

Sports Page

CONTACT US. STAN AWTRY, GWINNETT SPORTS, 6455 BEST FRIEND ROAD, NORCROSS, GA 30071.

Bradley will coach Newton again

Prior tenure set success standards

By STAN AWTRY
sawtry@ajc.com



Ronald Bradley had a 430-69 won-lost record in 17 years at Newton County.

George Walton Academy, Trinity Christian, Loganville and Piedmont Academy.

"I was coaching the game I love and working with some great people, but I knew I was really a Georgian, and I needed to be back there," Bradley said of his one year at Port St. Joe.

So when Billy Hendricks resigned, Bradley started getting phone calls from former players and colleagues encouraging him to seek the job. He interviewed Tuesday last week and was offered the job Friday. Newton principal J.W. Rutledge played for Bradley on the state championship team.

Bradley was elected to the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in 1997. He was inducted into the Georgia Athletic Coaches Association's Circle of Achievement in 1999.

Last year, he was awarded the Steve Schmidt Award for outstanding contributions to Georgia basketball by the Atlanta Tipoff Club. Also, the Ronald M. Bradley Gymnasium in Covington was dedicated in his honor.

Ronald Bradley is getting a rare opportunity to finish what he started.

Bradley, who began his coaching career at Newton County High School, will get a chance to finish it there. Bradley has been hired to coach the boys varsity basketball team.

"We're really looking forward to it," Bradley said. "So much of our foundation was formed from our days at Newton County, we're excited to be going back."

Bradley, 66, spent the last year at Port St. Joe, Fla., where his team went 27-7 and reached the state semifinals.

But he's best known for those days in the early '60s when Newton County set the standard for basketball success in Georgia.

During his 17-year tenure as Rams coach, the program went 430-69 and won a national-record 129 consecutive home games. Newton won 10 region championships, reached the state finals three times and won it all in 1964.

"I hope I can continue to coach for a while," Bradley said. "I enjoy coaching, and I want to coach. It's always a challenge working with young people, but it's very rewarding."

Bradley's career won-lost record is 1,225-314, leaving him just 29 victories short of tying the late D.B. Carroll for first place for most career coaching wins.

Bradley also has coached at