

ALBANY EMPIRE

WEEKLY GAME NOTES

ALBANY EMPIRE (3-2)

Vs

WASHINGTON VALOR (0-5)

6:00 p.m. Saturday May 26th, 2018 Times Union Center

QUICK FACTS

Albany Empire (3-2) vs Washington Valor (0-5)

Date: Saturday, May 26th, 2018

Kickoff: 6:00 p.m. EST

Site: Times Union Center Center (13,500)

Officials: Cutaia, Carr, Leffle, Valenti, Griffith

Radio: ALT 105.7

TV: CBS Sports Network

Series Record: Empire 2 – Valor 0

Coaches: Rob Keefe (3-2 with Albany); Benji McDowell (0-1 with Washington)

2018 EMPIRE 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.	
June 2	BALTIMORE	7 p.m.	
June 9	BALTIMORE	7 p.m.	
June 16	PHILADELPHIA	6 p.m.	
June 23	@ Baltimore	7:30 p.m.	
June 29	@ Washington	7 p.m.	
July 7	PHILADELPHIA	7 p.m.	

MEDIA CONTACTS

Albany	Washington
Jordan Lomaestro	Jackson Filyo
Manager, Communications/PR	Coordinator Franchise Communications
JLomaestro@TheAlbanyEmpire.com	Jfilyo@monumentalsports.com
(518) 596-4455	(240) 357-8741

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

MONDAY	Off
TUESDAY	HIIT With Britt Workout
WEDNESDAY	Practice 10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m
THURSDAY	Practice 10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m
FRIDAY	CLOSED Walkthrough
SATURDAY	Albany vs Washington at 7:00 pm

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EMPIRE VS VALOR

MATCHUP PREVIEW

The Empire return home to the Times Union Center for the first of a four-game home stretch to take on the Washington Valor. So far on the season, the Empire are 2-0 against the Valor. The game will be broadcast live on CBS Sports Network and on Alt 105.7 fm.

The first matchup to look out for is between Washington quarterback Shane Austin and the Empire defensive backfield. Though he was assigned to the Valor roster prior to the first meeting with the Empire, Austin made his first appearance of the season a week ago in a one-point heartbreaking loss to the first place Baltimore Brigade. The Valor's star quarterback, Nick Davila, went down early in the year with a season ending injury, leaving backup Warren Smith to face the physical Empire defense in both previous matchups. This will be the first time Albany has seen Austin this season. Austin poses as a dual threat quarterback due to his accuracy in the pocket and mobility on the ground. In his debut a week ago, Austin had 228 yards and four touchdowns through the air and another 28 yards and two touchdowns on the ground.

The next matchup to look out for it between Empire receivers Joe Hills and Malachi Jones against the Valor defensive backfield. Last week against Philadelphia, Hills and Jones received the lion's share of targets for the Empire receiving unit combining for 16 catches for 135 yards and three receiving touchdowns. Jones also punched in a score on a short run. These two have clearly been the one-two punch for Grady to throw to and have been a nightmare for opposing defenses to try and cover since Hills came to the Empire in Week 2. Through the first two matchups against the Valor, Hills and Jones have combined for 11 total touchdowns looking seemingly unstoppable. **Hills comes into the game having caught a touchdown pass in his last 85 consecutive games.** The Valor defensive backfield that forced two interceptions a week ago will have their hands full with the Empire's dynamic duo.

The last matchup to look out for is between the Empire's stalwart defensive front against the Valor's offensive line. Since a sack-less first game, the Empire have combined for nine sacks over the past four games. This defensive line has been a terror to opposing quarterbacks as they not only hit home for sacks, but also force fumbles. Led by defensive end Joe Sykes, who has an impressive four forced fumbles on the season, the Empire defensive line has a total of six forced fumbles as a unit. In the first two matchups against the Valor, the Empire defensive line broke through for five total sacks. Look for Washington the mix in quick throws on two-step drop backs from Austin to get rid of the ball before the Empire defensive line takes him down behind the line of scrimmage.

THE IFS:

If the Empire defeats the Valor it would...

- * Extend the Empire win streak to four games
- * Give the Empire a winning record of 4-2 on the season
- * Make the Empire 3-0 on the season against the Valor

WASHINGTON TIES

- WR Greg Carr played for the Valor in 2017 where he caught 67 passes for 776 yards and 16 touchdowns.
- This season marks the second year in the Arena Football League for the Valor.

OPPOSING PLAYERS TO WATCH

Look out for Valor quarterback Shane Austin. The Empire have yet to see Austin this season. Austin is a dual threat quarterback and can beat opposing defenses through the air and on the ground. Albany has yet to see a mobile quarterback this season and could pose as a challenge as they attempt to contain Austin and keep in in the pocket.

Wide receivers Reggie Gray and Rod Windsor are fifth and sixth in the league in receiving yards, respectively. This dynamic duo has combined for 14 receiving touchdowns thus far on the season and has been a bright spot for a struggling Valor team. Look for Austin to seek out his top two targets downfield if he is given time in the pocket.

THE SERIES

This will be the third meeting between the Empire and the Valor.

Week 4: Albany 47 – Washington 23

Week 5: Albany 53 – Washington 42

WHAT'S AHEAD

After the home game against the Valor, the Empire stay in Albany to take on the Baltimore Brigade. The game on Saturday, 6/2 will be at 7 p.m. Tune into [Facebook.com/AFLWatch](https://www.facebook.com/AFLWatch) 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. THE VALOR

Coach Keefe is 2-0 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: 3-2
Career Regular Season: 64-32
Career Playoff: 5-3
Career Total: 69-35

WASHINGTON VALOR HEAD COACH Benji McDowell

McDowell assumes interim head coaching duties in his third season as an AFL coach and his second with the Valor. Before taking over as Head Coach on May 16, McDowell was the defensive coordinator for the Valor.

He spent the 2016 season with the Tampa Bay Storm as the defensive coordinator, line coach and special teams coordinator. During his tenure, Tampa boasted one of the top defenses in the league.

The Forest City, NC native has worked in both the professional and collegiate ranks. McDowell spent the 2015 season with the University of Georgia as a defensive line intern and was a member of the Alabama Hammers of the Professional Indoor Football League (PIFL) coaching staff during the 2013 and 2014 seasons. The Hammers won the PIFL championship in 2013.

VS. THE EMPIRE

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

COACHING RECORD

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

2018 Regular Season: 0-5
Career Regular Season: 0-5
Career Playoff: 0-0
Career Total: 0-5

EMPIRE PLAYMAKERS

Tommy Grady



Tommy Grady was on point while handing the Soul their first home loss in 20 games. Grady threw for 178 yards and five touchdowns. Grady leads the league with 28 passing TD's
Varmah Sonie



A "pitbull" as Coach Keefe describes him, Sonie led the team with seven tackles against the Soul. He was lockdown all night adding an interception and two pass breakups.

Joe Hills



No surprise that Joe Hills was Grady's top target against Philadelphia. He reeled in 9 catches for 72 yards and a touchdown. His score extended his consecutive games with a TD to 85.
Nick Seither



Nick Seither was part of a defensive line that pressured Philadelphia all night long. He had three total tackles, two of which were sacks. He also forced a fumble.

Malachi Jones



Malachi Jones is becoming a household name in the AFL. Another three TD game a week ago for Jones as he hauled in 7 catches for 63 yards and two TDs. He also ran in another TD.

Terence Moore



Terence Moore seems to be wherever the ball is on the field. Against the Soul, Moore had 6.5 total tackles, a pass breakup, and an interception.

EMPIRE LEADERS

WHAT'S AT STAKE: The Albany Empire look to continue their three-game win streak in the third matchup of the season against the Valor. Since Week 1, the Empire look like a totally different team on both sides of the ball. Their high powered offense and shutdown defense will be problematic for the Valor once again.

LEADING THE WAY: QB Tommy Grady continued his great 2018 play in the Empire's third consecutive victory last weekend. Throwing for 178 yards and five touchdowns, Grady was able to dissect the league's top scoring defense. Finding his top two targets, Joe Hills and Malachi Jones, all game long, the Empire offense was able to keep pace with the two-time champs. On the season, Grady leads the league with 28 passing touchdowns.

MR. TOUCHDOWN: WR Joe Hills has lived up to his nickname of "Superman" since joining the Empire. In four games, Hills leads the league in receiving touchdowns (10) and is second in catches (34) and third in receiving yards (377). He currently holds the AFL record for most consecutive games with a touchdown reception with 85 – **a streak that is still active**. Hills draws a ton of attention from opposing defenses, but still looks seemingly uncoverable. Expect Hills to continue his streak by catching more than one touchdown against Washington this weekend.

MAKING A NAME: WR Malachi Jones has been nothing short of dominant in his debut season. Second in the league in receiving yards (409) and receiving touchdowns (8), he looks like he cannot be tackled if he gets the ball in open space. He is second in the league in receiving touchdowns. This kid can do it all as he even leads the team in rushing touchdowns with three. Whether he's catching a deep ball or running one in from the goal line, expect Jones to continue his rookie campaign success against the Valor.

NO FLY ZONE: DB Varmah Sonie may typically be the shortest person on the field, but don't let his height deter you from his ability. Sonie is a freak athlete and has the ability to lockdown any receiver in the league. He is third in the league in total tackles (29) and has forced a fumble and interception on the season. In the Empire's Week 6 victory in Philadelphia, Sonie led the team with seven tackles while having an interception and two pass breakups to his name. He will not back down to any receiver and is always going for the ball. Look for Sonie to see a lot of Valor receivers Windsor and Gray and expect at least one of them to have a subpar performance.

2018 INDIVIDUAL REGULAR SEASON LEADERS: (As of 5/19/18)

Washington	Category	Albany
Smith (438)	Total Offense	Grady (1,167)
Smith (63.6)	Completion Pct.	Grady (63.9)
Davila (10)	Pass TDs	Grady (28)
Davila (121.3)	Passer Rating	Grady (115.2)
Smith (415)	Passing Yds	Grady (1,168)
Smith (66)	Pass Comps	Grady (101)
Austin (228.0)	Pass Yds/Gm	Grady (233.6)
Davila (12)	Touchdowns	Grady (28)
Windsor (27)	Receptions	Hills (34)
Gray (325)	Receiving Yds	Jones (409)
Two Tied (7)	TD Receptions	Hills (10)
Austin (28)	Rush Yds	Mauia (51)
Two Tied (2)	Rush TDs	Jones (3)
Duvalt (23)	KO Returns	Taylor (11)
Duvalt (437)	KOR Yards	Williams (119)
Duvalt (522)	All-Purpose Yds	Jones (413)
Knight (18.5)	Tackles	Norman (31.5)
Three Tied (1)	Interceptions	Norman (2)
Two Tied (1)	Sacks	Sykes (6)

AROUND THE LEAGUE



2018 AFL STANDINGS



Team	W	L	Pct	PF	PA
Baltimore	4	1	.800	235	221
Philadelphia	3	2	.600	234	207
Albany	3	2	.600	225	209
Washington	0	5	.000	213	270

2018 AFL 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 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	7 p.m.

EMPIRE ROSTER

AS OF 5/25/18

#	POS	NAME	HT	WT	COLLEGE	EXP
15	WR	Paul Browing	6'2	220	Colorado State Pueblo	R
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
9	DB	Oshay Dunmore	6'3	205	Southern Oregon	R
12	QB	Mike Fafaul	6'2	215	UCLA	R
92	DL	Calvin Fance	6'1	245	Angelo State	5
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
55	OL	Damian Love	6'4	310	Alabama State	R
13	FB	Wes Mauia	6'1	280	Western New Mexico	5
56	DE	Willie McGinnis	6'3	295	Rhode Island	5
23	DB	Erick McIntosh	5'10	180	Florida Atlantic	6
8	LB	Terence Moore	6'2	225	Troy	7
21	DB	Marrion Norman	6'1	205	Coastal Carolina	6
72	OL	Bret Piekarski	6'4	305	St. Cloud State	1
99	DL	Nick Seither	6'3	270	Georgetown KY	2
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
58	OL	Kyle Steuck	6'3	310	Northern Michigan	R
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 5/25/18

#	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	Brandon Stephens	5'11	210	Miami OH	4
7	WR	Malachi Jones	6'3	215	Appalachian State	R
8	LB	Terence Moore	6'2	225	Troy	7
9	DB	Oshay Dunmore	6'3	205	Southern Oregon	R
10	DB	Varmah Sonie	5'8	190	Northern Iowa	4
11	WR	Collin Taylor	6'1	205	Indiana	7
12	QB	Mike Fafaul	6'2	215	UCLA	R
13	FB	Wes Mauia	6'1	280	Western New Mexico	5
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
55	OL	Damian Love	6'4	310	Alabama State	R
56	DL	Willie McGinnis	6'3	295	Rhode Island	5
58	OL	Kyle Steuck	6'3	310	Northern Michigan	R
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
92	DL	Calvin Fance	6'1	245	Angelo State	5
99	DE	Nick Seither	6'3	270	Georgetown KY	2

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

2018 VALOR ROSTER

AS OF 5/25/18

#	POS	NAME	HT	WT	COLLEGE	EXP
1	WR	TT Oliver	6'0	185	Bethune Cookman	15
2	WR	Chris Duvault	5'11	180	Illinois	6
3	WR	Reggie Gray	5'10	175	Western Illinois	8
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	W	Jared Dangerfield	6'3	205	Western Kentucky	R
11	DL	Reggie Wilson	6'3	255	Texas	3
12	DL	Roosevelt Falls	6'2	250	Louisiana Tech	2
13	QB	Jeron Evans	6'3	235	Virginia Tech	R
14	QB	Shane Austin	6'0	200	Hawaii	3
16	WR	Rod Windsor	6'2	210	Western New Mexico	7
17	LB	Alvin Ray Jackson	6'1	210	Albany State	8
19	WR	Josh Reese	6'0	185	Central Florida	1
20	DB	Quo Cox	6'0	185	Jackson State	1
21	DB	Michael Knight	5'10	185	Minnesota West CC	1
23	DB	Dominic Addison	6'2	185	Bethune Cookman	3
24	DB	Svante Davenport	6'1	185	North Alabama	R
40	DL	David Washington	6'2	310	Faulkner	4
44	OL	Will Corbin	6'6	315	Appalachian State	1
50	LB	James Gordon	6'2	275	Buffalo	3
53	OL	Devante 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
64	OL	Michael Bamiro	6'8	335	Stony Brook	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
75	OL	Jordan Mudge	6'4	330	Nevada	2
89	WR	Josh Atkinson	6'2	205	Tulsa	R
93	DL	Roderick Henderson	6'1	360	Alabama State	R
99	DL	Jake Payne	6'4	275	Shenadoah	1

VALOR COACHING STAFF

HEAD COACH/DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Benji McDowell

WIDE RECEIVER/SPECIAL TEAMS COACH: Jeremy Grier

ASSISTANT COACH/OFFENSIVE LINE COACH: James Clark

HEAD ATHLETIC TRAINER: Casey Carter

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

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

AS OF 5/19/2018

RUSHING

PLAYER	GP	ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	YDS/G	TD/G
Mauia, Wesley	5	7	51	7.3	0	37	10.2	0.0
Jones, Malachi	5	8	4	0.5	3	3	0.8	0.6
Moore, Terence	5	2	3	1.5	0	3	0.6	0.0
Taylor, Collin	5	1	1	1.0	1	1	0.2	0.2
Grady, Tommy	5	3	-1	-0.3	0	0	-0.2	0.0
Hills, Joe	4	1	-2	-2.0	0	0	-0.5	0.0
Faul, Mike	5	2	-3	-1.5	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	5	101	158	63.9	1168	28	4	48	17.7%	2.5%	233.6	5.6	115.2
Faul, Mike	5	1	6	16.7	5	0	1	5	0.0%	16.7%	1.0	0.0	0.0

RECEIVING

PLAYER	GP	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	YDS/G	TD/G
Jones, Malachi	5	31	409	13.2	8	48	81.8	1.6
Hills, Joe	4	34	377	11.1	10	35	94.3	2.5
Taylor, Collin	5	16	182	11.4	4	35	36.4	0.8
Carr, Greg	4	9	77	8.6	3	18	19.3	0.8
McNeil, Doug	3	6	49	8.2	1	26	16.3	0.3
Mauia, Wesley	5	4	42	10.5	1	18	8.4	0.2
Williams, Jordan	5	1	25	25.0	1	25	5.0	0.2
Moore, Terence	5	1	12	12.0	0	12	2.4	0.0

EMPIRE 2018 STATISTICS

DEFENSE

AS OF 5/19/2018

PLAYER	GP	Tackles			Tackle for Loss				Sacks				Fumbles			Int	
		UA	A	TOT	UA	A	TOT	YDS	UA	A	TOT	YDS	FF	FR	YDS	INT	YDS
Norman, Marrio	5	29	5	31.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	32
Sonie, Varmah	5	28	2	29	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	25
Moore, Terence	5	26	4	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	9	1	3
Hobbs, Arthur	5	13	5	15.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Sykes, Joe	5	11	1	11.5	6	0	6	36	6	0	6	36	4	1	0	0	0
McGinnis, Willie	5	6	0	6	3	0	3	7	1	0	1	4	1	1	0	0	0
Seither, Nick	5	6	3	7.5	4	0	4	16	2	0	2	13	1	0	0	0	0
Cato-Bishop, Darryl	4	5	1	5.5	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Summers, Derrick	5	5	2	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Stephens, Brandon	5	3	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Carr, Greg	4	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hills, Joe	4	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Spencer, Kenny	5	2	1	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Taylor, Collin	5	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Williams, Jordan	5	2	1	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jones, Malachi	5	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
McNeil, Doug	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

EMPIRE 2018 STATISTICS

AS OF 5/12/2018

KICKOFF RETURNS

PLAYER	GP	NO	YDS	AVG	TD	LONG	YDS/G	TD/G
Williams, Jordan	5	8	119	14.9	0	21	23.8	0.0
Taylor, Collin	5	11	115	10.5	0	25	23.0	0.0
Sonie, Varmah	5	2	18	9.0	0	17	3.6	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	5	31	1640	10	2