POTSDAM, NY -- Cortland's string of 17 straight SUNYAC Eastern Division titles came to an end as the Red Dragons went 1-2 during the second day of competition at the league round-robin in Potsdam. Oneonta finished divisional play with a 9-1 record, clinching the title with a 3-2 win over Cortland on Saturday. Cortland, which won at least a share of every SUNYAC East title since 1985, finished tied for second with Plattsburgh at 7-3 after dropping a 3-2 decision to the Cardinals.

Oneonta, Cortland and Plattsburgh all advance to the SUNYAC Tournament on Nov. 8-9, along with Brockport, Geneseo and Buffalo State from the West. Brockport won the West title and will host the tournament, with the champion receiving the league’s automatic berth into the NCAA Division III playoffs.

Cortland (21-12 overall) won its two matches on Friday and opened play on Saturday with a 30-16, 30-13, 30-17 win over SUNYIT. Junior Katie Pietrzak (Rochester/Greece Arcadia) had five kills and no errors in eight attempts. Junior Megan Thurkins (Painted Post/Corning-Painted Post) also recorded five kills and freshman Andrea Hutton (North Tonawanda) had four kills, four aces and five digs.

Against Oneonta, Cortland won the first game 30-27, lost the second game 31-29 and won the third game 30-25. Oneonta won the fourth game 30-25 and took advantage of eight Cortland attack errors and two service receiving errors in the fifth game to win convincingly 15-4. Junior Andrea Smith (San Diego, CA/ Frontier Central (NY)) led the Red Dragons with 11 kills and 25 digs. Pietrzak registered 10 kills and five blocks and junior Jamie McMullen (Castile/Letchworth) finished with 41 assists, nine kills, six aces and seven digs. In addition, sophomore Barbie Lang (Cuba/Cuba-Rushford) had nine kills and 14 digs and Thurkins chipped in nine kills.

In the final match, Cortland lost the first two games to Plattsburgh 30-28 and 30-27, but bounced back to win the next two games 30-23 and 30-17. The Cardinals, however, won the fifth game 15-11 to defeat Cortland for the first time ever after 33 straight losses to the Red Dragons. Smith paced Cortland with 13 kills, 31 digs and five blocks. Pietrzak added 10 kills and eight blocks and Thurkins amassed nine kills, nine digs and three blocks. Graduate student Kimberly Wood (South Salem/John Jay) finished with 29 assists, 18 digs and five kills.

SUNYAC East Division Results

Day 1 (Oct. 25)
Cortland def. Potsdam 3-0
Plattsburgh def. SUNYIT 3-0
Plattsburgh def. Potsdam 3-0
New Paltz def. Oneonta 3-0
Oneonta def. SUNYIT 3-0
Cortland def. New Paltz 3-0

Day 2 (Oct. 26)
Cortland def. SUNYIT 3-0
Plattsburgh def. New Paltz 3-0
Oneonta def. Plattsburgh 3-0
New Paltz def. Potsdam 3-0
Oneonta def. Cortland 3-2
Potsdam def. SUNYIT 3-0
Plattsburgh def. Cortland 3-2
New Paltz def. SUNYIT 3-0
Oneonta def. Potsdam 3-0

Final SUNYAC East Records: Oneonta 9-1, Cortland 7-3, Plattsburgh 7-3, New Paltz 5-5, Potsdam 2-8, SUNYIT 0-10

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