SUNY CORTLAND RECEIVES 13th STRAIGHT NCAA BASEBALL BERTH

Cortland and Ithaca Co-Hosting Six-Team Regional at Auburn’s Falcon Park; Top-Seeded Red Dragons Looking 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 13th straight season and the 14th time overall. The Red Dragons (35-7-1) have been chosen to co-host a six-team regional with Ithaca College at Auburn’s Falcon Park and will be the top seed at the event, which runs May 19-22. Cortland will open the tournament versus Rhode Island College (19-19) Thursday at noon. Cortland’s run of 13 straight NCAA appearances is the longest active streak in Division III.

Thursday’s other matchup features second-seeded Skidmore College (26-12) versus fifth-seeded University of Pittsburgh at Bradford (25-14) at 3:30 p.m. and third-seeded Centenary College of New Jersey (23-17) versus fourth-seeded Ithaca (22-13-2) at 7 p.m. The tournament continues with three games on Friday and Saturday and at least one game on Sunday. The regional winner advances to the eight-team NCAA Division III World Series, which will be held May 27-31 in Grand Chute, Wis. (near Appleton; south of Green Bay).

Ranked fourth nationally, Cortland earned an automatic berth into the NCAA tournament by winning its 24th State University of New York Athletic Conference (SUNYAC) title and 13th in the last 15 years. Rhode Island College, the Little East Conference tournament champion, is making its first NCAA showing since 1980 and fourth overall. Liberty League champion Skidmore and Skyline Conference champion Centenary are both making their first-ever NCAA appearances.

Pitt-Bradford won the Allegheny Mountain Collegiate Conference title and is in its second NCAA tournament. The Panthers played in the New York regional in Albany in 2002. Ithaca is making its 29th NCAA Division III tournament appearance and ninth in a row. The Bombers, Empire 8 champions for the fourth straight season, earned an NCAA “Pool B” berth as an independent qualifier since their conference does not qualify for an automatic bid.

Cortland has never faced Rhode Island College, Skidmore or Centenary. The Red Dragons defeated Pitt-Bradford in their only meeting in the 2002 NCAA tournament. Cortland and Ithaca are regular rivals and played twice this season, with Ithaca winning 10-8 in Cortland and the teams tying 2-2 in Ithaca in a game stopped in the sixth inning due to darkness.

Under sixth-year head coach Joe Brown, Cortland reached the 30-win plateau for the 11th time in the last 12 seasons. Cortland has won regional titles in six of the last 10 years, the most recent coming in 2001 the last time the regional was held in Auburn. The Red Dragons went 1-2 in regional play last year, finished second to Trinity (Conn.) in 2003 and were 2-2 in the 2002 tournament.


(NCAA tournament field on next page)
2005 NCAA Division III Baseball Tournament
Regional at Falcon Park; Auburn, N.Y.; May 19-22
(co-hosted by Ithaca College and SUNY Cortland)

Thursday, May 19
Game 1: (#1) Cortland (35-7-1) vs. (#6) Rhode Island College (19-19), Noon
Game 2: (#2) Skidmore (26-12) vs. (#5) Pittsburgh-Bradford (Pa.) (25-14), 3:30 p.m.
Game 3: (#3) Centenary (N.J.) (23-17) vs. (#4) Ithaca (22-13-2), 7 p.m.

Friday, May 20
Game 4: Loser of Game 1 vs. Loser of Game 2, Noon
Game 5: Winner of Game 1 vs. Loser of Game 3, 3:30 p.m.
Game 6: Winner of Game 2 vs. Winner of Game 3, 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 21
Games at Noon, 3:30 p.m. and 7 p.m. (schedule to be determined by outcome of Game 5)

Sunday, May 22
Schedule to be determined

2005 NCAA Division III Baseball Championship -- Regionals (* host school)

May 19-21
Orange, Calif.
1. * Chapman (Calif.) (32-8)
2. Linfield (Ore.) (33-7)
3. Texas Lutheran (33-8)
4. LaVerne (Calif.) (30-11)

Whitewater, Wis.
1. Wisconsin-Stevens Point (35-9)
2. * Wisconsin-Whitewater (38-6)
3. St. Thomas (Minn.) (30-10)
4. St. Scholastica (Minn.) (35-5-1)

Salisbury, Md.
1. * Salisbury (Md.) (28-7-2)
2. Mary Washington (Va.) (26-8)
3. Ferrum (Va.) (21-12-1)
4. Hampden-Sydney (Va.) (24-13)

May 19-22
Boytown, Pa.
(Pa. Athletic Conf. host)
1. Rowan (N.J.) (37-7)
2. DeSales (Pa.) (31-8)
3. Alvernia (Pa.) (36-4)
4. College of New Jersey (34-11)
5. Messiah (Pa.) (27-12-1)
6. Franklin & Marshall (Pa.) (25-14)

Terre Haute, Ind.
(Rose-Hulman host)
1. Wooster (Ohio) (33-7)
2. Manchester (Ind.) (30-12)
3. Otterbein (Ohio) (28-14)
4. Webster (Mo.) (24-11)
5. Millsaps (Miss.) (29-15)
6. Adrian (Mich.) (26-14)

Harwich, Mass.
(ECAC host)
1. Trinity (Conn.) (31-7)
2. Suffolk (Mass.) (26-10)
3. Wheaton (Mass.) (29-10)
4. Amherst (Mass.) (23-7-1)
5. Worcester St. (Mass.) (24-15)
6. Salve Regina (R.I.) (24-17)

Bloomington, Ill.
1. Aurora (Ill.) (34-7)
2. Wartburg (Iowa) (31-9)
3. * Illinois Wesleyan (32-11)
4. Edgewood (Wis.) (26-14)
5. Washington (Mo.) (31-8)
6. Ripon (Wis.) (22-13)

Auburn, N.Y.
see teams above