

JewishHoopsAmerica.com presents the "Where Are They Now" series. This series explores the current events of past Yeshiva League stars.

Moshe Kalai, HAFTR Guard, Graduated 2002

While I didn't have the pleasure of coaching Moshe Kalai for 2 years, I did have the privilege of coaching him in his senior year. People talk about heart; There is a picture of M.K. in the dictionary under the word "heart." We had an average team compared to the rest of the league that year but we had a team full of heart and determination led by Moshe. At 5'8 and not a great shooter, Moshe willed his teams to victory with his leadership qualities and his uncanny ability to get to the basket. His semi-final performance vs Magen David in MDY's gym epitomized his greatness as a ballplayer. Down 24-6 after the first quarter, Moshe went on to score 32 points and countless assists to propel HAFTR to the finals and ultimately win his 2nd championship in a row.

-Joey Hoenig, Head Coach, HAFTR Hawks during the 2001-2002 season.

I entered HAFTR High School in 1998. In my first season, playing for the Hawks as a freshman, our team won the JV Championship. The next year as a sophomore we lost to Magen David in the 2nd round. We knew we could do better.

One year later, as a junior we were back in the Finals playing for the Varsity Championship vs Ramaz in the Meadowlands. We brought home the Varsity trophy that year. My fellow juniors on that team wanted to come back the following season and win it again. We knew we had the talent and the skill.

In 2001-02 season we faced off against Ramaz once again in the Finals, this time in Yeshiva University. It was packed with fans. The game came down to the wire and, in one of the greatest finishes I've ever been a part of, we won the game on a 3 point shot with 3 seconds left in regulation. That year I was awarded the league MVP trophy and the Satran Tournament MVP trophy as well. It was a great feeling to repeat Varsity Championship seasons, a feat that hadn't been accomplished since 1995-96, and hasn't been done since.

After graduating High School in 2002 I went to Israel for the year and studied in Yeshiva Ner Yaakov in Yerushalayim. After returning home I attended Yeshiva University and once again set my sites on playing ball. I tried out for the Macs team and made it, but after a week I realized that my schedule wouldn't permit me to continue and I had to leave the team. After graduating from YU, I learned in Yeshiva Gedolah of the Five Towns for a year. While in Yeshiva I was the assistant coach for the HAFTR Varsity team. We lost in the Semi-Finals that year to an undefeated HANC team in a close game on Long Island.

The very next year I started dental school in New York University. During my first year in NYU I got married and just this past year we had a baby boy. I'm currently in my 3rd year of dental school and living in Woodmere.

- Moshe Kalai, HAFTR Hawks