

# Ga. House ready to recognize Bradley

## Legendary coach draws further praise

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Consider it his own personal brand of March Madness.

"It's almost like a funeral," Newton head coach Ron Bradley said. "Every time we turn around, there's someone else saying nice things about us."

Such is the plight of the state's all-time winningest high school basketball coach.

Having already been honored by Gov. Perdue and the State Senate, Thursday Bradley and his lengthy list of accomplishments will be officially recognized by the State House of Representatives at 9 a.m. Thursday at The Capitol in Atlanta.

The ceremony marks the end of a magical month for the 70-year-old legend who retired as head coach of the Newton High School boys' basketball team last week. It included a berth in the Class AAAAA State Tournament Final Four and a third retirement from coaching.

"It's been a fantastic experience," Bradley said, "to celebrate a great year and fun career."

During his first tenure with Newton's boys' basketball team (1958-75), Bradley won 10 region championships in 17 seasons and guided Newton to its only state crown in 1964. He directed his teams to a national-record 129 consecutive home wins during one 9-year span.

Upon returning to Newton prior to the 2001-02 campaign, Bradley led the Rams to three 20-win seasons and three state tournament appearances. He went 76-39 during his second tour at the school, winning the Region 8-AAAA championship in 2003.

Bradley became the state's all-time winningest coach in 2003 with victory No. 1,255 and its all-time leader for wins as a boys' coach (925) a year later. Bradley's 948 boys' wins rank him seventh nationally; he won 506 of those at Newton.

The recognition he has received at the end of his spectacular coaching career carry its own special significance.

"They're real special because so many people worked hard to make them possible," Bradley said. "It's not one year, it's not five years, it's a number of years."

All told, Bradley won 1,589 games in three sports, losing only 482. In basketball alone, he is nearly 1,000 games above .500 for his career (1,301-353).



**Ron Bradley**

will be honored by the state house Thursday in Atlanta.