



**CCWW Sports Report No. 611  
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It's official. For the sixth straight year the Big Red will not win or share any Ivy League fall championships. The last teams with slim chances—football, volleyball and men's soccer—all lost and were mathematically eliminated from their title races. So it's time to shift our attention to the winter sports—where the Red won all three of their Ivy titles last year. I have some thoughts on the state of Cornell athletics generally that I will share at a later time but for now let's just focus on last week's results. As in life generally, there were wins, losses and something in between.

### **Winners**

1. Maybe **Field Hockey** read last week's post about the stakes, from a program history perspective, in their last game of the season. Probably not, but somehow this team which had not been able to score all season busted out and not only beat Dartmouth but won the game in a shootout—in both senses of that term.

The first "shootout" was the game itself. The Big Red had zero goals in its first six Ivy league games, but they broke that streak Saturday with a goal in the eighth minute. That tally evened the game at 1-1 and started a back and forth scoring pattern. Dartmouth led 1-0 and 3-2; Cornell led 2-1 and 4-3. In the 29th minute of the second half, the Big Green tied the game for the last time. Then the teams stopped scoring. No more goals in regulation, and no goals in twenty minutes of overtime, although the Cornell offense outshot Dartmouth 6-0 in the second OT. That meant the game would be decided by a shootout. No team scored in the first two rounds of the shootout but in the third round **Avery Smith '22** put the Red ahead. After **Maddie Henry '20** stopped the Dartmouth shooter's try, **Gabby DePetro '19** scored to clinch the Big Red's victory. **Grace Royer '21** had three goals in regulation to lead the Red, and the hat trick earned her Ivy POW honors.

Cornell finished the season with a Ivy League record of 1-6 and an overall record of 5-12. The Red scored just 20 goals in their 17 games, the lowest total since the 2003 team scored 15 in a 16-game schedule. DePetro is the only graduating senior; everyone else should be back, including Cornell's two All-Ivies, second-team middie **Maddy Conklin '20** and goalkeeper Henry, who received honorable mention.

2. After last week's sweep at the hands of Michigan State, **Men's Hockey** got its conference season off on a winning note with a home sweep of Yale and Brown. The Big Red built a three-goal lead over Yale on Friday but the Elis came back to close within a goal and the game was not settled until **Morgan Barron '21** potted an empty-netter, his second goal of the game, with 51 seconds left. The Big Red's other goals came from **Cam Donaldson '21** and **Yanni Kaldis '20**. The win over Brown on Saturday was similar. After a scoreless first period, the Big Red scored took a 3-1 lead in the middle period. Brown got to within a goal early in the third period but no closer and the Red prevailed, 3-2. The Cornell goals were scored by Barron, **Matt Nuttle '19** and **Michael Regush '22**. The Red travel to the Michigan U. P. this weekend for a two-game set with Northern Michigan. I've been told that video of this series is only available by purchasing a one-month subscription for \$29.95. I love the Big Red but I think I'll pass.

3. **Men's Basketball** prepared for a long night of election return watching (It's a longer night in the Eastern time zone) by playing its season opener Tuesday at Binghamton. It took a while for **Matt Morgan '19** and the Big Red to get going but they eventually did and pulled away in the second half for an 86-75 victory. Bingo led by as many as eight in the first half and Morgan had just five points in the first 16 minutes of the game. But Matt scored seven in the last four minutes of the half to send Cornell into the break with a one-point lead. The second half was different: Matt scored 26 second-half points in 13 minutes to finish the game with 38, a career high and the fourth-highest one game total in Cornell history

(one more than my Cornell roommate **Gregg Morris '68** dropped on Kentucky in December 1966). Morgan also had a career-high 13 rebounds and four assists. **Jimmy Boenheim '21** added 20 points and seven rebounds. Matt's 38 points moved him into second place in career scoring at Cornell, 348 points behind **Ryan Wittman '10**.

I watched the replay of the game and have some thoughts but I want to see more games before finalizing and sharing them. The Big Red will play D-III SUNY Canton this evening (Thursday) and then Colgate on Sunday. Both games will be streamed on ESPN+, today's game at 4:00 p.m. PST and Sundays at 10:00 a.m. PST.

4. Cornell **Equestrian** finished first at a home show and now has three firsts and a second in four shows. **Lena Reeb '21** finished first in the open fences, first and the open flat and was the high point rider.

5. The men's and women's **Polo** teams defeated Harvard by a combined score of 61-3. If only those were football, basketball and/or hockey results....

### Losers

1. **Football** lost to Penn, 20-7. I watched the entire game on ESPNU—the first time I've been able to do that this season. The game was lost on the Big Red's first possession, but it took another three hours to make it official. After Penn opened with a quick three and out and a poor punt, Cornell took over at its own 47-yard line. With some nice runs by **Harold Coles '20** and a completed pass from **David Banks '19** to **Owen Peters '20**, the Red had a first and goal at the Penn one-yard line. Time for a quarterback sneak or two and a Cornell touchdown, right? Wrong. Four plays (none of which was a QB sneak) and a wasted timeout later, the Red had zero points. That impacted the whole game. **Lars Pederson '19** caught a TD pass from Banks in the second quarter but instead of leading 14-3 at the half, the Red only had a four-point lead. Penn got two touchdowns and a field goal in the second half but if Cornell had scored on that first possession, they would have had the ball with over five minutes to go trailing by just six and needing just one score to win. That would have been very doable. Instead, trying to hurry up and score twice, the Big Red made some desperation plays that didn't work and Penn prevailed.

The handling of that first-and-goal in the first quarter was an awful mistake. You don't have to take my word for it—by their subsequent actions the Cornell coaching staff essentially admitted it. I mentioned the Cornell TD in the second quarter. That completed a 75-yard drive. But in the first series of the drive the Big Red had a fourth-and-one on its own 34. The Red went for it. It was a very risky decision so, of course, you want to use the play with the greatest chance of success. That's what the Cornell coached did—they called a quarterback sneak. Banks easily got the yardage and the drive continued. *Q.E.D.* I rest my case.

The Big Red is now 3-5 (2-3 in the Ivy League) and they're looking at a likely loss to a powerful Dartmouth team this Saturday and a difficult matchup at Columbia to conclude the season. This is **David Archer '05's** sixth season as Cornell's head coach. In his first five seasons, the Red won a total of 12 games. If Cornell loses out this season—as is likely—Archer will have averaged 2.5 wins per season, a winning percentage of .250. That will be the third-lowest winning percentage of any coach in Cornell's history. The two coaches with lower percentages were gone after two and three years. Watching the Penn game, it dawned on me—Dave Archer is Bill Courtney with a Cornell degree. The parallels are there. Courtney did not have a winning season overall or in the Ivy League in six tries and barring a miracle, neither will Archer. Both were given contract extensions after sign of modest progress only to have the team regress. I think that after these next two games, the Cornell administration needs to decide whether this is working. If you plan to watch Saturday, kickoff is at 10:30 a.m. PST and the game will be streamed on ESPN+.

2. **Men's Soccer** lost to Dartmouth in overtime, 2-1. The Big Red are now 10-6 overall and 3-3 in the league with one match to go. Looking at the big picture, 2018 has been a huge success as a team made up of three-fourths underclassmen will post a three- or four-win improvement over last year and nine- or ten-win improvement over two years ago. Still, it's hard not to be a little bit disappointed since at one time the Big Red was 9-2 and ranked in the top 25 in the country. I'm not sure of the reason for the fall-off. It

may just have been the law of averages catching up. In the early season the Red often came from behind to win and won some matches despite being outshot; now they're losing all those matches in which they are outshot. The Red's final match is Saturday at Columbia starting at 10 a.m. PST on ESPN+.

3. **Women's Soccer** ended its season on a 14-match winless streak, losing to Dartmouth in double overtime, 2-1. The Big Red scored three goals in their seven Ivy matches. Amazingly, however, in this match, as in the other two in which the Red has scored, the one goal was almost enough to win even though the other side dominated in possession and shooting. In Cornell's opener at Columbia the Big Red scored in the 24th minute (on their only shot of the match) and the Lions did not tie it until the 87th minute, before winning in overtime. At Brown, the Red scored in the 11th minute and held the lead for almost 30 minutes before losing, 3-1. Last Saturday, co-captain **Jessica Ritchie '19** scored her first goal of the season in the 27th minute and, despite a huge edge in shots taken and shots on goal Dartmouth did not tie it up until the 89th minute. So close!

Cornell finished the season 1-13-1, posting one fewer win and two fewer ties than a year ago. Only three seniors graduate, so maybe next year will be better. The Big Red did have a couple of All-Ivy selections: defender **Abby Adams '20** was named to the second team and goalkeeper **Meghan Kennedy '19**, the Ivy League saves leader, received honorable mention.

4. **Sprint Football** lost to Army, 51-0, to finish the season with a 4-2 record. Cornell last defeated Army in 2010. In the eight games since then, the Big Red has been outscored by a 332 to 59 margin.

### Win Some, Lose Some

1. By splitting with Penn and Princeton, **Volleyball's** skimpy Ivy League title hopes came to an end. The Big Red have an 8-4 record and have already clinched their second-straight third-place finish in the league. Their successful season will conclude at Yale (currently the Ivy leader with an 11-1 record) and Brown. The Yale match is Friday at 4 p.m. PST and the Brown match is Saturday at 2 p.m. PST. Both matches will be streamed on ESPN+.

2. **Women's Hockey** also split its contests, winning at Yale and losing at Brown. The Yale game was closer than expected, as Cornell got its only lead with less than seven minutes to play. The final score was 4-3. **Kristin O'Neill '20** got the game-winner as well as earlier shorthanded goal to knot the score at two apiece. **Maddie Mills '21** had the Red's first goal and **Sam Burke '22** had the other goal.

The problem came in Providence the next afternoon. Playing without its head coach and three top players, all of whom were off to Saskatchewan for the Four Nations cup, the Big Red lost 4-3. Missing were coach **Doug Derraugh '91** and players O'Neill, **Micah Zandee-Hart '20** and **Jamie Bourbonnais '20**. Some of the scoring slack was picked up by **Grace Graham '20**, who had a goal and two assists; Mills, with a goal and an assist; and Burke with her third goal of the season (the only first year who has scored), but it was not enough.

It gets worse. This weekend Cornell will travel to Erie, Pennsylvania, without those three players, for two games with Mercyhurst, a tough non-conference opponent. The Lakers are 6-6 but four of those losses are to the top two teams in the country, Minnesota and Wisconsin. You may recall that last year the Big Red played two games without four players—including O'Neill and Bourbonnais—who were off playing for Canada, and lost both games. As it turned out, the damage that was done to Cornell's RPI by these losses probably did not account for the Red just missing the NCAA tournament but it did not help. And this year, losses of three winnable games—if that is what happens—could very well be the difference between making the NCAA tournament and not making it. Let's hope not. BTW, the games with Mercyhurst should be available for free on Stretch Internet. Saturday's game is at 3:00 p.m. PST and Sunday's game is at 10:00 a.m. PST.

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