Cortland's Danin Squires Wins Third Consecutive National Balance Beam Title

Red Dragon Gymnasts Earn Four Individual Event All-America Honors
Colleen Shanahan Breaks Own School Floor Exercise Record

CAMBRIDGE, MASS. -- SUNY Cortland senior Danin Squires (Syracuse/Solvay) became the first person in the 20-year history of the National College Gymnastics Association (NCGA) Division III Championship to win an individual event national title three consecutive years when she captured top honors on balance beam at the championship meet at MIT.

Squires, the balance beam champion in 2002 and co-national champion in 2003, won her third straight title with a two-day score of 19.275. She was tied for third after Friday's competition with a 9.60, but came back with a 9.675 to edge Wisconsin-La Crosse's Jenna Houle, who finished with a two-day total of 19.25.

Squires is only the second person in NCGA history to win three individual titles in the same event in a four-year span. The other person to accomplish that feat was former Cortland gymnast Sulekha Modi, who won uneven bars title in 1997, 1998 and 2000.

Three other Cortland gymnasts earned All-America honors on Saturday with top-six finishes. Junior Colleen Shanahan (Buffalo/Williamsville East) tied for second on floor exercise with a score of 19.725. Shanahan set a new school record on Friday with a 9.85, the broke the record again with a 9.875 on Saturday. Brockport's Carrie Santore won the event with a 19.85, with Shanahan and Houle tied for second.

Sophomore Emily Smuckler (Southbury, CT/Pomperaug) and sophomore Luisa Gutierrez (Rockaway Beach/Stella Maris) were both All-Americans on vault. Smuckler tied for fourth with a two-day total of 19.225 and Gutierrez, last year's runnerup in the event, placed sixth with a 19.20. Both Smuckler and Gutierrez posted 9.65 scores on Saturday. Santore won vault with a 19.45 and finished with three national titles (floor, vault and all-around) at the meet.

Cortland finished the meet with five All-Americans. On Friday, sophomore Lindsey Marranca (Kenmore/Kenmore West) tied for fourth in the all-around competition with a score of 37.975. Marranca was second on beam after the first day of competition but finished 12th with a two-day total of 17.925 after a Saturday score of 8.30.

Freshman Amber French (South Glens Falls) (balance beam) and junior Kristen Marzello (Buffalo/Orchard Park) (vault) also advanced to Saturday's finals after being in the top 12 on Friday, but both barely missed All-America honors on Saturday. French finished seventh on beam with a 19.075 (9.50 on Saturday), missing All-America honors by less than a tenth of a point. Marzello was seventh on vault with a 19.175 (9.625 on Saturday), just 0.025 behind Gutierrez's sixth-place score.

Cortland finished fourth out of eight teams in Friday's team competition with a score of 187.80. Wisconsin-La Crosse won its fourth straight title with a score of 191.275, followed by Ithaca (189.80), Brockport (189.35), Cortland (187.80), Gustavus Adolphus (Minn.) (187.425), MIT (186.30), Hamline (Minn.) (185.90) and Wisconsin-Eau Claire (185.525).

# # #