

= Frank Brimsek =

Francis Charles " Mr. Zero " Brimsek (September 26 , 1915 ? November 11 , 1998) was an American professional ice hockey goaltender who played ten seasons in the National Hockey League (NHL) for the Boston Bruins and Chicago Black Hawks . Brimsek started his career playing exhibition games with the Pittsburgh Yellow Jackets in 1934 ? 35 . The Detroit Red Wings initially owned Brimsek 's rights before they traded them to the Bruins in 1937 . In 1938 ? 39 , Brimsek made his NHL debut with the Bruins since their starting goalie , Tiny Thompson , sustained an injury during an exhibition match . Initially deemed as a short term call @-@ up , Brimsek soon found himself as the Bruins ' starting goalie . He went on to record six shutouts in his first seven games which earned him the moniker of " Mr. Zero " .

Brimsek spent his first nine NHL seasons with the Bruins and during this time , he received numerous individual awards . He won the Calder Memorial Trophy , the Vezina Trophy twice , and he was named to the NHL All @-@ Star Team eight times (twice on the First Team and six times on the Second Team) . He was also a member of two Stanley Cup championships (1939 and 1941) . During World War II , Brimsek left the NHL for two years in order to serve with the United States Coast Guard . After being discharged from the Coast Guard , Brimsek returned to the NHL for the 1945 ? 46 season where it was noted that his skills were not as sharp as before he left . Despite this , he still managed to be one of the best goalies in the league . Brimsek was traded to the Black Hawks in 1948 ? 49 due to personal reasons . He spent one season with the Black Hawks before retiring from professional hockey .

One of the most accomplished American goalies of all @-@ time , Brimsek held the record for most wins , and shutouts recorded by an American netminder at the time of his retirement . His wins record stood for 54 years while his shutouts record stood for 61 years . His eight berths to the NHL All @-@ Star Team rank him second all @-@ time among all goalies . In 1966 , he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame , the first American goalie to be inducted ; and in 1973 , he was part of the inaugural class of the United States Hockey Hall of Fame . In 1998 , Brimsek was ranked number 67 on The Hockey News ' list of the 100 Greatest Hockey Players , the highest ranked American goaltender .

= = Background = =

Brimsek was born in the hockey hotbed of Eveleth , Minnesota on September 26 , 1915 . His parents were of Slovene descent . The town of Eveleth produced at that time four other hockey players who would play in the National Hockey League (NHL) : Mike Karakas , Sam LoPresti , Al Suomi and John Mariucci . Brimsek and Karakas played on the same baseball team in high school . Brimsek first started playing hockey when his brother , John , the second @-@ string goalie on the Eveleth High School team , expressed his desire to be a defenseman instead . John was moved to his desired position , while Frank replaced him . Soon , Brimsek found himself spending most of his spare time on the Eveleth rinks playing hockey . Unlike most of his friends who wanted to be high @-@ scoring forwards , Brimsek never showed any desire to play any other position except for goalie . Just before winter , Brimsek and his friends would get on a dry lot , and they would practice shooting at him . After graduating from high school , Brimsek went to play for the St. Cloud State Teachers College hockey team . He also graduated from college with a machine shop student 's degree .

= = Playing career = =

= = = Early career = = =

In the fall of 1934 , Brimsek was invited to the Detroit Red Wings training camp for a shot at playing in the National Hockey League (NHL) . Jack Adams , the Red Wings ' coach and manager , made

a bad impression on Brimsek . He felt that Adams had a habit of favoritism . This led him to try out for another professional team , the Baltimore Orioles of the Eastern Amateur Hockey League (EAHL) . Unfortunately for Brimsek , the Orioles decided to cut him . Disappointed , Brimsek hitchhiked back to Eveleth . On his way back home , he had a chance meeting with the owner of the Pittsburgh Yellow Jackets , John H. Harris . The Yellow Jackets were in need for a goaltender and Harris proceeded to sign Brimsek to the team . Brimsek started for the Yellow Jackets for the first time in 1934 ? 35 by playing 16 games exhibition games . Out of those 16 games , he won 14 of them .

The next season , the Yellow Jackets joined the EAHL . Brimsek finished with the most wins and shutouts of any goal tender in the league with 20 and 8 respectively . At the end of the season , he was named to the league 's Second All @-@ Star Team and he was awarded the George L. Davis Trophy for having the lowest goals against average (GAA) . Impressed by Brimsek , Harris wanted to protect his interests in the goalie so he ironically had the Red Wings put Brimsek on their protected list . Harris then tried to get the Red Wings to call Brimsek up . However , the Red Wings wanted Brimsek to first play one year for their amateur team in Pontiac , but Brimsek turned down the offer . Brimsek opted to stay with the Yellow Jackets instead . Harris then shopped Brimsek around the NHL until he was accepted by the Boston Bruins in October 1937 . The Bruins were already well established in net with future hall @-@ of @-@ famer Tiny Thompson . This led to Brimsek being assigned by the Bruins to the Providence Reds of the International @-@ American Hockey League (IAHL) for the 1937 ? 38 season . In his only full season with the Reds , Brimsek helped his team win the Calder Cup and he was named to the league 's First All @-@ Star Team .

= = = Boston Bruins = = =

= = = Pre World War II = = =

Brimsek started the 1938 ? 39 season with the Reds , but he would not stay long with them . During an NHL exhibition game , Thompson got injured and it was unlikely that Thompson would recuperate in time for the beginning of the regular season . Needing a replacement , Brimsek was called up by the Bruins . In his NHL debut , Brimsek helped his team defeat the Toronto Maple Leafs by a score of 3 ? 2 . He started in net for one more game , a 4 ? 1 victory against the Red Wings , before being sent back down to the Reds as Thompson recovered . Art Ross , the Bruins ' coach and general manager , had seen enough of Brimsek during his two stints in Boston to contemplate promoting Brimsek full @-@ time with the Bruins . Thompson was traded to the Red Wings after playing only five games with the Bruins . Ross then proceeded to promote Brimsek as the team 's new starting goalie . This did not sit well with Bruins fans as Thompson was a favorite and he was the reigning Vezina Trophy winner .

In Brimsek 's first game as the starting goalie , his team fell 2 ? 0 to the Montreal Canadiens in Montreal . Meanwhile , on that same night , Thompson won his first game with the Red Wings . Also , Brimsek wore red hockey pants instead of the team 's colors , and he was wearing Thompson 's former jersey number , No. 1 . These little details did not help him improve his image with the fans . The next game yielded a more positive result for Brimsek , as he shutout the Chicago Black Hawks . This did not earn him the acknowledgement of Bruins fans yet as when he made his first appearance in Boston , the fans greeted him coldly . However , after shutting out his opponents for the second straight game , the fans warmed up to him immediately . Brimsek earned six shutouts in his first seven games , leading to the fans and the media calling him by the nickname of " Mr. Zero " . During that seven game span , he also set a then modern @-@ NHL record for longest shutout streak of 231 minutes and 54 seconds . At the end of the regular season , Brimsek had backstopped the Bruins to a first @-@ place finish in the league . Brimsek finished the season with the most wins (33) , shutouts (10) and the lowest GAA (1 @.@ 56) in the league . In the playoffs , Brimsek and his team defeated the New York Rangers before beating the Maple Leafs in the 1939 Stanley Cup Finals . Adding to his Stanley Cup victory , Brimsek was awarded the Calder Memorial Trophy , the

Vezina Trophy , and he was named to the NHL First All @-@ Star Team .

The following season , Brimsek finished first in the league in wins again and he was named to the NHL Second All @-@ Star Team . This would be his first of six berths to the NHL Second All @-@ Star Team . The Bruins were eliminated in the playoffs by the eventual Stanley Cup champions , New York Rangers , in the semi @-@ finals . In 1940 ? 41 , Brimsek backstopped the Bruins to their third consecutive first @-@ place finish in the league . The Bruins made it to the 1941 Stanley Cup Finals and were matched up with the Red Wings . The Red Wings fell in four games in a best @-@ of @-@ seven series giving Brimsek his second and last Stanley Cup victory . For his efforts during the regular season , Brimsek was named to the NHL Second All @-@ Star Team for the second year in a row . Continuing on the previous season 's success , Brimsek won the Vezina Trophy and was named to the NHL First All @-@ Star Team for the second time in his career . However , Brimsek 's team could not replicate their playoff success as they were eliminated by the Red Wings in the semi @-@ finals .

= = = World War II and aftermath = = =

Following the outbreak of World War II , three of the Bruins ' best forwards decided to join the Royal Canadian Air Force midway through the 1941 ? 42 season . These three forwards made up the Kraut Line , one of the best lines in the NHL . Despite missing three of their best players , the Bruins managed to advance to the Stanley Cup Finals the next season . In the finals , they were eliminated by the Red Wings , four games to none . Due to his play in the regular season , Brimsek was again named to the NHL Second All @-@ Star Team . However , it was popular opinion at the time that Brimsek deserved the spot on the First All @-@ Star Team over Johnny Mowers , including Mowers ' own coach and general manager , Jack Adams .

Brimsek decided to help the war effort next season by joining the United States Coast Guard . During his time with the Coast Guard , he played with the Coast Guard Cutters hockey team in Curtis Bay , Maryland , and later served in the South Pacific . After the war ended , Brimsek returned to the Bruins in time for the 1945 ? 46 season . However , Brimsek was not as sharp as he was before due to having not played any professional hockey for two years . In his first season back , Brimsek guided the Bruins to the Finals , matching up with the Montreal Canadiens . The Bruins were defeated in five games with three games requiring overtime . Brimsek was applauded for his performance in the playoffs , compensating for his team 's weak defence . This marked Brimsek 's fourth appearance in the Finals and it would be his last . At the end of the season , Brimsek was also named to the NHL Second All @-@ Star Team , the fifth time in his career .

Brimsek remained with the Bruins for three more seasons . He was named to the NHL Second All @-@ Star team twice more and was selected to play in the inaugural NHL All @-@ Star Game in 1947 . The Bruins made the playoffs all three seasons but were eliminated in the semi @-@ finals in all of them . Brimsek was also a finalist for the Hart Trophy in 1947 ? 48 , finishing behind Buddy O 'Connor of the Rangers . Personal problems plagued Brimsek during his final years in Boston . His 10 @-@ month @-@ old son had died in January 1949 , and his coach and longtime teammate , Dit Clapper , had resigned from his coaching duties . It did not also help that the Boston crowd would occasionally boo Brimsek for his play . After the 1948 ? 49 season , Brimsek requested a trade from Boston to Chicago in order to be closer to home , and to the new blueprint business he had started there . Boston granted his request and he was traded to the Chicago Black Hawks in exchange for cash . Brimsek only played one season with the Black Hawks , recording 22 wins , 38 losses and 10 ties in 70 games played . The team finished last in the standings . Brimsek 's lone season with the Hawks was the only season where his team did not reach the playoffs . He retired at the conclusion of the season .

= = Retirement and legacy = =

Brimsek played a stand @-@ up style of goaltending . Goalies playing this style usually stay on their feet instead of dropping down on their knees to make a save . Brimsek is also remembered for

having a quick catching hand and for " taking the feet out " of opposing players that were being a nuisance in front of his net . After retiring , Brimsek returned to Minnesota and worked as a railroad engineer . Even after his retirement , Brimsek regularly received fan mail . In 1966 , Brimsek was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame , the first American @-@ born goalie to be inducted , and in 1973 he was an inaugural inductee of the United States Hockey Hall of Fame . Brimsek died on November 11 , 1998 in Virginia , Minnesota , leaving behind his wife , Marguerite , his two daughters , Chris and Karen , and his five grandchildren .

In 1998 , Brimsek was ranked number 67 on The Hockey News ' list of the 100 Greatest Hockey Players , the highest ranked American goaltender . An annual award , given to the top high school goaltender in Minnesota , is given in Brimsek 's honor . Brimsek 's 252 wins and 40 shutouts each stood for a long time as the most ever recorded by an American netminder . His wins record was finally broken by Tom Barrasso on February 15 , 1994 and his shutouts record has only been equaled by John Vanbiesbrouck and Jonathan Quick . In addition , Brimsek 's eight berths to the NHL All @-@ Star Team are the second most among goalies in history , behind only Glenn Hall 's ten berths .

= = Career statistics = =

= = = Regular season = = =

= = = Playoffs = = =

= = Awards = =