

Satish Jagnandan

His opponents aren't Castro, Kaplan, Lewis, Maisonet, Roberts, Sala or Sostre. They are Obert, Sandler and Durso. Satish Jagnandan isn't playing for today; he's competing for history. When he won his first USHA National Open Singles Title in August 2004, Jagnandan said he was more relieved and felt like "a ton of bricks" was lifted from his shoulders. "That quote reflected the truth of how I felt, I wasn't sure that I could win on the grandest stage, there's a certain aura about Coney Island (court 1) that you don't feel anywhere else - it just feels significant."

Though he has earned the respect of the handball community with this victory, he has plenty of work to do to be compared to the greats. The easy-going, hard-hitting Jagnandan would trade several of his minor victories (through 2004) for another USHA National title. Let others play for money and prestige; he's playing for majors. "I measure my year on how well I do at the majors (ICHA Major's Cup and USHA National)," Jagnandan said.

Jagnandan is not the indifferent individual he pretends to be. While he gives the impression that he doesn't play with a passion, he deeply wants to be remembered as one of the best ever. "I don't think it's arrogant," Jagnandan said. "I'm not ashamed that I feel that I can actually do it." Yet, he is uncomfortable in the spotlight. He is a throwback to the days when gentleman played the sport of handball. "I could be abrasive (like Joe "Legend" Durso or John "Rookie" Wright) and get a lot more publicity, but that's not who I am. Sure, I respect Durso's talent and Wright's intensity, but the players I admired most were the gentlemanly Al Torres, Eddie Archibald, Robert Sostre and Joe Kaplan, those guys were great guys."

Since 2000, when he first returned to the game (after a 6 year hiatus), the 5-foot-7 Jagnandan has been one of the game's top players. While he has a ferocious right hand and sensational serve, his greatest gift may be his will to win. He's not afraid to leave his guts on the courts. Jagnandan was born in Georgetown, Guyana, and grew up in the Bronx, New York. His father, Basdeo, was a statistician for the Department of Agriculture and his mother, Elsie, was an insurance consultant. He began playing handball at twelve under the tutelage of Joe Miratello at Bronx High School of Science. Coach Miratello was so impressed with the youngster's ability, he awarded him the captaincy and first singles position on the varsity handball team. When Jagnandan was 15, he won the first of two PSAL individual (iron horse) and school championships and had the opportunity to trade strokes with (Eddie) Archibald, one of his idol. "Satish was so nervous he couldn't keep the ball on the court," Miratello said.

Through the sponsorship of Inner City Handball Association (ICHA) and Paul Williams Jagnandan continued his improvement and growth to become one of the city best junior players. Jagnandan believed playing against stronger and older players in ICHA youth handball tournaments helped develop the necessary skills and passion to be great.

After high school, Jagnandan focus shifted, completing a B.S. in Chemistry, M.S. in Mathematics, and M.S. in Administration and Supervision. By the mid 1990s, he was completely out of the game as a result of reconstructive knee surgery (torn ACL). As part of his rehabilitation, he turned to handball and by 2000 was competing again. New coach Rene Franco showed Jagnandan the value of playing percentage handball - going for smart, conservative shots rather than flashy, difficult ones. On July 22, 2001, Jagnandan won his first of eleven open singles title.

Men's One-Wall Open Singles Titles

2001 Marty O'Malley Classic	July 22, 2001
2002 ICHA Mayor's Cup Tournament (Major)	July 13-14, 2002
2002 Marty O'Malley Classic	July 20, 2002
2003 Marty O'Malley Classic	July 19, 2003
2003 Bailey Park Fall Classic	October 7, 2003
2004 ACE Pro Stop #1	May 15, 2004
2004 ICHA Mayor's Cup Tournament (Major)	July 17-18, 2004
2004 USHA One-Wall Nationals (Major)	August 5-8, 2004
2004 ACE Pro Stop #2	October 2, 2004
2004 H.E.S Invitational	October 31, 2004
2004 YMCA National 1-Wall Pro Singles	December 11, 2004

Jagnandan 2004 match record of 31-3 is the best among players on the One-Wall Pro Handball Tour. With six tournament victories, including his first USHA National and second ICHA Mayor's Cup, he is only the second player in history to win both majors in the same year. Jagnandan credits his success to hard work and surrounding himself with the right people - his wife, parents, brother, coaches and friends.