

Case History: Lejeune High School, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina

Recycling saves money, helps qualify construction for LEED credits

Situation: Camp Lejeune High School is located on the U.S. Marine Corps base in North Carolina. It serves the children of Marines at this base.

The bleachers were manufactured by Folding Bleacher Company and were approximately 10 years old. Original scope of work was to replace the existing floor and transfer the original bleachers onto the new floor. An additional requirement was to replace all existing wheels on the understructure, because of the marks on the gym floor.

The maintenance director at Lejeune High School initially contacted the Bleacherman for information on the wheels. By chance, a former Bleacherman crew leader, Sgt. Mark Schumaker, was at Camp Lejeune, and was about to retire after serving two tours in Iraq.

Sgt. Schumaker inspected the bleachers and determined that the existing understructure wheels did not need to be replaced, they just needed to be cleaned.

Further inspection revealed the real problems: the bleachers were sagging, the old motors were underpowered, plus the drive rollers were decomposing and delaminating.

Note: the situation paralleled the situation that the Bleacherman encountered at North Tonawanda High School (New gym) [See Case History here](#).

Then there was also the problem of transferring the bleachers to the new floor that was to be installed. (The new floor would be 6" higher than the existing floor!) Additional considerations were safety upgrades such as P-rails for aisles, end safety rails and ADA rails.

The general contractor tried - in vain - to locate a local expert to fix their bleacher. But they found that specialized work required a specialist. They finally settled on the Bleacherman as the best choice for solving their bleacher problems on a long-term basis.



Unfortunately, no "before" pictures are available for the Lejeune High School project. The photo above shows the bleachers after they were repaired and relocated onto the new floor. (The wood risers and seating were in good condition and did not require refinishing.)



These bleachers were originally manufactured with aisle closure panels with no intermediate steps.



Aisle closure panels deter climbing on the bleachers in the closed position. The owner chose not to discard this feature.



Sagging of bleachers (which makes them hard to open and close) is prevented with the addition of the patented Century Design® “no-sag” system, after the understructure was repaired. This photo shows a Century Design® wheel on a seat-level runner at the end of the bleachers.



Century Design® was also installed at the aisles. A two-wheel design on one side of the aisle is used here due to the sagging issues, instead of the more common one-wheel system, to assure long-term trouble-free use.



Typical drive roller showing deterioration and delamination of the outer covering from the metal roller. We replaced five existing motors with our heavy duty motors equipped with 50-durometer drive rollers that won't delaminate, guaranteed.



Bottom view of Bleacherman's heavy duty motor drive replacement shows two rows of 14-inch wide drive wheels for maximum traction.



School mascot “Devil Pups” appears on ADA safety rail pads. A popular nickname, Marines were called “devil dogs” by the Germans in WWI, which is where the mascot comes from.



P-rail pads continue the “devil pups” motif, with a paw print screen-printed on both sides. Logo artwork for Lejeune High School's padding was donated by Sgt. Mark Schumaker and Lcpl. Robert McArthur (both retired Marines).



Brand new gym floor gleams in the photo above. If you are considering a new floor in your gym (or sanding/refinishing the existing floor), please note you do NOT have to discard your old bleachers! However, you may want to hire a specialist who knows how to move them.



Installing a new gym floor is a big project. Often a deteriorating gym floor and old, worn-out bleachers are replaced or refurbished at the same time. The savings from refurbishing bleachers vs. buying new can be applied to the refinishing of an existing floor or to a new floor installation – and stretch your maintenance dollars.



Refurbished bleachers in closed position. Note the lack of wheel marks on the floor in front of the bleachers. To keep your gym floor looking new, always clean the floor prior to opening the bleachers. This will remove any dirt or dust which can adhere to the understructure wheels and permanently mark the gym floor.



Above is an example of what NOT to do. Garbage, dirt and debris underneath the bleachers can also cause problems. Even though the understructure wheels are non-marking, over time they can pick up dirt and mark the gym floor with black lines.

Where the term “Devil Dogs” comes from.

According to Marine Corps lore, the name “Devil Dogs” was coined after the battle of Belleau Wood in WWI. This was in the summer of 1918, in the midst of a heat wave. As the Marines made ready to charge, the Germans were preparing to use mustard gas to repel the attack. As a precaution, the Marines were ordered to put on their gas masks and take the hill. While the Marines fought their way up the hill, the heat caused them to sweat profusely, foam at the mouth and turned their eyes bloodshot. Additionally, at some points the hill was very steep, which caused the Marines to have to scramble on all fours to make their way up. Consequently, from the Germans' vantage point, they witnessed a pack of tenacious, growling figures whose lower faces were obscured by gas masks (which at the time had a prolonged shape that somewhat resembled a snout) but left open their bloodshot eyes and mouth foam seeping from the sides, advancing up the hill, sometimes on all fours, and killing everything in their way. As the legend goes, the German soldiers, upon seeing this spectacle, began to yell that they were being attacked by "dogs from hell."

