

Maccabi games athletes shine at Jewish Film Festival

Men and women, young adults and seniors all earned the podium as the Jewish Film Festival finale on Sunday, November 22 paid tribute to all the athletes in Calgary who have participated in the Maccabiah Games.

Joining them on stage at the Beth Tzedec congregation was the legendary Tal Brody, who brought much fame to Israel nearly four decades ago when he and his Maccabi Tel Aviv teammates shocked the world and brought Israel its first European Cup basketball championship.

After that triumphant game in 1977 Tal Brody blurted out one of the great quotes in Israeli history: "We're on the map . . . and we're going to stay on the map . . . not just in sports, but in everything."

Those few words caught the times like no other. The Yom Kippur war was still in memory. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had to resign because of a financial scandal. It was the year Egyptian President Anwar Sadat made a historic visit to Jerusalem to sign a peace treaty with

Prime Minister Menachem Begin. Israeli emotions were roiling but the country united behind the daring exploits of the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team.

nership with the Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary. The film, by director Dani Menkin, has not been publicly screened before so it was an exclusive

talking about those heady days, sharing memories about his teammates, and answering audience questions. Brody was visibly moved when he recount-

stayed. Over the years Brody has developed a strong family life, a deep Jewish connection and the opportunity of becoming a roving goodwill ambassa-

is now on the board of directors of Maccabi Canada. Calgary has a long tradition of support and participation in the various Maccabi games and many of the local Jewish athletes were called to the stage in a show of appreciation.

Balaban said he has gone through his own personal transformation by participating in the Maccabi movement and he encouraged others to pursue the same opportunity. The original goal of the Maccabi World Union was to promote physical fitness among European Jews in order to better prepare them for the hard work of building a modern Jewish state in Israel. Balaban said that vision is still valid today as the participation in sports helps promote lasting Jewish identity and a strengthening of Zionist commitment.

For information about the Maccabi movement you can go to www.maccabicanada.com. To connect to the local organization you can email Jordan Balaban at jordan@greengatepower.com



Calgary participants in the Maccabi Canada sporting movement are called to the stage with Israeli basketball legend Tal Brody (holding the basketball) after the Jewish Film Festival screening of the film "On the Map," on Sunday, November 22.

The story of that illustrious team and one of its key players, Tal Brody, was told in the remarkable film, "On the Map," which screened at the Beth Tzedec in part-

nership with the Jewish Community Foundation of Calgary. The film, by director Dani Menkin, has not been publicly screened before so it was an exclusive

ed all the blessings that have come his way after he gave up life as a professional basketball prospect in the U.S. to come to Israel as a Maccabiah Games participant – and

dor for the State of Israel. Later Brody was joined on stage by Jordan Balaban, a basketball star himself, who has participated in several Maccabiah Games and