

Joseph Ellington

Coach Joseph Ellington took over as Camp Lejeune's second head coach in 1947, three years after the young high school was founded in 1944, then offering three sports; football, baseball and basketball (boys and girls). Coach Ellington was not connected with the school system but was a civil service engineer who worked on base and volunteered his time to coach the team and commute from his home in Swansboro for practices and games.

Coach Ellington is "Mr. Basketball" to Lejeune High School. During his four years as head coach, he had an outstanding record of 89 wins and only 10 losses which included a runner-up in the state championship (1948-49) and two state championships (1949-50 and 1950-51). Coach started the 1947-48 season with only one substitute player returning from the previous season (18-5). His first team had a record of 20-5, losing the five games by a total of 12 points. His athletes were required to have an academic average of 85 to play for him. The student body at Lejeune consisted of 114 students which included 41 boys.

The 1948-49 season produced a 23-2 record and a runner-up state championship losing to Trinity 48-46. (2 Losses: Wilmington 3-A by 3 points and Kinston 2-A by 11 points). The 1949-50 Season saw the Devilpups win the school's and county's first state championship, defeating Matthews 37-25 and having a 22-2 season record. Losses came to Morehead City by 1 point and the East Carolina Teacher's College Freshmen by 8 points. The Devilpups would defeat both teams later in the season by 1 point and 14 points respectfully.

The 1950-51 Season produced back-to-back state championships for the school and county by defeating Hasty 62-55 and a record of 24-1. Coach Ellington was voted "Outstanding Coach" of the state tournament. During the season, Coach started three sophomores. Their only loss came to New Bern by 1 point in double overtime. They defeated 2-A Kinston in the Raleigh Coliseum prior to the NC State-Michigan game. The 1949 and 1950 teams produced a 36 consecutive game winning streak at home and each team recorded a string of 21 straight victories each year. Camp Lejeune High was not a member of a conference and therefore would have to play teams from multi-classifications just to have a full schedule. Coach Ellington was selected to the first class in the Lejeune High School Hall of Distinction.