University of Haifa

The Senate of the University of Haifa, by virtue of the authority vested in it
by the constitution of the University and in accordance with the recommendations
of the President and the Executive Committee

hereby confers upon

Noah Klieger

the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy, Honoris Causa

In recognition of his long-term endeavors to commemorate the Holocaust of European Jewry, and on the
investment and effort to instill the memory of the Holocaust, especially among the younger generation and
leaders in Israel and abroad; on his commitment to deepening the study and research of the period of the
Holocaust, which the University of Haifa also embraced as its mission in establishing the Center for Holocaust
Research and the International MA Program in Holocaust Research; for his professional achievements in the field
of journalism in general and sports journalism in particular, an area in which he is one of the founding fathers in
Israel.

Conferred in 15 Sivan 5775/June 2, 2015
Haifa, Israel

Photo: David Sarnow

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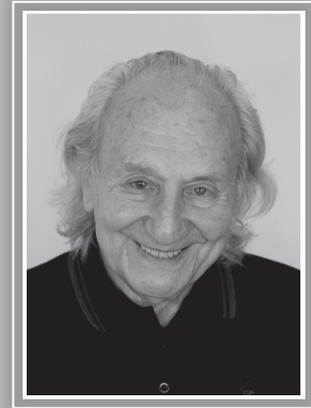
NOAH KLIEGER

Noah Klieger was born in 1926 in Strasbourg, France, to Dr. Bernard and Thackla Esther (nee Eybeschutz) Klieger. He was raised and educated in France, Luxembourg and Belgium.

During the Nazi occupation, Klieger acted as a courier in the Belgian underground. He was also a member of an underground cell of the Zionist Youth Movements that engaged mainly in transferring children and youth via France to neutral Switzerland. Klieger was arrested by the Gestapo in October 1942 and sent to the Mecheln transit camp, from where he was transported to Auschwitz in January 1943. He survived the death march that departed on the night between January 17 and 18 1945. A few days later, on January 22, he was put in to an open car of a freight train, where he spent 10 days and nights without food and water. On February 2 he arrived at the Dora-Mittelbau camp, located near Nordhausen, where he was put to work in the manufacture of V1 and V2 missiles. On April 4, he set off on another march – this time taking 10 days to Ravensbruck Camp, from where he was liberated on April 29, 1945.

After his liberation, Klieger volunteered for undercover operations with the Mossad Le Aliyah Bet – which was responsible for illegal immigration – and shortly thereafter he himself decided to immigrate to Eretz Yisrael. He was appointed commander of Cayolles B, one of the transit camps for immigrants around Marseilles, from where he boarded the ship President Warfield (later Exodus) on July 10 1947. Klieger was appended to the ship's crew and was one of the commanders in the battle at sea against British naval commandos. When the ship reached Haifa, the approximately 4,600 illegal immigrants on board were removed to three prison ships and sent back to France, from where they had set out. The British took this step to put a stop to Aliyah Bet for once and for all. However, the illegal immigrants aboard the Exodus refused to disembark in France. More than three weeks later, the British had still not succeeded in breaking their spirit and were forced to move them to two internment camps in Germany. Eventually, Klieger arrived in Israel in June 1948 and took part in the War of Independence.

Klieger began to write for the French sports daily, L'Équipe, and for the weekly magazine, France Football in 1953. In 1957 he joined the editorial team of the newspaper Yediot Ahronoth, where he works to this day. He was, among others, a reporter and editor of the sports magazine, as well as editor of the foreign news desk. It was in this capacity that Klieger covered some of the most high profile trials against Nazi war criminals: Adolf Eichmann and John Demjanjuk in Jerusalem, the Auschwitz trials in Frankfurt, and Majdanek and Treblinka trials in Dusseldorf.

Between 1951 and 1969, Klieger served as Chairman of the Basketball Division of Maccabi Tel Aviv and, as of 1970, and for almost 30 years, he served alternately as Chairman of the Basketball Association and as Chairman of Maccabi Ramat Gan Sport Club and the basketball division. Klieger also served as Chairman of the Media Commission of FIBA, the International Basketball Federation, and President of the Union of Basketball Journalists of the World Sports Journalists' Association.

Klieger is considered an expert on the holocaust of European Jews and on the Second World War, and thousands of articles and columns under his byline have been published during the course of a career that spans many decades. To this day he heads delegations to the extermination camps in Europe.

Over the years, Klieger has been awarded many titles that have given expression to the centrality in his life, side by side, of sports journalism and holocaust research. In 1990, he was elected to the Hall of Fame of World Jewish Sports in Los Angeles – as a boxer in Auschwitz and as a journalist. He has received lifetime achievement awards from the Israel Olympic Committee, B'nai Brith International, and the Israel Journalists Association. He was also awarded the Order of the French Legion of Honor (Knight), the highest decoration in France. Most recently, he was awarded the Medal of Honor of the City of Strasbourg, the city of his birth.