SUNY Cortland Football
Cortland vs. Buffalo State
September 27, 2003; SUNY Cortland Stadium Complex; Cortland, N.Y.

FINAL SCORE: Cortland 36, Buffalo State 14

CORTLAND, N.Y. – Senior quarterback J.J. Tutwiler (Grand Island) passed for two touchdowns and ran 51 yards for another as Cortland defeated Buffalo State, 36-14, in the Red Dragons’ home opener. Cortland improves to 2-2, while the Bengals fall to 1-3.

Tutwiler threw a pair of first-half scoring passes to senior Neal Heaton Jr. (Bellport) and is now Cortland’s career leader with 42 touchdown passes. Their 2-yard connection with five minutes, 48 seconds left in the first quarter opened the scoring. Buffalo State tied the game with 9:05 left in the second quarter on a 2-yard run by Curtis Hathcock (Buffalo/Bennett). The run capped a five-play, 19-yard drive set up by a Cortland fumble.

Cortland took the lead for good on a 14-yard touchdown run by junior Steve Davis (Central Islip) with 1:16 remaining in the half. A key play in the drive was a 44-yard shuffle pass from Tutwiler to Davis to the Buffalo State 15-yard line. Davis finished the game with 108 yards rushing on 22 carries. On the ensuing kickoff, the Bengals were unable to gain possession and Cortland's Will Groff (Queensbury) recovered the ball at the Buffalo State 26-yard line. Cortland's next play resulted in a 26-yard touchdown pass from Tutwiler to a wide-open Heaton with 1:06 left to extend the lead to 19-6. With the catch, Heaton, in his third season, became the 10th player in school history to reach 100 career receptions.

Cortland scored the lone points of the third quarter on a 32-yard field goal by junior Ryan DeCamp (Plattsburgh/Seton Catholic) with 5:37 remaining. The Bengals mounted the day's longest scoring drive in the fourth quarter, capping an eight-play, 80-yard drive with a fourth-down, 1-yard touchdown run by freshman fullback Will Bryant (Washington, DC/Bishop Ireton) with 8:01 left. The score moved Buffalo State within 22-14. The drive started after senior cornerback John Lesure (Rochester/Greece Athena) intercepted a Tutwiler pass in the end zone to halt a potential scoring drive. The interception was Tutwiler's first in four games this fall.

The Bengals held the Red Dragons on their next possession, but lost two yards on their next series and punted the ball back to Cortland. Tutwiler ran an option play to the left on Cortland's first play from its own 49-yard line, broke free and rambled 51 yards for the insurance score. Cortland's final score came on a 14-yard bootleg run by freshman quarterback Drew Lascari (Pequannock, NJ/Pequannock Twp.) on just his third collegiate snap.

Tutwiler finished 9-of-22 passing for 155 yards and two touchdowns and he ran eight times for 67 yards. He is now Cortland's career leader in total offense with 5,484 yards. Tutwiler also averaged 38.7 yards per punt on seven attempts. Hathcock rushed 25 times for 68 yards for the Bengals. Sophomore Mike Mikolaichik (Hilton), a Cortland transfer, completed 12-of-27 passes for 163 yards.

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The Red Dragons' defense held Buffalo State to 245 yards of total offense, including just 64 yards rushing. Cortland sacked Mikolaichik six times. Linebackers Chad Rowe (Cazenovia), Matt Montpetit (Westhampton Beach/Westhampton) and Chuck Eich (Cheektowaga) each registered 10 tackles and defensive lineman Adam Haas (East Aurora/St. Francis) had seven tackles, three for lost yardage. Eich also finished with an interception. Junior linebacker Hank Pirowski (Lackawanna) led Buffalo State with 14 tackles. Senior strong safety Bo Sireika (Lackawanna) made 10 tackles, forced a fumble and broke up a pass.