



UPDATE

The Newspaper of the Westchester 2009 JCC Maccabi Games

WEDNESDAY

Sports Shorts

Tennis Star Makes Pit Stop in Westchester

By Carley Sohn, Robin Klein, and Becca Leibowitz

Have you heard of Julia Glushko? She is a highly ranked tennis star from Tel Aviv, Israel. She is 19 years old and is qualified for the U.S. Open this summer. She recently visited the 2009 Westchester Maccabi Games. She also played for the Games when she was younger. She was at the Bronx Zoo Monday night!



We were lucky enough to meet her. She is amazing at what she does and is a big inspiration for many people. We hope she wins her matches at the U.S. Open!

TABLE TENNIS

“Ask me why they call it ping pong,” says Venue Director Al Sarnotsky. “Why do they call it ping pong?” I ask. “I don’t know!” he responds. As I sat in the Temple Israel Center gym and listened to the sounds of table tennis players competing, I figured it out. The pings and pongs of the balls on the paddles fill the room.

Seventh grader Aaron Wald of Westchester changes paddles between matches, noting that a new paddle has “fresher rubber and a better spin.”

Neema Korori, a ninth grader from Orange County, Cal., loves the game, but says his favorite part of Maccabi is “making new friends.”

– Becca Leibowitz

SOCCER

Competition was fierce at the North Castle Town Recreation Department at Tuesday’s soccer games. Tensions were high and balls were kicked every which way. Nonetheless, teamwork was in the air. “We need to work as a team, and then we have a pretty good shot at the gold,” said Adam Strikowski of the 16U Los Angeles Boys Soccer Team.

For some competitors, soccer was not about the competition, but the journey. “I’m here to meet people,” said Noah Shohet of Orange County.

– Dorin Azerad

BASEBALL

Crack! Brian Zeller of Palisades smashes the ball and runs to second base, bringing in three runs.

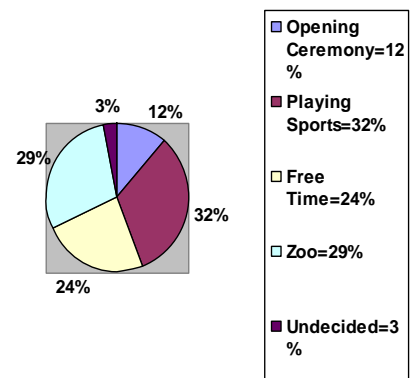
At Ardsley High School on Monday, Palisades and Westchester Blue played a hard-fought game. The Palisades pitcher was 16-year-old Kyle Beldoch. His mother, Jackie, says that both she and her son love the “feeling of community with the team and with the Jewish community.”

Palisades took an early lead, and while Westchester tried to pull its way back, the final score was 10-6, in favor of Palisades.

Palisades Coach Jeff says that his favorite part of coaching the team this year is the games, as well as “getting to know the kids.” Coach Mike of Westchester Blue enjoys “camaraderie of the teammates.” While the teams play in hopes of winning, the friendships they make are even more precious than the medals.

Favorite Activities So Far

By Andrea Ditkoff



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Tennis Players Serve to Improve

By Jacob Koffler

At Beach Point Country Club, the 16U players took part in one of the most popular sports at the JCC Maccabi Games: tennis. Many of the competitive players I talked to said they played five times a week, while the recreational players spanned one, two or three days a week. For most of the competitive players, tennis is the only sport they play, while recreational players tend to have other sports, too.

One Westchester player, Larry Milstein, told me that his favorite thing about the games was “playing a sport I love in a friendly yet competitive environment, which gives me an opportunity to improve my tennis game.” He added,

“Tennis is a mental game. You always have to keep your head in the game.”

I asked many players what they thought they needed to improve, and the answers included backhands, serves, pace, consistency and volleys. One player even told me he needed to stop spinning his racket before waiting to return a ball because it breaks his focus.

The Games are a great place for athletes to raise the caliber of their play. The energy is positive, the coaches and teammates supportive and opponents even congratulate each other on good shots and rallies. Winning is important, but so is creating a positive learning environment for all.

Pins, Pins, Everywhere!

By Dorin Azerad

Pins are being traded everywhere you look. From the pool deck to the tennis courts, people are swapping hometown pins and vintage JCC Maccabi Games pins. Some are in the shapes of jerseys, iPods, and symbols of the delegation’s community, while others are classic big buttons.

For many, trading pins is a way to meet new people. “Asking for pins is an icebreaker. I’ve met more people because of them,” says athlete Eireann O’Dea.

When you look around, you see that all sorts of JCC Maccabi Game people collect pins, from volunteers to staff to coaches to athletes. Some

coaches have pins from 30 years ago, when they were competing in the JCC Maccabi Games!

Some pins have been a way of improving sportsmanship. “I’ve been able to meet people on the opposing side, because of my trading pins,” says athlete Elyse Wohl.

Most of all, trading team pins is a Games tradition. Whether you have five or fifty, you can never have enough. As Amiel Kolleck of Hamilton, Canada put it, “No two are alike!”

At far left: Some people collect a lot of pins. Can you guess who owns this stash?!

