

Bucket

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With the tie, neither team was able to lay claim to the coveted trophy filled with Dom's Lunch hamburgers.

Dom Femia, a Morehead City Jaycee, was the owner of Dom's Lunch on 18th Street and apparently the originator of the Mullet Bucket idea.

The restaurant was a favorite hangout for teenagers. After the games, boys with flattop haircuts wearing letter sweaters and Chuck Taylors and girls with pageboy haircuts, poodle skirts and saddle shoes would flood Dom's Lunch and eat and drink to their hearts content as The Platters played over the WMBA airwaves.

Femia was popular with the kids and an ardent supporter of community activities. Over the years, he became a fixture at Morehead City High games, always noticeable in his trademark tan topcoat and brown hat.

The Eagles had other diehard fans as well, such as Warren Beck. Then there was Jimmy Smith and Wade Bell who were known as the "yellers."

Malcolm Reid and Headon Piner were referred to as the "play followers," due to their propensity to stalk the sidelines while closely following the action on the field.

In an effort to generate revenue and spur interest in the series, the Jaycees scheduled two games between the county rivals for the first three years of the Mullet Bucket game.

Over a month after the inaugural game, the two teams met again on Thanksgiving night in a game dubbed the "Fish Bowl" by the Jaycees, and 3,500 fans at Beaufort Field watched as Morehead City took home the first ever Mullet Bucket title by a score of 21-12.

Tommy Bennett, John Ballou and Steed scored touchdowns for "The Big Red." Beaufort passed eight times in the contest and completed three of them.

Unfortunately, all three completions were to the Eagles.

As was the custom at the time, Beaufort co-captains Clyde Owens and John Lynch handed over the grey wooden Mullet Bucket to Morehead City co-captains Perry Gorham and Mickey Woolard at an assembly at Morehead City High School on the following Thursday.

Owens remarked, "You usually say when you are giving a trophy that you like to do it. Well, I don't like to do this, but I've enjoyed playing football against you boys. Mickey will be here next year and so will John, and if I don't do better in school, maybe I'll be, too!"

Wiley Taylor Jr., the Beaufort Jaycee athletic chairman gave a speech regarding the improved relations between the two schools. As *The News-Times* reported, he "recalled the days about 15 years ago when he said if he drove his father's car to Morehead City he was lucky if he got back home without a car full of tomatoes and rotten eggs."

The Eagles finished the 1950 campaign with a record of 10-0-1.

Led by John Lynch, Johnny Olund, Louis Woolard, Billy Eudy and Jimmy Parker, Beaufort swept the season series in 1951. However, the two-game winning streak was just a blip on the radar screen for the Seadogs. Morehead City High recaptured the Mullet Bucket at home in October of 1952.

The Eagles would go on to win eight straight in the series and 12 of the next 13 rivalry games, usually on muddy, rain-soaked fields as it always seemed to rain during the games.

Led by such notables as Jerry Conner, Kemp (Baby) Wickizer, Jimmy Parker, Danny O'Neal, Al Conner, Jackie McQueen, David O'Neal and coach Norman Clark, Morehead City would go undefeated in Seashore Conference play for four straight seasons from 1952-1955.

In the October 1954 game, the first to be played at the new

Camp Glenn Athletic Field, the Eagles beat Beaufort 7-0. But it was the play between the snaps that drew the most attention. Just before the nasty winds of Hurricane Hazel came sweeping through the county, the Eagles whirled up a firestorm with their rough play on the gridiron.

Rip Wilder wrote a scathing piece in the *The News-Times*, denouncing the play of Morehead City, essentially calling it dirty. Beaufort was so upset that they threatened to call off the series. It was reported that the fans in the bleachers were rowdy, as well.

The next two seasons the teams settled on a "gentlemen's agreement" for the removal of any player who was guilty of unsportsmanlike conduct, whether the referees saw it or not.

The newspaper reported "coaches, principals and players alike have worked hard to bettering relationships between the two schools and the Morehead City Jaycees have passed on a request that fans display the same sportsmanship that will be shown on the field."

While the play cleaned up on the field, the pranks off of it never stopped, as members of each school would perennially pull such high jinks as slipping over to the opposing school the night before the game and paint graffiti on whatever was available.

The revelry would show itself on game days as well, where dummy football players wearing the uniform of the rival team would be raised up a flagpole or burned in effigy at the school's pep rally.

In 1957, the Eagles demolished the Seadogs 47-6 on their way to an undefeated season that culminated in a state championship.

Led by the "master psychologist" Clark, who was known to get his players up for a game better than most coaches could, and Gerald Jones, Richard Powers, James Guthrie, Gordon Patrick, John Glancey, Freddie Oglesby, Lynwood Durham and Linwood

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Swinson, Morehead City delivered the first football state title to Carteret County.

Two years later, Beaufort broke the eight-game Mullet Bucket winning streak of Morehead City with a 14-6 home victory in front of 4,000 fans.

John Nelson's 45-yard fumble return for a touchdown started the scoring and a 29-yard Butch Hassel to Calvin Jones touchdown pass finished it as the Mullet Bucket was brought back to Beaufort for the first time since 1951.

First year coach Curtis Lancaster (father of current first-year West Carteret coach John Lancaster), who had just graduated from East Carolina a few months earlier, talked his Seadog players out of dunking him in the showers after the game.

However, he did tell his squad that he would be more than happy to let them partake of the traditional post-game celebration if the team won the state title.

The players cashed in on that promise weeks later as Beaufort, led by Ernest (Power) House, David Jones, Ray Hassell, Denard Harris, Freddie Hooper, Eddie Taylor, Nelson, B. Hassell and C. Jones, won the 1959 state championship.

Four years later, the two teams met for the last time as Morehead City and Beaufort high schools with the Eagles out-rushing the Seadogs 29-31 on their way to a 19-0 win, thanks to three touchdowns from Donald Oglesby.

The following season, West Carteret High School was up and running, and one year later East Carteret High School entered the fold.

While the rivalry stayed intense and passions ran high in subsequent years, the game was never the same as the days when the county virtually shut down on a Friday night and 3,000 to 4,000 fans filled the bleachers to watch the Seadogs battle the Eagles for the cherished Mullet Bucket.