



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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South Sudanese AFL prospects to showcase their talent at inaugural NGA Draft Combine

The South Sudanese Australian community is pleased to confirm the first of two inaugural Australian Rules Football Next Generation Academy (NGA) Draft Combines will take place this weekend in Werribee.

A collaboration between NextGen Unite and the Australian Football League (AFL), the NGA Draft Combine is an invitation only event providing 13–23-year-old males and females with the opportunity to try out for a place with an NGA program in Victoria.

The NGA programs, run by Victoria-based AFL clubs, aim to grow and strengthen the talent pool of Indigenous and multicultural players to help increase representation on AFL playing lists and boost opportunities for players living in a variety of geographical locations.

The NGA Draft Combines will give potential athletes the chance to showcase their skills and ability, with the testing managed by Rookie Me, the same company that coordinates testing for the AFL and AFLW draft combine events.

The events will also provide career development opportunities for all participants and will include presentation training to help upskill players and ensure they are equipped with skills to best communicate their diverse range of talents off the field too.

The NGA Draft Combines will be held in two locations, with one taking place in the south-east at Casey Fields – home of the Melbourne Demons and the Casey Demons Football Club.

The other will be hosted at Eagle stadium, in Werribee.

Representatives from the AFL Clubs will be present during testing including North Melbourne, Western Bulldogs, Essendon, Melbourne, Hawthorn St Kilda.

The NGA Draft Combines are also open to young aspiring AFL umpires.

NextGen Unite Founder and CEO, Mamuch Chuol, said they were thrilled to partner with the AFL to help support staging the two NGA Draft combines.

“It is recognition of what our community has already achieved in the AFL, for both men and women, but perhaps more importantly what is ahead in the future for our community,” said Mr Chuol.

“AFL is perfectly suited to the physical attributes of the South Sudanese people. Height, strength and speed and awesome skills will be on show for recruiters to see and engage with.

“Our partner, Baseline Footy is also coordinating social media coverage of the event which will provide significant exposure for those involved in both draft combines.”



AFL Diversity Manager (Victoria), Xavier Moloney, said he was looking forward to seeing the players' talents on display.

"This NGA Draft Combine targeting the South Sudanese community is terrific initiative and I know everyone involved is excited to see what the participants can produce and in turn, how we can help support their pathway in footy even further.

"Last year we had two Sudanese players drafted in the top 40, with Tew Jiath heading to Collingwood and Luamon Lual picked up by Essendon. They are both inspirational stories to come out of our NGA multicultural program and now sees 11 South Sudanese players contracted to AFL lists.

"In the AFLW Akec Chuot from Hawthorn is leading the way, but we need to continue strengthening and improving pathways for girls, and we're hoping this combine plays a role in this work.

"I'd like to thank Mamuch and the team at NextGen Unite for all their hard work in pulling this inaugural combine together in partnership with the AFL and Werribee Football Club – they have such a strong connection to their community and are passionate about providing opportunities for the next generation."

NextGen Unite is a dynamic youth-led non-profit, dedicated to empowering South Sudanese Australians. Through education, mentorship, sports and cultural initiatives, NexGen Unite create transformative opportunities for their community, fostering resilience and unity.

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