

## Late defensive stand preserves AU win at Rochester

10/29/11



ROCHESTER, NY - The Alfred University football team defeated host Rochester Saturday, 24-17, as the AU defense thwarted a potential game-tying score with a goal-line stand in the closing seconds. With the non-conference win, the Saxons snapped a two-game losing streak and avoided giving up a late lead for the second straight week. In last Saturday's 54-53 loss at Frostburg State, the host Bobcats tied the game in the final seconds of regulation before winning in two overtimes. The Saxons' defensive stand Saturday became necessary after Rochester drew within a touchdown with just under two minutes left, then drove to the AU 2-yard line after recovering an on-side kick. AU won an evenly matched game in which the Saxons produced 305 yards of offense and Rochester 306, with each team tallying 16 first downs. Rochester stayed in the game due in large part to its converting nine of 18 third downs. Key for the Saxons was the defense forcing two turnovers, while the AU offense committed none. AU (5-3, 2-3 Empire 8) jumped out to a 21-0 lead midway through the second quarter. The Saxons opened the scoring with 3:19 left in the first when freshman wide receiver Christian Smith (Lackawanna, NY/Lackawanna) took a handoff from senior quarterback T.J. Kilcarr (Nanuet, NY/Clarkstown South) and lofted a 47-yard touchdown strike to sophomore wideout Josh Phillips (Syracuse, NY/West Genesee). The Saxons made it a three-touchdown lead courtesy of a pair of short scoring runs by senior linebacker Nick Clark (Canisteo, NY/Canisteo-Greenwood). The first, a three-yard run, came 1:35 into the second frame and capped an eight-play 37-yard drive that started after Rochester was forced to punt out of its own endzone. The second, from a yard out, ended an eight-play, 68-yard drive that was highlighted by a 39-yard pass from Kilcarr to sophomore wide receiver Justin Oliver (Rocky Point, NY/Rocky Point) to the Yellowjacket 2-yard line. Rochester scored 1:11 before halftime when quarterback Brazen Subick connected with fullback Joe Cicero on a two-yard TD pass and AU led 21-7 at intermission. The Saxons added to their lead on their third possession of the second half. Senior kicker Eric Rockwood (Allegany, NY/Allegany-Limestone) booted a 22-yard field goal with 4:25 left in the third to give the Saxons a 24-7 edge. The kick came after Alfred's six-play, 33-yard drive stalled at the Rochester 4-yard line. Rochester answered on its ensuing possession, when backup QB Dean Kennedy threw a six-yard scoring pass to wideout Thomas Hayes with 1:36 left in the third. The touchdown was set up by a 43-yard pass from Kennedy to wide receiver Garrett Kesel to the Alfred 6-yard line. Rochester appeared ready to carve deeper into the AU lead early in the fourth, when free safety Kobie Hamm blocked a Rockwood punt and the hosts took over possession at the Saxons 26. However, on the Yellowjackets' first play from scrimmage, Kennedy was intercepted by free safety Ryan Quinliven (Endicott, NY/Union-Endicott) in the AU endzone, giving the Saxons a touchback. AU drove to the Rochester 27-yard line before Rockwood's 44-yard field goal attempt missed wide left with just under

eight minutes left in the fourth. It was Rockwood's first miss of a field goal in 11 tries this year. The Yellowjackets then marched 69 yards in 17 plays, and had first-and-goal from the AU 4-yard line. But Kennedy threw three straight incompletions and Rochester settled for a 22-yard Alex Antonucci field goal with 1:57 left. Rochester's ensuing on-side kick attempt was successful, with the Yellowjackets recovering at their own 48-yard line. Rochester drove to the AU 2-yard line. The key play in the drive was Kennedy's 35-yard pass to Hayes to the Saxons 11-yard line with 17 seconds left. Rochester had three tries to score the tying touchown but the game ended after Kennedy tossed three straight incompletions, the last coming as the game clock expired. Kilcarr completed 16 of 25 passes for 181 yards, with Phillips catching five passes for 108 yards. Sophomore tailback Austin Dwyer (Hornell, NY/Hornell) led AU with 42 rushing yards on 14 carries. Subick threw for 60 yards and touchdown and an interception before he was relieved by Kennedy, who completed 12 of 30 passes for 153 yards, a TD and an interception. Kennedy also ran for a game-high 47 yards and Hayes caught five passes for 75 yards and a score. Junior tackle Mike Raplee (Dundee, NY/Dundee) had 10 tackles (nine solo) to lead the AU defense. Senior linebacker Wes Smith (Turbotville, PA/Muncy) had nine tackles and Clark had five. Senior linebacker Brady Bonacquisti (LeRoy, NY/LeRoy) had seven tackles and an interception. Linebacker Zach Cicero had a game-high 14 tackles for Rochester, while end Chris Bickford had m10, including two sacks. AU is in action next on Saturday, Nov. 5, at 1 p.m. at Empire 8 Conference rival Ithaca. The Saxons end their regular season the following Saturday, Nov. 12, at 1 p.m. at home against conference foe Utica.