SUNY Cortland Men's Basketball

SUNY Cortland vs. SUNY Plattsburgh
Saturday, February 5, 2005; Memorial Hall; Plattsburgh, N.Y.

FINAL SCORE: Cortland 61, Plattsburgh 57

PLATTSBURGH, N.Y. – Juniors Frank Ranieri (Cicero/Cicero-North Syracuse) and Brian Kirchhoff (Webster) scored 15 points apiece as Cortland held off a late Plattsburgh rally to defeat the Cardinals, 61-57, in SUNYAC play. The Red Dragons improve to 12-8 overall and 7-4 in the league. Plattsburgh is now 13-7 and 8-4.

Ranieri also finished with six rebounds and two blocked shots. He made 7-of-13 shots from the floor. Kirchhoff scored all of his points from behind the three-point arc, connecting on 5-of-13 long distance shots. He also dished out a team-best four assists.

Curtis Smith (Brooklyn/Paul Robeson) led Plattsburgh with 22 points and James Corless (Washingtonville) scored 10 points and recorded five assists and three steals.

The first half featured nine lead changes. Corless hit two three-pointers in the final 2:32, including the final points of the half with 1:36 left, to give the Cardinals a 29-27 lead.

Cortland struggled from three-point range in the first half, hitting only 2-of-13 shots, but warmed up to make 6-of-12 attempts from behind the arc in the second half. The Red Dragons took the lead for good at 36-34 with 15:44 left on a Simon Skrelja (Hastings-on-Hudson/Hastings) layup. A Kirchhoff trey pushed the lead to seven with 13:27 left, but the hosts closed back to within 48-45 on a Smith three-point play at the 9:56 mark.

Kirchhoff's three with 4:29 left gave Cortland a 56-47 lead and Jutton's trey 49 seconds later moved the Red Dragons' advantage to 59-48. Plattsburgh rallied from that point, though, to make the game interesting. Corless hit a layup at 2:05 to close the gap to nine.

The lead was still nine with less than a minute remaining but Cortland missed the front end of two one-and-one opportunities and the Cardinals took advantage. Smith followed the first Red Dragon miss with a three-pointer at the 44-second mark and hit a layup after the second miss with 25 seconds left to make it a four-point game. Cortland hit one free throw with 17 seconds left and Smith's layup with 10 seconds left brought Plattsburgh within three.

The hosts then forced a jump ball and regained possession on the alternate possession with seven seconds left. The Cardinals, however, missed a pair of two-point jumpers, and a Ranieri free throw with one second left closed the scoring.

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