

# Fred Feit

## Fred Feit's love and appreciation for handball began at the ripe old age of four!

His dad, Abe, introduced him to 1 wall at Laurelton Park in Queens. Virtually every weekend he drove there from Valley Stream Long Island. Fred immediately got involved playing with anyone who would accept a challenge. By the time he was six he was playing with the older boys and often men. He often played from early morning until it was too dark to follow the ball! He always tried his best to win, but he accepted defeat because, in his view, "all true sportsmen must endure loss as well as victory." "Handball," he claimed, "taught me character. Handball taught me to evolve past poor sportsmanship to a higher plane."

When Fred was but six years old, his family moved to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. From six through twelve the local Jewish Community Center was his home away from home. While his father became a local 4-wall champion, Fred was competing in 1-wall against men in both singles and doubles. His father taught him the essence of doubles play, always to cover your partner and know what to take and what to leave!

When Fred turned twelve, his family moved to Brighton Beach, Brooklyn adjacent to Bright Beach Baths and famed Garber Stadium! There was Fred exposed to serious, top level players. Legendary players abounded: Vic Herskowitz, Moey Orenstein, Ruby and Carl Obert, Al Torres, Joe and Charlie Danilczyk, Howie Eisenberg, Kenny Davididoff, Louie Russo. Joel Wisosky, Fred Lewis, Steve Sandler, Wally Ulbrich, Arty Reyer. There were other top players as well. Fred was also a stone's throw from the famed Coney Island Courts, where National One Wall Handball Championships were held. On entering Abraham Lincoln High School Fred joined the handball team and played third singles for the school from 1963-1967. From 1963 - '66 the school team were City Champions. Fred also ran track all four years anchoring the 440 yard quarter mile and cross country relay. In addition he was an avid musician, the first trombonist in the school's Dance Band and Orchestra. And he captained the chess team.

In 1973 he was invited to compete in a 1-Wall Handball Round Robin Competition held at the famed Garber Stadium in Brighton Beach Baths. The top eight singles players of the day were invited to compete against each other. Feit was only one of two players (the other was Mark Levine) to defeat Al

## PLAYERS OF DISTINCTION

Torres, while yielding to the great Steve Sandler by a mere three points, 18-21.

Fred attended Brooklyn College for Basic Sciences, and transferred to Long Island University while working as a postal carrier throughout his college career. During his last semester at LIU he taught physics at both the undergrad and graduate levels. It was a great honor bestowed by Chairman of the Physics Department Dick Teiger, former head of NIH Fast Breeder Reactor Division.

Marty Cushman, the famed "Farmer," was Fred's most frequent singles opponent in Coney Island. The Farmer, as he did for so many upcoming players, honed Fred's game to championship caliber. Although never winning a national title, the Farmer was runner up on a couple of occasions, defeating several top level players.

Fred had to put his game on the back burner while he attend medical school in Mexico, specifically the Autonoma University of Guadalajara Medical School. After graduating he did an internship in internal medicine at Long Island University Hospital, and completed his specialty residency at New York University, the Rusk Institute in rehabilitation medicine and physical therapy.

In 1984 he defeated Flip Wolfarth, former USHA National 1-Wall Champion, in the first National Senior Singles Tournament held at Castle Hill in the Bronx, NY. He partnered with the sensational Ruby Obert in 1983 and defeated Albert Apuzzi and Joe Durso in the quarter-finals. But Ruby's back went out during their semi-final match against Buddy Shapiro and Frank Devito. For years Ruby and Fred played marathon singles matches against one another on weekends at Coney Island. Fred claimed that Ruby raised his singles game to an elite level. During his long career as an open and masters competitor Feit defeated in National, and/or state and local tournaments in singles or doubles all of the following top level players: Albert Apuzzi, Roger Casuso, Marty Cushman, Joel Davidson, Ken Davidoff, Joe Durso, Howie Eisenberg, Dan Flickstein, Ed Golden, Ruben Gonzalez, Mark Levine, Steve Lott, Stu Kirzner, Danny Maroney, Graham Palmore, Charlie Sheldon, and Al Torres. Fred was clearly a player with whom to be reckoned.

In 1986 Fred moved to Manalapan New Jersey, where, at this writing, he continues to play handball. And he plans to compete in the National Masters at Coney Island during the upcoming summer (2015).