



NETANYA, Israel – Former Bainbridge High School and Western Washington men's lacrosse player Alexander Rabin '11 (BHS) and '17(WWU) has been selected to represent Israel when the country's national team competes in the Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) Men's World Championship from July 12-21.

Israel will serve as the host country for this summer's event and Rabin is one of just seven Attack players and one of 13 Jewish diaspora players from the United States and Canada selected to the 30-man roster.

The team roster is comprised of Israeli players, as well as members of the Jewish diaspora, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the FIL. In conjunction with the Israel Lacrosse Tzedakah Program, each player will be competing in honor of a charity of their choosing.

Alexander Rabin – Team Israel

Position: Attack

Alexander played at Western Washington University from 2013-2016, exploding as a senior with a team-high 43 goals in 23 games. He started his Team Israel career with the birthright lacrosse trip, participating in clinics and exhibitions as well as playing in the 2017 Israel Premier Lacrosse League (IPLL) for Haifa. Alexander scored 15 goals and added six assists, putting him eighth in league scoring.

He also played on the other side of the pond for Israel during the national team's fall tour, competing in exhibitions in New York in October.

In His Own Words

1. What does playing for Israel mean to you?

It means representing a nation of people who exist today due to perseverance and an undying commitment to each other. It's an incredible honor to represent the blue and white, knowing full well the history that has surrounded the Jewish people for thousands of years, and the determination that brings us to where we stand today.

2. Talk about your personal connection to Israel.

My personal connection to Israel is highlighted by my family living in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. They exude the aforementioned spirit of Israel and give me a place to call home away from home while I learn and grow within this new culture of strength and community.

3. Pick a Jewish or Israel-related charity to play in honor of and explain why you're playing for them.

American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, or JDC. I'm playing in honor of JDC because I believe it's invaluable for the fortunate of us to help those in need. Together, we are one, and that includes those in need of food, water, shelter, aid, etc. The JDC distributes to all sorts of poverty and disaster ridden individuals, and as someone who has always been passionate about the need to address poverty, it's critical to give the spotlight to organizations like JDC who address these issues. We are only as strong as our weakest player, so we must all thrive. Yalla!

Alexander Rabin's style of lacrosse at Western was enthralling to watch. His drive, passion and energy were contagious, former teammates said.

Now he'll be playing in the 2018 World Lacrosse Championships in Netanya, Israel, from July 12-21, after being selected to the Israeli National Team.

Rabin, has family in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and has been living in Israel since June 2017. He grew up on Bainbridge Island and graduated from Bainbridge High School in 2011. He is a 2016 Western Washington University graduate. He was the leading scorer on the men's lacrosse team his senior year, netting 43 goals in 23 games.

Currently a member of the Haifa Lacrosse Club in Haifa, Israel, part of the Israel Premier Lacrosse League, Rabin said it's an honor to play for the national team.

"Wearing the blue and white to represent Israel on the field is special, whether it's a team practice, exhibition match or otherwise," Rabin said. "I've been lucky enough to suit up for the team and I'm thrilled with the opportunities around Israel lacrosse."

Zane Sharif, Rabin's former teammate at Western, said he's not surprised with the success Rabin's gained so quickly. "It wasn't shocking that Rabin made Team Israel," Sharif said in an email. "He's one of the most talented and dedicated players I've known. The caliber of talent for that kind of play takes years of dedication."

Garrett Goshorn, a senior defender on Western men's lacrosse team who played with Rabin for two years, said what sets Rabin apart from others is how he motivates those around him.

“Playing with Rabin was always exciting because of how much he loves the game,” Goshorn said in an email. “He was always pushing us to be fast, so we could get the most out of practices. His personality was like his play style, very fast. Rabin definitely has the spark for great lacrosse, so it’s fitting where he’s playing right now.

While Rabin has found success in lacrosse at Western, Bainbridge High School and beyond, he said “it isn’t as widespread as other sports in North America, making the audience difficult to reach. But that doesn’t mean the sport isn’t full of passion.”

“Lacrosse is not as large as football, soccer, basketball or baseball, but it’s a tight-knit, mutualistic community full of ambition,” Rabin said. The most rewarding aspect of the game isn’t success, Rabin said, but in passing along knowledge.

“The sport can take you around the world, as is my case, and it’s important to give back to the sport,” Rabin said. “Seeing new players incorporate lacrosse into their lives here is a special experience. Ultimately, it’s most impactful to be out here introducing and coaching the sport with a new generation of young athletes. That’s the real reward.”

As Rabin fought his way to the national stage, it didn’t come without challenges. The idea of packing up his life and moving to a foreign country wasn’t something Rabin was on board with at first.

“Initially, I was unsure of packing up shop and taking time to move to Israel,” Rabin said. “In other words, sacrificing [opportunities] at home for a new adventure abroad. It was something of excitement and fear all the same, but it was a crossroads that I’m ecstatic to have navigated.” Missing opportunities in Washington gave Rabin pause, but a brand-new landscape and an unseen set of challenges ended up winning him over. After stepping out of his comfort zone and adapting to a new environment, Rabin said he couldn’t help but feel he made the correct choice. Rabin said being a student at Western was a growing experience for him, and playing for the lacrosse team enriched not only his love for the game, but also his love for life.

“Playing lacrosse at Western was a once-in-a-lifetime experience and helped me appreciate high-level lacrosse with an aspect of enjoyment,” Rabin said. “Being able to enjoy what you do is always important, be it academics, work, athletics or anything else. Western cultivated an appreciation for enjoying my time, regardless of what I’m doing. Enjoyment and passion lead to success.”