



On June 18th of this past year, Norb King passed away after a long illness. His accomplishments were many. Norb spent nearly all of his adult life serving the youth of the diocese of Syracuse and all of Central New York. In 1956, Norb began as the Boys program director of the Northside CYO and eventually served as the Organizations Executive Director until his retirement in 1988. He received many awards for his dedication to human services and his service to the youth of Central New York.

Now that certainly was his life's vocation....But tonight Norb is being inducted into the CBA *ATHLETIC* Hall of Fame. Many people who knew him may not have known of the athletic prowess of his younger days. A humble man, it was rare that he would let even his friends know the extent of his athletic accomplishments. Well, tonight we are going to expose his secrets...

In the mid 40's if you asked any follower of CBA to name the Three Kings, unless it was Christmas time, they would have quickly answered Fred, Norb and Regis!! By then, each of the three boys had made their mark on the Syracuse sports scene. Growing up on the north side, they would spend countless hours honing their craft playing baseball at McChesney or basketball at Schiller. Fortunately for us, they all chose to travel to Willow Street for high school and proudly wear the Purple and Gold of CBA

Norb was a natural athlete. Although he spent one season using his 6' 3 inch frame on the gridiron, he made a name for himself on the hardwoods and ball diamond. In his junior year, King along with Denny Owen, were named the teams' co captains and proved themselves to be two of the better players in the Syracuse Area. After a second place finish in the league, CBA was chosen to represent Syracuse in the Parochial School State Championships in Little Falls. So off our boys went to Little Falls to face the best Catholic school teams from all over the state. CBA dominated that tournament defeating CBA Albany, Catholic Central from Troy and then St Francis from Utica in the championship game. King was named the all tournament team and awarded the shooting efficiency trophy for shooting over 46 percent from the field for the tourney. Norb finished his junior year with 228 points, averaging a little over ten points a game. Not bad for his second sport.

Where Norb really made a mark for himself was on the ball diamond. He made the varsity as a freshman, earning valuable experience his first two years on the team. But as a junior his career started to take off. Norb



was not only the ace of the pitching staff but he also hit cleanup and was one of the most feared hitters in the city. As the season moved on and the pennant race heated up, so did Norb. On May 18th, his 18th birthday, Norb celebrated by pitching a two hit shutout of Nottingham. He struck out 12 Bulldogs that day and had two doubles to pace the offense. Norb then pitched the last 4 games of the regular season. On back to back days he had 7 strikeouts vs. North and then came back and struck out 13 against Eastwood. Coach Lou McKenna then gave him three days off (what a nice guy) and Norb struck out 15 in the final game of the regular season to clinch the title for the Golden Tornadoes. His stats were amazing. Norby "King Size" King, as he was dubbed by one reporter, struck out 109 batters in 67 innings while compiling a 7 – 2 record. He also led the team in hitting and hit a legendary shot at Griffin Field estimated at 500 feet... now King was not tremendously fleet a foot so he may have the record for the longest triple in baseball history.

So Norb had a heck of a junior year and scouts from several pro teams were beginning to show interest in him... but he would never again wear a CBA uniform. Uncle Sam had other ideas. When he turned 18, he became eligible to fight for his country. One of the youngest men in his regiment, Norb served in the 16th infantry of the First Division. In March 1945 near the Black Forest of

Germany, he was injured by flying shrapnel. Awarded the Purple Heart along with other military medals, he returned to the U.S. where he underwent numerous surgeries and nearly two years of rehabilitation. After his recovery, Norb was finally able to return to the safe haven of the halls of CBA to complete his senior year and finally graduated with the class of 1947.

When LeMoyne College opened in the fall of 47, Norb enrolled. Despite his injuries, the nerves in his left leg were severed and his foot was left numb, He refused to give up playing baseball. In one of the most courageous displays in athletic history, Norb played four years of baseball for coach Tom Niland at LeMoyne College. In fact, he pitched the win in LeMoynes first varsity victory which chronicled at the time..... Norb King is not letting the effects of a wounded left leg spoil his bid for pitching success as he struck out 7 in the Dolphins 10 – 2 win. The performance was a revelation to those who doubted he would ever overcome the handicap of his wartime injury. He may have a nerve shattered left leg, but Norb pitched with a strong heart and right arm. For his efforts, Norb was included in the first class inducted into the LeMoyne College Hall of Fame in 1984.

Norb never let his injury be an excuse. He was a great role model and an example of what can be accomplished if you persevere through adversity. I hope that as he looks down on us today, he realizes our respect and admiration for all that he accomplished. It is only fitting that at this time, he joins his brother Regis in our Athletic Hall of Fame

