As the former publicist for Thomas “Hit Man” Hearns, as well as the manager of James Toney, Jackie Kallen is very good at sizing up fistic talent.

A native of suburban Detroit, Kallen now resides in Los Angeles and manages undefeated featherweight Matt “Sharp Shooter” Remillard, 11-0 (7 KOS), of Manchester, Connecticut, who is generally regarded as one of the sport’s brightest prospects.

Like so many other things that occurred in Kallen’s life, the manner in which she became involved with Remillard is stranger than fiction.

Remillard was a troubled youngster who found salvation through boxing. The path to that salvation was through his association with Paul Cichon, a boxing coach at the Police Athletic League (PAL) in Remillard’s hometown.

The delinquent Remillard was sent there by the court to pay off his debt to society through community service.

Utilizing his own version of tough love, Cichon transformed Remillard from a brooding, angry and impulsive youngster into a sensational amateur. Realizing what a blue-chip professional prospect Remillard was, Cichon was determined to enlist a manager who could bring out the best in him. The last thing he wanted was for him to get lost in a vast stable of fighters.

The resourceful Cichon, who is employed full-time as a heavy equipment operator, obtained Kallen’s e-mail address and forwarded her a message touting Remillard. Having just lost at the 2004 Ringside World Tournament in Kansas City, Cichon and Remillard were convinced that the youngster’s style was much better suited for the pros.

Cichon was shocked when Kallen responded to him within a half an hour. (Having written about boxing for decades, I can attest to Kallen’s sense of follow through. Long before the Internet, I had mailed her several articles I had written about her fighters for foreign publications. Although we hadn’t met at the time, she never failed to send a thank you note in an expeditious manner).

“I take every e-mail and piece of correspondence I receive very seriously,” said Kallen. “But most fighters are not what I’m looking for. Most are too old or have too many losses. Some are looking for a handout. I’ve been involved in boxing for a long time and know what I’m looking for. Having been involved with Tommy Hearns and James Toney, I’m spoiled.”

In Remillard, she believes she has a surefire future champion. Not only is he an all-action fighter, his tremendous support network includes promoter Jimmy Burchfield and trainer Cichon, as well as former light heavyweight title challenger John “Iceman” Scully, who Remillard says “amps me up better than anyone before fights.”

“When I met with Paul and Jimmy, I realized what a great team Matt had behind him and it seemed like a great fit,” said Kallen, who also manages Seattle junior middleweight Byron “Buddy” Tyson, 8-0 (4 KOS), junior welterweight Michael Peralta, 1-0, of Carson City, Nevada, and southpaw female Jeannine Garside, 6-0-1 (2 KOS), who just beat Laura Serrano for the vacant women’s IBA featherweight title.

“I had made a promise to Matt a long time ago that if he ever went pro, I would get him the best manager out there,” said Cichon. “I never heard one word about Jackie being anything but fair. When she responded to me so quickly, even though she didn’t know who I was, I knew that I made the right decision.”

The 60-year-old Kallen has been making a lot of her own good decisions since beginning her career as a rock music journalist in the sixties. In the early- to mid-seventies, she was a Detroit television personality.

In 1978, she became the engine of the publicity machine that helped make the hard-punching Hearns into a bonafide superstar. That was her first foray into boxing and she has never looked back.

Her success with Hearns was followed by her management of the unpredictable Toney, with whom she eventually had a less than amicable breakup. Along the way, she also managed Bronco McKart, who hailed from Monroe, Michigan.

To suggest that Kallen’s success in boxing has come easy would be a mistake. Her life and career has been so unique, it was chronicled in the 2004 theatrical film “Against the Ropes,” where she was played by Meg Ryan.

In early 2001, the mother of two was described by writer Susan Whitall of the Detroit News as exuding a “kitten-with-a-whip quality.” It was certainly an accurate assessment then—and still is today.

Describing her introduction into boxing, she told Whitall, “I was a fish out of water. I had age, gender and educational barriers with these guys. I went into a world very different from my white, Jewish, middle-class, suburban background.”

Not only did Kallen reach the pinnacle of a male-dominated sport, she survived a host of other travails that included the breakup of a 30 year marriage, Toney’s erratic behavior, including his coming after her with mayhem on his mind, and having her face shattered by a dropped barbell while exercising at a Los Angeles gym.

Along the way, in 2003, Penmarin Books published her self-help book, “Hit Me With Your Best Shot: A Fight Plan for Dealing With All of Life’s Hard Knocks.”

The first sentence reads: Women today not only have to compete head to head with men on a daily basis, but they have to win more often than they lose or they won’t be in the game long.

Kallen has been in the fight game for nearly 30 years and has only gotten better as she has gotten older.

Even though Remillard is a white, East Coast fighter competing in a weight class that is populated by fighters of Hispanic and Asian descent, many of whom live and train on the West Coast, Kallen has no doubt that he is not only a future champion, but a superstar in the making.

“If you have the talent and the charisma to win the public over, boxing is color blind,” said Kallen. “Matt has what it takes to succeed in this sport. I’ve been around a lot of champions before. I have no doubt that he too will be a champion someday.”