

# Bradley going for record 925th win

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COVINGTON — Newton coach Ron Bradley is going for his 925th career boys basketball win tonight to become the boys winningest coach in the state as the Rams travel to play the Salem Seminoles.

Upon breaking the record currently held by the late Eric Staples, Bradley will automatically become the seventh winningest boys coach in the nation. The record has belonged to Staples since retiring in 1963.

“Coach Staples was a great coach, even though I never coached against him,” said Bradley. “He coached back in a time when you didn’t have to lock the gym.”

Bradley began the trek into Georgia basketball history on Nov. 22, 1957 with an 82-34 Newton win over Loganville. Bradley left the Rams in 1974 only to return to where it all started three years ago.

During his first stint as the Rams coach, Bradley compiled three state championship teams and compiled a winning streak of 129 home games — a national record which is still in existence 37 years later.

Last season, Bradley became the all-time winningest coach in Georgia basketball with a 66-43 win over Eastside for his 1,255th career win. The Rams went on to win the Region 8-AAAA championship before being eliminated in the state playoffs. But not before Bradley chalked up his 1,260th win.

During his 46 years of coaching basketball Bradley has acquired quite a few mementoes as a boys coach to go along with his state titles and winning streak. Some of those include six times state runner up and 16 region championships.

Unlike some coaches with his longevity, Bradley still not only has a love for the game he also has a love for the kids.

One time, Bradley was talking to a coach who made a remark of how he couldn’t wait until the season was over because of the kids.

“I remember praying to God,” said Bradley, “asking him to never make me that sour towards kids.

“But you can’t do anything about the past, only the present.”

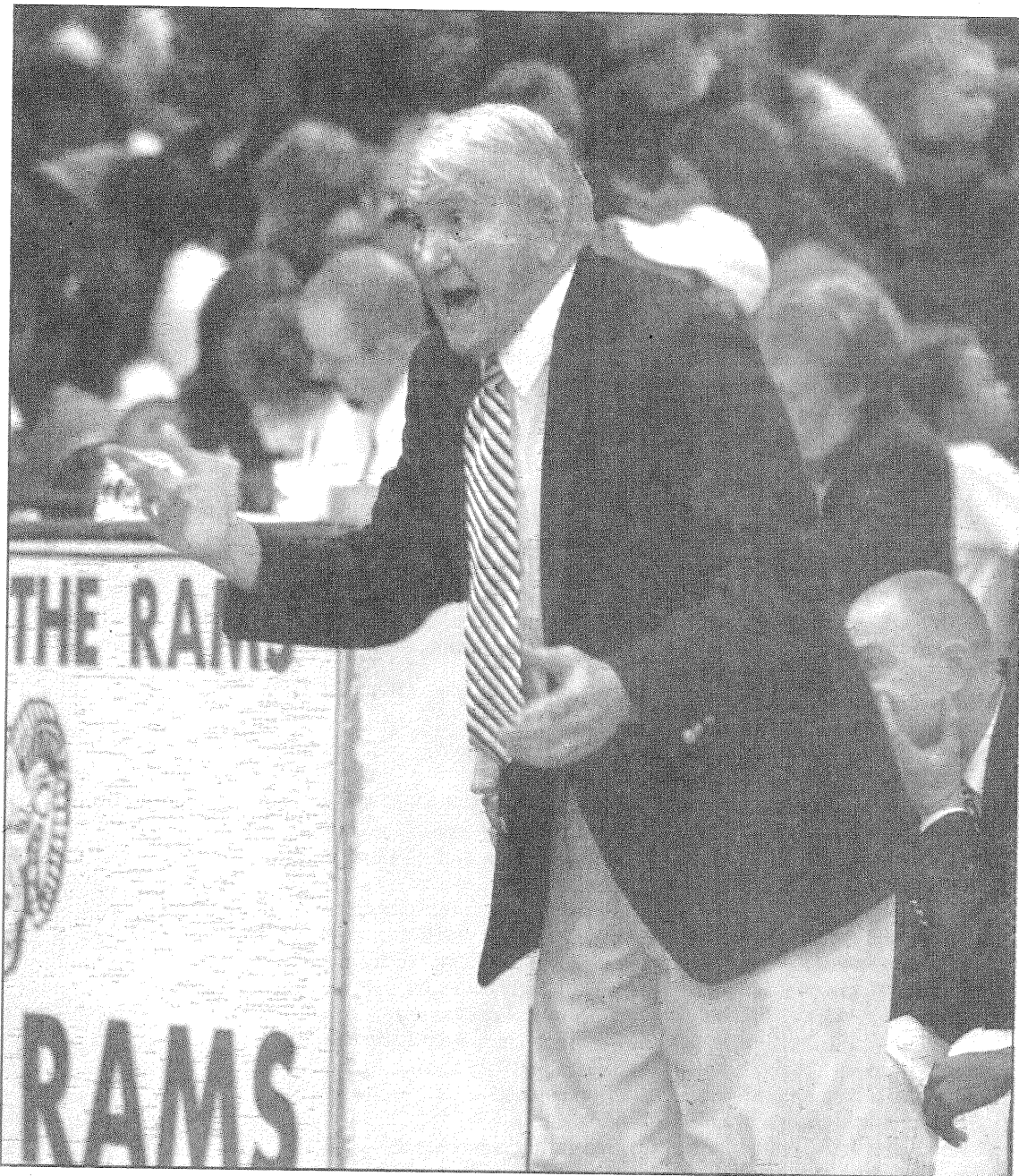
Another thing that keeps the coach going is his 50-plus year relationship with his wife Jan.

“When I started coaching we decided that she wouldn’t work so that she could help me. She keeps our records and helps out a lot,” said Bradley. “I’ve known a lot of coaches that have gotten divorced because of this game. But by her doing this we’re able to spend time together. Everything I have is because of her.”

Bradley can be found in the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in Macon and has turned down the opportunity to be inducted into the Georgia High School Hall of Fame in Dalton.

“I want to wait until it’s all over so that everything will be complete,” said Bradley.

And considering his love for the game, the kids and the support from his wife, it could be a long time.



Newton boys basketball coach Ron Bradley will be looking for career win No. 925 when the Rams travel to take on Salem tonight at Salem High School. If the Rams win, Bradley will set the all-time boys basketball win record in the state of Georgia. Also, it will make him the seventh winningest boys' coach in the nation. — Photo by Shannon Peacock