SUNY Cortland Baseball

SUNY Cortland vs. North Carolina Wesleyan College
Friday, March 5, 2004; Bauer Field; Rocky Mount, N.C.

FINAL SCORE: N.C. Wesleyan 4, Cortland 2

ROCKY MOUNT, N.C. – Josh Lipford’s two-run double sparked a three-run sixth inning as North Carolina Wesleyan defeated eighth-ranked Cortland, 4-2. The Battling Bishops improved to 8-4 with the win, while Cortland dropped to 0-3.

Red Dragon junior starter Matt Miller (Harrison) suffered the loss despite allowing only three hits and two walks in five and one-third innings. He struck out three and allowed four runs, three earned. Senior Ryan Ensel (Clifton Park/Shenendehowa) gave up two hits and struck out two over the final two and two-third innings. Ben Pearson earned the win as he gave up five hits and two unearned runs in seven and one-third innings. He struck out four Red Dragons and did not walk a batter.

Cortland took a 2-0 lead in the top of the third inning. Junior Nick Wilson (Auburn) singled through the left side with one out. Senior Neal Heaton Jr. (Bellport) followed with a single to center that was misplayed by the centerfielder and rolled to the wall. Heaton raced all the way around the bases to score.

The hosts got back a run in the bottom of the fourth. Chancellor Bishop was hit by a pitch, stole second, moved up to third on a ground out and scored on an RBI single to left by Brian Massey. In the sixth, Bishop walked with one out and stole second. Cale Strickland walked and Massey reached on an error to load the bases. Ensel relieved Miller and allowed Lipford's two-run double to give N.C. Wesleyan a 3-2 lead. Ray’Mon Bizzell’s ground out to second plated the final run.

Cortland got a runner in scoring position in the eighth when senior Josh Horner (Groton) led off with a single and moved to second on a ground out. Reliever Kyle Holt struck out Heaton for the second out and Brian James induced a pop-up to end the inning. The Red Dragons mounted a two-out rally in the ninth when senior Pat D’Auria (Upper Nyack/Nyack) doubled and freshman Will Groff (Queensbury) singled to put runners on first and third. James recorded a pop-up, however, to end the game and tally his second save of the season.

Cortland will face former Division III program and current NAIA member Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia on Saturday before heading to Ormond Beach, Fla., for seven games next week.

N.C. Wesleyan 4, Cortland 2

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Cortland (0-3): Matt Miller (L, 0-1), Ryan Ensel (6) and Kyle Bestine
N.C. Wesleyan (8-4): Ben Pearson (W, 1-0), Kyle Holt (8), Brian James (8) (Save, 2) and Cale Strickland, Ryan Hutcherson (9)

HR - none
3B - none
2B - Pat D’Auria (C), Billy Norris (NCW), Josh Lipford (NCW)