



Media Statement

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North Sydney Bears Extend Affiliation Agreement With South Sydney Rabbitohs

The North Sydney Bears and South Sydney Rabbitohs have extended their affiliation agreement until the end of the 2019 season, and for the first time, this formal affiliation agreement is to be registered with the New South Wales Rugby League in conjunction with the South Sydney Juniors.

The Bears will maintain their status as the official feeder club to the Rabbitohs NRL side, whilst continuing their affiliation through the NSW Intrust Super Premiership competition, and now adding the State-based under 20s side to their portfolio.

North Sydney and South Sydney, two of Rugby League's foundation Clubs with histories that date back to 1908, have been in partnership since 2007 with the Bears feeding into the NRL-based Rabbitohs from the New South Wales second tier competition for over a decade.

The Rabbitohs logo will appear on the Bears' red and black jersey in a display of the tight bond between the two clubs celebrating their 110th anniversaries in 2018.

North Sydney Bears CEO, Greg Florimo, said "We are very happy to continue our relationship with South Sydney for 2018-19. Ours is a unique situation where both clubs are foundation clubs, and all players and staff get the benefit of having the support, history and tradition associated with clubs who have both been in the game for over 100 years," Mr Florimo said.

"It is the goal of the Bears to help to continue to develop those young men to play first grade, and to secure the short and long term success of the club."

The Rabbitohs coaching, high performance staff and players will work closely with the Bears coaching and training staff to ensure a seamless transition for players moving between full time training and playing in the NSW ISP or under 20s competitions on any given weekend.

The Bears, Rabbitohs and South Sydney Juniors will work together to provide a continuous pathway from under 16s through to the NRL for any players in the North Sydney and Souths Juniors systems. The seamless pathways will include coaching, strength and conditioning programs, nutrition, wellbeing and education. This is a three-way affiliation between the organisations.

Rabbitohs General Manager of Football, Shane Richardson, says the partnership between South Sydney, North Sydney and Souths Juniors is a mutually beneficial arrangement.

"We're very happy to be extending our affiliation with the Bears. They are a professionally run outfit and we have worked well together for a long time now," Mr Richardson said.

“The Bears have proven that they can run a NSW Cup and under 20s side in partnership with us, and Souths Juniors indicated that they are more than happy to be part of this three-way affiliation agreement.

“To have two foundation clubs working so closely together for an extended period in their 110th years is also a positive for the game and I’m sure all Rugby League fans enjoy seeing the famous red and green, and red and black, jerseys each weekend. To see the Rabbit alongside the Bear on the North Sydney jersey is fantastic and really shows the respect both clubs have for each other’s histories and the path forward.

“We couldn’t be happier with this arrangement and we look forward to successful seasons ahead for all Rabbitohs, Bears and Souths Juniors teams.”

- Ends -

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