

GOLDEN SP/KE

Former Husker Allison Weston returns to the coliseum — as a member of the red, white and blue

BY SHANNON HEFFELFINGER
Assignment Reporter

Former Nebraska volleyball player Allison Weston returned to Lincoln — home of the college program she helped build — with the national team she is attempting to recreate.

Cornhusker fans welcomed Weston Tuesday night with warm applause before the Huskers' match with the U.S. National Team. In a ceremony prior to the match, the team retired Weston's No. 18 jersey.

Weston, a three-time All-American and 1995 national player of the year, became the fourth player in school history to earn the honor.

"It was Allison Weston's night," Husker coach Terry Pettit said. "We wanted to honor her. There isn't anyone who's done more for Nebraska volleyball than Allison Weston. She is probably the best volleyball player we've ever had here."

"And the thing about it, if you can believe it, is that she's a better person than she is a volleyball player. She is an incredible person."

A dominant force in college, Weston topped Nebraska's all-time kill chart with 1,778, and led the Huskers to a 32-1 record and their first-ever national championship in 1995.

Competing for the national team was a big adjustment, Weston said.

"It's a really big jump," Weston said. "It's like going from high school to college, and that gap may be even a little bit wider."

National team coach Mick Haley said Weston has bridged the gap nicely. Against the Huskers, Weston led all players with 20 kills while hitting .271 for the match.

Haley is counting on the all-around play of Weston to help rebuild a struggling national team.

The team lost several key players, including Lori Endicott, a former NU setter, after finishing sev-



PHOTOS BY SCOTT McCLURG/DN
ABOVE: FORMER HUSKER Allison Weston had her jersey retired Tuesday night at the NU Coliseum. Her jersey is only the fourth to be retired in Nebraska history. RIGHT: NEBRASKA OUTSIDE HITTER Lisa Reitsma attempts a kill over Christine Garner of the U.S. National Team Tuesday night at the NU Coliseum.



enth in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. Haley said the chances of posting a better showing in the 2000 Olympics in Sydney, Australia, is unlikely unless the team greatly improves.

Weston said the improvements will come as the team gains experience.

"It will take a good two years of us working in the gym to get to that level," Weston said. "We've only been together for four months and there are a lot of expectations on us."

Houston drops NU from schedule

BY SAM MCKEWIN
Staff Reporter

Yet another team has dropped out of a scheduled game against Nebraska only one year before the contest was scheduled to be played.

The University of Houston has decided not to play a home-and-home series against the Huskers in 1998 and 1999. NU would have played in Houston next season, with UH visiting Lincoln in 1999.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne said that with the late notice of the Cougars dropping out, NU is once again scrambling for an opponent for the next two seasons.

"It's not too bad when teams cancel four or five years ahead of time," Osborne said, "but when they do it one year in advance, you have a problem."

The problem arose when Houston interim Athletic Director Bill Carr agreed on April 21, 1997, to play the Huskers without knowledge that UH already had a game scheduled on that date, and

it could not be changed.

Nebraska Athletic Director Bill Byrne said Houston was supposed to seal the agreement by signing a contract, but never did.

"We had a letter of agreement with them, but no contract," Byrne said. "We sent them a contract to sign twice, but they never sent them back."

Now, the focus shifts to finding a team to fill that slot with less than a year to do it.

Byrne said the top priority will be to make sure the Huskers have no fewer than six games at home. Currently, NU only has five home games in 1999.

"We don't want to have anything less than six home games in any year," Byrne said. "We may try something like we had with Houston, or we might have two teams we don't have to return. It all depends on who's available."

Houston is just one of many programs that have pulled out of contests with the Huskers. Arkansas and Northern Illinois pulled out of games scheduled for this year, and Wyoming pulled out of one of its two scheduled games.

In past years, NU has even had to use Division I-AA teams like Middle Tennessee State to fill gaps in the schedule.

Other teams have wanted to back out of their contracts, including Michigan State, which played Nebraska in 1995 and 1996, Osborne said.

Still, Osborne said it is difficult to negotiate with teams who want out of a contract.

"If somebody doesn't want to play you," Osborne said, "there's not much you can do to make them play."

Osborne said that, other than Division I-AA teams, he is open to any teams that are available, including a Big 12 team in a nonconference matchup.

"I hope people understand that we'll do the best we can," he said. "We don't want a soft schedule."

The more important issue, though, Osborne said, is unreliability of contracts.

"Eventually a signed contract has to mean something," he said. "An agreement has to mean something."

Sports Opinion



Dave Wilson

Wildcat QB unfazed for NU battle

MANHATTAN, Kan. — Michael Bishop doesn't know what he has coming.

Playing in his first season of Division I football, the junior Kansas State quarterback will travel to Lincoln Saturday to face his toughest opponent ever.

Bishop led Blinn (Texas) Junior College to two consecutive national championships while compiling a 24-0 record. At Kansas State this season, Bishop — who earned the starting position in fall camp — has led the Wildcats to wins over Northern Illinois, Ohio and Bowling Green. Kansas State currently ranks 17th in the nation.

Against third-ranked Nebraska, Bishop could see his first loss since high school.

But don't tell him that.

"If we go in with an open mind," Bishop said, "and we believe we can win, I think we'll win."

If only it were that simple.

Kansas State has not defeated Nebraska since Nov. 9, 1968. But that doesn't keep Bishop from counting his chickens before they hatch.

"I'm going to go in and play 110 percent and help the seniors out," Bishop said. "They've never beat Nebraska. I know what it's going to feel like once we beat them."

Of course Bishop does have good reason to be a little cocky. He leads the Big 12 in passing efficiency (170.23) and set a Kansas State single-game record with a 274.22 efficiency rating against Northern Illinois in the season opener.

Behind an offensive line that has allowed only five sacks this year, Bishop is feeling pretty comfortable. So is his offensive line. Senior center Kendyl Jacox said the Kansas State offensive line will not be dominated by Nebraska's defensive line.

"Physically, I think we match up perfectly," Jacox said.

One thing is certain: The Wildcats must establish a running game to beat Nebraska. Jacox said that shouldn't be a problem.

In the last three years against the Huskers, Kansas State has compiled negative one net yards rushing. The last time the Wildcats came within 20 points of Nebraska, in 1993, then-quarterback Chad May threw for 489 yards, and Kansas State rushed for 76 — in a 45-28 losing effort.

Bishop has never thrown for more than 352 yards in a game — including high school — but he still remains confident of the Wildcats' chances.

"I think they'll maybe overlook us," Bishop said. "It's not a good thing to overlook us. We have a team that can explode at any point in time."

Not this year.

Wilson is a junior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan

Volleyball Score



U.S. team sweeps Nebraska

BY ANDREW STRNAD
Staff Reporter

Nebraska coach Terry Pettit called Tuesday night's match against the U.S. National Team a celebration of volleyball.

Former Husker great Allison Weston had her number 18 retired, while on the court the NU volleyball team played the best volleyball players in America as 1,609 enthusiastic fans watched on at the NU Coliseum.

The Huskers were able to put up a fight, but were swept by the national team 15-13, 15-9, 15-11.

The national team had control of the match for most of the evening, but could never put the Huskers away.

"We had a lot of hitting errors," said national team coach Mick Haley. "In international play if you have as many hitting errors as we had tonight, you'd probably only score two points."

NU never led the match, but did draw as close as 14-13 in the first game before national team outside hitter Christine Garner served an ace to win the first game.

The Huskers gave the national team too many opportunities, NU coach Terry Pettit said.

"Every time you're passive against a good team it's bad news," Pettit said. "They will make you pay."

Weston, who posted a match-high 20 kills for the national team, didn't disappoint the crowd.

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