

RL: Crowe rules out bid for Souths Sydney

By Jonathan Moran, Laine Clarke and Darren Walton

SYDNEY, Sept 21 AAP - Oscar-winning actor Russell Crowe has ruled out making any bid to buy his beloved South Sydney NRL club, at least for the time being.

Speaking at the Australian premiere of his new film Cinderella Man, the diehard Bunnies fan said he did not believe the time was right to be investing in rugby league.

"Not at this point. Not right now," Crowe said when asked about reports he was involved in a bid to buy Souths with businessman Peter Holmes a Court.

"It was surprise to me that it was even up for sale. Souths may be priceless but they are certainly not worth \$10 million."

Crowe said despite the huge success of the NRL this season with bumper crowds and the most even competition ever, he did not think the sport was a wise investment.

"On the surface ... from what I've seen, I think most rugby league fans don't really have a full idea or have been given the facts so they could make an objective assessment," he said.

"You pull that curtain back and take just a little bit of a peak and rugby league doesn't look like a good investment."

Crowe is a regular spectator at Souths games, considered a No.1 supporter at the club, and also sponsors the Rabbitohs.

But the 41-year-old said he didn't see himself as an administrator.

"My support of Souths has always been done quietly unless I go to the game and get photographed and all that kind of stuff," he said.

"But there have been a lot of occasions where the club has asked me to help them financially and I just do that because I think it's important to keep a presence in South Sydney.

"It is important for Redfern and the people of Redfern to know that their team still operates and exists and has hopes and aspirations that match their own.

"So there are all those reasons for being an anonymous benefactor to the club.

"Taking on the role of actually being a rugby league administrator, I'm really not sure if that's something that's suitable for me."

Souths chairman Nicholas Pappas, who had been awaiting a formal proposal from Crowe and Holmes a Court within the "next 10 days", appeared surprised tonight when informed of the actor's apparent U-turn.

"That's news to me," Pappas told AAP.

"I'm not going to respond to hearsay. I'll wait until Russell contacts me directly."

NRL chief David Gallop declined to buy into Crowe's argument that rugby league was not a wise investment.

"It was always initially an issue for Souths and Russell, if it's not going ahead than so be it," Gallop said.

"Football clubs are very expensive businesses to run.

"In my conversations with Peter Holmes a Court, I provided him with as much information about it, but it's not my place to make a comment on it in the sense it as an investment."