



**CCWW Sports Report No. 513  
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by  
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Happy Thanksgiving! Here's the daily rundown of top events in the week gone by.

**You'll be Unfaithful  
Probably on Thursday  
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“Probably on Thursday”- Andrew Lloyd Webber (1967)

I regard it as an article of faith that Cornell is better than Colgate in basketball. In fact, it was 2003 when the Raiders last defeated Cornell's men's and women's basketball teams in the same season. That string ended last Thursday as Colgate . swept the two games, played simultaneously in Hamilton and Ithaca. With the sweep, Colgate continued to have its way with Cornell this year. The Red is just 1-5 against 'Gate, having also lost in football, field hockey and women's soccer. The Big Red's only win was in overtime in Men's Soccer—thank you, **Ryan Hill '19!**

**Men's Basketball** lost by eleven, 72-61. It wasn't a total blowout but Colgate took the lead for good with 5:50 to go in the first half and led by double figures for the last eight and a half minutes. The difference in the game was Colgate's superior three-point shooting. The Raiders hit six more treys than the Red despite taking two fewer shots. The other stats were pretty even. The Big Red lost again on Sunday, a 98-78 blowout at UMass-Lowell, a team Cornell took to overtime last year. In this game, the Red shot pretty well (as did the River Hawks) but UML had six more offensive rebounds (which they turned into eleven more second-chance points) and eleven fewer turnovers. Cornell's best player, **Matt Morgan '19**, played well against Colgate (23 points, five assists and just one turnover) and very well against UML (25 points on 9 for 18 shooting, including five for eleven from beyond the arc). For the week, including last Monday's win over Binghamton, Matt averaged 24.7 ppg and was named the Ivy League Player of the Week. The Big Red's record is now 1-3.

**Women's Basketball's** 74-70 loss to Colgate ended a six-game win streak against the Raiders. Cornell has a very young team and fields an entirely new starting lineup. Against 'Gate, all three double-figure scorers for the Red were sophomores: **Sam Widmann '20**, who had a career-high 25 points, **Danielle Jorgenson '20**, who netted 14, and **Stephanie Umeh '20**, who had 10 points and nine rebounds. And the team is improving. Against Lehigh on Monday, with Widmann, Jorgenson and Umeh again leading the way, the Big Red overcame a slow start to lead after three quarters but could not hold on and lost by five, 62-57. Then today (Wednesday) the Red got their first win, 67-59 over Canisius. Widmann set another career high with 27 points, and **Christine Ehland '17** added 17, a career-high for her.

**TGIF**

Friday was a great day for the Big Red, as Men's and Women's Hockey and Wrestling all had convincing wins. **Men's Hockey** defeated a depleted St. Lawrence team, 6-1. **Noah Bauld '20**, who was a healthy scratch against Harvard, got the Red on the board 11:34 into the first period. Then **Morgan Barron '21**, who looks like a budding star, stole the puck and scored unassisted just eight seconds later. The score was 5-0 when **Matthew Galajda '21** lost his shutout with less than three and a half minutes left in the game. The Red would score once more, an own goal credited to Bauld (giving him a hat trick). The only negative was that talented freshman **Cam Donaldson '21** left with an injury and has not played since.

**Women's Hockey** cruised Friday at Brown, with five different players scoring in the 5-1 win. **Maddy Mills '21** had a goal and an assist and **Kristin O'Neill '20** had three assists. **Willow Slobodzian '21**, who on Thursday was named to the Canada U-18 team for the world championships in Russia in January, finished the Cornell scoring with her first collegiate goal.

Those wins were expected. What came as a mild surprise was **Wrestling's** decisive win over a higher-ranked Northern Iowa team. After losing four regulars, three of whom were perennial All-Americans, to graduation, this looked to be a rebuilding year. But the Big Red won its first dual meet of the season rather easily, taking seven of ten bouts, three by falls, for a final score of 30-10. The meet started with a pin by **Chaz Tucker '20** at 133. Highly-touted freshman **Yianni Diakomihalis '21** then defeated a ranked UNI wrestler at 141. The Panthers won the next two bouts to close the gap to 9-7 but that was as close as they would get. **Jon Jay Chavez '19** pinned his opponent at 165 to stretch the Cornell lead to 15-7. After UNI won a battle of ranked wrestlers at 174, the Big Red closed out with four straight wins, including a huge upset by **Max Dean '21** (younger brother of Cornell's two-time NCAA champion **Gabe Dean '17**) over the fourth-ranked wrestler at 184, a fall by **Ben Darmstadt '21** at 197, a win at Heavyweight by **Ben Honis '19** (an NCAA qualifier last spring at 197, who had to give away about 50 pounds to his opponent), and, finally, an upset at 125 by **Mike Russo '20** over a ranked UNI wrestler.

### **“Saturday Night’s Alright for Fighting” or “I Guess That’s Why They Call it the Blues” (the Elton John Medley).**

This was the big day—final football game of the season, and a battle of two top-ten hockey teams, as the Big Red hosted Clarkson. Unfortunately, neither game went well. Let’s take them in reverse order. **Men’s Hockey** hit the ice Saturday night sporting a 7-0-0 record, the best start by a Cornell team since 1971. But it was the Golden Knights who came out flying, consistently beating the Big Red to the puck and taking a 2-0 lead early in the first period. Cornell had a couple of chances to get back in the game but **Jared Fiegl '17** hit the post on a second-period breakaway and a few minutes later the Clarkson goalie saved a point-blank shot by **Anthony Angello '19** on a two-on-one. Clarkson then immediately answered with two more goals and that was all she wrote. Final score: 4-0. With the loss, Cornell fell a few spots to No. 7 in both polls.

Unlike the hockey game, the **Football** game was close until the end—I mean, the *very* end. The clock ran out with Cornell on the Penn one-yard line needing a touchdown and extra point to force overtime. And so another losing season is in the books for the Big Red. Cornell was 3-7 overall, 3-4 in Ivy League play. The Red last had a winning season overall and in the league in 2005. The Big Red won one fewer game than a year ago but won one more Ivy league game. Is that a step forward or a step backward? I don’t know, maybe it’s just a step to the side.

What I do feel confident saying is that this was a winnable game in which Cornell was outcoached. In-game management by the coaches has been a topic I’ve raised in the past but this seems like the most glaring example because victory was so close. Kind of like the Seahawks game Monday night, which I’ll get to in a bit.

First, let’s review the game’s progress. An interception by **David Jones '20**, the first of his three in the game, on Penn’s opening drive gave Cornell possession in Penn territory and led to a field goal that put the Big Red up 3-0. After the teams traded touchdown drives, Cornell led 10-7. Another long Penn drive was killed by Jones’ second INT; however, the Big Red went three-and-out and this time the Quakers finished their drive with a touchdown to lead 14-10. Penn scored once more in the second quarter and led 21-10 at the half.

Early in the third quarter, **Nick Gesualdi '17** made a brilliant interception to kill a Penn drive at the Cornell eight-yard line. That jump-started the Big Red and they drove 92 yards for a touchdown with 4:37 to go in the third quarter. A failed two-point conversion attempt—we’ll discuss that below—left the score at 21-16. The Quakers could manage just one first down on their next possession, and an 80-yard touchdown drive gave the Big Red a 22-21 lead after another two-point conversion attempt failed.

Jones’ third pick of the day—on the Cornell five—ended Penn’s next drive but after one first down Cornell had to punt. **Nickolas Null '20** got off a beauty, a 60-yarder that rolled out of bounds on the Quaker three-yard line with 8:21 to go. However, Penn was up to the challenge, driving 97 yards for the TD, including two third-and-long conversions (one of which should have been third and even longer—we’ll get to that below), and eating up over six minutes of clock in the process. Penn then went for and made a two-point

conversion to lead 29-22 with just over two minutes left. With the aid of a pass interference penalty, the Big Red drove down the field and made a first and goal at the Penn one-yard line with 18 seconds left. But they could not score and the game ended as a Penn victory.

How can coaches affect the outcome after the game has started? Play selection, for sure. Also clock management, especially the use of timeouts. And other decisions, such as whether to accept or decline a penalty, or whether to go for one or two points after a touchdown. IMHO, the Big Red coaches botched all of these. Let's start back in the third quarter, when Cornell went for two following its second touchdown. Conventional wisdom, as expressed by the Eleven Sports announcers at the time, is that it's too early to go for two then. I agree, and said as much to my TV. Actually, this was a twofer of questionable coaching as Cornell also wasted a timeout trying to decide what play to run, in the end choosing a sweep that did not fool Penn at all.

That decision to go for two probably did not cost Cornell the game although if things had played out differently it could have. Had the Red kicked the extra point, they would have done the same after their next score and Penn also would have kicked its last PAT. The score would have been 28-24 and Cornell's last drive would have been for the win rather than just a tie. And the wasted timeout *did* have consequences.

Let's move ahead to Penn's last drive. The Quakers started at their own three and after two quick first downs they got into trouble. An incomplete pass and a false start penalty made it second and 15 on the Penn 23. The Penn QB then had to unload the ball out of bounds to avoid a sack. But on the same play Penn had an illegal receiver downfield. So Cornell had a choice—third and 15 or second and 20. Again, the Eleven Sports announcers nailed it—decline the penalty and give Penn one play to get 15 yards. (Note, it would have been *one* play as there were more than six minutes left and Penn still had all three of its timeouts; a fourth down deep in their own end would almost certainly have caused the Quakers to punt and try to get the ball back.) But Cornell accepted the penalty and gave Penn the extra play. Two passes, neither of which gained 15 yards, got the Quakers the first down and kept the drive alive. Penn then picked up another first down, after which Cornell called its second time out—another questionable decision—apparently hoping to slow the Penn drive. It did not work, and Penn eventually scored the go-ahead touchdown.

That left Cornell with two minutes and one timeout to drive the field and score a TD in order to get a tie. Amazingly, and with some luck, the Big Red almost did just that. With 18 seconds left **Collin Shaw '17** caught a pass and was pushed out of bounds on the Penn one-yard line. (As an aside, it looked to me like Collin might have held the ball forward over the goal line before he stepped out, which would have been a touchdown; however, there's no replay review in the Ivy League.) So the Red had a first and goal from the one with 18 seconds left and no timeouts. Given the time constraint, and adding in the fact that Cornell had been having difficulty all game running the ball down close to the end zone—it took three tries from three yards away to barely get in on the previous touchdown—short passes seemed to me like the way to go. And there was enough time for multiple throws into the end zone. But no, the Big Red tried to run ball but that play went nowhere. At that point, the Red barely had time to unpile, line up, and spike the ball with one second still left on the clock. A pass play doesn't work and that's that. Instead of four shots at the end zone, Cornell gets two. Game over.

If you peruse the blogs you can find the sentiment expressed that these decisions are further evidence that **David Archer '05** and his staff are in over their collective heads. Maybe so, but I have to say these coaching faux pas were not very different from those made on Monday night by Pete Carroll. In his Tuesday column in the *Seattle Times*, Matt Calkins called coach Carroll out on these but hardly suggested they were grounds for dismissal. (Of course, Pete Carroll has won a Super Bowl with the Seahawks, while Coach Archer has won 12 games in five years.) I have no inside information on how the powers that be view these things but I expect Coach Archer to be back for another year. And while this year did not result in the progress one might have hoped for, there were certainly some positives along the way.

Enough about football, let's cover the other action summarily.

**Women's Hockey** had a four-point weekend, following up the Friday win over Brown with a 3-0 shutout of Yale on Saturday. O'Neill and Mills each had a goal and an assist and **Marlene Boissonnault '19** made 15 saves in recording her first shutout of the year. The Big Red had one more game, a Tuesday afternoon contest with Penn State, the first meeting ever between the two programs. Cornell was favored but the Nittany Lions got a second-period power play goal and made it stand up until **Diana Buckley '19** lit the lamp with less than a minute and a half left and Boissonnault on the bench for an extra skater. And that's how it ended, a 1-1 tie. The Cornell women are now 5-3-1 and are eighth in both national polls. They play at No. 10 Providence College twice over the Thanksgiving weekend.

**Men's Hockey** also had a game on Tuesday and, like the women, got more than they expected from an underdog Niagara team. The Purple Eagles scored first, took a 3-1 lead in the second, and then responded to Cornell's second goal, four minutes into the third, with a goal of their own to put their lead back to two goals. It looked as if the Big Red were finished and would lose to Niagara for just the third time in 17 meetings. But goals by two defensemen, **Alex Green '21** and **Brendan Smith '19**, knotted the score and then **Trevor Yates '18**'s team-leading sixth goal of the season gave the Big Red its first lead of the game with less than three minutes left. An unfortunate minor penalty for too many men on the ice made the last couple of minutes exciting but the Red held on for the 5-4 victory. Next up is Red Hot Hockey against B.U. in Madison Square Garden on Saturday night. The game will be streamed on the ILN at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time (same time as the Apple Cup).

There was other action in **Wrestling** (an easy win at the NYS Championships on Sunday), **Polo** (a pair of impressive wins by both the men and the women), **Equestrian** (two more high-point days), **Swimming and Diving** (losses by both the men and the women to Penn and Princeton), and Squash (two wins by the women, two wins and a loss for the men), but I'm out of time and space to say much more about them so I'll leave you with another HAPPY THANKSGIVING and, of course, a

**GO BIG RED!**