SUNY Cortland Men’s Basketball

FINAL SCORE: Cortland 65, Alfred 63

ALFRED, N.Y. – Sophomore forward Jon Rother (Sodus Point/Sodus Central) scored 23 points, including the game-winning layup at the buzzer, as Cortland defeated host Alfred University, 65-63, in a non-league contest.

With the game tied at 63-63, Cortland (4-2) called a pair of timeouts in the final 20 seconds, including one with six second left to set up a final play. Junior guard Justin O’Garrow (Port Washington/Paul D. Schreiber) took the inbounds pass and drove into the lane but missed a layup. Rother's tip-in attempt was off the mark, but he grabbed the ball again and hit a layup just as time expired.

Cortland rallied from a seven-point deficit in the final seven minutes. The Red Dragons drew within 55-53 on Rother's layup with 3:55 remaining and were still down two at 57-55 after sophomore Frank Ranieri (Cicero/Cicero-North Syracuse) hit a layup with 1:54 left. Alfred (1-4) upped the lead to four points on Chris LeMasters’ jumper with 1:54 left. Sophomore Brian Kirchhoff (Webster) nailed two three-pointers to tie the game. His trey from the left side at the 1:33 mark brought Cortland within 59-58. LeMasters hit an eight-footer with 1:17 remaining, but Kirchhoff drilled a three-pointer from the top of the key to tie the game at 61-61 with 59.1 seconds left.

The Red Dragons applied pressure after Kirchhoff’s shot and O’Garrow stole the ball with 50 seconds left. Freshman Dave Jutton (Red Hook) missed a layup, but Rother grabbed the offensive rebound and was fouled trying to score. His two free throws gave Cortland a 63-61 lead with 46.5 seconds remaining. Alfred tied the game on a layup by Dillon Stein with 26.5 seconds left. Stein led the Saxons with 20 points, 14 in the second half, and 13 rebounds.

Cortland led most of the first half. The Red Dragons took a 13-4 lead seven minutes into the contest and still led 27-22 before Alfred went on an 11-2 run over the final six minutes of the half. The Saxons led by four at halftime and held a seven-point lead twice in the final 10 minutes.

Kirchhoff finished with 12 points, all on three-pointers, and a team-high seven rebounds. O’Garrow dished out eight assists and notched three steals and Ranieri scored 11 points.

Nick Andolina scored 13 points in the first half for Alfred but was held scoreless in the second stanza. Tate Williams added 10 points for the Saxons.