Buffalo outlasts ruggers

By DAVE OLSON

An inspired Cortland rugby team surprised a more experienced host Buffalo Old Boys team by scoring three trys and a penalty kick in the first half for a 17-12 lead, only to lose the match in the final minute 23-20, Saturday.

Paul Hientz, a freshman in his first season, scored the first try of the game to give the Red Dragons a 4-0 lead. Minutes later, Bob McKee ran the ball in from fifteen yards out by breaking several tackles to reach the goal line which made the score 8-0.

Buffalo got back into the game when Terry Lee broke free from a Cortland player to score and Charley Lake added the conversion kick to make the score 8-6. But then, Paul Hientz scored his second try of the day when he raced around several Buffalo players and bowled over another at the goal line for the score. Ron Gardner kicked the conversion and the score was 14-6. Buffalo scored again though on a try by Barry Fergeson and Lake kicked the conversion to keep Buffalo close 14-12. Then shortly before the end of the first half, Rich Gardner kicked a twenty five yard penalty kick for three points and the half ended with Cortland leading 17-12.

Buffalo tightened up its defense in the second half and Cortland committed costly penalties which turned the game around. John Polcyn scored for the Old Boys to make the score 17-16. The penalties hurt the Dragons by killing their drives and putting them in poor field position. It was a penalty kick by Charley Lake that put the Old Boys ahead 19-17.

Time was running out and the Ruggers dug for the final push. Cortland drove the ball to the Buffalo 25 yard line where they were awarded a penalty kick that could win it for the Red Dragons. Gardner withstood the pressure and split the uprights to put Cortland ahead 20-19. However, it was not to be Cortland's day. Buffalo kicked off and after another Cortland penalty, John Polcyn of Buffalo shook loose from a Cortland defender and ran down the sideline to score giving Buffalo the game 23-20.

A young B team also lost a tough game. They held a thin 3-0 lead most of the game on a penalty kick by Kevin Coleen, but Buffalo scored a try late in the game to win it 4-3.

This Saturday the Cortland rugby team hosts St. Bonaventure in what should prove to be an exciting contest between two evenly matched teams. The A game is set for 1 p.m. and the B will start at 2:30.