

Davis follows NFL dream

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Former Sydney Swans forward Nick Davis will resume his quest to become the next Australian rules export to the NFL when he auditions in front of an American delegation at the Gold Coast on Sunday.

The 29-year-old trialled with the San Diego Chargers in April but missed out on a place on the west coast franchise's roster as they were searching for a punter who could also perform the kicking-off duties.

At the time relatively unschooled in kicking department, Davis is now attempting to sell himself as a specialist in both fields, a position which could earn him as much as \$2m a year in the NFL.

His next opportunity to press his case arrives at Runaway Bay on Sunday when he will punt and kick in the first of a series of tryouts being conducted as **part of Punter Down Under**, an American-driven competition to find the next Australian to make the grade in the United States.

Among the eyes watching on will be those of the New York Giants scout Steve Malin.

"It's not the end of the world on Sunday if nothing comes of it but it would be a great opportunity and something I believe I've got the skills and opportunity to do," said Davis, who became a Swans hero for his 2005 semi-final heroics in their premiership season but was discarded last year after falling out with management.

Having formerly pitched himself purely as a punter - as fellow Australians Darren Bennett, Matt McBriar, Ben Graham and Saverio Rocca have done in the NFL with resounding success - Davis has honed his kicking-off skills in an effort to make himself more appealing to potential suitors.

Unlike most AFL players the practice of place-kicking - a feature of other Australian football codes - was not entirely unfamiliar to him.

"I played a lot of soccer when I was young and growing up in New South Wales I played rugby league at school," Davis said.

"So I had a fair idea on how to do it without knowing the real technical ins and outs of it."

He trains twice a week in Sydney under the gaze of the former University of Connecticut punter Adam Coles, a coach in the OzPunt management company that aims to recruit punters for American professional teams and colleges.

One of Oz Punt's directors, Cameron McGillivray, believes Davis's skills are well known among the NFL scouting fraternity and he is on the brink of landing himself a contract that, in monetary terms, would stretch well beyond anything he signed during a decade with Collingwood and Sydney.

"It's not really a matter of if his is going to make it over there, it's more a matter of when now," McGillivray said.

If he makes eyes light up on the Gold Coast, it could be as soon as Sunday.



Nick Davis dreams of playing NFL. Photo: Domino Postiglione