

Home > Culture > Sports > First-ever Israeli MLB draft pick proud to represent his country

CULTURE SPORTS

FIRST-EVER ISRAELI MLB DRAFT PICK PROUD TO REPRESENT HIS COUNTRY

By **Daniel Koren** - October 26, 2015 > 4190 > 0

Subscribe to the CJN SUBSCRIBE

RSS Feed VIEW



Dean Kremer. COURTESY

In June, 19-year-old Dean Kremer made history when he became the first Israeli to ever be selected in the Major League Baseball draft, chosen by the San Diego Padres as the 1,137th pick in the 38th round.

Sports agencies had a field day discussing the 6-foot-2 Kremer’s abilities as a pitcher (particularly his fastball), with Jewish and Israeli news outlets lauding Kremer for finally bringing about the day when an Israeli would play in the MLB.

Kremer, though flattered, turned down the Padres’ offer, however, saying he wasn’t ready to join the big leagues without first pursuing his post-secondary education at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV).

“I didn’t feel that I was ready at the time and wanted some time to mature as a person and as a player,” he explained in an interview with *The CJN*, though he said it was a “dream come true” to be picked. The Stockton, Calif.-raised Kremer, who speaks fluent Hebrew and identifies as Israeli, was particularly proud to put the Jewish state on the baseball map.

“It’s the best feeling in the world being able to represent the country I associate myself with,” he said.

Nate Fish, national director of the Israel Association of Baseball, told reporters that Kremer, who has been part of the baseball program in Israel for the last five years, would have been drafted higher had he not vocalized his desire to remain in school. “We are all very proud to have a member of the Israel national team be selected in the draft and it couldn’t have happened to a more deserving guy,” Fish said.

As The CJN recently reported – [in a piece looking at Canadian Blue Jays fans living in Israel](#) – that baseball is still a niche sport in the Jewish state, according to Kremer, it is certainly on the rise, though not quite yet “mainstream.” In previous interviews, Kremer admitted that most of his family in Israel don’t even know what baseball is, save for, perhaps, his famous great-uncle and Democrat donor Haim Saban. But today, “more and more kids are signing up and the talent is growing,” he told *The CJN*.

Though Kremer currently attends school at UNLV (where there are actually several Israelis, and no presence of BDS, he said), his last two summers have been spent playing on Israel’s men’s national baseball team. “I’ve loved every minute of it. I would love to play any time they need me.”

After school, he hopes “to sign a pro contract and go as far as I can. It doesn’t really matter what team I go to.”

(It is worth noting, however, that he’s a staunch Boston Red Sox fan.)

With the World Series between the Kansas City Royals and New York Mets approaching, the young pitcher also gave his predictions on the series. “Mets in six,” he said.

Many Jays fans will hope he’s right.

SHARE AND ENJOY !

0 SHARES

