

THE Daily Telegraph

Former Swans forward Nick Davis keeps NFL dream alive

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By Carly Crawford in New York

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DISCARDED Sydney Swans forward Nick Davis is one step closer to his multi-million dollar NFL dream after yesterday attracting interest from the San Diego Chargers at a training camp in Reno.

At a six-hour try-out, Davis impressed scouts at the University of Nevada's football stadium with his punting skills and was approached by several coaches.

Davis is attempting to follow in the footsteps of former AFL stars Ben Graham, Saverio Rocca and Darren Bennett - and if successful, could land a massive contract.

Graham this year signed a two-year contract worth \$A2 million after helping the Arizona Cardinals reach the Super Bowl.

Another Australian, Mat McBriar, is believed to be on an annual contract worth about \$A3.5 million with the Dallas Cowboys.

Coaches and talent spotters from 15 teams watched scores of NFL aspirants display their skills and Davis won a rare approach from San Diego.

Davis, 28, was regarded as the most accurate long kick for goal during his time at Sydney and Collingwood.

"The Chargers were very keen to get him in the team straight away," Ozpunt director Cameron McGillivray said. "There were a lot of people there and the coaches did not talk to the majority of them, so to see them talking to Nick was quite rewarding."

Davis fell from favour at the Swans after famously winning the 2005 semi-final against Geelong off his own boot.

He struggled to meet the fitness, diet and general disciplines required by his coaches and teammates at the Swans.

Yesterday the would-be NFL stars were allowed just eight kicks each to convince coaches they have the skills worthy of a contract.

Davis performed for NFL scouts in Australia but suspended his US ambitions when the Brisbane Lions invited him to train with them.

He trained briefly with the Lions, but they overlooked him in the pre-season draft.

The next step for Davis will be a private workout at the Chargers' ground, possibly next week.

"From my experience, these guys don't give you a card unless they want you to come to their ground," McGillivray said.

Two Melbourne hopefuls joined Davis yesterday at the tryouts - David King, 27 and Steven Baker, 30.

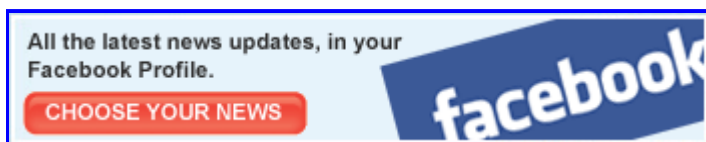
Local Aussie rules player King, a Melbourne sales rep, could become the second Australian to play for the New York Jets, whose scouts rated him the best they had seen on their nationwide talent camp tour.

"The New York Jets are very interested in David," McGillivray said. "David was very consistent and the New York Jets said he was the pick of the bunch."

The Jets have an eye for Australian talent - they signed former Geelong skipper Graham for four years before releasing him abruptly last year.

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Impressing the right people...Nick Davis trials for a spot in the NFL at University of Nevada football stadium. Picture: Candice Towell

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