

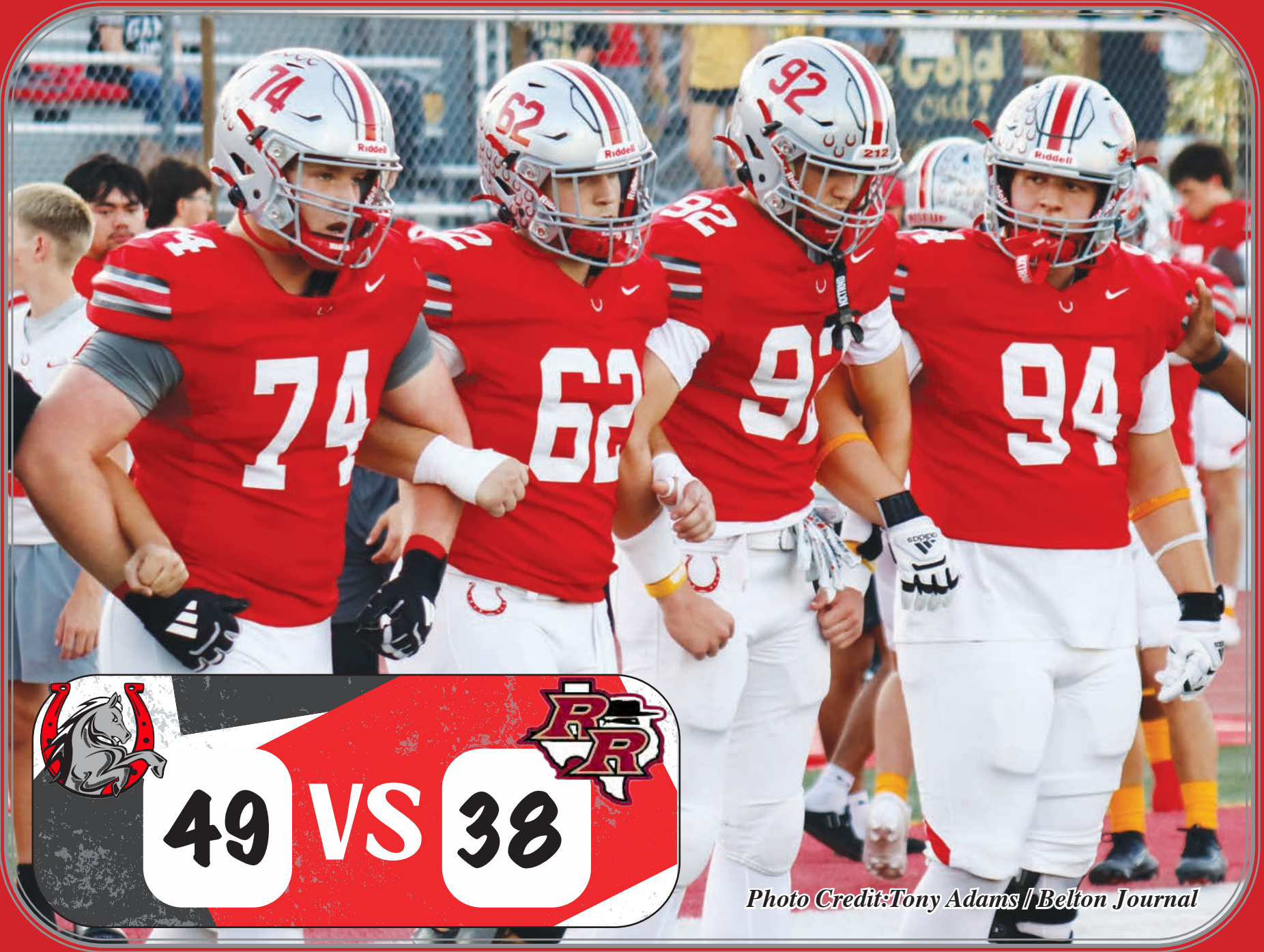
Friday Night Football Frenzy



September 27, 2025

A publication of the Belton Journal

Week Five



49 VS 38



Photo Credit: Tony Adams / Belton Journal

Onside kick return spurs Broncos' 49-38 win

By Tony Adams
The Belton Journal

If Friday night's game at Tiger Field told us anything about District 8-5A-II, the games will not be boring.

The Lake Belton Broncos and Rouse Raiders battled it out in the district opener on Lake Belton's Go For Gold Night, a game recognizing those battling pediatric cancer.

Lake Belton Joshua Lighthall's 51-yard onside kick recovery and sprint to the end zone sparked a 21-point swing and helped lift the Broncos to a 49-38 win over the Raiders.

Maverik Maddux's 32-yard pass to Davion Peters set Maddux's one-yard plunge to get Lake on the board. Long

Chuong's extra point made it 7-0.

After Rouse grabbed a 21-7 lead in the second quarter, Maddux hit Peters on a 23-yard pass to the left side. Chuong's extra point cut the margin to seven with 10:19 left in the first half. Gavin Stewart's interception set up a 29-yard touchdown pass from Maddux to Peters. Chuong's extra point tied the game at 21-21 with 5:35 left in the first half.

A 25-yard field goal by Rouse ended the first half, with the Raiders up, 24-21.

Maddux hit Luke Phillips for a go-ahead touchdown of 32 yards. Chuong's extra point put Lake up 28-24.

After a 58-yard Rouse strike to take the lead, they extended their lead to ten on a three-yard touchdown plunge.

On the ensuing kickoff, Rouse tried an onside kick. Lighthall snagged the ball and raced 50 yards untouched for the score with 9:14 left in the game. Chuong converted the kick to bring the Broncos back to within three points.

"Josh Lighthall is on varsity for what he can do on special teams," Lake Belton head coach Brian Cope said. "It was a huge momentum swing for us."

After a three-and-out stop by the Broncos defense, Gavin Owens slammed the door with a fourth down stop.

The Broncos scored again after the stop. Zyien Dupree's seven-yard run with 4:36 to play gave the Broncos the lead, 42-38.

After the Broncos got another defense stop sacking London Morgan on fourth



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down, Arrington Alexander’s eight-yard touchdown run with 3:35 play provided the richly needed insurance for the Broncos.

Lake got a late interception from Christian Onchweri to halt the Raiders’ comeback hopes.

“I told these guys every game in this district will have these challenges,” Cope said. “They stepped up tonight.”



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Tigers fall on road to No. 7 Gobblers

By Clay Whittington
The Belton Journal

The Tigers were on the verge of being blown out, but it did not happen.

After a hard-fought, back-and-forth first half, state-ranked Cuero exploded for 21 unanswered points to assume a commanding 42-24 lead with 4 minutes, 8 seconds remaining in regulation.

Belton refused to succumb to the scenario, however, rallying to take a one-point advantage, 43-42, before the Class 4A, Division II No. 7 Gobblers produced a 94-yard touchdown drive on the ensuing possession to emerge with a 50-43 victory.

The outcome concluded a contest that witnessed the teams combine for 65 points

in the second half.

On the heels of a 30-yard touchdown connection between seniors Jaxxon Marie and Walker Dietze to give Cuero an 18-point advantage in the fourth quarter, which came after recovering a kickoff, the Tigers appeared to be doomed.

Approximately two minutes later, though, senior running back Gino Zecca's 10-yard touchdown sparked a 19-0 run for Belton.

A fumble recovery led to sophomore quarterback Sawyer Harbin finding Asa Thomas, a senior, for a six-yard touchdown, and after recovering an onside kick, the Tigers needed one play to convert as Harbin connected with Gavin Ross for a 52-yard score.

Unfortunately, the Gobblers responded with a 94-yard march into the end zone and added a two-point conversion to punctuate the contest's scoring.

The outcome drops Belton's record to 2-3 heading into its bye week. The Tigers open their District 10-5A, Division II

Continued on Page 10




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schedule against visiting Killeen Ellison on Oct. 9.

Cuero (5-0) opened the game by starting at its own 1-yard line, and it did not work out well as the Gobblers were forced to punt away the possession less than a minute later.

The Tigers capitalized on the ensuing drive, covering 46 yards in four plays with Zecca breaking free for an 18-yard touchdown to give Belton a 7-0 advantage with 10:00 remaining in the first period.

After exchanging fruitless possessions, the Gobblers crossed the goal line with 10:47 left in the second quarter, tying the contest 7-7 on a five-yard touchdown pass from Marie to Dietze.

The score held until 81 seconds remained in the half, when Harbin, who assumed the starting role under center prior to halftime last week following an injury to junior Will Shepard, punched in a 1-yard touchdown to cap off a 92-yard drive spanning almost five minutes.

The cushion was immediately deflated, though, thanks to Marie's 34-yard touchdown to junior Camelo Perez with 26

second remaining, and the squads went into halftime tied 14-14.

Tigers senior kicker Corin Ramesar connected on a 22-yard field goal to begin the third-quarter scoring, but a 31-yard touchdown from Marie to junior D'Zayvin Bonner sent the Cuero back atop

Harbin and Achilles Palomares combined for a 42-yard score with 8:11 left in the third quarter, but the Gobblers reached the end zone approximately two minutes later to begin their rally.

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Sep 05 / 07:00 PM AT Georgetown High School Georgetown, TX		Sep 04 / 07:00 PM AT McNeil High School Cedar Park, TX
Sep 12 / 07:00 PM VS East View High School Belton, TX		Sep 11 / 07:00 PM VS Killeen High School Belton, TX
Sep 19 / 07:00 PM VS San Angelo Central Belton, TX		Sep 26 / 07:00 PM VS Rouse High School Belton, TX
Sep 26 / 07:00 PM AT Cuero High School Cuero, TX		Oct 03 / 07:00 PM AT East View High School Georgetown, TX
Oct 09 / 07:00 PM VS C.E. Ellison Belton, TX		Oct 10 / 07:00 PM VS Glenn HS Tiger Stadium Belton, TX
Oct 17 / 07:00 PM AT University High School Waco, TX		Oct 17 / 07:00 PM VS Leander HS Tiger Stadium Belton, TX
Oct 24 / 07:00 PM VS Rudder High School Belton, TX		Oct 24 / 07:00 PM AT Cedar Park HS Cedar Park, TX
Oct 30 / 07:00 PM VS Waco High School Belton, TX		Oct 31 / 07:00 PM VS Georgetown High School Belton, TX
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