By Katy Moeller
Photography by Bob Ewell

Be careful before you agree to a round of H-O-R-S-E with Jen Schumacher. You may lose your shirt.

Schumacher is one of the best 3-point shooters in the history of women’s basketball at UAlbany, having set both school and conference records this season. The 5-foot, 8-inch junior guard sank 77 3-pointers this season, topping the previous America East Conference record of 76. Nine of those buckets came in one game, a single-game high for the conference.

On the way home, Schumacher told her dad that she wanted to play basketball in college — not golf. But she did play golf all four years at Whitney Point High School, serving as captain her senior year.

“I played golf on the boy’s team,” noted Schumacher, who was valedictorian of her high school. She is currently taking master’s-level computer science classes and carries a 3.65 Grade Point Average.

Trina Patterson, coach of the UAlbany women’s basketball team, believes Schumacher’s talent for shooting from 3-point range has something to do with the aim and spatial perception skills she developed on the golf course.

“Schumacher’s sister, Tammy, who is 19, completed her first season as a point guard at Walsh University in North Canton, Ohio. The sisters recalled how much of their free time they spent practicing together at their home hoop and their school gym.

“My dad would take us to the gym on Saturdays and Sundays,” said Tammy Schumacher.

Instead of doing mundane house chores, the girls were given the option of shooting a certain number of baskets before their dad got home from work.

“We had to shoot 200 shots each,” Jen Schumacher said. “The way we used to get our allowance is he’d pay us a penny for every shot that we took.”

Leo Schumacher said he and his wife, Nancy, who was captain of her college ice hockey team, believed that their girls could learn important values from sports, including commitment and how to tackle challenges.

The Great Danes’ season ended March 10 in a devastating 68-48 loss to the University of New Hampshire in the quarterfinals of the America East Conference Tournament. Schumacher, who led the team with 15 points, including three 3-point buckets, says she’ll be back.

“I do have another year,” she said. “I’m excited for that.”