

Taking a punt

SPORT

AUSTRALIAN RULES/FOOTY

11 MAY 09 @ 07:50AM BY MEGAN HUSTWAITE



Which ball? Trevor Bromley weighs up whether to pursue a gridiron punting career in the States. MARK STEWART.
s46wg74

TREVOR Bromley's booming kicks have served the Oakleigh Krushers well for many seasons in the VAFA.

But, it was another thing for him to take a punt and show his leg to NFL gridiron scouts.

The 29-year-old forward has just returned to Australia after three weeks in the US where he tried his luck as a prospective punter at a try out day.

He said he felt a mixture of terror and excitement as he stood in the middle of the University of Nevada field, in Reno, as club coaching panels and scouts prepared to scrutinise his every move.

"You have eight punts and, if they like what they see, they ask you to sign up or attend one of their training camps," he said.

"You have to get rid of the ball less than 1.3 seconds after catching it.

"Then you have to kick it over five seconds, from the time it hits your foot to the ground, and average around 45 yards in distance.

"I had two that were average, a couple over five and some high fours. They want, consistently, over five.

"It was a really good experience, especially kicking under that sort of pressure. Because, if you don't get them right its all over."

Bromley was invited to join the Australian Punting, Kicking and Holding Academy last year and trained with the program, three nights a week, from September until March.

"This time last year I wouldn't have thought that, after trying it for six months, I'd get to the US for a try out," he said

"It's about technique for me, they thought I had the potential to do it but they want me to follow through more when I kick.

"You're kicking a different shaped ball and you have to get rid of it a lot quicker than in Australian rules, it's very different.

"I only tried it for seven months before I went there and I need a year of practicing to try and perfect it."

He said a few seasons of senior football helped develop his now-thumping kick.

A prolific goalkicker for the Krushers in recent years, his long drop punts, from 60m, have become something of a regular fixture in the C Section competition.

"After a few years of playing at Oakleigh it was only then I realised I was able to kick the ball further," Bromley said.

"I used to kick out at full back and, all of a sudden, I got a bit better and stronger in the legs."

Bromley believes being an amateur footballer had helped him set realistic goals of, one day, becoming a punter.

"I've never had huge expectations on myself, just to enjoy playing," he said.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I mightn't get the chance again.

"The benefits are enticing for many reasons, the \$300,000 minimum contract being one of them.

"I've also got a young family so there is a lot to think about.

"But, you get a small window of opportunity, so you have to have a crack. I don't want to look back in 10 years and regret not trying."

Bromley returned to the Krushers in style at the weekend, booting nine goals as his side recorded a 37-point over the Monash Blues.

In other C Section games, Mazenod thrashed Parkdale, 19.15 (129) to 12.4 (76).

And, Chadstone remains winless in D4 Section after an 86-point loss to Kew.

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