

ALBANY EMPIRE

WEEKLY GAME NOTES

ALBANY EMPIRE (9-4)

Vs

Washington Valor (2-11)

7:30 p.m. Saturday July 21st 2018 Times Union Center

QUICK FACTS

Albany Empire (9-4) vs Washington Valor (2-11)

Date: Saturday, July 21st, 2018

Kickoff: 7:30 p.m. EST

Site: Capital One Arena

Officials: Brunet, Carr, Bovos, Engelberts, Griffith

Radio: ALT 105.7

Watch: CBS Sports Network

Series Record: Empire 5 – Valor 0

Coaches: Rob Keefe (9-4 with Albany); Benji McDowell (2-7 with Washington as Interim HC)

MEDIA CONTACTS

Albany	Washington
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2018 EMPIRE REGULAR SEASON SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Kickoff	Result
April 14	PHILADELPHIA	7 p.m.	L 56-35
April 21	BYE WEEK		
April 28	@ Baltimore	3 p.m.	L 52-49
May 5	WASHINGTON	7:30 p.m.	W 47-23
April 21	@ Washington	7 p.m.	W 53-42
May 19	@ Philadelphia	6 p.m.	W 41-36
May 26	WASHINGTON	6 p.m.	W 48-21
June 2	BALTIMORE	7 p.m.	W 61-53
June 9	BALTIMORE	7:30 p.m.	L 59-56
June 16	PHILADELPHIA	6 p.m.	L 75-74
June 23	@ Baltimore	7:30 p.m.	W 56-49
June 29	@ Washington	7 p.m.	W 55-41
July 7	PHILADELPHIA	6 p.m.	W 71-57

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY	Off
TUESDAY	Practice 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
WEDNESDAY	Practice 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
THURSDAY	Practice 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
FRIDAY	CLOSED Walkthrough
SATURDAY	Albany vs Washington at 7:30 p.m.

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EMPIRE VS VALOR

MATCHUP PREVIEW

After a narrow 57-56 overtime victory in the Nation's Capital, the Albany Empire (9-4) take a one-point aggregate lead in the home-and-home playoff series over the Washington Valor (2-11) with game two set to be played on Saturday, July 21st, at 7:30 pm at the Times Union Center in Albany. Should the Empire continue their hot streak and defeat the Valor at home, it would secure the inaugural franchise's spot in ArenaBowl XXXI. If Washington wins by two or more points, the fourth-seeded Valor would advance to the championship game. In the event that the Valor win by one point, and overtime period would be played to determine the winner of the playoff series based on aggregate scoring.

The first matchup to look out for is between Washington's quarterback, Arvell Nelson, and Empire jack linebacker Terence Moore. Moore played one of his best games all season in the opening game of the playoff series at home against Albany. Earning offensive player of the game honors, the 6'5" quarterback racked up 256 passing yards and six touchdowns while adding another two scores on the ground. Coming on midway through the season, Nelson helped lead the Valor to their only two wins on the regular season and gave Washington momentum heading into the playoffs. Nelson has proven to be a threat not only through the air, but by using his legs as well. The key to victory in this matchup lies on the stout Empire defensive front. Despite only recording one sack in the previous matchup against Washington, Albany was able to apply pressure to Nelson all night long. If the Empire defensive line is able to get to Nelson quickly, it will limit his time in the pocket and force him to decide to either scramble or find a secondary option on a short route.

Another matchup to look out for is between the Washington kickoff unit and the Empire return team. Given Albany's offense proving to be virtually unstoppable all season long, expect the Valor to mix in a surprise onside kick or two to try a steal a possession away from the Empire. If Washington is able to score and then come out and recover an onside kick, it could serve as a two-score swing for the Valor and put pressure on the Albany offense. It's fair to assume the usual onside kick scenarios inside of one minute of each half, but don't be surprised to see the Valor attempt an onside kick early in this one to stifle any momentum the Empire might have.

The third and final matchup to watch out for is between Washington receiver Reggie Gray and the Empire defensive backfield. Gray has torched Albany this season including the first playoff matchup at home where he compiled 103 receiving yards on 14 catches for four touchdowns. Gray had 10 more receptions than the next closest receiver on the Valor offense, proving to be the top target for Nelson. Over the course of the regular season, Gray finished fifth overall in receptions (71), receiving yards (769) and receiving touchdowns (17). Though the Valor have other capable receivers on their offense, if the Empire can limit Gray, it will make life miserable for Nelson as he looks for other options.

ROAD TO ARENABOWL XXXI

After defeating the fourth-seeded Valor in game one of the home-and-home playoff series, the Empire return home for a rematch against Washington with the ArenaBowl on the line...

- Game two of the series will be played in the Capital Region on Saturday, July 21 at 7:30 p.m.
- Albany won the first game by 1 point, giving the Empire a one-point lead in the aggregate score.
- If Albany wins, the Empire advance to the championship game.

WASHINGTON TIES

* Current Albany Empire wide receiver **Greg Carr** was a member of the 2017 Washington Valor during their inaugural season, compiling 67 total receptions for 776 total yards.

OPPOSING PLAYERS TO WATCH

Look out for Valor **QB Arvell Nelson** who earned Offensive Player of the Game in the loss to the Empire a week ago. Nelson had a game to remember completing 26 passes for 259 yards and six touchdowns. The 6'5 mobile QB also added another two touchdowns on the ground.

WR Reggie Gray has been more than productive against Albany all season long. Last week, 'Big Play' Gray posted 103 yards and four touchdowns on a game-high 14 catches. Nelson likes to find Gray on short routes to methodically push the ball down field, but don't be surprised to see Gray go over the top as Nelson floats it down field towards the end zone for his receiver to make a play.

THE SERIES

This will be the fifth meeting between the Empire and the Valor this season between the regular season and playoffs.

Week 4: Albany 47 – Washington 23

Week 5: Albany 53 – Washington 42

Week 7: Albany 48 – Washington 21

Week 12: Albany 55 – Washington 41

PLAYOFF GAME ONE: Albany 57 – Washington 56

WHAT'S AHEAD

Should the Empire defeat the Valor at home on Saturday, July 21, Albany would secure a spot in ArenaBowl XXXI and host the Baltimore Brigade for the AFL championship. Tune into CBS Sports Network or listen to Alt 105.7 for full coverage!

THE COACHES

ALBANY EMPIRE HEAD COACH ROB KEEFE

Keefe enters his ninth season as a coach in the AFL. At the age of 29 he became the youngest head coach in AFL history to win an Arena Football League Championship, when he led the Spokane Shock to an ArenaBowl victory in their first year in the AFL. He is the only person in Arena Football history to win an Arena Cup (AF2) and ArenaBowl (AFL) title as both a player and a coach.

As a player, Keefe was a defensive back. During his playing days, he set team records for the Spokane Shock as their all time leader in tackles and interceptions. Making the transition from AF2 to AFL, Keefe joined the Philadelphia Soul, where he won a championship in 2008.

Keefe's first season as a head coach, the Spokane Shock boasted the league's top-ranked defense, allowing a mere 37.6 points per game. The shock won an ArenaCup in that same season.

Coming into the 2018 season, Keefe posted a career 61-30 record as a head coach in the AFL (#1). Most recently, he led the Orlando Predators as head coach and vice president of football operations from 2014-2016. In his stint in Orlando, Rob won a division championship in each of his three years leading the team.

VS. VALOR

Coach Keefe is 5-0 against the Valor as the Head Coach of the Albany Empire

COACHING RECORD

Coach Keefe's record as a head coach in the AFL:

2018 Regular Season: 8-4
Career Regular Season: 69-34
Career Playoff: 6-3
Career Total: 75-37

WASHINGTON VALOR INTERIM HEAD COACH BENJI MCDOWELL

Entering his second season with Washington as the defensive coordinator, McDowell became the Interim Head Coach of the Valor after the dismissal of Head Coach Dean Cokinon on May 16th. With a 1-5 record so far, McDowell is credited for capturing the Valor's first victory of the season in Philadelphia during Week 9.

Before coaching, McDowell had a successful playing career in indoor football. McDowell's career began in triumph by winning the Arena Cup as a member of the Alabama Vipers in 2008. Playing as a defensive end, McDowell played for the Georgia Force from 2011-2012 in which he combined for 41 tackles and seven sacks during the two seasons. Taking a break throughout 2013-14, McDowell served on the coaching staff of the Alabama Hammers in the Professional Indoor Football League, helping the team to secure a championship in 2013. McDowell returned to playing in 2015 with the New Orleans VooDoo.

McDowell began his coaching career in the AFL in 2016 as the defensive coordinator for the Tampa Bay Storm, bolstering one of the top defenses in the AFL during that season.

VS. THE EMPIRE

Benji McDowell is 0-3 against the Empire as the Interim Head Coach of the Washington Valor

COACHING RECORD

Coach McDowell's record as a Interim Head Coach in the AFL:

2018 Regular Season: 2-6
Career Regular Season: 2-6
Career Playoff: 0-1
Career Total: 2-7

EMPIRE PLAYMAKERS

Tommy Grady



It's no surprise that Grady earned another game MVP award. Tallying 340 yards and seven passing touchdowns, Grady led the Empire down the field in OT to secure the first ever playoff win for the new franchise.

Joe Hills



Though he started off slow, Joe Hills found his usual 'Superman' form last week against the Valor. In the win, Hills caught nine passes for 114 yards and two touchdowns.

Malachi Jones



Earning First Team All-Arena Honors in his rookie season, Jones posted huge numbers in his playoff debut. He reeled in 11 catches for a game-high 167 yards and four touchdowns in the Albany victory.

Brandon Sesay



Sesay was in the face of Valor QB Arvell Nelson all night. The Second Team All-Arena DT recorded 3.5 total tackles including a big hit on Nelson for a sack.

Gregg Carr



Greg Carr did it all for the Empire in the team's playoff victory. Aside from a TD reception, Carr caught the game-winning two-point conversion and chipped in an onside kick recovery.

Terence Moore



Picking up where he left off in the regular season, the First Team All-Arena jack linebacker led the Empire with 7.5 total tackles while shadowing the mobile Arvell Nelson all night.

EMPIRE LEADERS

WHAT'S AT STAKE: A trip to ArenaBowl XXXI is on the line as the Washington Valor come to the Capital Region in the second game of a home-and-home matchup against the Empire on Saturday, July 21, at 7:30pm on CBS Sports and Alt 105.7 fm. The Empire have a one-point lead in the aggregate scoring format with a victory by any margin clinching their spot in the championship.

CAN ANYONE STOP THIS MAN?: QB **Tommy Grady** finished the regular season leading the league in both passing touchdowns (81) and passing yards (2,960) on his way to being named First Team All-Arena. Grady has dominated the Valor all season long, including a seven touchdown performance a week ago in the opening game of the home-and-home playoff series. With Grady at the helm of the Empire offense, all we can say is, good luck Valor defense.

DBs HAVE TO BE SICK OF THIS GUY: WR **Joe Hills** joined his QB on the First Team All-Arena list after leading the league with 33 TD grabs on the season. The playoffs spotlight proved no different for Hills as he racked up big numbers in the victory last weekend. It's a safe bet, Hills will be in the end zone at least once this weekend as no one has found a way to stop him since his inception into the AFL.

FIRST OR SECOND OPTION?: Whether it's Hills or WR **Malachi Jones**, opposing DBs are left scratching their heads trying to figure out a way to stop the dynamic duo. To no surprise, Jones shined in his playoff debut and his regular season success earned him a spot next to Hills on the league's First Team All-Arena squad. Expect Jones to catch a ball over the middle and juke the shoes off a Valor defender as he gains extra yards or even brings the ball to the house.

DON'T SLEEP ON: WR **Greg Carr** has been the X-Factor for the Empire over the past few games. The big red zone threat caught another TD last weekend in Washington, but it was the two-point in overtime that sealed the victory. Carr has been an important part of Albany's special teams unit as well. Whether he is pouncing on the ball or batting it out of play, Carr is a steady hand on special teams and makes sure that any onside kick attempts are recovered by the Empire.

DID YOU FORGET ABOUT HIM?: DE **Joe Sykes** has been quiet of late, but he is still the league's most feared DE. After an offside penalty DQ'd Sykes from last weeks OT period, the vet will be back with a vengeance and play angry as he hounds Nelson.

2018 INDIVIDUAL REGULAR SEASON LEADERS: (As of 7/7/18)

Washington	Category	Albany
Nelson (1,636)	Total Offense	Grady (2,948)
Davila (62.3)	Completion Pct.	Grady (66.9)
Nelson (27)	Pass TDs	Grady (81)
Davila (121.3)	Passer Rating	Grady (126.2)
Nelson (1509)	Passing Yds	Grady (2,960)
Nelson (129)	Pass Comps	Grady (228)
Nelson (251.8)	Pass Yds/Gm	Grady (246.7)
Nelson (27)	Touchdowns	Grady (81)
Gray (71)	Receptions	Hills (88)
Gray (769)	Receiving Yds	Jones (1156)
Gray (17)	TD Receptions	Hills (33)
Nelson (127)	Rush Yds	Benson (85)
Nelson (6)	Rush TDs	Jones (5)
Duvalt (55)	KO Returns	Williams (18)
Duvalt (898)	KOR Yards	Williams (269)
Duvalt (1,133)	All-Purpose Yds	Jones (1,196)
Belton (31)	Tackles	Norman, Moore (68.5)
Everett, Obi (2)	Interceptions	Moore (6)
Five tied (1)	Sacks	Sykes (7.5)

AROUND THE LEAGUE



2018 AFL STANDINGS



Team	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Albany	8	4	.667	646	564
Philadelphia	7	5	.583	612	577
Baltimore	7	5	.583	605	562
Washington	2	10	.167	482	642

2018 AFL SEASON SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	
<i>Friday, April 13</i>	
Washington @ Baltimore	7 p.m.
<i>Saturday, April 14</i>	
Philadelphia @ Albany	7 p.m.
WEEK 2	
<i>Saturday, April 21</i>	
Baltimore @ Philadelphia	7 p.m.
WEEK 3	
<i>Saturday, April 28</i>	
Albany @ Baltimore	3 p.m.
Washington @ Philadelphia	7:30 p.m.
WEEK 4	
<i>Friday, May 4</i>	
Philadelphia @ Baltimore	7 p.m.
<i>Saturday, May 5</i>	
Washington @ Albany	7:30 p.m.
WEEK 5	
<i>Friday, May 11</i>	
Albany @ Washington	7 p.m.
WEEK 6	
<i>Saturday, May 19</i>	
Baltimore @ Washington	3 p.m.
Albany @ Philadelphia	6 p.m.
WEEK 7	
<i>Friday, May 25</i>	
Philadelphia @ Baltimore	7 p.m.
<i>Saturday, May 26</i>	
Washington @ Albany	6 p.m.

WEEK 8	
<i>Saturday, June 2</i>	
Philadelphia @ Washington	6 p.m.
Baltimore @ Albany	7 p.m.
WEEK 9	
<i>Saturday, June 9</i>	
Baltimore @ Albany	7:30 p.m.
<i>Sunday, June 10</i>	
Washington @ Philadelphia	4 p.m.
WEEK 10	
<i>Friday, June 15</i>	
Washington @ Baltimore	7 p.m.
<i>Saturday, June 16</i>	
Philadelphia @ Albany	6 p.m.
WEEK 11	
<i>Friday, June 22</i>	
Philadelphia @ Washington	7 p.m.
<i>Saturday, June 23</i>	
Albany @ Baltimore	7:30 p.m.
Week 12	
<i>Friday, June 29</i>	
Albany @ Washington	7 p.m.
<i>Saturday, June 30</i>	
Baltimore @ Philadelphia	7 p.m.
Week 13	
<i>Saturday, July 7</i>	
Baltimore @ Washington	3 p.m.
Philadelphia @ Albany	6 p.m.

EMPIRE ROSTER

AS OF 7/19/18

#	POS	NAME	HT	WT	COLLEGE	EXP
9	FB	Mykel Benson	6'0	290	Florida A&M	8
12	DB	Arkeith Brown	6'0	200	Texas A&M	6
15	WR	Paul Browning	6'2	220	Colorado State Pueblo	2
2	WR	Greg Carr	6'5	200	Florida State	4
3	DE	Darryl Cato-Bishop	6'4	265	NC State	4
68	OL	Ryan Cave	6'5	335	Hampton	7
12	QB	Mike Fafaul	6'2	215	UCLA	R
4	QB	Tommy Grady	6'7	245	Utah	7
75	OL	Hayworth Hicks	6'3	330	Iowa State	3
81	WR	Joe Hills	6'4	225	Tennessee State	8
24	DB	Arthur Hobbs	5'10	190	Nebraska Kearney	2
7	WR	Malachi Jones	6'3	215	Appalachian State	R
13	LB	Wes Mauia	6'1	280	Western New Mexico	5
23	DB	Erick McIntosh	5'10	180	Florida Atlantic	6
8	LB	Terence Moore	6'2	225	Troy	7
21	DB	Marrio Norman	6'1	205	Coastal Carolina	6
14	DB	Al Phillips	5'11	180	Wagner	8
72	OL	Bret Piekarski	6'4	305	St. Cloud State	1
6	QB	Kyle Rowley	6'1	205	Brown	6
93	OL	Moqut Ruffins	6'5	355	Louisiana Tech	7
99	DL	Nick Seither	6'3	270	Georgetown KY	2
91	DL	Brandon Sesay	6'6	300	Texas Tech	6
5	DB	Terrance Smith	6'2	210	South Carolina St	7
10	DB	Varmah Sonie	5'8	190	Northern Iowa	4
19	K	Kenny Spencer	6'1	220	Northern Alabama	6
5	DB	Brandon Stephens	5'11	210	Miami OH	4
50	LB	Derrick Summers	6'1	260	Toledo	7
1	DE	Joe Sykes	6'5	265	Southern	6
11	WR	Collin Taylor	6'1	205	Indiana	7
18	WR	Jordan Williams	6'3	220	Edinboro	R

EMPIRE COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH: Rob Keefe

ASSISTANT HEAD COACH: Les Moss

OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR/DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Chris Thompson

DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL/PASS RUSH COORDINATOR: Beau Bell

DIRECTOR OF PLAYER OPERATIONS: Brandon Goldstein

NUMERICAL ROSTER

AS OF 7/19/18

#	POS	NAME	HT	WT	COLLEGE	EXP
1	DE	Joe Sykes	6'5	265	Southern	6
2	WR	Greg Carr	6'5	200	Florida State	4
3	DE	Darryl Cato-Bishop	6'4	265	NC State	4
4	QB	Tommy Grady	6'7	245	Utah	7
5	DB	Terrance Smith	6'2	210	South Carolina St	7
5	DB	Brandon Stephens	5'11	210	Miami OH	4
6	QB	Kyle Rowley	6'1	205	Brown	6
7	WR	Malachi Jones	6'3	215	Appalachian State	R
8	LB	Terence Moore	6'2	225	Troy	7
9	FB	Mykel Benson	6'0	290	Florida A&M	8
10	DB	Varmah Sonie	5'8	190	Northern Iowa	4
11	WR	Collin Taylor	6'1	205	Indiana	7
12	DB	Arkeith Brown	6'0	200	Texas A&M	6
12	QB	Mike Fafaul	6'2	215	UCLA	R
13	LB	Wes Mauia	6'1	280	Western New Mexico	5
14	DB	Al Phillips	5'11	180	Wagner	8
15	WR	Paul Browning	6'3	220	Colorado State Pueblo	2
18	WR	Jordan Williams	6'3	220	Edinboro	R
19	K	Kenny Spencer	6'1	220	Northern Alabama	6
21	DB	Marrion Norman	6'1	205	Coastal Carolina	6
23	DB	Erick McIntosh	5'10	180	Florida Atlantic	6
24	DB	Arthur Hobbs	5'10	190	Nebraska Kearney	2
50	LB	Derrick Summers	6'1	260	Toledo	7
68	OL	Ryan Cave	6'5	335	Hampton	7
72	OL	Bret Piekarski	6'4	305	St. Cloud State	1
75	OL	Hayworth Hicks Sr.	6'3	330	Iowa State	3
81	WR	Joe Hills	6'4	225	Tennessee State	8
91	DL	Brandon Sesay	6'6	300	Texas Tech	6
93	OL	Moqut Ruffins	6'5	355	Louisiana Tech	7
99	DL	Nick Seither	6'3	270	Georgetown KY	2

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ASSISTANT HEAD COACH: Les Moss

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DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL/PASS RUSH COORDINATOR: Beau Bell

DIRECTOR OF PLAYER OPERATIONS: Brandon Goldstein

2018 VALOR ROSTER

AS OF 7/19/18

#	POS	NAME	HT	WT	COLLEGE	EXP
1	WR	TT Toliver	6'0	185	Bethune Cookman	15
2	WR	Chris Duvalt	5'11	180	Illinois	6
3	WR	Reggie Gray	5'10	175	Western Illinois	8
4	QB	Arvell Nelson	6'5	230	Texas Southern	5
5	DB	Greg Reid	5'9	190	Florida State	3
6	DB	Tracy Belton	6'0	185	UMass	8
7	K	Pat Clarke	6'3	210	Buffalo	1
8	QB	Warren Smith	6'0	200	Maine	3
9	WR	Jared Dangerfield	6'3	205	Western Kentucky	R
10	QB	Nick Davila	6'3	220	Cincinnati	7
11	DL	Reggie Wilson	6'3	255	Texas	2
12	DL	Roosevelt Falls	6'2	250	Louisiana Tech	2
14	DB	Oshay Dunmore	6'3	205	Southern Oregon	R
15	DB	Fred Obi	6'1	190	San Diego	3
16	WR	Rod Windsor	6'2	210	Western New Mexico	7
17	LB	Alvin Ray Jackson	6'1	210	Albany State	8
18	WR	Douglas McNeil III	6'3	210	Bowie State	1
19	WR	Josh Reese	6'0	185	Central Florida	1
20	DB	Qua Cox	6'0	185	Jackson State	1
23	DB	Dominic Addison	6'2	185	Bethune Cookman	3
24	DB	Svante Davenport	6'1	185	North Alabama	R
25	DB	Michael Everett	5'10	180	SW Minnesota State	R
40	DL	David Washington	6'2	310	Faulkner	4
42	DL	Lanford Collins	6'2	245	Virginia Tech	2
44	OL	Will Corbin	6'6	315	Appalachian State	1
50	LB	James Gordon	6'2	275	Buffalo	3
52	DL	Zack Bullock	6'4	250	South Florida	1
53	OL	Devonte Danzey	6'3	315	Auburn	R
58	DL	Khreem Smith	6'4	265	Oklahoma State	3
60	OL	Siosifa Tufunga	6'3	315	Washington	R
70	OL	James Atoe	6'7	375	Washington	1
72	OL	Anthony Parker	6'6	380	Western Michigan	6
74	OL	Dionte Savage	6'5	335	Oklahoma	2
89	WR	Josh Atkinson	6'2	205	Tulsa	R
90	DL	Austin Brown	6'2	280	Miami OH	1
93	DL	Roderick Henderson	6'1	360	Alabama State	R
99	DL	Jake Payne	6'4	275	Shenadoah	1

VALOR COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH: Benji McDowell

ASSISTANT COACH: Jeremy Grier

ASSISTANT COACH: Shane Stafford

ASSISTANT COACH: Corey Stubbz

TRANSACTIONS

April 23, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Joe Hills

April 30, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Damian Love

PLACING ON LEAGUE SUSPENSION: Greg Carr

May 7, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Greg Carr

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Lance McDowdell

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Doug McNeil III

May 17, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Brandon Sesay

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Shawn Lockett

May 24, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Oshay Dunmore

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Kenny Spencer

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVED: Paul Browning

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Brandon Sesay

May 29, 2018

ACTIVATING FROM REFUSE TO REPORT: Al Phillips

REACTIVATING FROM INJURED RESERVED: Kyle Steuck

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Mike Fafaul

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Brandon Stephens

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

May 31, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Larry Beavers

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Mike Fafaul

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Brandon Sesay

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Brandon Stephens

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Jordan Williams

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Oshay Dunmore

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Damian Love

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Willie McGinnis

June 4, 2018

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Calvin Fance

June 7, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Calvin Fance

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Damian Love

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Moqut Ruffins

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Marrio Norman

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Nick Seither

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Kyle Steuck

June 8, 2018

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Marrio Norman

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Nick Seither

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVED: Marrio Norman

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVED: Nick Seither

June 11, 2018

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

June 14, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Jordan Williams

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Calvin Fance

June 15, 2018

CLAIMING OFF REASSIGNMENT (#1 CLAIM ORDER POS): Mykell Benson

REACTIVATING FROM INJURED RESERVE: Marrio Norman

REACTIVATING FROM INJURED RESERVE: Nick Seither

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Larry Beavers

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Brandon Stephens

June 16, 2018

PLACING ON REFUSE TO REPORT: Mykell Benson

June 19, 2018

ACTIVATING FROM REFUSE TO REPORT: Mykell Benson

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Terence Moore

June 20, 2018

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Terence Moore

PLACING ON RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Damian Love

June 22, 2018

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE REASSIGNMENT: Damian Love

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVED: Damian Love

June 27, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Terrance Smith

PLACING ON RECALLABLE ASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

June 28, 2018

ACTIVATING FROM RECALLABLE ASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

PLACING ON INJURY RESERVE: Jordan Williams

July 2, 2018

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Larry Beavers

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Damian Love

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Wesley Mauia

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Brandon Stephens

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

TRANSACTIONS

July 3, 2018

CLAIMING OFF REASSIGNMENT: Jordan Williams

July 5, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Brian Brikowski

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Al Phillips

July 16, 2018

PLACING ON REASSIGNMENT: Brandon Stephens

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Brandon Stephens

July 19, 2018

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Arkeith Brown

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Wesley Mauia

HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED: Kyle Rowley

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Mike Fafaul

PLACING ON INJURED RESERVE: Arthur Hobbs

PLACING ON LEAGUE SUSPENSION: Brian Brikowski

2018 AWARDS

Twelve Empire Players Awarded All-Arena Honors

Eight players Named to First Team, Four Named to Second Team

7/17/2018

ALBANY - The Arena Football League has announced the 2018 All-Arena First and Second Teams. Twelve members to the Albany Empire have been selected for All-Arena honors.

QB Tommy Grady (6'7, 245, Utah), WR Joe Hills (6'4, 225, Tennessee State), WR Malachi Jones (6'3, 215, Appalachian State), C Ryan Cave (6'5, 335, Hampton), OL Hayworth Hicks (6'3, 330, Iowa State), DE Joe Sykes (6'5, 265, Southern), JLB Terence Moore (6'2, 225, Troy), and DB Marrio Norman (6'1, 205, Coastal Carolina) were selected for First Team All-Arena.

DE Darryl Cato-Bishop (6'4, 265, North Carolina State), DT Brandon Sesay (6'6, 300, Texas Tech), Derrick Summers (6'1, 260, Toledo), and DB Varmah Sonie (5'8, 190, Northern Iowa) were selected for Second Team All-Arena.

"These guys have worked so hard all season long, it's no surprise we had so many names on the All-Arena teams," said Rob Keefe, Head Coach of the Albany Empire. "The whole team is proud of the individual accolades, but we won't stop fighting until we bring a championship back to the Capital Region in our inaugural season!"

2018 FIRST TEAM ALL-ARENA

QB Tommy Grady – Albany
FB Jeramie Richardson – Philadelphia
WR Joe Hills – Albany
WR Malachi Jones – Albany
WR Darius Prince – Philadelphia
C Ryan Cave – Albany
OL Hayworth Hicks – Albany
OL Jordan McCray – Baltimore
DE Joe Sykes – Albany
DE Jake Metz – Philadelphia
DT Justin Lawrence – Baltimore
MLB Dexter Jackson – Baltimore
JLB Terence Moore – Albany
DB Marrio Norman – Albany
DB James Romain – Philadelphia
DB Virgil Gray – Baltimore
K Mark Lewis – Baltimore
ST Brandon Thompkins - Baltimore

2018 SECOND TEAM ALL-ARENA

QB Randy Hippeard – Baltimore
FB Rory Nixon – Baltimore
WR Reggie Gray – Washington
WR Brandon Thompkins – Baltimore
WR Aaron Wascha – Philadelphia
C Phillip Keith Manley – Philadelphia
OL Neal Tivis – Philadelphia
OL Wayne Tribue – Philadelphia
DE Darryl Cato-Bishop – Albany
DE Rodney Fritz – Baltimore
DT Brandon Sesay – Albany
MLB Derrick Summers – Albany
JLB Joe Goosby – Philadelphia
DB Dwayne Hollis – Philadelphia
DB Joe Powell – Baltimore
DB Varmah Sonie – Albany
K Adrian Trevino – Philadelphia
ST Chris Duvalt - Washington

2018 AWARDS

Albany's Hayworth Hicks Named Offensive Lineman of the Year

Hicks a Key Member of the Empire Offensive Line

7/18/2018

LAS VEGAS - The Arena Football League has announced that Albany Empire offensive lineman Hayworth Hicks has been named 2018 AFL Offensive Lineman of the Year.

Hicks (6'3, 330, Iowa State) started all 12 games for the Empire in 2018 and was a key member of the offensive line that allowed a League-low four sacks in 341 passing attempts (1.2%). Behind that line, the Empire led the League in scoring offense (53.8 points per game) and passing touchdowns (81).

AFL OFFENSIVE LINEMAN OF THE YEAR

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>	<u>TEAM</u>
2018	Hayworth Hicks	Albany
2017	Wayne Tribue	Philadelphia
2016	Jordan Mudge	Arizona
2015	Shannon Breen	Philadelphia
2014	Rich Ranglin	San Jose
2013	Billy Eisenhardt	Arizona
2012	Kyle Young	Arizona
2011	Rich Ranglin	Kansas City

2018 AWARDS

Albany's Joe Sykes Named Defensive Lineman of the Year

Sykes Wins Award for 4th Time in His Career

7/18/2018

LAS VEGAS - The Arena Football League has announced that Albany Empire defensive lineman Joe Sykes has been named 2018 AFL Defensive Lineman of the Year. This is Sykes' fourth time winning this award.

Sykes (6'4, 285, Southern) started in all 12 games for the Empire in 2018 and tallied 17.5 tackles (13/9) during the regular season. A disruptive force for the opposing offense, Sykes lead the League with 7.5 sacks and four forced fumbles.

AFL DEFENSIVE LINEMAN OF THE YEAR

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>	<u>TEAM</u>
2018	Joe Sykes	Albany
2017	Khreem Smith	Baltimore
2016	Jake Metz	Philadelphia
2015	Joe Sykes	Jacksonville
2014	James Ruffin	Spokane
2013	Joe Sykes	San Antonio
2012	Joe Sykes	San Jose
2011	Cliff Dukes	Tampa Bay

2018 AWARDS

Albany's Malachi Jones Named Receiver of the Year

Jones Becomes First Rookie to Win the Award

7/19/2018

LAS VEGAS – The Arena Football League has announced that Albany Empire wide receiver Malachi Jones has been named 2018 AFL Receiver of the Year. Jones becomes the first rookie in AFL history to win the award.

Jones (6'3, 215, Appalachian State) appeared in all 12 games for the Empire this season and led the League in reception yards (1,156), receiving yards per game (96.3), and yards per catch (15.0). The rookie ranks second in receiving touchdowns (29) and all-purpose yards (1,196).

AFL RECEIVER OF THE YEAR OF THE YEAR

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PLAYER</u>	<u>TEAM</u>
2018	Malachi Jones	Albany
2017	Joe Hills	Tampa Bay
2016	Joe Hills	Jacksonville
2015	Reggie Gray	San Jose
2014	Marco Thomas	San Jose
2013	Adron Tennell	Spokane
2012	Jesse Schmidt	Iowa
2011	Anthony Jones	Dallas

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Take Game One In Playoffs Against Valor

7/7/2018

The top-seeded Albany Empire (9-4) defeated the fourth-seeded Washington Valor (2-11) to take a one-point lead in the home-and-home playoff series with a 57-56 Saturday night in overtime at the Capital One Arena in Washington, DC in front of a crowd of 5,160. The two teams square off next Saturday, July 21, at 7:30 pm at the Times Union Center in Albany to wrap up the second game of the playoff series.

Albany received the game's opening kickoff and began their first possession from their own nine-yard line. On one play, the Empire were across midfield as quarterback Tommy Grady found receiver Collin Taylor for a 17-yard gain. One play later, the Empire were on the board as Grady hit the league's leader in receiving yards, Malachi Jones, for a 24-yard touchdown. Washington received the ensuing kickoff and thanks to an Albany penalty, the offense took the field on their own 12-yard line. On the first play of the drive, quarterback Arvell Nelson found receiver Jared Dangerfield in stride for the quick response and a 38-yard touchdown.

Grady and company came back onto the field after a nice return by Jordan Williams who ran the ball out to their own 12-yard line. The drive began with a quick sling to receiver Joe Hills for six yards followed by a first down carry by fullback Mykel Benson. With the new set of downs, Grady went right back to his top target as a wide-open Hills carried the ball down to the opposing six-yard line. After recovering their own fumble, Albany was helped by an offsides penalty to bring the Empire down to the three-yard line. Grady handed the ball back off to Benson who ran the ball into the end zone for the short score.

After nearly losing the ball as it bounced off far off the net, the Valor offense took the field starting from their own three-yard line. Nelson found his top receiver, Reggie Gray, for 21-yards to reach midfield. Following a defensive pass interference penalty, Nelson tucked and ran for a 16-yard touchdown to tie the game at 14.

Albany began their next possession from their own five-yard line. After consecutive incomplete passes, Albany was helped by an offsides penalty on defensive back Jake Payne, who was forced to sit for the remainder of the half due to being penalized twice as the first quarter came to an end. On first down, Albany was pushed back for a false start penalty, bringing the ball inside of their own five-yard line. Grady hit Jones on a quick-hitter to pick up nine-yards and set up for a second down and short situation. Grady found Jones for the first down as the Empire reached midfield. Going right back to Jones, the rookie was able to use his elusiveness to work the ball down into the red zone. One play later, Grady was intercepted by defensive back Fred Obi as the ball popped out of Hills' hands in the end zone.

Receiver Chris Duvalt took the initial kickoff of the first half to the nine-yard line as Nelson led the Valor offense back onto the field. Following two incomplete passes and a short gain, the Valor were quickly in a fourth down and five hole. Unable to pick up the necessary yardage, Albany forced a turnover on downs and Grady marched the offense back onto the field starting from the opposing 14-yard line.

After an Albany outside kick attempt, Washington was set up in the red zone on the eight-yard line. In one play, Nelson hit Gray who made an impressive catch for the score to tie the game. Williams recovered the deep kickoff as the Valor attempted to beat Albany in a dash down the field. From their own two-yard line, Grady connected with Hills for a quick six-yard gain. One play later, Grady found Jones over the middle to move the ball to the 23-yard line as Albany used it's first timeout. After consecutive incomplete passes, Grady was pressured and hit in the pocket, forcing an intentional grounding penalty. On fourth and long, the Empire attempted a long field goal that came up short as Duvalt returned the field goal to the Valor 13-yard line with just three seconds remaining in regulation. In one play, Nelson was sacked by defensive lineman Brandon Sesay sending the game to overtime.

Duvalt brought back the kickoff to start the overtime period to the five-yard line as the Valor offense came onto the field. Following three incomplete passes, the Valor were quickly looking at a fourth and 10 situation. Helped by a defensive holding penalty on Albany, Washington had the ball moved out to the 15-yard line and a fresh set of downs. The Valor were quickly backed up due to an offensive pass interference penalty on McNeil. On first and long, Nelson found Duvalt for a quick 16-yard pickup. Following a short first down completion to Gray, Nelson connected with McNeil for another first down as Washington reached the red zone. On first down, Albany was penalized for roughing the passer, moving the Valor inside of the five-yard line. Following a one-yard rush by James Atoe, Nelson found Gray once again in the end zone to take the lead.

Following a kickoff nearly recovered by Washington, the Empire were set up at the five-yard line. On the first play, Grady found Hills over the middle for a quick 13-yard gain. Two plays later, Grady went right back to Hills as Albany reached the opposing five-yard line. After a two-yard loss by Benson and an incomplete pass to Hills, Grady found Hills wide open in the corner of the end zone for the score. Grady connected with Carr on the two-point conversion to give Albany the one-point victory in overtime.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	ot	FINAL
ALBANY	14	7	14	14	8	57
WASHINGTON	14	7	7	21	7	56

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

QB – ARVELL NELSON, WSH

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – FRED OBI, WSH

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Defeat Soul to Clinch #1 Seed in AFL Playoffs

6/23/2018

The Albany Empire (8-4) defeat the Soul (7-5) 71-57 in front of 10,082 fans at the Times Union Center to clinch the top seed of the Arena Football League Playoffs. The Empire will travel to Washington on Saturday, July 14 to battle the Valor in Game 1 of the Playoff Series. The Empire will host the Valor in Game 2 of the Series in Albany at the Times Union Center on Saturday, July 21 at 7:30pm. The team highest aggregate score of the two playoff games will advance to ArenaBowl XXXI. With tonight's attendance, should the Empire advance to the championship game, they would host the ArenaBowl at the Times Union Center on Saturday, July 28. Tickets for the July 21st Playoff game are on sale now at TheAlbanyEmpire.com.

Albany received the opening kickoff and began on their own 12-yard line after a nice return by Terrance Smith. After failing to connect with receiver Malachi Jones deep in the end zone on first down, quarterback Tommy Grady went right back Jones for a short gain for the games first completion. One play later, Grady found Jones on a screen pass for an Empire first down as Albany quickly reached midfield. Wasting no time, Grady targeted receiver Joe Hills on a 24-yard pass setting up the Empire on the one-yard line and threatening. On the next play, Grady handed the ball off to fullback Mykel Benson who plowed ahead for the touchdown to give Albany the early 7-0 lead.

After a short kickoff, Philadelphia took the field on their own 12-yard line after a return by Poppy Livers. On the first play from scrimmage, quarterback Dan Raudabaugh found receiver Darius Reynolds for a quick four-yard gain. After an incomplete pass on second down, Raudabaugh went right back to Reynolds down field setting the Soul up on the opposing 12-yard line. After a penalty on the Soul, Raudabaugh once again fed Reynolds for a 13-yard touchdown to tie the game.

The Empire returned the ensuing kickoff to their own five-yard line and Grady and company were back on the field. Following two consecutive incomplete passes, Grady found Hills near the sideline dasher to give Albany a fresh set of downs. The Empire were across midfield on the next play on a short pass to receiver Collin Taylor. On a quick snap, Grady handed the ball off to Benson who evaded a Soul defender on his way for a 16-yard gain. At the start of the second quarter, Grady found Hills on the first play for a four-yard touchdown to reclaim the lead. On the following kickoff, Livers was hit hard by Terence Moore and was forced back into the end zone before being swarmed by Greg Carr for a safety to quickly give Albany two points and the ball back.

The Soul offense took the field from their own six-yard line and Raudabaugh quickly hit his top target Darius Prince for a six-yard gain. On the following play, Raudabaugh went right back to Prince as the Soul crossed into Empire territory. After a short rush by fullback Jeramie Richardson, Raudabaugh target receiver Aaron Wascha along the sideline dasher board moving Philadelphia into the red zone. One play later, the Soul were in the end zone on an eight-yard pass to receiver Lonnie Outlaw.

Philadelphia received the kickoff to start the second half and began on their own 14-yard line. Following a neutral zone infraction on Albany, Raudabaugh located Reynolds as the Soul pushed down to the Empire 15-yard line. One play later, the Soul were able to cap off the drive with a 15-yard touchdown to Prince. Albany began their first possession of the second half on their own seven-yard line after being backed up by a holding penalty. On second down, Grady hit Jones in stride for a quick 43-yard Albany score.

Philadelphia began their following drive from their own 16-yard line following an offsides penalty on Albany. Two plays later, Raudabaugh found Reynolds on a quick slant who made a juke and carried the ball down to the Empire seven-yard line. One play later, Raudabaugh threw a fade to Wascha who made an impressive catch for the score. Starting from their own three-yard line, Grady targeted Taylor for a 13-yard pick up as the third quarter came to an end. The Empire opened the fourth quarter with a screen pass to Jones and a carry by Benson for a quick first down. On the following play, Grady hit Jones in the end zone for the 25-yard touchdown, his third receiving score of the night.

Albany successfully recovered an onside kick attempt and after a penalty on Philadelphia, Grady led the offense back onto the field from their own 24-yard line. In one play, Albany was down to the goal line as Grady connected with Hills who flew over the boards making an impressive catch. After two rushing attempts by Benson, Grady found Carr for the short score to push the lead to 57-36.

Albany recovered the Soul onside kick attempt and controlled the ball on the Philadelphia six-yard line with 32 seconds remaining in the game. On second down, Grady found Hills in the corner of the end zone on a fade and after successfully converting the two-point conversion, the game was all but over. With 20 seconds remaining in the game, the Soul offense took the field from their own nine-yard line. On the first play, Raudabaugh found Wascha over the middle who carried the ball down to the Empire 12-yard line as the Soul used their second timeout. Following two consecutive incomplete passes, Raudabaugh was intercepted by Moore who added to his league lead with six interceptions on the season as time expired.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	23	14	27	71
PHILADELPHIA	7	7	22	21	55

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – JOE HILLS, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – James Romain, PHI

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Bounce Back on the Road at Baltimore

6/23/2018

The Albany Empire (6-4) defeated the Baltimore Brigade (7-3) 56-49 Saturday night at the Royal Farms Arena in Baltimore, MD in front of a crowd of 5,552. Empire quarterback Tommy Grady went 14 of 20 passes for 199 yards and seven passing touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Empire receiver Joe Hills had 6 receptions for 76 yards and four receiving touchdowns being named Offensive Player of the Game. Empire defensive back Marrio Norman led the way with 10 total tackles and was named Defensive Player of the Game. With the victory over the Brigade, Albany now holds the tiebreaker for the playoff seeding should the two teams finish even in the standings.

Baltimore received the opening kick and began the game's initial drive from their own five-yard line. On the first play of the possession, Brigade quarterback Randy Hippeard fired a dart to receiver Brandon Collins for a quick four-yard pickup. On the very next play, Hippeard hit his top target Brandon Thompkins for a 41-yard touchdown to give Baltimore the early lead. After the Brigade failed to recover an onside kick, the Empire set up shop on the opposing 16-yard line. On the first play of the drive, Empire quarterback Tommy Grady found the league's leader in receiving touchdowns, Joe Hills, for the 16-yard score to tie the game. The touchdown reception marked the 90th consecutive game with a receiving touchdown for Hills.

The ensuing kickoff was returned by Thompkins to the Baltimore seven-yard line. On the first play of the drive, Hippeard found Collins over the middle who ran the ball down to the Empire four-yard line. After a three-yard rush by fullback Rory Nixon and an incomplete pass, the Brigade were able to capitalize on third down with a one-yard touchdown rush by Nixon. The Empire took over on their own one-yard line after a mishandled return by Jordan Williams that was recovered by Collin Taylor. With the first play of the drive, Grady found rookie receiver Malachi Jones for the quick first down. On the following play, newly acquired fullback Mykel Benson rushed ahead for 12 yards as the Empire approached midfield. After an incomplete pass, Grady found Hills who broke a tackle and pushed forward for another Albany first down. Facing fourth down after a short pass to Jones and an incompletion to Hills, the Empire were helped by a pass interference penalty as Grady was targeting Hills in the end zone. Wasting no time with the new set of downs, Benson was able to get a block on the outside and rush for a six-yard touchdown.

Thompkins had a nice return on the kickoff, but the yardage was quickly taken away thanks to a block in the back penalty, setting the Brigade up on their own two-yard line. Baltimore gained some space on an eight-yard completion to receiver Milton Williams. Two plays later, the Brigade were unable to convert on fourth down giving the ball back to Albany on the opposing 10-yard line. On the first play of the new drive, Grady found Jones on a screen pass who was able to take it the 10 yards for the Albany touchdown to take the lead early in the second quarter.

Starting on their own six-yard line, the Brigade were able to move the chains and pick up a first down after two short throws from Hippeard. After an incomplete pass thanks for pressure by defensive end Darryl Cato-Bishop and a short throw, Baltimore was set up on a third and short situation as the first half approached the one-minute warning. The Brigade picked up the first down on a quarterback sneak by Hippeard and let the clock run down inside of 30 seconds. Despite an incomplete pass, the Brigade were helped by a defensive holding penalty and entered the red zone with just 14 seconds remaining in the half. One play later, Hippeard found Collins for the eight-yard score. The Empire were set up on their own 21-yard line after a timely return by Jordan Williams. After being setback by a false start penalty, with just five seconds on the clock, Grady found Jones over the middle to push the ball back to midfield as the Empire field goal unit came onto the field. The first field goal of the Empire's inaugural season was missed from 40-yards out by kicker Kenny Spencer as Albany entered halftime with a 28-21 lead.

Down two possessions to start the fourth quarter, the Brigade offense took the field on their own five-yard line. On the second play of the drive, Nick Seither forced and recovered a fumble right in front of the Empire bench as Albany took over on the opposing 18-yard line. Two plays later, Grady found Hills once again who made a bobbling grab in the end zone for his fourth touchdown of the night to widen the lead. From their own 13-yard line, the Brigade were aided by a roughing the passer penalty to advance the ball to midfield. After a few short completions, Hippeard was able to find Collins for the 14-yard touchdown; his third touchdown reception of the night.

Baltimore recovered the onside kick attempted and the offense was back on the field starting from the 25-yard line. After an incomplete pass down field, the clock trickled to the one-minute warning. On third down, Hippeard hit receiver Williams for the 25-yard score to pull within a touchdown. Albany was able to recover the ensuing Baltimore onside kick attempt. After two kneel downs, the Empire were victorious 56-49.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	14	14	14	14	56
BALTIMORE	14	7	7	21	49

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – JOE HILLS, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – MARRIO NORMAN, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Lose Heartbreaker to Soul

6/16/2018

The Albany Empire (5-4) was defeated by the Philadelphia Soul (5-4) 75-74 Saturday night at the Times Union Center in Albany, NY in front of a crowd of 9,534. Soul receiver Aaron Wascha caught 12 passes for 208 yards and seven receiving touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Empire receiver Malachi Jones had 7 receptions for 177 yards, five receiving touchdowns and one rushing touchdown on his way to being named Offensive Player of the Game. Empire mac linebacker Derrick Summers was named Defensive Player of the Game 4.5 total tackles and one sack.

The Empire received the opening kickoff and began the game on the five-yard line after a short return by Jordan Williams. After failing to connect on a bomb to receiver Joe Hills, Tommy Grady hit receiver Malachi Jones for a 45-yard touchdown to give the Empire an early 7-0 lead. Philadelphia took the ensuing kickoff to the 14-yard line and went to work on their first drive of the game. After an incomplete pass, defensive end Joe Sykes was able to apply pressure, but couldn't bring down Soul quarterback Shane Austin who scrambled across midfield for a 15-yard gain. The next play, Philadelphia was in the red zone as Austin connected with the league's leader in receiving yards, Darius Prince. Three plays later, Austin hooked up with Prince in the end zone for the short score to tie the game.

The Soul attempted an onside kick, but failed to recover it, setting up the Empire on the opposing 10-yard line. After an encroachment penalty on Philadelphia, Grady found Joe Hills from five yards out for the quick score. Hills' trip to the end zone marked the 89th consecutive game of his career with a receiving touchdown; an active league record.

Philadelphia took over on their own 15-yard line after a nice kick return by Poppy Livers. The Soul were across midfield on the first play of the drive as Austin went right back to Prince. After making it to the red zone, the Soul were setback thanks to a sack by defensive end Nick Seither. One play later, Austin found Aaron Wascha to get down to the Empire three-yard line. Philadelphia was quickly backed up because of an offensive pass interference play, but Austin found Prince on the next play for the score to tie the game at 14.

Albany went back to work on their on 12-yard line as the first quarter came to an end. With the first play of the second quarter, Grady found Hills down field to set the Empire up on the opposing seven-yard line. After Albany successfully overturned a fumble call, Malachi Jones ran the ball in from four-yards out for the score. The Soul returned the ensuing kickoff to the two-yard line and two plays later, Austin connected with Wascha for the 48-yard touchdown to once again tie the game.

Due to a holding penalty on the Empire return, the Albany offense went back out to the field starting on their own three-yard line. After an illegal contact penalty on Philadelphia and two completions to Hills, the Empire were quickly across midfield. One play later, Grady found Hills in the end zone once again as he bobbled the ball but secured it for the score. Albany would then attempt an onside kick but failed to recover, setting Philadelphia up on the six-yard line. Three plays later, Austin found Wascha once again for the score.

After another failed onside kick attempt by the Soul, Albany went back to work in the red zone on the seven-yard line. One play after the one-minute warning, Grady found receiver Greg Carr for the short score. The Empire then attempted an onside kick of their own but failed to recover, giving the Soul the ball back on the Albany 15-yard line. After a defensive pass interference, Philadelphia inched down to the six-yard line after a short rush by Austin. Albany used three timeouts on consecutive plays as the Soul ran the ball down to the four-yard line to set up a fourth and goal situation, but Philadelphia was able to cap the drive off with a touchdown to Wascha; his third of the quarter. The Empire offense took the field with a mere 21 seconds remaining in the first half with no timeouts. Making quick work, Albany was across midfield thanks to catches from Hills and Jones who were both able to get out of bounds. Grady was then able to connect with Jones from 14-yards out for the Empire touchdown, leaving just five seconds on the clock before halftime. The Empire took a 41-34 lead into the half.

Albany recovered the Soul's onside kick attempt and were quickly in the red zone threatening once again. Two plays later, Grady hit Carr on a fade in the corner of the end zone for the Empire touchdown pushing Albany to 74 points; the most points scored by any team on the season. After a short rushing attempt and two incomplete passes, the Soul were quickly forced into a fourth down and seven situation. Unable to pick up the yardage, Albany took over on downs in the red zone on the nine-yard line. After running down some clock, the Empire failed to get into the end zone, turning the ball over on downs back to the Soul. Within two plays, Philadelphia was across midfield and threatening once again. One play later, Austin found Wascha once again for his seventh receiving touchdown of the game.

The Soul recovered the ensuing onside kick and took over on their own 12-yard line down by five. After pushing across midfield in two plays, the Soul were threatening once again with little time left on the clock. From the 10-yard line, Austin took a shot at the end zone that fell incomplete leaving less than one second on the clock. On the following play, Austin rolled out and found Prince for the 10-yard score as time expired.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	14	27	20	13	74
PHILADELPHIA	14	20	14	27	75

GAME MVP:

QB – AARON WASCHA, PHI

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – MALACHI JONES, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

LB – DERRICK SUMMERS, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Fall Short to Brigade in Rematch

6/9/2018

The Albany Empire (5-3) was defeated by the Baltimore Brigade (6-2) 59-56 Saturday night at the Times Union Center in Albany, NY in front of a crowd of 8,767. Brigade quarterback Randy Hippeard threw for 270 yards and eight touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Brigade receiver Brandon Thompkins had 17 receptions for 159 yards and three receiving touchdowns on his way to being named Offensive Player of the Game. Empire defensive back Brandon Stephens was named Defensive Player of the Game leading both teams with 11.5 total tackles

Albany received the game's opening kickoff and were setup on their own 11-yard line after a nice return by Larry Beavers. Grady went right to work finding the league's leader in receiving yards Malachi Jones on a short pass to the side for a 9-yard pick up. On the next play, Grady went right back to Jones and picked up 21 yards as the Empire were quickly in the opposing red zone. One play later, Grady found Jones once again from 10-yards out as the Albany took the early 7-0 lead. After a high kick off the net, Baltimore went to work on their own nine-yard line for their first possession of the game. After an incomplete pass on first down, Hippeard found his top receiver for a six-yard game to set Baltimore up in a third and short situation. The next play Hippeard went right back to Brandon Thompkins to pick up the first down and approach midfield. Three plays later, Brandon Sesay hit home for the sack to back the Brigade up to the 17-yard line for third and long. Joe Sykes assisted on the sack, tying him for the all-time career lead in sacks with 60.5. In two plays, Baltimore was able to pick up the necessary yardage to set up a first down on the one-yard line. On first down, Hippeard was sacked by Darryl Cato-Bishop. In response, Hippeard found receiver Quentin Sims who made an impressive one-handed catch in the end zone to tie the game.

After a touchback, the Empire began their second drive on their own three-yard line. After two incomplete passes, Grady found receiver Joe Hills for the Empire first down as the first quarter came to a close. Albany was quickly across midfield as Grady found Collin Taylor over the middle for another first down. The next play, Grady found Hills for an 18-yard touchdown as the ball was tipped and Hills made a nice play to recover in the end zone. This touchdown marked the 88th consecutive game with a receiving touchdown for Hills, an active league record. Baltimore went back to work on their own 20-yard line as the Empire kickoff sailed out of bounds outside of the net. In one play the Brigade were across midfield as Hippeard found Sims for the 10-yard gain. Three plays later, Hippeard was intercepted by jack linebacker Terence Moore thanks to pressure from defensive end Joe Sykes. On the first play of the drive, Grady found Jones and the Empire were quickly threatening on the Brigade 14-yard line. Two plays later, Grady found Hills again in the end zone as he battled defensive back Josh Victorian before eventually coming down with the Empire touchdown.

To start the half, the Brigade were set up after a nice return by Thompkins and quickly crossed midfield. Hippeard continued to target Thompkins as the Brigade moved into the red zone. Hippeard went right back to Thompkins from seven yards out for the score to give Baltimore the early second half lead. The Empire would begin their initial drive of the new half on their own 12-yard line. Albany quickly picked up a first down after completed passes to Hills and Jones. On the third play of the drive, Grady hit Taylor for a 27-yard touchdown to tie the game.

Starting on their own five-yard line, the Empire were quickly across midfield thanks to a pass interference penalty on Baltimore and a short reception by Jones to end the third quarter. After losing a chunk of yards due to an offensive pass interference penalty, Grady responded by finding Taylor for a 15-yard gain. One play later, Hills caught a five-yard reception to pick up the first down, but the Empire were setback due to another penalty on Hills. Hills bounced back bringing a catch-and-run down to the goal line. The next play, Albany was in the end zone on a one-yard rush by Jones.

Albany would recover the ensuing kickoff on another squib kick from Spencer and take over on the opposing four-yard line thanks to an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on Baltimore on the previous Empire touchdown. The next play, Grady found Hills again for the short touchdown, Hills' third of the game. Baltimore would return the ensuing kickoff to the 11-yard line, but thanks to a roughing the kicker penalty on the previous Empire extra point, the ball was moved back to the six-yard line. One play later, Thompkins caught a short pass and made a move to run in for a 44-yard touchdown.

Albany failed to recover an onside kick as Baltimore began their drive on the Empire 11-yard line with one-minute remaining in the game. Hippeard rushed down to the two-yard line on the first play of the game, forcing Albany to use one of their timeouts. Hippeard continued to kneel the ball causing the Empire to use up their remaining timeouts. With five seconds left, Baltimore kicker Mark Lewis drilled a 17-yard field goal to ice the game with a 59-56 victory in favor of Baltimore.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	21	7	3	56
BALTIMORE	7	21	14	17	59

GAME MVP:

QB – RANDY HIPPEARD, BAL

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – BRANDON THOMPCKINS, BAL

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – BRANDON STEPHENS, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Claim a Share of First Place

6/2/2018

The Albany Empire (5-2) defeated the Baltimore Brigade (5-2) 61-53 Saturday night at the Times Union Center in Albany, NY in front of a crowd of 8,057. Empire quarterback Tommy Grady threw for 248 yards and eight touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Empire receiver Malachi Jones had eight receptions for 133 yards and three receiving touchdowns on his way to being named Offensive Player of the Game. Empire's jack linebacker Terence Moore was named Defensive Player of the Game for the second straight week with 4.5 total tackles, a forced fumble and an interception.

Albany received the opening kickoff and went to work on their own six-yard line. On the first play from scrimmage, quarterback Tommy Grady hit receiver Malachi Jones over the middle who then broke a tackle and took it to the house for a 44-yard touchdown for the early lead. The Brigade took the field on the 20-yard line after a nice return by Brandon Thompkins. After one play, Randy Hippeard found receiver Quentin Sims for a short pass and the Brigade were across midfield. A few plays later, Hippeard over threw his receiver and hit the field goal post only to be intercepted by linebacker Terence Moore. Shortly after, the Empire turned the ball over on downs giving the ball back to the Brigade on the short side of midfield. Two plays later Hippeard found Sims for a nine-yard score to tie the game 7-7.

The Empire took over on their own seven-yard line and Grady quickly found Jones who used his elusiveness to push the ball to midfield. After the quarter break, Grady found his favorite target Joe Hills for a 13 score. This touchdown marked the 87th consecutive game with a receiving touchdown for Hills. Albany failed to recover an onside kick setting up the Brigade with great field position on the opposing seven-yard line. One play later, Baltimore capitalized with a short touchdown to Brandon Thompkins.

Albany went back to work from their own seven-yard line and were quickly across midfield in one play thanks to an impressive diving catch by Jones. Two plays later, Jones found pay dirt for the second time of the half on a 17-yard pass from Grady.

Due to the Empire kickoff going out of bounds, Baltimore was set up on their own 20-yard line. Two plays later, Hippeard found receiver Milton Williams and the Brigade were quickly across midfield. The next play, Hippeard went right back to Williams, moving Baltimore into the red zone. Hippeard then found receiver Brandon Collins for the short touchdown as Collins held onto the ball while flipping over the wall.

After the drive started on their own two-yard line, Grady found receiver Collin Taylor for a 48-yard touchdown on the first play of the new possession to reclaim the lead 27-21 with only a minute remaining in the half. The Empire failed to recover another onside kick, setting the Brigade up on the six-yard line. Baltimore made quick work of the short field as Hippeard connected with Thompkins for a two-yard touchdown.

Baltimore successfully recovered an onside kick and went back to work on their own 11-yard line. Thanks to a successful challenge by Head Coach Rob Keefe, Moore forced and recovered a fumble one play later to get the ball back on the opposing 14-yard line. After three consecutive run plays to Jones and a kneel by Grady, Baltimore had burned through their timeouts. One play later, Grady found Jones once again for the six-yard score; Jones' third touchdown of the half. Baltimore returned the Empire kickoff and thanks to an unsportsmanlike penalty, were set up on the opposing 17-yard line. The Brigade ended the half with a 32-yard field goal to end the half still behind 33-31.

After a failed Brigade onside kick, the Empire went to work on the opposing 14-yard line. The Empire took their time burning away precious seconds on the clock. Grady then connected with Hills for his third touchdown of the game giving Albany a 61-46 lead with just over four minutes remaining in the game.

Collin Taylor recovered the Brigade onside kick attempt and the Empire offense took over on the 12-yard line with a minute remaining in the game. The Empire were quickly back in the red zone, but in no hurry to score. After three consecutive kneeldowns by Grady, the game was over, securing the Empire's fifth straight victory 61-53

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	26	14	14	61
BALTIMORE	7	24	7	15	53

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – MALACHI JONES, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – TERENCE MOORE, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Win Fourth Straight

5/26/2018

The Albany Empire (4-2) defeated the Washington Valor (0-6) 48-21 Saturday night at the Times Union Center in Albany, NY in front of a crowd of 7,847. Empire quarterback Tommy Grady threw for 237 yards and six touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Empire receiver Joe Hills had five receptions for 99 yards and three receiving touchdowns on his way to being named Offensive Player of the Game. The game marked the 86th consecutive game for Hills with a receiving touchdown; an active league record. Empire's jack linebacker Terence Moore was named Defensive Player of the Game with 8.5 total tackles and an interception return for a touchdown.

Washington received the game's opening kickoff and began their initial drive on their own five-yard line. After beginning with an incomplete pass, quarterback Shane Austin found receiver Reggie Gray for a quick five-yard pick up. The very next snap, Austin found Chris Duvall over the center of the field to push to ball closer to midfield. Two plays later, Austin was intercepted by Arthur Hobbs in the end zone to set the Empire up on their own five-yard line. The Empire opened the drive with a pass to rookie standout receiver Malachi Joes for an early first down. The next play, Grady connected with his top target Joe Hills for a long 30-yard touchdown to put Albany on top 7-0 midway through the first quarter.

The ensuing kickoff hit off the field goal post and was recovered by Jordan Williams, giving the ball back to the Empire on the opposing six-yard line. The first play of the new drive, fullback Wes Mauia couldn't haul in a pitch from Grady, fumbling the ball back to the Valor. Washington methodically worked the ball down the field and eventually capped their drive with an eight-yard touchdown to TT Toliver as he flipped over the back wall.

After a nice return by Jordan Williams, the Empire were set up on the 12-yard line. One play later, Grady found Jones deep in the end zone, but the play was erased by a penalty. Albany would bounce back as Grady hit Hills over the middle for an Empire first down as the first quarter came to a close. To open the second quarter, Grady connected with receiver Collin Taylor for a first down as Albany crossed midfield. One play later, Grady found Hills for a 17-yard Empire touchdown. After the Valor received the next kickoff, Jack Linebacker Terence Moore intercepted the first pass from Austin and returned the ball into the end zone to extend the Empire lead to two scores.

Starting from their own three-yard line, Austin found Reggie Gray for a quick 10-yard pick up. The ensuing play, Washington moved the ball through the air across midfield. After the play, Valor offensive lineman Will Corbin was ejected for a personal foul. After working the ball into the red zone, the Empire were able to stop Austin's scramble attempt from a yard out to force a turnover on downs. Albany would gain some space as Grady found Hills across the middle to quickly move the ball to midfield. After a couple of short completions to Taylor, Grady was able to hit Malachi Jones in the end zone from seven-yards out.

Wasting no time, the Valor returned the following kickoff all the way down field to the opposing seven-yard line setting them up with only 23 seconds remaining in the first half. Three plays later, Austin hooked up with receiver Josh Reese for a short score leaving only five seconds on the clock before halftime. On the final kickoff of the half, Valor receiver Jared Dangerfield was ejected for a personal foul. The Empire ran down the remaining seconds to end the first half with a 28-14 lead.

Empire quarterback Mike Fafaul entered the game for Grady late in the fourth quarter. After a Valor defensive penalty, the Empire were quickly over midfield and threatening again. Following the one-minute warning, Fafaul found Taylor as the Empire moved the ball inside of the Valor 15-yard line. The game was all but over as Fafaul took a knee and let the clock run out as the Empire won 48-21.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	21	14	6	48
WASHINGTON	7	7	0	7	21

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – JOE HILLS, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – TERENCE MOORE, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Snap Soul's 20-Game Home Win Streak

5/19/2018

The Albany Empire (3-2) defeated the Philadelphia Soul (3-2) 41-36 Saturday night at the Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia, PA in front of a crowd of 9,715. The big win for the Empire broke the Soul's active streak of 20 consecutive wins at home. Empire quarterback Tommy Grady threw for 178 yards and five touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Empire receiver Malachi Jones had seven receptions for 63 yards and two receiving touchdowns, while chipping one rushing touchdown and earning himself Offensive Player of the Game for the second straight week. Soul's James Romain was named Defensive Player of the Game with eight total tackles and an interception.

The Soul received the initial kick and began their drive at their own five-yard line by opening with a 16-yard connection from Raudabaugh to Reynolds. Two plays later, the Soul found the end zone on a 27-yard hookup to Darius Prince to jump out to an early 7-0 lead.

Albany began their ensuing possession on their own five-yard line after a touchback on the kickoff. After a short completion to Joe Hills, the Empire were helped by a pass interference on fourth down to extend the drive. The drive was stalled by an interception by defensive back James Romaine on a pass intended for Hills in the end zone. Three plays into the Soul drive, Raudabaugh was hit hard by a swarm of Empire defensive linemen and was temporarily knocked out of the game, leaving backup quarterback Greg McGhee to handle the next play. After giving up a sack to Empire lineman Nick Seither, Raudabaugh returned to the game. The Soul failed to convert on fourth down, turning the ball back over to Albany. At the end of the first quarter, Philadelphia led the defensive battle 7-0.

With the first play of the second quarter, the Empire were setback by an intentional grounding penalty on third down and were unable to convert on a long fourth down to give the ball back over to the Soul. Philadelphia worked quickly as they crossed into Empire territory in just two plays. Unable to convert another first down, the Soul attempted a long 46 field goal. The field goal was no good and returned by Empire receiver Collin Taylor to the five-yard line, but thanks to a Soul penalty, the Empire began their drive from the 15-yard line. Two plays later, Grady connected with Malachi Jones for a 30-yard touchdown to tie the game at 7-7.

Albany wasted no time after another Soul score as Grady connected with Jones for his second touchdown reception of the half to give the Empire a 14-13 lead. The Empire then failed to recover an onside kick of their own, setting up the Soul on the Albany 12-yard line. The Soul would take advantage of the short field by taking back the lead on a 27-yard field goal. With little time on the clock, the Empire couldn't find a way to score, with the first half ending 16-14 in favor of the Soul.

Albany would begin their second possession of the second half on their own 20-yard line after the Soul kickoff went out of bounds outside of the nets. Two plays later, Grady connected with Jordan Williams for a 25-yard touchdown; the first touchdown reception of Williams' young AFL career. The first play of the Soul's next possession ended with a fumble by fullback Adrian Ferns, giving the ball back to the Empire inside of the Soul 5-yard line. Defensive end Joe Sykes forced the fumble giving him a league leading four forced fumbles on the season. The Empire capitalized on the Soul turnover with a one-yard touchdown run by Malachi Jones to further the Albany lead. At the end of the third quarter, the Empire led 35-23.

To end the game, the Empire took over on the opposing six-yard line after a failed onside kick by the Soul with just under two minutes to go in the game. The Empire were unable to capitalize on the short field, giving the ball back to the Soul who then drove down field and capped with an eight-yard touchdown to Darius Prince to close the Empire gap to 41-36 with 33 seconds remaining. The Empire recovered the Soul onside kick attempt and were able to kneel the ball to run the remaining seconds on the clock and come away with a victory.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	0	14	21	6	41
PHILADELPHIA	7	9	7	13	36

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – MALACHI JONES, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – James Romain, PHI

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Spoil Valor's Home Opener

5/11/2018

The Albany Empire (2-2) defeated the Washington Valor (0-4) 53-42, Friday night at the Capital One Arena in Washington, D.C. in front of a crowd of 9,036. Empire quarterback Tommy Grady threw for 257 yards and seven touchdowns earning himself the game MVP award. Empire receiver Malachi Jones had six receptions for 120 yards and three receiving touchdowns, while chipping one rushing touchdown and earning himself Offensive Player of the Game. Terence Moore was named Defensive Player of the Game with six total tackles and a fumble recovery.

The Empire received the opening kick and began their drive just inside the 10-yard line. With the first play of the game, Grady found Malachi Jones for a 41-yard bomb and a touchdown giving the Empire an early 6-0 lead. The Valor's Chris Duvalt returned the ensuing kickoff to nearly midfield, giving the Valor excellent field position for their first drive in their home opener. Three plays later, Valor quarterback Warren Smith connected with wide receiver TT Toliver for the score.

Grady found Jones for a quick first down to open the team's second drive of the game. After a few Valor penalties and a couple of hookups between Grady and his top target Joe Hills, the Empire were able to cap the long drive off with three-yard touchdown to a wide-open Greg Carr.

The Empire attempted to surprise the Valor with an onside kick, however the try was unsuccessful, giving the Valor the ball on the Albany nine-yard line. The Valor were able to capitalize on the short field position with another touchdown to Toliver to end the first quarter with the lead, 14-12.

In response, the Empire opened the second quarter with a quick-hitter to Joe Hills that moved the ball to midfield. The very next play, Grady connected with Jones for a 19-yard touchdown; Jones' second of the game. The Valor were able to keep the back and forth pace up with the Empire as they marched down the field and ended with a 21-yard touchdown to Duvalt.

After a nice kickoff return by Jordan Williams, the Empire were set up on their own 15-yard line. Two plays later, Grady found a wide-open Collin Taylor in the end zone from 19 yards out, giving the lead back to Albany, 26-21. The Empire once again attempted an onside kick but failed to recover, setting up the Valor on the Albany 5-yard line. The very next play, the Valor scored on a 5-yard touchdown run by Warren Smith.

With under two minutes to go the Empire went to work inside of their own five-yard line. Two plays later, Grady found Hills for a long completion as Hills smartly stayed out of the end zone to keep the clock running. The Empire capped the drive with a two-yard rushing touchdown by Malachi Jones: his third touchdown of the half. At the end of the first half, the Empire led 32-28.

The Valor began the second half with the ball and were able to methodically work down field, but the drive stalled inside of the Empire 5-yard line and turned the ball over on downs. With 45 yards of turf ahead of them the Empire picked up where they left off by finding Malachi Jones for a completion over the middle. The next play, Grady connected with Jones for a short pass, but Jones was able to make some elusive moves and make his way into the end zone for his fourth total score of the night.

The next Valor possession began with a quick pass, but a Valor penalty brought the offense back inside of their own 10-yard line. Washington worked the ball with ease and ended the drive with a five-yard touchdown pass to receiver Josh Reese. The Valor attempted to get the ball back with an onside kick, but failed, giving the ball to the Empire on the short side of the field. The Empire took a knee and watched the clock wind down on their way to a 53-42 victory.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	12	20	7	14	53
WASHINGTON	14	14	0	14	42

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – MALACHI JONES, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – TERENCE MOORE, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Empire Routs Valor 47-23

5/5/2018

The Albany Empire (1-2) won their first game in franchise history against the Washington Valor (0-3) 47-23, Saturday night at the Times Union Center in front of a crowd of 10,065 wearing orange. Empire quarterback Tommy Grady threw for five touchdowns on his way to winning the game MVP award. Valors's Rod Windsor caught the two of the three Washington touchdown passes earning Offensive Player of the Game. Marrio Norman was named Defensive Player of the Game with two interceptions and a touchdown.

Albany receiving the opening kickoff and instantly found receiver Joe Hills on the first play of the game for a first down. On just the third play of the drive, Quarterback Tommy Grady threw a 25-yard floater that looked like it was intercepted, but the ball bobbed up into the hands of Hills for the touchdown. With the score, Joe Hills extended his record of consecutive games with a touchdown reception to 83.

To answer, the Washington Valor methodically drove the ball down the field. On fourth down in the red zone, Valor quarterback Warren Smith found Washington's top target Rod Windsor for the score. On the ensuing possession, Grady found Collin Taylor for a long catch-and-run hookup, but after being tackled from behind, Taylor fumbled the ball into the end zone for a Valor touchback. After the quarter break, the Valor were unable to capitalize and turned the ball over on downs thanks to a sack by defensive end, Joe Sykes.

After a penalty on Washington and a few short completions, Grady was able to find rookie receiver Malachi Jones on a short pass that he broke for a 14-yard touchdown. That touchdown marked the third touchdown in as many games for the rookie.

Starting on their own 1-yard line on the following possession, the Valor were helped by a series of Empire penalties that slowly moved the ball down the field. Washington was able to capitalize on the penalties and cap the drive off with an 8-yard touchdown to Windsor, his second of the game. The extra point attempt was blocked but recovered by the Valor for a two-point conversion, giving them the lead 15-14.

After Valor kickoff went out of bounds, the Empire received the ball with great starting field position at the 20-yard line. Albany easily worked the ball down the field finishing the drive with a four-yard fade to Hills for his second touchdown reception of the game.

The Empire surprised Washington with an onside kick that was recovered by Malachi Jones, giving Albany the ball with a minute remaining in the first half. The offense milked some clock while at the same time making their way down field thanks to two catches by Hills and a Valor penalty. The Empire controlled the ball down to the one-yard line as time was about to expire before Malachi Jones capped the drive off with a short touchdown run giving the Empire the lead 28-15 at the half.

The first play of the second half, Valor quarterback Warren Smith was intercepted by Marrio Norman, who ran it back for a touchdown. The Valor's next possession ended with another turnover on a strip sack by Willie McGinnis, giving the ball back to the Empire on the short side of midfield. Beginning on the Valor 20-yard line, the Empire took their time as they moved down field and capped the drive with a five-yard hookup from Grady to Hills.

The Empire capitalized working their offense before finishing the drive with a pass off the net, caught by Collin Taylor in the end zone for the score, furthering the Empire lead 47-15.

After a late Valor touchdown, the game was already on ice as the Empire took the field for the final time and ran down the remaining seconds on the clock on their way to a 47-23 victory.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	21	12	7	47
WASHINGTON	7	8	0	8	23

GAME MVP:

QB – TOMMY GRADY, ALB

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – ROD WINDSOR, WAS

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – MARRIO NORMAN, ALB

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Brigade Defeats Empire 52-49 in Albany's First Road Game

4/28/2018

The Albany Empire (0-2) played the team's first game on the road in Baltimore and left with a loss to the Baltimore Brigade (2-1) 52-49, Saturday night at the Royal Farms Arena. Brigade quarterback Randy Hippeard threw for seven touchdowns on his way to winning the game MVP award. Empire's Joe Hills caught four touchdown passes in his debut, earning Offensive Player of the Game. Virgil Gray was named Defensive Player of the Game with ten tackles and an interception.

The Empire offense was led by quarterback Tommy Grady, who threw for six touchdowns. His top target, Joe Hills, caught four of those touchdown passes from Grady. Malachi Jones and Collin Taylor chipped in receiving touchdowns of their own as well.

Baltimore received the first kick and started inside of their own 5-yard line. Reigning league MVP Hippeard took the field for the first time against the Empire and led the Brigade to a score, finishing with a 34-yard touchdown to Milton Williams on third down.

In response, The Empire came out firing as Grady connected with Malachi Jones for a first down on the team's opening play. After missing on a bomb to Joe Hills, Grady completed another medium gain to Collin Taylor for first down. The drive ended with a 6-yard touchdown hookup to Joe Hills, his first touchdown reception of the game. This touchdown extended Joe Hills' active streak and league record of consecutive games with a touchdown reception to 82 games.

With the first play of the second quarter, Hippeard found receiver Brandon Thompkins for a 26-yard touchdown. Shortly after, Grady was picked off trying to go deep to Hills by Virgil Gray. Hippeard capitalized on the Empire turnover with a short touchdown pass to receiver Lamark Brown.

After a long catch-and-run by Malachi Jones and a couple of penalties by the Brigade, the Empire scored with a 5-yard touchdown to Collin Taylor; his second in as many games.

The Empire began the second half with the ball and methodically worked down the field. The drive was capped off with a 1-yard touchdown run by Collin Taylor; the first rushing touchdown of the Empire's young franchise. The Brigade answered by marching down the field to take back the lead with another touchdown pass to Brown.

The Empire took over and ran a quick-hitter to Malachi Jones who turned it into a 42-yard catch-and-run from deep in Empire territory for a touchdown; his second consecutive game with a 40+ touchdown catch.

Heading into the fourth quarter, the Brigade controlled the ball and opened the quarter with a long touchdown pass to Williams; Hippeard's sixth touchdown toss of the game. The Empire then took over on the Baltimore eight-yard line after a Brigade failed onside kick. The very next play, Grady connects with Hills for the pair's fourth touchdown giving the lead back to Albany, 49-45.

With just over 12 minutes remaining in regulation, Hippeard leads the Brigade on a long drive down the field, capping off with another touchdown to Sims; his second of the day.

The following possession for the Empire began inside their own 10-yard line. Grady completed a pair of short passes to Hills and Jones before misconnecting with Hills deep in the end zone. Shortly after, the snap was mishandled by Grady and recovered by Baltimore as the Brigade took over with 52 seconds remaining in regulation.

The Brigade were able to milk to remaining seconds on the clock and come away with a close game victory.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	21	14	7	49
BALTIMORE	7	24	7	14	52

GAME MVP:

QB - Randy Hippeard, BAL

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

WR – Joe Hills, ALB

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – Virgil Gray, BAL

2018 GAME SUMMARIES

Soul Defeats Empire 56-35 in Albany's Inaugural Game

4/14/2018

The Albany Empire (0-1) opened their inaugural season with a loss to the Philadelphia Soul (1-0), 56-35, Saturday night in front of a sold-out crowd at the Times Union Center. Soul quarterback Dan Raudabaugh, threw for six touchdowns on his way to winning the Offensive Player of the Game award. Torez Jones was named Defensive Player of the Game with five tackles, a fumble recovery and an interception.

The Empire offense was led by quarterback Tommy Grady, who tossed for 259 yards and five touchdowns. His top target Greg Carr, caught eight passes from Grady, tallying for 74 yards and two touchdowns.

Philadelphia came out firing on all cylinders. After returning the opening kickoff to nearly midfield, the Soul marched their way into the end zone, capping off their drive with a seven-yard touchdown to wide receiver Shaun Kauleinamoku.

The Empire answered right back on their first drive. Despite being the first time in game action together, the Empire gelled quickly and made their way to the end zone. The empire capped off their first ever offensive possession with a 10-yard touchdown pass to Carr.

The Soul wasted no time going right down the field again on their second possession. Raudabaugh found receiver Darius Prince 15 yards downfield in the back of the end zone for this first touchdown reception of the night at the end of the first quarter.

The first score of the second quarter came on a deep, 27-yarder to receiver, to Collin Taylor, for his first touchdown as a member of the Empire. After another Soul touchdown to answer, the Empire recovered a failed onside kick from Philadelphia, giving Albany great field position. The Empire capitalized with another hookup between Grady and Carr for six. To end the half, the Soul scored two touchdowns in the final minute, giving Philadelphia a 35-21 lead. At the end of the half, Grady had 132 passing yards for three touchdowns. His counterpart, Dan Raudabaugh, compiled 110 yards for four touchdowns.

After a halftime ceremony highlighted by the retirement of Albany Firebird legend "Touchdown" Eddie Brown's number 17, the Empire took the ball. Despite moving the ball downfield, Philadelphia forced a turnover on a backwards pass fumble from Grady. The Soul marched their way down for another score.

Down 42-21, The Empire made their way down the field in large part to a huge gain on the ground from fullback, Wes Mauia. The drive was completed with a short, six-yard touchdown pass from Grady to Doug McNeil III. The next Philadelphia drive ended with a missed field goal that bounced in play and was recovered for a Soul touchdown. The Empire wasted no time responding, tossing a 48-yard touchdown to receiver, Malachi Jones.

On a crucial driving being down by only two touchdowns midway through the fourth quarter, the Empire turned the ball over on downs on the opposing three-yard line. Philadelphia milked a lot of clock and moved the ball down field for another score, increasing their cushion to 21.

The Empire were unable to convert on their next possession, giving the ball back to Philadelphia. The Soul maintained control until the final seconds ticked off the clock. The final score of the game was 56-35.

SCORE BY QUARTER	1	2	3	4	FINAL
ALBANY	7	14	14	0	35
PHILADELPHIA	14	21	14	7	56

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

QB - Dan Raudabaugh, PHI

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE GAME:

DB – Torez Jones, PHI

EMPIRE 2018 STATISTICS

2018 REGULAR SEASON

RUSHING

PLAYER	GP	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	YDS/G	TD/G
Benson, Mykell	3	23	85	3.7	4	16	28.3	1.3
Mauia, Wesley	11	8	54	6.8	0	37	4.9	0.0
Jones, Malachi	12	21	40	1.9	5	8	3.3	0.4
Moore, Terence	12	2	3	1.5	0	3	0.3	0.0
Taylor, Collin	12	1	1	1.0	1	1	0.1	0.1
Hills, Joe	11	1	-2	-2.0	0	0	-0.2	0.0
Faulf, Mike	9	3	-5	-1.7	0	0	-0.6	0.0

PASSING

PLAYER	GP	COMP	ATT	PCT	YDS	TD	INT	LONG	TD/A%	INT/A		YDS/G	TD/G	RAT
										%				
Grady, Tommy	12	228	341	66.9	2960	81	6	48	23.8%	1.8%	246.7	6.8	126.2	
Faulf, Mike	9	3	9	33.3	18	0	1	8	0.0%	11.1%	3.0	0.0	2.8	

RECEIVING

PLAYER	GP	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	YDS/G	TD/G
Jones, Malachi	12	77	1156	15.0	29	48	96.3	2.4
Hills, Joe	11	88	1045	11.9	33	45	95.0	3.0
Taylor, Collin	12	36	515	14.3	9	48	42.9	0.8
Carr, Greg	10	16	109	6.8	7	18	10.9	0.7
McNeil, Doug	3	6	49	8.2	1	26	16.3	0.3
Mauia, Wesley	11	4	42	10.5	1	18	3.8	0.1
Williams, Jordan	9	1	25	25.0	1	25	2.8	0.1
Ruffins, Moqut	2	1	22	22.0	0	22	1.1.0	0.0
Moore, Terence	12	1	12	12.0	0	12	1.0	0.0

EMPIRE 2018 STATISTICS

2018 REGULAR SEASON

DEFENSE

PLAYER	GP	UA	A	TOT	UA	A	TOT	YDS	UA	A	TOT	YDS	FF	FR	YDS	INT	YDS
Norman, Marrio	11	60	17	68.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	32
Moore, Terence	12	58	21	68.5	2	1	2.5	9	1	1	1.5	5	2	2	9	6	40
Sonie, Varmah	12	53	7	56.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	25
Hobbs, Arthur	12	29	10	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0
Stephens, Brandon	8	22	3	23.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Phillips, Al	5	13	4	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Summers, Derrick	11	13	9	17.5	0	1	0.5	2	0	2	1	2	0	1	0	0	0
Sykes, Joe	11	13	9	17.5	6	2	7	40	6	3	7.5	40	4	1	0	0	0
Cato-Bishop, Darryl	10	7	7	10.5	3	2	4	15	2	2	3	13	1	2	0	0	0
Seither, Nick	10	7	6	10	5	0	5	23	3	0	3	20	2	1	0	0	0
McGinnis, Willie	6	6	0	6	3	0	3	7	1	0	1	4	1	1	0	0	0
Williams, Jordan	9	6	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Carr, Greg	10	5	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Jones, Malachi	12	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mauia, Wesley	11	3	3	4.5	0	1	0.5	0	0	1	0.5	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sesay, Brandon	6	3	4	5	2	1	2.5	10	1	1	1.5	7	1	0	0	0	0
Smith, Terrance	2	3	1	3.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spencer, Kenny	12	3	5	5.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taylor, Collin	12	3	1	3.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beavers, Larry	3	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brikowski, Brian	1	2	3	3.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hills, Joe	11	2	1	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

EMPIRE 2018 STATISTICS

2018 REGULAR SEASON

KICKOFF RETURNS

PLAYER	GP	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	YDS/G	TD/G
Williams, Jordan	9	18	269	14.9	0	26	29.6	0.0
Beavers, Larry	3	9	158	17.6	0	30	52.7	0.0
Taylor, Collin	12	16	125	7.8	0	25	10.4	0.0
Smith, Terrance	2	5	80	16.0	0	19	40.0	0.0
Sonie, Varmah	12	3	16	5.3	0	17	1.3	0.0

KICKING

Field Goals	Made-Att	Pct	01-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-99	Long	Blkd
Spencer, Kenny	0-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

KICKOFFS

PLAYER	GP	NO	YDS	TB	OB
Spencer, Kenny	12	94	4808	21	5