

Maccabi:

A super week to remember

By Marty Budner
staff writer

"A week to experience, a lifetime to remember." That was how Marty Ollif, who, along with Jay Robinson, co-chaired the second Maccabi Youth Games in North America, summed up the weeklong competition that ended Sunday evening.

"The athletes won't remember who won the games, they'll just remember the cultural experiences and athletic performances they witnessed," said Ollif. "They will maintain the friendships that have formed and have a little better understanding of what the Maccabi movement is all about."

The Maccabi games involved more than 1,000 Jewish athletes from six countries participating in nine different sports — basketball, volleyball, tennis, swimming, racquetball, soccer, table tennis, gymnastics and track and field. Delegations from Israel, Australia, Venezuela, Mexico and Canada were present, as were representatives from some 30 cities across the United States.

Competition — for youngsters 12 to 16 years of age — was held at various sites throughout West Bloomfield and Bloomfield Hills, including the Jewish Community Center.

"The purpose of the Games is not to have high quality competition, but to bring the Jewish community together," said Ollif. "The quality of competition was secondary to everything that went on."

THE MACCABI GAMES, primarily for world-class Jewish athletes, are held every four years by the country of Israel. The Maccabi Youth Games is an attempt by the Maccabi World Union to "develop and train" younger Jewish athletes into top-flight competitors.

"The youth have not been served by the actual Maccabi Games every four years," said Ollif. "That's why the Maccabi Youth Games came about."

"They (the athletes) trained their hardest for these (84) Games," he said. "There were a lot of people who were very satisfied with the competition."

Memphis, Tenn., hosted the first North American Maccabi Youth Games in 1982. West Bloomfield was chosen to host this year's competition and Toronto is scheduled to be the site of the 1986 games.

Led by the driving spirit of Southfield's Max Sheldon, representatives from the Jewish Community Center mobilized to host the Maccabi Youth Games almost immediately after the Memphis Games closed.

"Our facility is the largest Jewish Community Center in the country," said Ollif. "We already had a commitment from volunteers to host the Games and we were very well prepared."

"We got our act together very quickly . . . nobody else had the manpower to do it like we did," he said.

The Jewish athletes from around the world stayed at the homes of some 570 families around the Detroit Metropolitan area last week.

Following are the official Maccabi Youth Games results Ollif had by press time Tuesday afternoon:

BOYS BASKETBALL: 1. Delaware Valley, 2. Baltimore, 3. Los Angeles.

GIRLS BASKETBALL: 1. Los Angeles, 2. Chicago, 3. Delaware Valley.

SOCCER: 1. Northern California, 2. Metro New York, 3. Delaware Valley.

RACQUETBALL (12-14 years): 1. Schwartz (Cleveland), 2. Galton (Troy), 3. Wain (Levittown).

RACQUETBALL (15-18 years): 1. Nathanson (Throokton, Mass.), 2. Schoen (Columbus, Ohio), 3. Goldstein (Pitt).

John Miller: a class act

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they are like a one-man team and players and coaches are yelling at each other. I couldn't play on a team like that," he said.

HERRINGTON HAS been careful of the amount of praise he heaps on Miller. Herrington, who has won 101 games at Harrison, stresses team football. When the team is successful, the credit goes to the team. Not to one individual.

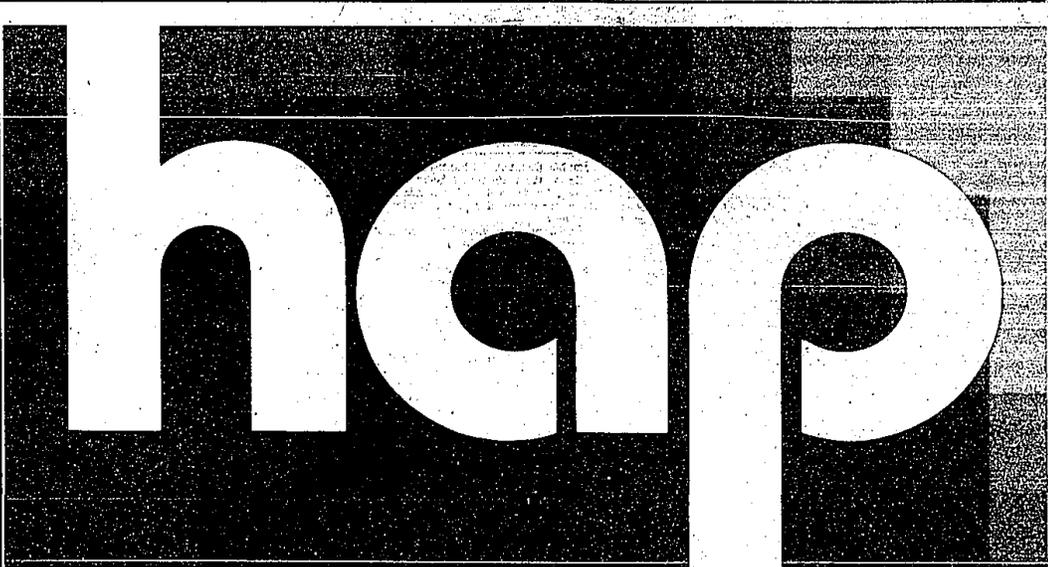
Miller has taken that philosophy to heart. "I don't think much about personal goals," he said. "All I want to do is contribute as much as I can to help the team accomplish its goals." He is not just offering up modest rhetoric. His words are spoken with deep sincerity.

Miller's accomplishments and the fact that he is one of the most sought-after players in the state by college recruiters could turn this 1984 season into a circus — a media circus.

But, Miller won't allow it. He has said up front that he will not choose his college until after the season. So, don't ask. He has said he will definitely visit Michigan State, Penn State and Wisconsin. There will be more, but for now, that's it.

John Miller won't let anything, especially not something as individualistic as where he's going to school, overshadow what his team accomplishes in 1984.

John Miller is a special young man.



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