

## **Marlene Mawson Inducted Into Kansas Athletics Hall of Fame**

Feb. 28, 2009

**LAWRENCE, Kan.** - Marlene Mawson, often called the "Mother of KU Women's Athletics," was inducted into the University of Kansas Athletics Hall of Fame Saturday as part of a celebration of 40 years of women's athletics at KU.

The induction took place at a dinner prior to the KU women's basketball game against Nebraska Saturday afternoon in Allen Fieldhouse. KU defeated Nebraska 70-57 to cap the day's activities. In addition to the dinner and the game, the weekend celebration included a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house at KU's new boathouse in Burcham Park earlier Saturday afternoon.

Mawson was a four-year high school athlete, playing basketball and softball for Archie High School in Cass County, Mo. She attended Central Missouri University and competed on basketball, volleyball and softball teams all four years. She graduated in 1962 and taught high school physical education and coached girls' sports in the Kansas City, Mo., school district for six years. She earned her master's degree at the University of Colorado in 1966.

The University of Kansas appointed Mawson to a full-time physical education faculty position beginning in 1968, with the added responsibility of initiating an intercollegiate women's sports program sponsored by the KU Physical Education Department. The program was begun with six sports on an annual budget of \$2000, which covered expenses for sports equipment, uniforms and travel. In addition to directing the program and teaching full time, Mawson coached basketball, volleyball, softball and field hockey.

Mawson was elected Secretary and then President of the Kansas Association for Women's Athletics, formed in 1968, as the first organization for collegiate sport competition in Kansas. In March 1971 the KU women's basketball team coached by Mawson qualified and participated in the second National Collegiate Invitational Championships, held in North Carolina.

Mawson took a leave of absence from KU to complete her doctoral residency at the University of Oregon, which she completed in 1973. She returned to KU and coached the volleyball team for two years. In the 1973-74 and 1974-75 academic years, her volleyball teams won the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) Region 6 Championship, qualifying for the National Volleyball Championships both years. Following her years of coaching, Mawson served as a nationally ranked official in basketball, volleyball and field hockey.

Mawson served as KU's institutional representative to the AIAW for the 10 years (1971-81) that the AIAW offered national collegiate championships. She was elected as the AIAW Region 6 President and served on the National AIAW Council in 1979-80.

Mawson was a professor and administrator at KU for 22 years. In 1990 she was appointed Department Chair of Kinesiology & Recreation at Illinois State University in Normal, Ill., where she served until her retirement in 2000. The international academic organization, "North American Society for Sport Management" (NASSM) elected her President for the 1997-98 year. She currently resides in Bloomington, Ill.