

Bullet doesn't deter Muhammad's NU career

By **Jeremy Fitzpatrick**
Senior Editor

Nebraska Wingback Abdul Muhammad has started working out again to prepare for the Nebraska football season.

He is carrying with him a reminder of his mortality: a bullet lodged in his left buttock.

Muhammad has refused interviews, but Assistant Sports Information Director Nick Joos said Muhammad was shot during a July 2 drive-by shooting near his home in Compton, Calif.

Associate Head Trainer Jerry Weber said Muhammad was leaning over when he was shot. Weber said the bullet traveled under the skin of Muhammad's back and then became lodged in his left buttock. The bullet was not removed, Weber said, because doing so could have caused more harm than good.

"It's not causing him any problems now," he said. "And if you have a foreign object lodged deep in a muscle, the odds are you are going to do quite a bit of damage to the muscle to go and get it out."

Muhammad has been cleared by physicians to work out and should be ready for the first day of practice Aug. 11, Weber said.

"Basically we just have him getting back into a conditioning program for the summer and see how he handles that and if he develops any symptoms," he said.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said Muhammad has been back in Lincoln for about 10 days. Osborne said Muhammad's medical status was good, but could change if the bullet moved.

"As of right now it will be OK," he said. "If there is any traveling or progression (of the bullet) it might require surgery, but we are keeping our fingers crossed that won't happen."

Osborne said he saw Muhammad almost every day and that he was dealing with the shooting well.

"Abdul is a pretty tough guy — he's OK," he said. "Obviously it was probably unpleasant for him, but again this is reality."

"This is what people deal with in their neighborhoods."



Damon Lee/DN

Keith Jones stands in front of his familiar surroundings of Memorial Stadium. After five years in the National Football League, Jones has returned to UNL to finish his degree in human development.

Former Husker Jones returns from NFL to finish degree at UNL

By **Derek Samson**
Staff Reporter

Former Nebraska I-back Keith "End Zone" Jones is hitting the books.

This summer, instead of reporting to camp for a National Football League team, Jones has returned to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to finish his degree.

Jones' NFL career ended before the 1992 season because of injuries. He had played in the NFL since he left UNL in 1987.

"I tore my ACL (knee) and had to have a total reconstructive surgery of my knee," Jones said. "In the process of rehabilitating my knee, I hurt a disc in my back and had to have surgery on it."

"Three months into the process of rehabilitating my back the (Dallas) Cowboys decided they couldn't use me anymore."

Jones said he thought about trying to make a comeback in the NFL after his injury, but encountered resistance from teams that were unwilling to take on a player who had been injured.

"I thought it was time for me to go on to my other goals in life," he said.

Jones, who won an arbitration suit against Dallas for releasing him after his injury, said he had prepared himself for the news that his career could be over.

"I was working hard to come back, but I knew that there was the possibility of not coming back," he said. "By being honest with myself, it made it easier to handle."

But Jones said his life did not end when his NFL career did.

"I had to put things in perspective and know how to respond to negative things in my life," he said. "As far as being a success, a lot of people might say I was because I played in the NFL, but I still have a lot of things left I want to accomplish."

One of his goals is earning a degree in human development, which he should complete in a year.

"I still want to finish school and be involved with the youth in my community," he said. "I switched my major to (human development) because after coming back and talking to different people and learning about different backgrounds it was interesting to me."

Jones said he valued working with people and helping them as much as his football career.

"I want to be active and involved in the community because I enjoy helping people out," he said. "My goal is to teach others by what I've learned."

"It's even a better feeling to know what you have said or done has helped someone out than it is to score a touchdown."

Despite the fact that his career ended early, Jones said his experience in the NFL was a positive one.

"The NFL experience as a whole was great," he said. "Because it gave me the enthusiasm to set higher goals. In anything you do, the sky is the limit."

Still, Jones said it has been tough for him to watch players report to training camp this summer.

"I knew it was going to be a feeling of emptiness seeing the training camps, but knowing the direction my life is going helps fill that emptiness," he

said.

"I feel I was at the top of my game when I got hurt, but I hate looking at things and saying 'what if,'" he said. "You have to roll with negative things, as well as positive, and I think I've been fortunate to be given the opportunities I was."

Jones finished his career at Nebraska as the fifth-leading rusher in Cornhusker history with 2,488 yards.

"I knew I could come in here and be successful," he said, "but I am grateful for the coaches here because they supported me and gave me a great opportunity."

"I'm just excited now to help other people in the way I've been helped."

Jones Returns

Former Nebraska running back Keith Jones is returning to UNL to finish his degree. Jones' career rushing numbers at Nebraska include:

Attempts	398
Yards*	2,488
Average	6.25
Touchdowns	32

*Ranks fifth in Nebraska history

Scott Monroe/DN

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