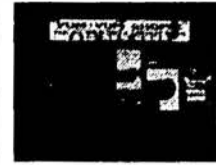


Yeshiva University Commentator

February 19, 1997 / 12 Adar I 5757 Official Undergraduate Newspaper of Yeshiva College Volume LXI No. 8

Yum Yum
Mysteriously
Closes Doors
Story, Page 4



High Schoolers
Converge On
YUNMUN VII
Story, Page 11



Repairs, Renovations Disrupt Classes in Furst Hall

Professors Forced to Cancel Lectures

BY YOSSI LEWIS

Over the past few weeks, Yeshiva University's Facilities Management has been putting the finishing touches on an upgrade of the campus computer and phone networks, a project which according to Dean Norman Adler, "will lead us into the educational technology of the twenty-first century."

However, to professors like Dr. Albert Marrin, the construction necessary to install the new telecommunications systems has come at the expense of more traditional methods of learning like the teacher lecturing and students listening. Both History professor Dr. Marrin and English professor Dr. William Lee have complained that the noise creates an environment that is not conducive to academic enrichment.

"There was drilling and hammering above and below; it's impossible to conduct a class with that background of noise," said Marrin. "It's disturbing to both the students and the professor as it jars one's thoughts and forces one to raise one's voice."

Indeed, the disturbance proved to be so distracting that Dr. Marrin was forced to cancel his classes on Friday, January 24, and attempted to relocate his classes for the following week. The attempted relocation resulted in the cancellation of his two large survey classes on Monday, January 27, as the registrar was unable to locate an empty room to accommodate classes of that size.

"To Dr. Marrin's credit, there was nothing else to do," said History major Joel Kruger in defense of Marrin's decision to

cancel classes. "It really was impossible to properly concentrate on the lecture."

Marrin cited the height of the disturbance to be one instance in which the workers were banging a sledgehammer into the first-floor ceiling right below his desk chair. While Lee didn't mention such a disturbance, he did interrupt his class to inquire whether the work could be done at a different time.

"Teaching is something that should be done in a university and it's not good that this noise prevents us from doing just that," declared Lee. "On the occasion that there will be such disturbances, the faculty should be informed ahead of time."

"The purpose of a university is to learn and it's difficult to learn in this setting," affirmed Marrin. "There must be a way to schedule the work so that the worst noise doesn't impede in the midst of classes."

According to Assistant Director of Facilities Management Pedro Gonzalez, standard procedure for coordinating construction with classes is to look at the course schedule and attempt to schedule the work during times when there are few classes. However, Gonzalez pointed out that because of union regulations, construction during the night is difficult to schedule, and therefore, on occasion, there are resulting disturbances to classes.

Gonzalez mentioned that he did not know the particulars of the situation and referred such questions to Director of Facilities Management Jeffrey Socol. Socol, for his part, refused to provide any details, declaring that he doesn't give interviews

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Already at the sale's midpoint SOY is experiencing a record number of shoppers. The Seferim Sale comes to a close February 23.

YU Rabbi Speaks Out at Conference on Feminism and Orthodoxy

BY BENJAMIN BALINT

It seems that another front has opened on the conflict between traditional Judaism and the values of modernity, one that is once more testing the boundaries and allegiances of Orthodoxy.

Last month's ruling of the Queens Vaad Harabonim against women's prayer groups, and the intense response it subsequently evoked; public comments made by various YU rabbis, Rabbi Twersky prominent among them, regarding the is-

sue of women in Judaism; a sold out 92nd Street Y panel discussion on Jewish feminism; a front page article in the Metro Section of the *New York Times* last Sunday on the subject, echoing major pieces in many Jewish newspapers; all these indicate that something is afoot in contemporary Judaism, something that has managed to penetrate even the insular walls of Yeshiva University.

This trend of growing public awareness and debate of the issues which concern women in

Judaism, climaxed this week with the International Conference on Feminism and Orthodoxy, the first of its type, held February 16 and 17, at Manhattan's Grand Hyatt Hotel. It was sponsored by AMIT, the Orthodox women's association; The Drisha Institute, a New York institute for women's Torah learning; EDAH, a modern Orthodox think-tank; and the Women's Tefillah Network. A bustling, overcapacity crowd of approximately 1,000 partici-

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Two Schools Nixed from Joint Israel Program

Anti-YU Stance Deemed Unacceptable

BY GIL BLOOM

In a bold show of force to Yeshivot in Israel who continue to inculcate their students with anti YU rhetoric, Yeshiva University's S. Daniel Abraham Joint Israel Program has severed its relationship with both Yeshivas Beis Yisroel and Yeshivas Toras Moshe.

The Joint Israel Program (JIP), which allows students to attend various yeshivot in Israel and receive credit for their learning has fast become the path of choice

for students planning on matriculating to the University.

The JIP plays an important role in the yeshivas it accredits, namely YU oversees collection of tuition for every yeshiva on its list. Additionally, affiliation with Yeshiva University has increased enrollment in many yeshivas on the JIP.

According to Director of Undergraduate Admissions Michael Kranzler, the yeshivot were nixed because they recommend that their students not continue at Yeshiva University upon com-

pleting their studies. "That is their prerogative, of course," Kranzler said, "But then the student and the parent, before they go [to yeshiva in Israel] should be able to assume, at the least, that they are not going somewhere that is anti-YU."

While these Yeshivot do not flout YU publicly, Kranzler has received numerous complaints about the indoctrination that occurs at the schools. "By being on the [Joint Israel] Program, it is communicating to the prospec-

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l. to r. YC Juniors Dror, Barber and Aylon Glazer admire art work on display at YC's first annual Arts Festival. Story on page 5.

What came first, the facilities or the education?

Yeshiva University was not designed by the likes of Herod or Frank Lloyd Wright. The buildings on the undergraduate uptown main campus are old and are in need of constant attention and repair. Facilities Management's mission is to provide continual upkeep and perform the upgrades necessary for the entire campus, but not at the expense of any individual student's education, let alone the education of a classroom full of students.

Over the past several weeks, Facilities Management has displayed a complete disregard and lack of concern towards the YU student's education. At any moment, a YC teacher's voice is being drowned out by the banging of sledhammers and the screechings of drills. Classes have suffered because of the excessive noise pollution.

The disturbances have become so overwhelming that one professor, unable to teach over the ruckus, cancelled his class outright. To avoid any further noise disturbance, he attempted to relocate his next class. Unable to find a suitable alternative room with the aide of the Office of the Registrar, the professor was forced to cancel his next class too.

These activities can not continue. While any upkeep and upgrade is important, especially technological upgrades which will enhance the productivity YU, all maintenance and construction should, under no circumstance, conflict with scheduled classes. If, for some bizzare reason, there is no other alternative, professors and students deserve the courtesy of being notified about the pending noise prior to repairs and be relocated to quiet classrooms.

The Commentator

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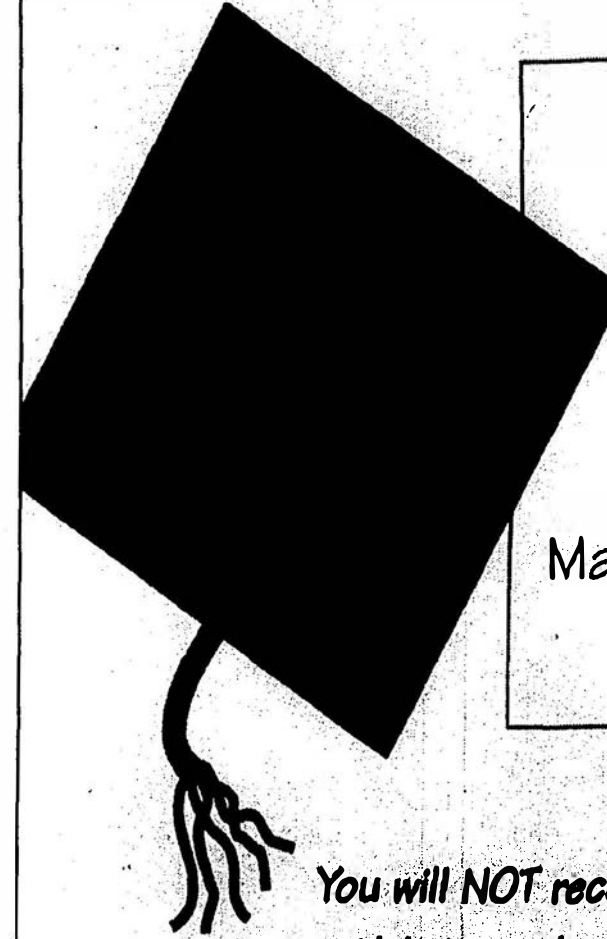
P I C T O R I A L



COMMENCEMENT

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

JOSHUA M. FELDMAN

I was interviewing for a job this past week, answering the typical myriad of questions asked of candidates for employment, when the interviewer cut me off, and asked me why, of all the extra-curricular activities available at Yeshiva, I had chosen to affiliate myself with *The Commentator*. I was slightly taken aback by his question, and after answering him with the words that he wanted to hear, I began to think about what it really is that lured me to this assignment.

I began my tenure with *The Commentator* as the Associate Technical Editor, bringing the newspaper transferring the printed page to the internet in the form of a list of articles. I became a member of the Governing Board of the paper as the Layout Editor, and after a short stint as Managing Editor, moved into the Co-Editor-in-Chief position. I always thought that the role of the Editor was just to work with the Governing Board in bringing the news of Yeshiva University to the undergraduate student body.

I was wrong.

In my short time as Editor, my experiences have been much broader. I have learned that it is all about people; getting to know them, building relationships with them, and whether it be to clarify a point or challenge an opinion, questioning the information that they are giving me.

The Torah tells us, "ki y'shalcha bin-chamachar leimorma zot," in reference to the Pesach *haggada*. Chazal teach us that the freedom that we discuss through the *haggada* on Pesach night, is the ability to constantly ask questions and get answers; something that one cannot do while in slavery.

The recent question posed to the Orthodox rabbinate regarding the halachic and hashkafic role of women in religious Judaism is a perfect example of just how important it is to constantly question, take positions, and re-question. From the Torah, to Chazal, to such contemporary personalities like, the Rav, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, and Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Aurbach, rabbinic personalities have upheld the tradition of asking questions and giving answers. It is this tremendous ability to question and think that has turned both our institution and our religion into greatness.

Throughout most of our academic lives, we are taught not just what to learn, but how to learn. Exams such as the SAT's, GMAT's, and GRE's measure students' on not only on what they know, but how they come to know it. We

are tested on the *process of learning*, and not just knowledge.

Sometimes, however, we forget how to think for ourselves. We are so used to sitting in yeshiva hearing what the rebbe has to say, whether it is on gemara, hashkafa, or even a current event, and not challenging it, that we seem to forget that we are only hearing one point of view; that we are only seeing one pixel of a much larger image. Often, we walk around mimicking what the rebbe had to say, but not mimicking the process by which the rebbe came to say it.

So, after thinking about it for some time, I have an answer for the next interviewer:

Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on your outlook, *The Commentator*, as one of its previous Editor's once put it, "serves as a public voice to commend, condemn, or debate the current pressing issues on campus and around the world." Overall, the paper represents to its readership, sixteen pages of information, conversation, and of course, controversy.

Through my involvement with *The Commentator* I have learned how to work as a team player in any environment. It has allowed me to truly experience college; not in the specific knowledge that I have gained through classes, but for the outlook and values that I have, through constant questioning, been able to formulate for myself and for the paper. *The Commentator* has actually granted me the ability to think for myself, and to understand other people's perspectives, be they rabbeim, teachers, deans, or fellow students.

In the past two weeks walking around our small campus from class to class, I have heard many conversations about the recent uprising in Orthodox Jewish politics; the questioning of the woman's role in Judaism in the 1990's. I'm not trying to use this forum to debate the issue. I am simply wondering whether some of the bochrim in our yeshiva have intellectually and logically thought out their arguments, be they for or against, like our rabbeim have. The same type of conversations could be heard throughout our campus last year with the news of a fraternity penetrating the walls of our yeshiva.

I cannot conceive of what my college education would have been like, or what type of person I would be, if I had not picked up these analytical skills along the way. I hope, and implore my colleagues to find an activity that will allow them to do the same.



MESSAGE FROM THE YCSC PRESIDENT

JASON BUSKIN

I would like to thank all the students who came to our last open YCSC meeting, your ideas and suggestions were very much appreciated. In the next few weeks, we will be having another meeting, and I would like to encourage all students to drop in and give us their input.

On February 3, YCSC greeted several hundred students, who came to cheer for the Macs as they played NJIT, by handing out free gifts (pom poms and foam #1 hands). Last Sunday, the Ski Club held a successful trip, sponsored by YCSC, and another trip is on the way.

Last Thursday, the Freshman Class ran a successful ice skating event at Rockefeller Center. Thanks to Josh Klein and Jason Yablon for their efforts in planning the evening. In the works from the other class councils are Shaloch Manot sponsored by the Sophomore Class and in two weeks the Senior and Junior Classes are sponsoring a Shabbaton at Stern. Also, this Shabbat don't

miss the YCDS/WYUR sponsored Shabbaton at Stern. The weekend is complete with a Friday afternoon trip to the Museum of TV and Broadcasting and a Saturday night activity.

Thank you to Daniel Berkowitz and Michael Sontag, the chairmen of the Food Services Committee, who have been hard at work the past few weeks addressing student complaints. Also, thanks to Michael Sussman and the Library Committee, who after meeting last week will begin addressing student ideas.

Many more events and programs are in the works for the remainder of the semester, including plans for Yom Hashoah and Yom Ha'atzmaut. Plus, after the success of the trip to see Star Wars, look for info this week on tickets to see Empire Strikes Back this weekend.

Lastly, in the coming weeks look for YCSC on the Web!

Jason Buskin
YCSC President '96 - '97

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Yeshiva College



Campus News

YCSC Holds Semester's First Open Meeting

BY JACK ALMO

With an itemized agenda, full board support, and an authoritative tone, YCSC president Jason Buskin commenced the first Student Council general meeting of the new semester. A lively crowd of approximately thirty students attended the open meeting in the Morgenstern Hall basement on Tuesday, February 4th to show their support and voice their concerns.

Buskin began by commending Senior Class vice-president Rocky Schechter and his supporting staff for organizing a successful book exchange. Albeit mitigating the sales pull of the campus bookstore, the book exchange allowed for advantageous pricing for both buyers and sellers of used books. Buskin asked that the records and organizational procedures used for the compilation of the massive three hundred book data base be entered into the YCSC files for future reference.

The Super Bowl extravaganza was deemed to be a highly entertaining event. Buskin informed students in attendance that YCSC is currently negotiations with the Dean's office to cater a similar event for the upcoming NCAA final four championship. Buskin also recognized the Star Trek Club, and Andy Weiss in particular, for organizing a trip back in time to view the original "Star Wars" movie. Over 100 people attended the YCSC subsidized outing. Buskin called the Star Trek club "the most active club of the first semester."

Students Ari Bandler, Joseph Glass, and Mark Posner proposed a Washing-

ton D.C. Shabbaton that gained the widespread support of the crowd present at the meeting. The proposed trip to the nation's capital is slated for sometime in March. Tentative plans call for students to meet with political leaders and to stay at a nearby campus site during the course of the Shabbaton. A trip to the United States Holocaust Museum is likely to be scheduled as a Sunday event.

The second half of the YCSC meeting was a time for students to voice their concerns. Jeff Bander and Jason Yablon reported the results of a survey of students living in Muss Hall, assessing their desire for a big-screen TV. The majority of students would not approve the proposition to purchase a new TV for Muss Hall due to "religious reasons." However, students living in Muss did request a food service for their second-floor lounge. Buskin informed the Muss spokesmen that if volunteers would be willing to organize and operate the proposed Muss Mart, then YCSC would support their efforts.

Other student concerns ranged from problems that exist in the Department of Food Services, such as the lack of low-fat items in the cafeteria and the need for fresher and hotter meals, to the limited operational hours of the MSAC lounge located in Rubin Hall. The YCSC executive board will meet with the YU Food Services management this week to voice student opinions.

The YCSC representatives concluded the session, by reiterating that involvement from the student body is welcome and strongly encouraged.

Academic Standards Committee Reviewing Hebrew Requirements

BY JOSH YUTER

Scholastic integrity was the issue discussed by the Academic Standards Committee (ASC) last week in its first meeting of the year. Of primary concern to the Committee is the current Hebrew language requirement of students at the Uptown campus.

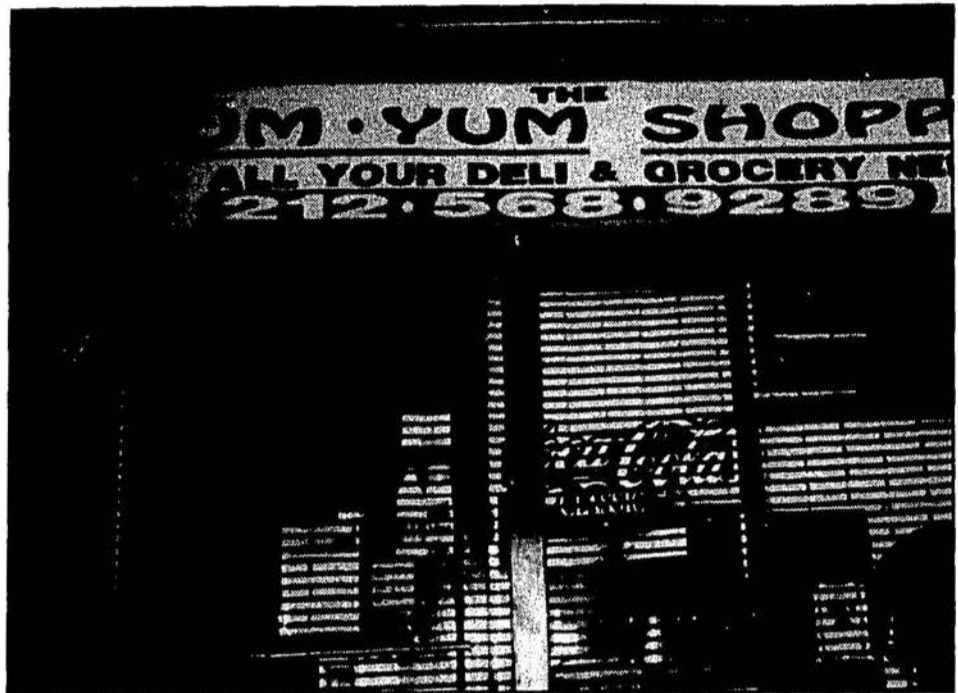
Dr. Michael Hecht, the chairman of the Committee and Associate Dean of Yeshiva College, expressed concern as to whether "the [Hebrew] requirements reflect the background of the students. Initially, the students in MYP have had a proficiency in Hebrew. This is not necessarily the case anymore."

Dean Hecht explained that while students enrolled in the Mazer Yeshiva Program (MYP) and the Stone Beit Medrash Program (SBMP) may not be prepared to enroll in Intermediate Hebrew, Hebrew classes offered in the Issac Breuer College (IBC) and the James Striar School

(JSS) may be too elementary. "[We would like to set up a system] that would meet student needs and at the same time prevent student abuse," referring to those who enroll in the more basic IBC and JSS Hebrew courses to fulfill their requirements.

To that end, the ASC has formed a subcommittee, comprised of Bible professor Dr. Moshe Bernstein, University Registrar Mr. Melvin Davis, Hebrew professor Dr. Shmuel Schnieder and student representative Owen Cyrulnik, whose purpose is to further examine the current situation and propose solutions to the Committee.

The ASC devoted the balance of its time together discussing the new credit cap, a highly contested issue, which will become a reality for the entering freshman class. According to the new standards, students will be required to take a minimum of 84 credits on campus before they may graduate.



Steel gates covering Yum Yum's storefront have not risen in more than a week.

Yum Yum Shoppe Unexpectedly Closes

BY NATE WIENER

After seven years of operation, Yum Yum Shoppe, the deli/grocery on Amsterdam Avenue between 184th and 185th streets, unexpectedly closed its doors. Irwin Raskin, Yum Yum's proprietor, attributed the abrupt closure to lack of funds for renewal of his lease.

Yum Yum's opening in December of 1990, came just one half year after implementation of YU's mandatory meal plan and succeeded the previous deli/grocery, Habodega. Though both the YU Food Service Department and Raskin vigorously denied allegations, rumors surrounding the closure centered around the effects of YU's mandatory meal plan and its own Caf Store on Yum Yum's business. Sources at the Caf claimed that at one time they had even offered to place Yum Yum on the "Gold Card," an extinct version of the current cafeteria debit card that for an additional sum of money could be utilized at the nearby Time Out dairy restaurant.

According to Raskin, "This has nothing to do with YU. It's between me and my landlord. The landlord wanted an astronomical fee for the new lease, which I simply refused to pay.... I am still negoti-

ating with my landlord to lower the lease fee."

Students Left Short Changed?

With the Yum Yum Shoppe stocking a wide variety of snack foods, and located just across the street from YU residence halls, many students opted to create prepaid "tabs" with the store. These students claim that they have not been contacted by Raskin since the closure. Yossi Lewis, a YU student and his brother, an MTA student, both had prepaid accounts at Yum Yum which they can no longer access. "I entered the store a week before it closed and commented on how empty it looked. The response given by the employees was not to worry. Then the next week the store closes and my brother and I are out about \$85."

Several other students reported similar stories, one student in particular was reported to have to have opened an account in excess of \$300. *The Commentator* has also learned that Raskin owes a rather large sum of money to the "Chof K," which provides kosher certification for Yum Yum.

Raskin did not comment on these allegations and still maintains that he "hopes to reopen Yum Yum sometime soon."

Mazal Tov to

Dani Glatt & Alana Feder
Moshe Kesselman & Eva Pick
Noam Weinberg & Nechama Gershon
Sruli Rothwachs & Wendy Leff
Yehuda Markowitz & Cindy Bash
Tzvi Weiner & Penina Savitsky

on their recent engagements

Sy Syms Shabbaton Yields Success

BY ELLIOT LOWENSTEIN

In an event designed to create a sense of unity among Sy Syms School of Business' student body, the School's student council held what turned out to be a wildly successful shabbaton attended by an estimated 200 people. The shabbaton was held on the Stern campus and featured MYP Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Meir Goldwicht as its guest lecturer.

Organizers of the event, which took place over the weekend of January 31, were pleased with the outcome. Bennett Schachter, President of the Sy Syms student body at the Main Campus, pointed out that "in terms of sheer numbers, the shabbaton was a tremendous achievement. Never has there been a joint YU-Stern shabbaton that was so well attended."

The success of the shabbaton was attributed, in large measure, to the ever popular Rabbi Goldwicht. As one stu-

dent stated, "Rabbi Goldwicht's presence was an impetus for many students to attend the shabbaton." President of the Sy Syms student body at the Midtown Campus, Michelle Stein, noted that Rav Goldwicht was "articulate as well as eloquent. He was the key to the entire shabbaton." One attendee, Yoel Feiler, concurred, feeling that "Rav Goldwicht's lectures gave weight to the Torah U'madda philosophy at Yeshiva University."

Many wish to turn the success of the shabbaton into the beginning of something positive. Schachter pointed out that "often guys aren't enthusiastic about going downtown for a Shabbaton, but in retrospect, all who attended had a great time. We should see this success as an example for future shabbatonim. This should be seen as an opportunity to continue to feature such Rabbeim as Rav Goldwicht at the Shabbatons so that it will benefit the student body."

Photo: YUPR



YC student Joseph Zelefsky, one of five musicians who performed at the Arts Festival.

YC Holds First Ever Arts Festival

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

YU was treated to a dose of campus-wide culture during the first annual Yeshiva College Arts Festival. Under the auspices of Yeshiva College Dean Norman Adler and Director of the Arts Festival and YC senior, Heshy Willig, the festival combined performing and visual arts into a three night extravaganza for over 50 YU and Stern students each evening.

On Monday night, aspiring poets from YU and Stern showed up to verbally exhibit their work. Innermost thoughts were expressed, from the raunchy to personal, deep seeded emotions. The poets spoke from their hearts, fearing neither reprisal nor attack, in the safe environment provided by the festival. Commenting on the poetry reading, Dean Norman Adler stated that, "To sit there I was amazed. All the politics... it all went away when I watched these young Jewish poets grappling with life, trying to transmute it to a Jewish vision."

Tuesday night, the crowd laughed, smiled, and cried to the dramatic reading of Aharon Rabinowitz's play, "All Bets Are Off." The play is about two roommates who both become entangled in a somewhat bizarre string of events involving a brother who has been absent for seven

years, a bookie and a friend with a "fail-safe" gambling strategy. The vibrant characters of each actor overshadowed any script caused impediments.

Wednesday evening, art was brought alive through the performance of five YU musicians, playing pieces by Mozart, Gershwin and Bach for a full house. The performances were both powerful and yet tempered by sincere emotions.

Displayed during the art fair, each evening, were canvases, collages and sculptures belonging to several of YU's very own artists. Most paintings centered around still-life themes and interspersed between those were several abstract pieces. One student displayed a short illustrated epic poem, called *Odysseus Schwartz*. Braving the wilds of YU bureaucracy, Odeysson finally succeeds in registering as a full-time student.

Dean Adler hailed the event as a grand success. As for the future, Adler stated that, "I think the next thing we're going to do is a form a dead poet's society, named after the movie. We will read a greek tragedy, possibly Antigone, with Professor Louis Feldman... What I eventually want to produce is a group that is known as, not only the most intellectual and religious, but people who have a great deal to say aesthetically to American Culture."

'97 Brody Lecture Features MIT's Professor Krugman

BY MICHAEL SAMUELS

Dr. Paul Krugman, an internationally renowned professor of Economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was the featured speaker at the Dr. Alexander Brody Lecture held on February 5.

Reflecting on Dr. Brody, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. William Schwartz, said that having taught at YU for thirty-four years, Professor Brody was the first major innovator at the University. "[He] was a one man band, having had degrees in law, economics, and history, that could have taught the whole curriculum at YU".

Dr. Krugman is the latest world-class economist to speak at the annual event, and follows such notables as Drs. Robert Solow and Robert Fogul, recipients of the 1987 and 1993 Nobel Prizes, respectively, Dr. Joseph Stiglitz, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers to the President, and at least three other Nobel laureates, all of whose work continues to push the outer limits in a field held dear to Dr. Alexander Brody.

Acclaimed for his work in international trade and finance, one of the founders of the "new trade theory," as well as the author or editor of 16 books and 100 articles, Dr. Krugman was awarded the American Economic Association's 1991 John Bates Clark Medal, a prize given bi-annually to "that economist under 40 who is said to have made a significant contribution to economic knowledge."

In his speech, Dr. Krugman addressed the topic of globalization and its role in the world's economic problems. Initially, he explained that the world is ruled by conventional wisdom as the good ideas usually surface and the bad ideas fall. He reminded the students and faculty members in attendance that sometimes conventional wisdom is so strong that people often "see the world through special glasses," implying that while people point to the new global economy as the source for

economic disasters, it is only because they are looking for the global economy's impact, neglecting other factors that may have caused it. In fact, according to Dr. Krugman, those world leaders who attribute their countries' problems, such as low wages, to the global economy have begun to use it as "a catch phrase, meaning everything that has gone wrong."

To illustrate his point, Dr. Krugman cited an article in a November 'Weekend Review Section' of the *New York Times*, entitled "Global Markets Battle Politics." The article claimed that governments have lost the power to affect the economy. The article mentioned France, who has had a horrific problem with unemployment due not to its own governments inefficiency, but rather German as well as greater political restraints created by the European Union and its quest for a common currency.

In addition, Krugman cited a relatively recent article in *Newsweek*, entitled "Hit Men," depicting the CEO's of various companies that have laid off a large number of workers. Among the companies mentioned were cigarette manufacturers, airlines, and telecommunications providers. According to Krugman, the problems that each business faced must have been initiated by domestic, rather than foreign issues. To further his point, Dr. Krugman, smiling, reminded his audience that the last time that he checked, there were no Korean phone companies calling him and offering to be his phone carrier, no French cigarettes competing with the domestic brands, and no foreign flight carriers competing for domestic air routes. Similarly, Dr. Krugman reminded the students and faculty members that global competition was not a factor in the stock crash of 1987 and was purely attributed to domestic causes.

In closing, Dr. Krugman urged his attentive audience to always remember that while global impacts are a "real story," they're not the "central story."

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RIETS Rosh HaYeshiva Interprets & Edits 12th Century Bible Commentary

BY MOSHE KINDERLEHRER

After centuries of obscurity, the commentary of Rabbenu Meyuchas ben Elijah on the Book of Vayikra (Leviticus) is now accessible to the public due to the efforts of RIETS Rosh HaYeshiva, Rabbi Michael Katz.

The recently published commentary represents six years of work for Rabbi Katz, who rescued the manuscript of the ancient commentary thirty years ago from the Hebrew and Samaritan section of the British Museum, where it had been gathering dust. The manuscript he discovered was a 15th century-handwritten copy of Rabbenu Meyuchas's work on the Torah (Pentateuch).

The 700-year old commentary differs significantly from other commentaries in its treatment of the Biblical text and the oral or Rabbinic tradition as one unit. Unlike the commentators who preceded him, he combines each *posuk* (verse) with Halacha, noting all the Halachot which pertain to the theme of the *posuk* (verse).

Of special interest to scholars, Rabbi Katz notes that Rabbi Meyuchas sought to protect the Oral Law tradition from attacks by the Karaites, a Jewish sect which categorically rejected the Rabbinic tradition of Judaism. The Jewish community at the time of Rabbi Meyuchas was deeply divided by the conflict between the adherents of the Rabbinic tradition and the Karaites. Rabbi Katz suggests that the entire commentary is possibly a refutation of the Karaite views, as its main approach is to demonstrate the derivation of Rabbinic law from the text of the Torah. Jewish religious life during the Byzantine period was also under ideological siege from Christian missionaries and crusaders, who bitterly attacked the authority of the Rabbinic tradition because it rejected the Christian view that the advent of their savior had been foretold in the Bible.

"The significance of this achievement," noted University President Dr. Norman Lamm, "lies not only in making the chef d'oeuvre of this thirteenth century giant available to scholars of Bible and Talmud, but also in the goal of Rabbenu Meyuchas in his anti-karritic polemic, to demonstrate the fundamental unity of the Bible and Talmud."

Rabbi Katz earlier edited the deeply re-



RIETS Rosh Yeshiva Rabbi Michael Katz

spected commentary of Rabbi Meyuchas on the Book of Devarim (Deuteronomy) which was published by Mossad Harav Kook in 1968. Born in Grodno, Poland and the son of the renowned scholar Rabbi Reuven Katz, who became Chief Rabbi of Petach Tikva in Israel, Rabbi Katz obtained his S'micha from the Rabbis Avram Yitzchak Kook and Yitzchak Isaac Herzog, then Chief Rabbis of Israel; Rabbi Avigdor Amiel, the Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv; and Rabbi Isser Zalman Meltzer of Eitz Chaim Yeshiva in Jerusalem. He also earned a teacher's license in Tanakh (Bible) and Jewish philosophy at Hebrew University.

In 1940, then YU president Dr. Bernard Revel recruited him to teach Talmud and attend college here. After earning his BA from Yeshiva College in 1945 he was named to the RIETS faculty and three years later became the first Rosh HaYeshiva to be appointed to the Bible faculty at YC. In 1963, he received his doctorate from the YU's Bernard Revel Graduate School, writing his dissertation on the commentary of Rabbenu Meyuchas.

Rabbi Katz was awarded the Distinguished Rabbinic Alumnus Award in 1995 for his 50 years of devotion to YU as a RIETS Rosh Ha-Yeshiva. Now in his 51st year of teaching and one of the most highly beloved and respected Roshei Hayeshiva of RIETS, Rabbi Katz continues to give his daily Chulinshiur in the S'micha program.

The commentary has been published by Ktav Publishing House and is available at the ongoing SOY Seforim Sale.

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Yente, start looking for a new profession!

Traditional Style Shadchanus no match for the PC

BY CHANAN HOSCHANDER
AND ARI GRUEN

Over the past few years, the world wide web and online services have grown far beyond expectation. As access to the net becomes as commonplace as television, it is no surprise that its varying potential is constantly being pushed to new envelopes. *Divrei Torah*, *shiurim*, and entire virtual *Batei Midrash* are now available online. Every Jewish organization, from the Orthodox Union to your local Young Israel, is now on the web.

You knew it was only a matter of time..... Yes, an alternative to the Thursday night scene at Stern College's Brookdale Hall has finally arrived online. Actually, many alternatives have arisen. In the past year, several services geared to meeting the needs of young Jewish singles have appeared online.

By far, the most commonly known of these services is America Online's Jewish Community (keyword "jewish") where one can find links to various Jewish interests including culture and news, as well as a multifaceted singles area which features two live chat rooms and a Matchmaker service. The chat rooms provide a relaxed atmosphere in which singles can meet while the Matchmaker service allows members, for a \$25 fee, to place an ad and a picture which can then be browsed by other members.

Another service calls itself the Jewish Singles Connection (www.zdepth.com/jsc). The service offers links to Jewish singles groups, college organizations, personals and homepages, as well as links to Israel, the Jewish Community, and Jewish and Israeli media. Access to this site and all of its links is completely free; one can even post an ad for no charge. According to the site, the Jewish Singles Connection is an attempt to connect Jewish Singles across the world in an effort to recreate the connection between Jews that once existed as a result of physical boundaries that defined ethnic groups.

The message on the site states that there is "an opportunity to utilize the new communications paradigm...the Internet...We hope that our new paradigm and our use of the latest technology and your interaction with it will bring personal rewards both for you and indirectly for the Jewish people."

Other services available to internet users at no cost include the Jewish Singles Mailing List, JSML, (www.tcg.inc.com/jds/1985/jsml/), and the Jewish Matchmaker System (www.yenta.email.net). JSML is, as its name implies, a mailing list of Jewish Singles while the Jewish Matchmaker System is a complex service that claims to, "cater to Jewish singles." This service is only three months old and includes personal mailboxes, live chat, extensive user profiles, and powerful search engines.

If you still haven't found your perfect cybergirl, a new startup in the field of online Jewish dating called Links Online (www.jlinks.com) is ready to offer the goods. The service describes itself as "the most popular place to meet young, observant, Jewish singles without having to be set up! Neither a *shiduch* service nor a board for posting personal ads, Links Online is simply a modern place to meet and find people like you." \$10 a month buys the user the startup software and unlimited time on the service which includes access to a virtual town with chat rooms and forums in which to discuss matters relevant to Jewish life.

Links Online's main feature is its Profile and Search questionnaire. Members of the service complete an extremely detailed Profile (describing oneself) and identical Search (describing the characteristics one is seeking in a mate). Kuty Shalev, a '94 graduate of YU and systems operator of Links Online, designed the questionnaire to reflect the concerns of today's observant Jewish singles. The questionnaire is divided into several sections including a physical appearance

section in which height, weight, and even body type choices—everything from 'teeny' to 'very big'—are included. Other questions center around education in which one must detail his/her years of Jewish study in Israel. A future goals section in which areas such as one's desire to make Aliyah are also covered.

The most detailed section of the profile and search is the observance section in which one must respond to questions dealing with topics including but not limited to Torah study - the possible responses are no, occasionally, or regularly; Shomer Negiah - yes, yes initially, it depends, or no; Kashrut - Glatt, less than Glatt, etc.; mixed dancing; mixed swimming; and the absolutely essential "Do you wear a hat on Shabbos" question.

Shalev explained the need for such an exhaustive profile: "If all you're looking to do is chat and you don't care about the values and the religiosity of people you meet, then AOL is the place for you." Indeed, one 29 year old woman from Los Angeles who uses the Jewish chat rooms on AOL did complain that she was disappointed because she became involved in a relationship which could not work out because the man did not meet her religious standards.

Every night Links' computers scan the stored profiles for prospective matches and then contact the matching members. Matches are provided with a brief self-introductory message written by one's potential significant other. One's picture can be provided as well - for a small additional fee, of course.

The popularity of these services varies widely. The Jewish Matchmaker System site boasts of having recently reached the 1,000-user mark. As of Feb. 17, Agmonet's Lovelinks (www.lovelink.co.il) claimed that its page had been accessed 26,297 times, while Jewish Quality Singles (www.jqs.com) received 131,868 hits in the month of November alone.

Links Online, can boast of only approximately one hundred members due

to its relatively recent startup - the service has been operational for under three months. In an effort to boost membership and thereby increase its potential pool of matches, Links is offering free service to all undergraduates for the foreseeable future.

Jewish singles seem to be attracted to these services for various reasons. Stephanie, who has an ad on AOL's Matchmaker, says that she chose this method of dating because she is kind of shy and does not like meeting people in the more conventional ways. Additionally, she states that by meeting and speaking online you are able to, "know the people before you really meet them."

Melissa, age 24, from Long Island, is currently dating someone she met in a singles room. She describes her experience in such a room as, "odd, strange, entertaining, addicting, social, a contest, and a mind game." She continued by saying that, "you never know who you are going to meet and what they are or who they are. And you get your emotions worked up.. and pow you are disappointed in them or they are disappointed in you."

All the online services seem to have one very glaring technical difficulty: there is no way to verify the honesty and sincerity of the different users. Links Online does offer the following encouragement for its members - "Please be accurate and honest; after all we use the Internet only for its technology, while our morals come from the Torah."

Though much caution is obviously warranted when meeting people online or via online services, the potential for success does exist. Both AOL's Matchmaker and the Jewish Singles Connection claim that eight marriages have been reported to their respective services by their users, and both services believe that there are other couples who are too busy with wedding preparations to report their successes. Like it or not, Jewish online dating services have arrived and are taking the internet by storm.



Yeshiva College Student Council



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

YCSC Working for You!

- Feb 19 Physics Club presents
Columbia University professor to speak on volunteer work
10:30PM Star Trek Club Movie Night @ Schottenstein 3rd. floor
- Feb 20 7:30 PM Macs Volleyball vs. Mt. St. Vincent @ MSAC
8:15 PM Torah U'madda Speech
- Feb 24 8:00 PM Dorm Talks Featuring Rabbi Lamm
8:00 PM Macs vs. Pratt Institute @ MSAC
- Feb 25 Torah U'Madda Lecture
- Mar 1 Shabbaton at Stern:
Sponsored by the Junior and Senior Class Student Councils

Mar 8 Shabbaton at Stern:
Sponsored by the Sophomore Class

Mar 17 7:00 PM Pre-Law Speaker: @ Rubin Shul
Federal Judge Michael McKenzie
Topic: 'The Relationship between Media and Law'

Reminder: The YC Peer Tutoring Program is fully operational for Spring 1997
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Computer Science	Jack Cate 201-567-1561	Physics	Ofer Melamed 927-5287
Hebrew	Ben Ahdut 927-5287	Poli Sci	Shmuel Bodenheimer 740-2507
Math	Yoni Bak 781-4222	Russian	Michael Kotlov 928-6088
Music	Ari Paley 568-5860	Spanish	Elias Zakay 740-5780

All Other Classes, contact Eric London 740-2507

Sternlicht Resigns After 35 Years of Service

BY YOSSI LEWIS

Dr. Manny Sternlicht, chair of YU's psychology department will hand in his resignation at the semester's end. Sternlicht, serving his thirty-first year as a full-time professor, asserted that allegations premising his departure upon pressure from the administration are erroneous. "There was no pressure placed on me to leave," said Sternlicht. "The reason I've decided to move on is that I am unhappy with the current administration."

Sternlicht's "unhappiness" stems from his claims that the Dean's Office manipulated statistics from the student evaluations making him one of five professors who were refused a pay raise this semester. According to Sternlicht, the professors are not privy to the actual evaluation forms, but they may view the data. Upon his request, data for three of the four classes he taught were shown to him, but data, "for one of my classes from the fall semester as well as for the last four or five years miraculously vanished."

Based upon the data from the three classes from last semester Sternlicht believes he was unfairly placed in the third tier and therefore received no raise. "They misused the statistics... and placed me in the third tier when I am in fact in the second tier. This is ostensibly the reason why I didn't get a raise and it makes no sense... and may be a way of nudging me out." By the administration's own standards, Sternlicht posited, they would have to withhold raises from one-third of the faculty.

Sternlicht also noted that albeit a relatively positive relationship, an incident that occurred several years ago at Stern College may have soured him in the eyes of the administration. As a method of preventing plagiarism, Sternlicht makes it a policy to request that his students turn in a duplicate copy of any paper that they would like returned with comments.

"President Lamm's daughter was in one of my classes and she wanted her paper back although she had only given me one copy," recalled Sternlicht. "I refused, but Karen Bacon (Dean of Stern College) put all kinds of pressure on me so I figured it wasn't worth it and gave it back." Sternlicht stated that from there on, the deans looked at him "a little differently" and that this incident was the spark that began a rift with the administration, partially causing his "present situation."

Because of these incidents and others, "I figured that rather than fight and get all tense, I'm at an age where I don't need the aggravation," said Sternlicht. "I decided that it's time to leave and let a young person take my place."

Dean Norman Adler did not confirm or deny that withholding a raise was the administration's way of pushing Sternlicht into retirement. Adler only confirmed Sternlicht's imminent departure.

Student reaction to Sternlicht's decision was mixed. Many students currently enrolled in his course refused to comment fearing reprisal based on his reputation to "play favorites."

Mendy Jesselson, IBC/YC '98, feels that not only is Sternlicht a boring and obscure lecturer, but that he is relentlessly unyielding to the needs of the students. Jesselson related an incident last semester



Dr. Manny Sternlicht

in which he was unable to complete his paper on time as his wife fainted and was hospitalized the day before the paper was due.

"He said 'a deadline is a deadline,'" recalled Jesselson, a pre-med/psychology major. "When I asked him if it would be different if I were in the hospital, he said maybe. I think that this is an incredibly insensitive reaction."

Even the students with more positive opinions of Sternlicht expressed an awareness of his poor reputation. "I don't understand a lot of the things people say about him," expressed psychology major Aharon Rabinowitz, IBC/YC '97. "I worked hard when I took him, learned a lot, and got a good grade. He teaches the material well, asks provocative questions, and makes you think. He taught me to clarify what I say and what I mean."

Psychology major Ross Rothenberg, SBMP/YC '98, stated that Sternlicht's challenge to students has held up throughout his student career and that any criticism of him is unjust.

"People say that his material is outdated. He always tells them to look it up and prove him wrong," said Rothenberg. "In all of the psychology courses I've taken, I've always reflected back to my notebook from his introductory courses. Dr. Sternlicht is better prepared than any other teacher I've had and still he always has the time to talk to me on a one-to-one basis after class."

During his career at YU, Sternlicht authored twelve books in the fields of developmental disabilities and special education, nine book chapters, three-hundred journal publications, one-hundred book reviews and served as consulting editor of the major journal of mental retardation.

Sternlicht plans to take the next year off and consider expanding his clinical practice in Staten Island, where he resides. "The only thing I'll really miss is the student body of YU," reflected Sternlicht. "I've found over the years that the level of intellect here is far superior to any other students I've taught."

Sternlicht is currently one of two full-time professors of psychology. Dr. Michael Palij, the other full-time professor, is rumored to be leaving YU as well. The departure of both these professors will throw the psychology department into an unprecedented state of transition.

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Things to do in New York, When You're Dead

THEATER REVIEW

BY DANIEL ANZISKA

Scott Elliot's bold, original and ultimately flawed staging of the Chekhov classic, *Three Sisters*, should have been far better. Beautifully staged and well lit, this attractive production is greatly assisted by a plethora of star power as actors such as, Amy Irving, Jeanne Tripplehorn, Lili Taylor, Eric Stoltz and Billy Crudup who lend their collective hands to the production. However, despite their acclaimed acting chops, they are hurt by incongruent staging and, for the most part, are emotionally distant in their performances. Elliot's production fails to consistently pull the viewer into Chekhov's narcissistic universe, choosing instead to stage "climactic" monologues, where expression and feeling should have sufficed. When I left the Roundabout Theater (after nearly three and a half hours), this play failed to move me, and that, is a testament to my disappointment.

Mr. Elliot, an acclaimed Broadway director, who is also currently signed at Universal, should not be only faulted for his valiant effort. Working with little time and a constrained budget, Elliot has succeeded at staging an imaginative version of the Chekhov classic. He has drawn out fine performances from Amy Irving (as the oldest sister, Olga), David Strathairn (as the soldier, Vershinin) and especially, the explosively dynamic Colista Flockhart (Natayla Ivanovna). By integrating an esteemed, though poorly rehearsed cast, Elliot banks on the appeal and star power to carry through a difficult mission. He only partially succeeds.

Three Sisters is about the pervasiveness of isolation and how it decimates the esteem and the potential of people. In order to convey this atmosphere of desperation, it is essential for Elliot to play to the ironic panorama of missed opportunities and emotional barrenness. Instead of creating this environment through the actors' relationships with one another, Elliot chooses to stage lengthy monologues by often, mannered acting that is as subtle as a jackhammer through the skull. The point of theater, as well as film, is to move the audience through the creation of a "real" emotional atmosphere. In his staging, Elliot forces his characters down our throat, not allowing the actors (with few exceptions) to creep into their personas and "act." Mistimed soliloquies and awk-

ward chemistry, probably due to lack of practice, further inhibit the production.

However, despite these problems, Elliot's *Three Sisters* is, at times, quite exhilarating. Whenever Ms. Flockhart's Natasha enters the stage, she literally blows the rest of the cast into the first row. A self-satisfied hedonist, Flockhart's Natalya is a perfect characterization of a Chekhov character - she is all verve and bite. She is stunning and completely conscious of her seductive affect on others, as personified by her sly, glowing smile when a table of men stand in her acknowledgement. Ms. Flockhart, best known for her supporting role in last year's *The Birdcage*, is a real find as well as the integral central character in this production.

The highly touted cast, led by the "Three Sisters" themselves, film stars Jeanne Tripplehorn, Lili Taylor and Amy Irving, have the difficult task of brooding, as Chekhov's "heroes" tend to do, for most of the play. Of the three, Irving's Olga makes out best, especially in the opening scenes as the proud head of her household. Irving's portrayal of Olga's descent from mistress to has been is believable. Tripplehorn, a gorgeous brunette who, is usually reduced on celluloid to portraying dull, helpless love interests to stars such as Tom Cruise and Kevin Costner, tends to have a pouty, impervious sneer on her face. Taylor, who has recently been upstaged as the "Indie Queen" by Parker Posey, is far too desperate in a negative, if not annoying way. Taylor also is completely overwhelmed by Tripplehorn and Irving in their scenes together.

Elliot's staging of *Three Sisters* is beautiful to look at, has some fine performances and attempts to deal with a tough Chekhov play in an original manner. His attempts to bring a sense of emotional devastation to many of the scenes should be commended even though, melodrama and over-dramatization too often set in where tragedy would have sufficed. Instead of making his characters' gestures and words into explosive, scene-chewing "events," Elliot should have more carefully integrated the actors into a cohesive unit. Too often, despite being on the very same stage, it appears that the actors were in thousands of miles apart. But, then again, albeit unintentionally, Elliot has captured Chekhov's fractured atomistic universe. As E.M. Forster once wrote, "Only connect."

YU Establishes Educational Services Program to Help Develop Curricula in Jewish Schools

BY MICHAEL GEWIRTZ

Realizing that it can contribute to Jewish day school education and recognizing its responsibility to the Jewish community, Yeshiva University recently established the Educational Services Program (ESP) in an effort to improve the educational programs of Jewish elementary and high schools in the United States and Canada.

Dr. Moshe Sokolow, associate professor of Bible and Jewish education at YU, has been named the educational director of this new department established under the jurisdiction of the Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (RIETS). Although he is now on leave from his teaching duties in order to work full time in his new role, Dr. Sokolow has been a member of the YU faculty since 1972. He has taught primarily at Stern for the past ten years, lecturing in *Tanach* and Jewish education. Additionally, Dr. Sokolow has extensive experience in curricular development and in-service training.

An independent network of day schools and high schools known as the International Council of Dati Tzioni schools (Dati) will be joining Yeshiva University's ESP. These Dati Schools, according to Dr. Sokolow, "have gotten

together over the course of the past year, and have enjoyed a variety of administrative, organizational and financial services." This "joint venture," as Dr. Sokolow calls it, will be called *Torati* and will provide interested schools with assistance in curriculum development and in-service training programs for their teachers.

Cooperating with ESP and Dati are two other educational organizations: the Torah Education Department of the Joint Authority for Jewish Zionist Education and the Educators Council of America (ECA).

This notable new program is similar to an association between Yeshiva University and the Torah Education Department, initiated ten years ago, called the Torah Education Network. Dr. Sokolow, however, observed that this new program, *Torati*, will have "a more ambitious and broader scope."

Included among the many curricular projects that Dr. Sokolow is developing, are programs involving religious Zionism and the *yahrtzeit* of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. Toward this end, ESP aims to "provide schools with educational materials and speakers in order to have suitable resources for these valuable activities."

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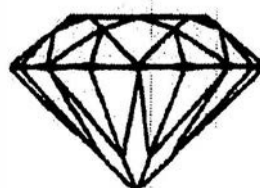
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Record Number of Students Attend YUNMUN VII

31 High Schools And 460 Student Delegates Attend

BY ADAM MOSES

The seventh Yeshiva University National Model United Nations graced the Seasons Resort in Vernon Valley, NJ from February 9-11. Over 460 student delegates, from 31 yeshiva high schools, spanning the United States and Canada, participated in the largest model United Nations of its kind.

The event, while heavily subsidized by the Office of Admissions and nominally under its jurisdiction, in reality relied almost exclusively on Yeshiva University undergraduates for its organization and execution. Some 60 YU students comprised the secretariat and corps of committee chairmen, assistants, and rapporteurs. Their voluntary efforts were integral to the success of the event.

Each high school sent a delegation, representing one or more countries on an array of committees, patterned after the structure of the United Nations. In the same vein, committee sessions were conducted with regulations that closely approximated those used in the United Nations. Seminal issues debated as part of the conference agenda ranged from the status of women to international security.

YUNMUN Secretary-General and SCW senior Joelle Tollinsky called the function "the largest and most success-

ful YUNMUN to date. It was a tremendous experience for both the delegates and the staff." Most student delegates appeared to echo this sentiment with one remarking that "YUNMUN is easily the most enjoyable extra-curricular activity of the year."

The festivities commenced with mid-day arrival and registration on Sunday at the Seasons Resort and Conference Center. This was YUNMUN's first year holding its conference at the Seasons Resort. While most seemed pleased with the caliber of the public facilities and conference rooms, some found the decor of the guest rooms to be reminiscent of a 70's polyester nightmare. The stellar quality of the catered food compensated for any misgivings over the retro guest rooms.

After dinner and *Maariv*, the opening ceremonies were held with an impassioned address by Rabbi Benjamin Blech, YU instructor of Talmud, who encouraged delegates to seek truth and strive for a "world free of strife." The Secretary-General also spoke, setting the stage for the opening of committee sessions. The first committee sessions primarily addressed procedural matters and served to whet delegate appetites for the substantive debates that ensued the subsequent day.

Monday, witnessed marathon com-



Delegates of the Social, Humanitarian, and Cultural Committee, debated such topics as religious intolerance and migrant workers at YUNMUN VII.

mittee sessions throughout the day punctuated only by prayers, *shiurim*, and meals. Delegates exhibited their tenacity and perseverance in heated debates that lasted many hours and yielded insightful resolutions. The competitive tension of the proceedings was tangible as delegates competed for their respective committee gavels - given to the top delegate in each committee - and consistently delivered effective and eloquent speeches. By the conclusion of committee sessions at 11:00pm on Monday night, the results of the competition were largely decided.

After *Shacharit* and breakfast on Tuesday morning, delegates either had their final committee sessions or participated in the General Assembly Plenary. Final resolutions were adopted in committee sessions and others ratified in General Assembly votes. The fatigue incurred at the hands of the grueling schedule was eclipsed by the anxiety and excitement of the Awards Ceremony.

Chairmen of the approximately fifteen committees, announced individual winners from their respective committees in the areas of best delegate, honorable mention, and verbal commendation. The mounting suspense over victorious high school delegations was soon answered with Ramaz garnering a first-place finish, with the most delegates awarded, Central turning in a feisty and unanticipated second-place effort, and former champions MTA, maintaining their dignity with a solid third-place performance.

As delegates packed their bags to make the trek back to their respective cities, they appeared to have thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Under-Secretary General and YC senior Josh Fine said, "YUNMUN VII was a tremendous success because it fulfilled its major goals: providing its participants with an intellectual challenge, an opportunity to meet other students from across the country, and just plain fun."

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16 1:30 PM until 9:00 PM	17 1:30 PM until 9:00 PM President's Day	18	19 9:30 AM until 12:30 PM 6:30 PM until 11:00 PM	20	21	22
23 1:30 PM until 9:00 PM	<p>Belfer Hall - Room 502 2495 Amsterdam Ave Phone & Fax: (212) 960-5387 Mitch Taragin, Chairman</p>					

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International Symposium Draws Women From Around The World

continued from page one

pants over two days included women from all over the world - Israel, Sydney, Johannesburg, London, and Amsterdam.

Blu Greenberg, chairwoman of the conference, deliberately soft-spoken, opened the conference by painting a typological description of the Orthodox feminist as a woman full of confidence that "halacha has the capacity to incorporate women's needs," and one who, since "her life is defined by halacha," performs "no antinomian acts." To an enthusiastic ovation, she called for halachic innovation, and declared that "where there is a rabbinic will, there is a halachic way." Concluding with a long litany of rhetorical questions, Ms. Greenberg, like the event itself, was ultimately more successful in raising significant and challenging questions than in suggesting specific answers or concrete proposals. The agenda did not seem to lend itself to the free flow of clashing ideas, but neither did the conference as a whole articulate or espouse a coherent position, only an amorphous constellation of similarly inclined views.

In a session entitled "The Agunah: J'Accuse," three activists who work on behalf of the plight of *agunot* (women whose recalcitrant husbands refuse to grant them a *get*, or divorce document), in tag-team style, told story after story in which women were subject to *get*-related extortions, and stridently cited "corruption in the *beit-din* system," as only exacerbating the problem. It was, in the words of one speaker, a list of "halachic believe-it-or-nots," which, coupled with the dramatic and tragic personal testimonies of two *agunot*, provoked many heads in the audience to shake in sympathetic disbelief.

Over an elegant lunch, at the conclusion of which the men in the audience were asked to leave in order to allow the women to recite *birkat ha'mazon* (blessing after meals) with a *zimun* (quorum), Dr. Noam Zohar spoke of "Talmudic disenfranchisement and disenfranchisements" of women, and proceeded to describe traditional halachic marriage as "a ceremony of obtaining control," and *tzniut* (modesty) as "restriction."

Rabbi Reuven Kimelman, in one of an array of workshops, delivered an entertaining and fast-paced lecture on the

subject of *kol isha* (woman's voice). Regarding the rabbi's conclusion that the prohibition of *kol isha* is limited to circumstances of reciting the *shema* prayer, one YC student (the only one in attendance at the conference) remarked that Kimelman demonstrated "selective quotation of unrepresentative sources, and biased disregard for responsible halachic methodology, completely obscuring the complexity of the issues at hand."

In perhaps the most substantive highlight of the conference, Rabbi Avi Weiss, assistant professor of Judaic Studies at Stern College, delivered a forceful and carefully constructed thirty-five minute speech, under the title of "Halachic Windows of Opportunity." Clearly uncomfortable with some of the conference's angry tone of rhetoric, Rabbi Weiss warned against directing unproductive acrimony towards the rabbinate, and said that "denigrating *k'vod ha'rabanut* is unacceptable." He also sounded a cautionary note against those for whom gender is the cornerstone of identity: "One's relationship to God is at the core of one's existence. Gender is a significant element in defining who we are, but it is not the foundation of one's being."

He reproached the liberal "left" for being "superficial and unbalanced," and the conservative "right" for "confusing public policy with halacha." Invoking authorities from Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik (he waved around a photograph of the Rav giving the inaugural Talmud class at Stern) and the Hafetz Haim to Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav and Shlomo Carlebach, Rabbi Weiss applauded participants in women's prayer groups as "seeking to instill greater religious meaning in their lives," and declared that "male and female are of equal Godly potential; of equal spiritual striving."

Former religion correspondent for the *New York Times* and Yeshiva College alumnus Ari Goldman, told this reporter that "this conference is the result of YU's work," even if YU at present feels too uncomfortable to co-sponsor or be overtly involved. In instituting advanced women's Torah education decades ago in the form of Stern College for Women, Goldman said, YU was "visionary," and "pioneering."

Beis Yisroel, Toras Moshe Bounced From Israel Program

continued from page one

tive students and parents that they are [attending a yeshiva] that actually is in favor of attending YU. If not, they are guilty of privatization."

Upon receiving tips that YU was being degraded by the two yeshivot, University Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. William Schwartz sent a letter to the Israel offices of both Beis Yisroel and Toras Moshe informing them that their conduct was unacceptable, in light of their affiliation with Yeshiva University. When the yeshivas neglected to respond, a second letter was sent informing the yeshivas of their imminent dismissal from the JIP.

The *Commentator* was unable to contact Toras Moshe. A spokeswoman from Beis Yisroel's New York offices men-

tioned that she was unaware of the school's deletion from the Joint Israel Program until a prospective student informed her. Beis Yisroel's representative further explained that until *The Commentator* informed her, she was unaware of the rationale behind the dismissal. The spokeswoman denied allegations that YU was slandered by Beis Yisroel or that recommendations were made that students not attend YU upon returning to the United States and emphasized Beis Yisroel's continued support of Yeshiva University.

Yeshiva University has stated that it is prepared to resume a relationship with both Beis Yisroel and Toras Moshe provided they cease discouraging students from attending YU.

Socol Eschews Responsibility Again

continued from page one

and that he doesn't need to answer questions.

"I find it offensive that someone working at a university shows such disregard for general student welfare," said one particular student activist who preferred to remain anonymous. "We have enough problems dealing with unavoidable noise. We don't need someone creating more and shrugging it off."

In contrast to Socol, Dean Adler shed some light on the situation as he pointed out that this is the first time that the

college has undertaken anything of this scale. Adler noted, that there is generally a good relationship between plant management and the faculty and that although there are some bumps along the way, ultimately the college will be better for it.

"We've done more here in five months than in two and a half years at my previous job," proclaimed Adler. "It's a shame that there has to be inconvenience to the students and the faculty but hopefully we'll be finished quickly and we'll have a fantastic campus network."

Purim Contest:

The Commentator is accepting submissions for this year's Purim Issue. Articles should be humorous and ideally relevant to Yeshiva University. Satirical Ads or cartoons are also acceptable. The best submissions will be awarded \$50.00 Each.

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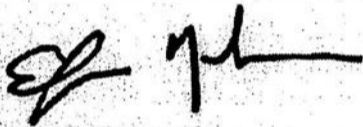
On behalf of the Office of the Dean of Students, we would like to welcome our returning and new students for the Spring 1997 semester.

Adjusting to college life can be both exciting and challenging. The staff of the Office of Student Services is committed to helping you through these challenging times. Whether you require assistance through the complexities of registration and academic life; guidance or advice regarding career opportunities, graduate and professional schools; or development of job search techniques, TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OUR EXPERTISE. If you are in need of counseling or even a reassuring hand, we encourage you to meet with our caring staff to discuss your needs and concerns.

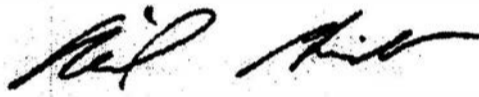
DO NOT WAIT UNTIL YOU FEEL FRUSTRATED AND OVERWHELMED. We encourage you to take full advantage of these services so that your college years can be most productive and rewarding.

As the semester begins, we wish you continued success.

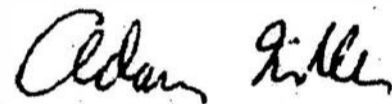
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Editorials OPINION

In the wake of the helicopter crash which took the lives of seventy-three Israeli soldiers, we offer our condolences to all of the families in mourning. What follows is a translation of a piece printed in Friday's Yediot Acharonot (and reprinted here with permission) written by Amram Mitzna, the mayor of Haifa and former OC Central Command. I feel that it captures the pain and emptiness that we are all experiencing in light of the tragedy:

I thought that my two hands had already encountered all possible pain and bereavement. These two hands that have comforted mothers. These two hands that have caressed orphans. These same two hands were now trembling. These two hands that have pulled the trigger of a tank's gun turret. These two hands that have evacuated the injured from gun-riddled battlefields. These same two hands were now trembling.

My hands were trembling as I waited anxiously for the phone call from my youngest son who is serving as an officer in the Paratroopers Brigade. I wasn't the only one. In thousands of homes all across

Israel, just as in mine, people sat and waited for that comforting sound of the telephone's ring, while at the same time fearing that instead they would hear the fateful knock on the door from the *Katzin Ha'ir*.

Our eyes were glued to the television. The images were dreary indeed. We went over to the radio. With one ear, we listened to the voice of newscaster Karmela Menashe, and with our other ear, we listened for the ring of the telephone. "When is he going to call already?!" The time passed and the waiting seemed to last longer than eternity.

JOSEPH J.
SUSSMAN
COLUMNIST

Assaf Cheifetz, the Chief of Police and an old friend of mine, appeared on the television screen. Our sons went through the rigorous basic training together. In a choked up voice he informed us that there were many fatalities. I was feeling dryness in my throat. Amiram Levine, OC Northern Command and also an old friend of mine, told us in a broken voice that there were about seventy dead. Mind boggling!

I was reminded of an article I once read entitled: "Parents - Waiting In Fear". How true today. I was scared. I was just a every

other father in this country during those tense moments - worried. I divorced with anger from my mind those apocalyptic thoughts that tried to sneak in.

The telephone rang. "It's me," said Raz in a trembling voice. "Look out for yourself," I told him as I passed the receiver on to his mother. My hands were still trembling.

In seventy-three Israeli homes, the telephone never rang. In seventy-three Israeli homes, the only sound that was heard was that of the fateful knock on the door. The knock that once heard, changed everything. The son, the father, the brother, will never pass through that door again. "He was taken in the helicopter tragedy."

Biblical Prophecy and Israeli Events

BY RABBI YOSEF BLAU

After the tragic helicopter accident where seventy-three Israeli soldiers lost their lives, synagogues were buzzing with the discovery that when interpreted properly, a verse in the previous week's haftora had predicted the crash. This is the most recent manifestation of a pattern of discovering Biblical verses which are seen as describing key events occurring in Israel. One such verse foretold Prime Minister Rabin's assassination by someone named Amir, and another Binyamin Netanyahu defeating both Shimon Peres and Yosef (Yosi) Beilin or Sarid. Articles in the Anglo-Jewish press and serious journals, refer to these verses noticing the remarkable coincidences.

Since these verses are invariably produced after the fact, and are not used for predictions, the process might be dismissed as cute but irrelevant. I suspect that they reflect a shift in the nature of our religious response to events and part of the mentality that sees happenings in modern Israel as the unfolding of the messianic era. If the crash of two helicopters over Moshav Shaar Yashuv was foreseen by the prophet Yeshayahu, then instead of a problem of how a just G-d could have allowed the tragedy to happen, we have another indi-

cation that we live in an era where prophecies are being fulfilled.

The Jewish people have been on an emotional roller coaster since we became aware of the enormity of the devastation in the Holocaust. Israel's emergence soon after, followed by the stunning victory of the Six Day War and the return to Israel of Russian and Ethiopian Jewry, has been balanced by increased assimilation and the loss of millions of Jews to intermarriage. Smaller Jewish communities are disappearing all over the world while we witness a massive return from the exile of two thousand years. Unable to find a rational explanation for all that is occurring, many have turned to messianic speculation. Events are thereby explained in terms of their being fulfillment of prophetic visions or necessary components of the unfolding of the messianic process. Dealing with the complexities and inconsistencies of actual events is no longer necessary. For some in Lubavitch, the death of the Rebbi does not affect their dream of his being the Messiah; it creates a new doctrine of a resurrected messiah instead. For some leaders of Gush Emunim in Israel, the agreement by Israeli governments to return territory to Palestinian

Arabs is a temporary betrayal that cannot last. Netanyahu will be no more successful than Rabin and Peres in delaying the completion of the emerging redemption.

Most of the Jews who repeat these Biblical interpretations are not consciously messianic. They are relieved, however, not having to face the difficulties in trying to come to terms with unexplained tragedies. Avoiding dealing with questions that should lead to self analysis and accepting that we do not know or understand the divine scheme of history, is an unhealthy denial. Judaism never denies reality nor the mystery of life, it has given us a way of coping with reality. The laws of mourning accept the fullness of the loss and establish a procedure that helps us to cope with it. We do not tell a mourner not to mourn because the departed has gone to a better world, even though we believe it so. A play on a verse in Yeshayahu adds nothing to our response to the tragedy but can serve to distract us from facing it.

This move away from rationalism also reflects the growing influence of a vague Chassidization as yeshivot no longer stress intellectual achievement. Torah study has become an act of religious piety and the

kollelim a spiritual refuge from a hostile world. Realities of life are to be avoided not confronted. In the Sephardic Jewish world the kabbalists who give out Kameyos and blessings are regaining prominence. The gap between the observant community and intellectual elements in the secular Jewish world continues to widen. At the same time there is a growing interest within that secular sector in learning traditional texts. If we can strengthen the rational, intellectual elements within orthodoxy, we have an unusual opportunity to increase our influence.

Let us return to an intellectually aware orthodoxy unafraid of confronting reality. Torah scholarship that promotes analysis and differentiation instead of religious slogans and playing on Biblical verses, can transform orthodoxy while reducing the hostility felt by the non-observant. This is a time of great opportunity as well as risk. Messianism is not the answer, nor a simplistic mysticism. The time is ripe for a renaissance of the intellectual world of the Lithuanian yeshiva.

Rabbi Blau is the Mashgiach Ruchani of the Mazer Yeshiva Program at Yeshiva University.

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Tennis Team Looks For Perfection Again

continued from back page

who will also pair up with Zilbershteyn for #2 doubles. Samet and Hasten will play #1 doubles for a second consecutive year after going undefeated last year in regular season matches. As the third doubles team, Hirt and Kraft hope to repeat as the top #3 doubles team of the league.

Of the new players, Senior Mark Schlossberg hopes to contribute his tennis experience while Oren Koslowe's strong and powerful serve will be tough to beat. David Schwartz, the only "lefty," should add some variety to the team. The team also looks forward to the never-die attitude of yet another newcomer, Yonatan Bendheim. The combination of this new force and the returning Mac stars will hopefully translate into another per-

fect season.

Returning as tennis coach for his third year, Jon Bandler looks forward to another strong season. "I like the chemistry of this year's team," says Bandler, "despite the loss of eight players to graduation last May. We don't have the depth we had in the past, but I'm confident that we'll be very competitive." Team captains, Josh Hasten and Tsvi Zilbershteyn, believe that "the remaining veteran players along with the new group of talented rookies can continue the winning tradition.

Now, the only thing that separates the tennis team for a three-peat this upcoming season is the magic number 11. Even if they do not succeed to win all of their matches, they hope to at least take home a third league championship.

Macs On Virge of Post-Season Play

continued from back page

about this loss and move on." Joel Jacobson led the Macs with 10 points, while Alon and Neil had 9 apiece.

Just three days later, the Macs took their frustrations out on SUNY Purchase. The Macs came out to a 10-2 lead spurred on by 8 points from Alon Zaibert including 2 threys. When Joel Jacobson put back a Marc Nadritch miss, the lead was up to 20 points. But the tide turned once the Purchase Panthers started to run at every opportunity causing the Macs to foul unnecessarily and put their opponents on the line 8 times. The half-time score was 37-29 after the short 20 minute half. Marc Nadritch played the half of his short YU career in this second-half. He scored 13 points on 4 field goals and 5 free throws. He finished with 21 points, 8 rebounds, 3 assists and 2 steals in 34 minutes of play, to lead the Macs to a 59-52 victory and the Macs' 11th win. Joel Jacobson finished with 13 points, while Zaibert and Bronstein both had 12.

In their third straight home game, the team took on Polytechnic, who they beat on

December 14, 64-58. Poly, coming in with 11 wins were looking for revenge, and jumped out to a 9-2 lead. The Macs then came storming back to take a 15-12 lead. The Macs used a tight man-to-man defense to build a 28-20 lead at half-time. The team extended the lead to 16 points, but were complacent and were unable to break Poly's press as the lead was cut to only 2 points with 2:42 remaining in the game. Neil Bronstein followed with a big lay-up at 2:14, and the rest was a foul shooting contest in which the Macs won. The final score was YU-53 Poly-47, giving the Macs their 12th win. Neil Bronstein had the game of his career, with 16 points on 7 for 8 shooting and 2 for 2 from the stripe. Alon Zaibert had 13, including two threys.

The Macs have three more games, two of which are away. This Wednesday, February 19, they go to City College, who they beat 67-53, Dec. 2, 1996. The next day, they go to Brooklyn to play St. Joseph's. Finally, Pratt Institute at the MSAC in their final regular season game at 8 PM.

Yeshiva Fencing Team Sharp As Ever

continued from back page

at Princeton, and performed remarkably well. Azari and Shindel had a combined 10-2 record.

Stevens Tech, whose fencing squad has had a long standing rivalry with Yeshiva, hosted Yeshiva and NJIT on Tuesday February 12. The fencing team inspired by the epee squad - Shimon Oppenheim, Hadar Weiss, Eric Schubert, and J.J. Lando - crushed NJIT.

The blowout, allowed coaches Messing and Rosas to give the new fencers an opportunity. Alan Gross (1-0) thoroughly crushed the opponent, winning by a score of 5-1; Ari Loren (0-1) initially looked as if he would pull off a victory, but in the end he was left hoping

for another shot.

This past Sunday, Feb. 16, a very important meet was held at Vassar College. For the first time in a long while, the fencing squad defeated Cornell. Yeshiva was led by the sabre squad (Avraham "juggernaut" Goldberg, Israeli mathematician Zeev Neumeir, Akiva Herzfeld, and Yekutiel Sandman) which won 9 matches and lost none to the Cornell sabre squad. The team also annihilated Lafayette College. However, the team lost a very disappointing match to Bard. Assistant Coach Pete Rosas was so upset that he shouted menacingly at the team, "If you're not going to fence

well, join the basketball team." (He later apologized for his mean spirited comments.)

The fencing team now prepares for the games that it must win, with the most important part of this season, the MACFA championships and NCAA competition, yet to come.

This year a few individuals hope to be selected to compete in the NCAA championships. Shimon Oppenheim, a senior with a 41-19 record, has used his long reach and lengthy extension to poke his way toward his goal; foil fencers Azari and Shindel have suddenly come to the fore

with excellent performances; and Sabre fencers Akiva Herzfeld and Yekutiel Sandman look promising as well.

The fencing team is nearing the crucial part of its season, but already it is turning out to be a successful year. After the gloriously triumphant 95-96 season, this year's team was left with only three returning starters. Nevertheless, the team fought hard in the beginning of the year, and the players meshed as the season progressed. Now the team feels confident and invincible. With the most meaningful part of the season rapidly approaching, Yeshiva fencing looks strong.

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En Garde: Yeshiva Fencing Nears Homestretch

BY AKIVA HERZFELD

In a game where sport is often dominated by arrogance, crudeness and money, fencing is one sport that holds up the gentlemanly qualities of humanity. Men in white tights line up facing one another, gallantly salute the opponent, and then don their masks preparing to fence. When the referee asks if they are ready, the players respond, "Yes sir," when the fencers finish they shake each other's hand and complement one another on their fencing ability. It is a gentle sport. It is a sport that Yeshiva students excel at.

Armed with a shard of metal and protected by a mask, the Yeshiva Collegiate student thacks, bashes, and bloodies the opponent into submission; yet it is all done gently, and with only the best intentions. The chivalrous qualities of the Yeshiva University student have in the past helped make the fencing team a very good one. For the past two years the team has won the IAC and last year the team finished in fourth place at the Mid Atlantic Conference

Fencing Association championship. This was in addition to remarkable individual accomplishments.

Over the past few weeks the team has met with a hectic schedule facing twelve teams and traveling in four different states. The frenzied schedule will continue through March when the MACFA championships are held.

Fencing Recap

Yeshiva went to Boston on February second to spar with some of the best teams in the nation, including MIT, Boston College, Brandeis, and Brown. The meet was held at Brandeis University and many members of the team met old friends. However, the Jewish atmosphere and kosher food did not help the team pull off any victories. On Feb. 9, the team fenced Princeton and New Hampshire and lost two agonizing defeats. Yet, the foilsquad led by Shaun Azari, Stuart Shindel, and Mordechai Gluck outsmarted the opponent

continued on page 15

Basketball Macs Make Run at Playoffs

BY RON MARKOVITZ
AND STEVEN ZOMBKE

With a post-season bid on the line, the undermanned Yeshiva Maccabees took on the ever dangerous NJIT Crusaders Feb. 3 at the Max Stern Athletic Center. Trying to avenge an early season loss to the Crusaders, the Macs knew that they faced a difficult challenge. Early on, the game was a see-saw battle, as the Macs' defense was suffocating. The lack of depth on the Macs began to show about midway through the first half, as NJIT wore down the Macs with their fast-breaks. Compounded by some sloppy ball handling, the Macs went ice cold as NJIT jumped out to a 10 point lead. Led by Alon "Oak" Zaibert & Neil Bronstein, who hit a big three with 2 seconds left,

the Macs closed the first half with a 9-2 run and trailed 27-24.

Unfortunately, the Macs got no closer as they came out flat to open the second-half. The Crusaders went on a 7-0 run, pushing the lead back to 10 points. The Macs were held to only 6 field goals en route to a 73-49 thrashing. After the game, the team piled into the locker room and held their heads in their hands, and not a word was uttered until Coach Halpert came in. He told the team to put this behind them so they could get on with the last 4 games and get 4 wins. When asked to assess the team's performance, Neil Bronstein said, "It's a 40 minute game. You can't play the way we did in the second-half and beat a team as good as NJIT." He added, "We just have to forget

continued on page 15

Tennis Team Hopes to Three-Peat

BY COMMENTATOR STAFF

Over the past two years, the YU tennis team has flourished with back-to-back league titles and an astonishing 18-0 match record. This year, under the leadership of Coach Jon Bandler and Captains Josh Hasten and Tsvi Zilbershteyn, the tennis Macs hope to remain undefeated for the season's 11 matches.

From March through May in '95 and '96, the tennis Macs faced eighteen opposing teams and were victorious in each and every meet. It should be noted that the Macs 18-0 record is measured in terms of meets, not individual matches. Each meet consists of nine individual matches, six singles and three doubles matches. To be victorious, either team must win the majority of these matches.

The players of each team are thus ranked by their coach in order to match-

up each competitor with his equivalent. If either team lacks a player, it automatically constitutes a forfeit of one match. With such fierce opponents as Maritime, NJIT, and Steven's Tech, has taken constant determination, team spirit and camaraderie to accomplish such a mission.

Well, it's 1997, and the Macs are back for more. Although eight of the team's seventeen players graduated last May, top seed Josh Hasten returns and will anchor a lineup that includes returning Mac stars Tsvi Zilbershteyn, Shai Samet, Edon Hirt, Doron Katz, and Daniel Kraft.

Hirt, as the team's most improved player, will get a chance to contribute more to the team than in the past. Samet also moved up in the rankings this year. In addition, the singles lineup will benefit from the arrival of rookie Steven Langer, an exchange student from Switzerland,

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YESHIVA SPORTS

YU Basketball Intramural Update

BY COMMENTATOR SPORTS STAFF

Feeding off the excitement of the "battle of the unbeaten" featuring Grossman's Clippers and Markovitz's Knicks, last semester, and with additions to the league from the second semester's supplemental draft, the league's weaker teams have become stronger. The addition of such players as Chaim Zackheim to the 76ers, and Ami Rosen to the Grizzlies, will vastly improve the teams. The runner up Knicks might have found the missing piece to the puzzle with the addition of power center Lenny Himmel-farb.

Game Summaries from first 3 weeks of the Spring Semester:

Clippers 38 Knicks 62

The rematch of last semester's final was not as breathtaking this time around. Without the services of Daniel Lowe, the Clippers played like their NBA counterpart from Los Angeles. The Knicks were led by Marc Goldberg's 16 points, and Jonathan Sicklick contributed 10 points for the Clippers. Steve Zombek was a notable absence.

Clippers 44 Cavs 56

The Clippers were outscored, out-rebounded, and outwitted once again, this time it at the hands of the Cavs. The Cavs

were led by the top rebounder in the league (and last year's technical foul leader), Mendy Miller, who added 15 points along with his tenacious defense. Judah Press lit up the sky with 12 points on 4 for 4 shooting from 3-point land. The Clippers offense (almost non-existent), was headed by Jonathan Sicklick's 17 points and Seth Grossman's 1 point effort.

Raptors 39 Cavs 40

This game saw a defensive struggle all the way down to the buzzer. The Raptors had ball possession in the closing seconds, but were unable to capitalize. The Cavs were led in scoring by David "Wild Thing" Wild. The Raptors were led by Dov "Spud" Robinson who scored 15 points. Yechiel Engel provided the half-time show with finger (not figure) ice skating, and repeatedly drawing the same cartoon face.

Grizzlies 34 Lakers 61

This game was a blowout from the get-go. The Lakers' offense was led by Michael "The Waiter" Resnick, who had a triple double, with 14 points, 10 rebounds, and 13 assists. Dovid Kompel also contributed to the scoring frenzy with 12 points. The Grizzlies were led by Jonathan "Smooove" Lifschutz who pitched in with 6 points and two early missed free throws, which proved crucial later in the game.

The Commentator

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