

CHAIRMAN'S CIRCULAR # 33

Shalom Chaverim

I am absolutely delighted to announce the launch of the EMC website, the first website to be launched by any Maccabi Confederation. You can find us at www.maccabieurope.com. It is well overdue but now that it is here I hope that you will be a frequent visitor and that your TO will contribute by providing information and photographs. With the European Maccabi Confederation now comprising 36 countries, communication is more important than ever. Each TO is not an isolated entity but rather a constituent part of a global movement and as such it is essential that we are aware of what is going on around us.

Let me start with some positive news. Our European central shlichah, **Stella Syrkin**, is leaving us after 5 years and 5 months of dedicated service. How, you might ask, is that positive news? In the first place it is almost unheard of that the Jewish Agency permits a shlichut to extend for such a long period but in Stella's case, she was doing such an outstanding and vital job that the Jewish Agency agreed. Secondly, we are not losing Stella as she is returning to Israel to take up a new position as Director of the European, FSU and North American Desks as well as Executive Director of the EMC.

The pressures upon the Chairman and executive of the EMC are becoming more demanding and having Stella based in Israel continuing to serve the EMC with her considerably acquired knowledge, is a real bonus. I did make a presentation to Stella in Israel during the Plenum in February but I wanted to take this opportunity to say a huge "thank you" for all her efforts and dedication. If you have met Stella you will know exactly what I mean and if you have not yet had the pleasure, then hopefully you will in the coming years. I wish her all the luck in the world and I am so pleased that I we will be able to continue our working relationship, at least until my term of office concludes in November 2010.

We are just weeks away from the 18th Maccabiah Chai and I know that preparation for these Games has been particularly challenging due the worldwide economic downturn. Nevertheless, I am aware that every effort is being made to ensure that as many countries as possible participate so that, once again, we can demonstrate to the world that Israel is strengthened by the support of the Diaspora and the Diaspora is all the stronger because of the existence of the Jewish State.

I was pleased to be able to negotiate a deal whereby the EMC entered into a partnership with Maccabi World Union, to provide a number of international

European madrichim who will work with the Junior Maccabiah Department during the Games. The experience for those madrichim will be unique and should enhance their leadership qualities both for their own personal development and to benefit their own country's movement. I hope to meet them all during the Games and we can be rightly proud that we have given these young people such a wonderful opportunity.

Once the Games are over the EMC executive will direct their energy towards planning future events. None will be as large as the **European Maccabi Games 2011** to be hosted in **Vienna** and I know that **Oskar Deutsch** and his organising committee are already well advanced with their plans.

It would be all too easy, during this economic recession, to make excuses for inactivity but the fact of the matter is that during difficult times communities need to strengthen themselves and those who represent Maccabi need to focus on new and innovative events. In this respect I have to congratulate **Jozsef Horvath** for organising the 4th **Maccabi Hungary** Sports Day in conjunction with a number of other communal organisations and with some 1,000 visitors. The event is covered on the website and sets an excellent example of what can be achieved with determination, imagination and a willingness to work with others.

Both the EMC Sports Director Motti Tichauer and Education Director Claudia De Benedetti will be planning regional events and programmes post Maccabiah and we look forward to hearing from you if you would like to host an event in your country.

I would like to congratulate all those involved in the production of our website and hope that you will both use it and contribute towards its continued development. Through this media we have a great opportunity to learn more about what is going on within the Maccabi world and to bring us closer to one another by social networking.

I hope to meet as many European Maccabeans as possible during the Maccabiah and I am sure that those of you lucky enough to be selected will have an unforgettable experience that will stay with you for life.

Chazak Ve'ematz

Stuart Lustigman

CHAIRMAN EMC

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