

# Heritage hires new coach

## Legendary Bradley takes basketball reins

BY JEFF GILLESPIE

SPORTS EDITOR

jeff.gillespie@rockdalecitizen.com

CONYERS — Ron Bradley is coming out of retirement yet again.

The legendary high school basketball coach is now the head

boys basketball coach at Heritage High School, only 10 days after stepping down at Greater Atlanta Christian School.

"We are very excited about having Ron come to Heritage," Heritage athletics director Chuck Landy said. "He had some offers from other schools, but he had a

meeting with our principal Mr. (Greg) Fowler, and they were able to work out the details. We are very pleased to have him join us."

Bradley replaces Tony Watkins, who stepped down after guiding Heritage to a 14-12 season, his first and only season



Ron Bradley

going to Heritage. I've admired

with the Patriots.

"I guess you just can't keep an old coach down," Bradley said in an interview while traveling in Denver. "I'm real excited about

•See Bradley, Page 5A

## Bradley

### •From Page 1A

their program from afar for awhile. When we resigned at GAC, we left the door open to coaching. We said if there's a good fit, we'd be interested. After my meeting at Heritage, I could see how enthusiastic they are there."

Bradley is the nation's winningest active high school basketball coach, with a record of 1,327-379 in 47 years of coaching. This winter, the GAC squad was the 124th that he'd guided as a varsity coach.

This is the fourth time the 72-year-old coach has retired only to return to coaching.

Bradley returned to Newton High as basketball coach in May 2001, stepping down

in March 2005 after leading the Rams to a 21-10 record and a trip to the Class AAAAA Final Four, which was Newton's deepest run in the state playoffs in 33 years. Three months later, he accepted the post of basketball coach and assistant athletics director at GAC.

Bradley started his coaching career at Newton in 1957. His Newton squads won 129 straight home games from 1959-67 and won the 1964 state championship. He has won four state titles as a coach.

After leaving Newton in 1975, Bradley moved to George Walton Academy, where he built that school's athletic programs from the bottom up. He won state titles there in basketball (1976 and 1985) and football

(1980).

He's also coached at Trinity Christian School in Dublin, Loganville High School, Piedmont Academy in Monticello and Port St. Joe High School in Florida.

Bradley is the only active coach to be inducted into the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame, back in 1997.

He graduated from Avondale High School in 1953 and graduated from the University of Georgia in 1957.

While at UGA, he played basketball and baseball for the Bulldogs, winning an SEC championship in baseball.

Bradley's first order of business at Heritage will be a meet-and-greet with the players and parents at 7 p.m. Thursday.