

ONTARIO BASKETBALL HALL OF FAME



James Naismith Builder

BIOGRAPHY

- James Naismith was the first person to be inducted into the Ontario Basketball Hall of Fame in 1999.
- 1861: Born on November 6 in Almonte, Ontario, Canada. Son of John Naismith and Margaret Young.
- 1867-1895: He attended the grade school at Bennie's Corners near Almonte.
- 1873: After the death of his parents and his maternal grandmother, he lived with his uncle Peter Young.
- 1875: Entered Almonte High School but less than two years later left his studies for four years. He returned and completed his high school equivalency in 1.5 years graduating in 1883.
- 1883: Entered McGill University in Montreal where he earned a BA in Physical Education. He participated in football, rugby, lacrosse and ground gymnastics.
- 1887: Entered the Presbyterian College of Theology in Montreal and obtained a diploma in 1890.
- 1890: Departed for America and Springfield College in Massachusetts.
- 1891: At the end of his studies he became a professor at Springfield where he stayed until 1895. During his vacation he went to Martha's Vineyard to learn about the Swedish principles of gymnastics to adopt at his training school. In the autumn he took up a seminar in psychology created by Dr. Luther Halsey Gulick, the director of the PE department. There was a need to create an interesting indoor game which resulted in his quest
- 1891: On December 21st the first game of Basket Ball was introduced to James Naismith's class of secretaries. Following brief scepticism, the game was a hit before the students departed for Christmas break.
- 1892: Basketball became a big success: so successful in fact it was published in 'Triangle' magazine under the title 'A New Game'. In January, Frank Mahan demanded the game be named 'Naismith Ball' but Naismith refused.
- 1894: On June 20 he married Maude E. Sherman from Springfield. The couple had five children: Margaret Mason (1895), Helen Carolyn (1897), John Edwin (1900), Maude Ann (1904) and James Sherman (1913). Together with Gulick he published the rules in the "American Sports Publishing Company".
- 1895: Moved to Denver to become PE director at the YMCA where he stayed until 1898. At the same time he was attending the University of Colorado Medical School (Gross Medical College); graduated in 1898.
- 1898: Became director of the gymnasium, campus chaplain, and basketball coach at University of Kansas.
- 1910: Received an honorary Masters degree in PE.
- 1911: Published "A Modern College".
- 1916: Sent to the Mexican frontier with his regiment for four months.
- 1917: Nominated as YMCA Secretary and spent 19 months working in France. Returned in 1919.
- 1918: Published the "Essence of a Healthy Life".
- 1925: Took American citizenship to meet government requirements after serving with the military.
- 1935: Under the NABC initiative, funds were created from the contribution of coaches, players and spectators to send James Naismith to Berlin for the Olympics through the Naismith Fund.
- 1936: Inauguration ceremony in Berlin (April 7): A tribute from the organizational committee he threw the ball for the first match of the Olympic Games.
- 1937: His wife Maude died. On March 3 he became Professor Emeritus in Kansas and retired at the age of 76 from the University.
- 1938: Received the Legum Doctorate degree at McGill University.
- 1939: Honorary Doctor of Divinity at the Presbyterian College in Montreal (April): On June 11 he married Florence Kincaid in Lawrence (Kansas): November 19: suffered a brain hemorrhage; November 28: died of a heart attack aged 78 at his home 1515 University Drive, Lawrence.
- 1941: Posthumously voted Life Member of Physical Education Instructors of America. His masterwork, "Basketball - its Origins and Development" is published by the Associated Press Basketball. He was a member of the Republicans and honorary president of the American Association of Coaches.