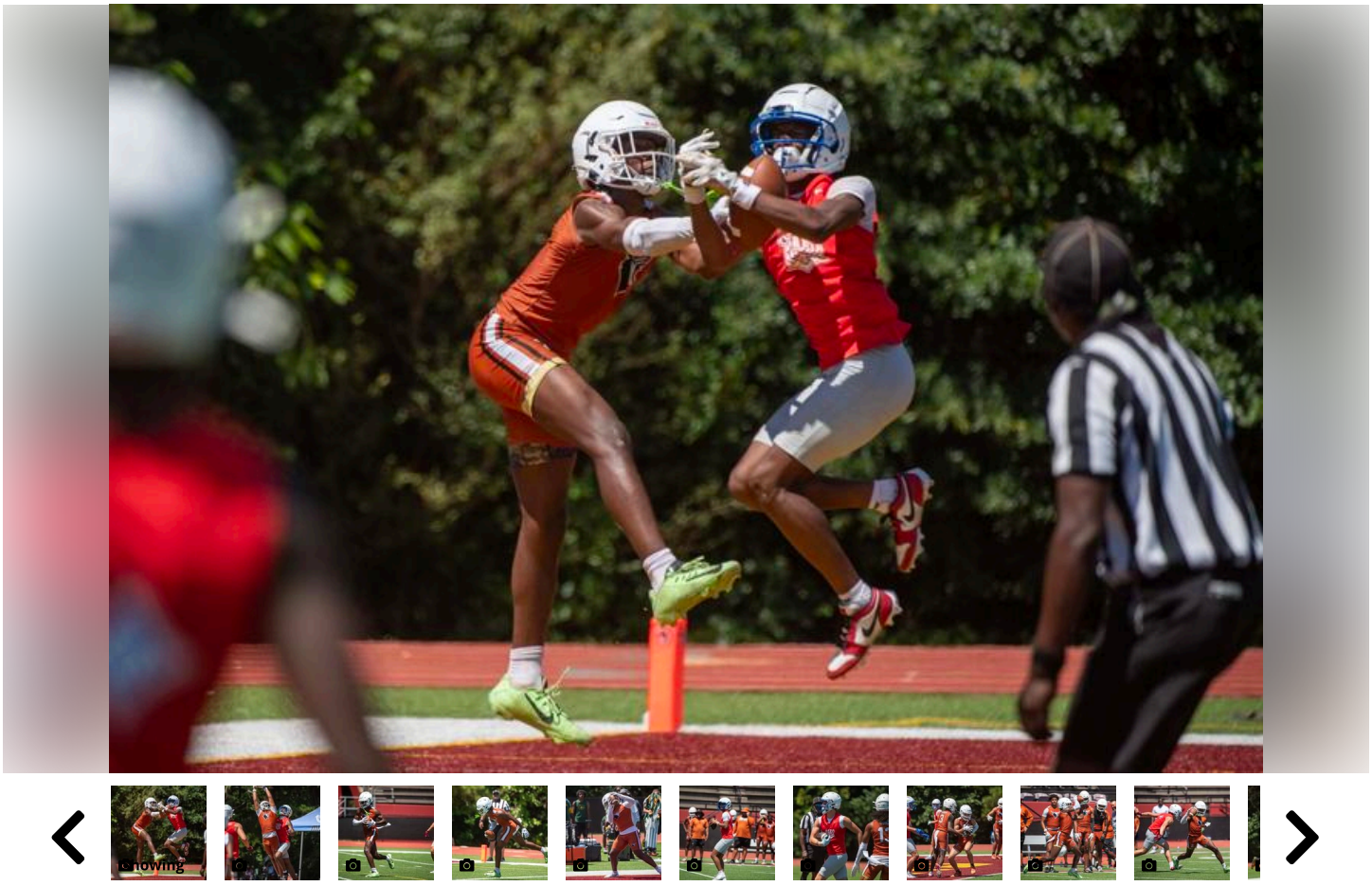
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Walton Settles for Second in Lutzie 7-on-7

By Liam Dreesen MDJ Sports Writer
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Scenes from Tuesday's Lutzie 7 on 7 football semi final game between Kell and Walton at Lassiter. (Photo: Anthony Stalcup)

MARIETTA — The championship game of the Lutzie 7-on-7 tournament, pitting Walton's A-team and Cherokee, came down to the final play at Lassiter High School.

As the clock hit zero, Walton quarterback Kaeden Gilstrap threw a ball toward the end zone that sailed just over his intended target.

Cherokee, one of Walton's region rivals, went 2-8 a year ago and dropped a 48-7 decision to the Raiders in the regular season. It got a modicum of payback Tuesday as the players stormed the field to celebrate its 20-18 win.

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Walton started fast when Gilstrap threw a deep post to his receiver for a first-play touchdown.

Coach Daniel Brunner said a quick start was part of the Raiders' plan and had been their M.O. all day.

Cherokee responded with a touchdown of its own, followed by two defensive stops and another touchdown giving it a 17-6 lead.

Walton came back with a touchdown and two stops of its own, which cut the lead down to one. However, the momentum shifted back in Cherokee's favor after an interception earned the Warriors three points and extended the lead to four.

"When it mattered the most, we just didn't make the plays," Brunner said.

Walton earned its spot in the championship after defeating Kell 23-17.

Kell coach Bobby May said he was happy with how the tournament went because his team got in some good work and played hard, but he said the Longhorns needed to work on consistency.

Walton and Kell were the best of the eight Cobb County teams that played in the annual Lutzie tournament.

Lassiter saw its A-team finish group play with a 3-0 record, earning the Trojans a first-round bye in bracket play. However, they fell to Lithia Springs 37-28 in the second round.

Kennesaw Mountain and Sprayberry matched up in the first round of bracket play, with the Mustangs edging out a 22-21 victory. Kennesaw Mountain then fell to Cherokee 15-14 in the second round.

Walton's B-team made it to the quarterfinals after winning its first two games in bracket play, then lost to Meadowcreek 22-14.

Pope was able to make it out of the first round with a 23-2 win over Dunwoody, but it lost 20-11 to No. 1 seed River Ridge in the second round.

Lassiter's B-team fell to Whitewater 29-2 in the first round of bracket play.