

AU linebacker Brady named Empire 8 Player of the Year; 14 others honored

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ALFRED, NY Brenton Brady (Rochester/Marshall), a junior outside linebacker on the Alfred University football team, has been named Player of the Year by the Empire 8 Conference. Brady finished the regular season with team-leading 90 tackles (51 solo), including 12.5 for loss and seven sacks. He leads AU with three interceptions (one returned for a touchdown) and is tied for the team lead with three fumble recoveries. Brady, the Saxons' short yardage run specialist, has rushed for 64 yards and four touchdowns. Brady was joined on the All-Empire 8 All-Conference First Team by senior defensive end Bill Battaglia (Cheektowaga/JFK). Battaglia has 41 tackles and leads the team in tackles for loss (15) and sacks (10) and fumble recoveries (3). Brady is a repeat selection to the all-conference First Team. Battaglia earned Second Team honors as a junior in 2003. Earning Second Team all-Empire 8 honors for Alfred were sophomore tailback Chaz Bruce (Rochester, NY/Marshall), junior offensive tackle Matt Nelson (Glens Fall, NY/Glens Falls) and sophomore offensive tackle Mike Yokopovich (Webster, NY/Webster-Schroeder). Bruce has run for 1,118 yards (sixth most for a single season in AU history) and six touchdowns. His seven games with at least 100 yards rushing are tied for the school's single-season mark. Yokopovich (a guard last season) and Nelson are in their second season as starters. They lead an offensive line that helped the Saxon offense generate 281 yards per game, including 125 on the ground. Saxons earning honorable mention from the conference were senior quarterback Ron Duliba (Forestville, NY/Forestville), senior wide receivers Chris Sargent (Ogdensburg, NY/Ogdensburg) and Jake Sprague (Johnsonburg, PA/Johnsonburg), freshman placekicker Chris Reynolds (Pittsford, NY/Pittsford Sutherland), freshman defensive tackle Don Miller (LeRoy, NY/LeRoy), sophomore defensive end Andy Rantz (Montandon, PA/Milton Area), freshman linebacker Blake Fuller (Newark, NY/Newark), sophomore strong safety Aaron Meyers (Delevan, NY/Pioneer), senior cornerback Ray Sawner (Sylvan Beach, NY/Oneida) and freshman punter Josh Rammacher (Angola, NY/Lake Shore). Duliba has thrown for 1,559 yards and 15 touchdowns. Sargent has 39 catches for 431 yards and five touchdowns, while Sprague has caught a team-leading 41 passes for 413 yards and a score. Reynolds has made 13 of 18 field goals and 25 of 26 extra point attempts. Miller has 40 tackles, including 3.5 for loss and two sacks, and has forced a fumble. Rantz has 40 tackles, including 5.5 for loss and two sacks, and has one forced fumble and one fumble recovery. Fuller has 42 tackles (3.5 for loss and two sacks) and leads the team in forced fumbles (3) and fumble recoveries (3). Meyers is second on the team with 68 tackles (40 solo, 3.5 for loss), has two interceptions and leads the team with nine pass breakups. Sawner has 31 tackles, one interception and five pass breakups. Rammacher averages 36.5 yards per punt. Sprague and Sawner earned Second Team all-conference honors in 2003. Meyers earned Empire 8 Rookie of the Year honors last year and was given honorable mention by the conference. This marks the second consecutive year an Alfred University player has been named Empire 8 Player of the Year. Tailback Jesse Raynor earned the honor in 2003. The Saxons (7-3, 3-3 Empire 8) conclude their season Saturday, Nov. 20, at noon at home against Norwich University in the ECAC Northeast Championship.