

AU at Ithaca Game Notes

10/10/13



Alfred University Saxons at Ithaca College Bombers

Saturday, Oct. 12, 1 p.m.

Butterfield Stadium, Ithaca, NY

Last meeting: 2012, AU win, 31-7, at Alfred

Last week: AU: W, 39-33 (2OT), vs. Buff State; Ithaca, L, 21-9, at Hartwick

Saxons Offense: 31.8 points per game

Saxon Defense: 23.8 points per game

Bomber Offense: 20.2 points per game

Bomber Defense: 12.8 points per game

Players to watch: AU — Tyler Johnson, FR, QB; Tyler DeRosa, SR, TB; Austin Dwyer, SR, TB; Josh Phillips, SR, WR; David Lee Tack, SR, WR; Jonathan Ruffin, SR, WR; D.J. Welch, SR, OLB; Seiji Hinton, SR, DB; Zack Bacon, FR, NG; Mike Perkins, JR, FS; Calvin Bain, SO, CB; Zach Brinkley, SO, DT; Corry Wallace, SO, MLB.

Ithaca — Phil Neumann, SR, QB; Joel Lynch, JR, WR; Vito Boffoli, JR, WR; Jared Prugar, SR, FB; Rakim Jones, SR, TB; Tommy Padula, JR, TB; Jake Santora, SR, ILB; Brian Hardenberg, SR, OLB; Will Carter, SR, ILB; Brian Garvey, SR, CB; Mike Vulcano, SR, CB; Mike Sheldon, SR, DE; Chris Williams, JR, OLB.

Key matchups: AU offense vs. Ithaca defense. Alfred is averaging nearly 32 points per game, while the Bombers are allowing just less than 13. The Saxons' balanced offense (155 yards rushing, 201 passing per contest) will contend with an Ithaca defense that allows 293 yards per game and has been stingy against the run, allowing 100 yards per contest on the ground. Ithaca's defense is a veteran unit: nine of 11 starters are seniors and the other two are juniors. Seniors **Jake Santora** and **Brian Hardenberg** anchor the linebacking corps in the Bombers' 3-4 scheme, while senior cornerbacks **Brian Garvey** and **Mike Vulcano** provide a veteran presence in the defensive backfield. The Saxons counter with an offense led by freshman quarterback Tyler Johnson and a trio of experienced senior running backs in tailbacks **Austin Dwyer** and **Tyler DeRosa** and fullback **Chuck Beckwith**. AU has been effective punching

the ball in on short-yardage situations, with Dwyer scoring a team-best eight rushing TDs, most from near the goal line. Johnson, with the team's second-most rushing yards, is a threat to run and has several talented receivers at his disposal. AU will look to generate offensive production through the air against a Bomber defense that allows nearly 200 passing yards per game... Alfred's pass defense vs. the Bomber passing game. Ithaca has experience on the offensive side of the ball, led by senior quarterback **Phil Neumann**. The Bomber's offensive production is decidedly slanted toward the pass: of their 307 yards, 220 have come through the air and 87 on the ground. The Saxons' line, led by end **Justin Collen** and nose guard **Zack Bacon** will look to put pressure on Neumann and let their defensive backfield, which has five of the team's 10 interceptions, make some plays. The Saxons are allowing 350 yards per game, including 214 per game passing.

Game Notes: Today's game marks the 54th meeting between the Alfred University Saxons and Ithaca College Bombers, with Ithaca holding a 35-16-2 advantage in the all-time series. The last time these two teams met, in 2012, Alfred claimed a 31-7 win at home. The last time these teams met in Ithaca, in 2011, the Saxons edged the Bombers, 21-19. AU has won the last three times these two teams have met; the last Ithaca victory came in 2009, when the Bombers won 31-10 at home. Buffalo State is the only common opponent thus far for the two teams, and both came away with wins: Ithaca won 24-20 at Buff State on Sept. 28 and AU beat Buff State 39-33 at home on Oct. 5.

About the Bombers: Ithaca is 3-1 overall after last weekend's 21-9 loss at Hartwick, which dropped the Bombers to 1-1 in Empire 8 Conference play. Ithaca has non-league wins over Moravian and Union and an Empire 8 win over Buff State.

Ithaca's offense produces 307 yards per game (220 passing, 87 rushing). The Bombers are led by senior quarterback **Phil Neumann**, a starter each of the last two seasons. He has completed 55 of 97 passes for 753 yards with four TDs and four interceptions. He'll throw to a pair of junior wide receivers in **Joel Lynch** (17 catches, 205 yards, one touchdown) and **Vito Boffoli** (13/136/1). Senior fullback **Jared Prugar** has 15 catches for a team-leading 326 yards and two TDs. The Bomber rushing attack is led by senior tailback **Rakim Jones**, who has 212 yards and three touchdowns on the ground. His backup, junior **Tommy Padula**, has run for 148 yards.

Ithaca's 3-4 defense allows 293 yards per game (193 passing, 100 rushing). Senior inside linebacker **Jake Santora** has a team-best 52 tackles (5 ½ for loss, one sack), while senior outside linebacker **Brian Hardenberg** has 38 (6 ½ for loss, three sacks). Senior inside linebacker **Will Carter** (29 tackles), leads the team in sacks with four, while senior end **Mike Sheldon** and junior outside linebacker **Chris Williams** each have three tackles for loss and three sacks.

Senior cornerbacks **Brian Garvey** (20 tackles, two interceptions) and **Mike Vulcano** (17 tackles, one interception) each have four pass breakups.

The Bombers have a productive return game. Senior **Sam Carney** averages 23.2 yards on kick returns and 16.2 yards on punt returns; sophomore **Josh Oliver** averages 19.5 yards on punt returns and 19.3 on kick returns. Sophomore kicker **Garrett Nicholson** has made seven of eight extra point attempts and all three field goal tries. Sophomore **Mike Lopez** is averaging 37 yards per punt.

About the Saxons: AU is 3-1 overall and 1-0 in Empire 8 Conference play after last Saturday's 39-33 double-overtime win over visiting Buff State in the Saxons' E8 opener. After opening the season with a non-league home loss to RPI, the Saxons, with non-conference wins against Montclair State and Brockport, have won three straight.

AU's offense is balanced, producing 356 yards per contest (201 passing, 155 rushing) and is led by freshman quarterback **Tyler Johnson**. Inserted in the second half of the Saxons' 34-28 overtime win at Brockport on Sept. 28, Johnson made his first career start last weekend against Buff State. He has completed 35 of 57 passes for 362 yards with three touchdowns and four interceptions and is second on the team in rushing yards with 190 (7.0 yards per carry) and a pair of TDs.

Johnson has a talented and veteran group of receivers, led by senior wide receiver **Josh Phillips** (team-leading 20 catches for 316 yards and two touchdowns). Senior wideouts **David Lee Tack** (nine receptions for 91 yards) and

Jonathan Ruffin (six catches for 105 yards) have each caught a TD pass. Sophomore tight end **Alec Ladonis** has four catches (27 yards); his backup, sophomore **Isiah Young**, has nine catches for 90 yards.

Alfred's rushing attack is paced by a trio of seniors, with **Austin Dwyer** and **Tyler DeRosa** sharing snaps at tailback and **Chuck Beckwith** starting at fullback. Dwyer has 204 yards on the ground with a team-leading eight touchdowns, while DeRosa has 160 yards rushing and one TD. In the win against Buff State, Dwyer scored a short rushing TD in each overtime; both scores were set up by long DeRosa runs (15 yards, 18 yards). Beckwith has been hampered by injury and has 44 yards on 11 carries.

The AU defense allows 350 yards per contest (214 passing, 136 rushing) but has been good at forcing turnovers. The Saxons have 10 interceptions as a team, and two were returned for touchdowns: freshman nose guard **Zack Bacon** for 38 yards against Montclair and sophomore cornerback **Calvin Bain** for 70 yards against Brockport. AU has also recovered two fumbles.

Sophomore middle linebacker **Corry Wallace** leads the team with tackles with 47 (one for loss) and has two interceptions. Sophomore tackle **Zach Brinkley** has 31 and senior outside linebacker **D.J. Welch** has 25 and an INT. Bacon has 12 tackles (two for loss) to go with two interceptions and last weekend picked up his first career sack. Senior safety **Seiji Hinton** has 19 tackles (3 ½ for loss and a sack). He had 10 tackles, a forced fumble and an interception against Buff State and was named Empire 8 and ECAC Northwest Defensive Player of the Week. Junior free safety **Mike Perkins** has 18 tackles and two interceptions and Bain has 16 tackles, an interception and three pass breakups.

Bain averages 26.1 yards on kickoff returns and Ruffin 6.2 yards on punt returns. Freshman **Ryan McDonnell** averages 38.9 yards per punt and will be making his first start at placekicker on Saturday.