



ALUMNI WEEKEND '97

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CAMP AVODA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

1, 2, 3, 4! We want a COLOR WAR!

by Ken Shifman

The Alumni Weekend Committee is pleased to announce the inception of Alumni Color War: a one-day competition where we will determine bragging and lake-jumping rights.

The committee has worked hard to find an organized event that will fit the Avoda Alumni culture and we believe we have it. It shouldn't be hard to adjust, as we will begin the day with softball and end the day with basketball – as usual. This time, however, there's something at stake.

And remember: it's a long year when you lose! Here is how Alumni Color War will work:

1. We announce the teams: Blue and White, of course. Team names are up to the teams.

2. Only two alumni, one from each team, will know the scores. These two will then "play" a game at the end of Saturday afternoon to determine who jumps into the lake.

3. The events and their point totals (there are three events for entire teams, plus miscellaneous events for just a few people that each team will select; any alumnus can only participate in one miscellaneous event):

- Softball (entire team) 50 pts.
- Mooseball (entire team) 25 pts.
- Bunko hitting/robbing (4 people) 15 pts. Each player gets five swings. Your team supplies the pitcher. 5 points for a lakeo, 3 for a beacho, 2 for a reco, and 1 for a bunko. If you hit anything on your last swing you can keep going. The other team may rob. The team with the most points gets the 15 points.

- Hot Shot competition (4 people) 15 pts. Choose five shots on the court; 1 ball, 1 minute to accumulate points.

- Relay race (4 people) 15 pts. Each person runs half a lap.

- Volleyball (3-on-3) 15 pts. Best out of 3; games to 15.

- Tennis (singles or doubles) 10 pts per game. 1 set = a game.

- Basketball (entire team) 50 pts. Game to 50. 3-pointers count. Call your own fouls.

If you're very *uninterested* in participating, please let us know ASAP. Otherwise, we will assume that everyone will take part in this new, experimental feature of Alumni Weekend. Hope you have a good time and may the best team win!

President's Letter

Dear Fellow Alumnus:

Thank you for attending the 7th annual Camp Avoda Alumni Weekend. Once again we find ourselves on the shores of Lake Tispaquin, where all our lives – in one way or another – were changed.

It's been 16 years since I last spent a summer at Avoda, but still this place – this Weekend, in fact – continues to mark growth and change in my life. In 1992, driving home with Mike Ross from the second Alumni Weekend, I confided to him that I was planning to propose to my then-girlfriend, Laura, later that week. When I returned home, I had a message from Laura on my answering machine. As usual, she had read me like a book and knew I was going to

propose. "Just don't buy the ring yet," she said, "I want to pick it out."

Naturally, I already had bought the ring.

Well, I drove right over to her place and gave her hell for ruining yet another surprise. All the while, I was stripping to take a shower because I was coated with well-earned Weekend sweat. Then she started telling me her ideas for our wedding and I stopped her. "Hey, I haven't even proposed yet." By now, I was completely naked, various parts of my body covered with Avoda dirt, Tispaquin algae, and dried-up sweat from the Middleboro sun. And in that state, I proposed.

This year, I will go home from the Alumni Weekend on Sunday and be greeted with my very first Father's Day. With memories of these days and

nights still fresh in my mind, with the voices of friends and fellow alumni still reverberating in my ears, with the smell of Avoda's field and flora still wafting through my nostrils, I will sit with my family and see all that I have to be thankful for.

A life at home, a life at Avoda. The older I get, the more the two blend together. I feel very lucky for that and I thank you all again for coming this year. Now let's go kick some ass!

Avodaically yours,

Jason M. Rubin
President
Camp Avoda Alumni Association

Brew Songs

by Ken Shifman

Brew Songs At the last few unofficial Avoda Alumni events, i.e. those where I'm with at least three or four other Avodians of old, we've been doing some singing. No, not just Marley and Jerry. No, not just the Bee Gees. We've been singing Hebrew songs. Songs we used to sing during services.

"I said a Hee-eee-eee-eee-nay!"

I'll leave a room to get a beer, come back in the room and there will be Rabbi Russell Sherman leading the "service." It's happened on a bunch of occasions and I must admit, it's pretty fun. It definitely brings me back to Avoda services.

They were the same every week and probably still are. How

about the old fake bug trick? That was religious of us. We would pick up the pine needles and drag them across someone's neck. *Smack!* "Damn these bugs!" Amen.

I can remember Jay Epstein leading great energetic songs and making services fun. Russell was telling us recently how he led services once, when his dad was at camp. He had free reign over the end of the Sh Sh's at the end of David Melech Yisrael.

*"...Zeidi zeidi zeidi bubbe...
Haifa (Yisrael!) Yerushalaim
(Yisrael!) Bobbie Davis (Yisrael!)
Larry Sherman (All the kids
think to themselves "We love*

Larry Sherman. Who's Larry Sherman?") (Yisrael!) *Camp Avoda (Yisrael!)...David Melech Yisrael...."*

Fun stuff.

And who can forget Benji (Elvis had not left the building) doing the after-the-meal prayer? He would swing the microphone around and the crowd would go crazy! ("We love Larry Sherman. And this prayer!")

As I've said before, everything at camp was fun. Even, yuck, services.

So now as we try to initiate a Color War at Alumni Weekend, I was thinking: Maybe we should have services Friday Night and Saturday morning. We just need to make teams and pick Rabbis....

Please send us articles and any

The Rock!

by Evan Yampolsky, Assistant Waterfront Director 1984

Salmon swim upstream to spawn. Birds fly south in the winter. I before E except after C. Movie night was always Saturday night. The Red Sox will perpetuate the great suffering that began with our grandfathers. But the phenomenon that puzzles me is: why did we swim to The Rock and back?

The Rock is a statuesque landmark in the middle of Lake Tispaquin. It is one point of The Triangle, the podium for a bare, buff Ahhnold wannabe, or the destination for Jonny Bamel's Kangaroo Kourt sentence. The Rock was the almighty torture of the Waterfront Staff. Whose light bulb went fluorescent and determined swimming to The Rock and back was a good thing?

For eight consecutive summers and one more time just for... well, short term memory loss prevents

me from remembering that other time...but for those eight years of swim instruction, eight sojourns to The Rock and back took place. As a young camper, the challenge of The Rock was the final exam to graduate to the next swimming level. I remember it like it was yesterday: the crawl, elementary backstroke, breast with frog-kick, crawl, sidestroke, back to crawl....

This exercise of endurance was a period off for my swim instructor, Robbie Coppel, who barked out orders from a row boat that he had weaseled a CIT to row!

Surprisingly, The Rock was hardly impressive. Sure you could stand up in the middle of the lake, but basically it was as memorable as Chevy Chase taking in the Grand Canyon in the movie *National Lampoon's Vacation*. No graffiti, no

landmark demarcations, nothing. Just a boring remnant from the Glacial Age or the Stone Age, depending on your perspective.

The truly worst part of the swim was "and back." Off in the distance the bugle call signals the end of the period. Every other class was dismissed to get ready for the next period and I'm in the middle of slime and grime treading water, struggling to do the inverted breaststroke (thanks Mel) with water running up my nose and scum covering my body.

Finally I reach the second area. Salvation! Twenty-five minutes remain in Athletics and my bunk needs me as they're losing in softball.

What could be worse? Benitis! "Hubba Dubba Wubba. Thanks for Nothin'. Boo Waterfront Staff!"

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personal news!

Hot Times at a Chili's Night

by Sam "Mamu" Mirkin

Friday, May 9, took an unusual turn when Mr. Davis got to the podium and announced that we were going to have another trip day. After having a gourmet brunch consisting of runny eggs and coffee cake, we filed into the expertly driven buses and headed for Chili's on Route 1 in Dedham.

The usual suspects were in attendance: Chubes & Louie, Hondo, Shif, Mamu, Peasely, Adam Becker (now that he's a lawyer, it doesn't seem that his nickname should appear in print), Blocker, and many others from various eras. People quickly divided into groups, and split off to do their favorite activities. Hondo was seen distracting the bartender while Shif ran behind the bar to grab free beers for all of us, while Blocker and Mamu could be heard arguing about the 1990 Color War (old habits die hard).

After several hours of tipping back some frosty ones with friends, it was back on the buses for the long haul home to Avoda. Mr. Davis was furious when he learned that Chubes had started a raucous chant of "We hate the neighbors" as the buses drove down Gibbs Road. A good time was had by all.

Really though, I know that I spend all week looking forward to the Avoda happy hours held sporadically at Chili's. It's a great opportunity to catch up with friends and remember the good old days when the toughest part of your day was deciding which sport you wanted to play. With all the weddings, births, etc., it also gives you a chance to catch up on the present goings-on of your old camp buddies. So, keep your ears open for future happy hours, and we hope to see you there.

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What's your e-mail?

If you're on e-mail and want to be included in occasional Avoda alumni updates, send your e-mail address to Mike Ross at: rossco@ziplink.net

And while we're on the subject...

Do we have your correct address?

If not, please give it to either Jason Rubin or Ken Shifman sometime this weekend