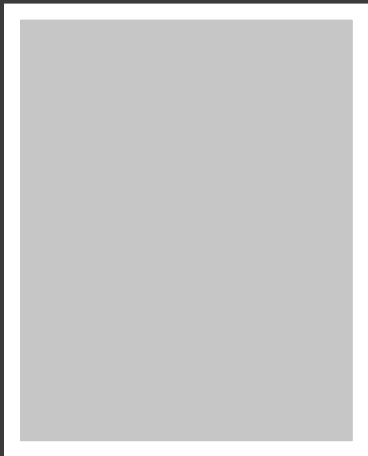


Lin Fernandez



Lin Fernandez began playing handball at the age of 9 in Harlem, New York. His passion for the sport led him to sponsor small local tournaments for kids while he was attending high school.

Lin's main interest and success in organized handball didn't flourish until he was a sophomore at Chelsea High School in lower Manhattan. There he was inspired by his coach, Nick Ragusa, who saw leadership potential in him. Lin always said that he achieved what he did "because of Coach ('Dad') Ragusa." In Lin's senior year at Chelsea, Coach Ragusa selected him to be team captain, and history began. Chelsea won its first ever NYC PSAL Handball Team Championship in 1981, with Lin leading the way. Throughout the next twenty years, Lin continued playing handball while serving as Assistant-coach for Chelsea, leading the team, alongside his great coach, to an unprecedented 127-0 undefeated team record and five NYC handball championships. As a player Lin won the NYS handball championship in 1985, and both the USHA "A" and "B" Divisions in 1993.

Lin's contribution to handball never stopped, as of this writing. From 1995 until 2000, while working as a teacher at Chelsea High, he also served as the Girls Handball Coach for Chelsea; then, in 2001, he attained the position of Public School Athletic League Handball Commissioner. He was responsible for more than 128 public schools involved in handball. For seven years he taught the rules and trained high school youths, while assisting coaches in training their players to succeed. He was determined to take high school handball to another level. Proven a worthy commissioner, Lin brought excitement to the 1-wall game. Many events he organized drew hundreds of spectators. Handball grew rapidly at this juncture and Lin was right there dedicating endless hours to his beloved sport.

While working as Commissioner, Lin often volunteered to referee at the annual USHA 1-Wall Nationals. He contributed time and direct involvement to the Inner City Handball Association, led by Paul Williams, its founder.

Lin was quintessential to NY 1-wall handball. He always strove to help youths improve their handball skills. He taught them the meaning of "Live longer, play handball."