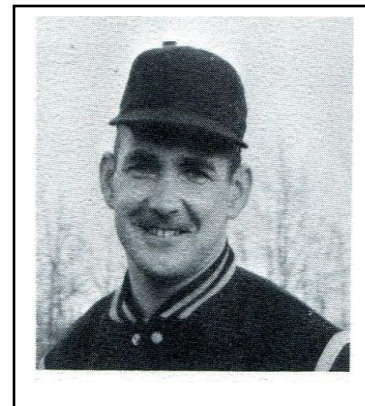


## ALLEN CAMPBELL

In an era when small towns had few organized youth sports, Allen Campbell was among those who knew how to create their own playing fields, learn the skills necessary for the sport, and arbitrate their games. A vacant lot in Luray, Virginia, provided the venue, as he developed into a multi-sport athlete in both high school and college.



His high school baseball team won the district championship in 1955. He was also named to the All-District team in football. At the time, Virginia had no sports playoff system beyond the district level.

Campbell's high school teachers and coach recognized in him the potential as a college athlete. He chose to forego signing with minor league baseball, instead accepting a scholarship at Salem College in West Virginia. He continued to play summer baseball after college for several years.

Following college, he left the Shenandoah Valley for a job opportunity in Amherst County at the recently-consolidated high school, teaching boys' health and physical education and coaching all three sports: football, basketball, and baseball. As coach, he assumed all responsibilities for the teams and for administration of games, including field preparation, and sometimes transportation, or even feeding and housing some of the players.

In the inaugural seasons, Campbell's teams faced some of the county's good athletes who represented their rival, Madison Heights High School. It was not until the early 1960s that all the county's students attended ACHS, thereby making the teams consistently stronger. Several of his players went on to play collegiate football, including one on a Ferrum Junior College national championship team.

From this foundation, the athletic program grew in subsequent decades to one that offered multiple athletic opportunities for both boys and girls, one that has become a perennial contender. Upgrades to the facilities started occurring in the early 1960s – with much help from coaches and local volunteers in designing, transporting, and assembling – and included the addition of bleachers, plus lighting to accommodate night games, and development of a track surrounding the baseball/football complex, which accounted for the track's unique design.

By the mid-1960s, separate coaches for each sport became the norm, as Campbell became athletic director, then assistant principal. From then until his retirement in 1991, he was known as a strict, consistent, and fair disciplinarian, gaining the admiration of the students. He was a stabilizing influence during the tenures of several principals. Allen Campbell supported the Lancer teams in their growing programs, attending games numbering in the hundreds.

Allen Lewis Campbell – July 29, 1936

### Career Highlights

- Luray High School: Class of 1955, 4-year athlete – football, basketball, baseball; District Championship, baseball; two-time All-District team selection, football
- Salem College: Class of 1959, 4-year-athlete – football, baseball
- Summer baseball: Massanutten League, Valley League (1956-60)
- ACHS: teacher, athletic director, three-sport coach, administrator – 33 years