FINAL SCORE: Cortland 27, Kean 6

UNION, N.J. – Cortland scored 27 unanswered points to break a halftime scoreless tie and the Red Dragons defeated host Kean University, 27-6, in a New Jersey Athletic Conference (NJAC) contest. Cortland improves to 3-0, 2-0 in league play. Kean is now 1-1 and 0-1.

Cortland struggled in the first half, committing five turnovers (including one a yard short of the end zone) and six penalties, missing two field goals and gaining only 122 yards offensively. The Red Dragon defense, though, kept the game scoreless by holding the Cougars to 50 yards and forcing three turnovers in the opening 30 minutes. Kean started three straight drives in Cortland territory after interceptions, but was actually pushed back and had to punt all three times.

Cortland straightened things out in the second half, gaining 251 yards and committing no turnovers or penalties. The defense continued their strong play after intermission and finished the game having allowed only 171 total yards, including minus-20 rushing on 29 attempts.

Cortland received the second half kickoff and started the drive at its own 39-yard line. The Red Dragons drove 61 yards on 11 plays, capped by junior Matt Rickert's (Holbrook/Sachem) 6-yard touchdown run. Rickert rushed for 75 yards on 18 carries. After the teams traded punts, Cortland posted two of its seven sacks. The first, by senior Eric Czachor (Middleburgh), pushed the Cougars back 10 yards to their 21-yard line. The second, by junior Josh Jablonski (Buffalo/West Seneca West), forced a fumble that junior Adam Haas (East Aurora/St. Francis) grabbed in mid-air and returned 10 yards for a touchdown and a 14-0 lead.

Haas finished with five tackles, 2.5 for lost yardage. He recorded two sacks, a forced fumble and a pass breakup in addition to his fumble return. Sophomore linebacker Bill Hauser (Lancaster) made a team-high seven tackles, including a sack, picked off a pass and broke up two others. Jablonski had six tackles and blocked an extra point kick.

Sophomore tailback Dustin Bowser (Jamestown/Southwestern) rushed nine times for a career-best 103 yards, including a 69-yard touchdown run on the first play of the fourth quarter. Bowser bounced off a group of tacklers and sprinted untouched down the left sideline for the score. Sophomore quarterback Alex Smith (Niagara Falls/Niagara-Wheatfield) completed only 4-of-18 passes in the first half, but bounced back to connect on 8-of-11 throws in the second half, including a 20-yard touchdown pass to sophomore tight end Paul Caughell (Niagara Falls/Niagara-Wheatfield) for Cortland's final score with 6:41 remaining.

Kean broke up Cortland's shutout bid with 3:52 left on a 3-yard pass from sophomore A.J. Roque (Matawan, NJ) to senior Jasper Hankins (Union, NJ). The play capped a 10-play, 70-yard drive – Kean's most productive drive of the game by more than 30 yards.

Hankins made eight catches for 83 yards and freshman Chase Long (Newark, NJ/Barringer) had five receptions for 51 yards. Defensively, the hosts were led by junior linebacker Clarence Goodman (Old Bridge, NJ), who made nine tackles, including a sack, and intercepted a pass.