

PICTURE: LARRY PALUMBO



UP STICKS: Israeli lacrosse player Sacha Stout, right, in action

## Sacha helps Israel to lacrosse glory

ISRAEL'S two most popular sports are football and basketball, writes SIMON YAFFE.

But a Mancunian is hoping to bring new sporting horizons to the Jewish state.

Sacha Stout is a passionate lacrosse player and is hoping to help increase its popularity in Israel.

And the 22-year-old helped the Israel's men team to win the European Championships Festival in Amsterdam at the weekend.

The Israeli women's team won, as well.

"It was a great experience," Sacha, of Hale, Cheshire, said.

"Representing Israel on the international scene made me proud and the guys from the other teams at the tournament wanted to know more about Israel."

Sacha was in Tel Aviv this week, leading lacrosse clinics coaching children at schools in Israel.

"The Israel lacrosse team was formed a year ago and is now an ongoing nationwide project, with the aim of getting it taught in clubs and schools," he said.

"Hopefully boys and girls will become interested in the sport and it will grow in Israel."

The former Manchester Grammar School pupil started playing lacrosse when he was 15.

He captained the school team and joined the Brooklands Lacrosse Club in Sale.

He also captained the Manchester University lacrosse team.

He was also part of an English select 11 which took part in the British National Championships and co-captained the team.

Sacha became involved with the game in the Jewish state after visiting the Israel lacrosse website.

## DVD winners

WINNERS of the Manchester United DVD: Aron Schleider, Salford; Josh Dubiner, Salford; Philip Lipschutz, Prestwich; Paul Sidle, Whitefield; Paul Clyne, Bury; Malcolm Meller, Salford; Marilyn Stiller, Bury; Talia Simpson, Prestwich; Hilton Myers, Prestwich; and Antony Mann, Didsbury.

Prizes can be collected from the Manchester Jewish Telegraph office.

"I emailed them asking if I could get involved and, after a series of interviews, they accepted me on to the team," he added.

"It is a unique sport and a fast game which requires elements of skill and intelligence.

"You need to be able to have good vision, but also strength and agility.

"It has elements of football with the aggressiveness of rugby and

ice hockey."

The game is now being taken so seriously, that a non-profit organisation, Israel Lacrosse, has been set up in a bid to develop the sport.

The organisation has also recruited top coaches to do just that in Israel.

And Sacha is planning on returning to Israel to help with its development.

www.lacrosse.co.il

## Ramon buys Hapoel Tel Aviv

A GROUP headed by former Knesset member Haim Ramon has bought Hapoel Tel Aviv.

The Ramon group will pay current owner Eli Tabib £1.9 million over the next year, with a further £816,000 to be transferred to him in the following five years. Any debts from Tabib's time as boss, which are estimated to be in the millions, will be deducted from the amount agreed.

## Berger to be inducted

WEIGHTLIFTER David Berger, who was murdered at the 1972 Munich Olympics, will be inducted posthumously into the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame and Museum in New York next year.

# Rolling substitutes will be trialled in the MJSL

THE Manchester Jewish Soccer League is to introduce rolling substitutes for the next two seasons.

Under the Football Association pilot scheme, any player substituted becomes a substitute themselves.

And teams will be able to name up to five substitutes.

MJSL chairman Brian Myer told *Sportsworld*: "It's a good idea because it means more players can take part in a game, although it is not compulsory.

"Perhaps weaker players might be able to play for a few minutes when previously they would not have much opportunity to do so."

At the annual meeting, held at Bury Hebrew Congregation, Manchester Football Association chief executive officer Colin Bridgford discussed MFA involvement at grassroots level across all communities.

Education and zero tolerance were highlighted as being the clear FA directives when tackling

the topic of racism.

Mr Bridgford added that a vital close-working relationship had developed with the MJSL over the previous season.

Meanwhile, two new teams have joined the MJSL.

Manchester Maccabi 2nd return to the fold after a long absence, while FC Cosmos will be made up of predominant Republic of Mancunia 2nd players.

But Leeds-based student side Hyde Park Rovers have resigned membership.

Mr Myer said he hoped that potential new students in Leeds would be able to form a team or maybe play under the Leeds Maccabi banner.

If there are 11 teams or fewer there will be a single division.

But 12 or more teams will see a split into two to accommodate a lengthy fixture programme.

The season will start on Sunday, August 26, followed by several mid-week dates to ensure

# City good for football, says scribe Harry

BY SIMON YAFFE

LAST season was an historic one for Manchester City.

The sheikh's millions and the tactical knowledge of manager Roberto Mancini led them to their first Premier League title.

And football journalist Harry Harris has chronicled the glorious campaign in *Mancini: Diary Of A Champion*.

"City's success is good for the game," Harry said.

"Only a few years ago it was the top two who were certain to win the title — now it is perhaps anyone in the top four and maybe even the top five.

"As Roman Abramovich discovered, it doesn't matter how much money you throw at a team, it is the manager putting a team together that counts."

Harry, who has penned almost 70 football books, has also written *The Roman Conquest*, about Abramovich's dream of owning the best team in Europe finally coming to fruition when they won the Champions League in May.

A winner of 14 journalism awards and former chief football writer at the *Daily Mirror* and *Daily Express*, 60-year-old Harry didn't even have to leave the comfort of his home to write the book.

Harry explained: "There is no point even being at sporting events these days, because that



AT THE DOUBLE: Harry Harris and a friend launch his two new books

in itself is a specialised journalistic expertise.

"My books on City and Chelsea go behind-the-scenes.

"To do that I spoke to people and had the inside track on why Abramovich sacked Andres Vilas-Boas, which I could not have done by just going down to Stamford Bridge.

"I had the inside track on the Carlos Tevez controversy at City by speaking to my friend Kia Joorabchian, who is also his agent."

Born in Whitechapel in London's East End, Harry's younger days revolved around football.

He used to kick a ball about with Barry Silkman, who went on to forge a career in the game.

A promising goalkeeper, Harry even had a trial with his beloved Tottenham Hotspur before embarking on a career in newspapers.

He became close to legendary Spurs manager Bill Nicholson and was poached from the *Daily Mail* by the *Mirror's* infamous Robert Maxwell, whom used to ask Harry for advice on players and managers when he owned Oxford United.

Czech-born Maxwell's body was found floating in the Atlantic Ocean in November 1991.

Presumed to have fallen overboard from his yacht, Harry believes he really escaped to South America.

He added: "I had been next to him when he was on the phone to presidents, kings and queens.

"He had enormous influence, especially in eastern Europe.

"If there was anyone who could have got the secret service to help him fake his own death, it was him."

Harry, who is now football correspondent for ESPN Soccernet, has more books in the pipeline, including one in conjunction with Spurs legend Glenn Hoddle and a tome on non-league Wembley FC and their journey through the FA Cup's qualifying rounds.

■ *Mancini: Diary of a Champion* and *The Roman Conquest* are published by Empire Press, priced £10.95 each.



RETURNING HERO: Mario Balotelli presents a signed football to Italian president Giorgio Napolitano after the Euro 2012 runners-up returned to Italy

## Jewish site hails Mario's embrace

ITALIAN Jews have a new hero – Mario Balotelli. The Manchester City striker scored twice for his country in the Euro 2012 semi-final win over Germany and dedicated his strikes to "my mother" Silvia.

Newspapers showed him embracing Jewish Silvia, who adopted Balotelli as a child after the match.

An article on Moked, the website of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, called the embrace "an emotion for all Italians and a special emotion for Italian Jews".

Balotelli revealed that his adoptive mother was Jewish last month when the Italians visited Auschwitz before the tournament, hosted by Poland and Ukraine.

Balotelli sat alone on the train tracks at the death camp, staring silently ahead.

"A while later, he told his team-mates about a box of letters that his Jewish adoptive mother kept underneath her bed," a source revealed. "He had never told anyone."

A writer in the Italian Jewish monthly *Pagine Ebraiche* called Balotelli "the symbol of the commitment that brings together the experience of immigration, of acceptance and of success.

"But he is also a tribute to his adoptive mother, the Italian Jew who welcomed the child and whose family suffered during the dark years of the Shoah."

Unfortunately for Balotelli, who finished joint top scorer at the tournament, Spain won the final 4-0 on Sunday.

strate that they are committed to the FA's Respect programme and have procedures in place to improve standards and address poor behaviour in the game, which is a key priority for all those involved in football.

"We will also gain recognition of the commitment to a quality experience for all and a well-run league."

Manchester Maccabi, Liverpool Haroldians, Republic of Mancunia, Sporting JLG and Broughton J/Wam have all achieved their accreditation, while South Manchester Sports Club and Oakhill Lions are likely to follow suit soon.

Leeds Maccabi already have a junior status which will soon become a full award.

Mr Rose added: "There will be subsequent periodic health checks for all those that have achieved so far. Any new teams who enter MJSL must strive for accreditation as part of their commitment to the CS initiative."

minimal bottleneck at the end of the season.

The Darren Rose Memorial Trophy is likely to take place on Sunday, August 19 between MJSL and Manchester Maccabi representative teams.

The MJSL has achieved Charter Standard League Status from the Manchester FA.

By signing up to working towards CS League status, the league had to demonstrate that it was willing to work towards a minimum-operating standard.

It also had to show it was willing to raise standards and address poor behaviour within the league and member clubs by encouraging teams to gain CS Club status as part of the Charter Standard League criteria.

MJSL secretary Paul Rose said: "The benefits are that we have a clear development plan in place, together with an agreed support package with the Manchester FA. "Charter Standard Leagues will demon-