

NEBRASKA CORNHUSKERS-FEATUREING LEIGHA BROWN

By Kaia Starnino

The Nebraska Cornhuskers women's basketball team has come a long way since they started as a club in 1970. The Cornhuskers have been to the NCAA tournament thirteen times in the past 30 years, with their most recent appearance in 2018 under current coach Amy Williams. Nebraska is going into this year's Big Ten tournament with a 9-9 record in conference play. There are eleven players on the team, and all are stellar, including 6'1" freshman Leigha Brown.

Leigha was born in Auburn Indiana, a small town with a population of 13,000 people. While her talent was evident at a young age, she began garnering a lot of attention at the high school level. Playing for DeKalb in Waterloo IN, Leigha finished as her high school's all-time leading scorer with 1,798 overall points. She averaged 28 points, 11.5 rebounds and five assists per game in her senior year. One of her best outings was when she scored 53 points against Lakeland. It was the eighth best single game in the area's history. During Leigha's last year of high school, she was a member of The News-Sentinel's Preseason Fabulous Five and was named to the Indiana All-Star team.

Leigha was recruited as the number 21 ranked forward in the nation (ESPN, 2017) and there are high expectations for her with the Cornhuskers. As a freshman, she is averaging ten points per game. Her best game came against Purdue on February 2, in which she scored 30 points resulting in a 67-61 win. She states, "It was really cool, especially since we won and Purdue is from Indiana". Leigha is a highly skilled three-point shooter (her 3pt FG % for this season is .420). She explains that "It comes with a lot of practice. I get in the gym and shoot with confidence." In addition to regularly scheduled team practices, Leigha spends an extra ½ hour a few nights per weeks getting shots in.

When asked what she likes about playing for Nebraska, Leigha responded, "I like the family atmosphere. I'm close with teammates and coaches, and the fan base is really cool." She says the difference between high school & college basketball is that "the pace of the game is a lot faster, and the physicality of the players is a lot stronger."

Leigha shared her thoughts about playing in the Big Ten Tournament, stating, "I am really excited. It's a chance to start fresh. I want to win and hope we play the best we can." Since the tournament

will be held in Indy, she'll be playing in front of fellow Hoosiers and says that "It'll feel really cool. My family and friends will be there." Her ultimate goal for the tournament is "to win and to be playing our best basketball at the end of the season."

With so much practicing and travel for games, as well as academic responsibilities (she majors in management), Leigha doesn't have much free time to spare. However, she enjoys reading nonfiction and hanging out with friends. Her favorite color is blue and her preferred food is steak. Who knows, if the Cornhuskers end up winning she may decide to celebrate at a steakhouse in downtown Indy with her friends and family!