

Aliir Aliir

Aliir Aliir has become one of the best footballers in Australia, but it wasn't easy for him. His journey from a refugee camp in Kenya to Australia has made him respected and admired.

Aliir Mayom Aliir was born in a refugee camp in Kakuma, Kenya to Sudanese parents. His father passed away during the family's time in the camp. After this, Aliir and his mother fled to Australia to escape the civil war in that part of Africa. They stayed with his Uncle in Brisbane. Aliir first learned to kick a football at Kedron State High School. He had grown up playing soccer, but he adjusted easily to the new sport. Then he was invited to play Australian Rules football for a local team, the Aspley Hornets.

He then played football for Queensland in the National AFL Championship. This was remarkable, seeming as he had been playing Australian Rules football for less than a year. Aliir says that the thing that got him into football was seeing Nick Natinui taking marks.

Aliir Aliir was overjoyed when he heard that he was finally drafted by the Sydney Swans in the AFL draft in 2013. He was the first Sudanese player to have been picked in the National Draft. After over 3 years of waiting, Aliir made his AFL debut in Round 6, 2016. Early in his season, he had well and truly shown everyone what he could do. Sydney thrived that year, and made it to the finals. During the Preliminary Final against Geelong, Aliir suffered a low-grade medial strain. This ruled him out for the rest of the finals. Sydney went on to lose in the Grand Final.



Aliir shares his story with his community to highlight the importance of getting rid of racism. Now, he is proud to be one of the AFL's official multicultural ambassadors.

Aliir was always determined to find a better life than his one in Africa. Through effort and dedication, he was able to achieve that. In Aliir Aliir's words, "You've got to work hard and commit. Do that, and anything is possible".

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