

WINSTON "BING" JUCKES

BING JUST 'FUN GUY TO BE AROUND'

Winston Jukes learned to play hockey in Hamiota Manitoba and he didn't have far to go to enjoy his favourite sport. Jukes and his three sisters grew up on a mink farm and the local hockey rink was right across the street. Speaking from Winnipeg, Shirley Angood recalled how her brother Winston's involvement in hockey affected her life growing up on the family farm. "I used to do all his chores when he played hockey" she said. "It wasn't fair at the time."

After he started playing hockey, Winston acquired a nickname which stayed with him for the rest of his life. According to his son Brad, now living in Surrey BC, Jukes could hit the crossbar regularly when he shot pucks at the net and it made a bing-like sound. That's when his dad said they started to call him Bing. At 16, Jukes moved away from home for the first time to play for St. James Canadians in the Manitoba Junior Hockey League in 1942. "I'm even surprised our parents let him go to St. James" Angood said. It was the beginning of a 13 year hockey career that would take him to 15 different teams in 11 leagues across North America.

In 1943, St. Catharines Falcons coach Rudy Pilous traveled to Winnipeg where he signed several area teenagers, including Jukes. In his first and only year in the OHA Junior A league, the left winger had 12 points including 7 goals but the following season he was back in Manitoba with the MJHL Winnipeg Rangers and the Winnipeg Navy team in the city senior league. The next year, he finished his junior career with Brandon Elks and spent 5 games with the AHL Providence Reds. In 1946-47, he moved up to senior hockey where he scored 31 goals with the Lethbridge Maple Leafs. In 1947, he turned pro with the New York Rangers who assigned him to the AHL New Haven Ramblers. He adapted well to the pro game, scoring 46 points in 55 games which led to a two-game stint with the Rangers. He was the second St. Catharines junior A player to make it to the NHL. In 1948-49, he got the attention of the Rangers when he scored 40 goals, made the first all-star team and led the St. Paul Saints to the United States Hockey League championship. "I can still visualize Bing playing on the left wing as he was such a feisty and powerful player", Angood said. "I remember him being a very strong skater and he always had that perky look on his face which will be in my heart forever."

In 1949-50, he saw action with New York in 14 games and scored two goals, but it was a frustrating experience. "He sat on the bench for several games", his son

Mark said from Houston Mississippi. “He said he could make more money in the minors.”

In 1950, the Rangers traded him to the Denver Falcons and after one season there, he saw action in Calgary, Yorkton Sask., Vernon BC and finally, Brandon MB. After retiring in 1955 at 29. Jukes and his dad started Bing Jukes Drive-In in Brandon. While his dad took care of the restaurant, Jukes had a series of jobs which took him across Western Canada and the USA. “He was not afraid to try anything”, his sister Wilma Lawson said from Brandon MB. After operating a chicken hatchery, he moved to Calgary where he sold heavy agricultural equipment. Then it was on to Vernon BC where he manufactured and sold West Pro hockey sticks.

After a short junior coaching career in Bellingham and Spokane Washington in the ‘70s, he and Las Vegas hotelier Ralph Engelstad set up the Southwest Hockey League. Jukes was the commissioner until the league folded after two years. “My dad was a promoter, probably one of the best”, Mark said.

In 1976, Jukes was the purchasing agent for heavy equipment for the City of Edmonton and during a business trip to West Point Mississippi, he saw the opportunity to start a plant which would supply lime to farmers and a nearby electric power plant. With financial help from Engelstad, the Limeco Lime Plant was built in 1978.

For 12 years, the family struggled to keep the business going. In 1990 Jukes dies of a heart attack at 64. “It was kind of like the hockey thing, Dad was just a little bit before his time” Mark said. The business is now run by his widow Wilda and son Mike. Mark Jukes has 10, 18 wheelers which transport the lime to the power plant which sends power to the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Today, Jukes, a first cousin of former CAHA president and Hockey Hall of Fame member Gordon Jukes, is survived by Wilda, his daughter Patty, and five sons: Mark, Brad, Brian, Mike and Cam. There are 12 grandchildren.

“He had a great sense of humor. He lived life to the fullest and will be remembered by many in their hearts as a fun guy to be around,” Shirley said.

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