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Jewish Sports Heritage

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Jews and The Beautiful Game



Jewish Sports Heritage

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From the Director...

Alan Freedman

What Americans call soccer, and the rest of the world calls football, has been called 'the beautiful game,' 'joga bonita' by none other than the greatest player of them all, Pele. Soccer is one of the few sports where the size of the player does not matter. Players small enough to ride in the Kentucky Derby can mix it up with players big enough to play in the NBA. And all around you can hear the announcer yell 'goooooooooal' (and that announcer, Andres Cantor, is mentioned in this issue receiving an award).

Not that all the issues of 'Jewish Sports Heritage' haven't been important to me, but this one is even more so. I grew up playing and loving soccer - at a time when Jewish boys supposedly didn't play or excel at soccer. As author Daniel Lillie wrote in his book "Soccer in the Weeds, Bad Hair, Jews and Chasing The Beautiful Game," Looking back, I must have seemed like a curiosity, a kid all amped up about running around a weedy field and kicking a ball between a couple of cardigans strewn on the ground," (page 15). When I played we didn't put sweaters on the ground, but it was the same idea, maybe I just liked to kick things.

I hope that you enjoy this issue - perhaps it will serve as an inspiration for Jewish youth and for young soccer players out there and who knows, perhaps you will get a kick out of this issue.

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A Fateful Fourth of July in the Life of A Romanian-Hungarian-Austrian-American Social Science Professor aka Inveterate Jewish Sports Fan and Fan of Jews in Sports

Written by Andrei S. Markovits

My most lasting soccer experience as a little boy hails from the Fourth of July, 1954, when my father and I gathered around a radio in Timisoara, Romania – perhaps better known to some under the Hungarian nomenclature of Temesvar – to listen to the broadcast on Hungarian radio of the World Cup final match between on one side the heavily favored Hungarian golden team (arany csapat) led by the incomparable major of the Hungarian armed forces Ferenc “Oecsi” Puskas and his pals from the army team “Honved”, decidedly the best soccer players on the planet at the time; and an unknown, upstart West German team whom the Hungarians had humiliated in the tournament’s early rounds on the other. Of course, I knew the entire Hungarian team by heart – and will for the rest of my life – because I had listened to the legendary voice of György Szepesi regale us with the many wins that this team had garnered, most impressively beating England at Wembley by the score of 6 – 3 and in Budapest’s “Nep Stadion” by 7 -1, and defeating both the reigning world champion Uruguay and a brilliant Brazilian team

at the World Cup in Switzerland on its way to the final which was played in the “Wankdorf Stadion” in Bern, the Swiss capital. Szepesi bragged to his audience before and even during the game as to how the Hungarians’ victory against the lowly Germans was a foregone conclusion. When Helmut Rahn then scored Germany’s third goal in the 83rd minute of the game leading his team to a 3 – 2 upset victory, I will never forget Szepesi’s uncontrolled sobbing into the microphone. I was certain that the second biggest upset in the history of the World Cup – following the Americans’ win against England four years prior to that in the Brazilian city of Belo Horizonte which, perhaps together with North Korea’s defeat of Italy in 1966, certainly will forever rank as the first – would surely depress my father. After all, having had two siblings, his parents and many relatives murdered by the Germans in Auschwitz, I knew – even as a child -- of his antipathies towards all things German. But then the second surprise of

that memorable day happened: Contrary to my expectations, my father was not at all upset by the Hungarians’ loss in good part because of his equal dislike of them on account of it having been the Hungarians who rounded up my father’s family though at the Germans’ behest, to be sure. And then, out of the blue, my father proceeded to tell me that, never mind the Hungarians and Germans, the only thing that really mattered on this day was that it was the FOURTH OF JULY, the birthday of a country which alone in the world was good to the Jews and where – God willing – I was going to end up some day, free of the burdens that he had to endure all his life, even (or perhaps especially) inside the many soccer grounds where he would in-

dulge his life-long passion for this game despite the constant anti-Semitism that confronted him at these visits. It was on this afternoon that my father confessed to me that his most favorite player on the Hungarian golden team were none of the Honved stars, not even Oecsi Puskas, but rather Nandor Hidegkuti, one of only two players from MTK – HUNGARIA, my father’s



GK Gyula Grosics, DF Mihaly Lantos, Jenő Buzanszky, Gyula Lorant, Jozsef Zakarias : MF Jozsef Bozsik, Nandor Hidegkuti, Zoltan Czibor, Laszlo Budai : FW Ferenc Puskas, Sandor Kocsis

beloved “blue and white” team, the team supported by the vast majority of Budapest’s Jews and, of course, my father as well who spent his student days in the Hungarian capital attending many MTK games and enduring the anti-Semitic abuse that its players and fans encountered from supporters of most opposing teams, particularly MTK’s bitter cross-town rival FERENCVAROS, “Fradi” by way of its diminutive. But there was another “Jewish” team that my father liked perhaps even more than his beloved MTK and that was “FK Austria”, Vienna’s equivalent to Budapest’s MTK, though it sported purple rather than blue as its team color which, for my father, was close enough. My father had never set foot in Vienna but he fell in love with “Austria” because of its identification with Viennese Jewry and because of its stellar star Matthias Sindelar -- so lovingly called “der Papierene” (the papered one), on account of his thin and small stature – arguably the greatest player of the Austrian “Wunderteam” of the

1930s coached by the legendary Hugo Meisl, an Austrian Jew hailing from Bohemia. My father had a number of opportunities to become enchanted with Sindelar's soccer skills in the frequent visits that the Wunderteam paid to its archrival, the Hungarian national team, during my father's student days in Budapest in the 1930s. But the real reason my father had come to idolize Sindelar was because of his well-known antipathies for the Nazis which led him to refuse to play for the German national team after Austria's Anschluss to Germany in March of 1938. We still do not know the whole story about Sindelar's committing suicide with his half-Jewish Italian girlfriend in 1939, but details remained unimportant for my father in his adoring Sindelar: A great soccer player who clearly was anti-Nazi and quite possibly might have been killed by the Nazis or committed suicide because of them was quite enough to have earned my father's lasting love. When we finally departed from Romania to Vienna in the fall of 1958, one of our first trips anywhere in that city was to go to an "Austria" game. My father remained this club's inveterate fan until his death on the last day of Pessach in 1990. Though my father knew of Hakoah's iconic stature for all Central European Jews and was in fact to meet one of its stars Bela Guttmann during the latter's frequent trips to and extended stays in Vienna during the 1960s, my father was a tad too young to have seen Hakoah play since the team disbanded by the late 1920s with my father not departing his birthplace of Satu Mare (in Romanian), Szatmar (in Hungarian) and best known

to Jews the world over as Satmar for the big city of Budapest until the 1930s.

There was nothing nicer for me in the world than to attend soccer games together with my father throughout the 1960s in Vienna, traversing the town's various districts in support of "our" Austria. Vienna at the time had – together with Budapest, Buenos Aires and London – the most top-division soccer clubs of any major city in the world, making the first rung of the Austrian soccer league essentially an intra-Viennese affair. But it was at one of these weekend outings, on the grounds of Austria's archrival Rapid, where I experienced palpable hostility that we clearly felt to be anti-Semitic though with none of the vehemence, explicitness and nonchalance with which such sentiments have become commonplace nowadays on many of Europe's soccer grounds, most certainly when such "Jew clubs" as Tottenham Hotspur, Ajax Amsterdam, FK Austria, MTK-Hungaria, AS Roma and even Bayern Munich are involved. There still existed a sense of shame concerning the public expression of Jew-hatred in the Europe of the 1960s, nary two decades after the Shoah. This threshold of decency has since been massively lowered, particularly in Europe's soccer stadiums where, using the crudest anti-Semitism to discredit or rile one's opponents well beyond the "Jew clubs" has become part of regular discourse. And there are few signs of this abating anytime soon.



"Be proud of your Jewish heritage & never forget where you came from." - Ernie Grunfeld

JEWISH SPORTS HERITAGE ASSOCIATION, INC.

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There was one more important name which I heard on that fateful Fourth of July in 1954 back in Timisoara: that of Hank Greenberg. My father, who had never been west of Budapest at that time in his life and knew next to nothing about baseball, had in fact come to know a player purely by virtue of his being Jewish and because he hit small but very hard balls very far, even into the stands which must have been very good. Most important, it bespoke strength (“a Shtarker”) and prowess which, most certainly for Jewish men, was crucial. I can remember few things upsetting my father as much as finding out from me during my undergraduate years at Columbia University that our beloved heavyweight Max Baer was actually not Jewish but only pretended to be one. “You are lying,” my father said angrily and dismissively when I told him this, and I am quite sure that he never believed this fact until his dying day. “Shtarkers” matter to all minorities, especially so vilified and hounded ones as the Jews had been for centuries. They convey a sense of pride and strength, however fleeting and illusory. And this Greenberg – or rather his descendants and game – was to become truly important for my life there in this very distant America, my father longingly wished and promised to me on that Fourth. And so it did. Indeed, during our very first visit to the United States and New York in the summer of 1960, my father made sure that he and I would attend a number of Yankee games in the Stadium, only to my benefit so that I would learn this iconic discourse of the New World which arrived much too late to be of use or pleasure in in my father’s life, but which he – correctly -- deemed essential for mine. Nothing in his love for me moved me more than his sitting patiently through many baseball games which he did not understand and therefore could not enjoy merely for my benefit so that I would become fully conversant with this crucial as-

pect of American culture, in essence learn this crucial cultural code, this language that would help me so much in my later life. What gift he gave me!

Being Jewish in any of my beloved sports has never become so important to me that I would root for a team merely because it featured a Jewish player: Sandy Koufax’s manhandling my Yankees in the Dodgers’ 4-game sweep in the 1963 World Series and his striking out 15 Yankees in Game 1, did not make me a Dodgers fan and failed to ease the pain of this ignominious loss. Seeing Tottenham Hotspur stealing a crucial win from my beloved Red Devils of Manchester United, whose fan I have steadfastly been since that fateful airplane crash on February 6, 1958 which virtually wiped out the wonderful “Busby Babes”, will not mutate me into a Spurs supporter. And I will always detest Arnold “Red” Auerbach and extol William “Red” Holzman, because, as a loyal Knickerbockers fan, I will always remain a Celtics foe. But the connection between Jews and sports – Jews and soccer in particular – will continue to form my most powerful link to and most pleasant memories of my father in whose troubled life Jewish sports figures embodied a bit of pride and joy that he so sorely missed elsewhere.

Andrei S. Markovits is the Karl W. Deutsch Collegiate Professor of Comparative Politics and German Studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. He has held many distinguished faculty positions at universities in the United States, Austria, Germany, Switzerland and Israel. He is the author of Offside: Soccer and American Exceptionalism (with Steven Hellerman) published by Princeton University Press in 2001; and Gaming the World: How Sports are Reshaping Global Politics and Culture (with Lars Rensmann) also published by Princeton University Press in 2010.



"Be proud of your Jewish heritage & never forget where you came from." - Ernie Gruinfeld

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Champion of Romanianization, Victim of Anti-Semitism: The Jewish Elite in Romania during World War II

by Catalin Parfene

Ph.D. student, Faculty of History, University of Bucharest &
Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales, Paris

Abstract: Given the fact that the Romanian national football team was composed almost exclusively of representatives of ethnic minorities from Transylvania (including Jews) during the interwar period, a powerful current of Romanianization emerged from the 1930s onwards. My paper discusses the representative case of Virgil Economu (1896-1978), one of the founders of Romanian football and a champion of Romanianization, who became manager of the national team but was dismissed in 1940 because of his Jewish origin. With the Anti-Semitism seen as part of the interwar Romanianization trend and already institutionalized in the late 1930s in various domains, the Jewish players were eliminated not only from the football national team, but also from the club teams. Ironically, among the victims of the institutionalized Romanianization was one of the most passionate promoters of this idea, Virgil Economu, organizer of the early Bucharest football activities, coach of the Romanian national team in 1939-1940 and the most important theoretician and tactician of the interwar Romanian football.

Keywords: Anti-Semitism, football, Romania, Romanianization, Second World War.

Moto: "It is not a certain football player who scores or who plays well, but the nation itself."

Virgil Economu, future coach of the Romanian national team, in Football. *Studiu documentar și critic* (1935)

1. Romanianization and Institutionalized Anti-Semitism in Romanian Football

Established in 1922 under the direct guidance of future King Carol II, the Romanian national football team was composed throughout the interwar period mainly of minority representatives, primarily Hungarians, Germans and Jews coming from Transylvanian clubs. The team's status of a national symbol determined an ardent debate around squad's Romanianization in the interwar newspapers and in the works of several renowned political and cultural personalities like Nicolae Iorga (historian, writer and Prime Minister), Camil Petrescu (writer, founder of the Romanian modern novel) and Nichifor Crainic (writer and philosopher). Despite the political framework characterized by integral nationalism, Romanianization and centralization, the football Romanianization eventually failed in the interwar period, irrespective of the State's implication and regulations concerning this issue.

The only successful Romanianization disposition was released by the Romanian Football Federation's president Viorel Tilea (future ambassador in the United Kingdom) in September 1936 and concerned Jewish players, eliminated not only from the national team, but also from the club teams in Divizia A (the first league). The decision was part of the anti-Semitic legislation of the late 1930s in Romania and was covered by the European

press, including the Jewish newspapers, like in the following example of the Viennese daily *Die Stimme. Jüdische Zeitung*:

Viorel Tilea [sic], anti-Semitic leader and newly-elected president of the Romanian Football Federation, announced that "only teams of true Romanians will be permitted to play in matches for the national title." Many of the foremost Romanian soccer teams included Jewish players on their rosters. ²

Returning to the Romanian anti-Semitic legislation of the mid and late 1930s, it was noted that

[i]f until then, the anti-Semitic violence and propaganda were promoted by organizations outside the official political framework, in the last years of the interwar period elements containing restrictions in regard to Jews' rights appeared also in the governmental policy. ³

The 1935-1937 laws regarding the use of ethnic Romanian personnel in various domains like industry, commerce, finance, law, public services and administration, preceded the anti-Semitic legislation of the Goga-Cuza government in 1938, which was continued during the royal dictatorship of King Carol II. As stated by historian Leon Volovici,

[b]y 1937, even before the government led by Octavian Goga came to power, excluding Jewish intellectuals from professional associations had become a general process. This was followed by measures to prevent qualified Jews from entering any of the 'free' professions. ⁴

The Goga government's anti-Semitic measures, such as "the suspension of Jewish press, (...) the dismissal of Jewish employees in state's institutions" ⁵, as well as the revision of the citizenship, were praised, among others, by Eugen Hațieganu ⁶, member of the football selection committee of the national team and brother of both prominent politician Emil Hațieganu and eugenicist doctor Iuliu Hațieganu. The Jews' sport and football exclusion in Romania resembled similar contemporary measures taken in Nazi Germany (including Austria) and Hungary. ⁷ In the end, the Romanian anti-Semitic legislation aligned to the Nazi pattern through Ion Gigurtu's government's passing in August 1940 of the racial laws, the Romanian equivalent of the Nuremberg Laws. According to them, "the Jews from the first and third category [the ones coming in Romania after 1918 and the beneficiaries of peace treaties after World War One, respectively] (...) could not be: (...) managers, members and players in the national sport associations". ⁸

2. The Case of Virgil Economu

Ironically, among the victims of the institutionalized Romanianization was one of the most passionate promoters of this idea,

Virgil Economu (1896-1978), organizer of the early Bucharest football activities, coach of the Romanian national team in 1939-1940 (his first tenure) and the most important theoretician and tactician of the interwar Romanian football, whose activity I will detail below. Virgil Economu was the only interwar Romanian national coach guided by the ideas of football Romanianization and centralization, already embraced during his activity as journalist and football author in the early 1930s.

Before analyzing Economu's ideas, a short overview on the coaches of the Romanian national team is required. The Romanian Sports Federations Union and, after 1930, the Romanian Football Federation always promoted ethnic Romanians as national managers, preferably from the Old Kingdom: Teofil Moraru, Costel Rdulescu, Adrian Suci, Liviu Iuga, and Alexandru (ane) Svulescu. In an attempt to modernize the Romanian football, the Federation sometimes hired foreign coaches: Austrians Josef Uridill (1934) and Karl Wanna (1935), Scotsman Peter Farmer (1934-1935), and Hungarian Konrád Kálmán (1936-1937). However, each of these foreign coaches was always "doubled" by a Romanian manager from the ones mentioned above. In other cases, the Federation preferred a selection committee composed of five or six members, all ethnic Romanians, the oscillations between the sole coach and the selection committee being one of the most common features of interwar Romanian football, each change of vision being taken after a series of bad results of the national team.

When Economu was named sole coach of the Romanian team in 1939, his main program was the Romanianization of the team, in concordance with his previous ideas expressed in the early 1930s in the right-wing newspaper *Curentul* (The Stream) and also in his 1935 book *Football. Studiu documentar și critic* (Football. Documentary and Critical Study):

I do not intend to hurt the most basic Romanian feelings by calling the [Romanian] team "national". (...) We cannot say that the team is Romanian: the joy or the sadness after the final result will be revealed either with satisfaction or with excuses by the minority newspapers in Transylvania. And they really have a reason for doing this, because the team belongs to them, and it belongs to them entirely.⁹

Since today the fight between the nations takes place on the sports ground, the time has come for the Romanian nation (*neam*) to be represented by its true sons in the international matches. One cannot conceive a Romanian representative team unless it is composed of elements whose integral spiritual education was conducted in the framework of a true Romanianism.¹⁰

Another stance of his activity regarded his Bucharest-centered vision of the Romanian football and national team. As a journalist, Economu wrote in the 1930s that

some cities in the Old Kingdom, beginning with Bucharest, reached to a satisfactory technical level of soccer, due to the close contact they had with Transylvania. (...) [Romanian football] is struggling between the influences of the Hungarian soccer and the adaptation to our Latin temperament.¹¹



Source: George Mihalache, "Il Dio" și "diavolii" din fața porții... Amintirile lui Mircea David, fostul portar al echipei naționale de fotbal ("Il Dio" and "the Devils" in Front of the Goal... The Memoirs of Mircea David, the Former Goalkeeper of the National Football Team) (Bucharest: Editura Albatros, 1979).

As a national coach, initially, Economu kept the players belonging to the ethnic minorities within the squad. However, between March and July 1940 the national team achieved "the most Romanian" formula in the interwar years, with the majority of players being ethnic Romanians and coming from Bucharest clubs. Economu's experiments at the helm of the national team ended with a shameful defeat versus Germany in a friendly match played in July 1940 and meant to express the alliance between Romania and Nazi Germany. The coach did not draft the 'old guard' of the minority players, the official motivation being tactical reasons, preferring instead to select several inexperienced ethnic Romanian players coming from Bucharest clubs, and the final result was disastrous: 3-9. "The game was imposed by Berlin. Hence, we had to obey. That was the thing back then. We arrived in Frankfurt [where the game took place] in the very middle of the English bombing", Economu later explained.¹² He was dismissed immediately, and soon afterwards lost both his job (he was an agronomist by profession) and his position within the Romanian Army because of his Jewish origins (while his father was a Greek who came to Romania from Greece, his mother was Jewish), as part of the anti-Semite legislation during the National-Legionary State and Ion Antonescu's dictatorship. Thus, the promoter of Romanianization became the victim of his own ideas, which proved to be disastrous in football. Regarding Economu's experiment and the frequent oscillations between the Romanian formula and the minority one, Mircea David, a former player in the national team at the time, noted:

[In 1938] a big turmoil was reigning at the Football Federation. Nobody knew what formula should be pulled off from the conjurer's hat. In the end, after fiery discussions, it was decided that the national team should return to its old "pattern" [to be composed mainly of minority players]. (...)

[In the match against Germany in 1940,] we had the unfortunate inspiration to renounce the team forged in the fire of the [previous] fiery fights (...).¹³

3. Epilogue: Rehabilitation during the Communist Regime

First promoted by the Romanian press and then embraced by the public in the early 1930s, Romanianization in football became institutionalized at the end of the 1930s, in the political context characterized by official anti-Semitism and extreme nationalism. However, the regulations were hardly respected and, in fact, they were abandoned because of the negative results of the national team. At the beginning of the 1940s, Romanianization in football gained a delusive impetus through the unwanted political and territorial changes which took place in the

summer and autumn of 1940, when Romania also entered World War Two. Ironically, Virgil Economu, one of the most vehement promoters of Romanianization, thus became the victim of his own ideas. However, he was rehabilitated after 1945, when the Communists came to power. Economu became again the manager of the national team and also the President of the Romanian Football Federation between 1946-1947, continuing afterwards to work as a football coach and theorist (he wrote five more books about football) until the mid 1970s. He died in 1978.

1. This article is based on my M.A. thesis, *Between 'Foreigners' and Romanianization: The Romanian National Football Team in the Interwar Period*, submitted to Central European University, History Department, Budapest, 2012.

2. "Juden aus den rumänischen Fußball-Teams ausgeschlossen?", *Die Stimme. Jüdische Zeitung*, September 25, 1936, p. 8.

3. Ladislau Gyémánt, *Evreii din Transilvania. Destin istoric. The Jews of Transylvania. A Historical Destiny*, translated by Simona Făgăreșanu (Cluj-Napoca: Institutul Cultural Român, 2004), p. 121.

4. Leon Volovici, *Nationalist Ideology and Antisemitism: The Case of Romanian Intellectuals in the 1930s*, translated from Romanian by Charles Kormos (Oxford and New York: Pergamon Press, 1991), p. 176.

5. Cristian Sandache, *Doctrina național-creștină în România (The National-Christian Doctrine in Romania)* (Bucharest: Editura Paideia, 1997), p. 54.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

7. Rudolf Oswald, "Nazi Ideology and the End of Central European Soccer Professionalism, 1938-1941", in Michael Brenner and Gideon Reuveni (eds), *Emancipa-*

tion through Muscles. Jews and Sports in Europe (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), pp. 156-68.

8. Lucian T. Butnaru, *Rasism românesc. Componenta rasială a discursului antisemit din România, până la Al Doilea Război Mondial (Romanian Racism. The Racial Component of the anti-Semite Discourse in Romania until World War Two)* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Fundației pentru Studii Europene, 2000), pp. 298-9.

9. Virgil Economu, "Un vicleim 'național'" (A 'National' Vicleim [Romanian Custom]), *Curentul*, October 3, 1932, p. 6.

10. Virgil Economu, *Football. Studiu documentar și critic (Football. Documentary and Critical Study)* (Bucharest: 1935), p. 36.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 132.

12. George Mihalache, "Il Dio" și "diavoli" din fața porții... Amintirile lui Mircea David, fostul portar al echipei naționale de fotbal ("Il Dio" and "The Devils" in Front of the Goal... *The Memoirs of Mircea David, the Former Goalkeeper of the National Football Team*) (Bucharest: Editura Albatros, 1979), p. 150.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 123, 149-50.

Hakoah Comes to America

By William Simons, Professor, History, and Co-Director,

The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture

Sport is a microcosm of society, and perhaps no sport better reflects America's ethnic diversity than soccer. The United States is a nation peopled by immigrants and their descendants. A plethora of groups have shaped the history of American soccer. Hakoah, a Jewish soccer team, is a significant part of that legacy.

The 1920's were America's Golden Age of Sport. It was the decade of Babe Ruth, Jack Dempsey, Red Grange, Bill Tilden, and Hakoah. In 1908 in Vienna, Austria, Jews formed the Hakoah soccer club. Hakoah, also sponsored, in time, other sports. By the mid 1920's, Hakoah swimmers, wrestlers, gymnasts and hockey players earned Austrian championships, and the soccer team won the Austrian national title in 1925. As Hakoah's fame spread, Jews from other countries came to Vienna to play for its team.

American Jews were proud of Hakoah, and they constituted the largest Jewish Community in the world. In mid-1920's notes Hakoah historian Benjamin Horowitz, "Almost one in eight of the world's 16 million Jews live in either Brooklyn, the Bronx or Manhattan."

Demographics encouraged Hakoah's soccer team to undertake a 1926 tour of the United States which would naturally begin in New York City, the capital of Jewish America.

Immigrants and their children comprised most of New York's Jewry. As did other immigrant groups, Jews cheered ethnic standard bearers who symbolically validated their worth. Thus New York Jews applauded Benny Leonard, the great lightweight champion of the world and other Jewish boxers who wore the Star of David on their trunks. Likewise, Jews lionized Andy Cohen, second baseman for the New York Giants. Hakoah, which had toured Palestine in 1923-1924 seemed destined to tap that same reservoir of ethnic pride.

Ignatz Koerner, Hakoah's president, arrived in New York several weeks before the team. As an advance man, Ko-



Hakoah-Vienna's top players include Jozsef Eisenhoffer, Sandor Fabian, Richard Fried, Max Gold, Max Grunwald, Jozsef Grunfeld, Bela Guttmann, Alois Hess, Moritz Hausler, "Fuss" Heinrich, Norbert Katz, Alexander Nemes-Neufeld, Egon Pollak, Max Scheuer, Alfred Schoenfeld, Erno Schwarz, Joseph Stross, Jacob Wagner, and Max Wortmann.

erner addressed a number of Jewish organizations. Although the soccer players were professionals, Koerner promised that profits would benefit East European Jews. Seventy-seven year old Nathan Straus, Zionist, wealth philanthropist, former public official, and one of the most influential Jews in America, became Hakoah's patron. Due to Straus' influence, Hakoah representatives received a White House invitation from Calvin Coolidge. New York mayor Jimmy Walker gave the team the key to the city. And Jewish-led labor unions, the International Ladies Garment Workers made a ticket for its members at half-price.

Hakoah's first two games were played at the Polo Grounds. Boxer Benny Leonard, the idol of the New York's Jews, had the honor of kicking out the ball at game one. Members of Rothschild banking family watched the contest from the Straus box. Before each game the American and Jewish Flags were paraded, and the Hebrew Orphan

Asylum Band played both the "Star Spangled Banner" and "hatikvah". The appeal of Jewish champions in New York was irresistible. With the shield of David Prominent on Hakoah's blue and white uniforms, New York Jews were ecstatic. Never before had more than 15,000 people viewed a soccer game in America. Yet, 25,000 attended game one and 46,000, a phenomenal figure, viewed game two. New York Jews gloried in the exploits of Hakoah stalwarts, Jozsef Eisenhoffer, Bela Guttmann, Alexander Nemes - Neufeld, Alfred Schoenfeld, Erno Schwartz, Egon Pollak, Max Grunwald and Moritz Haeusler.

In 1926 Hakoah played ten games in the United States. There were four contests in New York City and other games were held in Providence, Jersey City, St. Louis, Chicago and Philadelphia. Not surprisingly, Hakoah drew best in New York with its huge Jewish population, but over 15,000 witnessed the Chicago and Philadelphia games.

Altogether more than 200,000 spectators cheered Hakoah during its ten game tour. Hakoah had a 6-2-2 record on the field.

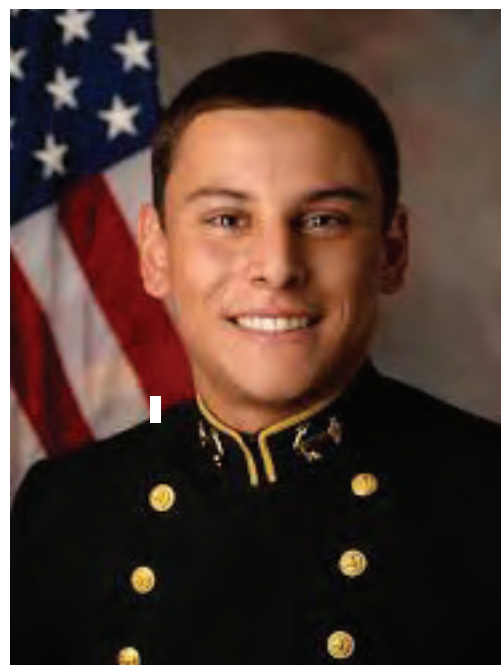
The novelist Sholem Asch wrote, "There are many ways in which to serve God. The new, holy idea has certainly arisen out of Jewish sports. You of the Hakoah were granted an opportunity to realize it." And in Jewish communities throughout America local teams called themselves Hakoah.

American teams raided Hakoah and due to these raids, the team's subsequent 1927 tour of America was largely anti-climatic. For a time, however, New York area teams that employed former Hakoah stars were successful at attracting substantial numbers of Jewish fans. The Great Depression of the 1930's, however, ended the Jewish soccer mania as unemployed workers could no longer afford tickets. Nonetheless, the lingering glory of Hakoah survives in soccer history.

National Soccer Hall of Fame News, May 1991. Vol. II, No. 2, pages 6-7

Dedication/Remembrance

Justin Zemser



We dedicate this issue of 'Jewish Sports Heritage' magazine to Justin Zemser, the Naval Academy Midshipmen 3rd class (sophomore), who was one of the passengers who lost their life due to injuries sustained in the Amtrak train derailment in North Philadelphia, which occurred on May 12.

Justin was a member of the 17th Company, an English major and an academic honor student at the Academy. He was a member of the Navy Sprint Football Team (weight limit of 172 pounds), the Jewish Midshipmen Club and the Semper Fi Society (a Marine Corps club).

"He was a physical fitness machine, pushed the other midshipmen, including myself," James Lieto, Navy sprint football teammate said. "At one point he actually pushed me from behind, grabbed me and then said, 'Hey man, we'll stick together, and we got this.' From that point on, I knew that this kid I'd be able to trust."

Major Kavan Lake, the sprint football coach, also offered remembrances of Zemser, he said that Justin was willing to play just about any position on the team that went undefeated this past season, including beating Army 27-7, to claim the Collegiate Sprint Football League title. "He never turned off as a football player," Lake said. "I mean, he has done some awesome things for us. He was that Swiss army knife. 'Hey, we need a longer snapper. Justin, go in and try that.' He was on it. He was accurate. If we could use that guy anywhere on the field, he was there. 'Justin, today you're going to be working on the scout team.' 'Yes, Coach.'"

"You can't ask anything more from a guy like that." (*Quotes from "The Washington Post" online, May 14, 2015*).

Keeper of the Cosmos

Shep Messing (1949—)

By David Hirshey

Have you met the crazy Jew from Harvard?"

Randy Horton, a fierce-looking six-foot-two Bermudan striker with a towering Afro, was shaking with laughter as he greeted me at the New York Cosmos' practice field on Hofstra University's Long Island campus. It was the summer of 1973 and Horton, who worked at a wildlife preserve when he wasn't banging in goals for the North American Soccer League club, had been out the previous night with an exotic creature he had never glimpsed before—a Bronx-born, Ivy League-educated, batshit-insane goalie named Shep Messing.

"We were kicking back at the pub across the road when a bunch of New York Jets walked in," Horton recounted. "Well, one beer led to another and the next thing I know their kick returner, Mike Battle, was challenging Messing to a glass-eating contest." Horton paused and shook his head, the mad glint in his eyes radiating a mix of excitement and disbelief. "And the crazy motherfucker accepted!"

As a reporter in his first job out of college, even I knew this story was sports-section gold. Never mind that the beat I was assigned to was held in such high regard at my paper, the New York Daily News, that the xenophobic columnist Dick Young once put an avuncular arm around my shoulders to counsel me: "Don't waste your time on soccer, kid. It's a sport for commie pansies."

Maybe so, but when the high noon glass-eating showdown arrived, it was the football player, not the soccer pansy, who failed to turn up.

"I was disappointed," Messing, who was also the U.S. national team's goalkeeper, told me after I introduced myself that afternoon at Hofstra. "I had been practicing on a sixty-watt lightbulb, and once you get past the first mouthful, there's nothing to it."

That was my first taste of Shep Messing. And over the years, I happily became his coconspirator. Growing up, I had admired Jewish athletes like Sandy Koufax and Dolph Schayes, but this was different. Shep Messing was a soccer player, and when I looked at him, I saw myself in a funhouse mirror: two twenty-three-year-olds with long, curly dark hair and luxuriant mustaches who shared a rare affinity for an un-American sport.



Messing came by his love of the game through sheer athletic ability. (In high school, he had starred in pole vaulting and wrestling.) My passion for the sport flowed directly from the DNA that had seen my great-uncle Freddy play for Hakoah ("Strength"), a storied all-Jewish soccer team that shocked the world by becoming champions of Austria in the 1920s, while my father was chosen to represent Switzerland in a U-17 international tournament. Mine was the mutant soccer gene in the family. I never rose above an eminently mediocre Division III college career. But in the soccer-phobic newspaper world of the early 1970s, I stood out as that unusual American who knew the World Cup wasn't some kind of protective gear.

So while Messing lived the dream, I was his Boswellian doppelganger. I chronicled his wild joyride through both the most primitive and glittering landscapes of U.S. soccer and occasionally benefited from our physical and religious connection—like that night in Toronto when a stunning waitress with a Star of David around her neck confused her hotel rooms and was too hammered to remember that Messing didn't wear glasses. Rules were the things. Messing waved at as he vaulted over them. While at Harvard, he once kept a four-foot South American honey bear in his dorm room until the school made it clear that either the kinkajou or the kinky-haired Jew goes. On the soccer field, he affected what he called his "Kerouac Look"—black shirt, black shorts, black bandanna into which he tucked his 'fro, and, of course, wraparound shades. He would alternate between leaning against a post as an expression of his ennui and casually whipping off his sunglasses when forced to make a save. In one game against Yale, his antics so enraged the opposing coach that he confronted Messing afterward and called him a "Bolshevik asshole."

Messing understood the value of showmanship and mind games. A 1972 Olympic qualifying match between the United States and El Salvador ended 1-1, before moving to penalties. As the Salvadoran player prepared to take the decisive kick, Messing came charging out of the goal, stripped off his jersey, and waved it over his head while screaming in pidgin Spanish, "Simon Bolivar es un puta." Who cares if the Harvard graduate had gotten his Latin American history wrong or that the referee gave him a yellow card for his loco move? What mattered was the result: the Salvadoran sailed his kick over the bar, sending the United States to the next round on their way to the Olympics.

In Munich in 1972, Messing was reunited with David Berger, an Israeli weightlifter with whom he had become close friends at the Maccabiah Games three years earlier. On the morning of September 5, Messing was roused from his sleep by an armed guard gripping his shoulder and asking in a thick German accent, "Are you Jewish?" Messing groggily nodded, and the guard said, "There is a problem at Building 31. You must come with me." Sequestered along with the other Jewish ath-

letes on the U.S. team (including Mark Spitz) in a solid concrete fortress, Messing learned that a group of Palestinian terrorists had scaled a fence outside the Olympic Village and taken eleven members of the Israeli team hostage, already killing two. When he was finally allowed to leave, he headed back to his room, only to encounter a Polish athlete laughing and nonchalantly tossing a Frisbee as if he were at a picnic. Overcome with grief and rage, Messing yelled at him, "Don't you have any sense of human decency?" before hurling him to the ground. Though he quickly apologized, a Jewish wire in him that even he hadn't known existed had been tripped. The next morning, he ran to the compound where the Israeli athletes had been held and, with tears in his eyes, asked the guard, "Please just tell me that David Berger wasn't one of the dead."

The guard said nothing.

After returning home, Messing began playing for Blue Star, an all Jewish semipro team based in Queens. Every weekend, Blue Star engaged in small wars of transplanted nationalism on rock-strewn fields against teams of hyphenated Americans—German-Americans, Italian-Americans, Hungarian-Americans. Messing had heard stories of broken legs, fistfights, and referees who required bodyguards. But it wasn't until Blue Star played a team of Greeks and Serbs that he was to experience it firsthand. Sliding to make a save at the foot of an opposing forward, he heard the player hiss, "Jew bastard." After another save was greeted with the word "kike," a full-scale brawl broke out and in the ensuing mayhem Messing was knifed in the thigh by a boy who had run onto the field after his father ordered him to "get the Jew."

In 1970, Warner Communications, the entertainment conglomerate, bought the New York Cosmos, with the quixotic notion of turning the club into the crown jewel of a league that would soon challenge the hegemony of baseball, football, and basketball. Three years later, with attendance at the games anemic, Warner's dream merchants began searching for all-American players to add to their mix of journeymen foreigners in the hopes of attracting suburban moms and dads and their soccer-playing children. Messing was offered a basic contract with the Cosmos—\$2,300 for the 1973 season, or the princely sum of \$76 a week. When his mother learned of the offer, she simply asked, "Have you thought about law school?" Though he played sparingly in his rookie season, the local kid became the team's de facto ambassador, his quick wit and outspoken ebullience enchanting even those reporters who viewed soccer as a threat to the Republic.

A newlywed, Messing was always on the prowl for an easy payday to supplement his Cosmos salary. So when he received a call from his friend Jim Bouton, the maverick ex-Yankees pitcher, telling him he could receive \$5,000 by posing nude for a woman's magazine called Viva, Messing agreed. The photographer had assured

him she was shooting an "artsy" image. But when the magazine appeared, the shot turned out to be a full frontal golazo of his Hebrew National. The Cosmos suspended Messing, citing a morals clause in his contract, then released him, even though by dropping his pants he had given the club the most exposure it would receive until the day in June 1975 when a certain Brazilian god dropped out of the sky to spread the gospel of soccer to the last heathens on earth.

I was able to break the news of Pele's arrival on the back page of the Daily News, the first time a story of mine had appeared there. It was a seismic moment for American soccer—and for me. Messing called first thing that morning. "Congratulations," he said. "It's nice to see one of your articles somewhere other than next to the hair replacement ads."

By then, Messing was the leading goalkeeper in the NASL, albeit for the Boston Minutemen, a club so mired in debt that it was forced to sell off its marquee players just to afford airfare. Messing begged the Minutemen to release him, and when the Cosmos' starting goalkeeper snapped his collarbone, the prodigal son got a lucky break and was traded back to New York.

Even Messing was humbled by the celestial talent the team had acquired in his absence. There before him stood soccer's Supreme Being, Pele, bare-chested and extending a hand to welcome him, Shep Messing of Roslyn, Long Island, back to the Cosmos. The fabled Black Pearl was now thirty-five, and while there was still magic in his dancing feet, Warner realized that one aging icon would not be enough to win a championship. In quick succession came the volatile Italian striker Giorgio Chinaglia and the elegant German sweeper Franz "Der Kaiser" Beckenbauer, both of whom were still in their relative prime and eager to escape the insatiable tabloid press in their respective countries.

Everywhere the Cosmos went in those days, they were greeted by mobs of reporters and photographers, sold-out stadiums, and that staple of big-time American sports, groupies. And these weren't the kind of groupies who stumbled into the wrong hotel room, but some of the most glittering names in show business and politics—Mick Jagger, Robert Redford, Barbra Streisand. To my astonishment, soccer, once the preserve of "commie pansies," had become chic, and no one milked the aura of Cosmos cool more than Messing.

I'll never forget the day the celebrity posse descended on the team's locker room after a playoff match against the Fort Lauderdale Strikers that drew a record crowd of 77,691 (nearly four times the number that turned up to watch the Yankees play that afternoon). On deadline, I was trying to make my way toward Messing's stool when I was shoved forward by the scrum and almost knocked Henry Kissinger into Shep's lap. Messing looked up blithely, as if having the former secretary of

state hurled at him was just another shot to be saved. "Oh hi, Henry," he said. "I once attended a course of yours at Harvard, but I fell asleep."

The next day, I called my father and described the surreal scene in the Cosmos' locker room. He laughed and told me that he had once seen a grainy clip of Kissinger playing goalie as a teenager in Germany.

"How was he?" I asked.

"Not as good as Messing," he replied, "but less meshuggeneh."

Shep Messing



Painting by Richard Wallich

Shep Messing was one of the premier American soccer players in the mid-1970s and 1980s, Shep knows more than just a little bit about goaltending and the game of soccer. Messing started his professional playing days as the netminder for the New York Cosmos, playing alongside world-renowned players Pele, Franz Beckenbauer and Giorgio Chinaglia. Together, they led the Cosmos to victory in the 1977 Soccer Bowl.

Following his stint with the Cosmos, Messing had the distinct honor of being the first player to sign with the Major Indoor Soccer League when he joined the New York Arrows in 1978. He spent six years with the Arrows, where he grabbed virtually every goalkeeping title and helped lead the team to the MISL Championship in each of the leagues' first four seasons.



2015 SOCCER AWARDS



In addition to looking at the accomplishments of Jewish men and women from previous generations, Jewish Sports Heritage Association also wants to recognize the achievements of current Jewish athletes, broadcasters and writers. In this next section of the magazine we will focus on the recipients of the Jewish Sports Heritage Association Honors Accomplishments in Soccer.

The Helene Hines Courage in Soccer Award - ETHAN ZOHN

Ethan Zohn, former professional soccer player, cancer survivor winner of the hit reality tv show 'Survivor: Africa,' and co-founder of Grassroot Soccer, a non-profit that uses the power of soccer to strengthen communities and empower young people to help stop the spread of HIV;

The Dr. Bruno Lambert Good Guy in Soccer Award - MIKE OREN

Mike Oren, for 18 years the Coach of the Suffolk Y JCC Maccabi Boys Soccer Team. In those 18 years, the Mike Oren Coached teams have won the Maccabi soccer tournament 7 times, the silver medal 3 times and the bronze 4 times. In the other four years Mike's teams have made the final four.

The Lifetime Achievement in Soccer Award - DAN ALEXANDER

Dan Alexander, for almost twenty years the Head Coach of the Boys Varsity Soccer Team at the Horace Mann School in Riverdale, N.Y. Dan was the very successful coach of the soccer team, and over the years he coached All-Americans Ken Pasternak, Jeff Gold and Seth Rubin, and led the team to several Ivy League titles as well as Westchester Championships.

The Marty Glickman Soccer Broadcaster of the Year Award - ANDRES CANTOR

Andres Cantor, famous for his signature bellowing of "Gooooooooooooo" after a score in soccer. Cantor was the first announcer to introduce this climactic call to a U.S. audience while working at Univision.

The Mike Freedman Outstanding Jewish High School Soccer Player of the Year Award (Male & Female)

Female - JENNY KRONISH - the senior keeper at the Riverdale Country Day School the 6'1" Jenny has a commanding presence to block shots and is an imposing figure in front of the net. Jenny helped Riverdale claim the Ivy League title this past season and helped them advance to the NYSAIS title game. Jenny was All-New York City and All-Ivy first team, and she will be attending Harvard University in the Fall;

Male - ERIK REISS - a senior forward/winger attacking midfielder from Great Neck North High School. Erik was selected a NSCAA All-Region and All-American; awarded the NCSCA Jim Steen Award, given to the Most Outstanding Player in Nassau County; Newsday All-Long Island 1st Team; Conference Player of the Year; and NCSCA All-County, Erik will be playing at Duke University in the Fall.

The Jay Fiedler Outstanding Jewish College Soccer Player of the Year Award (Male & Female) -

Female - HANNAH KRONICK - senior forward from Johns Hopkins University. Hannah finished her career at Johns Hopkins first all-time points (200), first all-time goals (82) and first all-time assists (36). She was named to the NSCAA/Continental Tire DIII All-America First Team, named second team All-America by D3Soccer.com, NSCAA Women's College Division First Team All-America. Hannah was the Centennial Conference Player of the Year in 2014 and she was the first player in conference history to be named First Team All-Conference four times.

Male - ITAMAR BEN-DAVID - Sophomore forward on the Yeshiva University men's team, Itamar was a first team All-Skyline member. Itamar produced 14 goals and 9 assists for 37 points in 15 games. His 2.57 points per game led the team and the Skyline Conference and was the ninth highest average in NCAA DIII this past season. The Tel-Aviv native had four multiple goal games, including two games where he scored hat tricks.

The Professional Jewish Soccer Player of the Year Award - (Male & Female) -

Female - YAEL AVERBUCH - currently a midfielder with F.C. Kansas City of the National Women's Soccer League (NWSL), Yael signed with F.C. Kansas City in the offseason after playing 22 matches with the Washington Spirit last season. Yael played her college career at the University of North Carolina, and during her time there helped UNC win two national championships (2006 & 2008). She set an NCAA record with 105 consecutive starts and she scored the fastest goal in women's college soccer history.

Male - STEVEN BIRNBAUM - a defender on D.C. United of Major League Soccer (MLS), Steve finished last season as a Rookie of the Year finalist. At the University of California Berkeley, Steve, a team co-captain, was a Missouri Athletic Club Hermann Trophy finalist and a first team NSCAA All-America.

The Jewish Soccer Sportswriter of the Year Award - JACK BELL

Jack began his professional writing career as a reporter and editor at the 'Passaic Herald News,' where he covered various high school sports, Nets basketball, tennis and N.Y. Cosmos soccer. From 1991-2014, Jack was an editor/writer at 'The New York Times,' where he wrote the weekly soccer notebook column for many years and helped supervise and write the goal blog. In 2015, he became the Senior Media Specialist at the North American Soccer League.

The Jewish Soccer Coach of the Year Award - JOSE PEKERMAN

Jose Pekerman is the current Coach (Manager) of the Colombia National Team. As a youth level coach for Argentina, Pekerman won the FIFA World Youth Championship three times, and the U20 South American Youth Championship two times. He coached the Argentina National Football Team in the 2006 World Cup and became the Colombia National Team Coach in 2012. After Colombia qualified for the World Cup in a 3-3 tie with Chile at home, Pekerman expressed his joy for helping Colombia return to the World Cup for the first time in sixteen years, considering it to be 'one of the greatest joys in my life.' Columbia won all three of its group matches (scoring 9 goals and giving up only 2), and went on to defeat Uruguay in the Round of 16 before losing to host nation Brazil in the quarterfinals.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT IN SOCCER AWARD

Daniel Alexander, HM '49 Head Coach of the Boys Varsity Soccer Team Horace Mann School, Riverdale, NY

Born in Brooklyn in 1931 and move to Manhattan, attended Ethical Culture thru grade six and then Horace Mann ,graduating in 1949. Played Baseball, Basketball and Soccer at HM. Went to the Univ. of Penn (Wharton School). Where I competed in Soccer and Baseball. Captain in my senior year.

Entered the Naval Reserve program during the Korean War and upon graduation from Penn transferred to the Marine Corps Officer Candidate Program. Commissioned as a 2nd Lt. retiring in 1972 as a Major.

In the fall of 1955 entered the graduate program in Social Studies at Teachers College, Columbia Univ. 7 eventually received an MA.

Summers were spent at Kennebec Camp in Maine, initially as camper and then waiter, counselor, Head counselor and director. 1944 thru 1978 Returned to Horace to coach soccer and the following year offered a position in the History Dept. In addition coached soccer & JV Baseball. My career at HM from 1958 thru 1997 involve positions as Head of Dept., Director of Fiscal & Main. Operations & eventually Assistant the Head of School.

Coached Soccer for almost twenty years with our teams winning a number of Ivy League Championships. Very gratifying to have our players continue their enjoyment of the sport as college players and as a recreational activity.

After retiring from HM, I entered a family business. Summers have been spent in Maine withy my family.

Awards: Dedication of HM yearbook (4)
Selected for decade team at Penn 1944-1953



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Congratulations
&
Best Wishes, Dan

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ProHealth
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Dan Alexander

Our friend, mentor, teacher and coach.

Jason Brown

Herb Nass

Rich Sarnoff

Eliot Spitzer

THE JEWISH SOCCER SPORTSWRITER OF THE YEAR AWARD

JACK BELL



For nearly 24 years, Bell was an editor and writer in the Sports Department at The New York Times. At The Times, he wrote the weekly Soccer Report for the print publication for almost 15 years and more recently helped to edit and write for the popular Goal blog on the paper's website.

"We're delighted to welcome Jack Bell to the NASL. As the league continues to grow in size and stature, we are committed to sharing the stories of our incredible players, coaches, fans, and owners," NASL Commissioner Bill Peterson said. "Jack has studied and reported on every aspect of soccer not only in this country, but also from a global perspective. With the NASL, he will focus on sharing the next great chapter in North American soccer."

Bell covered the first incarnation of the New York Cosmos of the NASL in the late 1970s and early 1980s for The Herald-News of Passaic, NJ, and still counts many of his experiences with the Cosmos and their players as among highlights of his journalism career.

"In a strange way, my world has come full circle in soccer since I got my introduction to the professional game via the NASL and now I'm back with the reborn and revitalized league," Bell said. "It's an amazing feeling to be back where I've always wanted to be -- in a working life in soccer. Nothing could make me happier."

A Long Island native, Bell played scholastically in Seaford and Rockville Centre, NY. Bell is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and currently lives in New Milford, NJ.

MARTY GLICKMAN SOCCER BROADCASTER OF THE YEAR AWARD



ANDRES CANTOR

Andrés Cantor (born December 22, 1962) is a Argentine-born Spanish-language sportscaster in the United States. Cantor primarily provides Spanish-language commentary of soccer matches, though he covers other sports as well; he also has provided soccer commentary in English and is well known among English-speakers in the United States.

Cantor is famous for his signature bellowing of "Goooooooool!" after a score in soccer. This practice started in Brazil in the 1940s, and since then has become almost universal throughout Latin America. It stemmed from the desire to let families and friends who have stepped away from a game know that a goal has been scored. However, due to translation and cultural dissonance issues, it was largely absent from the lexicon of UK-based soccer play-by-play commentators. Cantor was the first to introduce this climactic scoring call to a U.S. audience while working at Univision, making him popular with American audiences. He first used it at the 1990 FIFA World Cup, but it became especially popular during the 1994 World Cup, which was held in the United States. It became so popular, in fact, that Cantor made guest appearances on the Late Show with David Letterman during the '94 and '98 tournaments, and after the tournament was over. He was broadcasting from Paris for the Late Show during the 1998 World Cup. The call is now being sold as a ringtone on Telemundo's website. He says that Diego Maradona's goal at the 1986 World Cup, in which he ran from midfield past five English defenders to score, brought tears to his eyes (Cantor was working at the game). That goal became known as the "Goal of the Century," and took place after the infamous "Hand of God" goal. The yell was also used in a popular Volkswagen commercial that aired in the U.S. around the time of the 1998 World Cup.

Another unique line of Cantor's can be heard whenever a game reaches half-time or is over. He delivers the line, "El árbitro dice que no hay tiempo para más" ("The referee says there is no time for more").

Cantor currently works for NBC Deportes, NBC Sports's Spanish-language division, and does play-by-play for matches on both Telemundo and its sister cable network NBC Universo. Cantor anchored Telemundo's coverage of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London from the network's studios in Hialeah, Florida. He was also the play-by-play announcer for soccer during the games.

Cantor's first English-language assignment was the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, where he called both men's and women's soccer for NBC, complete with his sig. At the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing, Cantor provided only Spanish-language commentary for sister network Telemundo.

THE DR. BRUNO LAMBERT GOOD GUY IN SOCCER AWARD

MIKE OREN



Coach of the Suffolk Y JCC Maccabi Boys Soccer Team

I was born February 1947 in the town of Netanya, Israel a year before Israel's independence. My father, Zvi, was one of the founders of Netanya. He was also one of the founders of the Maccabi Youth movement in the town and a member of the board of the Maccabi Netanya Soccer team. A team that has participated in Israel's premier league. My older brother, Roni, played professional soccer on Maccabi Netanya's soccer team. At the age of 13 1/2 I joined the youth program of Maccabi Netanya and played for 1 1/2 years. As a result, my love for the sport began at a very early age. In 1963 I came to the United States for the first time and lived with my sister, Hadassah, in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1964 I returned to Israel to join the military. I served for 2 years and 2 months and was discharged in April, 1967. The six day war began in June of 1967 and I was called into duty for the duration of the war.

November 1968 I returned to America and located in Philadelphia. A year later I moved to New York where I met my wife, Linda. We were married in 1970 and this year celebrated our 45th anniversary. Our son, Jeremy, was born in 1974, and three years later our daughter, Jaime was born.

In 1980 I started coaching our son in the Commack Soccer League. During the early 80's I took coaching courses from Long Island Junior Soccer and continued to coach my son for the next nine years.

In 1997 I co-coached the Suffolk JCC girls Maccabi soccer team for the first time. The following year I was appointed the boys soccer coach and have continued the coach a team for Maccabi for the past eighteen years along side my son, who has been my co-coach.

Over the eighteen years my teams have won seven gold medals, three silver medals and four bronze. For the four additional years my teams have made the final four.

This August my son and I will be coaching the Sid Jacobson JCC boys team in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

HELENE HINES COURAGE IN SOCCER AWARD

presented to

ETHAN ZOHN



ETHAN ZOHN is a former professional soccer player, cancer survivor, winner of the hit reality television show *Survivor Africa*, and co-founder of Grassroot Soccer. As demonstrated by his charitable work, volunteerism, and community involvement, Ethan believes that a better and healthier world can be achieved through education, advocacy and inspiration.

Zohn is Jewish and was born in Lexington, Massachusetts. On April 30, 2009, Zohn was diagnosed with a rare type of cancer called CD20-positive Hodgkin's lymphoma. He started chemotherapy in May 2009. On September 14, 2009, he disclosed that after three months of intensive chemotherapy, his cancer returned. He started undergoing a new treatment, including a stem-cell transplant, to battle the rare form of Hodgkin's disease. Zohn received a "clean CT scan" in late April 2010 and remained in remission for nearly 20 months. In September 2011, Ethan confirmed that the cancer had returned in his chest.

In early March 2013, Zohn announced via *The Jeff Probst Show* that he is indeed cancer free due to two rounds of stem cell transplants that he received from his brother.

With the \$1 million prize money that he secured in winning the 2002 *Survivor: Africa*, Ethan co-founded Grassroot Soccer (GRS), a nonprofit organization that uses the power of soccer to strengthen communities and empower young people to stop the spread of HIV. Since 2002, GRS has graduated over 700,000 from its tailored, soccer-based HIV prevention-curriculum. GRS now directly implements programs throughout Southern Africa and partners with organizations to implement its curriculum in over 40 countries around the world. Ethan has contributed to GRS' ability to develop a strong donor network, including Nike, the Gates Foundation, USAID, FIFA, Elton John AIDS Foundation, Barclays, Peace Corps and the MAC AIDS Fund. In the summer of 2010, Ethan and Grassroot Soccer teamed up with the (RED) Campaign to bring Soccer Skillz Camps to children in South Africa during the highly publicized and watched 2010 FIFA World Cup.

On January 22, 2010 he was ranked 14th in the USL Second Division Top 15 of the Decade, which announced a list of the best and most influential players of the previous decade.

JAY FIEDLER OUTSTANDING JEWISH COLLEGE SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD (MALE)

ITAMAR BEN-DAVID



My name is Itamar Ben David, I'm 24 years old. I'm starting my third year in Yeshiva University and I'm majoring in finance plus a management minor. I was born and raised in Tel Aviv, Israel, I moved to N.Y. right after I finished my military service in Israel. I've been playing soccer since the age of 6. I had the privilege to play for some really good youth teams including Maccabi Tel Aviv, and FC Fiorentina.

In 2013 my first year with Yeshiva I played 17 games scored 16 goals and 10 assist which ranked me number 6 in D3 in points per game statistics with 42 points. Additionally I was awarded with the Jewish Sport Review Men College All American Soccer Team and All Conference Second Team.

As a sophomore forward on the Yeshiva University men's team, Itamar was a first team All-Skyline member. Itamar produced 14 goals and 9 assists for 37 points in 15 games. His 2.57 points per game led the team and the Skyline Conference and was the ninth highest average in NCAA DIII this past season. The Tel-Aviv native had four multiple goal games, including two games where he scored hat tricks.

In my 2014 season I played 17 games scored 18 goals and 10 assist which ranked me number 4 in D3 points per game and number 5 in D3 goals per game statistics.

JAY FIEDLER OUTSTANDING JEWISH COLLEGE SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD (FEMALE)

HANNAH KRONICK

John Hopkins Athletics

First all-time in points (200) • First all-time in goals (82) • First all-time in assists (36)



2014: Finishes career as the all-time leader in both school and Centennial Conference history in goals (82) assists (36) and points (200) • named to NSCAA/Continental Tire NCAA Division III All-America first team • named Second Team All-American by D3Soccer.com • NSCAA Women's College Division First Team All-American • Centennial Conference Player of the Year • first player in conference history to be named First Team All-Centennial Conference four times • First Team All-Mid-Atlantic Region • notched her conference record-breaking goal and school's all-time assist in match against Washington College (9/20) • named Centennial Conference Offensive Player of the Week twice (9/15, 9/22) • tallied goal in 3-0 win over St. John Fisher (8/30) • scored goal against then-No. 8 Messiah (9/3) • notched two goals on the road at Roanoke College (9/7) • had second two-goal game one week later against then No. 10 TCNJ (9/13) • scored eighth goal of season in 3-0 win over Muhlenberg (9/27) • headed in game-winning goal off Alyssa Morgan corner kick in last 35 seconds against Swarthmore (10/2) • tallied goal and assisted on a Sydney Teng goal in 2-0 win over F&M (10/8) • assisted on two of team's four goals in win over Ursinus (10/11) • tallied a goal in 5-0 win over Dickinson (10/22) • tallied a goal and assist in 5-0 win over Bryn Mawr (10/25) • tied the conference record for career assists (35) against Bryn Mawr (10/25) • broke the conference mark for career assists with one in win over McDaniel (10/28) • had consecutive scoring streak in nine games from 9/7 – 10/11 • tallied three

goals in two Centennial Conference tournament games against Ursinus and Swarthmore • scored a goal in First & Second Round NCAA Tournament games against Farmingdale State and SUNY Geneseo • Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll member.

2013: Compiled numerous postseason accolades after an outstanding junior season • NSCAA First Team All-America • NSCAA First Team All-Mid-Atlantic Region • D3Soccer.com Forward of the Year • D3Soccer.com First Team All-America • Centennial Conference Player of the Year • ECAC DIII South Offensive Player of the Year • ECAC DIII South First Team All-Star • NSCAA Scholar All-America First Team • CoSIDa Academic All-America Third Team • CoSIDa Academic All-District First Team • became the all-time leader in Hopkins history in career goals (65) and points (159) • NSCAA Player of the Week (9/9, 9/17, 10/29) • Centennial Conference Offensive Player of the Week (9/8, 9/16, 10/21) • scored two goals including the game winner against #1 Messiah (9/4) • moved into second all-time in goals with a score vs. #5 Carnegie Mellon (9/8) • tallied two goals, including the game winner in overtime vs. Stevenson (9/11) • notched two assists and game-winning goal vs. Muhlenberg (9/21) • scored a goal against #13 TCNJ (10/9) • became the Hopkins all-time leading goal scorer with strike against Bryn Mawr (10/19) • became the Hopkins all-time leader in points with two assists against McDaniel (10/23) • tallied a goal and an assist in victory over Brooklyn in NCAA first round (11/16) • scored game winning goal in 2OT against York to advance to the NCAA Sweet 16 (11/17) • scored critical goal against #17 Williams in NCAA Sectional victory (11/23).

2012: NSCAA Third Team All-America • D3soccer.com Third Team All-America • ECAC Co-Offensive Player of the Year • ECAC All-Star Team • NSCAA First Team All-Mid-Atlantic Region • Centennial Conference Player of the Year • set Hopkins single-season record for goals (24) and points (57) • Centennial Conference Offensive Player of the Week (9/17, 10/8, 10/15) • set program record for career and single-season hat tricks (5) • tallied first career hat trick in 4-0 victory versus Rochester (NY) • tied a single-game Centennial Conference and team record with four goals against Washington College • notched third hat trick in seven games against St. Mary's (MD) • tallied three goals and an assist versus Ursinus • moved into third all-time in points in Hopkins history with a four-goal effort against Haverford • tallied goal and assist versus Bryn Mawr • had two goals and assist against McDaniel • registered goal and assist in conference semifinal versus Swarthmore • broke Hopkins single-season points record with goal and assist against Lancaster Bible • scored against Rowan in NCAA second round • tallied assist in NCAA Sweet Sixteen against Lynchburg.

2011: Burst onto the national scene as a freshman • named Second Team NSCAA All-Region, First Team ECAC All-South and First Team All-Centennial Conference • also earned Centennial Conference Player of the Week (10/10), Centennial Conference Co-Offensive Player of the Week (9/06, 9/26) and ECAC South Co-Offensive Player of the Week (9/25) honors • set school record for consecutive games with a point, tallying at least one point in the first 16 games of her career • set school record for consecutive games with a goal (8) • started 21 games for the Blue Jays • tied for team lead and ranked 21st in the nation with 19 goals • led Centennial Conference in goals per game (0.90) • second on team with 10 assists and 48 points • led Centennial Conference with six game-winning goals (second in nation amongst freshmen) • tallied two goals and an assist in first collegiate game in 5-1 victory versus RPI • tallied the lone goal in 1-0 defeat of #11 TCNJ • notched a goal and two assists in NCAA second round defeat of Springfield.

13 Hannah KRONICK

Jay Fielder

Outstanding Jewish Soccer
Player of the Year



HOPKINS



THE PROFESSIONAL JEWISH SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD (FEMALE)

Yael Averbuch



Yael Averbuch, a native of Upper Montclair, NJ, is a current professional soccer player for F.C. Kansas City of the National Women's Soccer League. Yael played collegiate soccer at the University of North Carolina, where she won 2 NCAA National Championships. In her sophomore year, Yael scored the fastest goal in NCAA history in just 4 seconds and also left the program with an NCAA record for most consecutive career starts, with 104. Yael played for all age groups of the U.S. Youth National Team system, including 26 appearances for the U.S. Women's National Team. She has played professionally for various clubs around the world, including in Russia, Sweden, and Cyprus and shares her journey in a regular blog for the NY Times online. Yael works with youth soccer players around the country and is currently working to develop a complete training video database on her YFutbol YouTube channel. She also supports several charity organizations, including the Jillian Loyden Foundation and To Write Love On Her Arms.



THE PROFESSIONAL JEWISH SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD (MALE)

STEVEN BIRNBAUM



PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2014: After starting the year as a reserve, Birnbaum finished the season as an MLS Rookie of the Year finalist, starting in the final 21 games for United after replacing the injured Jeff Parke on June 7 against the Columbus Crew at FedEx Field. The Irvine, Calif., native became the fifth D.C. United rookie of the year finalist in six seasons, joining Chris Pontius (2009 finalist), Andy Najjar (2010 Rookie of the Year), Perry Kitchen (2011 finalist) and Nick DeLeon (2012 finalist).

COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

2013: Birnbaum was one of three team captains for Cal. He was a Missouri Athletic Club Herman Trophy Semifinalist, named a NSCAA First Team All-American, NSCAA First Team All-Far-West Team, College Soccer News First Team All-American selection, All Pac-12 first team, Pac-12 All-Academic honorable mention and Soccer News Net College Boot Player of the Year Finalist. He started and played 19 games at central defense for the Bears and finished the season with 10 goals and one assist. Birnbaum helped lead the Bears to the NCAA tournament quarterfinals.

2012: Was named preseason All-American by College Soccer News, but played just two games for the Bears due to injury. He was redshirted for the season.

2011: Birnbaum was co-captain during his junior season and earned a spot on the All-Pac-12 first team and garnered honorable mention Pac-12 All-Academic status. He started in 16 games for the Bears.

2010: Started in all 20 games for the Bears and finished the season with one goal and five assists. Was a Pac-10 All-Academic Honorable Mention recipient.

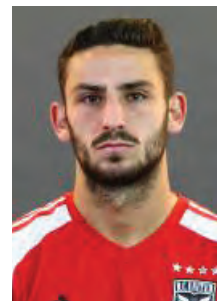
2009: Made eight starts as a true freshman, which was the most at the time in school history. He appeared in 17 games.

YOUTH INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Birnbaum competed for the U.S. U-18 and U-20 National Team squads in tournaments in Portugal and Mexico in 2008. He was a part of the U.S. squad that competed against Manchester United in the 2008 Milk Cup Final. Birnbaum won a silver medal with the U.S. team in the 2012 Pan Am Maccabi games in Brazil.

ACQUIRED

Selected in the first round (2nd overall) of 2014 MLS SuperDraft



MIKE FREEDMAN OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD (FEMALE)

JENNY KRONISH



Athletic Achievements

- 2015 Riverdale Country School Scholar Athlete Award
- 2015 Selected by Israeli National team to play in UEFA U19 Tournament
- 2015 Playing in Pan American Maccabi Games in Chile in December

Riverdale Country School Varsity Soccer

- 4 years starting keeper
- 2014 Captain
- 2014 Best Defense Award
- 2014 All-NYC Team, All-Bronx Team, All-Ivy First Team
- 2014 NYC Mayors Cup Team Selection
- 2013 Coach's Award Recipient
- 2013 All Bronx Team, All-Ivy First Team

Riverdale Falcons Soccer Team Awards

- 2013, 2014 New York State NYSAIS Finalist
- 2014 Ivy League Champions
- 2011, 2012 Undefeated Ivy League Champions
- 2011 New York State NYSAIS Champions

Riverdale Country School Varsity Softball

- 5 year starter – 1B, SS
- 2015 Captain
- 2014 All-Bronx Honorable Mention
- 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 All-Ivy First Team

Club Soccer

Began playing soccer in NYC at age of 8 with West Side Soccer League. Played club soccer with Asphalt Green 2006-2011; Manhattan Soccer Club 2011-13, FC Sting 2013-14, Nirvana FC 2014-15.

2014 Undefeated Disney College Showcase Champion, 2013 Mad Dog Mania Finalist, 2013 State Cup Finalist, 2012 Rockland Invitational Tournament Finalist

College

Will be playing at Harvard this fall.

MIKE FREEDMAN OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARD (MALE)

ERIK REISS



Erik Reiss is a senior forward/winger from John L. Miller Great Neck North High School. Born on May 7, 1997, in Great Neck, New York, Erik came from a family of athletes. His paternal grandfather, Zeev Reiss, represented Israel in the International University Games in track and field, basketball, and volleyball. Zeev also held Israel's national record in the triple jump event in track and field from 1954-1978 and played basketball in the National League of Israel from the early 1950's to the mid 1970's. Erik's father Isaac Reiss represented Israel on the U18 Israeli National Team and also played basketball in the National League of Israel during his service in the Israel Defense Forces. Erik has been playing soccer competitively since he was eight years old. In third grade, he began playing soccer for his local club team Great Neck Blizzard. Soon enough, the level of play dropped off, and Erik left Great Neck to continue playing at a high enough level that matched his skill set. In seventh grade, he joined a new club team called Long Island United, which was sponsored by Liverpool FC and coached by the assistant coach at Hofstra University Gary Book. Long Island United was nationally ranked and compiled from some of the most talented players on Long Island. In that same year, Erik also became a part of the Long Island Olympic Developmental Program (ODP) Team, which then led him to the New York State ODP Team, where Erik was practicing twice a week, not including the two practices a week he already had with Long Island United. By the start of Erik's freshman year of high school, Long Island United fell apart,

and Erik joined another nationally ranked team called East Meadow Arsenal while also representing Great Neck North High School on its junior varsity soccer team. Erik also continued to represent the State through the New York State ODP Team, but by the summer entering tenth grade, Erik was selected for the Region I ODP Team, which consisted of players from the whole North East region of the United States, ranging from Maine to Virginia. Tenth grade was a very successful year for Erik in terms of soccer. He made his varsity soccer team at Great Neck North High School, led the team in goals and assists, was named the team's Most Valuable Player (MVP), and was awarded NCSCA All-County recognition. Also playing for the Region I ODP Team, Erik was selected to be a member of the team for the Interregional Event and the International event. The Interregional Event was a showcase tournament in Bradenton, Florida, in which all four regions competed, and at the Interregional Event, Erik was selected to the Interregional All-Star Team. Erik then took part in the International Event, in which the squad toured Italy for a tournament against top European youth academy teams, such as AC Milan, ACF Fiorentina, AS Monaco, and Atalanta B.C. In his junior year, Erik joined an academy in the United States Soccer Federation (USSF) called Blau Weiss Gottschee. Due to the USSF regulations, Erik was ineligible to play high school soccer his junior year. Enjoying success at Blau Weiss Gottschee, Erik was recognized on the TopDrawerSoccer IMG Academy Top 150 Player Pool, which is a player-pool of the top soccer players in the country. However, as prestigious as Blau Weiss Gottschee was, Erik left the academy his senior year and joined Massapequa Celtic in order to be able to play high school soccer his senior year of high school. In his senior year, Erik helped lead the Great Neck North Blazers to a Conference A1 Championship and the Nassau County Semi-Finals, where the Blazers were upset by South Side in the last two minutes of regulation. Despite his team not coming out victorious, Erik became the most decorated soccer player in Nassau County that year. Erik was selected as a member of the NSCAA All-America Team, the NSCAA All-Region Team, the NSCAA All-State 1st Team, the MSG Varsity All-Metro 2nd Team, and the Newsday All-Long Island 1st Team. Erik was also awarded the Jim Steen award, given to the most outstanding player in Nassau County, the Conference A1 Player of the Year, and NCSCA All-County. Despite Erik's rigorous soccer schedule, he always managed to make time for his academics and his social life. Erik graduated John L. Miller Great Neck North High School with ten AP classes and a 4.0 GPA. During high school, Erik was also very involved in extracurricular activities. Aside from playing varsity soccer, Erik was the vice president of the AIDS Awareness Club, the vice president of the Stock Market Club, a member of the KEY Club, a member of DECA, and the starting point guard of the varsity basketball team. Erik will be attending Duke University in the fall of 2015.

Congratulations

on receiving the

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*It is gratifying that all your
dedication and hard work
over these years is
being recognized.*

Am I my brother's keeper?

Cain, Genesis 4:9

I'm proud to be a Jewish professional football player. Despite encountering the occasional anti-Semitic teammate, it's important to stay strong to whom I am.

Daniel Haber

As a Jewish soccer player I am often starkly aware of being part of a very small minority. Through traveling the world to play the game I love, I have made lifelong bonds with Jewish communities and other Jewish players all around the world. It has been inspiring and comforting to know that no matter where soccer takes me, I have an extended family waiting with open arms!

Yael Averbuch

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