

Normie Himes

April 13, 1903 – Sept. 14, 1958

Perhaps the greatest all-round athlete to come out of Cambridge, Galt's Normie Himes could do it all. A gifted hockey player, he was also an accomplished golfer and baseball player. Indeed, he was once offered a tryout by New York Giants manager John McGraw.

Himes played on two Intercounty championship Terrier teams in the early 1920s, teams which went on to win the coveted all-Ontario crown. He once led the league in batting with a .347 average.

But hockey was his first love. He was instrumental in bringing the Ontario intermediate title to Galt in 1921, just a year before the Galt Arena Gardens was built.

Himes was signed by the New York Americans of the NHL in the mid-1920s. Representatives from the Americans had come to Galt to scout Himes' teammate, Clarence Boucher, but it was Himes who left the biggest impression. In their excitement to sign Himes they almost forgot Boucher.

When Himes first arrived at Grand Central Station in mid-town Manhattan he was immediately taken over to Madison Square Gardens, the hub of hockey in New York. There, a large billboard proclaimed: "Come out and see the world's greatest stickhandler in action." Said Himes: "Wow! Who's that?" "It's you!" came the reply.

Small in stature, Himes had plenty of skill, playing 10 full seasons in the NHL. New York sportswriter Ed Sullivan called him the league's most valuable player. Indeed, he was in select company. Himes counted as his friends Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, among others.

Himes later coached minor pro and junior squads, including the Galt Jr. A Red Wings the year Terry Sawchuk played on the team.

He was a golf pro in later years, first as an assistant at the Waterloo – now Galt – Country Club, and later, as head pro at Southampton and, for 18 years, at Westmount in Kitchener. He capped his golf career by winning the Millar Trophy, emblematic of professional supremacy in Ontario.

He died at age 59 in the fall of 1958 shortly after playing a round of golf at the Galt Country Club. It was said that Galt lost the greatest athlete in the history of the area that day.



Inducted 1997