The UMass football team scored early and often in Saturday's season opener, using five first-half touchdowns to kickstart a 63-15 win over Duquesne University at McGuirk Stadium in Amherst.

A three-headed offensive monster of Andrew Ford (13-for-19 passing, 186 yards, two TDs), Andy Isabella (5 catches, 131 yards, 2 TDs), and Bilal Ally (9 carries, 112 yards, 1 TD) tormented the Dukes early, helping to build a 35-9 lead by halftime. Marquis Young added 90 rushing yards and a touchdown on 15 carries.

UMass running back Bilal Ally gets a boost from lineman Larnel Coleman after scoring a first-half touchdown. MICHAEL DWYER/AP

UMass running back Bilal Ally gets a boost from lineman Larnel Coleman after scoring a first-half touchdown.

While the UMass offense dominated the Dukes, the defense worked to silence questions about its competence. Safety Bakhari Goodson swiftly ended Duquesne's opening drive with a diving interception, which set up a 32-yard touchdown pass from Ford to Brennon Dingle on the next play.

It was the first turnover forced by the UMass defense on a season-opening drive since 2009.

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The Dukes went three-and-out on the following drive, and UMass was quick to strike again. Backup quarterback Ross Comis found a wide-open Isabella streaking across the middle, and the senior wideout went untouched for a 60-yard score. Another PAT made it 14-0 in favor of the Minutemen before many people had arrived at their seats.

Isabella scored again on UMass's first drive of the second half, outjumping one Duquesne defender to catch a pass from Ford before sidestepping another defender en route to a 44-yard touchdown. A 60-yard interception return for a touchdown by senior Brice McAllister on the ensuing Duquesne drive gave the Minutemen a 49-9 lead just five minutes into the third quarter.

The win was the first season-opening victory for the Minutemen since they beat Holy Cross, 24-16, in 2011. UMass's 63 points were the team's most in a game since 1999.

The loss of tight end Adam Breneman (64 receptions, 764 yards in 2017) was expected to shake up the Minuteman attack, but Ford looked comfortable throwing to new faces. Junior Kyle Horn (five catches, 49 yards) converted some key third downs, exhibiting the trust he and the other tight ends have earned from their quarterback.

"I think [Horn] had three or four third-down conversions that led to touchdown drives, so being able to move the sticks with a tight end in those third-and-short situations is going to be really important for us going forward," said Ford. "He did a great job stepping in today."

"That's a really solid room, a lot of depth, and a lot of guys that can make plays for us." $\,$

UMass quarterback Andrew Ford had a good day, passing for 186 yards and two touchdowns.

MICHAEL DWYER/AP

UMass quarterback Andrew Ford had a good day, passing for 186 yards and two touchdowns.
"Kyle's played for us, which has a lot to do with it," added coach

"Kyle's played for us, which has a lot to do with it," added coach Mark Whipple. "Maybe not catching balls, but he's been out there, he's experienced. All those guys have played well for us when we've needed it, and they have to continue to grow."

Duquesne's offense never found a rhythm after falling behind early. The Dukes, who turned it over four times, averaged just 3.83 yards per play, and were an abysmal 1-for-9 on third down in the first half.

"I think it was a great all-around defensive effort," said McAllister, who had two interceptions, including the pick-six. "The defensive line was getting great penetration, getting in the quarterback's face, so he really didn't have enough time for his guys to run routes and get open."

 ${\tt UMass}$ safety ${\tt Brice}$ ${\tt McAllister}$ makes one of his two interceptions during the rout of ${\tt Duquesne.}$

MICHAEL DWYER/AP
UMass safety Brice McAllister makes one of his two interceptions during the rout of Duquesne.

UMass travels east to face Boston College next Saturday at 1 p.m.

"They're a different beast — bigger guys, faster guys, everything else," said Whipple. "It was a good win, but [BC running back] AJ Dillon will have our guys' attention come Monday morning."

Scoring Summary	Fina DUQ UMAS	ş	1 3 21	2 6 14	3 0 21		4 6 7	т 15 63		
Brennon Dingle 32 Yd pass from Andrew Ford (Mike Caggiano Kick) 1	FIRST	ing Summary QUARTER					DU	īQ	UMASS	
2 plays, 77 yards, 0:00	Breni 1 pla	non Dingle 32 ay, 32 yards,	Yd pass 0:00	from A	ndrew F	ord (Mike C	aggian	o Kick) 7	
S plays, 87 yards, 3:01	2 pla	ays, 77 yards, S TD 6:20	, 0:00				oper G	arcia 1		
Secons 28 yards 2:58 3 21	8 pla	ays, 87 yards, FG 0:50	, 3:01		no Kick)	C)	21	
Andy Isabella 14 Yd Run (Cooper Garcia Kick) 5 plays, 75 yards, 1:20 3 28	6 pla	ays, 28 yards, ND QUARTER		Goal						
Marquis Young 2 Yd Run (Mike Caggiano Kick) 12 plays, 62 yards, 3:07 9 35 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7 7	Andy	Isabella 14 Y	/d Run (0	Cooper	Garcia :	Kick)		3	28	
DUQ TD 0:05 Nehari Crawford 5 Yd pass from Daniel Parr (Two-Point Pass Conver Failed) Say	Marqu	uis Young 2 Yo	d Run (M:	ike Cag	giano K	ick)	3	3	35	
9 plays, 66 yards, 3:07	DUQ Nehai	TD 0:05 ci Crawford 5		from D	aniel P	arr (Two-Po	int Pa	ss Conver	sion
Andy Isabella 44 Yd pass from Andrew Ford (Cooper Garcia Kick) 6 plays, 54 yards, 2:38	9 pla	ays, 66 yards, D QUARTER	, 3:07				_			
Brice McAllister 60 Yd Interception Return (Mike Cagdiano Kick) 5 plays, 16 yards, 2:13	Andy	Isabella 44 Y		from An	drew Fo	rd (C	ooper	Garcia		
Ross Comis 18 Yd Run (Cooper Garcia Kick) Splays, 81 yards, 3:40 90 056	Brice 5 pla	S TD 10:09 McAllister (ays, 16 yards,	50 Yd Int	tercept	ion Ret	urn (Mike C	aggian	o Kick) 49	
Daniel Parr 2 Yd Run (Mitch MacZura PAT failed) 15 15 15 15 15 15 15 1	Ross 8 pla	Comis 18 Yd E ays, 81 yards,		per Gar	cia Kic	k)				
Zak Simon 14 Yd pass from Ross Comis (Mike Cagglano Kick) 4 plays, 22 yards, 1:06	Danie	el Parr 2 Yd F	Run (Mito s, 8:06	ch MacZ	ura PAT	fail		5	56	
First Downs	Zak S	Simon 14 Yd pa	ass from	Ross C	omis (M	ike C				
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