



Rodney P. Walker Sr.

June 26, 1946 - May 9, 2026

Rodney P. Walker, Sr.—beloved husband, father, grandfather, teacher, and one of Georgia’s most respected high school coaches—passed away on May 9, 2026, in Atlanta, Georgia, at the age of 79.

Born on June 26, 1946, in Hawkinsville, Georgia, Rodney dedicated four decades of his life to education and coaching. Over a career spanning from 1970 to 2011, he became one of the winningest coaches in Georgia high school football history, recording more than 300 career victories and leading championship programs across the state.

Rodney began his career at Wade Hampton High School in Hampton, South Carolina, before serving at numerous schools throughout Georgia, including Jones County, Villa Rica, Gilmer, Habersham Central, West Rome, Stephens County, Peach County, Sandy Creek, and Mary Persons. He captured a state championship at West Rome in 1984 and led multiple programs to region titles and deep playoff runs. Beyond the wins, he was known for the discipline, toughness, and accountability he instilled in his teams—principles that shaped generations of young men and women.

Rodney also shared a unique place in Georgia football history with his son, Chip, as the first father-son duo to both win state championships as head coaches—an accomplishment that brought him immense pride.

Perhaps most meaningful to him was the lasting impact he had on his players and assistant coaches. Known as a mentor and builder of people, Rodney developed countless coaches and leaders who carried his influence forward across the state. His coaching tree extended far beyond the programs he led, with many former players and assistants going on to become coaches, athletic directors, and leaders in athletics—continuing the standard he set. While his achievements on the field were remarkable, his true legacy was found in the relationships he built and the lives he changed, instilling discipline, resilience, and a higher standard in everyone he led.

At the center of Rodney's life was his deep love for his wife and children. He was a devoted husband and a proud father, and nothing meant more to him than time spent with his family. "Papa" especially loved showing up for his grandchildren, faithfully attending their sporting events and proudly supporting them through every milestone and achievement.

Outside of Georgia high school athletics, Rodney enjoyed golf and was a loyal supporter of the Georgia Bulldogs and the Atlanta Braves, never hesitating to share his thoughts on Facebook about how they were doing.

Rodney was preceded in death by his father, John P. Walker, and his mother, Anne Chapman Brasher.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 58 years, Adecia Pierce Walker; his daughter, Leigh Walker Eastman and her husband Kyle; and his son, Rodney P. "Chip" Walker, Jr. and his wife Meaghan. He also leaves behind three cherished grandchildren, Rodney P. "Trey" Walker, III and his wife Lauren, Bryant Oliver Walker, and Marlowe James Walker; as well as his great-grandson, Rodney P. "Rhodes" Walker, IV. He is also survived by an extended family of former players, coaches, and friends who considered him a mentor

and role model.

A memorial service to honor Rodney's life and legacy will be held on Monday, May 18, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Newnan, located at 15 W. Washington Street, Newnan, Georgia. The service will be officiated by Rev. Dr. Jimmy Ellison and Dr. Lee Sheppard. Family and friends are invited to gather for a reception following the service to celebrate Rodney's life and share memories. As a nod to Rodney's lifelong love of high school athletics and the countless students, players, coaches, and communities he impacted, guests are welcome to wear their school colors.

In place of flowers and in honor of Coach Walker's love of student athletics, the family invites you to consider a donation in his name to your local high school booster club or the American Heart Association.

Rodney Walker's legacy is not defined by the scoreboard, but by the lives he influenced, the standards he set, and the generations of players and coaches who carry his impact forward.

Upcoming Events

Memorial Service

MAY 18. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Baptist Church of Newnan
15 W. Washington St.
Newnan, GA 30263