

Paul Lonerган

Paul discovered the game of handball at the young age of 8 while watching his father play every weekend in Braddock Park. It wasn't until attending Martin Van Buren High School that Paul began playing competitively against other players. His love for the game didn't end after graduation. Looking to find more worthy opponents, Paul, with his older brother, Joe, began playing at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral, where they met Arty Reyer and Al Torres. Torres encouraged the brothers to play together as partners to make up a "dynamic righty-lefty duo." In the middle 1980's the brothers entered the USHA National Tournament in Coney Island, competing in the Open Doubles. In 1986 and 1987, Paul and Joe won the USHA National 1-Wall Indoor Doubles.

In the summer of 1988, Paul, once again, returned to Coney Island to compete in the National Open Doubles, but this time partnered with Al Torres. Lonerган/Torres were defeated in the finals by Al Apuzzi/Joe Durso. The same outcome occurred in 1989, and in 1990 Lonerган/Torres lost in the finals to Eric Klarman/Danny Maroney. After losing in the finals three years in a row, Paul became determined more than ever to win a National Doubles title. In the summer of '91 Paul regrouped with his brother Joe to defeat Paul Williams/Al Torres in the finals for the National Open Doubles Championship. It was in that final match that dehydration caused Paul's legs to cramp severely, yet he played through it for the title. Afterwards Danny Maroney told Paul, "You have more heart than anyone else!"

Paul's heart, along with his athletic ability, won him respect during his handball years from his partners as well as his opponents. He always played with 100% effort until the very last point. Because of his love for the game, as well as his love for competition, Paul, as of this writing, continues to play on weekends and to compete in tournaments. He currently resides in Rockville Center with his wife and 4 children.

