

RL: Pappas hits back at Piggins

By Steve Jancetic

SYDNEY, Dec 16 AAP - South Sydney chairman Nick Pappas today lambasted club patriarch George Piggins for turning the Rabbitohs boardroom dealings into a public slanging match.

Pappas' broadside came after Piggins revealed he would back a bid by former South Juniors chairman Henry Morris to oust Pappas from his role on the Souths board at the club's annual general meeting in March.

Morris will stand for a seat on the club's board before forming a ticket with a group of directors to challenge for the chairman's job.

Piggins said he believed there was need for a change in leadership, claiming the football club was in dire financial straits.

Pappas welcomed Morris' nomination for the board, but criticised Piggins for going to the media with his concerns about the future of the club.

"It is disappointing that we have to do this in the media yet again," Pappas told radio station 2KY today.

"I thought we'd moved away from these days.

"It's opening up old wounds, that's disappointing, especially when we've taken such significant strides for the club in the last two and a half years.

"We didn't need this public foray, we didn't need any of this and hopefully we'll still be able to salvage it and work it out behind closed doors."

Pappas hit back at Piggins' claims today, saying it was the fault of the Souths Leagues club, of which Piggins is president, that the football club was cash strapped.

"It's a little bit strange that George has come out with these sort comments when the source of our financial problems is the inability of our own leagues club to give us a grant each year," Pappas said.

"Their club, because of its poor trading, has been unable to provide a grant for the football club."

Pappas believed Morris could be worthwhile contributor on the Souths board, saying he had always had a good working relationship with the veteran powerbroker.

"We welcome candidatures from people across the membership," Pappas said.

"Change is a good thing, it's something I've always advocated. New blood on the board, replenishing boards, is something I believe in."

Morris has vowed to bring together the club's warring parties once and for all if he is successful in his takeover attempt. He said reversing the club's decision to move its home games from Aussie Stadium to Telstra Stadium was at the top of his agenda.

"I can bring all the factions together ... I want to role my sleeves up and have a real dig," Morris said.

"I know they're struggling for money, I know they're struggling for sponsorship, I'm not saying I can do any better than what they're doing.

"I'm really disappointed in the situation that we're leaving Aussie Stadium and we're going to Telstra."

Meanwhile, the Rabbitohs will consider the Russell Crowe-Peter Holmes a Curt buyout bid when a proposal is formally put to the board on Monday.