



Nebraska I-back Lawrence Phillips, left, waits with friend Bruce Harris of Lincoln before Phillips' Tuesday sentencing at the County-City building.

Jeff Haller/DN

Phillips

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rest, he was thrown off the football team.

The one-time Heisman Trophy contender returned to the football field six weeks later and played at the Nov. 4 game against Iowa State University.

Phillips left the courtroom Tuesday through a side exit trailed by the glare of television lights and microphones. His attorney, Hal Anderson, called the sentence fair.

"It is consistent with what historically happens in Lancaster County," Anderson said.

The probation ends Nov. 29, 1996. Phillips was ordered to spend the last 30 days of his probation in jail, but Anderson said incarceration would be waived if Phillips completed his sentencing requirements.

"It's standard for these kinds of cases," Anderson said. "The judge kind of waves a carrot at the end of the sentence and says he can have it if he completes the program. If he doesn't

complete probation, he will go to jail."

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said he spoke with Phillips after his sentencing. The star I-back assured Osborne he would complete his probation requirements. Osborne declined to comment on the sentencing.

"I don't know what's fair or what's not fair," Osborne said. "I know that he'll comply."

Osborne said he did not know if Phillips would stay at Nebraska next year. Before he was suspended from the team, Osborne said Phillips had the potential to make millions for signing with a professional football team.

"I imagine by suspending him, I took several millions of dollars away from Lawrence Phillips," Osborne said. "He's paid the price."

Before the sentencing hearing, Phillips avoided the news media by waiting on the third floor of the County-City building. Bruce Harris of Lincoln waited with him and later spoke to the media about Phillips' sentencing.

"It's pretty much what he might have been expecting," said Harris,

who said he has been friends with Phillips for four years. "From what he told me this morning, he is ready to get on with his life."

Phillips will stay in Nebraska for another season, Harris said, then move on with his life.

"I asked him about the pros. He is just focused on playing football at Nebraska."

Childs, a senior I-back, said Phillips wants to put the court case behind him.

"Lawrence is a very close friend of mine. I want to show Lawrence any kind of support I can in what he's going through," Childs said in an interview. "The media keep bringing it up about him."

"I feel that everybody around here should leave him alone. He's moving on. Lawrence is getting back to the old Lawrence Phillips and playing football."

Senior Reporter Trevor Parks contributed to this report.

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