

Columbia Daily Tribune (MO)

January 7, 2004

Husker charged for punching MU fan

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Article Text:

While Nebraska searches for its next football coach, a Cornhusker player and Missouri fan seek the end to an ugly episode that occurred on Faurot Field last fall.

Nebraska football player Kellen Huston was charged yesterday by the Boone County prosecutor's office for punching Matthew Scott on the field after Missouri's 41-24 win over the Cornhuskers on Oct. 11. Huston, Nebraska's junior holder and backup cornerback, struck 21-year-old Scott of Lee's Summit in the face as fans rushed the field. At least two TV stations captured the incident on videotape.

Huston's attorney, Milt Harper of Columbia, was expected to appear for Huston in court this afternoon to plead guilty to peace disturbance by fighting, a misdemeanor offense. The misdemeanor is punishable by one day to six months in jail, a fine of \$1 to \$500, or both. Boone County Assistant Prosecutor Richard Hicks said today that he would recommend the maximum fine of \$500.

Scott's attorney, John Picerno of Kansas City, said Scott could have sought a more serious charge.

"Typically, you'd see someone charged with assault with what took place, and we certainly think it was a case of assault," Picerno said. "We're trying to negotiate a settlement on the civil matter and get all of these things behind both of these kids. "My client didn't have any complete animosity or anger toward this guy where we wanted to see him be incarcerated for what took place. We don't have a problem with what he's been charged with."

The case was transferred from the city prosecutor's office to the county's six to eight weeks ago, Hicks said, after the city determined Scott's injuries were more serious than originally determined. But Hicks said the injuries were never deemed serious enough to warrant felony charges. Plus, Hicks said, the context of the postgame melee on Faurot Field was taken into account.

"Our office never seriously considered filing it as a felony," Hicks said.

As for the civil case, Picerno said he is negotiating a settlement with Huston's attorneys and counsel from the University of Nebraska. Scott required surgery for a fractured nasal passage and deviated septum, Picerno said, and some of his teeth were loosened. Scott is seeking compensation for medical costs, pain and suffering and special damages. Picerno is still gathering medical billing records to determine a figure.

Last week, Scott and other MU fans were ticketed by the city for trespassing on the field - a charge that bothered Picerno.

"He was told by the authorities down there when it happened initially that he would not be ticketed," Picerno said.

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Record Number: 100FEEB98B16F06D