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SUNY Cortland Football
Cortland vs. William Paterson Univ.
October 25, 2003; Wightman Field; Wayne, N.J.

FINAL SCORE: Cortland 20, William Paterson 14

WAYNE, N.J. – Senior quarterback J.J. Tutwiler (Grand Island) ran five yards for a touchdown with five seconds left to break a 14-14 tie and give Cortland a 20-14 come-from-behind win at William Paterson in a New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) game.

Cortland's winning drive started at the William Paterson 24-yard line with one minute, 16 seconds left in regulation. The Red Dragons (3-4, 2-3 NJAC) gained that field position when sophomore defensive lineman Joe Bulone (Seaford) sacked Pioneers' quarterback Darrell Russian (Sparta, NJ) and forced a fumble that was recovered by freshman defensive tackle Adam Haas (East Aurora/St. Francis).

A 6-yard run by junior Steve Davis (Central Islip) and a 10-yard pass from Tutwiler to senior Jon Frechette (Oswego) gave Cortland 1st-and-goal at the William Paterson 8-yard line with 33 seconds left. Tutwiler ran four yards on the next play, but a holding penalty during the play moved the ball back to the 14-yard line. Davis ran three yards on the following play, and a personal foul on William Paterson pushed the ball up to the 5-yard line. Tutwiler scored on a draw up the middle on the next snap. The Red Dragons missed the extra point.

William Paterson (1-7, 0-4) let two leads slip away in the contest. The Pioneers took a 7-0 lead with 6:42 left in the first half on a 45-yard pass from Russian to senior wide receiver Bryant Richardson (Elizabeth, NJ/Northern Burlington). Cortland drove to the William Paterson 15-yard line on its final possession of the first half, but a Tutwiler pass intended for Neal Heaton Jr. (Bellport) was picked off in the end zone by Tom Larsen (Ramsey, NJ).

Midway through the third quarter, a 65-yard Tutwiler punt rolled into the end zone to give the hosts the ball on their own 20-yard line. On second down, Russian was pressured by Costin and his short pass was intercepted by freshman linebacker Chuck Eich (Cheektowaga), who raced untouched 20 yards into the end zone to tie the game at 7-7. The interception return was the first for a touchdown by a Cortland player since 1993 (Jason Dudek at Brockport).

Cortland drove to the Pioneers' 13-yard line on its next possession, but a 30-yard field goal attempt by junior Ryan DeCamp (Plattsburgh/Seton Catholic) was blocked by senior linebacker Paul Wolford (Sacramento, CA/Rio Americano). William Paterson then mounted an 11-play, 80-yard scoring drive to regain the lead. The drive started with 4:08 left in the third quarter and was capped by a 34-yard Russian to Richardson touchdown pass with 13:07 left in the game. Richardson initially bobbled the ball while being hit, but regained possession and ran in for the score.

Heaton returned the ensuing kickoff 46 yards to the William Paterson 41-yard line. A 9-yard completion from Tutwiler to Heaton on 3rd-and-9 to the Pioneers' 31-yard line kept the drive alive. Heaton caught a 14-yard pass, sophomore Matt Rickert (Holbrook/Sachem) rushed for six yards and senior Mike Stepnick (Marilla/Iroquois) carried 11 yards for the tying touchdown with 10:16 left.

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William Paterson punted on its next possession and freshman Anthony Morat (Rome/Rome Free Academy) returned the ball 18 yard to the hosts' 30-yard line. Three plays netted no yards and Tutwiler quick-kicked on fourth down to pin the Pioneers at their 10-yard line with 6:39 left. The teams then traded possessions, giving William Paterson the ball on its own 28-yard line with 2:09 left. On 3rd-and-12 with 1:24 left and overtime a distinct possibility, Russian tried to step up in the pocket to pass but was hit from behind by Bulone and fumbled to set up the winning drive.

Tutwiler completed just 10-of-23 passes for 101 yards, but did run for a team-high 43 yards on nine carries. Davis ran 40 yards on 14 carries and Stepnick gained 37 yards on six rushes. Heaton caught five passes for 57 yards and Frechette made four catches for 47 yards. Junior linebacker Chad Rowe (Cazenovia) recorded a team-high 12 tackles. Eich recorded 11 tackles, including a sack, and added a pass breakup in addition to his interception.

Freshman fullback Thomas Murphy (Suffern) led William Paterson with 134 yards rushing on 22 carries. Russian completed 11-of-23 passes for 189 yards and two touchdowns and Richardson caught five passes for 112 yards. The Pioneers outgained Cortland 337-256 in total offense.