



JCC Association
of North America



THE RACHMANUS RULE

What distinguishes the JCC Maccabi Games from all other athletic competitions? Infusing the games with Jewish values makes them a more meaningful experience for our athletes and their families. We want our athletes to strive for excellence yet we also want them to have compassion for their teammates and their opponents.

Judaism has always viewed compassion, or **RACHMANUS**, as a definitive value. The Talmud goes so far as to say that one can identify a Jew by observing whether they are compassionate or not. As Jews we seek to emulate G-d. As compassion defines one of G-d's characteristics, so too must we be compassionate.

RACHMANUS plays a key role in athletics and the JCC Maccabi Games. The level of competition at the Games varies considerably due to delegations from varying city size and delegations fielding teams with younger players. Although several sports have mercy rules, blowing out a much weaker team for the sake of scoring points or getting runs across the plate is contrary to the spirit of the Games and shows a lack of **RACHMANUS**. Rachmanus includes displaying good sportsmanship, respecting your opponents and the officials, and exhibiting appropriate behavior are also important components of RACHMANUS.

Rachmanus Rule

1.5 Rachmanus Rule—Compassion and good sportsmanship shall be displayed by athletes, coaches and spectators at all times during the JCC Maccabi games both on and off of the playing field.

1.5.1 Treat others as you would like to be treated. Lashon Harah (trash talking, taunting, gossiping and making fun of a weaker team) by any participant or spectator shall not occur.

1.5.2 Be a good loser and gracious winner. The losing team shall not express negative remarks or actions toward their opponents, nor shall the winning team tease or mock their opponents.

1.5.3 Make a positive difference on the playing field. Along with competition, compassion is very important to maintain on the field. All athletes must be encouraging to their teammates during time of play. Rather than expressing negative remarks for performing a mistake, athletes should encourage teammates with tips of what they can do in the future to better their performance.

1.5.4 Refrain from actions that may cause injury to others. Being over aggressive and “out of control” on the playing field shall not occur as it can lead to serious injury of ones self as well as to other participating athletes.

1.5.5 Lead by example. All members participating in the JCC Maccabi games should come into the event with open arms.

1.5.5.1 Help guide an athlete if you see him or her having trouble with a skill, and encourage athletes when they have done something good to raise their motivation.



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1.5.5.2 Coaches should also demonstrate kind behavior by being equally caring and fair to all of his or her athletes. If a team is being “blown out” the coach of the winning team should slow his team down from scoring points. Coaches must also give each member of his or her team a chance to play in each game.

1.5.6 Project a sense of pride. The JCC Maccabi games are a place to show one’s pride as an athlete and as a strong Jewish person. Showing pride does not consist of arrogance or superiority over any other individual, but rather pride as a whole group. Athletes are encouraged to create a bond where they will express their sense of pride in both of these areas with fellow teammates and opponents.

1.5.7 Respect teammates, opponents, coaches, officials and spectators.

1.5.7.1 Officials have the final say during a sporting event. There shall be no arguing between officials, coaches and athletes who are unsatisfied with a call made by an official.

1.5.7.2 Teammates must work together as one and be respectful of one another on their own team. Teams shall also be respectful and caring toward opposing teams, as well.

1.5.7.3 Spectators must not negatively interact with athletes, coaches, or officials before, after, and during a game.

Summary

During JCC Maccabi, athletes, coaches, delegation heads, chaperones, and spectators are bound by the “Rachmanus Rule” of fair play.

Participants are expected to support teens of all backgrounds and levels of experience. “Blowing out” a much weaker team for the sake of scoring points is contrary to the spirit of the JCC Maccabi and shows a lack of Rachmanus (mercy/compassion).

Lashon Harah (slander, gossip, trash talk), putting down other athletes or artists, making fun of a weaker team or athlete, making fun of an artist or specialty shows a lack of Rachmanus. JCC Maccabi athletes and artists are expected to engage, interact with, and support teens that are not from their delegation, or in their sport or specialty area.

The atmosphere of JCC Maccabi and its significance as a truly Jewish event will be enhanced if both participants and spectators have an understanding of and a commitment to following the Rachmanus Rule.

- Treat others as you would like to be treated
- Be a good loser
- Be a gracious winner
- Practice good sportsmanship
- Respect teammates, opponents, coaches, officials and spectators
- Demonstrate fair play at all times



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- Refrain from actions that may cause injury to others
- Lead by example
- Project a sense of pride
- No taunting
- Make a positive difference