

HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL

Bradley's journey brings him to brink of milestones

With unlimited flight privileges as father of a Delta employee, Ronald Bradley spent retirement flying to Hawaii to jog, to San Juan to swim, to New Zealand just to see it. The world was his to explore. And yet, instead of expanding his travels, Bradley grounded himself and went back to the musty gyms that smell sweet to a basketball addict.

This space hardly could chronicle all that Bradley has experienced, all he has seen, all he has accomplished. His is a career that has spanned six decades. By the count of his vibrant wife, Jan, who has a book the size of War and Peace full of her husband's feats, this year's Newton High squad is the 119th varsity team in all sports that Bradley has coached.

He is 68, with 43 years of coaching in his still-sharp mind. "People ask me all the time, 'Why do you still coach? How can you relate to those kids?'" Bradley said. "And I tell them: 'The kids and I have one thing in common: We love basketball.' And that's enough for me. As much as I loved to travel and see the world, it pales by comparison to my passion for working with kids."

HIGH SCHOOLS



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This week, Bradley is expected to set a number of marks that will signify longevity and success, milestones in which thousands of former players around Georgia share:

- ▶ He'll become Georgia's all-time winningest coach, passing former Forsyth coach D.B. Carroll's 1,254 victories.
- ▶ He won 353 of those as a girls coach, and won his 900th as a boys coach on Friday.
- ▶ He'll be No. 8 nationally all time, one of only three coaches among the top eight still active.

Overall, Bradley sat on a record of 1,253-331 as Saturday dawned, a ledger so stellar that he could lose 30 games a year for the next 30 years, "and still have a winning

record," Jan Bradley said. "But it's about far more than the winning and losing. It's been about the kids. I figured it out one year that the kids spend more than 2,000 hours a season with [Ronald]. And we love the opportunity to be a part of their lives. It's been a fantastic journey."

They met when Jan was 14 and have been married for 49 years. She had never seen a basketball game. When asked at a 40th class reunion what she had been up to, she answered: "The same thing I was 40 years ago: Riding school buses to games."

And that was not a complaint. Ron Bradley got into coaching at age 25. After defeats, he wondered if he was in the right profession. "I'd wonder if I should sell insurance," he said, "because there had to be something better than the hurt [that comes] with losing. But you know you should be a coach when you look into the mirror with all that hurt and decide you want to keep doing it."

Well, he was in the right profession, an icon already inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame (1997), playing in a gym named after him. He coached at Newton

for 18 years, took two years off to travel and was summoned back to the game by . . . the game.

"I've been a little bit of everywhere," he said, speaking of stints at Trinity Christian in Dublin, Loganville, Piedmont Academy, Port St. Joe on the Florida Gulf Coast and finally back to Newton two years ago.

"When I was traveling, I thought coaching was a job," Bradley said. "But I was wrong. And I missed being important to someone. I missed the questions from the kids. 'What time do we have to be here?' 'How do we run this play?' That all meant so much to me."

Now, he's on his final coaching trip that he hopes will last until after his 45th season. At that point, with all his records in tow, he'll likely start traveling again. But, no doubt, he'll still show up from time to time at the sweet-smelling musty gyms. He's addicted.



Bradley

2003

BOYS GAMES

Bradley ties record with No. 1,254

FROM STAFF REPORTS

Newton's boys wasted no time getting coach Ronald Bradley to the top of Georgia's all-time winningest coach list.

A day after Bradley coached his 900th career boys victory, Legale Floyd and Antwone Smith ensured that he'd earn his 1,254th overall win.

Floyd scored 32 in three quarters and Smith added 24 as the Rams pummeled Jackson County 96-49, tying Bradley with the late D.B. Carroll for most coaching victories in Georgia history.

John Richardson led Jackson County with 15 points.

► Jonesboro 72, Northside 60: The Douglas brothers proved too much for Northside. Toney Douglas had 31 points — 22 by halftime — and 10 rebounds, while Harry Douglas added 23 points for Jonesboro. (18-5). Northside (4-15) — Keith Ward, 10.

► Tri-Cities 54, Stephenson 52: Keith Jones tipped in the game-winning basket with five seconds left for the Bulldogs (11-6). Jones and Derrick Floyd each had 18 points for Tri-Cities.

► Wheeler 54, South Cobb 48: The Wildcats won for the 20th time in 21 games as Sharaud Curry scored 20. South Cobb (14-8) — Brandon Houze, 11.

The rest of Saturday's games, in alphabetical order by winners are as follows.

► Apalachee 54, Greater Atlanta Christian 37: Apalachee (14-6) — Tyler Whately, 17 points, 15 rebounds; GAC (11-10) — Chad Barron, 15.

► Buford 76, Union County 67.

► Calhoun 67, Model 49: Calhoun (15-6) — Gib Roland, 14; Model (9-9) — Phil Nasworthy, 10.

► Callaway 71, Lamar County 45.

► Cartersville 34, Cass 32.

► Carver-Atlanta 50, Washington 38.

► Cedar Shoals 74, Loganville 27: Cedar Shoals (17-0) — Ryan Cooper, 20; Loganville — Darren Ford and Casey Ward, 8 each.

► Chamblee 59, North Forsyth 43.

► Chapel Hill 63, Woodward Academy 60: Chapel Hill (13-8) — Everett Smith, 25; Woodward — Chris Johnson, 17.

► Chattahoochee 69, Centennial 56: Chattahoochee (18-4) — Anthony Fisher, 18; Centennial — Bryant Anderson, 19.

► Coffee 73, Taittnall County 71.

► Columbia 62, Druid Hills 45.

► Commerce 66, Rabun Gap 61: Commerce (2-12) — Brandon Jennings, 22; Rabun Gap (5-8) — Caleb Jordan, 20.

► Cross Keys 61, Westminster 45.

► Decatur 52, Paldeia 37.

► Douglas County 107, Alexander 47.

► Dunwoody 68, Tucker 52: Dunwoody (15-5) — Anjuan Wilderness, 21; Tucker — Damian Duncan, 14.

► East Coweta 37, McIntosh 36.

► East Hall 78, White County 70.

► Echols County 80, Madison County, Fla. 78.

► Etowah 49, Cherokee 40: Etowah (10-11) — Brett Pinckard and David Cochran, 12 each; Cherokee — Brett Dozer, 15.

► Forest Park 61, Sandy Creek 59: Randy Jackson scored off an offensive rebound with 0.3 seconds left for the win. Forest Park (10-8) — Richard Hawkins, 24; Sandy Creek — Aaron Caruther, 14.

► Gordon Lee 43, Mt. Paran 40.

► Greenville 90, Pike County 77.

► Johnson-Gainesville 78, Jefferson 76 (OT).

► Lakeside-DeKalb 82, Southwest DeKalb 57: Lakeside (10-6) — Paul Bacot, 17; Southwest — Jarek Swain, 14.

► Lakeview Academy 52, Athens Christian 42: Lakeview (10-7) — J.B. Little, 19; Athens Christian — Nick Dalton, 10.

► Lassiter 67, Northwest Whitfield 43.

► Lithia Springs 75, North Clayton 58.

► Marietta 61, Harrison 38.

► Monroe Area 78, Social Circle 58.

Monroe Area (9-8) — Kevin Green and Demario Young, 13 each; Social Circle (7-6) — Cagney Crawford and Patrick Parker, 12 each.

► Montgomery County 91, Deely County 85.

► North Springs 45, St. Pius 32: North Springs (8-12) — Donald Lawrence, 16; St. Pius (12-9) — Aaron Parr, 9.

► Parkview 81, Newnan 76.

► Pebblebrook 85, Northgate 77.

► Pope 67, Murray County 64: Pope (10-10) — David Wedekind, 28; Murray County falls to 13-9.

► Redan 50, Cedar Grove 41: Redan (17-5) — Gerald Stegall, 32 points, 14 rebounds.

► Riverwood 58, Forsyth Central 51 (OT).

► Roswell 71, Milton 56: Roswell (16-5) — John Muttioli, 18, and Collins Brown, 16; Milton — Curt Heyden, 22, and Geo Gregg, 20.

► St. Francis 83, Trion 63.

► South Forsyth 65, Mariet 62 (OT): South Forsyth (17-3) — Taylor Patterson, 25.

► Southside 68, Avondale 58: Southside — Brandon Gaston, 25.

► Sprayberry 47, North Cobb 44.

► Stockbridge 75, Franklin County 71: Stockbridge (14-7) — Quin Humphrey, 25; Franklin County (16-5) — Amonzo Gannt, 26.

► Temple 63, Atlanta International 27.

► Towers 80, Clarkston 39: Towers — Keron McKenzie, 21.

► Villa Rica 58, LaGrange 51.

► Walker 64, Adairsville 50.

► W.D. Mohammed 76, Landmark Christian 55.

► Wesleyan 77, Holy Innocents' 48: Wesleyan (15-7) — Drew Prehmus, 25; Holy Innocents' (3-15) — Daniel Quirk, 14.

► Whitefield Academy 115, Mt. Zion-Carroll 40.

► Wilkinson County 70, Oglethorpe County 43.

► Woodstock 70, Sequoyah 58: Woodstock (14-7) — Ben Brim, 15; Sequoyah (6-13) — Patrick Muza, 14.

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