



David Gach
At age 33, David Gach was the youngest player on the Inter-Congregational Men's Club Summer Softball League champion Temple Shir Shalom team.

Gach held down the No. 5 spot in Shir Shalom's potent lineup, and he patrolled either left-center field or right-center. The former Berkley High School baseball and football star now lives in Bloomfield Hills, works in health care sales, is married to Amy, and is the father of Avery, 4, and Eli, 2.



Eric Weiss
Eric Weiss will achieve a rarity next summer when he competes in the JCC Maccabi Games for the fifth time. The 15-year-old Bloomfield Hills Andover

High School sophomore was able to compete in the Maccabi Games as a 12-year-old in 2008 because Detroit was a host. He had to play an individual sport, so he competed in tennis. He's played basketball the last three years, including this summer. The normal age range for a Maccabi athlete is 13-16.

A Big Maccabi Winner On And Off The Court

Steve Stein
Special to the Jewish News

The word "selfish" isn't a part of Sammy Stern's vocabulary.

After he had sold enough \$10 raffle tickets to pay his registration fee to participate in the JCC Maccabi Games this summer, the 14-year-old from Huntington Woods didn't stop there.

He continued to sell tickets, knowing full well that all the money from the sales would be going into a scholarship fund for other Detroit Maccabi athletes who needed financial assistance.

"The economy is tough, so I thought I'd help my parents by selling enough tickets so I could go to the Maccabi Games for free," he said. "Once I did that, I kept going because I knew there were kids who were hoping for scholarships."

Stern sold 183 of the 646 raffle tickets sold by the more than 100 Detroit Maccabi athletes, artists, coaches and delegation heads who went to Israel, Philadelphia and Springfield, Mass. He won a \$50 prize for selling the most of any athlete or artist.

Thirteen scholarships were awarded to athletes who competed in Philadelphia and Springfield. Scholarships paid for a maximum of 50 percent of the registration fee.

First prize in the raffle was \$1,000. Second and third prizes were \$360 and \$180. Funding for the prizes came from sources other than raffle ticket sales.

Eighty percent of each raffle ticket sold by an athlete or artist went to the youth who sold it, and 20 percent went into the scholarship fund. Once Stern had paid his registration fee, 100 percent of each ticket sold was put in the scholarship fund.

"What Sammy did was absolutely amazing," said Detroit Maccabi delegation head Karen Gordon.

A letter Stern wrote to about 50 family members and friends resulted in most of his ticket sales. Enclosed with each letter was a stamped envelope.

"What I am most excited about is ... my representation as a leader of Metro Detroit," he wrote about his first participation in the Maccabi Games.

"If you are not able to help at this time, I absolutely understand and will accept all good wishes that come my way," he also wrote.

Most of the money from ticket sales poured in the first two weeks after the letter was mailed. Checks continued to trickle in for about two months.



Sammy Stern, left, and Detroit Maccabi basketball teammate Jon Radner, right, flank Mexican players Davo Samra and Alejandro Hirsch Saed.

Stern wasn't only a Maccabi champion in raffle ticket sales. He also was a Maccabi champion on the basketball court, helping the Detroit 14U boys team win a gold medal in Springfield with a perfect 7-0 record.

One of his teammates was best friend Jon Radner, also a Huntington Woods resident and Berkley High School freshman.

Stern played center for the Detroit team. He's not sure if he'll play that position or power forward at Berkley.

"Wherever they want me to play," he said.

He's a member of the Berkley junior varsity boys tennis team this fall.

Athletes of the Year

The Michigan Jewish Sports Foundation has announced the names of the *Jewish News* High School Athletes of the Year and Bill Hertz Memorial Scholarship recipient.

The Athletes of the Year are Farmington Hills Harrison football player Stephen Slobin and Ann Arbor Huron swimmer Elizabeth Gelb. Lacrosse player Ari Cicurel from Bloomfield Hills Andover and the International Academy is the scholarship winner.

Slobin, Gelb and Cicurel will be honored Nov. 7 at the annual Michigan Jewish Sports Hall of Fame induction dinner at Congregation Shaarey Zedek in Southfield. More details about the high school honorees and dinner will be forthcoming. □

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