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# ECAC Champions

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Posted: Tuesday, December 7, 2010 12:00 am

**Dan Glickman**  
Staff Writer | 0 comments

It wasn't the venue they would have liked, but the St. John Fisher Cardinals were able to finish their 2010 season on a very positive note, completely and utterly demolishing the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute Engineers 56-13 in the ECAC's Northwest Championship Bowl in a game that saw quarterback Tim Bailey finish his college career in a spectacular manner that won him his second straight Most Outstanding Player.

## ECAC Champions

The seniors celebrate their victory.

Although not the NCAA playoff that the Cardinals (9-2) and their fans no doubt had hoped for, there was no doubt that the team had come to play.

Bailey, who racked up 313 yards passing and three touchdowns, perhaps summed that up best.

"Whatever opportunity we get, we try to capture it. Anytime you play the game you love it's special," adding that no matter what the game was, he "put his heart into it every single time."

From the beginning, the game was rarely in doubt.

After RPI (6-4) punted to conclude their first drive, the Fisher offense went to work.

Although the game, being a post-season bowl, was technically a "neutral" game, the crowd's reaction on Fisher's opening drive quickly revealed that few had made the drive from RPI's campus in Troy, NY and that this would be like any other home game at Growney Stadium.

Fisher provided plenty for the crowd to cheer for during the opening drive, although they also received help from their opponent when a third-down sack of Bailey by RPI's Cody Hinrichs was negated and a first down was awarded due to a personal foul against Hinrichs. Thanks to this defensive miscue, Fisher was able to continue the drive, culminating in a 3-yard rushing touchdown for Ryan Kramer, his first of two he would have during the game. The drive had taken a little over four minutes.

The next drive for the Cardinals would be nowhere near as long.

Looking to tie the game up, RPI's offense was only able to get to around mid-field before Fisher's defense drove them back and forced them to punt. Mike Grubbs' punt went out of bounds on the Fisher 38, and the offense once again took the field. They weren't there for long though, as Tim Bailey connected with Ryan Francis for a strike that moved Fisher all the way down the field for a touchdown of 62 yards that, after Chad Monheim's point-after, made the score 14-0 for the Cardinals.

RPI, however, soon displayed a quick-strike capability of their own.

Getting good field position after a personal foul call on Monheim, in a rare penalty call on a kicker, during Matt Wood's return, the Engineers engineered a trick play that got them on the board. RPI quarterback Mike Hermann got

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the ball to wide receiver Ray Davis for what seemed to be a reverse. A reverse, that is, until Davis himself decided to throw the ball, hitting Reggie Colas in double-coverage for a touchdown to put RPI on the board.

In an amusing bit of statistics, the 40 yards of passing that resulted from this play alone was enough for Davis to have more passing yardage than Hermann would on the day. In addition, Davis would later be the receiver who caught the second RPI touchdown on the day, so he both threw and caught a passing touchdown.

Even after this surprising turn of events, Fisher stood strong, as the point-after-try by Peter Nilson was blocked by senior Dominic Fotia, ensuring that Fisher would hold a 14-6 lead. Not like they would need that one point, since for the rest of the half Fisher's starters would put on a clinic.

With a little over 3:30 left in the first quarter, Fisher started on their own 24-yard line.

With a nice mix of passing plays and rushing plays, Fisher moved into RPI's end of the field. But when Fisher's luck seemingly ran out and they found themselves at a fourth and four situation on RPI's 37, head coach Paul Vosburgh made a gutsy call and decided to forgo a long field goal or short punt and decided to go for it.

And the gamble worked: Tim Bailey found Dan Witkowski for a 6-yard gain and a first down. Cody Miller's 22-yard rush the next play put Fisher into position for an eventual touchdown pass from Bailey to Ryan Schmidt.

The Fisher rout continued in the second quarter. Whether it was Tim Bailey rushing in for a touchdown or Ryan Kramer getting his second rushing touchdown of the game, the score continued to rise until finally Fisher put an exclamation point upon the first half when Tim Bailey threw a 17-yard touchdown pass to Ryan Francis during the last minute of the first half.

This touchdown, the last Bailey would throw as a Cardinal, made the halftime score 42-6 after the extra point. As the half came to an end, many in the stadium probably sensed that the game was essentially over

And in a way, all of those people who thought the game was over were right. The second half would be very different from the first. Most of the starters were removed from the game, particularly on offense.

Senior Matt Lukasiewicz scored his first career touchdown on a rush in the third quarter.

The ultimate star of the second half, however, was Fisher's strong safety, Zach Dolan. He intercepted two passes, the first of which he took in an astounding 95-yard return for Fisher's final touchdown of the day.

"It was a good way to go out," Dolan said post-game, "When I saw the blocks down field, I went with it."

By the end, it was just a matter of having time run out. Several coaches started leaving their perches above the press box well before the game was finished. And when the game was over, the scoreboard read 56-13, St. John Fisher College.

It may not have been the way they wanted to go out, but, as Dolan said, they "went out with a bang."

And for the departing seniors?

"Last game," Bailey said, "feels good to get a win out there."

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