

The Day I Was Jack “the Shot” Foley’s Ball Boy
by Justin McGonigle

We were horsing around on the shed next to the basketball hoop. I was waiting to see who would jump off the roof first, me or my brother. We tired of this game quickly and my brother and the Foley boys went into the house. I found myself alone, standing there.

A car pulled up. It was Mr. Foley. I thought right away that I was in trouble. Jack was a cop in town and I was terrified of him. He never spoke to me.

He looked straight at me and started walking towards me. I thought for sure, this is it, I’m done, my goose is cooked.

He said: “Hey, throw me that ball”. He wore a plaid shirt, jeans and work boots. His feet were about a size 11 or 13. I quickly ran to get the ball. My teenage arms were like lead throwing the ball back to him. I knew something special was about to happen.

Jack “the Shot” Foley began to shoot the basketball, moving around the yard in a semi-circle pattern. He lifted the ball high and behind his head, making it impossible for even Wilt himself to block it and then threw it as a line drive into the basket from about 30ft away.

I couldn’t believe what I was seeing. He never missed. Slowly and methodically he moved around, on the rocky ground, as if he’d done it a thousand times before. And each time a perfect swoosh.

One by one he knocked them off. Most of them rolled back to him, some I had to retrieve. He shot about a dozen or so, going from one side to another or ‘round the world’ (in basketball lingo).

He then stopped and walked into the house. He was satisfied.

I stood there watching him walk away in disbelief, clutching the basketball, wondering how does someone become that good?

My bother and the Foley boys came back outside. I don’t remember what happened next, but I bet it had something to do with basketball.

In his three seasons as a [Holy Cross] Crusader, [Jack Foley] scored so many points that his nickname, "the Shot", was what he was commonly referred to. Wikipedia.