

## Cottage Hill volleyball coach Jennifer Newton named Press-Register coach of the year

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Cottage Hill Christian volleyball coach Jennifer Newton led the Warriors to the 3A state title. She led Cottage Hill to an AISA title in 2006. She was named the Press-Register's coach of the year. (G.M. Andrews/Staff Photographer)

MOBILE, Alabama -- The third time proved to be the charm for Cottage Hill coach Jennifer Newton, who guided the Warriors to their first AHSAA state title in 2010 after losing in the first round the previous 2 years.

Armed with an experienced roster, and sparked by all-around leader Meredith Parrott, Cottage Hill won the 3A state title.

"We had the same core group from last season on the team this year," Newton said. "We played with a very young squad last year, which earned us quite a few losses, but we gained valuable experience as well. The biggest difference this year was confidence."

Newton had already led Cottage Hill to an AISA volleyball title in 2006. Her record is 192-119.

"I can't really say that we had a turning point," she said, "but I knew we were capable of doing something special when I saw how hard the girls were willing to work."

In the state tournament, the Warriors trailed in all 3 matches they won.

"We played as a team, in every sense of the word, especially in the championship match, when we battled back after losing the first two games," Newton said.

Could this be the start of a dynasty? Cottage Hill loses just one senior, and boasted four juniors, three sophomores and two freshmen in 2010.

"Coaches like to talk about chemistry of a team, and we have it for sure," Newton said. "The girls on the team are best friends and very close, on and off the court. I think their closeness and love for each other definitely contributed to our success. They played with a unity that doesn't happen very often."