

## Torch Award Submission: **TA11- 61**

- Full Title of Entry (80 char max): ***The Final 2***
- Entry Category (You can select up to 2, although you will only win in one):
  - ☐ Men's Club Shabbat    ☐ Yom HaShoah / Yellow Candle    ☐ Israel / Masorti    ☐ Hebrew Literacy / Ritual Literacy
  - ☐ Hearing Men's Voices    ☐ Men's Health    ☐ xxx Youth Programming    ☐ Programs for Young Men (21-40)
  - ☐ World Wide Wrap    ☐ Shomrei Ha'aretz    ☐ Club Administration    ☐ Non-FJMC Program
  - ☐ Best Overall Programming\* [\*Best Overall Programming is not on the basis of a single program, but your club's entire year. A single program submitted in this category will be re-categorized.]
  - ☐ I'm not sure, so please select for our club's submission.
- Contact Person: Brian Brenner
- Email address for Contact Person: bbrenner@fstinc.com
- Club number & Club name: Brotherhood of Temple Israel, #738  
[Is it a Men's Club or a Brotherhood? Please specify]
- Number of club members: 132
- Synagogue name, city and state: Temple Israel, Sharon MA
- Club President name (at time of entry): Brian Brenner
- Club President name (at time of convention): Brian Brenner
- Person preparing entry: Brian Brenner
- Email address of person preparing: bbrenner@fstinc.com

### **Part II. Summary Information ( 2 – 3 sentences):**

**A group of programs interacting with Temple Israel USY, including “The Final 2”, a basketball game between the Brotherhood and Temple Israel USY with proceeds marked for Tikkun Olam projects.**

**Part III. By submitting this document, I certify, on behalf of the club, that this submission has not been submitted by our club for a Torch Award in a previous year. This was a brand new program.**

### **Part IV. Entry Documentation**

**Temple Israel Brotherhood challenged the USY chapter to a basketball competition. The event was referred to as “The Final 2”, with timing coinciding with the end of the NCAA national basketball competition. The event culminated a series of programming interactions with our USY chapter.**

**Our motivations for youth programming were as follows:**

- **Develop a new format for working with our kids, in addition to parent/ teacher relationships. Ideally this format would provide opportunities for kids to see us as strong, committed Jewish men, but in a new environment separate to an extent from the usual messages they receive from parents and teachers.**
- **Develop a format for team building efforts between USY and the Brotherhood.**
- **Develop additional avenues for Tikkun Olam projects.**
- **Develop approaches to better attract young men for participation in Temple Israel Brotherhood, and for more active involvement.**

- **Develop approaches to better tie participation in the “sports wing” of USY to the mainstream group.**

**In the fall of 2010, we started planning our event, “The Final 2”. The event was publicized by a series of EMAIL messages and a poster board hanging in the gallery of the synagogue (figure 1). We recruited two team captains, one for USY and one for the Brotherhood. In addition to organizing the teams, the captains would help organize tasks for the game.**

**Both team captains were active in their related sports functions for USY and the Brotherhood respectively, but not so much for the mainstream activities. The Brotherhood captain was one of the softball league team captains. He went out and recruited new members for the Brotherhood to play in the basketball game, and several gentlemen joined our group as a result. As planning proceeded, our team captain became increasingly enthusiastic – he arranged for practice sessions in a local school gym and got us (excellent) basketball jerseys. The Brotherhood team captain also became more deeply involved in overall Brotherhood planning. Many of the men involved with the event are younger members who represent future strength for the group.**

**The USY team captain, likewise, was active on the USY basketball team but not as much with the main group. Most of the USY team members had little contact overall with the rest of USY, and none at all with the Brotherhood.**

**Over the winter, leading up to the April 10 game date, we chatted up the game. The Brotherhood President initiated an ongoing dialogue in which he essentially “trash talked” USY to rile up the kids and generate interest in the event. An example is shown in Figure 2, an article in “The Luach”, the bi-monthly newsletter of Temple Israel. Culmination of “trash talk” occurred at a Kabbalat Shabbat service the Friday before the game, where in a fortuitous moment many of the USY members were attending.**

**Both USY and the Brotherhood helped to put together a program book with selling of ads and well wishing messages. This was part of the fund raising effort for Tikun Olum for the event. On the day of the event, \$5 tickets were sold, and USY also sold candy and snacks.**

**We rented the local Schechter Day School gym for the game, on the afternoon of April 10. We had two referee volunteers, and a Brotherhood member served as Announcer (and this turned out to be one of the most popular features, since our announcer was hysterical). During halftime, our USY program director provided a 30 minute show with his rock band.**

**For a complete accounting of this event, we must report that USY utterly demolished the Brotherhood in the Final 2. The kids were all extremely talented, and the Brotherhood members apparently were all extremely old and slow. But a rollicking good time was had by all. This was a terrific community building event that achieved many of its original goals. Our event raised several hundred dollars for Jewish relief efforts in Japan, the designated program. An article posted in the local town newspaper website appears at <http://sharon.patch.com/announcements/april-madness-the-final-two-face-off-on-by-lauren-brenner>. Figure 3 shows team photos from the game.**

**We all had tremendous fun at the Final 2. We’re looking forward to next year, when USY will go down in a crushing defeat and basketball parity will be achieved in Sharon, Massachusetts. Figure 1 below**



# **THE FINAL 2!**

## **USY-Brotherhood Basketball Showdown April 10, 2011**

### **THIS TIME IT'S SERIOUS**

**Where: Solomon Schechter Day School  
Norwood, MA**

**When: Sunday, April 10, 3:00pm**

**For more info contact: Mike Freeman  
[fivefreemans@msn.com](mailto:fivefreemans@msn.com)**

**All Proceeds to Support Temple Israel USY and  
Brotherhood Tikun Olam Projects**

## Figure 2

### BROTHERHOOD

## THE FINAL 2

On Sunday, April 10, Temple Israel USY and the Brotherhood will match wits and jump shots in **The Final 2**, a fierce basketball showdown for the ages. The game is scheduled for 3:00pm at the Schechter School in Norwood. Proceeds from the game will be donated in support of USY and Brotherhood *Tikun Olum* projects.

The Luach had the opportunity to interview the two team captains, Ori Laby (USY) and Mike Freeman (Brotherhood). Here's what they had to say:

The Luach:

Ori, how do you feel about your team's preparation for the Final 2?

Ori: I feel pretty good with my team and I know that we will be prepared to win.

The Luach:

Mike, we understand that some USY players feel the matchup is unfair, since a few members of the Brotherhood team were around the week basketball was invented. Do you think this gives the Brotherhood team an unfair advantage?

Mike: Absolutely. In fact, one of us actually held the original peach basket into which Dr. Naismith threw the first basketball. We are very proud of that and intend to use it to our advantage.

The Luach:

Ori, rumor has it that Justin Bieber is subbing as the USY team point guard. Can you confirm this?

Ori: No, the rumors are not true. To my knowledge Justin cannot play basketball. He should stick to singing.

The Luach: Mike, is there any truth to the rumors on a run up for Ben Gay stock prior to April 10?

Mike: Absolutely. In fact, all members of our team have pooled our life savings into Ben Gay stock. After our win, we are going to publicly declare that Ben Gay was the secret to our success, and then, CHUH-CHING!

The Luach:

Ori, what types of *Tikun Olum* projects has USY been involved with this year?

Ori: USY has been involved in Habitat for Humanity and most likely a couple more.

The Luach:

Mike, do you have any thoughts on the Brotherhood's long road to the Final 2? That game with *Hazak* was a real nail-biter.

Mike: Well, they're a high quality team. Plus, several of our team members were run over by their wheelchairs. We still came out on top, and we're going to incorporate their game plan into ours. We've dipped into the Brotherhood budget to obtain three high-powered wheelchairs of our own. They actually have spikes on the tires. All's fair in love and war.

The Luach:

Is there any truth to the statement made by an anonymous USY member that "we can beat them hopping on one foot and blindfolded"?

Ori: Yes, there is truth to that statement. My team has completed an undefeated season and we could win sleeping on the court.

The Luach:

If the Brotherhood team wins, what's next, Disney World?

Mike: Hebrew Home for the Aged.

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Well, there you have it. Please join us on **April 10** as the long-standing rivalry continues. And with the Yankees (no pitching- sorry Ron) getting creamed this year, **USY-Brotherhood basketball** promises to be the premier Boston sports event- you don't want to miss it! More details/ contributions to the program book: Mike Freeman (fivefreemans@msn.com).



Figure 3

