

Saxons fall to RPI to open season

9/08/12

TROY, NY — The Alfred University football team dropped a 24-6 decision to host RPI in the Saxons' 2012 season opener.

AU cashed in on its opening drive when freshman wideout **Meleke Fuentes (Olean, NY/Olean)** scored on a 13-yard run midway through the opening quarter. The touchdown capped an 11-play, 72-yard drive that spanned just over four minutes and came after the Saxon defense forced RPI to turn the ball over on downs at the AU 28-yard line. The PAT failed and Alfred led, 6-0, with 7:37 left in the frame.

RPI answered with a touchdown on the Engineers' ensuing drive, then added another in the second quarter to take a 14-6 halftime lead. An RPI field goal early in the fourth made it 17-6 and another touchdown later in the final frame closed out the game's scoring.

In his first start in an AU uniform, junior quarterback **Zach Sopak (Falconer, NY/Southwester)**, a transfer from Washington & Jefferson, threw for 122 yards. Junior wideout **Josh Phillips (Syracuse, NY/West Genesee)** caught four passes for 32 yards and senior tight end **Adam Schutz (Geneva, NY/Geneva)** caught three for 19 yards.

Senior tailback **Tyler DeRosa (Miller Place, NY/Miller Place)** rushed 12 times for a team-leading 76 yards for Alfred. Junior tailback **Austin Dwyer (Hornell, NY/Hornell)** ran seven times for 31 yards and Fuentes finished with 23 yards on a pair of carries.

RPI quarterback **Mike Hermann** threw for 197 yards and a pair of TDs and ran for 100 yards and another score. **Reggie Colas** caught six passes for 90 yards and a touchdown for the Engineers.

Senior strong safety **Reggie Pressley (Rochester, NY/Gates-Chili)** had a game-high 13 tackles and senior end **Chris Steeves (Rochester, NY/Gates-Chili)** had 12 tackles, including a sack, to pace the AU defense. Senior tackle **Mike Raplee (Dundee, NY/Dundee)** had 11 tackles and senior linebacker **Brendan McGinnis (Walworth, NY/Gananda-East Rochester)** had nine. Junior linebacker **D.J. Welch (Avon, NY/Avon)** made six tackles and intercepted a pass.

Wade Hansen had a pair of sacks and **Joe Tedder** had six tackles and an interception for RPI.

Alfred is in action next on Saturday, Sept. 15, at 1 p.m. at St. Lawrence.