FINAL SCORE: Cortland 13, Salisbury 12 (OT)

PHILADELPHIA, PA. – Junior Mike Felice (Baldwinsville/C.W. Baker) scored with 2.2 seconds remaining in overtime as Cortland claimed its second NCAA title and first-ever in Division III with a 13-12 victory over three-time defending champion Salisbury. Cortland finishes the season with an 18-3 record, setting a school single-season victory record.

The Red Dragons won an NCAA Division II national title in 1975 and the USILA College Division championship in 1973, but had not played in the NCAA Division III championship game since losing to Hobart in the first two Division III finals in 1980 and 1981. Salisbury (20-1) had its 69-game winning streak – the longest ever by a men’s lacrosse team in any division - snapped with the loss. The Sea Gulls’ last loss was to Lynchburg in April of 2003.

Cortland senior goalie Ben Gaebel (Deferiet/Carthage) made a career-high 18 saves, including five in the fourth quarter and two in overtime. Sophomore Ryan Heath (Baldwinsville/C.W. Baker) finished with four goals and one assist and Felice, the championship game’s Most Outstanding Player, scored three times and assisted on two others. Junior Ryan Simensky (Locust Valley) recorded three goals and one assist, including the game-tying goal with 56.7 seconds left in regulation.

Luis Gonzalez (Crofton, MD/Arundel) led Salisbury with three goals. He had scored only four goals this season prior to the championship. Jimmy Creighton (Huntington) added two goals and two assists and Max Zarchin (Annapolis, MD/St. Mary’s) made six saves.

The back-and-forth affair was tied on 11 occasions. Salisbury held the game’s only two-goal lead at 6-4 with a three-goal run, two by Creighton, midway through the second quarter. Cortland responded with goals by senior Mike Abbott (Syracuse/Nottingham) and Heath to knot the game at 6-6 with 1:32 left in the second. A Dan Boyer (Millersville, MD/Mt. St. Joseph’s) goal with 1:13 remaining gave the Sea Gulls a 7-6 halftime advantage.

Cortland won 12-of-14 faceoffs in the second half and overtime and won 20-of-29 on the afternoon. Red Dragon sophomore Josh Cittadino (Baldwin) finished the game with 13 faceoff wins in 18 attempts and a team-high nine ground balls. Abbott won 6-of-9 faceoff attempts. Cortland took a 10-9 lead with 4:33 left in the third on a Heath wrap-around shot, but Gonzalez and Ryan Rohde (Glenmoore, PA/Malvern Prep) answered with goals at the 2:21 and 1:34 marks, respectively, to give the Sea Gulls an 11-10 lead. Heath tied the game off a Kyle Simensky (Locust Valley) assist with 36.3 seconds left in regulation.

Salisbury re-gained the lead on Eric Bishop’s (Media, PA/Penncrest) goal with 7:44 left in regulation. Cortland missed on five shots to tie the game over the next four minutes and Salisbury cleared the ball with 3:27 remaining. With 1:46 left, Cortland substituted freshman goalie Michael Robinson (Alexandria, VA/Thomas Edison) for Gaebel to help pressure the ball. Long-stick midfielder Cheney Raymond (Camillus/West Genesee) forced a turnover with 1:31 left and Cortland called timeout.

With just under a minute left, Ryan Simensky drove right about 10 yards in front of the goal and stumbled to the ground. As he was falling, he flicked the ball to his left. The ball floated over a Cortland player’s stick and by a Salisbury defender before finding its way past a surprised Zarchin into the net to tie the game. Cortland won the ensuing faceoff, but turned the ball over. Salisbury had a final shot but Kylor Berkman’s (Salisbury/Parkside) attempt was saved by Gaebel with 10 seconds left.

Cittadino won the faceoff to start overtime and three quick passes set up Abbott for a potential game-winning shot, but the ball sailed over the cage. Salisbury gained possession and cleared the ball. Matt Dasinger (Reisterstown, MD/Franklin) had a shot at 2:23 go wide and another attempt with 1:29 left stopped by Gaebel. Boyer tried to scoop in the rebound of the second shot but was also stopped by Gaebel.
A Gonzalez shot went wide with 49 seconds left and Dasinger’s shot with 26 seconds remaining hit off the crossbar and ricocheted high toward the back right corner. Cortland won the chase to the ball and gained possession.

With time running out in the overtime, Felice took the ball on the left side, beat his defender and stuffed home a close-range diving shot with 2.2 seconds left to give Cortland the title.

GAME SUMMARY:

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<td>Salisbury (20-1)</td>
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<td>Cortland (18-3)</td>
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Scoring (Goals-Assists):

**Salisbury**: Luis Gonzalez 3-0, Jimmy Creighton 2-2, Ryan Rohde 2-1, Matt Dasinger 2-0, Eric Bishop 1-1, Dan Boyer 1-0, Mike Edwards 1-0, Kylor Berkman 0-3, J.B. Sheridan 0-1, Brett Yoder 0-1

**Cortland**: Ryan Heath 4-1, Mike Felice 3-2, Ryan Simensky 3-1, Kyle Lambert 1-2, Mike Abbott 1-1, Brian Atkins 1-0, Matt O’Connell 0-1, Adam Hyde 0-1, Kyle Simensky 0-1

Goalkeepers:

**Salisbury**: Max Zarchin, 6 saves (13 GA in 63:58)

**Cortland**: Ben Gaebel, 18 saves (12 GA in 62:59), Michael Robinson, 0 saves (0 GA in 0:59)

**Shots**: Salisbury 49, Cortland 36

**Ground Balls**: Cortland 37, Salisbury 35

**Clears**: Cortland 13-of-15, Salisbury 22-of-25

**Faceoffs Won**: Cortland 20, Salisbury 9

**Penalties**: Cortland 2-1:30, Salisbury 3-2:00

**Extra-Man Offense**: Salisbury 1-2, Cortland 1-3