

Middleton makes easy transition into Big Red family

BY DARREN IVY
Senior staff writer

When junior softball catcher Ellen Middleton transferred to Nebraska from Texas Tech last summer, she filled an open position, but also was expected to fill some big shoes.

Middleton had to replace third-team All-American Jenny Smith, a three-year starter and NU's second career all-time home run hitter.

"There was a set way they had things the last three years," said Middleton, who was an All-Big 12 second-team selection in 1996 as a freshman at Tech.

The transition from Smith to Middleton didn't happen overnight. It took some time for the Cornhusker pitching staff and Middleton to adjust to one another.

"No one can replace Jen Smith," said All-American pitcher Jenny Voss. "I told the catchers that I didn't expect them to. I just wanted them to give everything they could."

"It was challenging at first. Once I got familiar with (Ellen) we kind of developed our own thing. The transition has been easier than I thought it would be."

For Middleton, the transition has been a smooth. She came from a program that was in turmoil. Conflict exist-

ed between coaches and players, Middleton said.

During her sophomore season, she decided to transfer. She looked at several schools before Nebraska contacted her in April.

Middleton said Nebraska offered her everything she wanted - a good, sound coaching staff, winning tradition and a chance to play.

Before Middleton signed with NU, Voss said she was familiar with her only from the times NU and Tech had played. However, those few encounters left a lasting impression on Voss.

"I knew she was a fighter because whenever I would pitch against her, it was a battle," Voss said. "I figured if she

had that fight in her, she also wouldn't let a ball go by her."

The pitcher and catcher are like a team within a team, Voss said. So it was essential that Middleton acclimate to the three pitchers - Voss, Leigh Ann Walker and Lori Tschannen - right away.

Middleton said Tschannen was the hardest to adjust to because she was left-handed and had the most spin on her pitches.

But Middleton learned quickly and now is a vocal leader on the team.

At the plate, Middleton is second on the team with a .300 batting average and leads the team in runs batted in with 30. April 19, Middleton faced her old

Tech teammates for the first time. She said she treated it just like any other game, although she admitted it was exciting for her.

Voss remembered NU Coach Rhonda Revelle asking Middleton before the game if she was glad she was wearing Husker red rather than Tech colors.

"She said yes," Voss said. "It was good to see that she fit in with our team."

Middleton said there were no hard feelings at Tech and she still keeps in contact with many old teammates.

"They were elated for me," Middleton said. "They knew (the move) was what I needed."

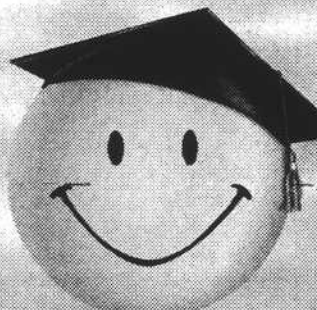
TWO-FERS
No Waiting
First Time Customer
2 Tans For \$3
10-20 Minute Beds
Hot Bulbs

Tan For Only **\$22.50** when you sign-up with a buddy!
1 Month Unlimited Tans
Regular \$45

Capitol Tanning Salon
502 South 12th, Suite 101
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-475-2322



You're done with school?



AVANT CARD
1323 O Street
476-1918

Former NU athlete fights to rebuild troubled life

EDWARDS from page 9

Junior College Athletic Association national championship team.

On Jan. 7, while Edwards was home on Christmas break, Jaylin Marie Fosdick was born.

Two days later, Jill Fosdick dropped Jaylin off at Dennis and Janet Banks' home. Jaylin stayed there for six months.

"Jaylin slept with her head on my chest," Edwards said. "When she got up two or three times a night, I was the one who changed her diapers and fed her."

Edwards opted to stay in Lincoln and attended Southeast Community College in the spring 1998 to stay close to his family and child.

In July, Edwards was ready to go to New Mexico State on a football scholarship. He had signed a letter of intent and planned to leave Jaylin with his parents.

"My mother felt that was the best situation for everyone," Edwards said. "But I didn't want to be an image for my daughter. I wanted to be there for her."

Then the next round of legal battles over Jaylin started, and on July 7, 1998, Jaylin went to live with her mother again.

Edwards' mother, Janet Banks, said she was crushed.

"After I found out Jill was going to take the child back, I couldn't breathe," Banks said. "I was the first face (Jaylin) saw in the morning and the last one she saw at night. I took care of her for six

months."

Edwards also was hurt. He still wears a necklace with a baby shoe lock- et on it. He said he can't keep Jaylin off his mind.

"From the time I get up until the time I lay down, I think about Jaylin," Edwards said. "When I study, all I do is find myself thinking about Baby J."

The issue of visitation rights for Edwards is still being decided in a court of law. Therefore, Edwards said, he hasn't seen his child in some time.

There's a reason for that, Fosdick said.

"I have been advised by my attorney that while this is still in court that visitation be not available," Fosdick said. "And I didn't agree with his lifestyle."

Responded Edwards: "My lifestyle was not a problem when we had the baby for six months."

Edwards admitted he made many mistakes in the past, but insisted he was clean from marijuana ever since his last failed drug test at NU.

"I was just a kid who was hard-headed," Edwards said. "I take full responsibility for my mistakes. And I am thankful God has given me a second chance."

"I'm taking the opportunity and running with it. I'm hungrier than ever. Once I get established at UNO, people are probably going to think another Oklahoma City happened because I'm going to explode on the field."

Pursue Job & Internship Opportunities That Span The Globe.

Attention undergraduate and graduate students around the world!


Get our services working for you today and have a job lined up before you graduate.

Go to the student section of our web site and complete the electronic candidate profile form.

Any candidate within our network is eligible to register provided he or she

(1) has a strong academic record and
(2) will be graduating within three years.

campuscareercenter.com



CampusCareerCenter
Worldwide
Your Gateway to a Worldly Future

Swing

DANCING THURSDAY
April 1st, 15th & 29th

Doors open at 8 p.m.
Lessons begin at 8:30 p.m.

Lessons by **Amy Castro**
of Dance Sport USA

The PLA MOR
Call 475-4030 for more info.


The Zone

728 "Q" Street
In the Haymarket

Tuesdays & Thursdays
\$20 Wings ALL DAY

Wednesdays
\$5 Cover
\$.01 Busch Lites
7-12 pm

Featuring...
DJ Foot
9pm-Close
Don't Hide It Divide It!



Huskers race for four-minute mile

MILE from page 9

strengths and weaknesses are opposite of one another."

Not only are they different on the track, but off the track they are complete opposites.

"I was just thinking the other day about how Tony and I are so different," Petricca said. "He is more mellow and laid-back. Our personalities are really different yet we get along well and are good friends."

Smith agrees: "Lou is more of a city-slicker and aggressive. We are both pretty easygoing, but let's just say I would be lost if I had to go to Chicago."

Coming out of high school, Dirksen believes, Smith and Petricca were about of equal capability. The numbers reflect that. Both won their respective state's mile run with Petricca finishing .01 seconds faster than Smith. Smith does own a better personal best than Petricca at 3:47.92 but has not been able to reach that mark yet in his career at NU.

"Tony is probably in the best shape of his life," Dirksen said. "He has been really working hard in practice and we are really close to seeing some good times from him because he has a little more speed than what he is showing."

Dirksen said that one of his goals for the two of them is to place at the conference meet. Currently, Petricca is ranked seventh and Smith is 10th.

"At the beginning of the season, I was hoping for them to make an impact in the conference, and they have done

that," Dirksen said.

Petricca also says placing at conference is one of his goals.

"I would like to end my career by winning the outdoor team title in the conference," Petricca said. "I would like to place in the top three at conference in the 1500 meters and make the top 10 all-time chart in NU history. Most of all, I would just like to end my career with a positive feeling."

Dirksen believes that competition brings out the best in Petricca.

"Lou likes to get in the heat of battle," Dirksen said. "He will give it everything he has if he knows it is going to lead to something. When the competition gets tough, Lou is there to give an effort."

Smith has a couple more years left to reach his goals. He will have one more year of eligibility left outdoors and two indoors after this season. He will also run cross country, which will help him improve as well.

"I would like to break 3:46 this season and contend for the Big 12 title in the 1500," Smith said. "Next season, I would like to be one of the top runners in our district for cross country and then break the four-minute mark indoors in the 1600 meters."

No matter what happens, it will be interesting to see what the future has in store for these two runners.

"I am really optimistic about their chances for the rest of the season," Dirksen said. "They are on track to place high in the conference meet and they must finish strong now."

TELL YOUR FRIENDS TO STUFF IT!

Stuff your Stuff with us and get a **10% DISCOUNT** with your student I.D.



Infinity Storage

1542 So. 1st • 475-2464