

## A year off is a big punt

SPORT

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David King is keen to pursue a career as a punter in American football. MARK STEWART s49mm52

PRODIGIOUS kick David King is taking the year off from the Eastern Football League to pursue a career as a gridiron punter.

King, who played a season with Norwood last year after joining from Euroa, showed promise at a punting try-out at the University of Nevada, in Reno, in March and has been invited by the NFL's Seattle Seahawks to trial again next year.

The 27-year-old caught the eye of the Seahawks' talent scouts and was asked by the club to attend a four-day camp for more punting sessions.

King will spend the rest of the year fine-tuning his style before his kick is again scrutinised by the Seahawks.

King said returning to local football could jeopardise his chance of earning an NFL contract.

"I'm not going to play again this year because it throws out your kicking style," King said.

"It's a whole new kicking style, whole new ball, it's a different way of dropping it so I want to build up over the next six months and get that muscle memory (in the leg).

"If I go back to playing football, I don't want to lose that muscle memory and there's a big chance of getting injured.

"I don't want to throw away this opportunity."

King has been training at an academy called OzPunt since September last year.

OzPunt scout Cameron McGillvray had been keen for King to consider punting when he first saw him.

"I originally spoke to him a few years ago, did a few kicks and he said 'yeah, I think you've got what it takes'," King said.

"I went down there after last season, in September, and trained for six months before I headed to Reno."

King hasn't measured how long he can kick an Aussie rules ball but he did say he had drilled goals from inside the centre square.

He believes becoming a punter is possible.

"It's something I had always thought about because I've got a large kick," King said.

"Considering how far I got with Seattle, I was pretty happy with that and they were happy with me, and I also got some interest from the New York Jets."

Norwood coach Kevin Tibaldi said the Norsemen had lost a quality player but he wished King well in his new ambition.

"It's something he's decided to do so good luck to him. You can't stop him if he's able to be successful at it and get himself a career over there. You can't begrudge him wanting to do that. From a footy point of view, it's a shame that we've lost him but it's good for him."

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