SUNY Cortland Sports Information

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SUNY Cortland Baseball Team Ranked Eighth in Pre-Season Division III Poll

The SUNY Cortland baseball team is ranked eighth in the 2004 American Baseball Coaches Association/Collegiate Baseball NCAA Division III pre-season poll.

Fifth-year head coach Joe Brown's Red Dragons finished last season with a 35-11 record. Cortland lost in the championship game of the NCAA Division III New York regional, falling one game short of advancing to the Division III World Series. Cortland has made 11 consecutive NCAA appearances and has won 30 or more games in each of the last 10 seasons. The Red Dragons have made six World Series showings, all since 1995, and have won 12 of the last 13 State University of New York Athletic Conference (SUNYAC) titles, including the last seven.

Cortland returns a pitching staff that features senior Mike Hubbs (Averill Park/Tamarac) (7-1 record, 1.58 ERA, 50 K), the 2003 New York Region and SUNYAC Pitcher of the Year, along with juniors Matt Miller (Harrison) (7-1, 3.05, 63 K) and Mike Burnett (Westfield) (5-1, 2.87, 45 K) and senior Toby Youngs (Windsor) (4-2, 3.38, 32 K). Miller was a second team all-region selection last year.

Top offensive returners include senior outfielder Josh Horner (Groton) (.431, 2 HR, 19 RBI), senior third baseman Neal Heaton Jr. (Belpoint) (.413, 2 HR, 23 RBI), sophomore outfielder Andy Mead (Baldwinsville/C.W. Baker) (.375, 23 RBI, 11 SB), junior designated hitter Nate Gagnon (Wilton/South Glens Falls) (.319, 2 HR, 21 RBI) and senior catcher Matt Ellis (Owego/Owego Free Academy) (.288, 3 HR). Mead was a second team all-region selection and the SUNYAC First Year Player of the Year. Heaton earned third team all-region honors. Also back is senior outfielder Pat D'Auria (Nyack) (.274, 7 HR, 24 RBI), who was the 2002 SUNYAC Player of the Year.

Cortland will open its season on Feb. 21 versus 19th-ranked Rowan University (N.J.) in Newport News, Va., and will play at 17th-ranked Virginia Wesleyan College the following day. The Red Dragons' schedule features five top-30 teams, along with two games versus Division I University of Maine, three games versus Division II schools and two games against NAIA squads, including a matchup versus nationally-ranked St. Xavier of Illinois. The Maine and St. Xavier games are part of Cortland's annual Florida trip in early March.

ABCA/Collegiate Baseball
2004 NCAA Division III Poll (2003 record in parentheses)

1. Eastern Connecticut St. (43-9)
2. Wisconsin-Oshkosh (37-8)
3. Christopher Newport (Va.) (35-9)
4. Chapman (Calif.) (39-12)
5. Trinity (Conn.) (27-12)
6. Johns Hopkins (Md.) (34-7)
7. DeSales (Pa.) (30-14)
8. CORTLAND (35-11)
9. Carthage (Wis.) (35-8)
10. Wooster (Ohio) (30-11)
11. Anderson (Ind.) (36-15)
12. Emory (Ga.) (37-15)
13. Ohio Wesleyan (31-17)
14. Thomas More (Ky.) (33-10)
15. Kean (N.J.) (29-12)
16. George Fox (Ore.) (31-13)
17. Virginia Wesleyan (34-9)
18. Mississippi College (34-15)
19. Rowan (N.J.) (31-10)
20. Wartburg (Iowa) (33-12)
21. Denison (Ohio) (31-12)
22. Mt. St. Mary (N.Y.) (32-8)
23. Mary Washington (Va.) (30-10)
24. Wheaton (Mass.) (27-10-2)
25. St. Olaf (Minn.) (27-14)
26. Wisconsin-Whitewater (35-9)
27. Pomona-Pitzer (Calif.) (30-11)
28. Heidelberg (Ohio) (32-12)
29. Averett (Va.) (27-14)
30. Rensselaer (N.Y.) (26-15)

Others receiving votes (alphabetical): Bridgewater St. (Mass.), Brockport (N.Y.), California Lutheran, Concordia (Texas), Dallas (Texas), Elmhurst (Ill.), LaGrange (Ga.), Manchester (Ind.), Marietta (Ohio), Montclair St. (N.J.). Penn St. Behrend, Ripon (Wis.), Salisbury (Md.), Southern Maine, Suffolk (Mass.), Texas Lutheran, William Paterson (N.J.)

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