

Saxons beat Utica as Raynor breaks Alfred University career rushing record

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UTICA, NY -- Senior tailback Jesse Raynor (Weedsport/Weedsport) ran for 110 yards and a pair of touchdowns as the Alfred University football team defeated host Utica, 33-11, Saturday afternoon. Raynor's performance gives him 3,518 career rushing yards, breaking the AU record of 3,506 previously held by Ray Rogers (1987-90). The Saxons (4-3, 2-2 Empire 8) scored on three of their first four possessions of the game and their first two possessions of the second half to jump out to a 33-0 lead after three quarters. The AU defense did not allow a score, as Utica tallied two fourth-quarter touchdowns in a fumble return and punt return. Raynor opened the scoring with a two-yard run just over five minutes into the game. With 46 seconds left in the opening frame, junior quarterback Ron Duliba (Forestville/Forestville) hit sophomore wide receiver TyQuan Horton (Syracuse/Corcoran) with a 17-yard scoring pass to make it 14-0. Alfred scored a safety three plays into second quarter and with 11 minutes left before halftime, Raynor booted a 34-yard field goal to give the Saxons a 19-0 lead. AU scored on their first drive of the third quarter when Duliba hit junior wide receiver Chris Sargent (Ogdensburg/Ogdensburg) with a 34-yard touchdown pass with 12:47 left in the third. Raynor closed out Alfred's scoring with a 2-yard run with 5:51 remaining in the quarter. Utica (1-6, 0-2 Empire 8) got on the board 13 seconds into the fourth when defensive end Jon Griffith returned a fumble two yards for a score. Cornerback Chris Sargis scored on a 73-yard punt return with 2:30 left in the game. Duliba finished with 180 yards passing and a pair of touchdowns. Horton had his best game in a Saxon uniform, catching five passes for 60 yards and a score. Junior Jake Sprague (Johnsonburg, PA/Johnsonburg) caught four passes and Sargent added two for 56 yards and a TD. The AU defense held Utica (1-6, 0-2 Empire 8) to 157 yards of offense, including only 32 on the ground. Junior end Bill Battaglia (Cheektowaga/Cheektowaga) had a team-high six tackles, including a sack, and senior end Jeremy Batt (Gowanda/Gowanda) had four tackles, including two for loss and a sack. Sophomore linebacker Brenton Brady (Rochester/Marshall) had four tackles and a forced fumble, and junior cornerback Ray Sawner (Sylvan Beach/Oneida) grabbed his fourth interception of the season. Quarterback Adam Luciano paced Utica's offense with 76 yards passing. He was relieved by Nick Martin, who completed five of eight passes for 48 yards. Tight end Brian Barth had a game-high seven catches for the Pioneers. Linebackers Jason Colunio and Anthony Venturino each had a game-high nine tackles to pace the Utica defense. Venturino, Sargis and Griffith each had sacks, and cornerback James Molinari had an interception. With the career rushing mark in hand, Raynor now holds most major rushing and scoring marks at AU. Earlier this year, he established new records for career touchdowns (rushing and total), career carries and games with at least 100 yards rushing. He holds the career scoring record and single-game records for rushing yards, rushing attempts, pass receptions and touchdowns. Alfred is in action next on Saturday, Oct. 25 at 1 p.m. at home against Hobart.