

Theresa Haley

Theresa M. Haley, nee McCourt, grew up in Brooklyn, N.Y, and started playing handball at a very young age. With her younger brother, George, she would go to the 38th Street Park, which was around the corner from where they lived. It was an old park in disarray: however it had a few basketball courts and two handball courts. One side was where the “good” players competed, and the other side was where the upcoming youngsters played. Theresa and George played one another singles, and occasionally played in doubles against other teams.

Theresa played handball every chance she could. She played during her lunch period against her computer teacher, Mr. Sorocco. But she never realized how competitive handball was until she entered FDR High School in 1995, where she was introduced to the small ball by her coach, Miss Linda Scaduto. At first she was intimidated by the ball, but once she struck the ball with her hand, she immediately fell in love with it. During tryouts for the handball team she overpowered her teammates and earned first singles position.

Theresa won most of her matches against other high school team players. At the end of every high school handball season, her coach entered her in the PSAL Individual City Championships, where she won every year she was entered. One year the PSAL Individual Tourney was run at West 5th Street in Coney Island. These courts were to become Theresa's second home. In her senior year Theresa was awarded the coveted Pegasus Award.

At the age of 19 Theresa entered the competitive world of ICHA and USHA handball. She always felt indebted to Dori Ten and Barbara Canton-Jackson for enabling her to see her potential, and entering her into her first handball tournament, when she came in first place. From then on she won many other handball awards. At this writing she 10 National titles combined in singles and doubles. Her most memorable moment came when she slammed in the 2006 USHA National 1-Wall in addition to slamming that same year in the World's played in Canada.

Theresa always respected and admired the first female pure 1-waller, Anna Calderon. Anna was a great mentor to Theresa throughout Theresa's years playing handball. They formed a partnership in 2002, and went on to many accomplishments together. At this writing Theresa lives with her husband in Staten Island, New York, and works in Brooklyn as a NYPD Highway Patrol Officer.

PHOTOGRAPHS
TO FOLLOW