ITHACA, N.Y. – Cortland finished third out of 12 teams at the New York State Women’s Collegiate Athletic Association (NYSWCAA) women’s volleyball tournament, losing to eventual champion and top seed NYU, 3-0, in the semifinals and defeating New Paltz, 3-0, in the third-place match. The Red Dragons are now 29-7.

Freshman middle hitter Tiffany Chatman (Watertown) and senior setter Lizz Rakita (Lake Grove/Sachem) were named to the all-tournament team. In addition, prior to the tournament, Chatman was announced as the NYSWCAA Women’s Volleyball Rookie of the Year and Rakita was named to the honorable mention all-state team.

NYU, ranked fourth nationally in Division III, defeated Cortland 31-29, 30-21, 30-22, then posted a 3-1 win over Ithaca in the finals for its third straight state title.

Seniors Danielle Turner (Farmingville/Sachem) and Lauren Nels (Baldwinsville/C.W. Baker) led Cortland versus NYU with nine kills apiece. Turner also totaled seven digs and Nels had four blocks. Chatman added six kills and eight blocks and Rakita finished with 22 assists and two blocks. Cortland held leads of 27-25 and 29-28 in the first game before faltering.

Cortland rebounded with a 30-24, 30-21, 30-23 win over New Paltz in the third-place match. Chatman paced the Red Dragons with 15 kills and four blocks. Rakita recorded a “triple double” with 35 assists, 10 kills and 13 digs and Turner finished with 10 kills, 10 digs and two blocks. Freshman libero Kate Gosman (East Northport/Elwood John Glenn) added 13 digs and freshman Britney Horton (Owego/Owego Free Academy) registered 15 digs and five kills. Cortland posted a team .341 attack percentage in the match.

Cortland will host the six-team SUNYAC tournament this Friday and Saturday. The Red Dragons will receive a bye into the semifinals and will play Saturday at 11 a.m. versus an opponent to be determined. The tournament winner earns an automatic berth into the NCAA Division III tournament.

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