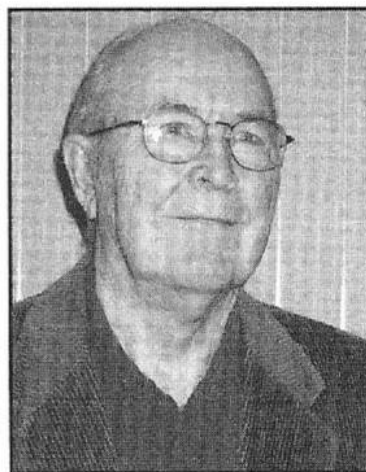


## JOHN J. SCHUMACHER

Whenever the topic of conversation is SDSD basketball, be it in a restaurant or at home or in a social get-together, you will most certainly be talking about the unforgettable 1944-45 team that went undefeated in the Little Sioux Conference competition and captured the Minnehaha County and South Dakota High School Athletic Association District 18 tournaments – three championships! – enroute to a cool 18-4 record for the season – a SDSD record yet to be surpassed to this day.



Among the prominent team players whose names surface immediately upon mention of the 1944-45 championship squad is John Schumacher from Aberdeen, SD, who is featured in this page. His basket at the buzzer for a 35-33 victory over the powerful and highly favored Baltic High School team sent the first-ever SDHSAA championship trophy to the campus of the South Dakota School for the Deaf. Throughout his four seasons as a Pheasant cager, John was “Mr. Big” in both the scoring column and the rebound category as well as the team’s “backbone” in critical situations – a leader when leadership on the floor was significantly needed. That buzzer shot in the Baltic game was so perfect that the ball did not even touch the rim – an unbeatable swisher long to be remembered by all who witnessed it.

John’s statistics over the span of four years places him in the prestigious class with other SDSD greats such as Jim “Deadshot” Mitchell, John Dykstra, Ricky Ahlgrim, and Lance Sigdestad. His senior year average of 23 points per game, for example, ranked second that season in the world of basketball among deaf and hard of hearing athletes. He co-captained the championship team, along with Robert Lange who accompanied him in the fall of 1945 to Gallaudet University in Washington DC where they both continued to play the game together with flying colors the next five years.

John and his gracious Nona are currently the residents of Sun City, California – a pair of South Dakota sunshines!