SUNY CORTLAND RECEIVES 12th STRAIGHT NCAA BASEBALL BERTH

Red Dragons Seeded Third in Four-Team Regional at Joe Bruno Stadium in Troy; Cortland Looks to Make Seventh World Series Appearance

The SUNY Cortland baseball team has received a berth into the 42-team NCAA Division III playoffs for the 12th straight season and the 13th time overall. The Red Dragons (28-14) will be the third seed at the four-team, double-elimination regional at Joseph L. Bruno Stadium in Troy, and will face second-seeded SUNY Brockport (30-13) in opening-round action noon Thursday.

Thursday’s other matchup features top-seeded Ithaca College (32-7) and fourth seed and host Rensselaer (27-15) at 3:30 p.m. Thursday’s two winners will play Friday at noon and Thursday’s losers will play Friday at 3:30 p.m. There will also be a game at 7 p.m. Friday and one or two games on Saturday, starting at noon. The winner advances to the eight-team NCAA Division III World Series, which will be held May 28-June 1 in Grand Chute, Wis. (near Appleton; south of Green Bay).

Cortland received one of three national “Pool C” at-large tournament berths going to schools that did not win their conference’s automatic berth. The Red Dragons are 28-9 versus Division III competition this spring and are 24-5 against in-region Division III opponents. Cortland lost twice to Brockport on the final day of the State University of New York Athletic Conference (SUNYAC) tournament in Cortland as the Golden Eagles earned their first-ever NCAA berth. Rensselaer won the Upstate Collegiate Athletic Association (UCAA) tournament title and Ithaca is a “Pool B” independent qualifier since the Empire Eight conference does not qualify for an automatic bid.

Cortland is 3-2 this season versus Brockport and is 1-0 versus both Ithaca and Rensselaer. Cortland and Rensselaer faced each other in NCAA play every year from 1993 to 2002 but did not play last year. They have the two longest active NCAA Division III playoff appearance streaks. Rensselaer is making its 13th straight NCAA showing (14th overall) and Cortland its 12th straight appearance. Ithaca is making its eighth straight NCAA showing (28th overall).

Under fifth-year head coach Joe Brown, Cortland is trying to reach the 30-win plateau for the 11th consecutive season. Cortland has won regional titles in six of the last nine years, the last in 2001. The Red Dragons finished second at last year’s regional in Troy to Trinity College (Conn.) and was 2-2 in the 2002 regional in Albany.

2004 NCAA Division III Baseball Tournament
Regional at Joseph L. Bruno Stadium; Troy, N.Y.; May 20-22
(hosted by Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)

Thursday, May 20
Game 1: Cortland (28-14) vs. Brockport (30-13), Noon
Game 2: Ithaca (32-7) vs. Rensselaer (27-15), 3:30 p.m.

Friday, May 21
Game 3: Winner Game 1 vs. Winner Game 2, Noon
Game 4: Loser Game 1 vs. Loser Game 2, 3:30 p.m.
Game 5: Loser Game 3 vs. Winner Game 4, 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 22
Game 6: Winner Game 3 vs. Winner Game 5, Noon
Game 7: Same teams as Game 6, if necessary

2004 NCAA Division III Baseball Championship -- Regionals (* Host School)

May 20-22
Troy, N.Y.
see teams above

Whitewater, Wis.
1. * Wisconsin-Whitewater (34-7)
2. St. Thomas (Minn.) (36-6)
3. Ripon (Wis.) (23-12)
4. Concordia (Wis.) (20-16)

Wooster, Ohio
1. * Wooster (Ohio) (35-8)
2. Manchester (Ind.) (33-11)
3. Heidelberg (Ohio) (31-12-1)
4. Albion (Mich.) (25-14)

May 20-23
Boyertown, Pa.
(Centennial Conference host)
1. Johns Hopkins (Md.) (37-2)
2. Rowan (N.J.) (36-6)
3. DeSales (Pa.) (26-12)
4. St. Joseph’s (N.Y.) (26-16)
5. Arcadia (Pa.) (25-14)
6. Juniata (Pa.) (24-15)

Orange, Calif.
1. Trinity (Texas) (35-8)
2. Linfield (Ore.) (31-9)
3. George Fox (Ore.) (31-9)
4. * Chapman (Calif.) (28-11)
5. California St.-Hayward (29-11)
6. LaVerne (Calif.) (27-10)

Martinsville, Va.
(Ferrum College host)
1. Emory (Ga.) (40-4)
2. Salisbury (Md.) (33-11)
3. Virginia Wesleyan (31-10)
4. Mary Washington (Va.) (29-10)
5. Methodist (N.C.) (27-17)
6. York (Pa.) (28-16)

Bloomington, Ill.
1. * Illinois Wesleyan (28-17)
2. Carthage (Wis.) (34-9)
3. Simpson (Iowa) (29-14)
4. McMurry (Texas) (29-13)
5. Blackburn (Ill.) (23-17)
6. Aurora (Ill.) (22-17)

Willimantic, Conn.
1. * Eastern Conn. St. (35-9)
2. W. New England (Mass.) (31-12)
3. Babson (Mass.) (24-17)
4. Bridgewater St. (Mass.) (23-14)
5. Endicott (Mass.) (26-19)
6. Amherst (Mass.) (19-16)