

AU football team hangs on to beat Springfield in Empire 8 opener

9/24/11

ALFRED, NY - The Alfred University football team defeated visiting Springfield College, 30-22, Saturday afternoon at Merrill Field in the Saxons' Empire 8 Conference opener. AU (3-0, 1-0 E8) utilized a bruising rushing attack (232 yards) while using a solid second-half defensive effort to stop one of nation's premier running teams. Springfield (2-1, 1-1 Empire 8) came in averaging 491 yards rushing through two games and ran for 205 in the first half. But the Saxons buckled down after intermission, and held Springfield to 27 yards on the ground in the second half. AU sophomore tailback Austin Dwyer (Hornell, NY/Hornell) ran for 137 yards on 26 carries. It was the third time in three games this season Dwyer has run for over 100 yards. His seven-yard touchdown run midway through the first quarter tied the game at 7-7, after Springfield took the opening kickoff and marched 67 yards in 10 plays to take an early 7-0 lead on quarterback Josh Carter's one-yard scoring run 3:26 into the contest. AU took a 14-7 lead with 8:36 left in the second. Junior wide receiver Andre McCloud (Bath, NY/Bath) blocked a Springfield punt and the Saxons took over at the Pride 20-yard line. Five plays later, AU senior quarterback Tom Secky (Bemus Point, NY/Maple Grove) found sophomore wideout Justin Oliver (Rocky Point, NY/Rocky Point) in the endzone from six yards out. Springfield answered, tying the game at 14-14 with just under five minutes left before intermission. The Pride drove 81 yards on 11 plays, with Carter running in from 25 yards. Alfred pulled away in the third on a pair of short touchdowns by senior linebacker Nick Clark (Canisteo, NY/Canisteo-Greenwood). The first, a one-yarder with 10:03 left in the period, capped a 10-play 61-yard drive. The second, with 4:28 left, was from three yards out and, after a missed extra point, gave the Saxons a 27-14 lead. Senior placekicker Eric Rockwood (Allegany, NY/Allegany-Limestone) made it 30-14 Alfred with a 25-yard field goal with 11:10 left in the fourth and Alfred looked to be in the driver's seat. Springfield made it interesting late, however, scoring on Carter's third touchdown of the game, a one-yard run with 7:37 left. The two-point conversion drew the Pride to within a touchdown, at 30-22. Springfield got possession back after AU turned the ball over on downs at the Pride 24-yard line with 3:15 remaining. But Carter was knocked from the game on a hit by Clark and three plays later Springfield turned the ball back over, as junior tackle Joe Dentino (Rochester, NY/Gates-Chili) stopped backup QB Austin Bateman for a one-yard loss on fourth-and-six at the Springfield 28-yard line. AU piled up 352 yards of offense, held a 21-15 advantage in first downs and held the ball for 36:45 to 23:15 for Springfield. Secky completed 12 of 18 passes for 120 yards and a score and Oliver caught four passes for 36 yards. Junior tailback Tyler DeRosa (Miller Place, NY/Miller Place) ran for 74 yards on 13 carries. Springfield had 330 yards of offense, with all but 83 coming in the first half. Carter finished with 79 yards on 16 carries with three touchdowns and halfback Mike Davis rushed for 65 yards. Carter completed five of 11 passes for 98 yards. Wide receiver Phil Baier caught two passes for 60 yards. Clark had a game-high 19 tackles (11 solo, one for loss) to lead the Saxon defense. Senior linebacker Wes Smith (Turbotville, NY/Muncy) had 11 tackles (one for loss), and senior linebacker Darrick Mason (Driftwood, PA/Cameron County) had eight tackles (3.5 for loss, one sack) and forced a fumble. For the game, AU had 10 tackles for loss and a pair of sacks. Linebacker Corey Kaiser had 14 tackles and linebacker Kevin Shields had 13 and a fumble recovery to lead the Springfield defense. Free safety James Kikel had 12 tackles and cornerback Phil Davis had an interception. AU is in action next on Saturday, Oct. 1, at 4 p.m. at St. John Fisher.