

**BLUE**  
**Banner**  
BIOGRAPHIES

# ALVIN KAMARA



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## CHAPTER ONE

# Give Up or Grow Up

**ALVIN KAMARA** was lucky. When his mom bailed him out of jail at 3:00 a.m., she wasn't mad. She just looked at her 19-year-old son and asked, "What's next?" Alvin, one of the country's best high school football players, had been arrested in his hometown for driving without a license. The police officer lectured him: *Is this what you want to do? No kids will look up to you.* Other prisoners questioned him: *What are you doing here?* After spending eight hours in jail, Alvin was asking himself the same questions.



Alvin Kamara

Six months before, Alvin's future seemed certain. He planned to be a star on the University of Alabama's legendary football team and then play professionally in the NFL (National Football League). Then everything went wrong.

Before Alvin played his first college game, he injured his knee during training camp. He returned to practice after having surgery but was out for his freshman season. Sitting on the sidelines, Alvin grew frustrated and angry. "I think he felt like he let himself down a little bit and didn't reach the goals he set," said Mark Hocke, a coach at Alabama. "He felt like he had failed."

Unable to play the sport he loved, Alvin got in trouble. He set off fireworks on campus and loafed at practice. His coach set up "The Box"—four cones on the sidelines—where Alvin did push-ups and sit-ups as a

punishment during practice. After getting suspended from the team twice, Alvin ditched school and headed home.

Alvin's arrest made him realize it was time to give up or grow up. "There was stuff that didn't work out like I wanted it to," he said. "I just knew I didn't want to stop [playing football]. I still believed I could do it, reach my dreams."

Alvin's coaches and family encouraged him to stay at the University of Alabama, but Alvin trusted his instincts. "I'm the type of person, I trust my gut, and when I get a feeling about something, I make a move based off of that," Alvin said.

Alvin packed one suitcase and moved to Hutchinson Community College in Kansas. At Hutchinson, away from a big team and big expectations, Alvin concentrated on school and football. His dedication and focus would help him achieve his dream of playing in the NFL.

Alvin Kamara believes everything happens for a reason. He is grateful for his difficult college years. Overcoming those challenges helped him become the person he is today—someone who works hard to be his best on and off the field.



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