

11th Pan-American USA Maccabi Indoor & Beach Volleyball
Quotes/Reflections:

Being a part of the Pan-American Maccabi games in Buenos Aires was an excellent experience on numerous levels. The competition was great and the team camaraderie was fantastic. Most importantly, however, the best part was being able to meet people from different cultures, and learn about other parts of the world. It was truly an honor to be able to represent the US Jewish community overseas.

- J.T. Wenger

It was an incredible experience to come together with people from all walks of life, ultimately for the same unified goal--playing sports with other Jewish athletes in a unique and exciting environment!

- Shana Kaye

The 11th Pan American Maccabi Games in Argentina was my third international Maccabi experience and one of the most powerful. Being able to represent the USA and make positive relationships and connections with the Argentineans and other federations was a deeply profound experience that I will not soon forget. To travel and experience other cultures and ways of life is an immeasurable experience that is so personally rewarding and inspiring. This trip has given me a perspective and a purpose to pursue the goals and aspirations I have here back in the USA.

-Sam Shweisky

As the year was winding down, I found myself en route to Argentina for the 2007 Pan-American Maccabi Games. It would be my first Maccabi experience and I knew no one else going on the trip aside from the introductory emails with my teammates and coaches from all over the country. Oddly enough, I could not be more excited about this trip into the unknown.

As everyone arrived in Buenos Aires, I knew we all had a few things in common. Sharing pride in our Jewish heritage and love for the sport of volleyball, we were all honored to be representing the United States of America. The two weeks I shared with the people that I met were two of the most memorable weeks of my life. Never before have I formed such strong bonds of friendship in such a short period of time.

Earning a silver medal with the girls on the indoor team was a storybook ending having met each other just days before competition began. It was also an incredible feeling to hear the “U...S...A” and “oooh-saah” cheers over and over again and to know that the crowd was cheering for us. It was equally as inspiring

to cheer for and watch the successes of men's' indoor team and all four (and a half) of the USA beach teams.

Nothing however compares to the time we had to get to know each other off the court. In retrospect, I welcome the slight disorganization and the fact that the competition venue was so far from the hotel. I now see these glitches as blessings in disguise because it was during those bus rides and random adventures around the city that I was able to get to know my fellow Americans and even some of the athletes representing some of the 20 other countries.

This trip helped me learn a lot about what it means to represent who I am; my religion, my country, my school, my sport, and my family and I can not put into words how much I look forward to doing it all over again in Israel in the Summer of 2009.

- Rachel Ostroff