

## – **BOBBY IVEY**

Everybody has a story to tell about Bobby Ivey.

The former Laurens District High School head coach made football fun. He made it hard work but left memories to accompany the sweat and toil.

Ivey, a Woodruff native, both played and coached in the Shrine Bowl and North-South Game. From 1968 through 1996, he coached winning teams at Marion, Lake City, Northwestern (Rock Hill) and Laurens, winning 206 games, 12 region championships and a state championship with the Raiders in 1991. He was inducted into the South Carolina Football Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2016.

Today Ivey lives on Lake Greenwood, as do fellow coaching legends Keith Richardson and Shell Dula. He only coached the Raiders for 10 years, but he has been in Laurens County for 31.

“It’s the longest we’ve stayed anywhere,” he said. “It was a good time coaching in Laurens, and we’ve enjoyed living at the lake ever since I retired.”

Ivey’s greatest influence remains his own head coach, the great W. L. Varner.

“He was the reason I got into coaching,” he said. “I knew, from the 10th grade on, I wanted to coach, and I never changed and it was because Varner. He was pretty sharp.”

The Raiders were ready for success when Ivey took the helm, succeeding Buddy Jennings.

“There’s no question that Buddy left me with a fine program,” he said. “The year that he retired from coaching, he won nine games, so he put the pressure on. We were fortunate to win 11, but we lost in the second round of the playoffs to a team we had beaten in the regular season, Westside, 42-41, and that team had only allowed 42 points in all the games leading up to that one.”

For a man who wins so often, sometimes the most indelible memories are the ones that got away.

