

17 Saxons earn all-conference honors

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ALFRED, NY Alfred University had 17 members of the football team earn all-conference recognition. The Empire 8 announced its all-star teams today. Empire 8 coaches chose the teams based on regular season games. Four of the conference's teams have post-season games, including AU, which hosts Rochester in the ECAC Northwest championship Saturday at noon. Six Saxons were named First Team conference all-star. Sophomore tailback Vinson Hendrix (Rochester, NY East), junior wideout Trevor Bork (Fishers, NY/Victor), and senior offensive lineman Mike Callahan (Scotia, NY/Scotia-Glenville) all earned First Team honors for the offense. Hendrix, also an Honorable Mention All Purpose Player, rushed for 1,178 yards (6.1 per carry, 117.8 per game) and a team-high 10 touchdowns while grabbing 31 passes for 323 yards and two scores. Bork led all Saxon receivers with 50 catches (eight shy of a single-season record) and nine touchdowns. Callahan, a Second Team selection a year ago, led an offensive line that paved the way for 447 yards (166 rushing, 281 passing) of offense per game. Senior defensive tackle Don Miller (LeRoy, NY/LeRoy) and sophomore linebacker Chad Pieri (LeRoy, NY/Caledonia-Mumford) rounded out the top selections for the defense. Miller, a First team pick in 2006, led all down lineman with 62 tackles (27 solo, 6.5 for loss) to go along with 2.5 sacks and a blocked kick. Miller also saw time in the offensive backfield as the Saxons short yardage back, racking up three touchdowns on six carries. Pieri, a Second Team selection a season ago, was the Saxons' leading tackler with 77 (44 solo, seven for loss). He also paced the defense with team-high six sacks and four forced fumbles. Senior kicker Chris Reynolds (Pittsford, NY/Pittsford-Sutherland) earned First Team honors as he finished the season 7 of 10 on field goal tries and an impressive 41 of 44 extra points. Reynolds was second on the team in scoring with 62 points and will leave Alfred tops in all career and single season kicking categories. Earning Second Team recognition for the Saxons were senior quarterback Paul Keeley (Caledonia, NY/Caledonia-Mumford), senior offensive linemen Brian Caston (Webster, NY/Webster-Schroeder) and Justin Hanft (East Otto, NY/Maple Grove), senior defensive lineman Mike Penkin (Rochester, NY/Greece Athena), and junior defensive back Brian Nitsche (Portville, NY/Portville). Keeley, a Second Team selection last season, and 2007 Sportsman of the Year for AU, had a record-breaking season for the Saxons. His 2,810 passing yards this season breaks the old record of 2,419 yards he set a season ago. Keeley will leave Alfred as the top quarterback in nearly all statistically categories. Caston and Hanft helped anchor an offensive line that protected Keeley and only allowed 11 sacks on 326 passing attempts. Penkin racked up 46 tackles (6.5 for loss) and had two sacks while Nitsche added 55 stops (38 solo, four for loss) and three interceptions. Senior cornerback and punter Josh Rammacher (Angola, NY/Lake Shore) earned Second Team honors for his punting abilities. Rammacher averaged nearly 40-yards per punt and had a long of 74 yards while punting the ball inside the opponent's 20-yard line seven times. Sophomore wideout Jared Manzer (Johnson City, NY/Johnson City), senior tight end Matt Gibbins (Clifton Park, NY/Shenendehowa), junior linebacker Blake Fuller (Newark, NY/Newark), and senior defensive back Dan Medlock (Garden City Park, Mineola) each earned Honorable Mention honors while Manzer and senior wideout Saucobie Riley (Rochester, NY/Marshall) were named special teams Honorable Mention selections. Manzer, 2006 Empire 8 Rookie of the Year, was the Saxons' leading receiver with 699 yards on 47 receptions (14.9 per catch) and seven touchdowns. His 1,137 all-purpose yards (333 yards returning) were second best on the team. Manzer also tied the record for the longest punt return with his 90-yard return against Husson College. Gibbins, a Second Team selection last season, quietly racked up 279 yards on 22 receptions, taking five to the end zone. Fuller, a Second Team pick in 2005, had 62 tackles (36 solo) 5.5 for loss, 1.5 sacks and a forced fumble. Medlock finished with 59 stops (45 solo) and was tied for a team-high in interceptions with three. Riley, honored for his special teams contributions, had 331 yards on 13 kick off returns for an average of 25.5 per return (best on the team) and had an 88-yard return for a touchdown. Riley also added eight touchdowns and 631 yards receiving and was the Saxons biggest deep threat, scoring on a 77-yard touchdown pass.