

Thunder, NAU Rumble, 34-0

By BILL NIXON
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FLAGSTAFF—Remarkable Chris (Thunder) Thornton yesterday gave the greatest single-game performance by a running back in Northern Arizona University football history.

But after ripping off 316 yards in 28 carries to lead the Lumberjacks to a 34-0 victory over Western Illinois, the husky sophomore pulled a hamstring muscle and possibly could miss the rest of the season.

THE WELLSVILLE, Ohio, product belted the visiting Leathernecks with touchdown runs of 71, 41, and 6 yards to carry the Axers to their third straight win and fourth of the season.

Enroute down the sidelines on a 23-yard gain in the fourth quarter — the play that broke Jim Sims' 1964 record of 306 yards in a single encounter — Thunder suddenly came to a grinding halt. He dropped the ball and grabbed his left leg.

In the dressing room after the game, NAU trainer Bill Kauth said preliminary examination indicated Thornton suffered only a pulled muscle. "If the muscle

is torn, and we should know by tomorrow," he said. "He could be out for the season."

THE VICTORY was costly in other ways for NAU. In addition to Thornton's injury, defensive end Bill Hanna suffered a broken left hand, and defensive backfield star Craig Ballew collected a twisted knee.

NAU's other scoring also was provided by a sophomore. Tight end Sonny Campbell of Rillito, Ariz., made a diving catch of Ted James' 26-yard pass in the end zone, then grabbed another James' aerial, broke two tackles and completed a 38-yard touchdown play.

Both of Campbell's touchdowns came in the final four minutes. He also kicked 4 of 5 extra points.

JAMES, THE senior QB from Royal Oak, Mich., left the bachelor ranks in a blaze of glory. He was married here last night to NAU coed Virginia Lent of Tucson.

The winless Leathernecks were easy pickings for NAU's big defensive line led by Bud Weidoff, Terry Keeton, Hanna, Bob Smith and Don Sam. The Illinois team had a net total offense of only 97 yards.

The Leathernecks' longest gain came on the final play of the game. Quarterback Frank Yaccino tagged halfback Dennis Skaggs over the middle and the fleet junior raced to the Axer 20 before he was hauled down by Chick Harris and frosh Kurt Van Hazel.

THE PLAY went for 60 yards. But despite the big play, the Illinois team netted only 97 yards offensively as 12 times Leatherneck backs were dropped behind the scrimmage line.

It was the first shutout of the season by the Lumberjacks, who themselves have notched 21 points in the past three games.

Defensively for Western Illinois, Sam Bonansinga, Jim Druetzler and Tom Schmulbach can hold their heads high all the way back home. Bonansinga intercepted two Axer passes, Druetzler one, and Schmulbach was the top WIU tackler.

THE LOGGERS scored in every quarter. Thornton got the first three touchdowns, twice getting a key block from fullback Gary Barnes.

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The game also produced another "season" mark for NAU. Bruce Branstrom's interception of a Western Illinois pass was the first by NAU's defensive secondary in 1967.

Thornton, providing his injury doesn't sideline him for very

long, could break more NAU records this season. His current 1967 total shows 109 carries for 738 yards and 54 points — all on touchdowns. On the horizon are Sims' season record of 885 yards rushing, and 70 points by Cruz Salas in 1956.

NAU'S OVERPOWERING of

Western Illinois made it a clean sweep for coach Andy MacDonald's team over Midwest foes this year. Earlier, the Axers whipped North Dakota U. 39-10, and Omaha, 41-13.

Next Friday night the Lumberjacks will play arch rival Long Beach State in the California city.