

# SOUL SPORT

December 2015

**All Time  
Greatest Jewish  
Athletes**

**Mandela Sport  
& Reconciliation**

**MOTIVATION:  
GETTING IT - KEEPING IT**

The Golden Era of  
Jewish Boxing

Soul Sport incl.VAT:R29

A SOUTH AFRICAN JEWISH SPORTS PUBLICATION

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# FULL PAGE AD

## Letter from the Publisher



Who is the greatest Jewish athlete of all time?

Soul Sport tackles this question in this December issue and finds in Mark Spitz, Dara Torres and Agnus Keleti, all multiple Olympic achievers, worthy challengers for this accolade.

Spitz and Torres are swimmers and with their intense training schedules, can at times spend up to a quarter of their day in the water. Water is not a natural human habitat yet these people live a significant part of their lives within that dimension.

Jewish teaching has a deep and profound insight connected to this. The code of Jewish Law obliges parents to fulfil certain duties towards their children and amongst them is to teach them how to swim. To become accustomed to the world of water. There needs to be a familiarity of both land existence as well as a comfortability with the realm of water.

Here is where it gets fascinating. Dry land is described in Torah as the behavioural, external, outer dimension of a human being, while the inner and hidden part of who we are, our spiritual identity, is compared to the world that exists out of view, the world of water.

A parent has to therefore not only introduce a child to the world of the dry land, to be trained in good and proper conduct, but is also obliged to ensure there is familiarity with the world of water, the non-tangible hidden dimension - that of having a sound knowledge of the soul, an integration with spiritual truths and a definite sense of inner identity.

I find Steven Katzew's piece on the dominant era of Jewish boxers fascinating. It was in the period between World War 1 and World War 2 that boxers parading the 'Magen David' were abundant. It reminded me of my late Zeide, Mark Balkind o.b.m who was a charitable stalwart in the Johannesburg Jewish community. An American, he fought for the Allies during World War 2 and in his time, he was the Boxing champion of his division in the US corps.

Having visited the Lubavitcher Rebbe at the age of 16, I received a glimpse of this iconic leader of leaders. There was hardly a subject, if any, that he did not advance in his teachings - sports included. Chess and baseball are the focus as he opens a window to the Divine, through sport.

There is a feast of spectacular articles by our outstanding journalists and a stunning array of adverts.

Much hard work has gone into producing such a voluminous publication such as what we have. I hope you appreciate, enjoy and are inspired by it!

Your feedback is always valued so please send us your thoughts and comments to: [soulsportsa@gmail.com](mailto:soulsportsa@gmail.com)

Have a safe and enjoyable break and we look forward to being back in 2016!

Yours in sport

Ilan Daniel Herrmann

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# Mark Spitz

By Soul Sport

South Africa, at its most Jewishly populated, was home to approximately 120 000 Jews. From this relatively small figure a truly remarkable high number of top level sportsmen and women emerged. These include world champions such as Jody Scheckter in motor-racing, surfer Shaun Tomson, Wimbledon and multiple Grand Slam winner Ilana Kloss, South African Cricket captain Ali Bacher and more recently, South African Soccer captain Dean Furman, to name but a few. And the list really does go on and on.

In global terms, whilst SA is right up there with producing great sports personalities per capita, the earth spans big and we have to travel continents, cross oceans and seek out generations, to evaluate the best Jewish athlete of all time.

The USA, home to about six million Jews, nearly half the worlds' Jewish population, probably gave us, albeit arguably, the number one Jewish athlete of all time - swimmer Mark Spitz.

It was amidst the backdrop of the tragic and infamous Munich Olympics of 1972, where 11 Israeli athletes were massacred by Arab terrorists that Mark Spitz, USA national swimmer, claimed a record number of gold medals.

The sports headlines following his Olympic coupe had variations all of one theme: "Spitz stuns the world with 7 gold medals." That event established him as one of histories most acclaimed athletes that few would ever match, let alone surpass.

The Guardian wrote on the following day: "Mark Spitz last night crowned his Olympic feats by winning his 7th gold medal of the Games and setting a record that may never be beaten." Indeed, his record lasted 36 years and would only be surpassed by USA swimmer Michael Phelps at the Beijing Olympics in 2008.

The Early Years

Mark Spitz was born on February the 10th 1950. He was one of three siblings. At age 2, Mark's parents, Arnold and Lenore Spitz, decided to move to Hawaii. He would spend hours swimming almost every day at Waikiki Beach. His father had

## BEST JEWISH ATHLETES OF ALL TIME

a strong ethic for discipline and competitiveness and passed this on to Mark.

At age 6 Mark began to compete at his local swim club. A few years later at the tender age of nine, he trained at Arden Hills Swim Club in Sacramento with Sherm Chavoor, the swimming coach who mentored him and six other Olympic medal winners.

Before he was 10, Mark Spitz held 17 national age-group records and one world record.

His family moved again when he was 14 years old, this time to train under George Haines of the Santa Clara Swim Club in California. During his four years there, Mark held national high school records in every stroke and in every distance. It was an unprecedented achievement.

Mark Bar-Mitzva'd and his father instilled some basic Jewish observances such as attending services on the high holidays and observing a Pesach seder. His most identifying Jewish experience would be the horror of the Munich massacre which he would cite as an event that called upon him to identify. "I felt an obligation to affirm my ties as a Jew," Spitz once said, "and to become educated on the issues so I could speak knowledgeably."

Gauging from comments attributed to him, Spitz had a brash personality and spoke with a swagger and bluntly without much subtlety. His approach gave no allowance for excuses. Their was no place for second best. His priority was simple - swim and be the World Champion. That's all and that's it.

## A Dazzling Career

It was at the 1965 Maccabiah Games, Spitz's first international competition, that he shot to prominence. At the age of 15, he won four gold medals and was named 'most outstanding athlete of the tournament'.

In 1966, at age 16, he won the 100-meter butterfly at the National AAU Championships, the first of 24 AAU titles. Mark emerged on the world swimming stage when, in 1967, he set his first world record at a small California meet in the 400-meter freestyle. Also in 1967, he won five gold medals at the V Pan American Games in Winnipeg, and set a record that was not surpassed for 40 years.

In the 1968 Olympic Games Spitz won two team gold medals in the 4 x 100-meter freestyle and the 4 x 200-meter freestyle relay. Overall he had hoped to win 5 medals and this was a let down for him and his team.

After the Olympic Games, Spitz enrolled in Indiana University and trained with legendary coach Doc Counsilman, who was also his coach previously in Mexico City. Counsilman would bring out the best in Spitz. While attending IU, Spitz won 8 individual NCAA titles. Then, in 1971, he won the James E. Sullivan Award as the top amateur athlete in the United States.

**"I felt an obligation to affirm my ties as a Jew and to become educated on the issues so I could speak knowledgeably."**

His teammates nicknamed him "Mark the Shark". Speaking about his training, Spitz once commented: "I was programmed for all those years. I swam two and a half hours in the morning and two in the evening, maybe seven miles a day for six years."

## Munich

Above all other achievements Mark Spitz will be remembered best for his astonishing win of seven gold medals at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games. He was 22 at the time.

In one of the most dramatic instances in Olympic history, Spitz won his 7th and final medal on September 4th only hours before Palestinian terrorists captured and eventually murdered 11 Israeli athletes in the Munich Olympic Village.

When he arrived at the press conference the following day he was greeted with the horrific news. As a precaution, now being the most famous athlete at the Olympics and Jewish, Spitz was whisked out of the country under heavy security for fear of his safety. He recalls, "We flew to London, and from there I flew to California. When I landed in Sacramento, I was met by Ronald Reagan and members of the Secret Service. The Secret Service remained with me for the next three months."

In every race that he won the 7 medals in, he broke the world record time:

100 metres freestyle, 51.2sec.; 200 metres freestyle, 1min 52.8sec.; 100 metres butterfly, 54.3sec.; 200 metres butterfly, 2min 00.7sec.; 4 x 100 freestyle relay, 3min 26.4sec.; 4 x 200 freestyle relay, 7min 35.8 sec.; 4 x 100 medley relay, 3min 48.2sec.

Spitz retired immediately after that Olympics. He became a celebrity, a sporting sensation and he cashed in on it with some very lucrative advertising contracts. Spitz earned \$6m in just his first two years out of the pool!

## Weighing In

Weighing in on some of his accomplishments, Mark Spitz:

Broke 33 world records  
Claimed 9 Olympic medals  
Was named World Swimmer of the Year in 1967, 1971, and 1972  
Was nominated in 1971 for the first Jewish recipient of the James E. Sullivan Award, given annually to the Amateur Athlete of the Year  
In the bicentennial year 2000, Sports Illustrated named Spitz No. 33 on its list of the 'Top 100 Athletes of the 20th Century'  
Won 10 Maccabiah gold medals

When Michael Phelps won eight gold medals in Beijing, surpassing Spitz's seven, the former champions raging ego nowhere to be seen, took his relegation stoically. "He is the single greatest Olympic athlete of all time now," Spitz said. "I always wondered what my feelings would be. I feel a tremendous load off my back."

Prior to the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, Spain, Spitz attempted a comeback. But at age 39 and eight pounds heavier than in 1972, he failed to qualify.

Spitz serves as a member of the World Sports Academy bringing sports to less fortunate children of the world. He ventured into motivational speaking, real-estate investment and swimming-pool design in the years following his swimming career.

Spitz lives in Los Angeles with his wife Suzy (nee Weiner, married in 1973) and has two sons, Matt and Justin.

He still swims.



# Agnus Keleti

Agnus Keleti has a unique and remarkable story. Keleti joins Mark Spitz and Dara Torres as the third of the most successful Jewish Olympians in history. She is the winner of ten medals including five gold, three silver, and two bronze.

Agnus Keleti was born Agnes Klein on 9 January 1921 in Hungary. She began to study gymnastics at the age of 4 in Budapest, winning her first Hungarian national title at 16, the first of 10 which would be won consecutively from 1947 to 1956.

It was disappointing when, after much preparation for the 1940 Olympics, the war began and the Games were cancelled. This was, however, to be the least of the hardships that she would have to endure.

At the beginning of the war Keleti's father was sent to Auschwitz, while her mother and sister were saved by Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. Keleti managed to purchase the papers of a Christian girl and escaped to a small Hungarian village, where she worked as a maid, hiding her Jewish identity.

During the battle for Budapest in the winter of 1944-1945, part of her duties was the morning rounds of collecting bodies of those who had died the previous day and placing them in a mass grave.

So as not to be taken to labor camps, she hastily married fellow Hungarian gymnast Istvan Sarkany in 1944. They would divorce in 1950.

After the war, she learned that her mother and sister had survived the concentration camps, but that her father and all her other relatives had been murdered at Auschwitz.

Keleti returned to gymnastics and made

the 1948 Hungarian squad, but an injury caused her to miss Olympic competition. She was nonetheless awarded a silver medal when Hungary finished second in the team competition.

At the 1952 Helsinki Olympics, Keleti, now aged 31, won a gold medal in the Floor Exercises, silver in the Combined Team competition, and a bronze in both Team Hand Apparatus and Uneven Parallel Bars.

In 1954 she captured the World Championship in Uneven Bars, and her Hungarian team won the silver medal in Team Exercises. She also took the bronze medal in the Balance Beam, and finished fourth in the Floor Exercise.

At the 1956 Melbourne Olympics, Keleti - now at the advanced age of 35 - won gold medals in the Free-Standing Exercise, Balance Beam, Parallel Bars, and Team Combined Exercise (portable apparatus), and silver medals in the individual all-around and team all-around competitions. At 35, Keleti became the oldest female gymnast ever to win gold.

Four weeks before the opening of the Melbourne Games, the Hungarian Revolution began, with the Soviet Union sending troops into Hungary to quash a revolution that had erupted against the Communist domination it was under.

It was two weeks after the revolt that Keleti and the rest of the Hungarian team left for the Melbourne Olympics and, once there, Keleti refused to return home, defecting to the West.

She was able to get her mother and sister out of Hungary, and in 1957 they settled in Israel. "I felt here that I was at home," was her remark about her arrival in Israel in 1957. Keleti became an instructor in physi-

cal education at Tel Aviv University and at the Wingate Institute, where she developed a number of national gymnastic teams. Happily, she took Israeli citizenship.

She met and married Robert Biro, a fellow Hungarian physical education teacher, and bore two sons: Daniel and Rafael.

Keleti's total of 10 Olympic medals ranks third of all-time among women athletes, and her five gold medals rank fourth of all-time for an individual winner of Olympic gold medals.

Keleti was inducted into the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in 1981, the Hungarian Sports Hall of Fame in 1991 and the International Gymnastics Hall of Fame in 2002.

Keleti was also an accomplished musician, playing the cello, which she played professionally.

1948 OLYMPIC GAMES  
Silver Medalist

- Team  
1952 OLYMPIC GAMES  
Gold Medalist & Olympic Champion:  
- Floor Exercise  
Silver Medalist  
- Team  
Bronze Medalist  
Uneven Bars

1956 OLYMPIC GAMES  
Gold Medalist & Olympic Champion:  
- Uneven Bars  
- Balance Beam  
- Floor Exercise (T)  
Silver Medalist  
- All-Around  
- Team



# Dara Grace Torres



Dara Torres is tied with Jenny Thompson and Natalie Coughlin, as the most decorated U.S. female swimmer ever with 12 medals. She is also a likely candidate for the most prolific Jewish sportswoman of all time. Here is her story.

Dara Grace Torres was born in Beverly Hills, California, on April 15 1967 as one of five children to Edward Torres and Marylu Kauder. Her father was Jewish and while her mother was not, Torres eventually converted to Judaism at the age of 33.

Growing up, Torres followed her brothers' lead by joining the local YMCA where she swam before formally joining formal a swimming school. At age 12 Torres set her first US national record and entered her first international swimming competition 2 years later at age 14. In 1984, at age 17, Torres competed in her first Olympics held in Los Angeles. She would go on to compete in a record five Olympics!

In 1986, Torres accepted an athletic scholarship to attend the University of Florida in Gainesville whom she swam for until 1989. While there, she earned a whopping 28 NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) All-American swimming awards (the most possible) and was named NCAA Swimmer of the Year and Southeastern Conference's Athlete of the Year (both in 1988).

It was at the Olympics that Torres shone with a brilliance and left an indelible mark and a remarkable legacy. In her five Olympics she accumulated twelve medals.

Torres' list of 12 Olympic medals reads:

1984 Los Angeles  
Gold in U.S. women's 4x100-meter relay team.

1988 South Korea  
Bronze in 4x100-meter freestyle relay.  
Silver in freestyle leg of the 4x100-meter medley relay.

1992 Barcelona  
Gold in 4x100-meter freestyle relay

2000 Sydney  
Five medals. Gold in 4x100-meter freestyle relay. Gold in 4x100-meter medley relay. Three Bronze medals in individual races - 50m freestyle; 100 metre butterfly; 100 metre freestyle.

2008 Beijing  
Three medals. Silver in 4x100-meter freestyle relay; Silver in the individual 50m freestyle; Silver in 4x100-meter medley relay.

**"I think this performance ranks up there with the biggest performances in sports ever...It puts Dara in the ranks of Michael Phelps, Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods"**

The Beijing games were also notable for Torres because that year she became the oldest Olympic swimmer in history and set an American record by participating in her 5th Olympic Games, which was especially impressive considering that she sat out the 1996 and 2004 Games.

In the words of her coach Michael Lohberg on winning three medals at age 41:

"I think this performance ranks up there with the biggest performances in sports ever...It puts Dara in the ranks of Michael Phelps, Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods. What she has done is really not measurable."

Another quite incredible feat is the fact that after the 1992 Olympics Torres left competitive swimming for 7 years and only

began to train for an Olympic comeback in 1999. One year later, in Sydney, she claimed 5 medals in spectacular fashion.

A further noteworthy accomplishment is that in 2007, at age 40, only 16 months after giving birth to her first child, Torres won the 100-meter freestyle at the U.S. Nationals and three days later bettered her own American 50-meter freestyle record.

Torres has broken or lowered her own American record in the 50-meter freestyle 10 times, which is the most by any American swimmer in any event.

## Later Years

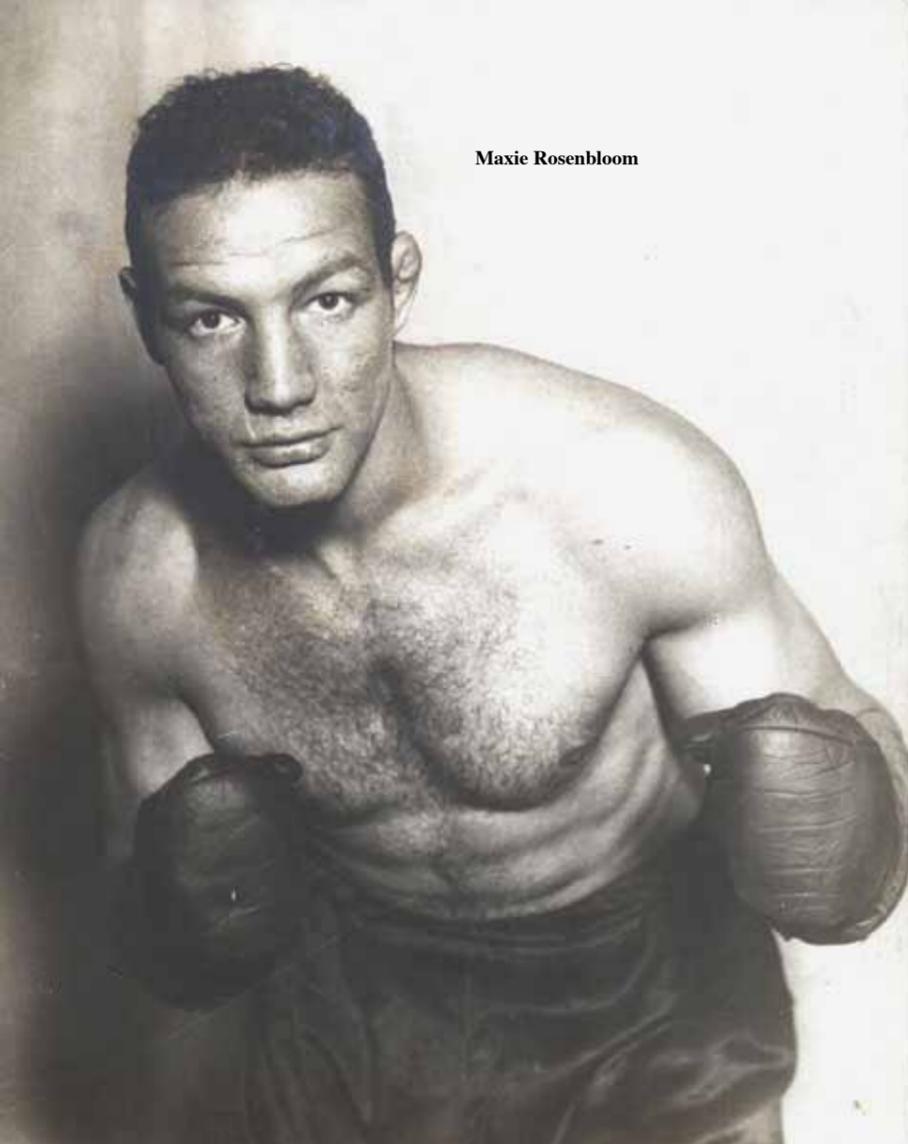
Torres braved an attempt at a comeback in 2012 at the age of 45, but it wasn't to be as she failed to make the 2012 Olympic team.

Torres is a highly sought after celebrity speaker and has appeared as a commentator on Fox News, ESPN and the Discovery Channel. She was the first female athlete to be featured in the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue. Sports Illustrated named her one of the Top Female Athletes of the decade in 2009.

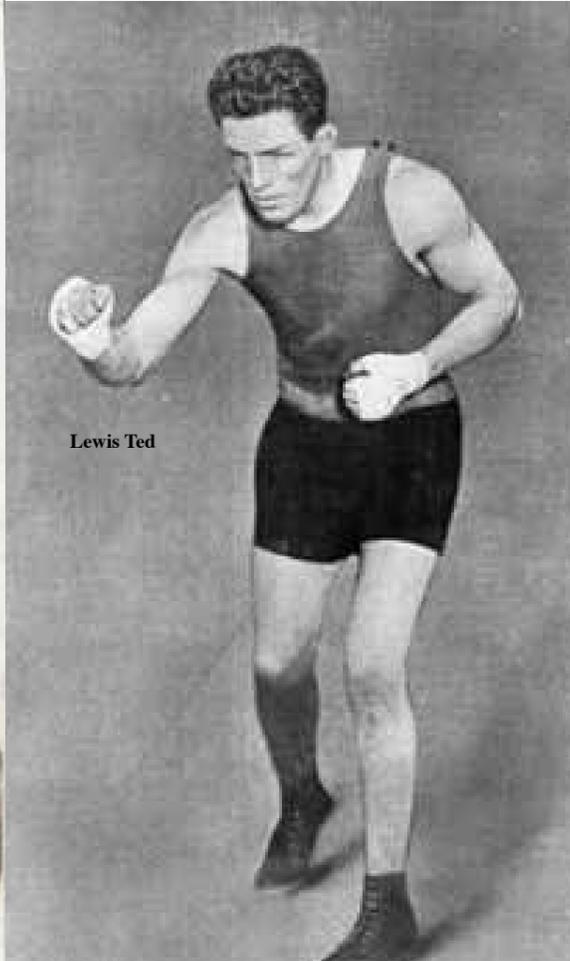
Torres' has published two books - Age Is Just a Number: Achieve Your Dreams at Any Stage in Your Life in 2009 and Gold Medal Fitness: A Revolutionary 5-Week Program in 2010.

Torres is a veteran promotional swimmer for Swim Across America, a charitable organization that raises funds for cancer research.

An Olympian, author, mother, role model and more, Dara Torres is many things to many people, but above all, she is an inspiration.



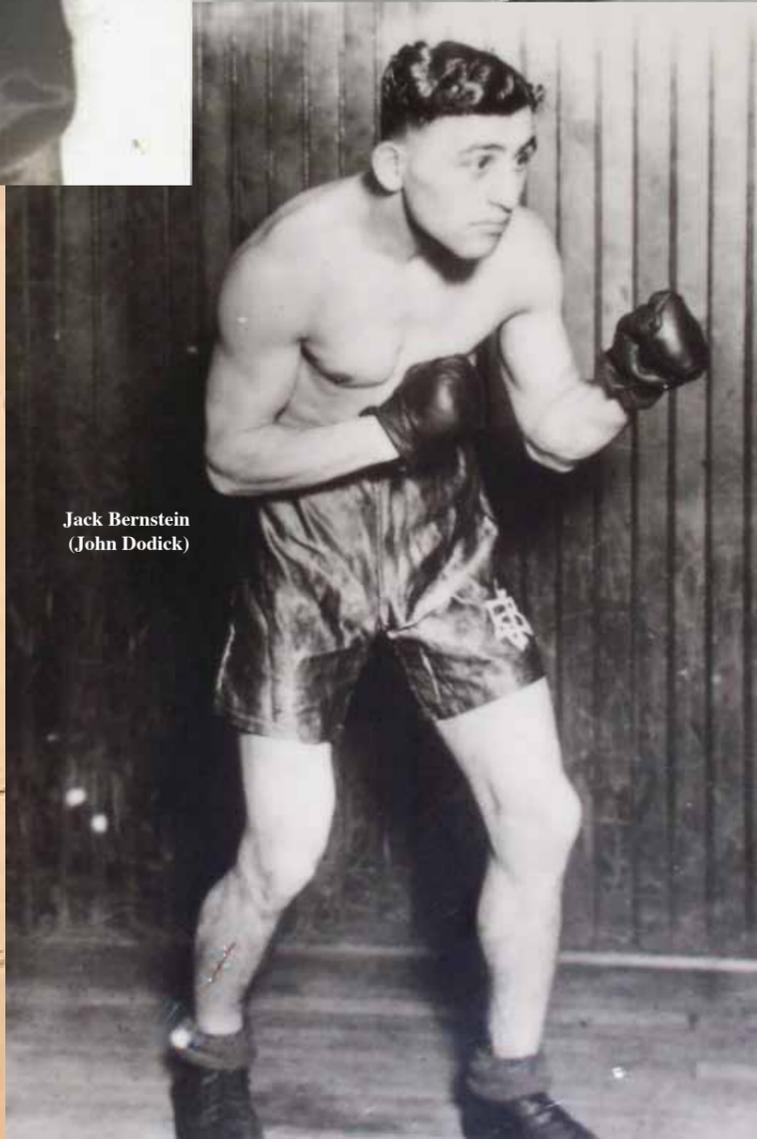
Maxie Rosenbloom



Lewis Ted



Abe Attell



Jack Bernstein  
(John Dodick)

# THE GLORIOUS ERA OF JEWISH BOXING

## When Jews held half the World Boxing titles at one time

By Steven Katzew

If a study were to be done to determine the extent of Jewish influence in any one sport, it is hard to imagine a sport that would come up more prominently than boxing.

While finding a professional Jewish boxer in the modern professional circuit is not an easy task, there was a time when Jewish boxers dominated the sport.

As we open the archives and search the different weight divisions and narrow down the search to World Champions, a fascinating result reveals the extent of Jewish influence in boxing.

But before we look at the statistics, it should be pointed out that the number of Jewish World Champions, upon which we will focus, by default reflects a vast participation by Jews in Boxing at all levels. The list of Jewish fighters in general is extensive and perhaps it is this sheer weight of their huge and influential numbers that produced the list of Champions. (The same, of course, applies to the so-called Springbok Rugby Minyan, which has become the sole focus of Jewish involvement in SA Rugby but which conceals a long list of unheralded Jewish participants in SA Rugby in various capacities, at different levels, who are in fact the *raison d'être* for the Springbok Minyan.)

The term World Champion carries a specific connotation of top Boxer in the World. In Boxing, however, this is not always the case with different Boxing Bodies recognising different Boxers as World Champions at any one time.

**“The image of Baer with the Magen David on his trunks knocking out the much vaunted Schmeling in a high profile heavyweight bout may be convincing enough of the genuineness of his pursuit for recognition as a Jewish fighter”**

Sometimes unification bouts take place where champions from two different Bodies face off and the result is an undisputed Champion, but often no Boxer emerges as undisputed Champion in a given era, leaving a number of Boxers in a single weight division carrying the mantle of World Champion. So to narrow the large numbers down further, we will identify, where possible, Jewish Boxers who were undisputed World Champions in that there were no other recognised versions of the World Title during their reigns, or alternatively that they held both or all versions of the Title.

A further question that needs to be looked at is that of “Who is a Jew” which raged in the early days of professional boxing for the reason that there appears to have been currency in a Jewish Fighting profile. What this means is that by identifying oneself as a Jewish Boxer there were certain advantages to a fighter and this may have been exploited.

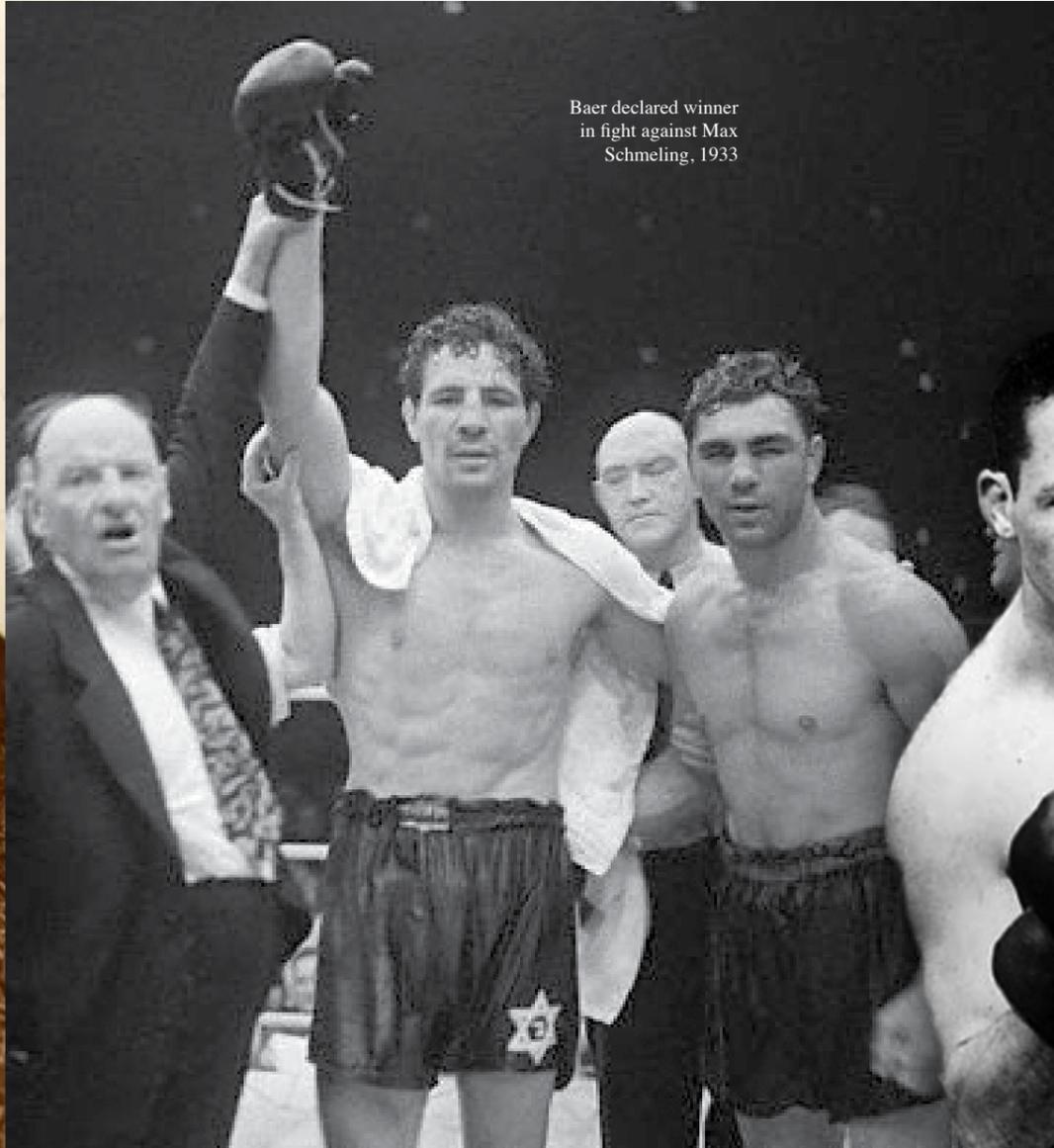
Top of the controversy list must be former World Heavyweight Champion Max Baer, an American who claimed to have Jewish roots and who fought with a Magen David emblazoned on his trunks. He is an inductee into the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame in Netanya, Israel, but is omitted from the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, an American hall of fame that honours only American Jews. This may be because doubts have been expressed about Baer’s claim to Jewish roots. Prof. Cecil Roth, editor in chief of the Encyclopedia Judaica said this:

“... Baer wore a Magen David on his boxing trunks and claimed “Jewish blood” on his father’s side. However, many boxing experts maintained that Baer’s claim was a publicity stunt. ...”

The following anecdote on the subject appears in *The Illustrated History Of Boxing* by Harry Mullan (1990):



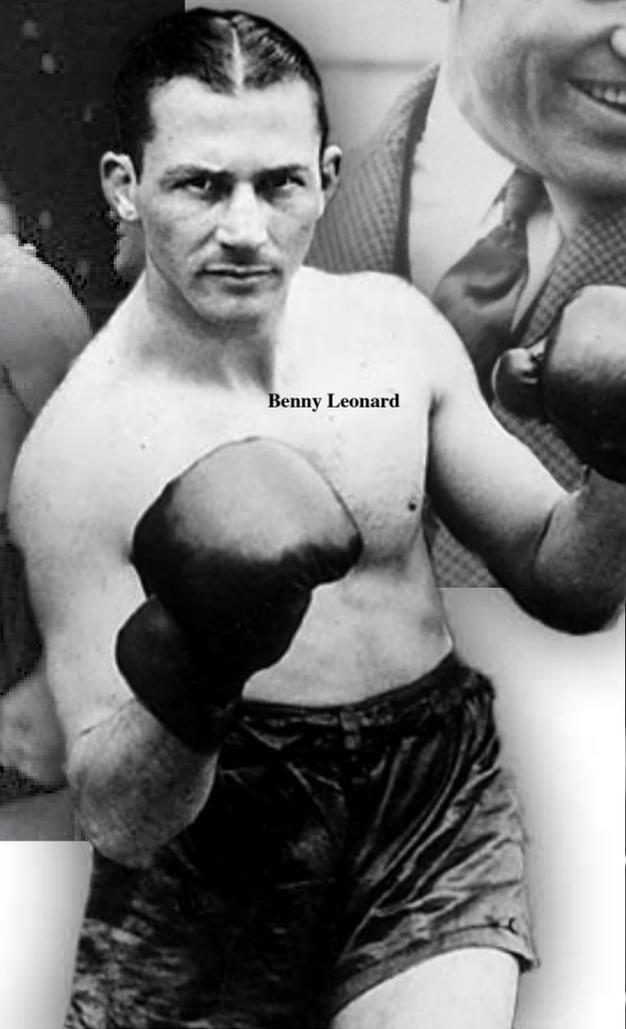
Max Baer



Baer declared winner in fight against Max Schmeling, 1933



The Kid Lewis with Jack Dempsey



Benny Leonard



Max Baer



Bareny Ross



Bob Olin

“ ... Baer, whose brother Buddy was a competent heavyweight who ... faced Joe Louis twice for the championship, tried to cash in on the Jewish market by wearing the Star of David on his trunks. In fact, he was of German Catholic extraction, and his trainer Ray Arcel settled the matter of his ethnic origins with the marvellous line that ‘ I seen the guy in the shower, and believe me he ain’t Jewish!’”

In contrast, Arthur Goldman, well-known South African sports and travel writer of the 1950’s, 1960’s and 1970’s, introduces Max Baer as follows in his book *Stars Of David*:

“But Maxie Baer, son of a Jewish slaughter-house owner, was the glorious exception. Anything for a gag, anything to make his hordes of female admirers laugh at their handsome hero.”

So was he? Wasn’t he? We might need a “Magnum PI” to dig deeper.

Another such case may be former World Junior-Lightweight Champion Jack Bernstein, who with a name like that would be a cinch to be Jewish. Indeed he was about to be included in my list of Jewish Champions when I happened upon Gilbert Odd’s *Encyclopedia Of Boxing* which said that Bernstein’s real name was John Dodick!

All this presents the idea of the notable value of Jewish identification in boxing of yesteryear.

Despite the uncertainty, considering the significant Jewish profile associated with Max Baer, I have included him as a Jewish World Champion.

Baer in fact made his Jewish representation count in one of his most famous bouts. In 1933 at New York’s Madison Square Gardens (the year before Baer won the World Heavyweight Title) Baer demolished one of Hitler’s favourite German boxers, Max Schmeling who was favourite to win the fight. As the Nazi darkness descended over Europe, the image of Baer with the Magen David on his trunks knocking out the much vaunted Schmeling in a high profile heavyweight bout may be convincing enough of the genuineness of his pursuit for recognition as a Jewish fighter.

But here’s a mind-blowing statistics. During the ten month period between June 1934 to April 1935, five of the ten undisputed World Boxing Titles were held by boxers with a media proclaimed status as being Jewish. They are Max Baer (heavy-

weight), Maxie Rosenbloom and Bob Olin (light-heavyweight - they exchanged the title on 16th November 1934 in the middle of the ten month period) and Barney Ross (welterweight, light-welterweight and lightweight).

To properly contextualise this phenomenon there requires an understanding of the history of Jewish immigration into the United States and the United Kingdom. Most of the Jewish World Champions concerned were first generation offspring of Jewish immigrants from Europe, Russia and the Baltic to the US and UK.

Important as well is the understanding of the history of Boxing in the social fabric of society at the time. Many of the elite in these societies were involved in Boxing. Success in the professional fight game rallied the enthusiastic support of whole communities who saw their heroes as champions of causes far greater than their own individual ambitions.

While Baer, Rosenbloom, Olin and Ross as World Champions in a single timeframe, gave us the most dominant period of Jewish boxing, there were other sensational fighters at other times who did remarkable things. Benny Leonard, for example, held the World Lightweight title for an astonishing eight years stretching over several eras, regarded by experts as exceptional for quality and talent. Indeed, Benny Leonard is accepted as one of the greatest lightweights of all time.

Similarly, Abe Attell held the World Flyweight title for an equally astonishing eight years.

Capturing the World Heavyweight title in itself makes Baer a great, but he failed dismally against the giant of his time, the great Joe Louis. This is unlike Ross, Leonard and British Champion Ted "Kid" Lewis who all conquered the best in their respective leagues while they were in their prime. It is notable that Lewis is often held up as the greatest boxer Britain has ever produced - an incredible reputation for the son of Jewish immigrants to England.

It is these and other facts and features about the fascinating rise of Jewish boxers that ultimately, perhaps inevitably, produced the amazing statistic that from 14th June 1934 - when Max Baer became the heavyweight champion of the World - until April 1935 - when Barney Ross relinquished the World.

*Steven Katzew has been a practicing advocate for over 25 years. He played sport at Provincial and the University level including soccer, squash and rugby. He is an avid sports fan and follows Jews in sport closely.*



## The reigns of undisputed Jewish World Boxing Champions have been as follows:

- Heavyweight** - Max Baer 14th June 1934 to 13th June 1935
- Light-heavyweight** - Battling Levinsky 24th October 1916 to 12th October 1920  
- Maxie Rosenbloom 14th July 1932 to 16th November 1934  
- Bob Olin 16th November 1934 to 31st October 1935
- Middleweight** - Al McCoy 7th April 1914 to 14th November 1917
- Welterweight** - Ted "Kid" Lewis 31st August 1915 to 24th April 1916  
- Ted "Kid" Lewis 25th June 1917 to 17th March 1919  
- Jackie Fields 25th March 1929 to 9th May 1930  
- Jackie Fields 28th January 1932 to 22nd February 1933  
- Barney Ross 28th May 1934 to 17th September 1934  
- Barney Ross 28th May 1935 to 31st May 1938
- Light-Welterweight** - Jack "Kid" Berg 18th February 1930 to 23rd April 1931  
- Barney Ross 23rd June 1933 to May 1935
- Lightweight** - Benny Leonard 28th May 1917 to retired 15th January 1925  
- Al Singer 17th July 1930 to 14th November 1930  
- Barney Ross 23rd June 1933 to April 1935
- Junior Lightweight** - Benny Bass 19th December 1929 to 15th July 1931
- Featherweight** - Abe Attell 1st February 1904 to 22nd February 1912  
- Louis "Kid" Kaplan 2nd January 1925 to 6th July 1926  
- Benny Bass 19th September 1927 to 10th February 1928
- Bantamweight** - Harry Harris 18th March 1901 to 1901 (relinquished due to difficulties with making the weight)  
Abe Goldstein 21st March 1924 to 19th December 1924  
Charlie Rosenberg 20th March 1925 to 4th February 1927  
Robert Cohen 19th September 1954 to 29th June 1956  
Alphonse Halimi 6th November 1957 to 8th July 1959
- Flyweight** - Victor "Young" Perez 27th October 1931 to 31st October 1932

From August 1915 through to 8th July 1959 the numbers of Jewish reigning champions were as follows:

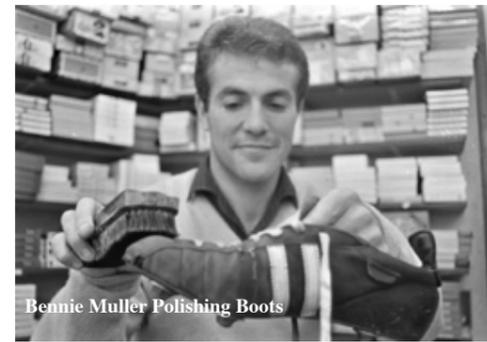
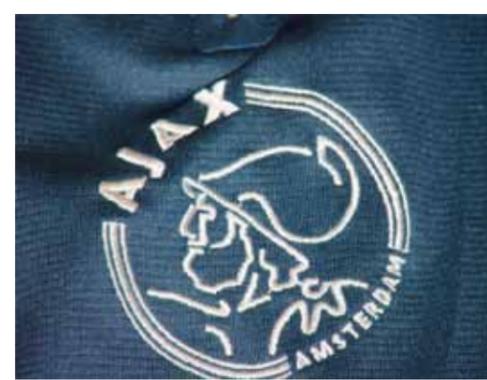
1. In two of the ten divisions as from 31st August 1915 to 24th April 1916.
2. In three of the ten divisions as from 25th June 1917 to 14th November 1917.
3. In two of the ten divisions as from 21st March 1924 to 19th December 1924.
4. In two of the ten divisions as from 2nd January 1925 to 15th January 1925.
5. In two of the ten divisions as from 20th March 1925 to 6th July 1926.
6. In five of the ten divisions as from 14th June 1934 to April 1935.
7. In three of the ten divisions as from April 1935 to 13th June 1935.
8. In two of the ten divisions as from 13th June 1935 to 31st October 1935.

# FULL PAGE AD



# Before Total football

‘Jewish club’ Ajax FC rises as war dust settles



(Above) Sjaak Swart  
Sjaak Swart leads Ajax onto the field



By Simon Kuper

On January 17, 1965, the crowd that attended the match between the Amsterdam soccer clubs, DWS and Ajax, in the city’s Olympic Stadium witnessed a peculiar sight. For no visible reason, Ajax’s stocky midfielder Bennie Muller began trying to punch DWS’s keeper Jan Jongbloed. The referee intervened before damage was done.

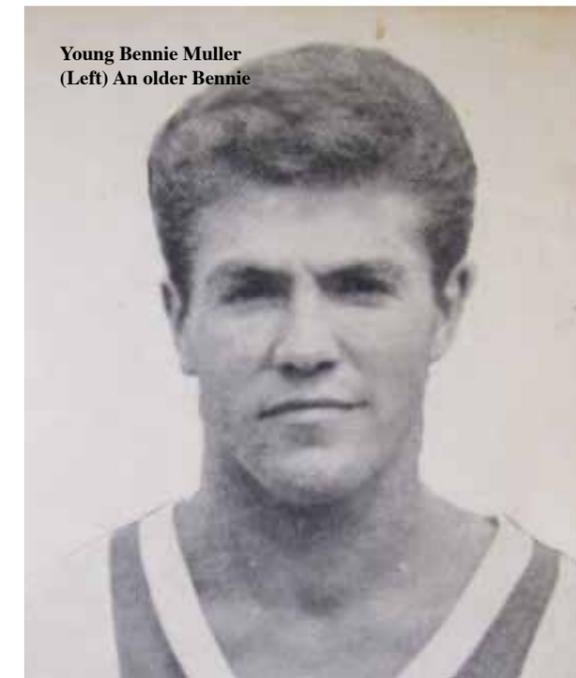
After the match, Muller explained that Jongbloed had called him a “pleurisy Jew.” Dutch swearing traditionally revolves around diseases: people tell each other to get cancer, or cholera, or the obscure lung disease of pleurisy; alternatively, as in “pleurisy Jew,” the diseases can function as adjectives. Jongbloed, a loyal communist voter, claimed he had merely told Muller to “get pleurisy.” Nonetheless, he was suspended for two games.

Much of the Dutch-Jewish experience—not just on the soccer field—is in Bennie Muller’s life. But when I first walked into his cigar shop in tourist Amsterdam in 1999 and asked him to talk about it, he grabbed his head and rubbed his eyes. The former captain of Holland and Ajax doesn’t even look Jewish, with his straight light brown hair. “Must we do this?” he asked. “Then everything will be dredged up again.” But then Muller led me into the backroom of the shop, gave me a seat for “two minutes,” and talked for an hour and a half.

He was born in the Jewish quarter of Amsterdam-East in 1938 to a Jewish mother and a gentile father. When he was four years old, German soldiers and their Dutch collaborators came for his mother. As he recalls it, the five Muller children wept, and the Germans said, “Let’s leave her alone,” but their Dutch helpers insisted on taking her. She spent three months in the Dutch transit camp of



Bennie Muller bottom left



Young Bennie Muller (Left) An older Bennie

Westerbork, fearing deportation to the east. She was only released after Muller's father proved he wasn't Jewish.

Hitler despised half-Jews and their parents as "contaminators" of the Aryan race. However, he governed the Netherlands with a measure of consent, and so he didn't go after the half-Jewish fami-

lies at first. The Nazis had discovered that people would generally stand by while the neighbours were deported, but would kick up a great fuss to protect their relatives.

Muller's mother survived the war. About 150 of her relatives died. Three-quarters of Dutch Jews were killed in the Holocaust, a higher proportion than anywhere else in western Europe. By 1945 the Jewish quarter was deserted, a devastation that, of course, extended to sports. Before the war Amsterdam had five Jewish soccer clubs. After the war, all five were in ruins. One had lost 95 per cent of its members. When they tried to pick themselves up and rejoin the Dutch soccer association, they were told they couldn't automatically return to the same division of the local Amsterdam league that they had belonged to in 1941.

With no Jewish clubs to play for, Muller started his playing career in 1947 with a tiny neighborhood club called TDW ("Trainen doet winnen", or "Training brings victory"). Another young half-Jewish kid with talent, Sjaak Swart, played one match with him there before immediately moving on to higher things. Muller eventually followed him. The pair began playing together for Ajax in the late 1950s. In 1960, they debuted for Holland under a mysterious Romanian-French manager named Elek Schwartz. (When Muller ran into his old manager decades later, he said, "Mr Schwartz, I've always wondered. Are you Jewish?" Schwartz replied, "Of course I am, Bennie. But there are so many crazy people that I don't shout about it.")

In the 1960s, Ajax became a haven for Dutch Jews. For survivors, the postwar Dutch landscape was a cold void. That emptiness dissipated, briefly, when you went to Ajax on Sundays to watch those two sturdy half-Jewish boys on the field. Ajax in these years became a sort of clubhouse for Jews without families. There was the chairman Jaap van Praag, the masseur Salo Muller (no relation), some journalists, a player's agent, the players' favorite baker—why, you'd almost think there were lots of Jews in the Netherlands. Salo Muller told me that the Ajax locker-room was "a wonderful environment for an Amsterdam Jew." Jews and gentiles alike would tell Jewish jokes and use Amsterdam-Jewish expressions. When the other players teased Salo, the big goalkeeper Heinz Stuy would shout, "Don't let those goyim get to you," and

the masseur would correct his pronunciation of "goyim." (Stuy pronounced it with a soft Dutch "g", as in Vincent van Gogh, a sound that to non-Dutch people sounds like throat-clearing.)

No wonder the myth arose that Ajax's greatest player Johan Cru-ijff, the founding father of modern Dutch soccer, was a Jew, too. A

couple of Cruijff's close relatives married Jews, and he has been sighted wandering around Jerusalem in a yarmulke at a family wedding. As Salo Muller says, Cruijff was always "surrounded by Jews". My relatives in South Africa used to insist to me that Cru-ijff himself was a nice Jewish boy, and [they insisted this before the yarmulke story] were surprised when he lost all his money

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Johan Cruyff, the founding father of modern Dutch soccer

investing in a pig farm. Cruyff is, of course, a lapsed Calvinist, like most Dutch people.

Unlike Cruyff, Muller was actually Jewish, and his national prominence made him vulnerable. Jongbloed's insult against him can be read as a parable of Dutch gentile insensitivity to Jewish pain. You won't find much strong anti-Semitism in Dutch history. It would never have occurred to the Dutch to deport their Jews unless the Germans had told them to. On the other hand, once the Germans decided to, few Dutch people did anything to stop them. Quite likely Jongbloed, trying to insult Muller, simply reached for the first taunt that came to mind.

A few days after the Jongbloed incident, a new Ajax manager parked his second-hand Skoda beside the little stadium: Rinus Michels, a P.E. teacher for deaf children.

Ajax was then still a dinky little neighbourhood club. But Michels wanted the players to drop their day-jobs and become full professionals. That required extra cash. Luckily, Ajax's sugardaddies helped out. Some of these boosters were Jews, and two were absolutely not: the Van der Meijden brothers, the contractors known as the "Bunker Builders" for their wartime services to the Germans.

Under Michels Ajax began to train twice a day. That didn't suit Muller, who still worked forty hours a week in his shop. And Cruyff and Michels were famously difficult colleagues. One of the psychologists hired by Michels, Dolf Grunwald, noted in his diary for October 20, 1966: "AJAX PRACTICE. Muller vulnerable and teary. Cruyff quite aggressive."

Still, Ajax kept getting fitter and better. Muller played in the 5-1 victory over Liverpool in 1966, the famous "mist match" (even the players could hardly see a thing) in which the neighbourhood club announced itself to the world. Muller came on as substitute in Ajax's first European Cup final, a 4-1 defeat to AC Milan in 1969, but soon afterwards Michels ousted him. The hero of the 1960s faded just as Dutch soccer came to define and dominate the global game, with its revolutionary invention of Total Football. OK? [ok]

Bram de Graaf's wonderful book *Voetbalvrouwen* ("Soccer Wives") tells the story of Maja Suurbier, a Jewish girl who married the Ajax and Holland wild-child right-back Wim Suurbier. She was the child of Holocaust survivors and spent much of her childhood playing in a corner with a box of buttons, to steer clear of the fighting in her house. When her very old grandmother died, Maja finally stopped repressing her war traumas and began to explore them. She visited the camp of Westerbork, and found that 139 of her relatives had gone from there to their murders. She went to Israel to visit Yad Vashem.

"And who did I see there?" she told De Graaf. "Bennie! There's only one person who walks like that, I thought, when I spotted him." I would like to think the visit helped them both, but probably nothing ever will.

*Simon Kuper's books include Soccernomics and Soccer Against the Enemy, both published by Nation Books. Ajax, The Dutch, The War published in the UK by Orion, published in the US by Nation Books in 2012.*

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Wimbledon

3rd Grand Slam - Wimbledon - Novak Djokovic vs Roger Federer 7-6(7-1), 6-7(10-12), 6-4, 6-3 Djokovic wins



US Open

4th Grand Slam - US Open - Novak Djokovic vs Roger Federer 6-4, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4 Djokovic wins

full page  
PAGE



# Muscling Ever Higher

## The Sol 'Shlame' Arenstein story

By Stacey Rosin

Sol (Shlame) Arenstein was born in 1937 in Johannesburg. He grew up together with his two brothers in Observatory and attended Athlone High School which he fondly remembers as “Jewish Boys High”. He was a perfectionist and gifted sportsman and he participated in numerous sports, earning national colours for cricket and successfully representing his province in U18 Tennis Doubles and U19 Rugby. After high school he joined his family butchery business.

In 1962 disaster struck and he was injured. As part of his physical rehabilitation and hoping to return to his sport as soon as possible, Shlame was referred to Reg Park’s Gym for weight training. Reg Park happened to be a world renowned authority on body building and was also mentoring none other than one Arnold Schwarzenegger at the time. With Reg’s guidance Shlame began his rehabilitation but ultimately struggled to return to rugby. Instead he found much enjoyment and fulfilment in weight training. Shlame: “I just loved the weight training”.

The decision to pursue a career in body building was not well accepted by his peers and often criticised. Community pressure together with raising his four daughters and maintaining a business were sources of

tremendous pressure and tested Shlame’s dedication to and love of his new career path. Not swayed by such adversity and having always been somewhat of a rebel, Shlame was resolute as ever and trained intensively for up to 4 hours per day, five days a week; eating an incredible 18 eggs, 2 whole chickens, steak and chops each day. He pushed weights of unbelievable magnitudes, bench pressing 750 lbs and squatting 800 – 900 lbs at a time.

**“I never left body building, I still train four times a week at 5.00 in the morning. I continue to feel strong and positive and I look forward to each day as a new beginning and a new challenge”**

By 1965 Shlame had won his first body building title. His unwavering determination to succeed together with Reg’s mentorship was the start of a phenomenal career in body building. Shlame won his height division in both 1966 and 1967 when competing in the National Amateur Body Building Association’s championships and was classed as Mr. Universe Class 1. In 1968 he competed against the world’s best body builders and was placed runner up to

Arnold Schwarzenegger, also in Class 1. In the same year, he was one of only two athletes awarded Springbok Colours for Body Building.

Shlame won Mr. South Africa in 1967, ’68 and ’69 and was the overall National African champion in 1968. But this was not enough, he also wanted to give back to the sport; being an active member of his community he started Mr. Maccabi in the early 1970’s. This was a body building event with international Jewish participation and a source of inspiration for youngsters who wanted to learn more about the sport.

By 1971 Shlame’s business known as “Raw Hide” was the largest manufacturer of biltong in South Africa. The building in which this business was housed was sizeable and this afforded Shlame the opportunity to open his own Gym – “Shlame’s Gym” - the upper floor of his business was half biltong factory and half gym. Shlame’s Gym was an instant success, and although there were only 2 stationary bicycles and 3 benches, it was teeming with people – 30 to 40 at a time.

On one occasion, whilst training alongside Arnold Shwarzenegger, Shlame remembers the two of them discussing their prospects. He smilingly recalls a conversation in which Arnold vowed to go to America and

become a movie star in Hollywood as well as many of his political aspirations; most of all he remembers Arnold promising to promote weight training as an integral part of training for any sport. This unprecedented but close friendship grew and Shlame even appeared together with Arnold in 2 episodes of the television series “Conan the Barbarian”.

Shlame then launched a second competition, this time a novice competition, which proved to be more popular than the previous Mr. Maccabi. It was called Mr. Golden City (so named by his eldest daughter) and was met with significant attendance of up to 300 novice body builders; as such the event served as a platform for development within the sport, facilitating the discovery of many new body builders.

In 1973 Shlame retired from competitive body building but never stopped training. His retirement coincided with the beginning of the experimentation with and use of various performance enhancing substances, such as steroids, in the sport of body building. Shlame was advised by his house doctor not to be tempted by the apparent successes of others who made use of steroids and other substances. Given that he

had enjoyed so much success in the sport as a competitor, he made the decision to focus on his family and business prospects.

Shlame’s passion for his sport as a movement and way of life remained strong and by 1975 he established SABBA or the South African Body Building Association for which he was awarded a diploma of honour in recognition of his contribution to the unification of body building in South Africa. During this time the Body Building World Championships, better known as Mr. Olympia, was hosted by South Africa. There was much excitement for Body Builders all over the world and Shlame’s Gym was the epicentre of activity, hype and (of course) training, for a myriad of international competitors.

Since then Shlame has remained an advocate for body building and a general health enthusiast. He continues to give back to the community through fitness and has spent time helping with the rehabilitation of substance abusers using exercise as a medium to health.

His advice to anyone who is interested in getting involved in body building is as follows: “Don’t start body building before the

age of 17, weight training should be 20% of the training time for any given sport, do not use steroids, never train through an injury and exercise requires concentration”.

When asked about what motivates him now that he is no longer body building competitively, Shlame replied swiftly and assertively, “I never left body building, I still train four times a week at 5.00 in the morning. I continue to feel strong and positive and I look forward to each day as a new beginning and a new challenge”.

Indeed this is evident by his current success in his family business “Alive Advertising” the largest digital outdoor advertising company in the country with over 60 billboards nationwide.

Moreover his positivity is seen in his spiritual aspirations as an observant Jew. When asked what the secret to his success is, he simply said “It all comes from Hashem”. Such a prolific legacy from “The Legend” himself.

*Stacey Rosin is a Physiotherapist who specialises in Orthopaedics. Currently completing her Masters at Wits, she runs her own practice in Linksfield, Johannesburg.*





Stan Levin



Eddie Keizan

# Motor Racing

## Accelerating with four SA champions

### By Hayley Lieberthal

The sport is not for the fainthearted. It requires precision, determination and a mind as fit as one's body to excel at. It pushes it's athletes to 'the max' and furnishes spectators with thrills, spills and manoeuvres that can take the breath away.

Soul Sport accelerates with four SA Jewish motor racing drivers who have each captured numerous trophies and headlines and have, in their careers, dazzled fans and peers alike.

Here are four champions of the racetrack: Arnold Chatz, Eddie Keizan, Ian Scheckter and Stan Levin.

### Arnold Chatz

**Born:** 1939, Kurgersdorp  
**Grew up in:** Northcliff, Johannesburg  
**Driver admires:** Ayrton Senna

**Favourite track:** Original Kyalami race-track

**Best racer of all time:** Juan Manuel Fangio

A car fanatic from a young age with, "a natural interest in the technical aspects", and what he considered "a superior driving ability", Arnold Chatz was motivated to go into racing by the influence of a close friend Basil van Rooyen, who began racing only two years prior to Arnold's career. By 1962 Chatz found himself behind the wheel of a Renault for Lawson Motors. "They were the local agents and also the importers of Volvo. Lawson Motors later contracted me to drive Volvo for four years. I was then contracted by Alfa Romeo in 1969 as their 'works' driver for 16 years".

Arnold's race philosophy is that of sportsmanship as well as a team player. He carries a belief in being "precise and accurate in order to achieve the ultimate

goal of winning, while being considerate to my competitors." This resulted in him becoming the Alfa Romeo's brands' most successful driver, more-so than any other international driver. "We won four modified saloon car championships. All this possibly due to the fact that I overstayed my welcome!"

Thinking back on his most memorable experience on the track Arnold says, "I had to fight to retain my lead on the last lap in a badly handling car due to a deflating tyre. It happened to be a year in which we won a championship so every point was vital including those of that memorable race." His opinion of what strengths a racer needs to have are, "the gift of fast reaction times and a sensitive feel resulting in an ability to control a fast car, which to an outsider makes the task seem easy."

Arnold adds: "the fastest race drivers are the neatest drivers. The car never appears

to be out of control in a race. Also, the ability to understand and not to over stress the mechanical components of a race car is important. So to be acutely aware but not to exaggerate the subtle workings of the car, to ensure your understanding of the car, in order to provide accurate feedback to the technical team."

How has being a race car driver helped him on the track of life?

"I have been truly blessed in that my passion for motoring became my sport and my livelihood. I was fortunate to have been successful in both, complemented by a happy marriage. My wife Joan produced two wonderful daughters who have presented us with three gorgeous grandchildren whom we are able to enjoy in good health."

### Eddie Keizan

**Born:** 12 September 1944, Benoni  
**Driver admires:** Bruce McLaren  
**Driver considers a hero:** Ayrton Senna  
**Best track:** Killarney in Cape Town and Old Kyalami  
**Best racer of all time:** Ayrton Senna  
 Car most preferred racing: Formula 5000

Eddie Keizan always had a "love of cars, things mechanical and a burning competitive spirit." This itself is what ignited him

to start racing in 1967. Of what inspired him to race he says: "once a 'petrol head', always a 'petrol head'." With 15 years of competitive racing under his belt, he won 4 production car championships; S.A. F5000 Championship in 1972; and; two Roof of Africa Rally races. Keizan also participated in three World Championship Formula 1 GP; two years under Tyrell, and one year with Lotus.

Keizan's highlight of his career, was "winning my first Roof of Africa. I was thrown into the deep end, as I hadn't raced in previous Roof of Africa races. It was also the first time I had driven a Land Rover, or was employed by a factory to drive their cars. Over the course of the three days we found ourselves in the lead. Our vehicle didn't break and with a lot of luck involved we worked our way through the field to win. Before this race I hadn't won anything."

His thoughts on racing and his philosophy are as precise as if he were on the racetrack of life. "To do it properly requires total commitment and focus – like anything in life. Whatever it takes to be successful in racing it would be the same as what it would take to be successful in any field of human endeavour. Motorsport gave me my start in life, and also opened many doors for me in my business career. But most importantly, it taught me how to

"focus" on winning and of the importance of passion in business."

### Ian Scheckter

**Born:** 22 August 1947, East London  
**Drivers admire:** Ayrton Senna, Lewis Hamilton

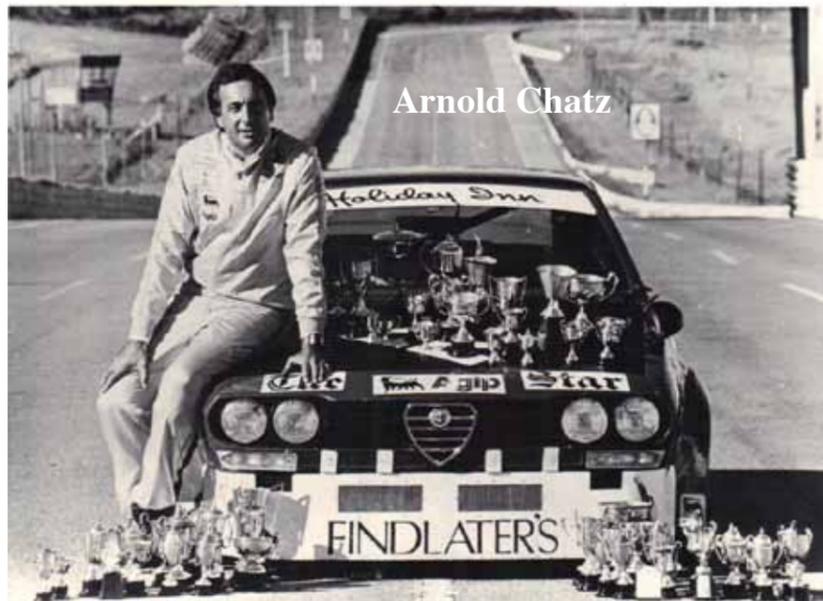
**Favourite track:** Original Kyalami

**Best racer of all time:** Ayrton Senna

Car most preferred racing: Lotus 72 F1 car

Ian Scheckter's admiration for cars started at a young age. His father was a car dealer and they were often at the racetrack as kids "It was just something we loved to do. We used to race after school on bicycles and the buzz bikes." By the age of 16, Scheckter started racing go carts for a year. At 20, a friend from Rhodes University offered him a Yamaha 100cc bike to race. "I did two races and was hooked. I then bought a Triumph 500 Daytona and started more serious racing."

Scheckter's motivation for racing was, "I loved speed and to win." And win he did! Winning Driver to Europe in 1972; 1973 SA Champ in F2; 1976 Formula Atlantic SA Champ; 1977 Philips International winner as well as Formula Atlantic SA Champ; 1978/79 Formula Atlantic SA Champ; In the SA Formula 1, Scheckter started in 21 races, winning 11 of them.



Arnold Chatz

1983 and 1984 were particularly good, with him winning 17 races in a row, "a record in a single seater." Scheckter also took the Formula 2 SA championship in 1983/84. 1974 came and the most memorable experience of Scheckter's racing career happened when he won his first Formula 1 race and soon after celebrated the birth of his first child. "It was a great race and that night my first kid was born." When Yom Kippur arrived, Scheckter opted out of the race day. Scheckter decries today's racing regulations as having ruined some of the sport. "Before they made all these regulation protocols you raced and had to respect that there were other cars on the track. No rules to protect you. So if you wanted to make a corner you had to allow room for the other guy when passing or being

passed. There were no inquiries, drive through penalties and no grid slot penalties. So the race was as they say, 'when the flag drops, the bull\*\*\* stops'." Scheckter laments further: "In Formula 1 the rules don't allow the engine manufacturers to catch up to superior technology by upgrading their engines, engine modifications are very restricted and regulated. The chassis' are so badly designed that the cars can't actually race without gimmicks to enable them to. The rules on the drivers are inhibiting them from really racing. They also build the tracks wrong and then apply stupid rules to keep the drivers from using the track to its maximum. All this has come about in the last 10 years. Before this, racing was real and Formula 1 extremely competitive and popular. I don't remember a driver being killed in a wheel to wheel race, so why now with

these rules?" Scheckter believes that the strength of a racer is his ability to have mental focused, to have a natural instinct behind the wheel and of course to be unswervingly dedicated to the drive.

And on the track of life he is grateful to the sport that he found great success in. "If you are winner particularly in the public eye, it does help open a lot of doors."

### Stan Levin

**Born:** Johannesburg, 8 January 1954  
**Driver admires:** Jackie Stewart  
**Best track:** Old Kyalami  
**Best racer of all time:** Michael Schumacher  
**Car most preferred racing:** Single seater racing car

Stan Levin started racing in 1976 at the age of 21. A competitive sporting fanatic from a young age, he openly admits, "I don't like to lose. I played a lot of cricket, and felt that I would be better suited to a more individual sport than a sport that relied on a team." Prior to his move into racing, Levin's brother had already started racing. "My brother wasn't the greatest of drivers. For the first year I was his mechanic. He came into the pits and told me "the car doesn't go" so I opened the engine and started fiddling. He complained that, "the car doesn't go round corners," so I fiddled and fiddled. It was at that stage, having had the hands on experience of cars, that I decided to build my own car the following year." "I built my own car and needless to say



Ian Scheckter

that was a failure, yet I persisted. I was a mechanic and engineer, so I followed the natural progression and started to race Formula Vee - they were reasonably priced, and I believed it was now my time - I raced for a year. The car was an epic disaster, except the engine. The engine was superb." In 1981, Levin won South African national champion. "I kept the car, and rebuilt it from start to finish. That 1981 win was incredible for me as the previous year I was in pole position for every race, I had the fastest lap times and still I never won a single race!" Levin raced for over 20 years, "I love everything racing, I raced a variety of cars; Rotar Mazda's etc. and then I moved onto motor-racing. My racing philosophy was the more you practiced, the more you listen, the better you will get. After some time I decided to do the management side of motorsport. It got to a stage where I wanted to put back what I got from racing.

I was heavily involved at Swartkoppies, acting Chairman of the sports car club of SA. I couldn't get enough, I was completely passionate." Levin's most memorable experience was not that of winning or any particular race. It was in fact an encounter with his mom at the 1981 Sports Racing prize giving. "When I became SA Champion in 1981, I asked my mom to accompany me to the awards evening. My late mom never attended a race, she wouldn't dare go to Kyalami to watch me. Instead she'd listen to the radio and followed what was going on through that medium. She said though that she would attend the black tie event with me which I was thrilled about; I remember buying the tickets at R10 in those days. Starters were served and then the prize giving started, my mom saw me go up to get the trophy and afterwards told me to take her home, now that she had seen me receive my award. My mom had made an effort!"

Being a race car driver helped Levin on the 'track of life' in many ways. "It really taught me discipline. You cannot succeed without extreme discipline. That means I would never get into a car without being prepared." Levin believes his strengths as a racer also stem from his strategy to try and win at the slowest possible speed. "That, a healthy mindset and the tactic of psychologically obscuring the opposition. My team mate and I always had a psychological advantage over the other drivers. The moment they made an error, we took full advantage hahaha." Levin reflects on how his passion for motor-sport stood him in good stead and how he continues to use that passion in life and in work today. "Without passion and discipline, there can be no rewards." Hayley Lieberthal resides in Durban she is a wife an freelance journalist

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# Bowled Over



## The South African contribution to Lawn Bowls in Israel

By Dave Kaplan & Dr. Les Glassman

“HARD TO BEAT” was the message that resounded at the 2015 European Lawn Bowls Championships held in Israel during October. Although the UK came out eventual champions, the mantra “Hard to Beat” referred to no particular country’s competing team but to the host country Israel. Said Maurice Lavin, an accountant and a former South African, who is the President of the Israel Lawn Bowls Association:

“Twelve European countries competed. It was the first time the championship was held in Israel and all the European players and their organizations said it was the best championship ever. They praised our efficient organisation and overwhelming warm hospitality.”

The Championships were hosted at the Ra’anana and Ramat Gan Bowls Clubs. “What was quite amazing,” revealed Lavin “was that the teams arrived in the midst of a sudden outbreak of terrorist attacks all throughout Israel and not one player or team cancelled despite the many enquiries.

In fact, the Israeli sport channels that were televising the championships were literally “bowled” over by this lack of fear and welcome support for Israel. The participants all said they never felt safer and we even took them before the championships to the Dead Sea. The loved it as they loved their entire experience in Israel.”

“Bowlers aren’t moffies!” quipped an Israeli spectator, exposing his South African pedigree. “Let’s hope it rubs off on the Bokke!” remarked another alluding to the Springbok team at the 2015 Rugby World Cup in the UK.

Hosting the championships in Israel was as one Israeli official commented “reaching the crest of Everest” and represented a long and inspiring journey of South African contribution to the founding and development of Lawn Bowls in Israel.

### Genesis

Playing a game of bowls may not have seemed an important priority to most Israelis after the War of Independence. There was the dire security situation and the desperate state of the economy but full

credit must go to former South African Max Spitz who is revered as the “Father of Lawn Bowls in Israel”.

The late Norman Spiro, originally from Durbanville outside of Cape Town and former President of the Israel Lawn Bowls Association and the bowl’s correspondent to The Jerusalem Post and Haaretz over many decades, said, “In the early 1950s, Max dreamt of bringing bowls to Israel but did not anticipate the bureaucratic hurdles and what would have broken the back of lesser mortals did not apply to Max – he had nerves of steel.”

Supported with his ‘A Team’ of fellow South African Olim (immigrants) Percy Manham, Jack Raphael and Lazar Braudo, the ‘trips’ and ‘skipper’ Max convinced the mayor of Ramat Gan Avraham Krinitzi - who had absolutely no idea what bowls was about - that the sport was vital for ‘Israel’s Survival’. In order to “smooze” the mayor, they showed him slides of the Balfour Park Bowling Club in Johannesburg with its beautiful gardens and flowers. The mayor was delighted and said ‘you

Closing Ceremony of the 2015 European Bowls Championships at Ramat Gan including dignitaries from European Bowls Union, the Mayor of Ramat Gan, Vice Chairman of Israel Association of Non Olympic Sports, HON. Life president of Bowl Israel and Maurice Lavin (centre)

want a park! Why didn’t you just say so? I love parks” and granted permission to lay down two greens on the banks of the Yarkon River.

Back in South Africa, Alf Blumberg the President of SA Maccabi Council and an international bowler formed the friends of the Israel Lawn Bowls Association.

However there was the question of financing and this is where Spiro says that Max earned another deserving accolade - “The King of Shnorrs”. With his self-styled power of persuasion, he enlisted the support of Diaspora Jewry through Maccabi South Africa which led to the opening of the first club in Ramat Gan.

### Pitch Perfect

This was all very well but nothing would go far without quality greens so South Africa sent “bowling green expert” Dave Millin to Ramat Gan to advise on the laying of the first green and brought with him grass from the Houghton Bowling Club in Johannesburg – and so in 1950, the first bowls club in Israel was opened by South African immigrants.

This was followed a few years later by a second club at Savyon outside Tel Aviv. Soon afterwards bowls was recognized as a Maccabiah sport. “Interestingly,” reveals Lavin, “That same grass brought out from South Africa is still here today. How is that for longevity? What’s more, the grass grown on the side of the original Ramat Gan green to be used to fix dry patches as and when they occur, were taken to other emerging clubs to be used as a basis to get their greens going.” These anecdotes reveal how literally ‘rooted’ South Africa is to bowls in Israel!

It was at the Maccabi Games in 1953 that saw the first Israeli Lawn Bowls team participate when they competed against South Africa and the former Rhodesia. The Israeli team consisted of the South Africans Max Spitz, Percy Manheim and Jack Raphael and an Englishman, Wellesley Aron. Aron enjoys an interesting connection to South Africa as he is the founder of World Habonim and it was a young student from Johannesburg in London in 1930, Norman Lurie, who heard Aron address a meeting on his concept of a new Jewish youth scout movement who within the year, introduced

Habonim to South Africa.

Ever since that fateful 1953 Maccabi Games, Lawn Bowls has been part of the Maccabiah.

As an aside with no connection to either bowls or Habonim but most certainly ‘music to one’s ears’, Wellesley’s grandson in Israel is none other than the famed guitarist and folklore singer David Broza.

### Going Green

Long before the environmental movement got going, greens started to flourish beyond the strictly Anglo-Saxton community. Instrumental in this drive was former Capetonian Jack Rabin who apart from being Vice Chairman of the South African Zionist Federation in Israel (Telfed) was also President of the Israel Lawn Bowls Association. During his tenure in the seventies and eighties, he oversaw the opening of five new clubs – Netanya, Ra’anana, Haifa, Jerusalem and Kfar Maccabiah. “At 43 years of age, I was the youngest person to hold the presidency by at least twenty years, and I set about encouraging younger players as well as reaching beyond the English speaking community to native Israelis.”

In 1972, Israel participated in the World Bowls Championships and since then, both the men’s and woman’s teams have participated in the event which is held every four years. Eight years later Israel won the Rinks Bronze Medal in the woman section of the World Bowls Championships - a stunning achievement. A few years later ‘Bowls for the Blind and Visually Impaired’ was co-founded by another former South African, Alex Goldsmith. National as well as International Championships and friendly international tournaments are frequently held and in 2012, Goldsmith formed his own nonprofit focusing on spreading the sport for the blind among the younger generation.

### Sauvé Cecil

When Cecil Bransky was about to make Aliyah in 1980, an article in the ‘Zionist Record’ referred to him as “One of the all-time greats of South African bowls,” and “one of the finest all-round players in the world today. The sport in this country will be that much poorer next year when Springbok



**The Four Muscateers.** Maccabiah IV in 1953. The South African pioneers of Lawn Bowls in Israel. Top (l-r). Percy Manham, Wellesley' Aron, (Seated l-r) Jack Raphael and "The father of Israeli Bowls" Max Spitz.

**Wonder Women.** The women's bowls team in the fours that took bronze at the 1981 World Bowls Championships. (l-r) Edith Silverman, Molly Skudowitz, Helen Gordon, Rena Lebel and Bernice Pillemer.

**The Norman Conquest.** The JPost sports correspondent on Lawn Bowls for many years, the colorful Norman Spiro is seen here in a local ice-cream commercial ("Saba Glida") wearing his Maccabi bowls blazer.



**The Exterminator.** Cool and calculating in his dispatch of the competition, Cecil Bransky in his Springbok blazer before immigrating to Israel.

Bransky moves to Israel." He must have cut quite a character on the green. One sports writer lamenting his departure wrote that "to watch him in action is like seeing a scene from an Al Capone movie. With his hat tipped forward resting just above the eyebrows, and his ever-present cigarette pointing from his mouth towards the target at the other end of the green, he looks the part of the cool, calculated killer." However, Cecil's terminal intentions were aimed at his opponent's bowls not their bowels. Nevertheless, this Springbok's 'hit list' was long and impressive. South Africa's loss was Israel's gain and within three years of his arrival, he was piped at the post by 'The Jerusalem Post' when it chose Shachar Perkis ahead of Bransky as their 'Sportsman of the Year'. The explanation at the time was that bowls did not enjoy the same following as tennis although Cecil's achievements were far more internationally impressive. He had finished sixth in the singles of

the Men's World Bowls Championships and was runner-up in the Worlds Indoor Championships which in no small way contributed to the rise in popularity of the game in Israel. Many titles and medals, both local and international would follow over the ensuing years - the magazine 'World Bowls' once described him as "one of the world's most distinguished bowlers of recent years" - and in 1998, he was one of the illustrious recipients of the Telfed Sporting Awards held at the Ra'anana Bowling Club. Another was the inimitable Jeff Rabkin, a former Capetonian.

Israeli bowls holds the distinction as being the only sport in which an Israeli was ranked No. 1 in the world! Listed at the top of the World Bowls Association rankings, Rabkin obtained five medals at World championship level. He won the Israeli singles championship seven times and the masters sixteen times as well as gold medal at the Hong Kong Classic Pairs.

All these achievement were documented and reported on by Norman Spiro who

volunteered for Machal in Israel's War of Independence and made Aliyah in 1962. He served on the National executive for 25 years and was honored as life President of Israel National Bowling Association for playing a major role in promoting bowls to Israelis. On Israel's 50th anniversary in 1998, Telfed, the South African Zionist Federation in Israel, awarded him a trophy "for outstanding development of sport in Israel".

### Seeing Red on the Green

Veteran Telfed staff member Susan Sharon recalls during the First Gulf War when she accompanied Norman "in the Fed car" to a school in Petah Tikva that had been badly hit by a Scud and where Telfed was to make a donation. On the way, news came through on the radio that a Scud had struck the Ramat Gan Bowling Club. "Quickly, turn around, we have to stop on the way and see what the destruction is." She tried to dissuade him, but he would not hear of it. They arrived at the club and saw that the Scud had



**Enriching Relationship.** Israeli Maccabi touring side to South Africa (December 1983-January 1984). Joe Goldberg, Harry Frankel, Jack Rabin (President, captain and manager), Fred Stein and Joe Lewis.

landed in the middle of a green, totally ruining it. Clearly Saddam Hussein had now gone too far: "Does that madman not hold anything sacred?" he bellowed.

So passionate was Spiro about bowls - something Saddam Hussein failed to understand - which only hastened Norman's support for the dictator's downfall.

Blue & White on the Green  
The success of bowls in Israel is reflected

in that today, most players are Israeli and the lingua franca on many of the greens is Hebrew. "Today we are attracting younger players who are Sabras (Israeli-born). Large clubs like Savyon, Kiryat Ono and even Ramat Gan are totally Israeli. At Ramat Gan where it all began in 1950, there are only two English-speakers - myself and an Australian. This is an excellent sign and bodes well for the future."

This achievement is reflected in the current Israeli singles champion being a Sabra, Tzvika Hadar, who was also appointed President of the European Bowls Union in 2013 and who held the position for a two-year term. "Not only are Israelis competing with the best in the world but also sitting on the sport's top world sporting bodies," says Lavin.

Who would have imagined that planting grass from the Houghton Bowls Club on the banks of the Yarkon River would sow the seeds of bowling greens across Israel, and while the future of the sport lies with Israelis, its proud legacy is embedded with those fine inspiring South Africans who chose to make Israel their home, bringing

with them their talents and their passion for bowls.

Reflecting back over the years, Jack Rabin says one of the highlights was in 1992 attending the World Championships at Worthing in the UK "when Israel won its first and only Gold medal with Cecil Bransky, Lawrence Mendelsohn and Leon Blum in the trips. Jeff Rabkin took the Bronze in the singles; he should have taken the Gold but lost out ultimately to a South American."

Regarding our illustrious heavenly bodies, we would like to believe that Max Spitz and Norman Spiro are smiling from their celestial perches and that Norman is probably still keeping scores.

As the recent visitors to the 2015 European Lawn Bowls Championships collectively expressed: "Israel is hard to beat."

*We are indebted to Philip Gillon z"l for his book on "Seventy Years of South African Aliyah" edited by Telfed - published by Adar Publishing Ltd. Israel and Telfed Magazine Vol 38 No 3.*

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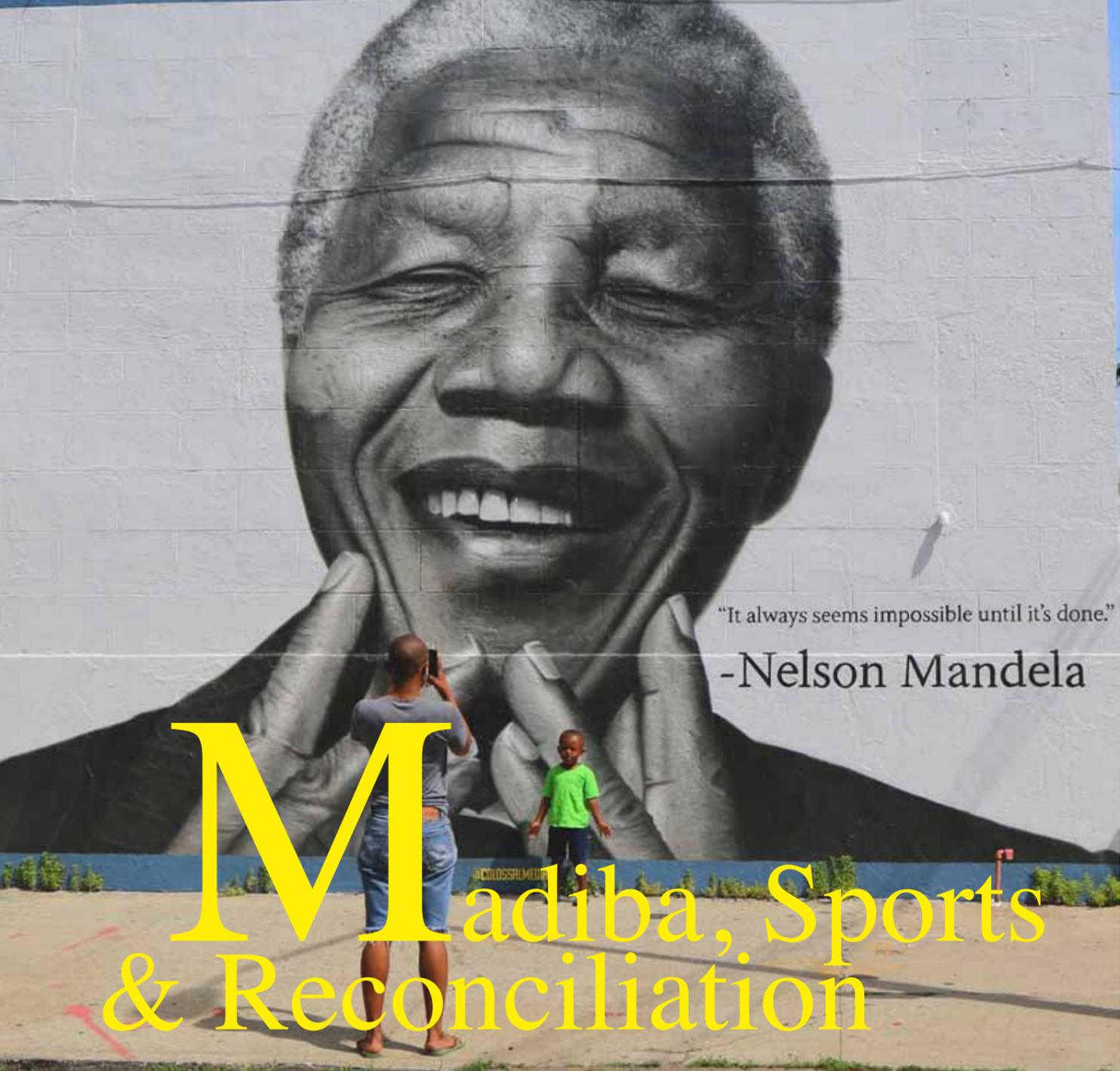
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# Madiba, Sports & Reconciliation

By David Saks

Perhaps the defining image of South Africa's post-apartheid process of reconciliation was of President Nelson Mandela coming out to greet the South African team before the 1995 Rugby World Cup wearing a Springbok jersey. The symbolism could hardly have been more powerful. For decades, the Springbok image had been associated with white minority power and privilege, with the result that one of the main planks of the liberation movement's strategy of isolating the apartheid regime was to campaign for South Africa's exclusion from international competition. Now, almost unbelievably, it had been transformed by a typically great-hearted gesture on Mandela's part into a symbol of national unity.

For Joel Stransky, South Africa's flyhalf on that unforgettable day, Mandela's pre-match appearance had a calming effect and instilled a sense of self belief in the team. What made a particularly deep impression on him was how the President, rather than merely giving a general 'Good luck chaps' message and then leaving,

went to speak to every individual player, showing in his remarks to each one how well he understood the intricacies of the game. Stransky had a sense then that history and destiny were with the team. Indeed, it was he who would kick the magnificent extra-time drop goal that gave South Africa victory over what, even by New Zealand standards, was an especially powerful All Black side.

It is worth quoting modern-day Springbok legend Brian Habana on how he remembers that day:

I was fortunate to be there with my dad. It was so inspirational. Before then I hadn't played rugby. Sitting there and seeing how Madiba inspired the nation and how that moment unified the nation was incredible. That was the moment I dropped soccer and took on rugby.

With regard to South Africa, national reconciliation through a shared sporting heritage did not start in the 1990s but went back almost to the beginning of the century. It was in large part through

sport, and in particular rugby, that English and Afrikaans-speaking South Africans were able to move beyond the bitter divisions of the Anglo-Boer War and begin forging a common (albeit all-white) national identity. No doubt, the same can be said about bringing together – at least to some degree – New Zealand's indigenous Maori population and the white settlers who supplanted them. There is surely no greater moment in sport than when New Zealanders – regardless of ethnic background – together perform the Haka, the ferocious Maori war chant, before every test match.

**“Sitting there and seeing how Madiba inspired the nation and how that moment unified the nation was incredible. That was the moment I dropped soccer and took on rugby”**  
- Brian Habana

Mandela's World Cup appearance has largely overshadowed another moving demonstration of the power of sport to unite a nation that had taken place some three years before. The date was 26 February 1992, and South Africa's national cricket side, in the country's first-ever World Cup appearance, had just won a resounding victory over hosts Australia. What really captured the attention of the world at large, however, was the image of a tearful Steve Tshwete, the ANC's sports mediator, embracing the victorious Proteas captain Kepler Wessels in the dressing room afterwards.

In a way, Tshwete's gesture was even more remarkable than that of Mandela's. The country was then still under white minority rule, and while negotiations were underway, there was no certainty as to what the final outcome would be. Even more than that, cricket over the previous decade had been a particularly bitter battleground in the anti-apartheid movement's campaign to expel South Africa from international sport. It was true that the cricketing Springboks had played no official tests since 1970, but to an extent it had been possible to get around the boycott by the hosting of a series of so-called 'rebel tours'. As will be recalled, these consisted of matches against teams made up of former and even some current international players from England, the West Indies, Australia and Sri Lanka, all of whom were well paid to put in an appearance. It might not have been the "real thing", but it at least enabled South Africa's best cricketers to represent their country again, and the ANC in exile had been furious about it. The last of these rebel tours, the visit of an English side in 1990, generated such opposition at home – the ANC had by then been unbanned – that the SA Cricket Board decided to cut it short in the end. Now, just two years later, things had turned around to such an extent that Dr Ali Bacher, who as head of the SACB had masterminded the rebel tours, was working hand in glove with the ANC in transforming cricket into a truly national sport and ushering in South Africa's return to international competition. It is an astounding story, and



one can only feel humbled not just by the far-sightedness, but ultimately the generosity shown by the leadership of the liberation movement in pursuing this course.

Teshuva – often translated as 'repentance', but literally having the meaning of returning to one's formerly blameless state before the commission of the sin in question – is of integral importance to Judaism. Its basic elements, as laid out by the Rambam in his Mishna Torah: Hilchos Teshuva, comprise confessing the sin, sincerely regretting it and undertaking never to do such a thing again. This, however, applies only to matters between man and G-d – sins that one has committed against G-d alone. When it comes to matters between man and man – there is a fourth element, namely that one must appease the person he has wronged and obtain his forgiveness.

This principle surely applies not just on the individual, but the group level. Reconciliation in South Africa therefore required – and still requires – more than just doing away with oppressive laws and regulations; it entails acknowledging that there was injustice, apologising for it and seeking forgiveness from those who were wronged is also essential. In South Africa, the dramatic turnabout from the all-time low of the abortive 1990 English rebel tour and the country's competing in the World Cup less than two years later would nevertheless not have been possible without a radical shift in outlook on the part of the white-run cricket establishment. In

this regard Bacher showed considerable vision and leadership, gaining the trust of the ANC despite the uncomfortable rebel tour legacy. After 1990, the emphasis would be on consultation, integration and joint decision-making, aimed at creating a united cricket authority that would be representative of the entire population. A crucial part of that process was the unequivocal acknowledgment of the injustices inherent in the way cricket, like SA sport in general, had been administered. Only then could all sides move forward together, towards reconciliation and integration.

During the critical final decade of the last century, sport thus played a vital unifying role in South Africa. On balance, it continues to do so to this day, but this is unfortunately

not the entire story. Of late, the vexed question of 'transformation' has generated much division and hostility within different sectors of the population. In the view of this writer, while it may be desirable that national sports teams be broadly representative of the national population breakdown, achieving this through the reintroduction of compulsory racial discrimination, this time essentially targeted at racial minorities, is practically and morally indefensible, and should be dealt with as such by the international sporting community.

*David Saks is the associate director at the SAJBD. He has been the editor of the Board's journal affairs since 1999. He holds an M.A. in History from Rhodes University. He is a regular contributor to Soul Sport.*

# Where few dare to tread

Milton Brest  
(Background) Bering Strait

## By Kiki Marx

“You can’t put a limit on anything, the more you dream, the farther you get” Michael Phelps

Dreams and ambitions can raise you to heights you never imagined, but the most noble of dreams are those that lift others, offering them the platform to reach further, to reach higher..

This is perhaps a fitting introduction, for an ordinary guy who made it his mission to do extra-ordinary things. Milton Brest has a passion for swimming and challenges his physical prowess in the quest to help others. Though he is a swimmer who has realised many successes, when speaking to him you are struck by his modesty and authenticity.

Milton is an avid swimmer, spending hours on end in the water. Seldom does a day go by without him clocking up numerous laps in training. But it is the navigation of his passion over the last many years that bears noble mention, making his successes count for others.

Milton has done ten Midmar Dam swims, thirteen Sun City Dam

swims, four Robben Island crossings, one Double Robben Island crossing(15km), one Sterkfontein Dam swim(18.1km) - and that’s just in South Africa.

“I was on the London Underground when I saw a guy wearing a T Shirt that said ‘I SWAM ALCATRAZ’. I asked him if there was a swim, he said yes, and I was hooked, and that’s how it all started”. In 2003 Milton swam from Alcatraz to San Francisco, where he came fourth in his age group and twenty fifth overall. This led to swims from Gibraltar to Morocco, Asia to North America (small Diomed Island to large Diomed Island, Bering Strait) and the Bosphorus Sea (Asia to Europe).

“My favourite swim was the Gibraltar to Morocco swim. The three of us did the swim of 19.5 km in 3hours and 17 minutes. Very few people in the world have done the swim. It was fun and it was hard. At the end all, I could say was that opportunities are created, friendships are developed and memories are never forgotten.”

All these swims were under the auspices of Madswimmer SA which is a registered charitable organisation started by Jean Cra-ven in 2009. The organisation is focused on swimming in some

of the most obscure, challenging, dangerous and distant waters, all in the hope of raising funds for eleven nominated charities, all devoted to the benefit of the upliftment of the lives of children. The charities are diverse, situated all over the country and focus on different aspects of developing a child’s mental, physical, social and emotional well being.

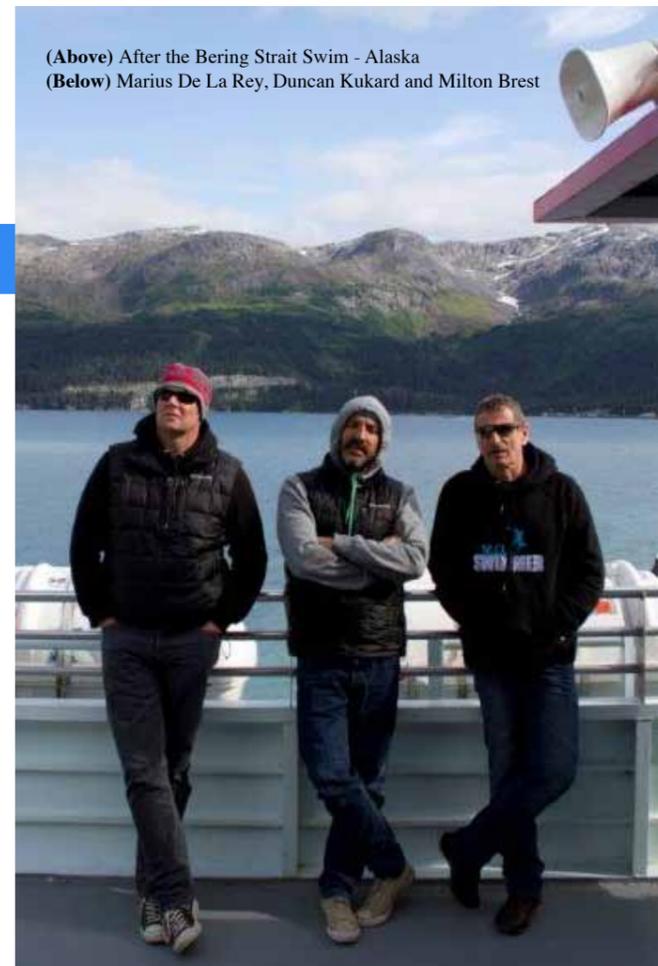
Milton’s next challenge with Madswimmer is probably his most daring to date.

The swim in November 2015 is the first of its kind, as it runs across the highest lake in the world. Mount Ojos Del Salado is 6.4km above sea level. This will be the first part of a two part high /low swim challenge - Ojos being the highest swim to be followed by the Dead Sea swim from Jordan to Israel (the lowest swimming depth) in November next year.

Mount Ojos is a massive strato volcano in the Andes Mountains on the Argentina-Chile border. It is the highest active volcano in the world and the second highest mountain in Western and Southern Hemisphere. The lake these swimmers hope to cross is a permanent crater of 100m in diameter.



(Above) After the Bering Strait Swim - Alaska  
(Below) Marius De La Rey, Duncan Kukard and Milton Brest



It is not without its challenges:

Altitude - the lake sits at 6390m above sea level.

Temperature - the mountain is permanently covered with snow at its peak and there is high possibility that the lake may be frozen making it extremely cold.

Diverse weather - on the one hand very dry, desert like conditions on the ascent and then snow at the top.

Terrain - the ascent is primarily a hike according to those who have done it, with the exception of the final section which is considered extremely difficult, requiring a range of technical climbing equipment.

Seven swimmers will be embarking on this

first of its kind challenge on 27 November 2015. They have seventeen days set aside to reach the lake and swim. They will be accompanied by Sherpa's, to help carry their equipment and three qualified doctors, to monitor their physical wellbeing.

Milton admits that he hasn't hiked and camped much in his life but he is up for the challenge. He is training hard, both in the water and also on land. The Westcliff stairs have become a regular training spot and the group plan to do some hiking trails around Johannesburg in advance of the challenge.

Madswimmer has over the years completed its initial goal of swimming the six inter

continent swims. So now they are looking for unconquered territories, which, although challenging and rewarding, brings with it the elements of the unknown and greater danger to every swim and Milton is acutely aware of this. While he is cautious, realising that the elements may prove a hindrance and maybe even prohibitive of their attempt, he is also optimistic and excited.

"The ultimate feeling is doing something others haven't done," he says with a boyish enthusiasm.

Milton is passionate about Madswimmer and the work that they do and is a proud participant. Since 2010, the organisation has raised in excess of 300 000 Dollars and it is that that keeps him swimming for this organisation.

The eleven charities that Madswimmer supports include:

The Bram Fischer Trust (assists boys to attend and afford Grey College)

Children's Hospital Trust (Red Cross Children's Hospital fundraising)

Foodbank SA (collection of edible surplus food from manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers and distributed to thousands of hungry people)

Hospivision (organisation that provides spiritual care, counselling, education and trauma support in health crises)

NSRI Waterwise Academy (teaches children basic water safety and training in CPR and rescue)

Jan Hofmeyer (upliftment of marginalised communities of Jan Hofmeyer, Vrededorp and Vrededorp)

Miles for Mercia ("paying it forward" initiative in aid of cerebral palsied individuals)

ORT SA Cape (offers diverse educational programmes in impoverished schools and communities, especially in Mathematics, Literacy and Information Technology)

SAVF (renders welfare services related to child and youth care, foster care, care in children's homes)

Seal Swimming Trust (promotes swimming in disadvantaged areas)

WACOT (supports local economic development including tertiary education for kids in Arniston area)

"The reward in all these swims is helping others", Milton says.

Milton is a proud father and a proud Jew. He is passionate about swimming and passionate about uplifting the lives of others. Remember, it all starts with a dream.

*Kiki Marx is a specialist Anaesthetist and an avid swimmer*

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(Left) Iron Man Finish  
(Right) Me and Mark Sack, training partner, mentor, friend



With our SA medals at long course SA champs 2015



Me and Jodi (my wife) on podium at African X running stage race (3 stages) 3rd in mixed category



# Iron Man for Life

## Gavin Mofsowitz: A Profile

By Ilan Preskovsky

You might think that being a full-time financial consultant for Alexander Forbes would be time consuming enough for any young husband and father of a newborn baby, but for Gavin Mofsowitz what must be a twenty-five hour day apparently just isn't enough. Gavin has a fairly particular "hobby", you see, and it's not one that you can just fit in between meetings or on your way to work, but is something that requires time, money and a whole lot of effort.

For the past eight years, he has spent whatever free time he has, training for and competing in, triathlons – including the infamous Ironman competition, in both "half" and "full" varieties – and he shows no sign of slowing down. Comprised in its "full" form of a 3.8 km swim in the Indian Ocean, followed immediately by a 180km bike ride and then a 42km run along Port Elizabeth's hilly terrain (the "half" variety is, predictably, half of each of those distances), Ironman is tiring just to think about for most of us. But for Gavin, it's clearly something that doesn't just energise him, but enriches every other aspect of his life in the process.

Born and raised in Bloemfontein, Gavin moved to Johannesburg ten years ago and has been competing in triathlons for almost as long. His life-long interest in athletics and a dream of competing one day in Ironman melded perfectly with his status as a new man in town looking to create a new social system for himself. By teaming up with a group of like-minded individuals (not least of whom was Mark Sack, a triathlon veteran who would become a good friend and coach/mentor), Gavin was soon on his way to both competing in Ironman and settling into his new hometown.

### “Life benefits’ are, both the inevitable side effects of his training itself “

Now, some eight years later, at the age of thirty-two, Gavin's other commitments may be greater than ever but his passion for his sport shines as brightly as it ever has. With the endless support of his wife, Jodi, herself a committed runner, Gavin trains twice a day, every day of the week, and dedicates significant portions of his weekends to

working on the three disciplines that make up your average triathlon: running, cycling and swimming.

Gavin acknowledges that swimming is the discipline with which he is least familiar and admits that most of his training is dedicated to running and cycling, both because the buoyancy of the sea water is a natural aid during the triathlon itself, but also because it is the punishingly long and hilly road running and cycling, that is the part of the competition that truly pushes his endurance to 'the max'. Also, Gavin's entry sport into the triathlons was cycling, which he'd had a long involvement in before deciding to try his hand at swimming and running and is thus the sport that is closest to his heart.

Still, regardless of his own particular strengths and weaknesses, triathlons in general and Ironman in particular, call for a mastery of all three disciplines and,

perhaps even more crucially, an ability to transition immediately from one to the other. The transition from cycling to running is what Gavin finds most trying, so part of his training includes what is known as a "brick session", which is a high-intensity focus on switching seamlessly between the two.

Such punishing training does seem to have paid off however. Gavin has taken part in countless half Ironman competitions and a significant number of full Ironman events as well. He came in top of his age group (30 – 34) in last year's half Ironman, coming in 23rd overall – a rank that he has more or less retained for years now. In what he considers his greatest sporting achievement yet, in the toughest competition, Gavin reached 32nd in the 2014 full Ironman competition. And, if 2014 wasn't enough of a bumper year, he also came in 10th in the SA Champs Standard Distance Triathlon (and 2nd in the elite age group category) held at Germiston Lake. This year, 2015, meanwhile, has seen him win the yellow jersey (overall open group winner) at the Jock Cycle Classique Stage Race and came 4th in the SA Champs Long Distance Triathlon.

In December, as a change of scenery, he hopes to

head 'down under' and take part in the Australian Ironman, with the now familiar and mountainous Port Elizabeth course giving way to something both fresher and significantly flatter. Gavin's ultimate goal is to take part in the "World Champions" of triathlons, the annual full Ironman competition in Hawaii.

In the meantime though, what perhaps impresses most about Gavin's intensity in sport, isn't as much the physical aspect of it – though, speaking as a certified couch potato, that's more than impressive enough – as how he has taken the discipline and dedication that is obviously needed to compete in something so physically demanding and has applied it to benefit and enhance his daily life.

'Life benefits' are, both the inevitable side effects of his training itself (a sound healthy diet; physical fitness etc.); but also the "soulful" byproducts of living such a lifestyle, such as 'balance'. Everyone from CEO's to mental health practitioners to our own great Rabbis stress that 'balance' is the key to living a physically, mentally and spiritually healthy life, so there's something wonderfully ironic, that something so extreme and seemingly imbalanced (and Gavin is the first to admit this), as running, cycling and swimming 230 kilometres, has in fact given real balance to Gavin's day to day existence!

Part of such balance is also regulating the recovery following the competition. A crucial part of triathlon training is recovery after the event and without a proper ability to manage the demand for rest with the need for exercise, a lot can go very wrong, very quickly.

But perhaps most poignant of all, is the way that the demands of his "hobby" have forced him to confront how he deals with friends, family and work and how he approaches living itself. The demands of training, traveling and funding his chosen passion requires a tremendous amount of sacrifice on Gavin's part. But rather than creating complacency in other areas of his life, it drives him to give "one hundred percent" to work, to whatever social interactions he might have time for and most important of all, to his young family.

As Gavin himself puts it: "My family means everything to me and they are my biggest fans! It's also always nice and a great honour to have the Bloemfontein Jewish community (granted very tiny but very proud) taking pride and interest in all my events. Coming from a small town like Bloem and a fantastic school – Grey College - has given me a solid foundation and taught me to always put 110% into everything that I do, and I always strive to improve along the way. This has not only helped with my sporting career, but hopefully also as a husband, new dad and always treating my clients fairly and with respect and always, always putting them first."

And, I don't know about you, but even if I'm about a million times more likely to read an Iron Man comic book than so much as take a stroll down even a small portion of the Ironman course, there's something incredibly inspirational about that.

*Ilan Preskovsky is a freelance writer/journalist*

Legends Series #2



## Esme Emanuel

Esme Emanuel was born in Johannesburg in 1947. She attended Greenside high and matriculated in 1967. She received full colours for sport at school. Esme was offered a scholarship for Tennis in San Fransisco where she received a Bachelors in Business Administration. Highly academic, she was the first female to get an MBA at Wits in 1974.

Esme played at a number of Maccabiahs winning golds in singles and doubles. Some highlights of Esme's career can be reflected in her Wimbledon achievements in which she played between the years 1965 - 1972. She competed at Wimbledon in singles, doubles and mixed doubles. In singles in 1971, Esme reached the 3rd round; the quarter finals in doubles in 1972; and the 4th round in 1972 and 1966 in mixed doubles.

Esme lives in Philadelphia and is an author and educator.

## Brian Desatnik

Brian was born in South Africa in Johannesburg 9 July 1948.

Brian captained Cyrildene primary school and Athlone Boys high school tennis teams. As a junior Brian was rated in the Top Four of the U/13 Division of South Africa. Brian's record comprises U13 Finalist and Semi-finalist in Southern Transvaal, Eastern Transvaal and Western Transvaal Championships, Singles and Doubles. In 1977/8 Brian played League for Balfour Park in the number one position.

His record overseas includes: winner of the Singles and Doubles title in Alverstoke and Wellingborough Championships 1968.

In 1970 he received a Tennis Scholarship to Wingate Collage in USA. In 1971 he was a Semi-Finalist in the National Junior Collage Tennis Tournament and was awarded Junior National All-American Tennis Honours which was given to the Top Four American Collage Juniors. In the same year, Brian won the Gastonia invitational Tennis Championships in both Singles and Doubles. In 1972 he was captain and the number one player for South Carolina University. He was runner-up in the South Carolina Closed Championship. He was picked to play in the Maccabi Games in 1984. He is presently the resident coach at Glenhazel Tennis Club.

## Marlene Bethlehem

Marlene Gerson was born in Johannesburg on June 21st 1940. She played on the International Tennis Circuit for 1959-1962. She won 3 gold medals, 2 silver medals and 1 bronze medal at the Maccabi Games in Israel in 1957, 1961 and 1985.

In 1961 she reached the quarter finals of the Women's doubles at Wimbledon with Eva Duldig (pictured above) from Australia. In 1962 she won the Wimbledon Plate (Consolation) event and also the Dutch International Doubles in Holland. In 1963 she reached the finals of the Ladies' Doubles at the South African Open Championships in Johannesburg

She married Brian Bethlehem in 1963. They have 3 children and 6 grandchildren.

Marlene Still plays tennis at Parkview tennis club where she has won the Ladies' Doubles 5 times with her daughter Lael Bethlehem.

# FULL PAGE Ad



**FULL TIME**  
Pool B | 19 September  
Brighton

	<b>V</b>	
<b>32</b>		<b>34</b>
<b>TRIES</b> Leuw B du Piessis de Jager Strauss		<b>TRIES</b> Leitch Goromaru Hesketh
<b>CONVERSIONS</b> Lambie (2) Pollard		<b>CONVERSIONS</b> Goromaru (2)
<b>PENALTIES</b> Lambie Pollard	<b>7</b>	<b>PENALTIES</b> Goromaru (5)



1. The USA Women's Soccer Team wins the World Cup beating Japan 5-2 to claim their 3rd World Cup Trophy

2. Chelsea are crowned English Premier League Champions for the 2014/15 season

3. The irrepressible Lewis Hamilton comfortably wins the seasons Formula One Grand Prix

4. After four years in charge Eli Guttman decides to quit as Israel soccer manager

5. Chris Froome wins the Tour de France for the second time

6. Australia celebrate as they win the ICC Cricket World Cup beating New Zealand in the final

7. The score says it all, in the most shocking result in Rugby World Cup history, as Japan defeat the Springboks in round one

8. Novak Djokovic holds up the Wimbledon trophy in a season that saw him dominate the Tennis circuit

9. Sepp Blatter suspended Fifa President, seen here at a conference amidst corruption allegations being showered by cash in a prank by comedian Simon Brodtkin

10. South African long distance runner Gift Kehele wins the Comrades Gold

11. Richie Mccaw the All Black captain holds up the RWC trophy after his teams beat Australia in the final

12. Bafana Bafana star Dean Furman signs for local team Supersport United from British Club Doncaster Rovers

# SPORTING A SENSE OF HUMOUR

## PROUD JOSE

Jose came to America from Mexico and wanted to go a baseball game so when he went home, he could tell his family all about it. When he got there, the game was sold out, so he climbed to the top of the flag pole to get a good look.

“What happened?” asked his family.

“Well, America is the nicest place in the world!!” he said. “Before the game started, all the people in the stands, and all the players, stood up, looked at me and said, “Jose, can you see?””

## SUPERMARKET

Jose Mourinho was wheeling his shopping trolley across the supermarket car park when he noticed an old lady struggling with her shopping.

He stopped and asked, “Can you manage dear?” to which the old lady replied, “no way you got yourself into this mess, don’t ask me to sort it out!”

## SURFING ADDICT

Funeral Procession Alex and three of his surfing buddies have gone surfing every Sunday for nearly thirty years. One Sunday the guys are surfing near a highway when a funeral procession drives by. Well, Alex lays down his board in the water, stands up on his board and places his hand over his heart.

This procession is huge and takes nearly five minutes to pass. Once it passes, Alex sits down on his board and waits for the next wave.

Needless to say his buddies are floored by his actions. One of ‘em finally speaks up and says, “that sure was a respectful thing you did there when they went by.” Alex replied, “It seems the least I could do seeing as how I’ve been married to the woman for over thirty years!”

## RUN AND OUTRUN

Two hunters are walking through a forest looking for deer. When all of a sudden, a giant bear jumps out and scares the hell out of them. They drop their guns and run like hell.

One of the hunters stopped, opened up his backpack and laced up a pair of tennis shoes.

His buddy looked at him and said, “What are you doing? Are you crazy? You can’t outrun the bear!” To this the hunter said, “I know, all I have to do is outrun you!”

## SEASON TICKET

A husband was engrossed in a magazine while his wife was reading the newspaper. Suddenly, she burst out laughing. “Get this,” she said. “Some guy put an ad in here offering to swap his wife for a season ticket to the stadium.”

“Hm m m m m,” her husband mumbled, still engrossed in his magazine.

Wanting to test him, she asked, “Would you swap me for a season ticket?”

“Absolutely not!” he said.

“That’s so sweet,” she replied. “Tell me why not.”

“Heck, the season’s more than half over!” he said.

## DOCTORS ORDERS

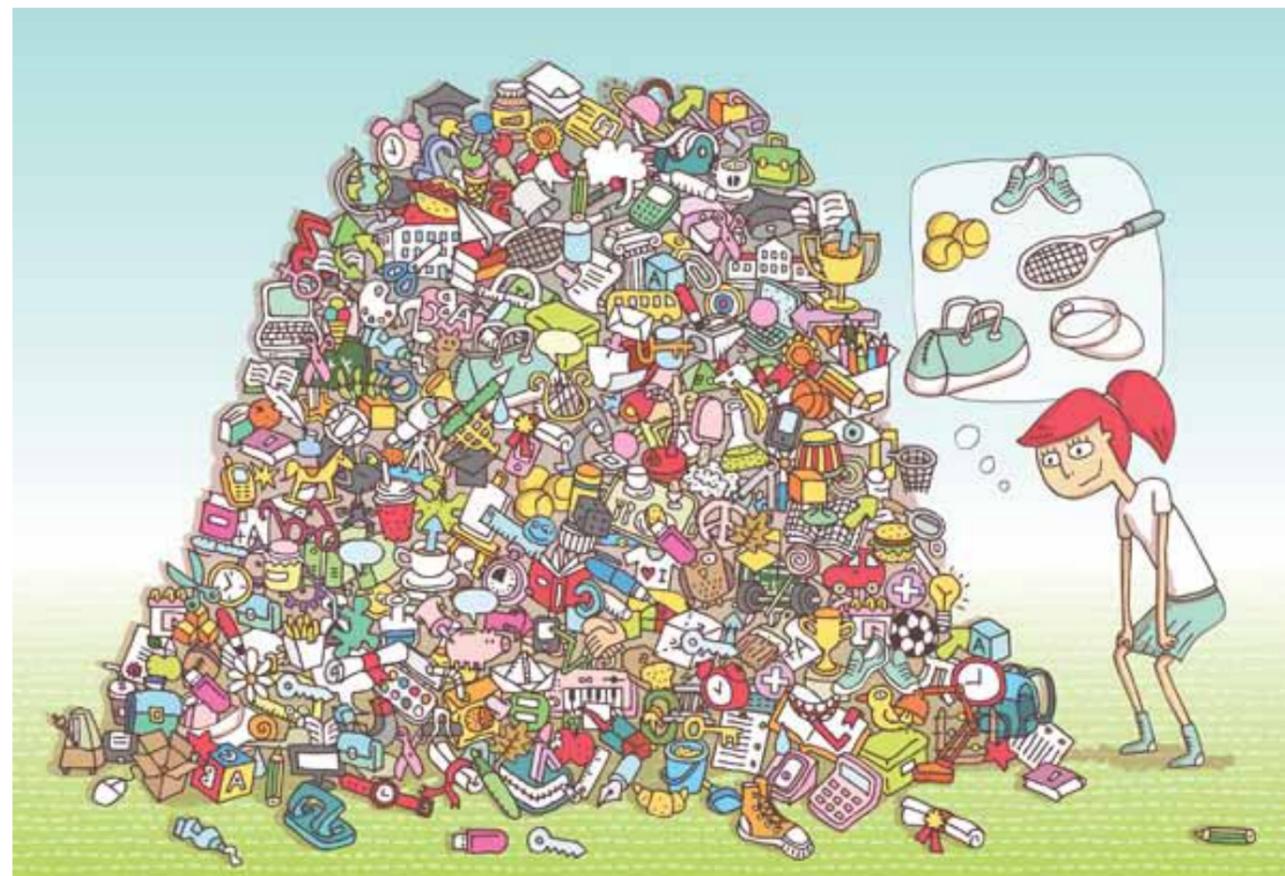
A middle management executive has to take on some sport by his doctor’s orders, so he decides to play tennis.

After a couple of weeks his secretary asks him how he’s doing. “It’s going fine,” the manager says. “When I’m on the court and I see the ball speeding towards me, my brain immediately says, ‘To the corner! Back hand! To the net! Smash! Go back!’”

“Really? What happens then?” the secretary asks.

“Then my body says, ‘Who? Me? You must be kidding!’”

# GAMES PAGE



### UNDERWATER WORLD

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U	R	T	E	C	F	I	E	L	R
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ANEMONE  
COD  
CORAL REEF  
CRAB  
DOLPHIN  
FISH  
FLYING FISH  
HALIBUT  
HERRING  
JELLYFISH  
LOBSTER  
MORAY EEL  
MUSSEL  
OCEAN  
OCTOPUS

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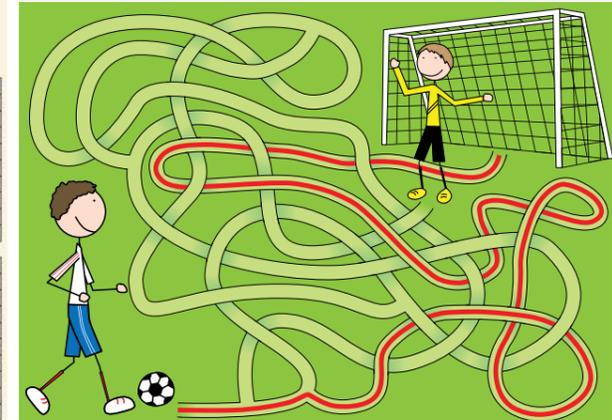
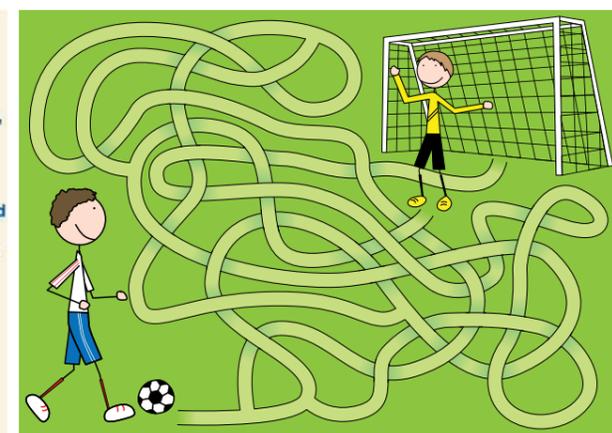
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SEAHORSE  
SEAWEED  
SHARK  
SHELL  
SQUID  
STARFISH  
STINGRAY  
TURTLE  
URCHIN  
WHALE



Words go left, right, up, down, and diagonally, and can bend at a right angle. There are no unused letters in the grid, every letter is used only once.



ANSWER:

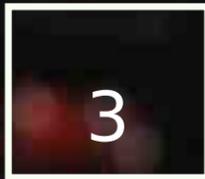
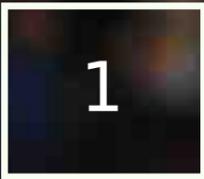


30  
**Ha!**  
Humor

Gallium  
49

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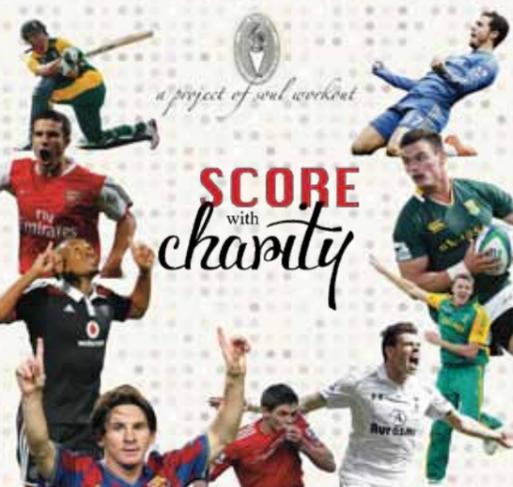


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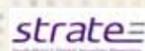
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Good luck and enjoy! Rabbi Ilan Herrmann



Select your favourite teams and for every goal scored - score with R5 to charity; every Cricket Run 5c; every Rugby point 20c - Denominations can be changed - Just Participate!

# It's no fun growing up fat



By Leigh-Ann Silber

There should be no greater pleasure than watching your child feel confident and enjoying their childhood years. Parents of obese children, however, know the heart-break that goes along with growing up. The list of situations where obese children experience fear and anxiety is endless.

Children and teens who are teased about their weight are more likely to have a poor body image, self-esteem and suffer from depression. It becomes a vicious cycle: to feel better, obese children typically use food high in fat, sugar and calories to comfort themselves.

Apart from all the social and emotional problems of being a "fat kid", there are many health risks associated with obesity. Obese children are more likely to have high cholesterol or high blood pressure. Pre-diabetes is also a common-occurrence among these children, which is a condition in which blood glucose levels indicate a high risk for development of diabetes. Some obese children also suffer from bone and joint problems, as well as sleep apnea, which affect their ability to concentrate in the classroom.

Dietitians working with obese children, often work on establishing healthier eating and physical activity patterns, but also in pro-

moting their self-esteem and development. When working with obese children and teens, different areas need to be addressed and the family has to work as a team.

## 10 Tips for dealing with an overweight child

### 1. Break the overnight fast

It may be your child's most important meal of the day. Breakfast breaks the overnight fast (hence the name), provides needed fuel to maintain blood sugar levels, primes muscles for the day's work and sends needed nutrients to all cells of the body for growth. Eating breakfast also helps prevent your child's hunger as the morning wears on, potentially curbing overeating later in the day. The choice of food is important. Move away from the high carbohydrate, sugary cereals and rather include a higher protein based breakfast, such as eggs.

### 2. Increase protein intake and breakfast

It turns out that paying a little more attention to the protein content of breakfast - namely offering a high protein breakfast - could have even more benefits for children. Eating a high protein breakfast (containing around 30 grams of protein) has been shown to improve blood sugar control after eating, and temper fat gain, while encouraging a healthy body weight.

### 3. Eat regular meals

When our children were infants and toddlers, we often stress routine, especially routine around eating. However as they get older it often falls on the wayside. Establish an eating routine with regular meals at a similar time each day. That way the child learns to self-regulate their appetite, and balances blood sugar levels.

### 4. Limit frequency and size of snacks

Children have smaller stomachs than adults have and thus may need to eat every three to four hours. Strategic snacking may also prevent highs and lows of blood sugar. However, continuously eating snacks throughout the day only leads to over indulgence and a lack of self-regulation. Limit snacks to specific times only and avoid grazing throughout the day.

### 5. Always be aware of portion sizes

We can use our hands as a guide for portion awareness. One portion of protein rich food is approximately the size of the palm of your hand. One carbohydrate portion is approximately the size of your fist. A dietitian will determine how many portions a child needs to eat per meal.

### 6. Toss the sweet drinks

Do not drink your kilojoules, rather drink water than juice or cold-drinks. Limit fruit juice to maximum one small cup per day. Fruit juice, even 100% fruit juice may have

an effect on blood sugar levels and increase excess energy intake. **OFFER PLAIN WATER CONTINUOUSLY THROUGHOUT THE DAY.**

### 7. Eat at least five different non-starchy vegetables per day

Focus on eating different coloured vegetables (green leafy, orange, red). Vegetables are lower in energy and provide a wide variety of nutrients. We all know the rules of vegetables, we just need to find exciting ways to increase vegetable intake.

### 8. Limit fatty processed foods, particularly fast foods

Teach your child that eating fast foods is a treat, rather than an everyday occurrence. Rather stick to home cooked meals.

### 9. Talk to your kids about healthy food choices and teach them to make better choices when eating out

Create opportunities to taste delicious healthy foods. Encourage them to choose salad and vegetables rather than chips for example. Allow treats occasionally.

### 10. Get active

All children need about 60 minutes of physical activity a day for good health, but it doesn't need to be all at once. Several short 10-minute or even five-minute bursts of activity throughout the day can be just as good as an hour-long stretch.

## PROTEIN RICH FOODS WHICH WILL APPEAL TO CHILDREN IN THE WEE HOURS OF THE MORNING

Beef, poultry, fish, beans, lentils, soybeans, milk, soy milk, Greek yogurt, regular yoghurt, eggs, cheese, cottage cheese, nuts, nut butters, and tofu are all protein foods.

Some high protein breakfast ideas

Easy egg sandwich

1 or 2 fried/scrambled eggs on Low GI toast

On-the-run breakfast box

Place one large hard-boiled egg, 1/4 cup almonds, 1/2 cup low fat cottage cheese topped with 1/2 cup berries, and 4 whole-grain crackers in a lunch box or other re-sealable container for a protein-packed breakfast on the run

Apple, walnut, oatmeal

Cook 3/4 cups of dry oatmeal with 1 and 1/4 cup of skim milk, and add 1/4 cup of chopped walnuts, plus 1 chopped apple.

Sprinkle with cinnamon and drizzle with honey or xylitol.

Combine with 1 cup of real Bulgarian/Greek yogurt.

Nut butter toast

Spread 2 Tbsp of nut butter on 2 slices of full grain bread

Nut and Berry parfait

If you've got a yogurt lover, give this one a try! Layer ingredients, beginning with yogurt, and ending with honey on top.

1 cup nonfat plain Greek yogurt

1/4 cup fresh or frozen raspberries

1/4 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted if desired

2 teaspoons honey

Always remember that it is our role as parents to inspire our children to create healthy eating habits. Rather than encouraging your child to lose weight, teach them that food nourishes

the body and that healthy foods provide more benefits to us, than filling our bodies with junk food.

What you can do as a family to promote childhood healthy eating habits:

Choose nutrient rich foods.

Be conscious of your wording and behaviour around food.

Be conscious and aware of the way you describe your body.

Have meals together as a family.

Spend time together doing physical activities and reduce sedentary behaviour.

Avoid exerting excessive control over your child's intake or promoting a restrictive diet. Empower your child to self-regulate eating, feeding and appetite.

If you are concerned about your child's weight, contact your health care professional or dietitian who can conduct a thorough assessment and work together with a team on a healthy lifestyle plan.

*Leigh-Ann Silber is a registered dietitian. Her expertise lies in educating, empowering and coaching adults and children about the importance of nutrition. She regularly hosts workshops and works with Daily Dietitian, a healthy meal delivery company that provides fresh healthy meals direct to your front door. Contact Leigh-Ann on leigh-ann@silber.co.za or visit www.silber.co.za*

## CHILDREN'S NUTRITION

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Leigh-Ann Silber is a registered dietitian with a special interest in children's nutrition. She is passionate about helping parents and children achieve optimal health. All consultations include nutritional assessments, individual nutrition and feeding advice to suite you and your child's particular needs and situation. Clients can receive feeding guidelines, recipes, meal plans, behavioural feeding techniques and a wide range of practical solutions. Leigh-Ann will coach you throughout the entire process.

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- Picky/fussy eaters
- Autism spectrum disorders
- Low muscle tone
- Behavioural disorders
- Management of food allergies and intolerances
- Childhood weight issues and obesity
- Childhood constipation



For comprehensive nutrition services for children of all ages contact Leigh-Ann:



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# FULL PAGE Ad



## Youth Sport Nominations

Soul Sport went to seek out some of the outstanding sporting talents in our Jewish day schools. Across the sporting spectrum we give recognition to young athletes making a mark in their respective sports, both in school and beyond. There are many more of you who have not been listed in this nomination, that have accomplished a great deal on the sports field and been an inspiration. We are proud of all your achievements and hope you will continue to strive to ever greater sporting excellence.



**Dina Sher**  
**Hirsch Lyons School**  
Age 10 - Grade 4

**Sports:** Cross Country, Athletics, Soccer, and Gymnastics

**Motivation**

Dina is a very talented young lady who excels at all she does. Dina is very dedicated and hard working.

She has won several inter school cross country races. She is a champion level gymnast and an outstanding soccer player. Well done Dina!



**Amber Michel**  
**King David Victory Park**  
Age 11 - Grade 6

**Sport:** Gymnastics

**Achievements:**

Central Gauteng team, SA national team.

**Motivation**

Amber Michel has obtained provincial and national colours in gymnastics, she was placed 9th at SA championships. Well done Amber!



**Rebecca Widan**  
**Herzlia Constantia**  
Grade 3

**Sports:** Tennis

**Motivation**

Rebecca Widan in Grade 3 has recently been selected for the WP south zonal Tennis team for 2015. This is a huge achievement as Rebecca is only 9 years old and is seeded number 5 in the U10 age group. Rebecca is a passionate tennis player who takes her tennis very seriously. Well done, Rebecca!



**Darren Moore**  
**Herzlia primary**  
Grade 6

**Sports:** Karate, Chess

**Motivation**

Darren participated in the Gojukai Karate National Championships in Kata, Kumite and Team Kata. He did really well in both Kata and Kumite. Next year Darren will be traveling to Japan where he will be obtaining his Black Belt.

Darren also participated in the SA Chess Open and SA chess Schools Open during the July school holidays. He came in 20th in the SA Schools Tournament - an excellent result for his first time in competing. Well done Darren!



**Jonathan Miltz**  
**King David Sandton**  
 Age 13 - Grade 7

**Sport:: Cricket**

**Achievements:**

He plays for the school 1st Cricket Team.  
 He represented Gauteng North Area U11 and U12 Cricket Team  
 He represented Gauteng North Region U11 and U12 Cricket Team.  
 He is a member of the U13 Provincial Gauteng Cricket Team.  
 He plays for the Central Indoor Cricket Team.  
 He represented South Africa at the Indoor Cricket World Series in 2015 in Australia. The Team he was a member of came 2nd overall.  
 He is a member of the school A Tennis Team.  
 Awarded SA Colours for indoor cricket  
 Well done Jonathan!



**Gavriel Ephraim Ash**  
**Torah Academy**  
 Age 12 - Grade 6

**Sport : Soccer**

**Achievements:**

Selected for FTF FC (Future Through Football Club) U14 team  
 FTF FC came 3rd in the U14 SAFA league  
 Leading goal scorer at TAPCON(Torah Academy Primary Cup of nations)  
 Top goal scorer for Torah Academy during 2015 Football Schools league

**Motivation**

Gavi Ash an U12 soccer player has proved himself worthy of playing U14 club Football. This club plays in the SAFA league. Gavi is an all round Sportsman and his talents are not limited to soccer. He is a real gentleman with amazing perseverance. An asset to any school.  
 Well done Gavi!



**Aaron Moritz**  
**Yeshiva College**  
 Age: 10 - Grade: 4

**Sports:Swimming, Soccer, Cricket, Athletics, Cross Country**

**Achievements:**

Winner of Discovery Cup Finals against King David – July 2015  
 Got selected to go to trials for North Eastern Gauteng Football

**Motivation**

Aaron is a well-mannered boy, who is not only dedicated but also talented in all the sporting codes that he participates in. He is a fantastic sportsman and achieves in the highest regard in all of his sports. His overall achievement is highly praised by all the coaches that work with him. Well done Aaron!



**Eden Cohen**  
**King David Linksfield**  
 Age 13

**Sports: Swimming, Athletics, Netball and Cross County**

**Achievements:**

Swimming  
 Junior Victrix Ludorum running up 2013  
 Senior Victrix Ludorum running up 2014  
 Dedication to swimming award in 2015  
 Captain in 2015

**Athletics**

Team Grade 4 to 7.  
 Netball  
 Team Grade 4 to 7.  
 Member of inter Jewish Team 2012 to 2015  
 Cross County  
 Top 10 Grade 4 -6 ,  
 Joined Sportswomen of the year (Junior) 2013.

**Motivation**

Eden is a committed and dedicated all rounder who leads by example. She is a true King Davidian.  
 Well done Eden!



**Shane Silverman**  
**King David Linksfield**  
 Age 13

**Sports: Athletics, Cricket, Soccer and Cross County**

**Achievements:**

Cricket  
 A Team 2013 – 2015  
 U11 Maccabi representative in Cape Town 2013  
 Captain in 2015

**Athletics**

Represented school team from 2012 – 2015.  
 Runner up from Victor Ludorum 2013 and 2014  
 Victor Ludorum and Captain 2015

**Soccer**

A Team 2012 – 2015  
 Maccabi Team in Cape Town 2011  
 Southern Gauteng Player 2015; selected as one of the top players in the Inter-providential tournament  
 Plays for U13 Black Aces

**Cross County**

Won the inter house event 2010-2015.  
 Won the inter Jewish 2014 and 2015

**Motivation:**

Shane is committed and dedicated all rounder who leads by example. He is a true King Davidian.  
 Well done Shane!



**Emma Stein**  
**King David Victory Park**  
 Age 16 - Grade 10

**Sports: Netball , Soccer , Touch Rugby**

**Achievements**

Played 1st team for the KDVP netball team since grade 9.  
 She got senior half colours for soccer and won overall soccer player of the year.  
 She was touch rugby player of the season and got senior half colours for touch.  
 Selected to play Gauteng u15 in 2014 and won a Gold medal,  
 Selected to play Gauteng u17 touch in 2015 and won a Silver medal.  
 Scored 13 tries at the junior IPTs this year

**Motivation**

Emma is a dedicated sportswoman, who strives to achieve the best. She is always driven and motivated. She works extra hard to achieve great results. She enjoys sports and is always ready to help out or assist in any sport, if needed.  
 Well done Emma!



**Shneur Zalman Uzvolk**  
**Torah Academy**  
 Age 12 - Grade 6

**Sports:: Athletics**

**Achievements:**

Senior Victor Ludorum - 2014 and 2015 for Athletics(Track and Field)  
 Junior Victor Ludorum – 2011 and 2012 for Athletics(Track and Field)  
 2nd place at the 2015 Inter Jewish Day School – Cross Country challenge U12 boys  
 4th place at the 2014 Inter Jewish Day School – Cross Country challenge U11 boys

**Motivation**

Shneur Uzvolks achievements and skills are not limited to the Athletics field. He also plays cricket and soccer for the school. Shneur is always dependable, efficient, and a source of inspiration to his peers as well as younger learners. Always willing to go the extra mile regardless of what he is asked to do, works hard, and tries to lift the spirits of those around him no matter the obstacles. Well done Shneur!



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**Daniel Rakusin**  
**KING DAVID SANDTON**

Age 12 - Grade 6

**Sport: Judo**

**Motivation and achievements**

He took Gold at the South African Judo Open in the U12/U55kg category. He is ranked Number 1 in this category. He was a member of the U12 Team that won Silver at the above Tournament. He was unbeaten in all competitions in 2015. Daniel was awarded South African National colours and a South African Department of sports and Culture tracksuit. He won the SA Schools Judo Tournament 2015. Well done Daniel!



**Benjamin Gruskin**  
**King David Linksfield**

Grade 12

**Sports: Cricket, Rugby & Soccer**

**Achievements**

1st team Cricket Captain  
 East Area Cricket 2014 and 2015  
 Captain  
 1st team Rugby fly half 2015  
 1st team Soccer goal keeper 2014 and 2015

**Motivation**

Benji has incredible skill complimented by a tremendous work ethic. His respect for the games he plays and his attitude to participation is an example to all. He applies himself in a dedicated and very composed fashion. Well done Benji!



**Alexia Zetner**  
**Herzlia High School**

Age 18 - Grade 12

**Sport: Tennis**

**Achievements**

WP u19B Tennis Team  
 Alexia has excelled at school, Maccabi and Provincial level.  
 Full WP Colours u19a  
 3rd in WP Masters 2014  
 2nd WP Summer 2 Open 2014  
 2nd WP Mini series 2 - 2014  
 Played for Maccabia u19 in the Games  
 Competed ITF in 2014

**Motivation**

Alexia started playing tennis at the age of 12 and could literally not hit a tennis ball. But she was determined to succeed in the sport, which she did relatively quickly. Her School, Maccabi, Provincial and National achievements testify to her ability, talent and hard work at Tennis. Well done Alexia!



**Ariel Yachad**  
**Torah Academy Boys**

Age 15- Grade 9

**Sport: Soccer and Cricket**

**Motivation**

Ariel is a great sportsman who has distinguished himself by his commitment, leadership skills, (on and off the field), as well as hard work. He motivates his teammates to excel at all times, even when the chips are down. He has led his team as a vice captain facilitating extra training sessions, which was instrumental in his team emerging as ISSL 2015 champions. Well done Ariel!

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# Motivation & the power of not giving up



Have you ever set a goal for yourself, like getting fit, making honor roll, or being picked for a team? Like lots of people, maybe you started out doing great, but then lost some of that drive and had trouble getting motivated again.

## You're Not Alone!

Everyone struggles with staying motivated and reaching their goals. Just look at how many people go on diets, lose weight, and then gain it back again!

The reality is that refocusing, changing, or making a new start on something, no matter how small, is a big deal. But it's not impossible. With the right approach, you can definitely do it.

## Getting Motivated

So how do you stay motivated and on track with your goal? It all comes down to good planning, realistic expectations, and a stick-to-it attitude. Here's what you need to do:

## First, know your goal

Start by writing down your major goal. Your major goal is the ultimate thing you'd like to see happen. For example, "I want to make honor roll," or "I want to get fit enough to make the cross-country team," or even, "I want to play in the Olympics"

are all major goals because they're the final thing the goal setter wants to see happen (obviously, some goals take longer and require more work than others). It's OK to dream big. That's how people accomplish stuff. You just have to remember that the bigger the goal, the more work it takes to get there.

## Make it specific

It's easier to plan for and master a specific goal than a vague one. Let's say your goal is to get fit. That's pretty vague. Make it specific by defining what you want to achieve (such as muscle tone and definition or endurance), why you want to get fit, and by when. This helps you make a plan to reach your goal.

## Make it realistic

People often abandon their goals because their expectations are unreasonable. Maybe they expect to get ripped abs in weeks rather than months, or to quit smoking easily after years of lighting up. Let's say you want to run a marathon. If you try to run the entire distance of 26.2 miles tomorrow without any training, you're unlikely to succeed. It takes the average person 4 months of training to run that far! But the bigger risk is that you'll

get so bummed out that you'll give up your marathon dreams — and running — altogether.

Part of staying motivated is being realistic about what you can achieve within the timeframe you've planned. Competing on the Olympic ski team is a workable goal if you are 15 and already a star skier. But if you're 18 and only just taking your first lesson, time isn't exactly on your side.

## Write it down

Put your specific goal in writing. Then write it down again. And again. Research shows that writing down a goal is part of the mental process of committing to it. Write your goal down every day to keep you focused and remind you how much you want it.

## Break it down

Making any change takes self-discipline. You need to pay constant attention so you don't get sidetracked. One way to make this easier is to break a big goal into small steps. For example, let's say you want to run a marathon. If it's February and the marathon is in August, that's a realistic timeframe to prepare. Start by planning to run 2 miles and work up gradually to the distance you need.

Then set specific daily tasks, like eating five servings of fruit and veggies and running a certain amount a day. Put these on a calendar or planner so you can check them off. Ask a coach to help you set doable mini-goals for additional mile amounts and for tasks to improve your performance, such as exercises to build strength and stamina so you'll stay motivated to run farther.

Reaching frequent, smaller goals is something to celebrate. It gives you the confidence, courage, and motivation to keep running — or doing whatever it is you're aiming to do. So reward yourself!

## Check in with your goal

Now that you've broken your goal down into a series of mini-goals and daily tasks, check in every day.

It helps to write down your small goals in the same way you wrote down your big goal. That way you can track what you need to do, check off tasks as you complete them, and enjoy knowing that you're moving toward your big goal.

As you accomplish a task, check it off on your list. Tell yourself, "Hey, I've run 10 miles, I'm nearly halfway to my goal!"

Reward yourself with something you promised yourself when you set your goal. Feel successful — you are! Now think ahead to accomplishing the rest of your goal: "What do I have to do to reach 26 miles? How am I going to make the time to train?"

Writing down specific steps has another advantage: If you're feeling weak on willpower you can look at your list to help you refocus!

## Recommit to your goal if you slip up

If you slip up, don't give up. Forgive yourself and make a plan for getting back on track.

Pat yourself on the back for everything you did right. Don't beat yourself up, no matter how far off track you get. Most people slip up when trying to make a change — it's a natural part of the process.

Writing down daily tasks and mini-goals helps here too. By keeping track of things, you'll quickly recognise when you've slipped up, making it easier to refocus and recommit to your goal. So instead of

feeling discouraged, you can know exactly where you got off track and why.

What if you keep slipping up? Ask yourself if you're really committed to your goal. If you are, recommit — and put it in writing. The process of writing everything down may also help you discover when you're not really committed to a goal. For example, perhaps you're more in love with the fantasy of being a star athlete than the reality, and there's something else that you'd rather be or do.



View slip-ups as lessons and reminders of why you're trying to make a change. When you mess up, it's not a fault — it's an opportunity to learn something new about yourself. Say your goal is to fight less with your brother or sister. You may learn that it's better to say, "I can't talk about this right now" and take time to calm down when you feel your temper growing out of control.

## Keep a stick-to-it attitude

Visualise yourself achieving your goal: a toned you in your prom dress or a successful you scoring the winning soccer goal. Self-visualisation helps you keep what you're trying to accomplish in mind. It helps you believe it's possible. You can also call up your mental picture when willpower and motivation are low. Positive self-talk also boosts your attitude and motivation. Tell yourself, "I deserve

to make the honour roll because I've really been working hard" or "I feel great when I swim — I'm doing well on my exercise plan!"

## Share with a friend

Another boost is having supportive people around you. Find a running buddy, a quit smoking buddy, or someone else with a similar goal so you can support each other. Having a goal buddy can make all the difference in times when you don't feel motivated — like getting up for that early-morning run.

If you're not getting support from someone when you really need it, you may need to take a break from that friendship and surround yourself with people who want to help you succeed. For instance, if you've been going to your friend's house to study together every Thursday after

school, but now your pal is turning on the TV, texting friends, or gabbing on the phone and ignoring your pleas to get down to work, it's time to find another study buddy. You can't stay focused on your goal if your friend doesn't share that goal — or, even worse, is trying to hold you back. Seek out others who are on the same path you are and work with them instead.

## Don't Give Up!

Ending an unhealthy behaviour or creating a new, exciting one is all about taking responsibility for our lives. Finding the motivation to do it isn't necessarily easy, but it is always possible. You can stay motivated by writing down your goals, sticking to your schedule, and reminding yourself of what led you to set your goal in the first place. Change is exciting — we'd all be very bored without it.

Good luck in reaching your goals!

Reviewed by: D'Arcy Lyness, PhD

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# Super Sam is The Sports Man



By Lisa Etkind

As I walk into Sam Woolf's apartment in the heart of Glenhazel Johannesburg, I am immediately struck by the orderliness of it all.

The unpretentious doorway leads me into a treasure-trove of carefully selected montages.

The three rooms in Sam's apartment are purposefully punctuated with anthologies of books, albums, DVD's, Royal Family souvenirs and Mandela memorabilia. And then of course there's the sport.

I grudgingly acknowledge that – in my mind's eye – the description 'collector' conjures up images of a hoarder who has been swallowed up by his own haphazard accumulation of moth-balled worthless articles.

But Sam Woolf is a true collector.

The walls are painstakingly and lovingly lined with family photographs – from Lithuania of old to modern Israel. And with Hollywood actors and actresses. And with sportstars. Cupboard doors are dedicated to displays of newspaper clippings and magazine cutouts.

This passion for collecting began in the mid 1950's. "I don't smoke," says Sam, "So collecting is my addiction."

What started off with photographs and autographs of the Academy Award winners gradually morphed into the careful selection and conscientious piercing together of all things sport – with a singular focus on Jewish sportsmen and women.

Sam confidently declares that there have only ever been ten Jewish international rugby players.

The Jewish Springbok soccer star Morrie Jacobson ignited Sam's passion.

Through the years, Sam's un-diminishing fascination with all things sport has earned him the title of Super Sam. He has entered and won literally hundreds of sport orientated forecast competitions. Companies worldwide have recognised Sam's unique knowledge

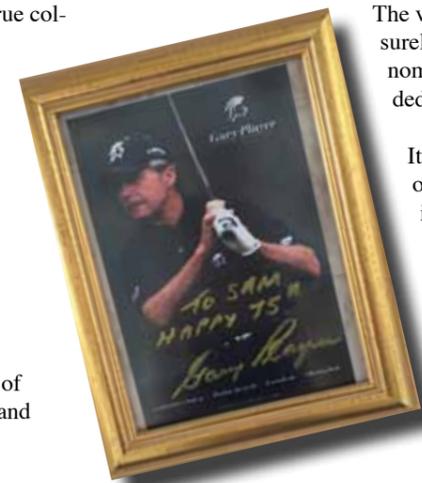
of the sporting arena and rewarded him with no less than six overseas trips, two cars and hampers galore.

An accurate listing of the assortment of prizes would not be too difficult to achieve as Sam has diligently categorised and filed each and every single prizewinner letter and receipt in an album.

And the albums are numerous.

Many albums are devoted to newspaper clippings and ceremony leaflets that pay homage to all of the South African participants of the Maccabi Games through the years.

The enthusiasm that oozes from Sam Woolf as he describes his compendiums is overwhelming and contagious. His habit defines him. It inspires him. It consumes him.



The value of Sam's collages can surely only be calculated in denominations of appreciation and dedication.

It is difficult to isolate the pride of Sam's compilations. Perhaps it is the hand-written personalised and signed message from the great Gary Player. Or is it the framed display of badges from The Rugby World Cup 1995? Maybe it's the Liverpool memorabilia since Sam is a die-hard fan (aren't they all?).

Unfortunately Sam's health is gradually declining. Recent diagnoses have restricted his mobility and independence. Sam sadly acknowledges that he will never get better. When the unthinkable happens, and he passes on from this sporting world, his family will surely have no choice but to destroy his obsessions. Space parameters would dictate their future. But it is almost as if – in his absence – the collections would lose their meanings. They only exist because of their creator.

The privilege of meeting this man was all mine.

For even if one is not as passionate about sport or entertainment or family history, one simply cannot deny how impressive these scrupulous collections are.

The door to flat 402 belies the gems hidden within.

Lisa Etkind is a wife, mother and educator



# The Rebbe on Sports

By Errol Hurwitz

It is well known that the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, of blessed memory, was able to connect and to converse with many different types of people; with Jews and with Non-Jews; with scholars and artists; with politicians and academics; with philosophers and linguists; with the youth and the aged; with educators and with sportsmen.

The Rebbe would also find lessons in all vocations, to assist people in understanding their role in improving their service to G-d.

There are some wonderful, informative and instructive examples of these, specifically relating to sports and the lessons which we can learn and benefit from.

Bar Mitzvah talks in the early days with baseball themes

## Fan or Player

In 1955, as a jolly young Shimshon Stock ushered a close acquaintance and his soon-to-be-Bar-Mitzvahed son into the study of the Rebbe, he proceeded to introduce his friend and his friend's son to the Rebbe, who greeted them with his comforting and warm handshake, requesting them to please take a seat. The Rebbe then briefly blessed the boy that he should grow to become a source of pride to the Jewish people and to his family. As they turned to leave, the Rebbe surprised the three Americans with the question he addressed to the youngster: "Are you a baseball fan?"

The Bar-Mitzvah boy replied that he was.

"Which team are you a fan of, the Yankees or the Dodgers?"  
 "The Dodgers", replied the boy.  
 "Does your father have the same feeling for the Dodgers as you have?"  
 "No."  
 "Does he take you out to games?"  
 "Well, every once in a while my father takes me to a game. We were at a game a month ago."  
 "How was the game?"  
 "It was disappointing", the 13-year-old confessed. "By the sixth inning, the Dodgers were losing nine-to-two, so we decided to leave."  
 "Did the players also leave the game when you left?"  
 "Rabbi, the players can't leave in the middle of the game!"  
 "There are players and fans", explained the young baseball fan to the Rebbe. "The fans



and Bobby Fischer.

Reshevsky never played in a chess championship on Shabbat or on Jewish holidays. His strong religious upbringing and his own firm faith, didn't allow him to waiver in his commitment to Torah and Mitzvot, and his many successes did nothing to change his religious resolve.

One of the primary mediums of teaching that the Rebbe employed, was a 'far-brengin', a public gathering at which the Rebbe would address thousands of people, often lasting several hours and sometimes extending right through the night.

When Sammy once attended one of these gatherings, the crowd was delighted when the Rebbe explained the meaning of chess, "the Game of Kings," as it is seen in the upper worlds.

"The king", he said, "is the most valuable piece on the chessboard. Protecting the king and attacking the pieces which threaten the king's "dominion" is the objective of the game, and the goal of all the pieces at the king's disposal."

"The same thing is true with all of created reality. The king represents the King of the Universe. When G-d created the world, He had an end-goal in mind – that this G-d-denying reality be transformed into a place where His dominion is known. Just as all of the pieces in the chess game exist only to protect the king and to further his goal, so too all components of creation exist only in order to fulfil this deepest desire of the King of kings."



can leave when they like - they're not part of the game and the game could, and does, continue after they leave. But the players need to stay and try to win until the game is over."

"That is the lesson I want to teach you in Judaism," said the Rebbe with a smile. "You can be either a fan, or a player. Be a player."

Outside the Rebbe's office following their meeting, father and son said goodbye to Shimshon, the three now sharing a new admiration of a pioneer in Jewish education.

## It's for real

A young man stood before the Rebbe one day in 1954, to receive a blessing before his Bar Mitzvah. He was surprised when the Rebbe asked him, in English, "Which sport do you like best?"  
 "Baseball," the boy replied.  
 "Do you ever play baseball with your friends?" The Rebbe asked.  
 "Yes."  
 "And do you ever see professional games?"  
 "Sure I do"  
 "What's the difference between your games and the professionals' games?"

"Rabbi, when we play, it's just kids' stuff, but the professional games are for real." The Rebbe addressed the boy with a broad smile and explained, "In your heart you have a big field. The two sides are the Yetzer Tov, the good inclination and the Yetzer Hara, the negative drives. Until now it's been like playing kids' stuff, but from now on (after being Bar-Mitzvah'd), the game is for real. Remember, just as in baseball, the side which plays best, will win. If you only want to, you can always overcome your Yetzer Hara."

## Chess

Samuel Reshevsky (1911-1992) was a child prodigy. He became famous as one of the youngest ever to compete in chess championships. At the age of eight, he competed against older contestants and won.

He was an eight time winner of the US Chess Championship, and although the actual World Championship title eluded him, he had during his long chess career played eleven of the first twelve World champions, from Emanuel Lasker to Anatoly Karpov, being the only player to do so. He defeated seven world champions: Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine, Euwe, Botvinnik, Smyslov

## Transcendence and Immanence

The Rebbe continued to develop the analogy of chess, explaining that while the king represents the transcendent capacity of G-d, the queen represents G-d's immanent quality. This quality of G-d infuses the rest of the spiritual hierarchy with Divine energy, on every level, to every creature, including the angels and souls.

The chess board also reflects the next stage of the creative design with the 'Officers' - i.e. the Rooks, Bishops and Knights - who represent the heavenly angels. The angels

inhabit the spiritual worlds and channel Divine energy to the worlds below and are imbued with great powers.

Finally on the lowest rung are the pawns, which represent the souls of Jews as they are embodied in physical bodies, in this world.

## Movement and Transformation

The analogy continues, demonstrating how every level of this hierarchy has a unique position and method of moving, in accordance with its mission.

On the lowest rung, but on the front lines, are the pawns. Like the pawn that can only go forward one step at a time, the Jew advances slowly, expending great effort in making the world into a place where G-d can feel at home. Each day we awake and do our work with simple actions that are often not very glamorous. Growth is incremental since we are finite and work within the limits of the natural universe.

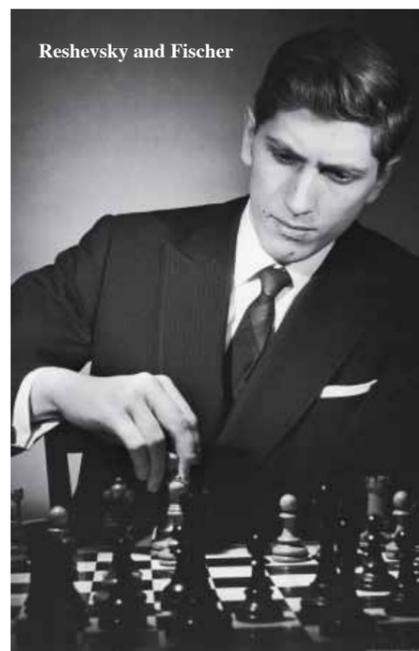
However, when a pawn finally completes its step-by-step progression and reaches the other side, it can be swapped and promoted to a higher piece. It is even possible for a pawn to attain the level of queen!

This is also true spiritually: The Pawn - the human being - is the only one within G-d's formidable creation that can achieve a transformation. Even angels - the officers - rooks, bishops, knights - cannot transcend themselves but must remain as they are. They can hop and skip, several steps at a time, yet they can each only move in the way they have been assigned.

Through human free will however, and the choosing to devote ourselves to a G-dly life, we are elevated, reaching higher than all the angels and the created spiritual forces, forging a bond with The Source, with Infinity, with G-d.

## The Queen and King

The Queen has more power and freedom than any of the Officers - she can move infinitely in any direction. But freedom implies risk, and the queen is often thrown into harm's way for the sake of the game. The parallel of this idea has a great depth: G-d allows an aspect of Himself to go into exile, to become embedded in a world that will not necessarily recog-



Reshevsky and Fischer



Fabrengin

nise His presence. This is precisely the construct of creation with light and dark intermingled. G-dliness can be found everywhere and at all times, even in situations that appear foreign to G-d, even in the most alien of places.

Interestingly, the king, the most important piece, seems to have the least power. While it can move in any direction, it can only move one step at a time, like a lowly pawn. It does not engage in the fighting, and it moves only when it is most necessary: to win the whole game, or in a time of danger.

This is because the King represents the innermost essence of G-d, which is completely removed from the mundane world. This aspect of G-d does not ordinarily become engaged in the happenings of the world. But, in a stunning move of extravagance, when the battle becomes a battle of life-and-death, when the whole purpose of creation is at stake, the King of kings, "G-d", in the most Infinite sense, steps in and joins us. His Glory, as was experienced at the time of the exodus from Egypt, descends to lift and liberate His children.

And what does it mean to win a game of chess? What is the future, that even G-d Himself will drop everything to save? To win the war of all wars; where victory means the vanquishing of darkness, when the world will be a place of good and harmony, peace and tranquility; when no part of G-d will be in exile; and when the essence of G-d will no longer be "removed" from creation. This battle heightens in intensity and becomes more acute as history climaxes and the game moves into a critical stage, arousing the King to make His move.

From our mundane Chess board, the Rebbe painted a grand and sublime vision of the metaphysical construct; the hidden and

revealed forces within creation; the deeper Divine attributes and essence; the interplay between Divine providence and human free will - weaving an extraordinary puzzle, of the process and pathway of history, leading to ultimate destiny.

## Reshevsky and Fischer

At the age of seventy, Reshevsky was no longer among the elite winners at chess tournaments. When he asked the Rebbe whether he should retire, the Rebbe replied that he should not, telling him that playing chess while meticulously observing the Mitzvot was his way of sanctifying G-d's name. Not long after that, Reshevsky defeated the world champion, Vasily Smyslov, in the Soviet Union. He received a standing ovation from the thousand-member audience who were enchanted by his brilliance.

A short while later, in the year 1984, Reshevsky was proclaimed the joint winner of a major chess tournament which took place in Iceland, a victory for which he had prepared by asking for the Rebbe's blessing.

Following his victory in Iceland, Sammy received a letter from the Rebbe in which the Rebbe warmly praised him for his success in the tournament: "I was doubly gratified because it was good to know that you continue to participate in international tournaments, and especially that you shared the first prize in the tournament at Reykjavik. Needless to say, the most gratifying point is that you continue to sanctify G-d's name insisting upon your right not to play on the holy Shabbat, and that your stance was recognised and accepted..."

At the end of the letter, the Rebbe wrote: "P.S. The following lines may appear strange, but I consider it my duty not to

miss the opportunity to bring it to your attention. You surely are familiar with the life story of Bobby Fischer, of whom nothing has been heard in quite some time.

"Unfortunately, he did not have the proper Jewish education, which is probably the reason for his being so alienated from the Jewish way of life and the Jewish people. However, being a Jew, he should be helped by whomever possible. I am writing to you about this, since you are probably better informed about him than many other persons, and perhaps you may find some way in which he could be brought back to the Jewish fold, either through your personal efforts, or in some other way..."

Bobby Fischer was a famous chess genius who became the American Chess Champion at the age of fourteen. He was the World Champion from 1972 to 1975.

When Reshevsky received the Rebbe's letter, his first reaction was one of joy: the Rebbe had chosen him for a special task. However, he understood that this mission would not be easily fulfilled. Bobby had already been out of public life for a few years, and was known to be living reclusively in Los Angeles. Soon after Reshevsky received the Rebbe's letter, he travelled to Los Angeles to play at a tournament. As soon as he arrived, he phoned Bobby and related the Rebbe's request to him. Bobby immediately agreed to see him. This was very unusual, since he did not often receive visitors. Their meeting lasted three hours, during which Bobby asked many serious questions about Judaism.

*Errol Hurwitz is a husband and a father of four. He is COO of Avacare Health Group. A former provincial Judoka and Chess player and is a regular contributor to Soul Sport.*



# A level above

Negotiating the conflict when pro sports and religion collide

By Heidi Hurwitz

From the moment we learn to walk and talk, perhaps even earlier, life is all about making decisions. And the closer to our heart they are, the tougher these decisions become.

For individuals who excel in and are passionate about sport, a decision as life-changing as giving it up can be really tough to make, especially when they are playing at the highest level and achieving sporting goals most of us only dream about.

When it comes down to tachlis, though, those individuals who

chose Judaism over sport have no regrets, as the more they delved into their spiritual roots and their understanding of Judaism grew, the more transparent it became that growing in Torah and coming close to Hashem was playing at the highest level imaginable.

Mandy Yachad, former South African cricketer and field hockey player, first picked up a cricket bat at the age of three. And for many years, he never looked back.

“I first played for the Balfour Park Third team at the age of 14 (filling in, as they were short of a player) and played for Balfour

until I joined the army in 1983. I was never really a professional. I studied at Wits from 1978 to 1982 (but still played for Balfour Park, although I played hockey for Wits) and then joined the army in 1983.”

A year later Yachad earned his first South African cap: “I was first chosen to represent South Africa in January 1984 when I was 23 years old. It was against the ‘rebel’ West Indies team that toured South Africa in 1983/1984 – this was the second year of their tour. That was when South Africa was still in isolation. I was then chosen to play for South Africa on the first official tour which took place after isolation. The team played three one-day internationals against India, in India, in November 1991. I played in the second one-day international.”

Yachad had already experienced the thrill of playing sport internationally, as he had been playing hockey for South Africa since 1979. “Nevertheless, being chosen to play cricket for South Africa and to play in the same team as players such as Clive Rice, Jimmy Cook, Peter Kirsten, Graeme Pollock, Ray Jennings and Garth le Roux, was the highlight of my career. To top it all, I made 123 not out in my first game against the West Indies, at the Wanderers, in front of a full stadium!”

As far as role models go, Yachad wasn’t short of inspiration. “Growing up, my biggest inspiration was Ali Bacher, who was captain of Balfour Park, Transvaal and then the Springboks, and from a hockey point of view, Neville Berman, who also played for Balfour Park and was captain of the Springbok hockey team. My late mom (who played provincial hockey) was also a big inspiration, and I learnt from her, that as important as winning was, it was more important to play fairly and within the rules.”

Growing up in a traditional home, Yachad says Yiddishkeit was ingrained in his upbringing. “We kept kosher and went to shul on Friday night, Shabbos morning and the Yomim Tovim. I put on tefillin from my bar mitzvah onward.”

It was after he got married and started a family that Yachad felt the gentle pull towards becoming more frum. “The conflict between playing sport on Shabbos, etc, and being frum became more profound, and I was effectively leading a frum life other than for the sport I was playing. When we had our third child, I decided that I couldn’t do one thing and expect my kids to do something else – I have always believed in leading by example – and it was at this stage that I finally decided to give up playing sport on Shabbos and Yom Tov.”

As most cricket matches took place on Shabbos, as did the finals for the provincial and national hockey games, he had to make this choice. “I did continue playing league hockey for a number

of years though, as these games were mainly on Sundays.”

Yachad said the decision was difficult at first. “Sport at the highest level (provincial and national) had been a part of my life for almost 15 years. However, once I made my decision, it was like a huge weight off my shoulders. Though I did miss playing for a while afterward, I was comfortable in the decision that I had made and knew that it was the right thing to do.”

Today Yachad plays in a 20/20 cricket league with his sons, as well as going to gym and playing golf. He enjoys watching test matches on TV, “particularly when two of the top four or five teams in the world are playing.”

## For the love of footie

Former South African international soccer player Warren Lewis always loved playing soccer. “I don’t remember the first time I picked up a ball, but I do remember that I was four when I started playing organised soccer for a team called Stella.”

Lewis was selected to play for Bafana Bafana in the year 2000. “At the time, I was really elated about being selected.

Obviously, for any soccer player or sportsman, one of the biggest honours is to be selected to represent your country. Very few people get the chance to play sport professionally and even fewer still, get to play at international level.”

Lewis did not come from a traditional Jewish background, but the path to observant Judaism soon beckoned. “It was around 2002 or 2003. My wife Kim was very keen for us to become more involved and once I started to get into it I realised that this was something that was very important to me.”

In 2004/2005, Lewis had to make the decision to choose Judaism over soccer. “I was worried about what I was going to do for a living, but I knew that I wanted to be observant. When my contract was due to expire in 2005, I decided to tell my club, Moroka Swallows Ltd, that I was quitting.”

Lewis said there were many obstacles to juggling observant Judaism and playing soccer. “You can’t really be a professional soccer player and keep Shabbat. Although not all games were on Shabbat, a lot were. Also, you often travel or train over Shabbat if you play a match on a Sunday. Amazingly, the team actually offered me a contract for another year and stipulated that I didn’t have to play on Shabbat or Yom Tov. I must thank the directors, Gavin Bernstein and Leon Prins, for that. I played for another year, but it was not ideal, as it is difficult for a coach to have to change his team all the time, especially in a key position.”

The decision was not an easy one. “It was very tough. I enjoyed soccer and it was what I had done for a living for many years.



I consulted a lot of people and spoke to my friends and family. Eventually, I decided that this was more important to me and my family.”

Nowadays Lewis doesn’t play much footie. “I really enjoyed my soccer days, but can’t say I miss it. There is a lot of hard work and pressure as a professional athlete. I probably enjoyed soccer more when I was playing as a kid for fun.”

Lewis recently made another life-changing decision, making Aliyah with his family. He says that soccer is really popular in Israel. “People talk about it a lot and the league here is pretty good. Israel has a decent national team that does fairly well for a small country in the European zone. Also, they have clubs like Maccabi Tel Aviv, which this season qualified for and played in the Champions League.”

He doesn’t watch much of the game. “I don’t watch a lot and never have, even when I was playing. I like to try and catch the big games if I can. I followed Tottenham growing up, but can’t say I am a big supporter. I enjoy watching teams like Barcelona that play great football.”

To keep fit, Lewis has taken up cycling. “It is easy on my body after all of my injuries. Also, I live in Ramat Beit Shemesh, which is a beautiful part of the country and is very popular with cyclists coming from all over to ride around here.”

His time behind the ball is now spent with his kids. “We like to have a kick around together and they think I am pretty good. They always used to get a kick out of it when we were in South Africa, when someone would recognise me and tell them about me.”

## Captain South Africa

Current Bafana Bafana captain Dean Furman was recently sent

off during a league match. This resulted in him being suspended for the next match, which took place on the eve of Yom Kippur. Furman says he always checks to see if Yom Kippur falls on a match day or not.

“I am never particularly happy about playing on Yom Kippur, as I have strong, traditional Jewish roots. However, in the past I have made the decision to play and fulfil the fast in a way that I feel appropriate.”

His sending off and subsequent suspension for the ‘Yom Kippur match’ was referred to by match commentators as “harsh”. I asked Furman if he thinks maybe there was a ‘bigger reason’ for this ‘soft suspension’, such as maybe he was freed up to experience Yom Kippur without having to take part in the match?

“It is nice to think that there was a ‘bigger reason’ for the suspension and I was being guided from Above...I spent Yom Kippur with my uncle at Sydenham Shul. The service was lovely, and it’s always nice to be with the family. I went to hear the blowing of the shofar at a shul closer to where I live and the service was finished with the singing of Hatikvah by the congregation, which was very special.”

Furman says he always fasts on Yom Kippur when possible. “And if not, I make a point of fasting on another day as a way of atoning.” He plans to always observe Yom Kippur in the future.

“I am a traditional Jew and I am very proud of being Jewish... Yom Kippur has an even deeper meaning to me and my family, as this is the day my Bobba sadly passed away.”

*Heidi Hurwitz is a wife, mother and a freelance journalist*

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# G-D WANTS TEAM PLAYERS



By Rabbi Daniel Sackstein

The spiritual lessons to be gleaned from the sports field are many. By highlighting these principles in the context of sport, we develop a clearer understanding of a number of spiritual axioms.

At the top of that list is the power of team work. G-d created us selfish, self-centered individuals. By experiencing the benefit of a group of individuals working in cohesion and harmony, we learn the benefits of working with others. This is why there is great value in encouraging our children, at a young age, to participate in team sports.

The basic ingredient in a successful team is for the individuals to function as a cohesive unit, putting the needs of the team above themselves. The success of any team largely depends on this factor. Often one sees teams of ordinary individuals achieve great things because of their ability to function as a united unit.

The opposite is also common - talented individuals failing to achieve as a team because they are not able to successfully work together. The difference between the

words UNITED and UNTIED is where you put the "I". The ego's of the individual players need to be kept in check and controlled for the development of the team. This difficult task falls on the shoulders of the manager.

The successful manager needs to generate within the team an ethos of dedication and commitment where all perform in a way that is consistent with the knowledge that the sum is greater than the individual parts. This is particularly challenging when dealing with extremely talented young superstars earning multi-million dollar salaries. It takes great skill to successfully engender an atmosphere of selfless giving to the team, especially when the stakes are high and there are many pressures at play.

Not only are we more effective working with others, but that experience of functioning as part of a team is the first step in our spiritual development. We see something bigger than ourselves and learn to break out of our single dimensional, selfish mindset.

That is why Judaism is a communal faith. The striving for perfection and connecting

with the Divine are collective tasks. It is for this reason that the covenant at Mount Sinai was not made with individuals, but with an entire people, a big team.

The Torah does not advocate the private communion of the individual with G-d in isolation. Rather a large part of the development of a human being is achieved through our learning to live and share with others.

G-d wants team players. This is clearly seen in the Torah's commandment to get married. Marriage is a challenging exercise in team work. Marriage is essential for our spiritual growth, forcing us to break out of our natural state of selfishness and making us aware of the needs of someone outside of ourselves. The success of our marital relationship is the foundation upon which we build our relationship with G-d. Once we have started to learn to treat our spouse with dignity, love and respect we begin to see outside of ourselves and are now ready to build a genuine relationship with G-d. We now become a team player.

We then further this character trait by fulfilling the commandment of having a

family and taking care of the needs of our children. The next step is to extend this generosity of spirit beyond the walls of our home to the broader community. The team becomes bigger.

The community provides a wonderful opportunity for giving and sharing with the team. We need to learn to play our part as functioning members of the community, contributing appropriately according to our talents, whether in the emotional, spiritual or material sphere. However interacting with a community is not a one way street. A community means you are there for other people and they are there for you. There are many benefits being a functioning part of a team. We pray together, celebrate together and even mourn together. As Rabbi Jonathan Sacks so beautifully puts it, "your griefs are halved and your celebrations doubled by being shared".

To see a close community celebrating the marriage of its members is always a heart warming sight. When I was learning in yeshiva in Jerusalem I was often not able to identify the family of the groom. Surely they were the ones celebrating with the most fervour? The ecstatic joy of so many was palpable, making it difficult to distin-

guish family from community.

The great power of community and being part of a team is also seen at moments of distress. To face a crisis is one thing; to face it alone is another.

The following three examples clearly illustrate this reality:

The support provided by community at times of grief through the various stages of mourning plays a big part in helping individuals realign their world in the face of having lost a loved one.

A family which went through an extremely harrowing ordeal told me that the light that was showered upon them by the unrelenting love and support of the community superseded the darkness they experienced. This provided them with the strength and hope to move on from their trauma and showed how unique our South African Jewish community is.

When my wife and I were living in Jerusalem, a member of our community was diagnosed with a brain tumour and had to be under constant surveillance and could not function for a year. The community formed

rosters to make meals and watched over her for that entire period – an extraordinary act of communal kindness by people with large families, living busy pressurised lives.

Today we live in a transient world where there is little sense of community and team work. We need to make a conscious effort to be a part of the extended family of a community. There is no better place than in the Jewish communities centred on the common goal of reaching self-actualisation through the Mitzvot and serving G-d; communities with the values and priorities which will push us to grow morally and spiritually.

Through our communities we learn to value one another and give thanks for what we have. By means of that community we become part of an ancient story, lifted into something greater than any one of us could achieve alone.

*Rabbi Daniel Sackstein was born in Jhb. Upon graduation of a BA degree at Wits University Rabbi Sackstein went to study in Yeshiva in Jerusalem. He learnt for nine years at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach, Ateres Yisrael and Midrash Shmuel. Rabbi Sackstein and Deanne were married in 1994*

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# a letter to my body

## I love and respect you, but I don't want my life to revolve around you

By Sara Debbie Gutfreund

Dear Body,

You've been with me for as long as I can remember. When I was little I remember how much I loved to swing with you towards the sky and run with you across the baseball field at school. You carried me down ski slopes and to the depths of the lake in the summer. You miraculously held my children and brought them into the world. You have quietly borne the pain of my pre-dawn spinning classes and insane runs through snow.

Sometimes I mistake you for myself, but then I remember: You are temporary. You are a tool.

The world around me seems to believe that you are everything. And that is one of the greatest challenges I face each day: taking care of you but living for my soul. I can't see my soul. It doesn't demand my attention the way you do. You're always needing something. Food. Water. Rest. Exercise. Clothes. If I'm not careful, you become the focus. You become the goal. That's why I am writing to you. So that I can remind myself what your purpose is and what I'm here for.

There have been colourful posters recently in the subways and on the buses in New York City. There are little girls pictured on the posters, playing musical instruments, kicking a soccer ball, smiling in the sun. In huge letters across the photographs are these words: "I'm a girl. I'm a leader, adventurous, outgoing, sporty, unique, smart and strong. I'm beautiful the way that I am." These signs are part of the NYC Girls Project, which is a campaign created to deal with the issue of self-esteem and body image. Judaism teaches us that we are created in G-d's image. We have beauty within us. You, my body, are a gift; a way that I can channel that infinite beauty into a finite world.

I'm grateful to you. But I am not you.

Forgetting your purpose leads to a distorted body image which, in turn, creates a cascade of serious problems. Just take a look, my dear body, at some of the damage:

A recent survey by Glamour magazine found that 97 percent of women have the thought "I hate my body" at least once a day. Ninety seven percent! And on average, most women have 13 negative thoughts about their bodies every day. In a University of Central Florida study of three to six year old girls, nearly half were already worried about being fat and approximately a third said they wanted to change something about their bodies.

There are only so many times that we can be exposed to the abundance of distorted messages from the media without being affected. No matter how confident we are, we subconsciously absorb the idea that there is something not right about our bodies. According to a study in Paediatrics about two thirds of girls in the 5th to 12th grades said that magazine images influence their vision of an ideal body and about half of the girls said that the images made them want

to lose weight.

In 1975 most models weighed 8 percent less than the average woman; today they weigh 23 percent less. The media today is a far more powerful influence than ever before, more important to most women than the influence of our friends and family.

Dr. Brene Brown, who has researched how this negative body image affects other areas of our lives, writes:

"When our very own bodies fill us with disgust and feelings of worthlessness, shame can fundamentally change who we are and how we approach the world...We often conceptualise 'body image' too narrowly – it's about more than wanting to be thin and attractive. When we begin to blame and hate our bodies for failing to live up to our expectations, we start splitting ourselves into parts and move away from our whole ness- our authentic selves."

Body image naturally affects the quality of our relationships. The less confident we are about our bodies, the more dissatisfied we feel about our relationships with others. Often women don't even realise when they are projecting their negative feelings about their bodies onto their marriages. And women are also heavily influenced by the way that their friends speak about their bodies. If we are around people who are constantly complaining about their own flaws, we start to focus on what is wrong with our own bodies. Because of the emphasis on body image in our culture, we also will begin to notice physical flaws even if we're struggling with something completely unrelated to it. If we're having a tough day at the office, that will be the time we start noticing that our arms aren't as toned as they used to be.

Negative body image seeps into every area of life, and this makes my connection to you, my body, far more complex than it used to be. I don't want to have a love/hate relationship with you. There are ways to appreciate you and treat you with more respect. One way is to write an "I like myself because" list and think of ten qualities not related to physical appearance. That way I can remember that my life doesn't revolve around you; I have a soul.

Another way is to rethink who we admire; we can consciously look up to people because of their values, not their images and appearances.

Another great way to feel better – and ironically less focused on you, the body – is to exercise. Exercise increases our confidence not only in our bodies but also in our ability to be strong and proactive. It also shifts our focus from appearance to action. One last way that we can increase our confidence in you, my body, is to set spiritual and personal goals that are not related to our appearance.

It's time to end my letter to you, my dear body. It's time to write a letter to my soul. Although you may get a lot of the attention, it is the soul that truly makes us beautiful. Just the way we are.

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