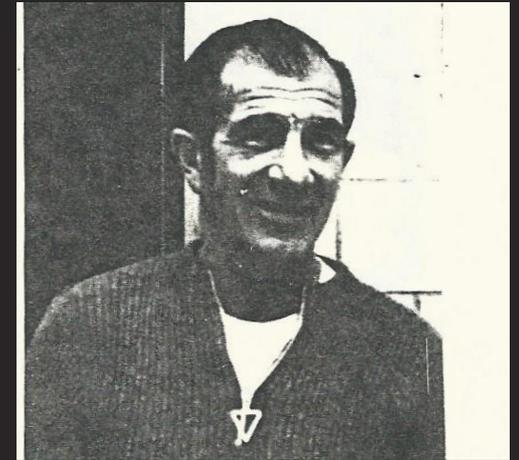
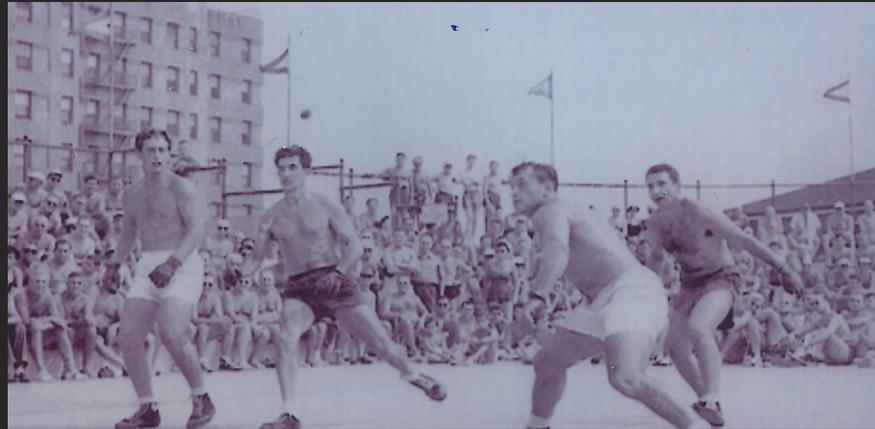


# Irving “Lefty” Kirzner

Irving “Lefty” Kirzner was born in Brooklyn, NY in 1917. Originally right-handed, Irv suffered a severe burn as a young child which forced him to play sports left-handed. Irving started to play handball in his teens, but because of family and work commitments, did not play in competitive tournaments until he was thirty.



Irving was a regular at Lincoln Terrace Park, the old HES, and West 5th Street in Coney Island. He had tremendous success in the legendary “Sweeps” at Brighton Beach Baths, and, at the same time, he began his tournament success. After finishing as runner-up in the 1951 National AAU 1-Wall Doubles, Irving won the 1952 title with George Andrews, and repeated in 1953 with Morris “Red” Kravitz. Irving was again runner-up

in 1955, and was a semi-finalist in 1957 and 1959. In 1959, he also partnered with Vic Hershkowitz in the first ever USHA National 1-Wall Championships. He and Vic finished as runners-up to Oscar and Ruby Obert. Considered one of the best doubles players of his era, Irving was also a formidable singles player, reaching the semi-finals of the National AAU 1-Wall Singles in 1948, and losing to Hershkowitz in the final in 1952 in

the National AAU Singles. When he wasn't winning, nearly all of his losses were at the hands of future National Hall of Fame players.

Irving was known for his sharp two way hook serve, deadly fly kills, and an incredible angle into the right corner, which would carry into the middle of the adjacent court. The only player who could regularly retrieve the sharp angle was Moey Orenstein, who would dive into

the second row of fans at Garber Stadium in Brighton Beach Baths.

In 1959 Irving played in his last competitive tournament, yet he remained competitive against top players of the younger generation for another decade. He also tutored his sons, Jeff and Stu, on the finer points of the “perfect game.” Irving was a gentleman on and off the courts, and was respected by all.