



MEDIA RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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U.S. Marine Proposes To Cheerleader Girlfriend During The 2009 International Bowl

Toronto, Ontario – Mike Neisen, a Lance Corporal based in Tonawanda, New York, came to the 2009 International Bowl on a mission – to propose to his girlfriend, Eve Solomon, a University at Buffalo cheerleader.

Neisen, dressed in full uniform, drove to Toronto and proposed in the second quarter of the game between the University of Connecticut Huskies and the UB Bulls at Rogers Centre on February 3.

The two have been dating for slightly more than a year but have known one another for six years. Neisen is 23, Solomon is 21.

Neisen, who leaves on Monday for training in California and will then be deployed to Iraq a few months later, surprised Solomon, who had no idea he would be at the game. Neisen, a member of Alpha Company in Anti Terrorism Battalion based out of Rochester, indicated he and Solomon had been talking about marriage for the past couple of months since he found out he would be deployed. He added the International Bowl gave him the perfect place to propose.

“This opportunity kind of presented itself, so I kind of wanted to grab it because I figured I wouldn’t have an opportunity like this,” he said. “It all kind of fell within one or two days of each other. My last day (at home) is tomorrow, she’s a cheerleader at the International Bowl today and I told her I wasn’t coming. But I had decided I was coming up by myself with a purpose and that was to propose to her.”

Solomon said she felt “so blessed” to be at the International Bowl cheering for her team and then have her boyfriend propose to her.

“The Bulls made it (this far) and this just topped it off,” Solomon said. “This is a memory of a lifetime I will never forget. I had no idea (he was coming). I thought he was at home watching it on TV. When I saw him in uniform I thought maybe he had to go back to his base and then it hit me. I was like, ‘Oh, no. I’m going to fall over. My knees are shaking.”

Neisen said he purposely dressed in his military uniform at the urging of one of his fellow officers.

“They said, ‘Come on, you’ve got to dress in uniform. It will look more professional,’” he said.

Unfortunately for Solomon, the game did not end up in her team’s favour. UConn won 38-20.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL BOWL:

The International Bowl is the only NCAA Division I football game played outside the U.S. This is the third year of the game, which is annually played at Rogers Centre in Toronto.

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