



# UPDATE

*The Newspaper of the Westchester 2009 JCC Maccabi Games*

## Tennis Talk

By Robin Klein

On Monday morning the tennis courts at Fairview Country Club in Connecticut were full of boys age 14 and under from different states and countries, all competing in the JCC Maccabi Games. They agreed that tennis is a sport where many people can bond, connected by something they all love. They said that no matter if they win or lose, just competing in the Games is an honor.

“Tennis is a fun game that combines strategy and athleticism, and you can play for the rest of your life,” says Zach Gensior from Rockland, N.Y. Zach has been playing tennis for three years and thinks the sport can give someone a lot of strength and energy. He says the JCC Maccabi Games has given him a chance to become stronger in tennis and to socialize with people from different areas of the world. Like Zach, many other boys who are competing this week in tennis can do the same. They say that tennis is one of the sports in the world that is watched and played by millions of people.

## Communication on the Court: Basketball

By Carley Sohn

Athletes usually have tons of practice before a game or tournament. However, the Westchester basketball teams have had very little, or no, practice at all, making for a challenging first day of play.

The boys 16U white team, which played Monmouth yesterday, won its first game. Many players were surprised, since the team had not had many practices. They believe their communication skills helped

them. Many felt that their ability to communicate on the court was extraordinary, considering that they have not known each other all that long.

According to Merryll Silfen, the mother of Westchester basketball athlete Ally Silfen, the white 16U girls’ team had no practice before the summer, since most of the girls were away at summer camp. Still, the girls played with all their hearts on this opening day. Good luck in the rest of the games, athletes!

## Bump, Set Spike: Volleyball

By Andrea Ditkoff

The players adjust their kneepads while the parents focus their cameras anxiously. The gym echoes with the squeaks of rubber soles on the wooden floor. The tension runs palpable for these volleyball players, as well as their coaches. But most of all, the players express their desire to have an enjoyable and fair game. As Nancy Merlin, an athlete from Bensonhurst, N.Y., put it, “I am looking forward to a good game, and I just want to have fun!”

Each team is scheduled to play four games before being

divided into seeds to begin the playoffs. From there, explains Coach Coulehan of Westchester, “It will be single elimination.”

For now, the players are still caught up in the novelty of their first games here. Annie Abrams of Westchester White says her team is “really psyched and excited.”

At the end of the week, most of the athletes predict they will remember the friendships more than the matches. According to Rachel Josselson, another Westchester athlete, “The most important thing I will take from the Games are the amazing people I have met!”

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## Swimmers Focus on the Community

By Dorin Azerad

Judaism and an interest in meeting new people united everyone at PACE University Aquatic Center on Monday. "It's not about the times for these kids; it's about meeting new Jewish teens and having a good time," said Bill Christy, the coach for the South Jersey swim team.

"People don't participate in the JCC Maccabi Games only for the sports. It's about the people you meet along the way," said Emily Elconin of Detroit.

Swimmers said they have a new-found reason for competing this week, after hearing the tragic story of the Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympics. "I now compete in memory of the lives lost," said

Jess Green of New Jersey. "Their stories should never be forgotten."

As Sandy August, the second-place in the 16U 200-yd. breaststroke, from Bridgewater, N.J., put it, "Two major aspects of my life are Judaism and swimming. It's nice to connect the two of them."



## Maccabi Madness: How Much Do You Know? By Carley Sohn

How high is *your* Maccabi I.Q.? Answers are at left.

1. The Opening Ceremonies were held here.
2. This Maryland city brought 44 athletes to the Games.
3. This soda company is one of the Games' many sponsors.
4. Some athletes are from this city, the capital of Manitoba.
5. One of four Canadian cities sending delegates, it is home to the CN tower.
6. Located in Rye, the site of one of the evening events.

7. This sport has the largest number of individual athletes.

8. Many athletes from this Brooklyn delegation originate from Ukraine, Russia, or Belarus.

9. The county in California that sent 95 athletes.

10. Number of sports being played this week.

11. Name of the JCC Maccabi community service program.

12. State where this week's table tennis commissioner won the table tennis championship in 1947.

### *Maccabi Madness*

#### *Answers*

1. Madison Square Garden
2. Baltimore
3. Coca-Cola
4. Winnipeg
5. Toronto
6. Playland
7. Tennis
8. Bensonhurst
9. Orange
10. Eleven
11. Day of Caring and Sharing
12. Indiana

*Don't forget to visit the Mid-Westchester JCC's own Café Taim, for coffee, veggie burgers, pastries, and more!*