

Near-comeback breathes new life on New Caney's season

By **CARMEN COLUNGA**

Two weeks ago, in the midst of a blowout loss to Cleveland, New Caney's football team looked to have turned the corner with an efficient offensive performance in the second half.

Now, after a near-comeback victory over Baytown Sterling, the Eagles begin their first season in District 14-5A with a clean slate.

The Eagles' district season starts off with a challenge, as they go on the road to face a tough Lufkin squad.

"I see it as a new season," head coach Russell Roberts said. "We're 0-0 going into district; so is Lufkin. Numerically, we're in the same boat. It will be a monumental task for us, but it's how we react that is important."



Friday's third-quarter play against Baytown Sterling proved a worthy foundation to build on. Down 25-6 at halftime, the Eagles moved the ball down the field in the third quarter and held the Rangers to a few three-and-outs.

New Caney came within a touchdown after three quarters, but were ultimately unable to turn the comeback into a win, losing 39-24.

"I liked our overall effort. It's been a great deal better. We had a chance to give up, but we didn't," Roberts said. "I didn't like that we didn't execute and that teams can do certain things against us, but that's why we practice and work to get better."

Lufkin is reeling after a 28-21 loss to Galena Park North Shore Oct. 3. Offensively, the Panthers have been a mixed bag, capable of scoring 35 points or scoring 10. Roberts said his defense will be crucial to keeping the Eagles in the game.

"[The defense's] job is to stop Lufkin. Their job is to give the team the opportunity to score," Roberts said. "A huge plus would be to create turnovers. That's something we have been doing a little but not as much as I would like, but I think this week will be the week we see more of it."