

JEWISH SOCIALIST SPORTS ORGANIZATION "*MORGENSZTERN*"

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The Jewish Workers' Sports Club of Kutno "*Morgensztern*" has undergone a very rapid development in a very short time: from several gymnastics' groups during the formation of the club – to several well-established sections for gymnastics, football, athletics, chess, music and others.



"*Jutrznia-Morgensztern*"

I joined the "*Morgensztern*" in 1928, with my classmate Ogurek who later became the club's chief cashier.

At the beginning, the club had to limit its activities due to the small premises that the "*Bund*" had on Królewska Street. When the party acquired its own two-story building, a huge hall along the entire length of the building was handed over to "*Morgensztern*." The joy was great, especially since the hall was equipped with all the necessary tools, such as: Swedish rings, trapeze, trampoline, mattresses, medicine balls, etc. Of course, all of this attracted more and more young workers into the club and out from poverty. Even children's groups (from 5 years old) were registered in "*Morgensztern*".

As far as I can remember, the work schedule was divided as follows:

twice a week – a children's group of boys and a children's group of girls, aged 5 years; 2 youth groups – from 11 to 15 years old; two men's and women's groups of 16 years old and up; two model groups (for men and women).

The instructors were all members of "*Morgensztern*". The author of the lines also led several groups. I instructed only the children – which I will never forget; at the head of the instructors group stood the unforgettable Kopel Kirszbaum.

The strongest and most popular section was the football team, which numbered about 20 athletes. They competed in the "A" league and were very popular with Jews and non-Jews alike.

The blues-orchestra of "*Jutrznia*" had instruments for trios, such as: cornet, clarinet, alto, tenor, baritone, bass and jazz. Classes were held twice a week, under the direction of conductor Witkowski. The organizer and overseer of the orchestra was Abraham Goldberg (my father's brother). Himself was playing the bass and his two sons, Moshe Hersh and Yechiel, also played in the orchestra.

Two gymnastics events took place each year – in the largest hall of the city in winter and on sports grounds in summer. A large crowd watched the high-level sporting performances with admiration and reverence. The summer events were accompanied by a sports parade of the athletes across the streets of the city, to the sound of their own orchestra. The moral and financial success of the festivities was extremely satisfying.

The club did not receive any subsidies, but its budget was based mainly on membership fees (at least – 10 groschen a week. Many members were also exonerated from this because they could not even pay this small amount).



Sportsmen from "*Jutrznia-Morgensztern*"

Today I wonder how such a wide-ranging activity was carried out, without any kind of help or support. Only thanks to people like Kopel Kirszbaum and others, whose only reward was the growth and development of the club, was it possible to build the "*Morgensztern*".