



L&A TREASURES

By David R. Grinnell, Chief Archivist

The Coffey Club

Before the Pittsburgh Steelers, local sports fans, especially those in the Hill District, rallied around the Coffey Club. Organized in 1910 with a mission to promote “clean living and clean thinking,” the club sponsored competitive basketball and baseball teams for young Jewish men. According to *The Pittsburgh Jewish Community Book* (1921), Coffey Club teams were popular champs on the court: “Its Tuesday night basketball games are attended weekly by crowds. Out-of-town it has earned a reputation for fair play that may well excite envy.”

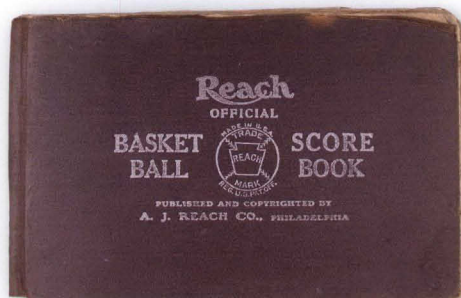
The items here were donated to the History Center’s Rauh Jewish Archives by Howard Abrams, son of basketball player David “Lefty” Abrams. The team scorebook chronicles each game of the season, including the name of the opposing team, the players, and how many goals and fouls were made by individual players. These treasures are just a few of the great items related to the Coffey Club in this new collection.



The Coffey Club basketball team, 1915-1916. Seated at center is Abe Golomb. Standing left to right are Theodore Kahn, David “Lefty” Abrams, Sol Adler, C. Levinson, and Morris “Moy” Marks.

David Abrams grew up in Pittsburgh’s Hill District and was active at the Irene Kauffman Settlement and Fifth Avenue High School. His experiences playing ball on Coffey Club teams prepared him to become the captain of the Carnegie Tech basketball team. He is credited as the first Jewish man to hold that position.

The Library and Archives collects materials related to the history and culture of Western Pennsylvania. The L&A is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., or visit the Historic Pittsburgh website to view the online catalog and many other useful tools at <http://digital.library.pitt.edu/pittsburgh/>.



| DATE <i>Coffey Club 12/7-15</i> VS. <i>South Side M. H. S.</i> | | | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|------------|----------|----------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|----------|----------|
| WHERE PLAYED <i>Reynolds Council</i> REFEREE <i>Harry C. H. S.</i> | | | | | | | | | |
| NAME OF TEAM | | | | | NAME OF TEAM | | | | |
| FIRST HALF | | | | | SECOND HALF | | | | |
| PTS. | FIELD GOALS | FOUL GOALS | REBOUNDS | POINTS | PTS. | FIELD GOALS | FOUL GOALS | REBOUNDS | POINTS |
| <i>F</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>C</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>C</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>G</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>G</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>G</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>G</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| <i>G</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>G</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> | <i>1</i> |
| TOTALS | | | | | TOTALS | | | | |
| <i>6 6 19 14 6 11</i> | | | | | <i>1 15 4 14 32 5</i> | | | | |
| INSTANT SCORE | | | | | FINAL SCORE | | | | |

The Coffey Club’s scorebook shows Lefty Abrams as an active player.

All Library & Archives, David “Lefty” Abrams Collection, #2005.0183