



CCWW Sports Report No. 604
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by
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Lots of action this past weekend but, with one big exception, most of what happened was so predictable there was no reason to get excited, or write much, about it. So here goes.

First, the big exception. If you've been following these reports for a few years, you know the saga of **Taylor Knibb '20**. Ms. Knibb, a third-generation Cornellian, runs on the women's cross-country and track teams but her real specialty is the triathlon (you know, swimming, biking and running). Taylor is the two-time defending International Triathlon Union (ITU) Junior World Champion. This year she moved up a level and last week, down under on Australia's Gold Coast, she dodged the crocodiles and jellyfish to win the U-23 World Championship. Good work, Taylor, now get back to your day job(s) in Ithaca—studying and racing for the Big Red.

Football. The Big Red lost to Delaware, 27-10. There was never much question that the Red was going to lose this game. Delaware is just a better team. And it probably did not help that the Cornell game plan, at least on offense, was to treat this game almost as an exhibition, with lots of players seeing action. Still, it was interesting and not that bad, all things considered. A year ago on the same field, the Red turned the ball over five times in the first half, trailed 27-0 at halftime, and lost 41-14. On Saturday, the Big Red scored first, only trailed by four points until almost the end of the second quarter and still only trailed by 11 at the end of the third quarter. Eventually, the anemia displayed by the Cornell offense took its toll on the defense and the Blue Hens mounted three fourth-quarter scoring drives, one for a touchdown and two for field goals. Takeaways:

- The Cornell offense was awful. The Red gained only 232 yards and more than half of those (130) were on the first drive of the game and the last drive (after the result was decided). As coach **David Archer '05** promised (threatened?), he used three quarterbacks. **Dalton Banks '19** was, well, Dalton Banks. There's a good Banks and a bad Banks. On Saturday we got the bad Banks. On the one scoring drive he led, Banks completed just one pass, a screen pass to tailback **Harold Coles '20**. He missed his receivers on his other three attempts. For the game, Dalton completed 10 of 17 passes for just 54 yards. **Mike Catanese '20** and **Richie Kenney '21** also played QB. Neither looked that good when I saw them play in the first half but Catanese came in later and led the Big Red to its only touchdown, completing four passes—all down the field, including a 29-yard catch and run play to tight end **Tommy McIntyre '20**, and a nice touchdown pass to **Davy Lizana '20**.
- The Red used a bunch of running backs but none really got enough work to develop a rhythm. Based on my observations, the best of the lot were Coles and **J.D. Pickell '19**. **Chris Walker '19** only got a few snaps and may not yet be healthy enough to contribute much.
- The defense gave up 391 yards, which is not great, but only three touchdowns. Cornell contained Delaware's running game pretty well, but I was concerned by the ability of the Blue Hens to complete passes down the field. The Hens averaged 21 yards per completion. That's too many; by comparison, the Red completed just one pass for more than 20 yards.

Delaware is probably the best team Cornell will face this year but not by that much. I looked at this week's FCS poll and seven of Cornell's ten opponents, including all three of its non-conference foes, received votes. Next up is one of those teams, Yale, whom the Big Red will face this Saturday on Homecoming Day. Yale actually lost this past weekend, blowing a 21-point first quarter lead and losing, 31-28, to Holy Cross in overtime. The game will be streamed on ESPN+ at noon PDT. Two years ago, the Red upset

the Elis in Ithaca in the middle of Cornell's season-opening three-game winning streak. Last year the Big Red got torched in New Haven, 49-24, with Yale's freshman Dudek running for 176 yards. ICYMI, Dudek ran for 217 yards last weekend against the Cross. Get ready.

I expected **Men's Soccer** to lose in California to a good Cal State-Northridge team, but to have had a decent chance to defeat Cal State-Fullerton. Check and check. The Big Red lost to CSN on Friday, but kept it close. The final was 3-1. All scoring was in the second half. The Red actually took more shots, but the Matadors held a big edge (11-3) in shots on goal. **Harry Fuller '21** had the Cornell goal. Northridge, which beat No. 11 UCLA two days later, is 5-2 and ranked No. 13 by Top Drawer Soccer—like I said, they're a good team. On Sunday, the Big Red defeated Fullerton. This was Lafayette redux. Just like in that game a week ago, the home team took a first-half lead but the Red eventually found some offense, tied the game late, and got the winning goal even later. This time Fuller set up **Szabolcs Wiksell '22** for the tying goal in the 65th minute, and then Wiksell set up classmate **Emeka Eneli '22** in the 73rd minute for the game winner. It was Eneli's third goal of the season.

Cornell is now 4-2-0, unranked, but has the 30th best RPI, which is tops in the Ivy League. The two teams that defeated the Big Red, Syracuse and CSUN, are Nos. 11 and 14 in the RPI. The Red will play two more matches before Ivy play starts next week. On Friday, the Big Red host Niagara, and then on Tuesday, they visit Lehigh. Niagara is not very good (RPI 199 out of 206), Lehigh (RPI 88) is better, but the Red should win both matches. Then the real season starts.

Cornell **Volleyball** also took a western trip to face some tough opponents in their last tourney before Ivy League play starts. The Big Red played three teams: host Valparaiso, Wright State and Western Illinois. The Red was expected to lose to the host team (and they did in four sets) and to defeat Western Illinois (which they easily accomplished in straight sets). The match with Wright State seemed like a toss-up and, it turned out that way, with Cornell eventually falling in five sets. Libero **Lily Barber '20** was named to the All-Tournament team.

Some quick thoughts. I saw most of the Valpo match, the first time I'd really seen the team play this season. Size matters. Cornell looked quicker and more athletic but had difficulty getting the ball past Valpo's big front line. As for the close loss to Wright State, it was surprising only in that in the **Coach Trudy Vande Berg** era, if a match goes to five sets, the Big Red usually win. Before Saturday's loss to the Raiders, the Red had won six straight five-set matches and nine of its last ten.

Cornell finished its non-conference slate with a 5-5 record against good competition. All five teams the Big Red lost to had winning records and their combined record in other games is 46-19. The Red also defeated two pretty good teams, Buffalo and UT-San Antonio, which are 16-6 in other games. This Saturday Cornell opens Ivy play at Columbia. Match time is 11:00 am PDT. You can watch on ESPN+.

It's been a tough fall for the Hornibrook family. Before last weekend's Catamount Classic, **Field Hockey**, coached by **Donna Hornibrook**, was 1-3 and had shown little ability to put the ball in the net. I did not give them much chance to defeat a ranked (and hot) Maine team and they did not. Boy, did they ever not. Maine had more shots (24-3), more shots on goal (14-3), more penalty corners (13-2) and, most importantly, more goals (5-0). Not pretty. The Big Red was expected to have a better chance against host UVM and that game was much closer. The Red generally controlled play and even took a 1-0 lead 12 minutes into the second half. But it didn't last. The Catamounts scored twice in the last sixteen minutes for a 2-1 victory. Now Ivy League play starts this weekend with Cornell hosting Penn. The Big Red are 1-5 and have scored just five goals in their six games. If the Red are to be a factor in the Ivy League race they need to find a scoring punch—now.

At least Coach Donna has a 14-year record of success on the Hill (including six runner-up Ivy finishes) to fall back upon. After a loss and a tie this past week, **Women's Soccer** is 3-14-4 since her husband, **Dwight Hornibrook**, took over last year as head coach. On Sunday, the Big Red lost at St. Joseph, 1-0, which doesn't sound that bad, but the overall statistics tell of St. Joe's complete dominance. The shots were 19-2 in favor of the home team. Cornell did not have a shot on goal or even a single corner kick. Against that backdrop, Tuesday's tie with Albany was a pleasant surprise. Albany came in with a win over

Arizona and a Hero Sports ranking of 107 out of 334 teams; Cornell's ranking was 287. And, from the bit I watched on ESPN+, the tie wasn't a fluke. After a scoreless first half, the Big Red struck first, in the 49th minute. After goals by the Scoobies in the 54th and 61st minutes gave them the lead, the Red applied strong pressure and were rewarded with the tying goal in the 89th minute. The overtime was scoreless, with each team managing a shot on goal. **Shelby Wray '21** and **Kennedy Yearby '20** got the Cornell goals, and Yearby also had an assist. Cornell's record is now 1-5-1, and the two goals gave the Big Red five for the year, which is as many as the Red scored in all of 2017. Next up is the Ivy opener at Columbia at 3:00 p.m. PDT on ESPN+.

I'll run through the rest quickly. **Sprint Football** opened with a 28-11 win over Caldwell University. The Red have a much tougher test this weekend when they play Penn on Friday night. FYI, the CSFL is comprised of ten teams representing Cornell, three "peer institutions" of the Big Red (Penn, Army and Navy) and six smaller schools, including at least one for profit institution and some (like Caldwell) that were recently women's colleges. Last year the Red lost all three games to its peers by a combined score of 149-28. Both Men's and Women's **Cross-Country** won their races at last weekend's Buffalo Stampede. I'm not sure what to read into the wins since I don't have a good feel for the competition. In the women's race, **Annie Taylor '19** and **Isabella Dobson '21** finished 1-2. In the men's race, the Big Red edged host UB by four points. Most interesting was that of Cornell's top seven, one (**Tomas Reimer '19**, who finished third overall) is a senior and the other six are all freshmen. Finally, the Big Red **Golf** team had a rough go of it on its home course, finishing tenth overall, forty shots behind winner Yale.

That's it for this week. **GO BIG RED!**