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SOFTBALL PLAYER PROFILE: CHUCK SCHAAN
By Larry Wolfe

A North Dakotan through and through, Chuck Schaan was raised on a farm near the small town of Balta, then moved to nearby Rugby when the family farmhouse burned down. Rugby’s claim to fame is that it is the geographical center of the North American continent. Chuck “lived on a baseball field” as a youngster and starred for the local American Legion and high school teams in Harvey, ND. He was also on the Hornets’ wrestling team as a junior and senior. From childhood through high school Chuck worked on the family farm and at his Dad’s gas station. In fact, he started driving trucks and tractors at age 12 when he received his driver’s license! It was at that gas station that Chuck became mechanically-inclined; he could tear an engine apart and overhaul vehicles as a youngster.

Chuck attended North Dakota State University in Fargo, majoring in business administration. His first “real job” after college was in the soil

testing business. He eventually owned that business for about 6 years. Later he got into the industrial X-ray business and ultimately started his own business in that field. His company provided inspection services for the gas and oil industries, including pipeline “X-ray inspections” of the welded pipeline connections. Chuck grew that business into a very successful operation which allowed him to retire in his late 50s. That company is now operated by his two sons, with Chuck still providing some guidance and consulting.

Chuck had visited his parents, who wintered in Green Valley, over the years and knew that Arizona was where he wanted to retire. The opportunity to live somewhere that he could keep active all year was very important since Chuck endured five bypass operations before reaching the age of fifty. All is well now health-wise and he wants to keep it that way! The Field of Dreams in Sun Lakes was the icing on the cake.

Like most of us Sun Lakes softball players, Chuck played industrial league softball into his late thirties before family and business became priorities. Upon relocating here, Chuck picked up his bat and glove and once again took the field. He’s one of our league’s top hitters, posting a .701 average this past season. A slick-fielding shortstop with a strong arm and arguably our faster base runner, he rarely hits a single. If he hits a ball into the outfield, he usually ends up with a double or triple. Chuck also enjoys playing on the Elite Realty tournament team.

In addition to his softball activities, Chuck enjoys tennis and golf. He and Gini also like to travel and go cruising. They keep busy visiting their combined fourteen grandkids and their many other family members and friends up in North Dakota. Chuck is used to big families since he grew up in a “good Catholic family” with four brothers and two sisters. Chuck says that the only down side is that “it makes Christmas really expensive!”