

## ORANGE BASKETBALL

# Syracuse great, NBA star Billy Gabor dies at age of 97

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Syracuse, N.Y. -- Billy Gabor, who played at Syracuse University and in the NBA for the Syracuse Nationals, died on Tuesday at the age of 97.

Gabor died after a brief battle with pneumonia. He had turned 97 on May 13 and was believed to be the oldest living former NBA player. He had been living for the past several years in Jupiter, Fla.

Gabor's son, Bill, confirmed the news on Tuesday.

Gabor played at Syracuse University during the 1942-43, 1945-46, 1946-47 and 1947-48 seasons. His career was interrupted by World War II when he served in the U.S. Air Force.

Nicknamed "The Bullet" due to his exceptional speed, Gabor then went on to play in the NBA for six years; all of them with the Syracuse Nationals.

Gabor was one of Syracuse University's earliest stars.


He was the first SU player to score 400 points in a single season. He also was the first player to score 1,000 points in his career. He finished his career as SU's all-time leading scorer with 1,344 points. His record stood for nearly 20 years until the legendary Dave Bing surpassed it in 1966.

In 2009, Syracuse University retired his No. 17 jersey, which now hangs in the Carrier Dome alongside those of Bing, Derrick Coleman, Carmelo Anthony and other greats.

"He was one of the greatest Syracuse players of all-time," Syracuse coach Jim Boeheim said. "He was always a great representative of his school and his family."

Gabor averaged 9.8 points per game during his NBA career. He was named to the NBA's All-Rookie team, he made the league's All-Star team in 1953 and was a member of the Nationals' NBA championship team in 1955.

He is a member of the Greater Syracuse Sports Hall of Fame, the Binghamton Sports Hall of Fame, and the Syracuse University All Century Basketball Team.

 Members of the Syracuse Nationals - 1955: Coached by Al Cervi (center) and led by players (left to right) Paul Seymour, George King, Billy Kenville and Bill Gabor. Credit: Onondaga Historical Association

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