

Rabbi Schiller's Boys: The New Power in Yeshiva Sports

By Zach Levin

After losing their first exhibition game 7-4 at the hands of M.T.A., Ramaz's new hockey team rebounded with two easy wins against the vastly over-rated Chafetz Chaim (9-0) and B.T.A. (17-0!). Both games saw flawless goaltending by Ami Finkelthal. Coach Schiller's boys played good, solid hockey in both games, after learning in the first game that brawn doesn't score goals.

Ramaz's most aggravating problem in the first game was its inability to put shots on net. By the second game, however, the boys had put to rest any doubts about their shooting abilities, pumping 16% of their shots into the opposition's net. Thus, the team went into the regular season opener 2-1, although Coach Schiller stressed that victories shouldn't inflate any egos, because they were only "practices."

Nevertheless, the team went into the season opener against M.T.A. with high hopes. Eager to avenge their earlier loss, the boys, revved up by an emotional pre-game pep talk from Rav Schiller, began the game ready to kill.

After five minutes of incredibly fast-paced hockey,

it, "four months of practice" had given it the ability to play. After clearing the Ramaz zone, Ben Freilich fed a pass to hustling Lee Lasher, who flipped the puck by the M.T.A. goalie for Ramaz's first goal.

When the first period ended, the score was 2-1 in M.T.A.'s favor.

The boys came out storming again for the second period. After several tense scoreless minutes, Joseph Hyman took one of his patented high-rising wrist shots to beat the M.T.A. goalie convincingly and tie the game. Adding insult to injury, Mathew Lindenbaum further silenced the M.T.A. crowd by putting Ramaz into the lead, 3-2.

Unfortunately, when the third period came around, it seemed that Ramaz had lost its momentum. M.T.A. took advantage of this fact and tied the score at 3. Then, with a mere five minutes remaining, things took a bad turn for Ramaz, as M.T.A. went ahead on a hard screen shot by Fine.

With desperation mounting among the team members, Coach Schiller called a time-out with 22 seconds to play. He instructed goalie Finkelthal to come out of the net as soon as

behind the net to Dave Lewit, who spotted Joseph Hyman drifting in from the point. Hyman's stick received the puck and sent it home into the firm netting of the M.T.A. goal, all in one motion.

With the score tied at 4, the

teams played six minutes of overtime.

At the final whistle, the score remained tied at 4, and a tired but satisfied team walked back to the locker room, aching for showers. The only grumbling to be heard concerned the officiating of the game. Throughout, Ramaz had been hindered by overzealous refereeing, prompting several players to comment that the referee was on the M.T.A.

payroll. All those who were at the game report that Ramaz hockey is unquestionably more exciting than its basketball. Autographed pictures of Rav Schiller will be available soon at the Co-op, as well as pictures of four select team members modeling the latest fashions of Sasson jeans. The team's schedule will be posted as soon as possible, and all fans are invited to future games.

Varsity Bounces Back

By Josh Berman

On November 11, the varsity squad's record stood at 0-2. A heartbreaking loss to Frisch, followed by a blowout at the hands of Rogosin, left the team discouraged and demoralized. The losses to the mediocre New Jersey teams implied that the Rams would be destined to another losing season.

Three months and ten games later, the Rams record stands at a respectable 8-4. The team that was a cellar dweller is now tied for second place in the division.

After balancing out their record at 2-2, the Rams faced the always tough M.T.A. Lions. The two teams played three periods of even basketball, only to see Ramaz falter in the fourth. Although they lost, the game was a victory of sorts. Sophomore Adam Ferziger explained: "After that game we knew we could play with almost anybody. Anyone that can play strongly against M.T.A. for three periods must be doing something right."

Then, the Rams went on to win their next two games, both on the road, trampling HAFTAR 69-43, and destroying YHSQ 61-48.

The following week the Rams faced a more formidable opponent as they went up against the defending league champion JEC Chargers. Led by Danny Dodelson, Mike Strulowitz and Mitch (the animal) Kasten, they proceeded to walk all over the Rams, and wound up winning by nine, 64-55. However, with seconds remaining on the clock, a fight broke out between Mitch

Kasten and Ram strongman, David Izhakoff. Both benches emptied onto the court as the game ticked to an end. After the game a league referee commented, "We're seeing more and more of this all the time. This sort of violence has no place on the basketball court, especially in a yeshiva high school league."

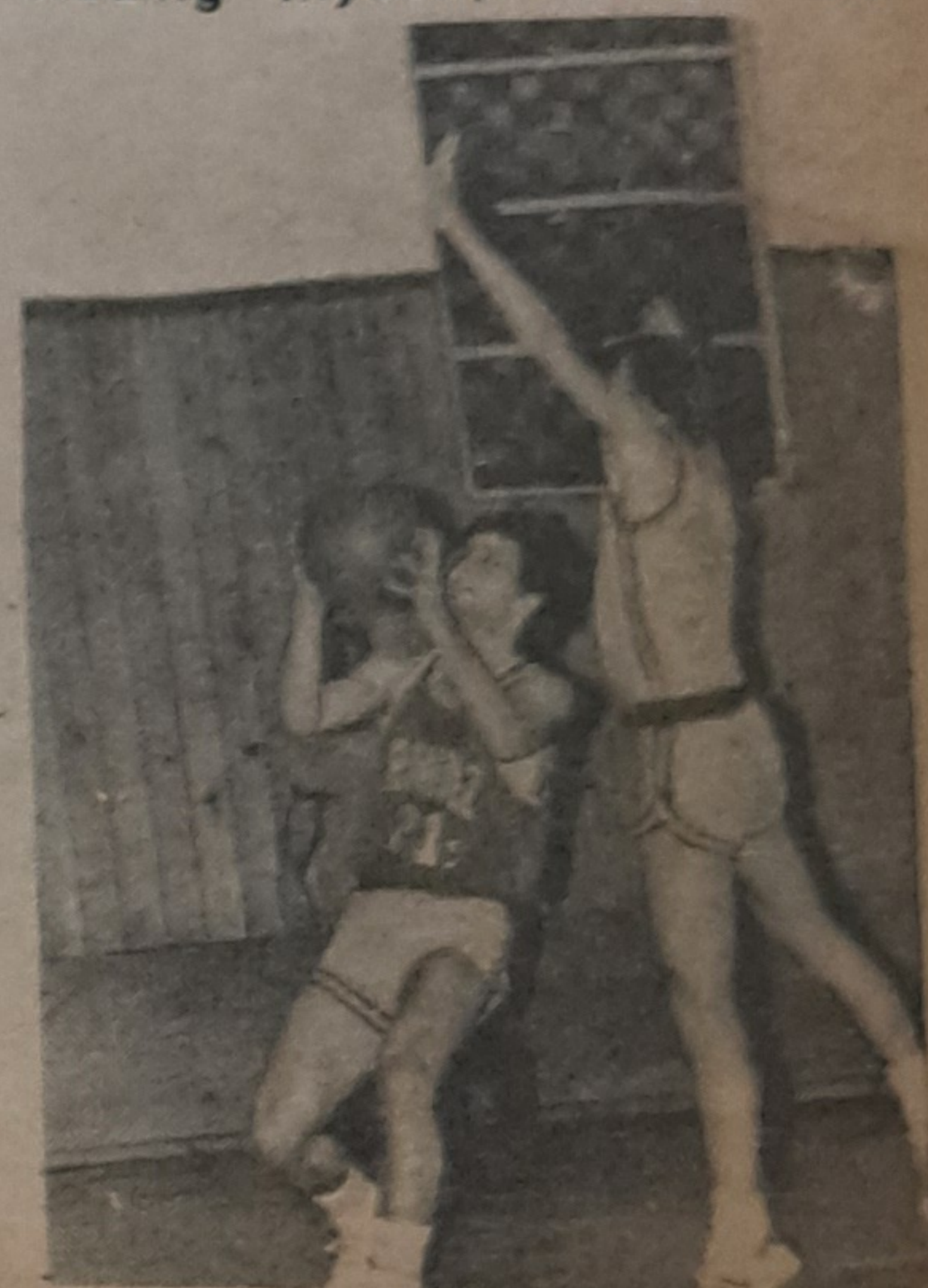
Following a week of practice, the Rams took the floor against the Sephardic Sonics, newcomers to the league. The Rams played inconsistently throughout the game, but managed to pull out the victory 51-49.

Next the Rams took on JEC hoping to avenge the loss suffered two weeks earlier. The Rams were able to defeat the Chargers 62-56. It was a fitting conclusion to the season for seniors Jacob Schreiber and Steven David, who were preparing to leave for Israel a few days later.

Shortly thereafter it was learned that HANC had dropped out of the league, thus raising Ramaz's record to 7-4. Another win would insure the first winning season in two years.

With this possibly in mind, the team traveled to New Jersey to take on the Frisch Cougars.

Before the game Coach Lessner had nothing but words of praise for his team. "You guys have improved at least 25-30% over the beginning of the year. You've all hustled, and you've all made it the kind of season no one, including myself, thought we



Rams' Ricky Finkel goes up against JEC's Danny Dodelson.

could have. It would be a shame if we didn't cap it with a winning record. Well, here's our chance."

Sure enough, the Rams went out and on account of excellent first half shooting won 53-46.

Junior Varsity Eyes Championship

By Peter Miller

After years of disappointing finishes, the Ramaz Jr. Varsity is finally winning consistently. With a record of 6-1, the J.V. is in first place and in contention for the championship. The key to this season's success, according to Coach Howie Gruenspecht, is the ability of the new kids on the team. "More than half the team is composed of new players, and I'm pleased with their play," he said. He also added that the team has "a lot of guys who have matured and are playing better."

Playing at HAFTAR, Ramaz took an 11-0 lead from the start and blew HAFTAR away in the first quarter. Led by Glenn "Gorky" Cohen, who had six points and seven steals in the quarter, Ramaz took a 23-4 lead over the hapless Hawks. The J.V. extended its lead with superb play by Paul Heller, who dominated the offensive and defensive boards and scored an impressive 10 points. As the teams went to the locker rooms at halftime, the score stood at 33-8, Ramaz in the lead.

In the third quarter Ramaz got sloppy, and HAFTAR was able to score eight points, while Ramaz managed a meager 18.

The game finally ended with Ramaz winning by fifty-one points, 71-20.

Following this tremendous victory, Ramaz beat YHSQ in a low-scoring contest 9-0. Actually, YHSQ had dissolved its team, and the J.V. won by default. After the forfeit, Ramaz had a three week layoff until the next game.

Against JEC, Ramaz got off to a slow start but took the lead on the strength of excellent second and third quarter play by "Gorky" Cohen and Benjie Schub. The two spearheaded points respectively. Ramaz won, 56-52.

A week later, against MHS, the Rams were the antithesis of good basketball. They failed to pass the ball, shoot the ball, or play defense when they didn't have possession. In front of a full house at the Ramaz gym, the Rams played their worst game of the year and lost 65-64.

With several games remaining to be played, whether Ramaz is really of championship ilk is as yet unknown. However, the way the squad has been performing, next month's playoffs will not only be a reward, but a path to greater glory.



Ramaz players Lee Lasher, Benjie Freilich and Gershon Bergwerk celebrate Ramaz's first goal against M.T.A., as an M.T.A. player walks away dejectedly.

though, M.T.A. quickly subdued the Ramaz bench with two fast goals by Steven Ratzger and Avrami Fine.

Then it happened. Ramaz started playing the kind of hockey that, as Rav Schiller put

the puck was cleared into the M.T.A. zone so that an extra forward could be put in.

The plan worked. With a mere eleven seconds left to play and the bench in turmoil, Bennet Lindenbaum passed the puck

Escape to Hunter Mountain

By Andrea Fastenberg

On Thursday January 31st, eighty students spent the day skiing at Hunter Mountain. It was, without doubt, the most successful ski trip Ramaz had held in a long time. Participants varied from beginners to Olympic potentials from grades seven to twelve. Some of us came to release tension caused by the recent exams, and some of us came just to exercise our athletic ability, but regardless of motive, everyone skied aggressively and enjoyed himself to the fullest.

The day began at 5:13 A.M. in front of Ramaz. Not surprisingly, many people's first stop was the 24 hour coffee shop nearby. There, they sipped hot chocolate in an attempt to warm their already frozen bodies or gulped down coffee so as to awaken their foggy

minds. Many were quiet and not yet "psyched" for the trip. Others were vibrant and raucous and could not contain their excitement.

We soon boarded the buses, and after a speedy ride, arrived at Hunter ahead of schedule.

By the time we had left the security of the warm buses to face the fierce cold we were indistinguishable to one another. Hats covered every inch of our faces, goggles provided our eyes with effective shields, and scarves were wrapped endlessly around our necks. We all separated, some of us heading to ski lessons, some to ski-offs, and some to brave the snowy slopes alone.

When we encountered one another on the slopes, we often had surprising accounts of athletic achievement to relate. For example, two Ramazniks planning to ski on an in-

termediate trail got on a lift that stops first on a low slope, then on a higher one. Assuming that the intermediate trail would be on the lower slope, they got off at the first stop and found themselves at the top of an expert slope. Nevertheless, they skied down that slope just as true experts would.

The most courageous of our group showed their stuff on a trail called Hellsgate (the name alone was enough to scare off some), and on the most challenging of slopes, Hunter West.

We left late in the afternoon, exhausted from the day's activities. On the ride home there was some muttering about frozen toes, numb fingers and charliehorses, but in the final analysis, it was agreed by all that a day of skiing was a great way to unwind and forget about the pressures of school.