

**Mike Spector – Volleyball Chair: Israel 1997, 2001, 2005
Mexico City 1999, Argentina 2007**

My wife, daughter and I went to Israel in 1989 to support my son Greg who played on the open men's volleyball team. It was my first visit to Israel and first Maccabi games. It was at that time I knew the experience of Maccabi was something special.

We went again in 1993 and for 1997 they asked me to chair the volleyball teams. I gladly accepted and have chaired all the volleyball competitions for Israel and Pan Am since except for Chile in 2003. Why do it? Three reasons, I love being Jewish, I love Israel and I love sports. The Maccabi games fulfill all three loves. Chairing the volleyball teams can be very frustrating but when we get to the games I forget all the upsetting moments and I keep coming back.

All the teams we have taken to competition have been memorable but If I had to single out one it was in 1999 I was struggling to find players for our Pan Am team in Mexico City (Ami Monson was not around then to help) I called Ron Carner the games chairman and told him we would have to cancel womens volleyball. He told me cancelling was out of the question and to get back on the phone and find some more players. Somehow we found eight to go. Five women who had college experience, two high school players going into college, one of which played in college and a 16 year old soccer player who came because their was no womens soccer.

We wound up winning the gold in a thrilling five game match against a well coached and more experienced Brazilian team. Our coach Kenny Rogers did an amazing job of bringing the women together.

Mike Spector