

Running *the* gauntlet

Last week promises to test Newton in 2-AAAAA chase

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The Newton High School boys' basketball team has met almost every challenge thus far, but this one borders on the absurd.

By the time this week ends, the Rams will have played three region games in three different cities and will have run up more than 150 miles on the odometer.

Tip the weatherman.

"We've got a busy week ahead of us," Bradley said. "I don't think [fatigue] will be a factor. We've played three games in a week before. It's put-up-or-shut-up time."

Newton (15-6, 7-4 Region 2-AAAAA), which entered Tuesday's game with Redan tied for second place in the region standings, plays at Morrow (8:30 p.m. Friday) and at Douglass (2:30 p.m. Saturday) in one 2-day span.

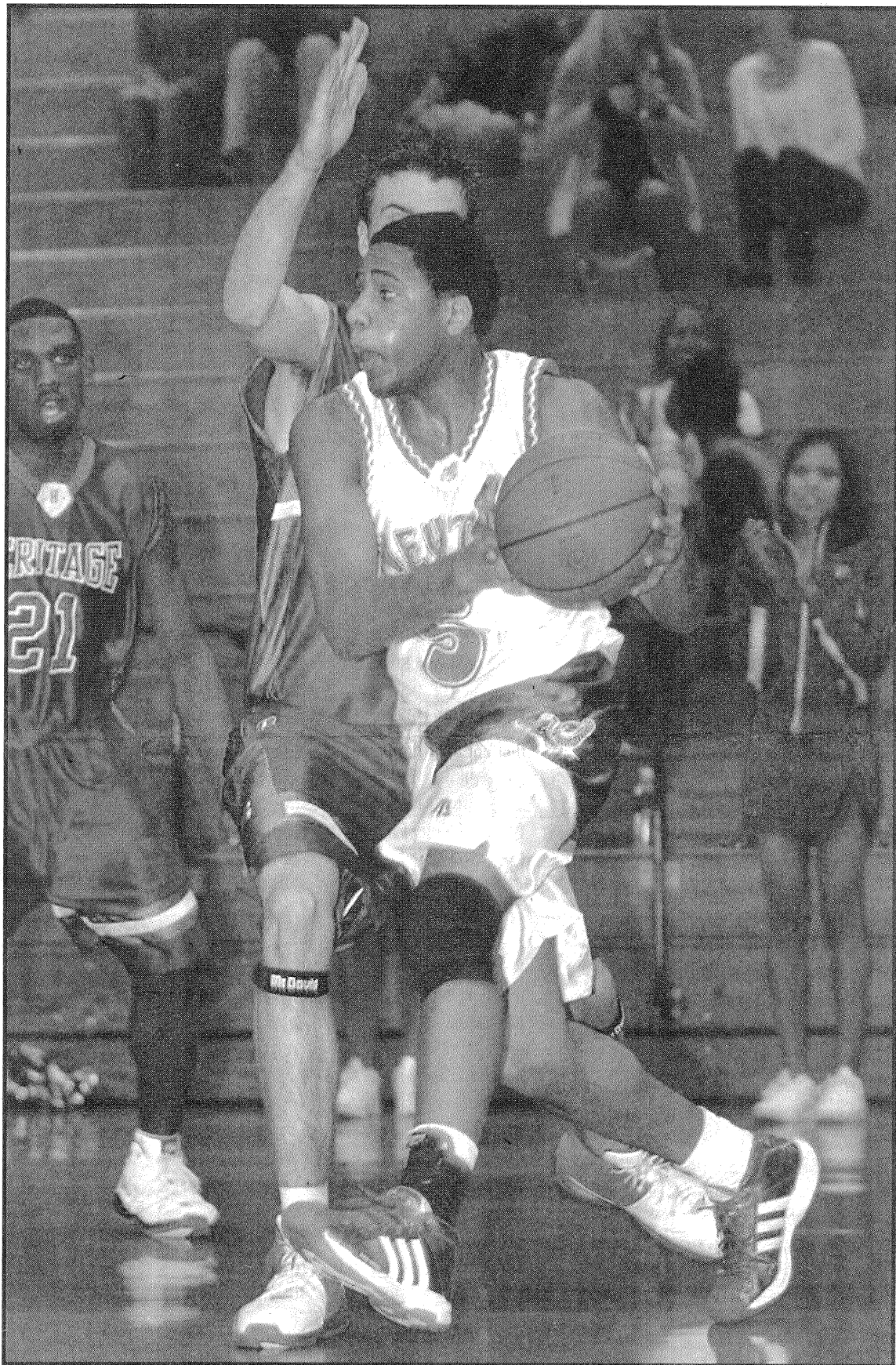
How the Rams fare will almost certainly determine where they fall in the postseason pecking order.

"It's been a lot of fun working with these guys," Bradley said. "This next week or so will decide whether or not we've had a great season or just a good one."

To complicate matters, the Region 2-AAAAA Tournament opens Tuesday at Douglass High School in Atlanta. There, Newton must reach the semifinal round in order to qualify for the state playoffs.

Newton's game against Douglass — originally set for Jan. 28 — and its non-region game against Rockdale County a night later had to be postponed because of the ice storm that struck Georgia over the weekend.

The Georgia High School Association waived its by-law restriction concerning the number of games permitted on school days, which paved the way for both games to be made up this week. Rockdale County has since elected not to reschedule.



Mandi Singer/The Covington News

Knifing through the defense: Newton's Trent Brown (5) makes his move down the lane during a game against Heritage earlier this season.