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Happy 150th Canada! 1867-2017



*Jewish Canadian Involvement*



by Rochelle Burns, PhD ©

Yes, it is well acknowledged we are the people of the Book -- and books.

In 1991, one out of every two Jews in Canada, age 15 and over, was either enrolled in university or had completed a BA, compared to one in five Canadians as a whole. At the graduate level, about one in six Jews (16 %) had obtained an MA, M.D., or PhD, compared to one in 25 (4 %) of the whole population.

Doing well in class usually didn't include gym class for Jewish Canadian students. The spotlight has been on Jewish Canadian educational accomplishments.

But Jewish Canadians have also attained glory in the less talked about area of sport.

For example, Sammy Luftspring (1916-2000), champion welterweight boxer, was named to Canada's Olympic team for the 1936 Berlin Olympics. He refused to attend. He explained in the *Toronto Globe* : "The German government was treating its Jewish brothers and sisters worse than dogs". This inductee into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame always sported a Star of David on his boxing shorts.

He began his boxing career at the gymnasium of Toronto's Brunswick Talmud Torah. In 1933, he took part in one of the saddest moments in Toronto's history, a riot that broke out at Christie Pits Park following an anti-Semitic demonstration.

Then there was Fanny "Bobbie" Rosenfeld (1904-1969), winning Olympic medals in track and field, and also excelling in basketball, hockey, softball, and tennis before being inducted into Canada's Sports Hall of Fame.

Be it the mind or body, when Jewish Canadians focused on achieving -- they did.

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Sammy Luftspring: Ontario Jewish Archives, Camp B'nai Brith 1933



Bobbie Rosenfeld: Canada's Sports Hall of Fame