

Saxons top Utica 37-20 in season finale

11/13/10



UTICA, NY-- The Alfred University football team won 37-20 at Utica College Saturday afternoon in the Saxons' regular-season finale. With the win, AU improves to 8-2 on the season and finishes with a perfect Empire 8 Conference record of 5-0. AU had won the Empire 8 crown and the conference's automatic bid to the NCAA Division III championship tournament with its win last weekend against Ithaca. The Saxons now await word on their first-round NCAA opponent; regional tournament seedings and first-round pairings will be announced Sunday evening. AU responded to Utica's early threat - The Pioneers held a 14-2 lead with just more than five minutes left in the second quarter - by scoring five unanswered touchdowns. Utica jumped out to the early lead by sandwiching a 53-yard fumble return and an Andrew Benkwitt-to-Jeremy Meier five-yard touchdown pass around an Alfred safety. AU answered with a pair of touchdown catches to senior wideout Ryan Thon (Rochester, NY/Victor) from junior quarterback Tom Secky (Bemus Point, NY/Maple Grove) that gave Saxons a 16-14 lead at the half. AU scored on their first possession of the second half when Secky found senior tight-end DJ Loughlin-Pope (Corning, NY/Corning East) for a 51-yard touchdown strike. AU pushed their lead to 30-14 with 5:06 left in the third, when junior linebacker Nick Clark (Canisteo, NY/Canisteo-Greenwood) scored on a four yard run, capping a 10-play 65-yard drive. Sophomore tailback Chris Lopez (Rochester, NY/Pittsford Sutherland) scored off a seven-yard run on the Saxons first possession in the fourth, capping a nine-play 87 yard drive giving AU a 37-14 lead with 8:24 left to play. Utica's tailback Anthony Acevedo scored on a two yard run with 4:25 left to close out the scoring. Secky completed 12 of 24 passes for 189 yards, and three touchdowns. Lopez carried the ball 19 times for 140 yards and a score and freshman tailback Austin Dwyer (Hornell, NY/Hornell) rushed 20 times for 86 yards. Thon caught six passes for 93 yards, and two touchdowns. Benkwitt completed 18 of 34 passes for 138 yards, one touchdown and two interceptions and Jake Scott carried the ball 14 times for 67 yards. Anthony Acevedo had five catches for 56 yards and wideout Jeremy Meier caught three passes for 27 yards, and a score. Clark (forced fumble), and sophomore cornerback Reggie Pressley (Rochester, NY/Gates-Chili) (one interception) each had eight tackles to pace the Saxon defense. Junior linebacker Wes Smith (Turbotville, PA/Muncy) had seven tackles and an interception, and senior linebacker Chad Pieri (LeRoy, NY/Caledonia-Mumford) had six tackles. Travis Ladd had a game-high 14 tackles (one and a half for loss) to lead the Utica defense. Kevin Hennion had 13 tackles, and Terrell Cunningham and James Brain each finished with 11 tackles and a forced fumble.