SUNY Cortland Men's Basketball

NCAA Division III Tournament – First Round
SUNY Cortland vs. UMass Boston
Friday, March 3, 2006; Whitney T. Corey Gymnasium; Cortland, N.Y.

FINAL SCORE: Cortland 68, UMass Boston 54

CORTLAND, N.Y. – Cortland broke a 24-24 halftime tie with a 10-0 run to start the second half and the Red Dragons defeated the University of Massachusetts Boston, 68-54, in the opening round of the NCAA Division III men's basketball tournament at Corey Gymnasium.

Cortland improved to 24-4 and tied a school record for single-season victories. The Red Dragons will face Tufts University, an 83-60 winner over Endicott, in the second round Saturday at 7 p.m. at Cortland.

Junior Rod Headley (Peekskill) led Cortland with 15 points and eight rebounds. Senior Frank Ranieri (Cicero/Cicero-North Syracuse) scored 13 points and grabbed six rebounds, while seniors Scott Taggart (Sidney Center/Franklin) and Simon Skrelja (Hastings-on-Hudson/Hastings) tallied 11 points apiece. Skrelja grabbed eight rebounds, all defensive.

UMass Boston (18-11) was led by sophomore Amigo Paniagua's (Santiago, Dominican Republic/Dorchester) 17 points and nine rebounds. He hit seven of his 12 shots from the field. Senior James L. Hall (Jacksonville, FL/Brunswick (GA)) came off the bench to score 16 points and pull down seven rebounds.

The visiting Beacons took a 6-0 lead to start the game, but Cortland scored the next seven points and neither team led by more than three the rest of the half. Headley scored five points during the Red Dragons’ run to start the second half. Cortland’s lead grew to as much as 18 at 56-38 with 7:06 remaining.

UMass Boston clawed back to within 59-50 on a Tony Barros (Dorchester, MA/Saint Sebastians) three-pointer with 3:01 left and trailed 62-54 with 1:08 left on a Hall three-pointer. Cortland, however, scored the final six points, four on free throws.

The Red Dragons struggled from the foul line, hitting only 16-of-33 attempts (49 percent). The Beacons also had trouble at the line, though, with only 10 of their 17 attempts connecting (59 percent).