

## Efroim Szmaragd (Fredek)

Efroim Szmaragd, who was known as “Fredek”, played a large role in the field of sports. He was the son of a well-to-do family and, from his childhood, displayed proclivities for sport. Fredek was one of the first Jewish gymnasts and organisers of sport in Częstochowa. He was already active as a gymnast in 1915 and, in 1917, participated in the great [Zagłębie Regional<sup>1</sup>] gymnastics tournament where, together with his teammates, he won the first-place medal for Częstochowa.

Fredek was an all-around sportsman – a gymnast, footballer, runner, jumper, track and field athlete - and he was commended in every field. In 1926, he participated in the Polish light athletics team as a representative of the Warta-Częstochowa Sports Club. In a very vigorous competition with the Polish sprinting champions [Aleksander] Szenajch [and Zygmunt] Weiss, Fredek fought his way to fourth place in the 100-metre sprint in a time of 11 seconds. Szmaragd was Częstochowa’s sports champion on multiple occasions. His high jump was 1.75m.

Regarding sport, he was a fanatic. He gave all his time to training and to propagating the idea of physical education among the broad Jewish masses in Częstochowa. Fredek was the first to organise boxing, volleyball and basketball in Częstochowa.

[Of] his colleagues, the sports champions Bader and Szajn are currently in the Land of Israel. The players Szmulek Orbach and Besserglik are in Landsberg, Bavaria, in the Ichud Sports Club, and the players Pieprz and Przeworski are in Zeilsheim, near Frankfurt.

Fredek sacrificed all his personal moments to sports. He married the Częstochowa Makabi sports champion Miss Nirenberg, who distinguished herself in running the 800m.

With the arrival of the Nazi forces and the tyrannical extermination of the Jewry, with his wife and their only son, Fredek went to live in a bunker in order to avoid the bitter tragedy. Regretfully, the bunker was uncovered by the Nazis, and the couple - the sports champions with their son, were killed.

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<sup>1</sup> [TN: This tournament is mentioned in “Sefer Częstochowa”, Vol. I, col.505, in the article “Sport and Sportsmen”.]