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Thunder Strike Late To Beat Albany 44-31

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May 31, 2008 -

Conquest Blow 17-point Lead In Fourth Quarter



YOUNGSTOWN, OH - The Mahoning Valley Thunder scored the final 30 points of the game as they shocked the Albany Conquest 44-31 Friday night at the Chevrolet Centre.

The game began when

Mahoning Valley's quarterback Shane Adler threw an interception on the Thunder's first possession of the game, sparking a turnover-riddled first half. Conquest defensive back Brandon Taylor picked off a pass from Adler deep in Albany territory, Taylor's team-leading fifth interception of the season, and he returned the ball back into the Mahoning Valley side of the field. Albany capitalized on the turnover as WR Chris Bocage finished off the drive with a 1-yard run for the first touchdown of the game, although Jason Fralicker's extra point hit the upright, giving Albany a 6-0 lead. The two teams then combined for five-consecutive turnovers before the Conquest scored again, this time Cole went to the air to find Bocage for a 23-yard catch and run for a touchdown; due to a bad snap on the PAT, Albany led 12-0. Mahoning Valley missed a 60-yard field goal attempt and then both teams turned the ball over on downs as the clock ran out in the first half. Mahoning Valley had six total turnovers in the first two quarters (1 interception,

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TEAM	W	L
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CONQUEST	3	6
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THUNDER	2	7



3 fumbles, 1 missed field goal and 1 on downs), while Albany had three turnovers on downs.

Albany extended their lead the second half to 18-0 on their first possession of the third quarter. Antwon Williams caught a 22-yard touchdown pass from Dan Cole, giving Williams his 60th career touchdown reception as a member of the Conquest and break the all-time franchise mark. But the Thunder refused to go away and backup QB Davon Vinson connected for two TD passes to cut the Albany lead to 18-14 at the end of the third quarter. The Conquest fired back with a pair of touchdowns to take a 17-point lead; Jared Jones caught an 11-yard touchdown from Cole and then defensive end Brian Bond intercepted a batted pass in the end zone for a defensive touchdown, giving Albany a 31-14 lead with just under ten minutes remaining in the fourth quarter. The Thunder struck back with two more touchdown passes from Vinson and a two-point conversion run from John Tackmann to cut the Albany lead to three points, but the Conquest still had the lead and the ball with under four minutes remaining in the game. Mahoning Valley forced a turnover on downs and took the lead on a 1-yard Vinson run. The Thunder then sacked Dan Cole in the endzone for a safety, giving them a six-point lead. Albany's onside kick attempt failed with 19 seconds left in the game, and as time ran out the Thunder fumbled the ball, got it back and scored to ice the game 44-31.

Mahoning Valley backup QB Davon Vinson completed 10-of-19 passes for 146 yards, four touchdowns and one interception; Vinson also led the team with 28 rushing yards on four carried and one rushing touchdown. Starting QB Shane Adler went 1-for-4 passing with 12 yards, one fumble and one interception before being pulled from the game late in the first quarter. Albany QB Dan Cole was 17-for-41 passing for 189 yards and three touchdowns, while being sacked three times. Conquest WR Jared Jones had a game-high seven receptions for 75 yards and one touchdown. Thunder WR Demetrius Wilbert led his team with three catches for 46 yards and two touchdowns.

SCHUTT OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME: Albany WR Chris Bocage

ADT DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME: Mahoning Valley DE Juan Underwood

U.S. ARMY IRONMAN OF THE GAME: Mahoning Valley LB John Tackmann

CUTTERS CATCH OF THE GAME: Albany WR Antwon Williams

Score By Quarters: - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - F

ALBANY (3-6) - 6 - 6 - 6 - 14 - 31

MAHONING VALLEY (2-7) - 0 - 0 - 14 - 30 - 44

Albany will head back home to prepare for a Week 11 rematch with the East Division-leading Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Pioneers on Saturday, June 7th. The Conquest suffered their worst loss of the season, a 69-27 defeat at the Wachovia Arena in Week 8 and will be looking for revenge on their home turf. The second of three meetings this year, Saturday's game is scheduled for a 7:00 pm Kick Off at the Times Union Center.

Partial season ticket packages and individual game tickets are now on sale for the remainder of the 2008 Albany Conquest regular season. For more information please contact the Conquest at (518) 487-2244 or online at www.albanyconquest.com.

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