

## Rabbitohs Make ANZ Stadium Home For 10 Years

SSFC Official Press Release

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\*\*\* Rabbitohs changeroom is an artist's impression \*\*\*

The South Sydney Rabbitohs have renewed their deal with one of the nation's premier sporting facilities, locking in ANZ Stadium at Sydney Olympic Park as its home ground for the next ten years.

The agreement to play NRL home games and home finals at ANZ Stadium for the next decade was struck between the Club and ANZ Stadium this week, with the new deal commencing this season. The agreement runs until the end of 2017, superseding the inaugural three-year home ground arrangement at ANZ Stadium that started in 2006.

The features of the 10-year deal include:

- A minimum of 10 NRL home games per season and all home finals;
- Construction of a dedicated Rabbitohs Locker Room within ANZ Stadium, providing change rooms and player amenities;
- Enhanced bar and lounge facilities for Rabbitohs Members and corporate guests;
- Continuing financial, marketing and match day promotional support from ANZ Stadium.

SSFC has already achieved a great deal during its tenure at ANZ Stadium, with home crowds growing by 48 per cent in 2007, securing the highest home crowd average of 15,702 for the Club in the modern era. The Rabbitohs also hold the largest NRL regular season crowd record at ANZ Stadium, with 34,315 Members and fans attending the round four clash with the Bulldogs last season.

Rabbitohs Director of Football Operations Shane Richardson says the custom player locker rooms will add to the Stadium's already first class facilities and most importantly increase the home feel for the Rabbitohs team.

“The people at ANZ Stadium showed faith in us when others didn't and we're delighted to be continuing our partnership with ANZ Stadium to reward that loyalty,” Mr Richardson said.

“This Stadium deal will give us the financial clout to become the best team in the competition, and that’s what it’s all about. For the first time, our Club has the best Stadium deal in Rugby League if not in all of sport. I’m not just talking financially, but also in the benefits it provides to our Members, our players, our coaches and our corporate partners.

“The stats show that our Membership is no longer dominated by the 2000 to 2036 postcode areas, which has been our traditional audience. We have made our home at ANZ Stadium and that has proven a success with our ticketed Membership numbers trebling since we made the shift to Sydney Olympic Park.

“We can finally say that we have a permanent home in Redfern for our training and administration, and a playing home at ANZ Stadium.

“The support shown from Ken (Edwards) and his team is first class. They are partners in the Rabbitohs premiership aspirations. ANZ Stadium is our home.”

SSFC Director of Marketing John Richardson says the Members of the Club will be some of the big winners from this deal.

“This deal delivers the Rabbitohs a long-term partner in ANZ Stadium that is committed to providing the Club with the best services for its Members. The Members will receive discounts on parking, food and beverage (from 2009), an improved Members-only bar and post-match area and a commitment from the Stadium to grow the Membership over the next ten years,” Mr Richardson said.

“We understand that our ticketed Members like to have the best seats in the house, alongside their family and friends each and every Rabbitohs home game, and by making ANZ Stadium the home of the Rabbitohs for the next decade our Members can make their seat their own for the many years ahead.

“We always aim to offer our Members the best experience possible at South Sydney home games and with the help of ANZ Stadium we will improve each year.”

South Sydney Director of Finance Joe Kelly says this long-term agreement is a fundamental piece of the Club’s financial future.

“The agreement the Club has reached with ANZ Stadium is paramount to our business plans for the next decade,” Mr Kelly said.

“Maximising revenue received from match days is fundamental to a successful business model for any football club. ANZ Stadium have demonstrated their support and long term commitment to our Club through reaching an agreement on this new deal.

“Financially, this is a wonderful deal for the Club.”

South Sydney Member Company Chairman and SSFC Director Nicholas Pappas said: “Our tenure at ANZ Stadium has opened up a whole new world of supporters to our great Club.

“The strides that we have taken in the last 18 months mean that no longer are our core supporters drawn just from our traditional heartland - rather, the Club now draws on committed support from across Sydney, from other states and territories and from abroad.

“A Club like ours deserves the best, and the best stadium in Australia is ANZ Stadium. It's the best not only in terms of the facilities it offers, but in terms of the commercial benefits for our Club.”

South Sydney Rabbitohs Executive Chairman Peter Holmes à Court said the new agreement reached with ANZ Stadium will form the foundation of the Club's plans for growth over the next decade.

“The new Stadium deal provides enhanced benefits for our most important stakeholders including our Members, sponsors & corporate customers, and our players,” Mr Holmes à Court said.

“I owe a huge thanks to my team and the team at ANZ Stadium who worked so hard to put this deal together.”

ANZ Stadium Managing Director & CEO Ken Edwards said the Stadium was excited to be a partner of the Rabbitohs for the long-term.

“This is an extremely significant agreement, not just for the Rabbitohs and ANZ Stadium, but for the game of rugby league,” said Edwards.

“The NRL is a world-class brand of footy where champion athletes produce fantastic entertainment and drama. It warrants big crowds at world-class venues. That's the essence of this agreement between the Rabbitohs and ANZ Stadium.

“We want to help the Rabbitohs and the NRL in Sydney to as big as they can be.”

The South Sydney Rabbitohs have three big games to open the 2008 season at ANZ Stadium, with the 25<sup>th</sup> Charity Shield against the Dragons on Saturday 1 March, followed by the opening ceremony of the Centenary season against the Roosters on Friday 14 March and the Good Friday game against the Bulldogs on Friday 21 March.

Tickets for the 25<sup>th</sup> Charity Shield are now on sale to the public at all Ticketek outlets, over the phone on 132 849 or online at [www.ticketek.com.au](http://www.ticketek.com.au).

Peter Holmes à Court and Ken Edwards will field questions from Rabbitohs Members via a live webcast interview this Monday 11 February at 11am. Follow the links on [www.rabbitohs.com.au](http://www.rabbitohs.com.au) and [www.anzstadium.com.au](http://www.anzstadium.com.au) to watch and participate in the webcast.