Chuck Eich Named NJAC Football Defensive Rookie of the Year; Red Dragons Earn 14 Spots on All-Conference Team

SUNY Cortland freshman linebacker Chuck Eich (Cheektowaga) has been named the 2003 New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) football Defensive Rookie of the Year.

Eich (pronounced IKE) finished second on the Red Dragon squad this fall with 85 tackles, including a team-high 45 solo stops. He also recorded three interceptions, a pass breakup, a forced fumble, a fumble recovery and two quarterback hurries in 10 games. He is the first Cortland player since at least 1964 to score three defensive touchdowns in a season and two in one game. He returned interceptions for touchdowns in wins at William Paterson and Utica and also scored off a lateral after a teammate's interception in the Utica game. Eich was named NJAC Defensive Rookie of the Week three times during the season.

Cortland earned 14 spots on the All-NJAC football team. Senior wide receiver Neal Heaton Jr. (Bellport), senior offensive tackle James Coughlin (Bellmore/Mepham), sophomore defensive lineman Joe Bulone (Seaford), junior kicker Ryan DeCamp (Plattsburgh/Seton Catholic) and senior punter J.J. Tutwiler (Grand Island) were all first team selections.

Eich was a second team honoree and Tutwiler earned an All-NJAC second team selection at quarterback. They were joined on the second team by junior tailback Steve Davis (Central Islip), junior linebacker Chad Rowe (Cazenovia) and sophomore cornerback Ron Stewart (Bentonville, AR). Four Red Dragons – senior center Dave Graziosi (Glen Cove), freshman defensive tackle Adam Haas (East Aurora/St. Francis), freshman linebacker Matt Montpetit (Westhampton Beach/Westhampton) and freshman free safety Stef Sair (Huntington) – were honorable mention All-NJAC choices.

Heaton finished the season with 44 catches for 594 yards and five touchdowns. He led the NJAC in receptions per game and receiving yards per game and was fifth in all-purpose yards per game (95.2). Coughlin started every game and helped Cortland lead the NJAC in fewest sacks allowed per game. The Red Dragons permitted only 12 sacks in 10 games.

Bulone recorded 42 tackles, 20 solo, in nine games. He made 13 tackles for lost yardage, including three sacks, in addition to registering two forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries and two quarterback hurries. DeCamp made 9-of-13 field goals and 25-of-27 point-after kicks for a team-high 52 points. He led the NJAC in PAT percentage and ranked second in field goals made per game. He made three field goals, including the game winner on the final play, in Cortland's 16-15 win at eventual NCAA quarterfinalist Ithaca.

Tutwiler led the NJAC in punting with an average of 37.4 yards per kick. Of his 56 attempts, 13 pinned opponents inside their own 20-yard line. As Cortland's quarterback, Tutwiler completed 117-of-236 passes for 1,566 yards and eight touchdowns with only five interceptions. He also rushed for 288 yards and a team-high five touchdowns. He ranked second in the league in total offense (passing plus rushing) per game. Tutwiler was a second team All-NJAC quarterback and honorable mention all-league punter in 2002. He completed his career as Cortland's career leader with 6,007 passing yards and 45 touchdown passes and is ranked second with 447 career completions.
Cortland Earns 14 Spots on All-NJAC Football Team

(Davis) was Cortland's leading rusher with 658 yards and four touchdowns in 10 games. He also caught eight passes for 155 yards. He ranked fifth in the NJAC with 65.8 rushing yards per game and sixth with 81.3 all-purpose yards per contest. Rowe was Cortland's leader with 87 tackles. He made 7.5 tackles for losses, including one sack, and had three quarterback hurries and a fumble recovery. Rowe ranked fourth in the NJAC in tackles per game with 8.7. Stewart concluded the season with 37 tackles, 27 solo, along with six pass breakups and an interception.

Graziosi was the center on an offensive line that helped Cortland rank first in the NJAC in rushing yards per game (180.2) and third in total offense (341.1 yards per game). He played in nine games, all as a starter. Haas was fourth on the team with 75 tackles. He led the Red Dragons with 16 tackles for losses, including a team-best 6.5 sacks. He also had a fumble recovery and two quarterback hurries. Haas ranked fourth in the league in sacks per game and sixth in tackles for lost yardage per game.

Montpetit ranked third on the team with 78 tackles, including 8.5 for lost yardage. He had three forced fumbles, two pass breakups, one fumble recovery and three quarterback hurries. Sair led the Red Dragons with five interceptions and 10 pass breakups in nine games. He also amassed 50 tackles and a fumble recovery. Sair ranked first in the NJAC in interceptions per game and was second in passes defended (interceptions plus breakups) with 15.

Cortland finished the season with a 5-5 record. The Red Dragons finished the regular season 5-4 before losing in the ECAC Division III Northwest championship game. Cortland earned its 10th post-season berth (four NCAA, six ECAC) since 1988.

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