SUNY Cortland Softball

NCAA Division III Regional – Championship Round
SUNY Cortland vs. Ithaca College
Sunday, May 9, 2004; Kostrinsky Field; Ithaca, N.Y.

FINAL SCORE: Cortland 4, Ithaca 3 (10 innings)

ITHACA, N.Y. – Cortland scored on a throwing error with one out in the bottom of the 10th inning to defeat host Ithaca College, 4-3, in the championship round of the NCAA Division III Northeast Regional. With the win, the Red Dragons earn a trip to the Division III World Series for the second straight season and the fourth time overall. Cortland, the champion of the seventh-seeded regional, will face St. Thomas (Minn.) in opening-round action of the eight-team, double-elimination tournament this Friday at 6:30 p.m. in Salem, Va.

“This is one of the best games I've been a part of,” said Cortland 10th-year head coach Julie Lenhart, who also guided the Red Dragons to the World Series in 1998 in addition to last year. “Both teams played exceptionally well. This win was an entire team effort for us, led by our five seniors who truly set the goals high for us this season.”

Freshman Dominique Talbot (Rockville Centre/Southside) started the winning rally with a single through the right side. Senior Jill Seymour (Conklin/Susquehanna Valley) moved pinch-runner Kate Yaun (Liberty) to second with a sacrifice bunt. Sophomore Rudy Loiacono (Williamsville/Williamsville South) followed with a grounder back to Ithaca pitcher Zahida Sherman, but Sherman's throw sailed over the first baseman's head and Yaun easily scored the game-winning run.

Ithaca, which had lost 2-0 to Cortland on Friday to start the regional, needed two wins over the Red Dragons on Sunday to capture the regional title. The Bombers looked like they might force a final game when they scored a run in the top of the ninth. Sara Coddington singled with two outs and Hannah Shalett doubled down the left field line. Coddington beat the relay home to give Ithaca a 3-2 lead.

Cortland, however, tied the game in the bottom of the ninth. Sophomore Jen Rockwell (Scotia) drew a one-out walk and seniors Lara Stone (Windsor) and Carin Piacente (Putnam Valley/Walter Panas) followed with singles to load the bases. Senior Pip Colombo (Williamsville/Williamsville North) hit a ball that Ithaca shortstop Sara Durant tried to backhand. The ball briefly squirted loose, and Durant's only play was a force out at third as the run scored.

Ithaca opened the game with two runs in the top of the first inning. Lindsay Galli singled through the left side with one out and Kaitlyn Dulac singled off Cortland sophomore pitcher Stephanie Adamshick (Milton/Marlboro) glove to put runners on first and second. A groundout moved the runners up, and Madeline Kraemer then singled off Adamshick's glove. The ball rolled to Colombo between first and second. Dulac kept running from second and slid around the tag at the plate to give Ithaca a 2-0 lead.

Cortland responded with two runs in the bottom of the second. Colombo singled up the middle with one out. Junior Erin Bock (East Hampton) hit a grounder to third, and Colombo beat the throw to second. Talbot then singled up the middle to drive in Colombo and Seymour walked to load the bases. With two outs, junior Kim Huson (Binghamton/Johnson City) singled through the left side to tie the game.

The Red Dragons stranded runners on second and third in the third inning and had runners on first and second with one out in the bottom of the seventh but lined into a double play. Ithaca had three hits in the first inning but did not record another hit until the sixth when Leigh Bonkowski singled with one out. Bonkowski was caught stealing, but Adamshick walked the next two batters before getting a popup to end the threat. Adamshick also walked two batters with two outs in the eighth before getting Durant to hit a comebacker to her for the final out of the inning.

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Adamshick and Sherman both went the distance for their respective teams. Adamshick (23-2) gave up seven hits and three runs in 10 innings. She struck out six and walked six and now has a school single-season record 158 strikeouts. She won all three of Cortland's NCAA regional games for the second straight season. Sherman allowed 11 hits and four runs, three earned, in nine and one-third innings. The freshman struck out three and walked four, two intentionally.

"Both pitchers had phenomenal years and are the top two pitchers in the region," noted Lenhart. "Both of them left it on the field. I was concerned about how much Steph (Adamshick) would have had left if we were forced to play another game."

Huson and Piacente each finished 3-for-5, Talbot was 2-for-4 and Colombo went 2-for-5. Galli was 2-for-5 for Ithaca.

Cortland had six players on the regional all-tournament team – Adamshick, Bock, Rockwell, Huson, Stone and Piacente. In three tournament games, Huson batted .545 (6-of-11) with a double, walk and three RBI, Stone hit .444 (4-of-9) with a homer, double and four walks (all intentional) and three RBI and Piacente batted .417 (5-of-12) with a double and two RBI. Rockwell hit .375 with two doubles, a triple and an RBI and Bock reached base twice and played flawless defense at third base. Adamshick was 3-0 with a 0.89 ERA, 20 strikeouts and 18 hits allowed in 23 and two-third innings.

Ithaca had five players on the all-tournament team – Coddington, Dulac, Galli, Shalett and Sherman. Also on the all-tournament team were Oneonta's Michelle Norwich, Erica Gifford, Rena Finsmith and Sara Place.

Cortland 4, Ithaca 3 (10 innings)

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Cortland: Stephanie Adamshick (W, 23-2) and Jill Seymour (Red Dragons: 37-7) Ithaca: Zahida Sherman (L, 16-8) and Hannah Shallet (Bombers: 27-15)

2B - Hannah Shallet (I)