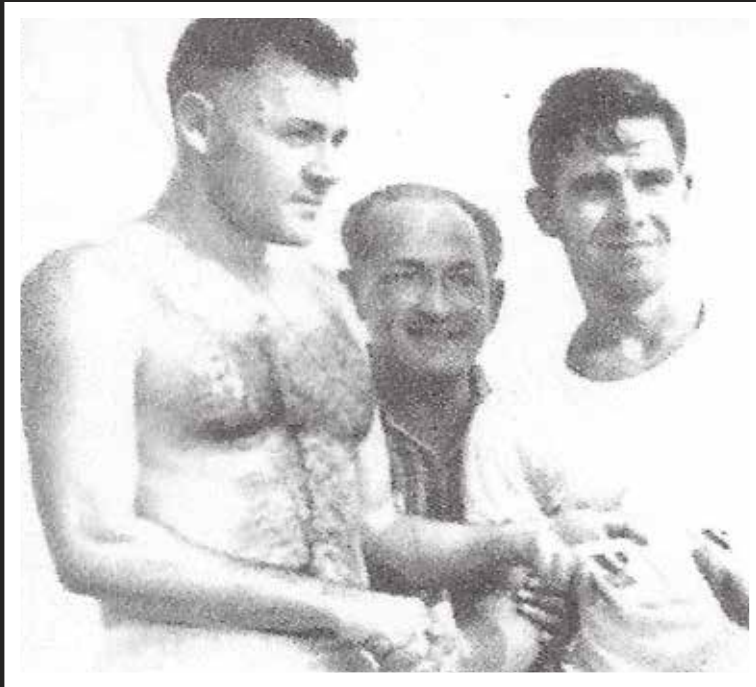


# Marty ‘The Farmer’ Cushman

Nicknamed “The Farmer” because he owned land in Cuba and “he wanted to grow cucumbers there,” according to his wife, Marty was a classic singles player and an institution at West 5th Street in Coney Island.



With his overhanded angle serve and side to side strategy, he chased opponents from one side of the court to the other. In 1956 he was runner-up in the National AAU Singles event, and on three other occasions, 1955, '58, and '59 he was a semi-finalist in that same tournament. But his true claim to handball immortality lay in the matches he played in Coney Island during the 1950's and throughout the '70's. He would oppose men 20 years his junior and always insist on at least a two game match. He played relentlessly for every point even if losing, 0-20 or winning 20-0. A hundred to two hundred people would surround “The Farmer’s” early evening challenges. The local ice cream man would inquire whether “The Farmer” was going to play each summer evening. With an affirmative answer, he would park his truck and wait until the break between games at which point he would sell lots of ice cream.

It became a rite of passage for a young man to do well or beat “The Farmer” in singles, something which did not occur often. He accepted challenges into his mid-'60's and never gave anyone a free point. Nor did he ever expect one. Truly a unique individual, Marty “The Farmer” Cushman was a living legend and a credit to 1-wall handball.