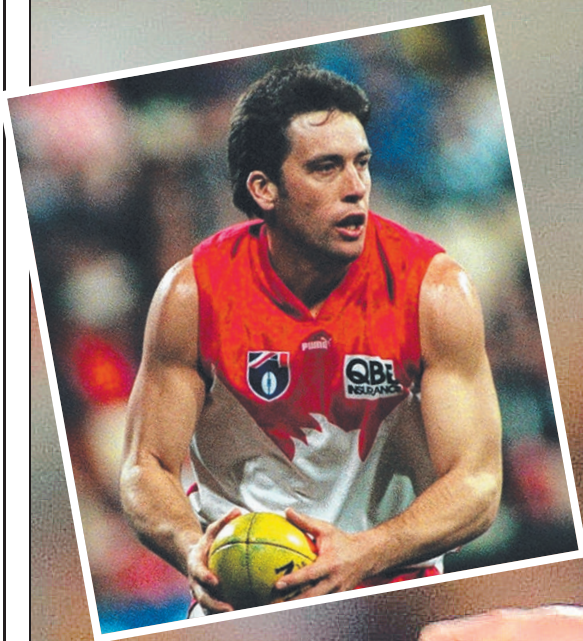


MERCURY Sport

Escaping the nest

Josh Dunkley, right, was born and bred a Sydney Swan. That was inevitable because dad Andrew, inset, was a Swans hall of famer. However, Josh will be anything but a Swan come Saturday when his Western Bulldogs square off against Sydney in the Grand Final. **REPORT PAGE 46**

Main picture: GETTY



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LUKE'S TITLE BOUT SHIFT



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TASSIE TEENS MAKE GRADE



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DREAM OVER

Swans rookie ruled out of final

NEIL CORDY

ALIIR Aliir's dream of a premiership has ended in heartbreak after the Swans ruled him out of Saturday's Grand Final against the Western Bulldogs.

Aliir, pictured at right, strained the medial ligament in

his right knee in the first quarter of Friday night's preliminary final win over Geelong and didn't return to the field.

He attempted to prove his fitness at yesterday's training session at the SCG but couldn't get through his program.

"Aliir has done all he could to give himself a chance to play

on Saturday. Unfortunately he was unable to complete training and therefore can't be considered for selection this week," Swans football manager Tom Harley said.

"It's always a tough situation for players facing some uncertainty over their fitness ahead of a game. Aliir is a

young man of outstanding character and a bright future and he will be supporting the team on the weekend."

Aliir's rise to success in the AFL was arguably the story of the season. After spending the first seven years of his life in a Kenyan refugee camp, he and his family migrated to Australia

where he took up Aussie rules in Brisbane at the age of 14.

He was drafted by the Swans two years ago and made his debut in Round 6 this season against the Lions.

Aliir's story was so inspiring Virgin Airlines signed the rookie **CONTINUED PAGE 47**

