

Generations keep Eagles-Armadillos rivalry going for 100 games

**By Mike Lee
Eagle Contributor**

The Goldthwaite Eagles and San Saba Armadillos have had other longtime opponents in football, but nothing like they've experienced against each other.

While other rivalries ended or stalled, Goldthwaite-San Saba survived for this year's 100th game scheduled for Oct. 13 at Eagle Field.

Why this rivalry survived is easily answered by proximity since the two towns are separated by just 22 miles of Texas Highway 16. Another obvious answer is the school enrollments have remained similar. San Saba never has been more than one UIL classification larger than Goldthwaite, and the two schools have been in and out of the same district since 1978. Currently, both are members of District 7-2A Division I.

The Eagles and Armadillos first played in 1916 and began playing regularly in 1922. They played twice in the same season five times during the 1920s and '30s. They've played every year since 1953.

The Goldthwaite-San Saba rivalry also survived because the townspeople demanded it – even through generational turnover.

"Players for both teams grow up and become parents and grandparents. Some move away, but the ones that stayed kept the rivalry going through their kids and grandkids. It's four or five generations now," said Goldthwaite resident Ronald Cagle, who played for the Eagles in the 1960s, had three daughters serve as Eagle cheerleaders in the 1980s and 1990s, plus three grandsons play for the Eagles within the last decade.

Grayson Wetzel cited the people connections between Goldthwaite and San Saba.

"There are so many friendships, kinships and work partnerships. So many people in each town know each other, and that keeps the rivalry at the forefront of a lot of conversations," said Wetzel, Goldthwaite's superintendent from 1981-

Continued Next Page

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