

## 2013 Athletic Hall of Fame Honoree



### JACK ERRION

*Coach and Educator, 1954-1976 (1925- 1990)*

On January 15, 1991, the name of the St. Anthony Catholic Center, our historic gymnasium opened in 1947, was changed to "The Jack Errion Memorial Gymnasium", forever honoring the memory of Jack Errion, legendary St. Anthony High School coach and educator.

John Walter Errion was born in Peoria, Illinois in 1925. "Jack" began his coaching career in Illinois, but moved to California in 1954 to become the coach at St. Anthony High School. During his 22 year tenure, he taught in the Boys' School and coached boys' basketball, baseball and football. Many times, he drove the bus himself to take his teams to their games. He is remembered by all who knew him for his passion, integrity and wisdom, his energy, focus and style.

Jack's coaching led St. Anthony Varsity Basketball Teams to 372 victories including seven Catholic League Championships and four Angeles League Championships. Eleven Championships in twenty-two years is a remarkable accomplishment for any coach, and it is a landmark achievement in the history of the Saints which has never been matched.

During his 22 years coaching Varsity Boys Basketball, Jack built a solid reputation on a tough man-to-man defense and a patient offense. He never deviated from his defense, jokingly calling the zone defense "un-American". His coaching strategy never changed throughout his career, and in 1982, he was quoted, "I've done the same thing for 32 years simply because I don't know anything else. I don't believe in changing to an offense just because you went to a clinic and learned something new. I try and keep things simple."

Jack was competitive, no doubt, but he was also in control. In the classroom, he was relatively gentle and mild-mannered, but step into the gymnasium and there was a whole change in personality. Everything he did, he did for a purpose. He might appear to be really angry and express this to a player, but he always had a focus and reason behind it - to get the best out of the student. He didn't have a great ego about winning or losing, he just did his best job teaching and the rest he left up to the boys.

Dan Lungren, former Congressman and graduate of St. Anthony Class of 1964, played for Coach Errion at SA. Dan shares this football memory, "We had a center who didn't always give Jack the effort he wanted. We had a meeting one afternoon before a game and Jack got upset with him and threw his car keys in a bunch of rose bushes. The kid went into the bushes to get the keys and came out with cuts all over his arms. That night, he was so mad at Jack, he played the game of his life."

Jack left St. Anthony High School in 1976 to become Varsity Basketball Coach for Corona Del Mar High School. He led the Corona Del Mar Sea Kings to a 199-60 record and two Southern Section 3-A Basketball Championships in 1977 and 1981 in his ten season tenure. He retired after the 1985-86 season at age 60 as one of Southern California's most well-respected coaches.

In 36 years as a varsity basketball coach, Jack had a record of 571-328. Those who knew him attribute his winning record to his enthusiasm and drive, along with the maturity and wisdom that comes from experience. They say he was a highly competent educator who just happened to coach basketball. At St. Anthony, he was a stern disciplinarian, but he deeply cared about his students and his players. Jack had a positive impact on hundreds of students over more than two decades of service as a coach and teacher at St. Anthony. We honor his excellence and integrity, and remember him with pride.

