Cortland Football to Host Westfield State in
ECAC Division III Northwest Championship Game

The SUNY Cortland football team will be making its first post-season appearance since 1997 when the Red Dragons host Westfield State College of Massachusetts in the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) Division III Northwest Championship Game on Saturday, Nov. 23, at noon. The teams will be meeting for the first time. Tickets for the game will be $5 for general admission and $3 for all students, including Cortland's, with ID. There will be no reserved seating and no passes will be accepted.

Cortland (8-2), which finished second in the New Jersey Athletic Conference with a 4-2 mark, has made eight previous post-season showings. The Red Dragons played in the NCAA tournament in 1988, 1989, 1989 and 1997 and were chosen for the ECAC playoffs four times. Cortland is 3-1 in ECAC championship games. The Red Dragons beat Plymouth State (N.H.) at home 21-6 in the 1991 ECAC Northwest Championship and defeated Bentley College (Mass.) at home 38-20 in the 1992 ECAC Northwest Championship. Cortland also won 15-6 at Maine Maritime Academy in the 1994 ECAC Northeast title game and lost 49-26 at Springfield College (Mass.) in the same game the following year.

Cortland is led by junior quarterback J.J. Tutwiler (Grand Island), who completed 146-of-241 passes (60.6 percent) for 1,916 yards and 13 touchdowns in 10 games. He was intercepted only five times. Senior wide receiver Joe Marzullo (Cicero/Cicero-North Syracuse) has 52 receptions for 582 yards and a touchdown and junior Neal Heaton Jr. (Bellport) has caught 41 passes for 642 yards and eight touchdowns. Senior placekicker George Oostmeyer (Islip/Calhoun) is 10-of-18 on field goal attempts and is Cortland's career leader with 30 in three seasons (he has a year of eligibility remaining). Junior linebacker Micah Kurtz (Clarence) leads the defense with 64 tackles. Senior defensive tackle John Longo (Massapequa) is among the national leaders with 26 tackles for lost yardage, including a team-high seven sacks.

Westfield State (8-2) opened the season with eight wins before losing its regular-season finale to Curry 13-12 on a late field goal. The Owls, who played in the NCAA playoffs last year, won the Bogan Division of the New England Football Conference but missed out on earning the league's NCAA bid by losing 16-0 to Boyd Division champion Massachusetts-Dartmouth. Westfield State is one of the top defensive teams in Division III. Entering last weekend's games, the Owls ranked first nationally in total defense (151.3 yards/game), rushing defense (45.2 yards/game), pass efficiency defense (65.8 rating) and scoring defense (7.1 points/game) and fifth in turnover margin (+2.0/game).

For Release: November 18, 2002

2002 ECAC Division III Championship Games
Saturday, November 23 (all kickoffs tentatively set for noon)

Northwest:  Westfield St. (Mass.) (8-2) at Cortland (8-2)
Northeast:  Rensselaer (7-2) at Worcester St. (Mass.) (9-1)
North Atlantic:  Curry (Mass.) (7-2) at Hartwick (7-2)
Southwest:  Johns Hopkins (Md.) (8-2) at Frostburg St. (Md.) (6-4)
Southeast:  Moravian (Pa.) (7-3) at McDaniel (Md.) (8-2)
South Atlantic:  Wilkes (Pa.) (6-4) at Kings Point (8-2)

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