition a ceremony bestowing the title ^oYakir Maccabi: was held in the Jerusalem Theatre. A world convocation of sports doctors from all over the world was held at the Wingate Institute. In addition, a world convocation of sports writers, jointly sponsored by the Maccabiah organizers and the Journalists Union, was held at Beit Sokolov in Tel Aviv. This time, the exhibit of children's paintings from twenty different countries was displayed in Dizengoff Center in Tel Aviv. The athletes planted three thousand saplings in Maccabi Forest in Modi'in honor of the Maccabiah. Finally, the National Postal Service published a bloc of three colorful stamps depicting three branches of competitions -- tennis, surfing and basketball. The stamps were valued between 400-600 shekels.



Following the grand Maccabiah tradition, the Closing Ceremony was held at the Sultan's Pool in Jerusalem. Prime Minister Shimon Peres, Mayor of Jerusalem,

Teddy Kollek, and Chairman of Maccabi World Union, Israel Peled, addressed thousands of athletes. The Maccabi flag was lowered by a snapping expert who glided down to the stage. A helicopter flew low into the Pool, grabbing the Maccabiah mascot, the Guri doll, and bearing it upwards to the skies. The main attraction was provided by members of the Amizur Kiryat Ono Athletic Association who climbed the walls of the Old City in view of the spectators at the Pool, creating a star of David with their bodies. The ceremony concluded with a spectacular fireworks presentation to the full-voiced audience singing 'Hora Jerusalem':



The Thirteenth Maccabiah: 5749 July 3 to July 13, 1989

The 13th Maccabiah Games, held in the summer of 1989, hosted 4,400 athletes from 46 countries, with approximately 1,000 from Israel. The athletes were billeted in 18 hostels, according to the various branches of sports. For the first time, since World War II, an East European contingent participated -- 57 athletes and their escorts, representing the Soviet Union and Lithuania (wrestlers of international standing, table tennis players, swimmers and weight lifters, Yugoslavia (14) in comparison to one from the previous Maccabiah, and Hungary. For the first time also, there were contingents from Cuba (7), Hong Kong, Korea (one multi-faceted athlete who competed in karate, badminton and the 100 meter race) and Singapore. India sent her largest delegation, since first participating in the Maccabiah Games -- some 28 athletes. Spain, which did not participate in the 12th Maccabiah, this time sent a team of junior soccer players and a fencing team. The South American participation, including Argentina, Uruguay and Venezuela, which had been in doubt because of lack of funding, did receive funding expressly for this purpose and came for the Maccabiah. South African athletes participated in competitions individually under the heading *Shaar HaEzra*: (The rest of the world), since their participation had been forbidden by the International Olympic Committee because of their apartheid policy. Much to their disappointment, their soccer and junior soccer players were forbidden to compete. There were thirty two competitive sports in the Thirteenth Maccabiah, including a brand new sport, bowling.

The difficult security situation, a year and a half after the outbreak of the Intifada, and the waves of unfriendly criticism in the world press, did not lead to any cancellation of registrations. On the contrary: at a time when tourism in Israel was at a low, the 13th Maccabiah attracted tens of thousands of tourists and fans to Israel. Also, the tragic terrorist incident on the 480 Tel Aviv-Jerusalem bus, in which the daughter of Maccabiah participant Kela Kennedy, was killed, did not prevent the continuation of the Games.

At the Opening Ceremony, except for the spectacular fireworks and free fall parachuting, the main emphasis was on Jewish and Israeli motives, demonstrated by a celebration of movement, color and special technical effects. 50,000 spectators were witness to the *Historical Rendezvous*: with *Tevye the Milkman*: and *Sallah Shabbati*: on the green when Dudu Fisher entered from a different part of the stadium, commanding a cart reigned to horses, with his voice bursting

into song ׁIf I were only Rothschild: from ׁFiddler on the Roof: and from the other side of the stadium, Zeցev Revach, seated in a cart from the 40ցs, sang from ׁSallah Shabbati:. Lasers projected a seven branched calendrum on the green and into this formation 800 children were placed, singing along with Fisher, ׁI belong to the Jewish nation: in 3 different languages.

The Israel Broadcasting Authority was prepared to broadcast full coverage of the Maccabiah events, and every day a ׁMaccabiah Day: was broadcast focusing on the daily events in the different sports events. Film crews covered the less popular sports events. The junior soccer games in the 13th Maccabiah were the star attraction; no less than nineteen countries signed up for the

Games, and the South Americans set the pace. Swimming seemed supreme with 17 Israeli records and 20 Maccabiah records set. The outstanding athletes in the 13th Maccabiah Games were the Americans Rick Ehrenberg (among the worldցs best in the 800 and 1500 meters), free style swimmer John Witschel (holding the 200 meter American record in free style swimming and among the 20 best in the world in short distance pool swimming), and the Israeli Eran Grommi (champion and Israeli record holder in backstroke). Among the outstanding women were Ruth Grodsky (who captured 4 individual Gold Medals) and Jeannie Sasser (six Golds, three of which were team wins.)

On the field were a number of outstanding athletes, among them the Canadian marathon runner Dave Edge from the world class of marathon runners, the American Ken Felix, hammer thrower (70.06 meters) and the Israelis, Ety Eluz (10.57 seconds in 100 meter), who earned the title ׁFastest Jewish Runner: and Rogel Nachum, who posted a record in the jump (16.77 meters) . The Israeli all-star junior basketball team was reinforced with four players from the adult team. The youngsters Nadav Handfield and Koren Anmisha stood out, when they and their group overcame, for the first time since the previous three Maccabiah Games, the American team, beating them 101-92. The main attraction was the ׁOldtimers: team with names from the past, like Joshua Rosin and Zacharia Ofri. For the first time in Maccabiah history the triathlon (30 kilometer biking, 7-1/2 kilometer running, 500 meter swimming) competition took place. The gold medal was won by Micha Kagan of Kibbutz Shamir.

Twenty four countries won Gold Medals at the 13th Maccabiah. The Maccabiah was budgeted at \$6,000,000. Israel won 97 Gold Medals, 82 Silver and 79

Bronze, leading the US -- 52-73-74, Canada -- 33-21-16, and Brazil -- 15-9-7. The Closing Ceremony at the Western Wall in Jerusalem, continued the םBar Mitzvah: theme of the Jewish Olympics. Symbolically, 13 flames were lit by the two torch bearers from the previous 12 Maccabiah Games (Uri Zohar and Motti Aroesti who conducted the swearing-in ceremony during the 11th and 12th Maccabiah Games took the place of former torch bearers Shlomo Glickstein and Mark Spitz) and a torch bearer from the 13th Maccabiah, Chanoch Boden, one of Israel's outstanding Handicapped Swimmers.

Eighty Zahal (IDF) orphans together with hundreds of American children, celebrated, on the morning of the Closing Ceremony, their Bar Mitzvah ceremonies at the Western Wall Plaza.

Also included were activities for the handicapped, two swimming events, tennis and basketball tournaments. The Ramat Gan Museum held a photography exhibition of the previous twelve Maccabiah Games. A םMaccabiah Youth Quiz: was held at Kfar Maccabiah -- the topic was םBody Culture in the Jewish Nation throughout the Generations.: Within the framework of םMaccabiah Eeek: the Ramat Gan Shopping Center sold shirts and souvenirs of the events. A special stamp was issued for the Thirteenth Maccabiah, designed by Rafi Diagi and produced by Dan Reisinger, and the world renowned artist, Yaakov Agam presented to the President of the State of Israel and new kinetic creation that he created especially for the event, called םLight of the Maccabiah.:



The Fourteenth Maccabiah: 5753 July 5 to July 15, 1993

The 14th Maccabiah broke attendance records: 5,100 athletes arrived from 48 countries and competed in 32 fields of sports. For the first time, since the establishment of the State of Israel, contingents arrived from Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and eight republics of the CIS. Croatia, Georgia and Portugal participated in the Maccabiah for the first time. The South African team returned and appeared under the South African flag, with the fall of apartheid and removal of the ban by the international community on the country. Seven-seven athletes and their escorts came from Turkey, after a gap of twenty four years, representing the Constantinople branch of Maccabi World Union (the first Maccabi Club) that had renewed its activities after many dormant years. Three athletes from Hong Kong appeared for the last time under the flag of their state. During the 15th Maccabiah the Hong Kong contingent will appear under the Chinese flag.

Three new games were added to this Maccabiah: netball (women), triathlon (1.5 kilometers swimming, 10 kilometers running and 40 kilometers biking), and a half marathon run.

The media also broke all participation records with 321 journalists from all over the world. At Kfar Maccabiah Bezek installed a modern communications center. Israel TV broadcast a special daily coverage, every evening, on the Maccabiah events, in addition to their live coverage from the swimming pool, the gymnastic arena, and the light athletic stadium.

The emotional Opening Ceremony, emphasizing Aliyah and Absorption, included a massive march, movement, dance, song, an air show (four Kfir planes flown by the IDF), gliders and a sound and light shows. The main attraction was provided by a Jumbo jet that landed at the beginning of the ceremony and a group of immigrants debarked in the center of the stadium.

Guests of honor were representatives of the International Olympic Committee and athletic veterans and Golden Agers: of Maccabi World Union, among them 80 year old Massimo de la Pergola, Chairman of Maccabi Italy and Chairman of a branch of International Sportswriters, and Juan Antonio Samarnash, President of the International Olympic Committee. A guest of honor of a different sort: was Robert de Niro, the movie actor, who was invited by the Israeli producer Arnon

Milchin; he sat in the box of honor next to the President, Prime Minister and Speaker of the House. Planted on the side of the stadium was a giant torch, 15 meters in height, that was designed by Yossi Assana and built by Yehuda Cranes Company. Amisragas supplied three tons of gas that kept a tremendous flame lit for six hours. The flame of the 14th Maccabiah -- the world's largest at 1.5 meters in height -- was seen from every possible angle in the stadium. The cost of the Opening Ceremony totalled \$850,000, about a tenth of the cost of the entire Maccabiah.

Sports events took place throughout the country -- from Metullah in the North to Ein Gedi in the South, with the main events centered in the Gush Dan region, so that the volleyball games were at Rashish Arena in Petah Tikva, soccer in Bat-Yam, the

tennis tournament in Ramat Hasharon, junior soccer and basketball in Yad Eliahu Stadium, badminton in Kiryat Sharett in Holon and the bowling tournament in the Super Bowl in Ari-Hahof Mall. The international chess championship was held at the Margoa Hotel in Netanya, while at the same time at the Tel Aviv University Campus, the handball, rugby and swimming events went on. Seven million shekels were invested in the construction of a modern gymnastics center at Hadar Yosef for the 14th Maccabiah. At the Olympic shooting range named for Yigal Alon in Herzliya, a new section opened for rifle marksmen in the 50 meter range.

The \$8.73 million budget for the 14th Maccabiah Games ended in an excess of \$50,000 (50% were subsidized by the delegations, 25% by the Government, Jewish Agency and municipalities, and the remaining by sponsorships, advertising and other sources). Unfortunately, the enormous energy and resources that were invested in this Maccabiah were not equally reflected in athletic achievements. The athletic competitions, which previously were the highlight of the Games, suffered cancellations from numerous categories: pole vaulting, hammer throw and walking (men), 10,000 meter run, triathlon and walking (women). Israel's swimming and athletic teams, this time captured fewer medals than in previous Maccabiah Games, but did walk away with first place in fencing, volleyball and for the first time in the history of the Maccabiah Games, also in badminton, following a difficult win over the outstanding British team, with a final score of 5:2. In total, Israel won 74 Gold Medals, 61 Silver and 50 Bronze, outstripping the United States -- 46-49-38, Canada -- 14-7-15 and the CIS -- 9-4-9.

The outstanding athletes, although perhaps not on the same level as previous

Maccabiah Games,
(10.74 seconds in 100 meters), the

included Darren Shongold

American athlete Jennifer Frank (12.26 seconds for 100 meters, beating Esther Roth's 20-year old record by half a second). These two athletes were crowned "Fastest Jew and Jewess in the World: at this Maccabiah. Vadim Baviko and Alex Feingret achieved impressive records in their javelin throwing with distances of 76.44 meters and 75.6 meters. Israeli Orit Kolodoni set a new record in the 400 meter run (54.27 seconds) on the same day that Itai Margalit secured his world record in Stuttgart with his vault jumping of 2.25 meters. The Ethiopian-Canadian athlete, Josef Kobir, won three Gold Medals at this Maccabiah in the 1,500, 5000 and 10,000 meter runs.

The American swimmer Lisa Martin was queen of the pool, winning seven Gold Medals, four of them individual ones. The young Israeli swimmer, Moran Zomerfeld, set new Israeli swimming records, when she broke Gineal's record set in 1980 in 400 meter freestyle, with a time of 3:58.43 minutes. CIS table tennis team introduced two Russian champions, Irena Timina and Vilna Felina, ranked 38 and 52 in the world and the National Canadian team member bettered the opponent Oleg Ladin in freestyle, who won a Gold Medal in the same year in the 100 kilo competition of the World Cup in Tennessee, USA. The gymnastics star of the Maccabiah, without a doubt, was the Olympic gymnast, Russian Valery Blaney, who participated only in the pre-trials and in the Opening Ceremony. Within the framework of the Junior Maccabiah, the gymnasts that stood out were Michal Shahat, European Junior jumping champion, Yahav Dori, the swimmers Avi Madnick (Toronto), Dov Melnick and Ethan Orbach (both of

Israel -- one of them champion in the breast stroke category, the second freestyle and backstroke.)

Among the accompanying events, this time during the Maccabiah, the Handicapped Olympic Games took place at the Sports Center in Ramat Gan.

This time the World Children's Art Exhibition was dedicated to the subject, "Leaping into the next century: -- alongside this an outstanding exhibition of sports-oriented photographs, under the title "Unrepeatable Moments: took place. Israel Educational Television held a Maccabiah Quiz for school children under the auspices of Dr. Uriel Zimri and Israel Paz. The Government Office of Medals and Coins minted a special Medal in honor of the Maccabiah, Bezek issued a special Telecard (phone card) with the Maccabiah emblem (Guri doll) and the Israel Postal Office issued, in the best of its tradition, a new stamp, dedicated this time to relay



runners, a team sport, requiring team work. On the stamp, designed by Dani Zilberman, relay runner #13 is passing the baton to relay runner #14, symbolizing the passing of the Maccabiah's Bar Mitzvah to the present one, #14. The World

Zionist Organization of the Jewish Agency, with the participation of Maccabi World Union leadership, developed a number of activities to encourage Aliyah, including: entertainment and cultural events, visiting homes of Israeli families, trips to become acquainted with the land, seminars and workshops to enrich the participants understanding and knowledge of Judaism and Zionism, festive meals and Sabbath songs.

The Maccabiah participants visited the new bus station in Tel Aviv fully one and a half months prior to its official opening, and enjoyed a well organized evening of Middle Eastern belly dancer, songs of Eretz Israel and typical Israeli cuisine.

The ten days of games and events culminated in the festive Closing Ceremony at the Sultan's Pool in Jerusalem, attended by the Prime Minister and Minister of Defense, Yitzchak Rabin and the Mayor of Jerusalem, Teddy Kollek.

The artistic part of the ceremony consisted of a classical rendition, with the participation of the Oratorio Choir of Jerusalem, Zahal (IDF) Orchestra and the Jerusalem Nitzanay Mochola (dance) group. The Closing Ceremony was signed off in a magnificent laser-light show, fireworks and the mass dancing of the hora, and at the end the dousing of the Maccabiah torch, followed by the departure of hundreds of athletes to Ben Gurion Airport for their return flight home, in great anticipation of the next Maccabiah.





15th Maccabiah - July 14 to July 24, 1997

The 15th Maccabiah, 14-24/07/1997 takes place and in the same year Israel celebrates 100 years to the Zionist Movement and the jubilee to the State of Israel. 5,500 sportspeople arriving from 50 countries compete in 34 fields of sport -in the conventional Maccabiah games, Masters' Maccabiah, Youth Maccabiah and Handicapped Maccabiah. This Maccabiah will be sadly remembered also due to the bridge disaster, when a bridge collapsed just as it was crossed by delegations during the opening ceremony. Yetty Bennett z"l, Greg Small z"l, Warren Zines z"l and Elizabeth Sawicki z"l from the Australian delegation were killed.



THE SIXTEENTH MACCABIAH 16th Maccabiah - July 16 to July 23, 2001

Intensive preparations and the registrations received from abroad indicated that the 16th Maccabiah would set records both for participant numbers and sporting achievements. However, the sudden upsurge of terrorism culminating in the Dolphinarium outrage in Tel Aviv (June 2001) just before the Maccabiah, caused a steady erosion in indications of participant numbers, leading to proposals by major Delegations for a year's postponement and even threatening cancellation of the Games. An emergency meeting of Maccabi leaders was held (June 2001) and high-level Israeli Government members who emphasized the importance of holding the Maccabiah and promised extraordinary security measures resulted in a decision to proceed without delay.

Amidst tight security precautions, the Opening Ceremony on 16th July, held for the first time ever at Teddy Stadium in Jerusalem, was a spectacular show that attracted an unprecedented TV audience. President Katsav opened the Games in the presence of Prime Minister Sharon, the Prime Minister of Romania and other VIP's from abroad, Israeli Cabinet Ministers, the Diplomatic Corps and many leaders of World Jewry, a powerful display of solidarity with Israel at a difficult time in its history. The Maccabiah Torch was carried into Teddy Stadium by Israel's star pole-vaulter Alex Awerbuch and the specially-constructed Flame was lit by Israel's triple gold medallist swimmer at the Sydney 2000 Paralympics Keren Leibovitch.

Despite the terrorist threat, many large Delegations participated, bringing 2,200 athletes from 46 countries and 1,100 from Israel. Amongst other European Delegations, big numbers came from Britain, Russia, Germany, France and Turkey; the USA, Canada and Argentina were impressively represented. Triple Sydney 2000 gold medallist and world record-holder Lenny Krayzelburg (USA) was the standout of the Maccabiah swimming competition otherwise dominated by Israelis. Russian gold medallists at Sydney, Maria Mazina and Sergei Charikov, were the stars of an excellent fencing tournament, and the Judo and Tennis tourneys in particular, were of outstanding quality. Once again, the Junior Maccabiah, centered on Zichron Ya'acov was a great success.

The Closing Ceremony at Sultan's Pool – attended by the Prime Minister and Jerusalem Mayor Olmert – was the grand finale to an outstanding Sixteenth



Maccabiah, expressing the pride of all who participated.





The Seventeenth Maccabiah 11-23 July 2005

The Seventeenth Maccabiah (July 2005) completely fulfilled its promise: it was "The Moment to Love". It was also a major leap forward: led over the new 15th Maccabiah Bridge by the massive 533-person Australian Delegation, an astonishing number of athletes, 7326 from 55 countries, were greeted by President Katsav, Prime Minister Sharon and an ecstatic capacity audience in Ramat Gan National Stadium. Windsurfer Gal Fridman, Israel's first-ever Olympic Gold medalist, lit the Flame, and the massed artistic program was a breathtaking whirl of color, movement and the spirit of Judaism.

Cricket, Fencing, Judo, Karate, Rugby and Triathlon were amongst the highest-level sports events ever staged in Israel, enlivened by the participation of many Olympic medalists and top-class international players. Gymnastics provided a stellar evening gala, Bryan Goldberg (USA) was the standout record-breaker in the pool, Israeli golfer Andy Nemiroff won Gold with a staggering 279, the superbly-managed Dutch women outclassed everyone else in field hockey, and world-class chess player Judit Polgár (Hungary) exhibited her amazing skills in a marathon of simultaneous games.

Preceded by the Israel Government's official declaration of 2005 as the "Year of the Maccabiah" with many cultural events, media interest in "Maccabiah 2005" – especially via Internet – was exceptionally high, and nearly 2000 enthusiastic Maccabiah Volunteers lent a hand to the Organizing Committee. Israel's

European Champion Judoka, Arik Ze'evi, participated in an emotional Closing Ceremony at Sultan's Pool in Jerusalem.





for the first time under their own national flag, paraded into the Opening Ceremony. For the first time ever, all the athletes remained in the arena, not in the bleachers, for the show themed on the Jews becoming a nation and building a home in Eretz Yisrael. The Closing Ceremony show at the IDF Armor Corps Memorial in Latrun was amazing, probably the best ever.

Future historians might well note the 18th Maccabiah as a milestone in the development of Maccabi's flagship event. It was the first to be televised beyond Israel's borders, but it was also the first Maccabiah, perhaps the first sports event of such giant size anywhere, whose accommodation, organization and logistics backbone performed flawlessly, including a daily average of more than 500 buses and other transit journeys between 24 hotels, 6 youth villages, 47 training and 50 competition venues.