

# Cornhusker suspended for hitting fan

## Missouri fan is from Lee's Summit

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**The Associated Press**

LINCOLN, Neb. -- Shortly after he apologized for punching a Missouri fan from Lee's Summit following Nebraska's loss to the Tigers, the Cornhuskers' Kellen Huston was suspended for this week's game against Texas A&M.

Earlier Tuesday, a fan stepped forward claiming he was the person assaulted by Huston as people stormed Faurot Field after last Saturday night's game in Columbia, Mo.

Coach Frank Solich said in a statement that he decided to discipline Huston after reviewing a videotape of the incident and interviewing people who were at the scene.

"I truly believe that Kellen did not instigate the situation and that he was simply reacting to what he saw as a dangerous situation coming right at him," Solich said. "However, Kellen knows that we do not condone our players striking another person, and he will be suspended for this week's game."

Athletic director Steve Pederson supported Solich's decision.

"I would never claim that hitting someone is appropriate," Pederson said in a statement, "but I was not standing in Kellen Huston's shoes on Saturday night. However, I was at the edge of the field, and I have never personally witnessed such an out-of-control situation."

Matthew Scott, 21, of Lee's Summit, Mo., reported to University of Missouri-Columbia police that he was punched by Huston.

Police Chief Jack Watring said the case is being handled as a misdemeanor assault because Scott did not suffer any broken bones or serious injuries.

"But he has two black eyes and a very swollen nose," Watring said.

Watring said the case will be forwarded to the city attorney for prosecution. He was contacting television stations for copies of post-game videotape showing what happened.

Scott is not a student at the university, Watring said.

In an interview with Kansas City, Mo., television station KMBZ, Scott said, "Regardless of what I did if I said something I didn't deserve to get hit."

Asked whether he thought Huston should be punished, Scott said, "I think he deserves something. You just can't do that."

Huston, a junior walk-on from Ankeny, Iowa, appeared before a group of reporters in a Memorial Stadium players' lounge to apologize.

"My actions should not be a reflection on Coach Solich, the University of Nebraska or this football team," Huston said. "I would never intentionally bring harm to another individual."

Sports information director Chris Anderson said Huston would not take questions from reporters.

At his weekly news conference, Solich said he had talked to players and other witnesses who saw the incident, and he watched a videotape of the incident with Pederson.

Video of the incident has been shown repeatedly on local television stations. Omaha television station KMTV's tape shows Huston hitting the fan in the face with a clenched fist soon after the fan ran at Huston while pointing a finger at him.

Huston was confronted by the fan as he was unbuttoning his chin strap and walking off the field, Solich said.

"I believe he reacted to what he thought was a threatening situation that happened in less than a second," Solich said.

Solich said it is never appropriate to hit someone.

"We all understand that as coaches, as a member of this football team, but could it happen in that kind of a situation? Did it happen? It did," he said.

Any time crowds rush a field after a game, the situation can easily get out of hand, Solich said.

"There is an understanding that some of those fans are elated with a win and want to be with their players and congratulate them," Solich said. "But there also are those who have been heavily drinking and are out of control. It's not a very good situation for players and coaches for either team when fans storm the field."

Linebacker Demorrio Williams said the situation Saturday was "scary."

"My main thing is to hurry up and get off the field," he said. "You got people running on the field who are drunk and saying crazy stuff to you. You have to get to the locker room the best way you can."