

★ H.L. (HICKUM) GALLES JR. ★

H.L. (Hickum) Galles Jr., chairman of the board of Galles Chevrolet Co., got his booster upbringing from a father who, during the 1920's, sandwiched sports fanaticism between the operation of his General Motors dealership and getting involved in Albuquerque's civic affairs.

Herb Sr. participated as a side-by driver in the 1900 trans-continental auto race that involved the legendary Barney Oldfield and Cannonball Baker.

Galles Jr., 83, being inducted tonight as the 56th member of the Albuquerque Sports Hall of Fame, mirrors the same enthusiasm and fire as his father, including the love of auto racing.

Hickum's pride and joy is Galles Racing, the Albuquerque based Indy Car team owned by his son, Rick Galles. Hickum contributes. He's been a working member of the team since 1983.

He says his hall induction is as great an experience as watching Galles Racing win auto racing's biggest and richest race, the Indy 500 in 1992. Albuquerque's Al Unser Jr., was at the wheel.

"Rick started driving in off-road racing in 1977, then advanced to Super Vee and finally to Sports 2000," said Galles Jr. "I was worried sick he'd break his neck or worse and he knew it. So, in 1980 we finally struck a deal; he'd quit driving if I'd finance a racing team with Al Unser Jr. the driver."

Galles' father played end for the 1909 University of New Mexico Lobo football team. He established his GM dealership on Copper Avenue across the street from the old Immaculate Conception Church. Clyde Oden sold Chevrolets on Fourth Street where Civic Plaza now stands.

The thing to do then for excitement was to meet at the Alvarado Hotel to watch the steam-driven Chief and the Grand Canyon Limited at the Santa Fe railroad depot. There you'd gawk at Hollywood celebrities such as Janet Gaynor, Leslie Howard, Marlene Deitrich, Cecil B. DeMille, James Cagney, Norma Shearer, Jack Oakie and maybe Tom Mix and Rudolph Valentino.

Galles Jr. first made his mark in athletics as an all-state 195-pound tackle for E.M. Wilson's Albuquerque High School football team.

Selected to the University of New Mexico Hall of Honor in 1988 as one of its all-time athletic greats, Hickum twice earned all-Border Conference tackle honors for the New Mexico Lobos.

He has become the fifth member of the 1934 BC champion Lobos to be named to the Albuquerque Sports Hall of Fame. The 8-1 Lobos that year were coached by the late Gwinn Henry Sr. Others on the 1934 team already members of the hall include end Ralph Bowyer, quarterback Abbie Paiz, fullback-punter and team captain Guyton (Sheep) Hays and the late Bill Brannin, halfback; all graduates of Albuquerque High School.

"This is a prestigious honor for me and for our championship football

team," said Galles. "The secret to our success was that we were very close. We all had Albuquerque ties."

Galles mirrors the late George Maloof who was inducted into the hall two years ago. Both received strong backing for membership because of financial support of athletics. Galles contributes generously to city athletic programs, and particularly to UNM sports.

"In the Depression days of the late-20s and early-30s, my dad helped Lobo athletics with off-season jobs like delivering cars and working around the showroom," Galles said. "I got to know the athletes and understand their needs. When dad retired, I just continued the tradition."

Galles has served on two separate steering committees seeking the expansion of 30,000-seat University Stadium. He is a founder of the UNM Lobo Club and a past president.

In 1967-68 he chaired the New Stadium Committee that was successful in the building of the Albuquerque Sports Stadium, and eventually bringing Triple-A baseball to Albuquerque 25 seasons ago. He also helped fund the construction of the new track and field facility at the UNM south campus. He has been a top visible contributor of UNM sports scholarship money.

Galles got his start in the auto business when he went to work for his father's firm in 1928. He became a partner in 1946 and succeeded his father as president of Galles Motors when Galles Sr. died in 1951.

Besides his role as chairman of the board of Galles Motors, he is vice president of three firms, Lee Galles Oldsmobile-Isuzu in Albuquerque, Friday Oldsmobile Inc., of Portland, Ore., and Busby Motors Cadillac-Chevrolet in Silver City.

In 1993 Galles was president of the National Automobile Dealers Association and was named Time Magazine's Quality Chevrolet Regional Dealer Award.

He was recipient of the prestigious University of New Mexico Alumni Zimmerman Award, the Northwood Institute outstanding businessman's award and was president of both the New Mexico and Albuquerque New Car Dealers Association.

Galles has served as potentate of the Ballut Abyad Shrine, president of the Western States Shrine, and was chairman of the United Fund and vice president of the Chamber of Commerce.

He also has served on the board of directors of Public Service Co. and Bank of New Mexico, now First Interstate Bank. He was president of the Albuquerque Industrial Foundation and served with the New Mexico Department of Development and the Albuquerque International Airport Advisory Board.