

NEWS

CLUB NEWS

CEO Shane Richardson joins The Passionate Group

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South Sydney Football Club Chief Executive Officer Shane Richardson has announced today that he will be joining a new sports, media and investment company, The Passionate Group, as its Director of Sports Operations.

Mr Richardson will continue the rebuilding of the Rabbitohs in a consulting role as the Director of Football Operations for SSFC for the next 12 months.

Mr Richardson has been a Rugby League administrator in the elite competitions in both Australia and the United Kingdom for the past 15 years, working with Cronulla, Gateshead, Hull, premiership winning Penrith and South Sydney in roles from Football Manager to Chief Executive Officer.

“My task was to re-establish the Rabbitohs as a force again in the NRL, “ Mr Richardson said.

“At the end of the last season I sought out the owners and informed them that I was looking for a new challenge and that we needed to look closely at the best structure to carry the Club forward to success, thinking outside of the box on that structure while ensuring stability.

“Football Clubs need to run like businesses, and Members and fans want not only good footy but they also want good marketing, good sponsors, good websites, good membership packages and good customer service. Football Clubs are no longer just about the football, with areas such as marketing, administration, finance, membership, merchandise, media and multi-media all becoming equally as important as the performance of the football team.

“I have chosen to take on this new challenge with The Passionate Group and I thank Peter and Russell for their faith. It is crucial though that the hard work that has been put into re-building the team is capitalised on and I looking forward to working with JT and Errol over the next 12 months to ensure the systems and structures are put in place to ensure the long term success of the Club. “

Rabbitohs Chief Financial Officer Joe Kelly will move into the role of Interim CEO at the current time. Mr Kelly has been the Chief Financial Officer of the South Sydney Football Club since April 2007, having previously worked as the Group Financial Controller for Chelsea Football Club in the UK Premier League.

“I’m honoured to be taking on this role for the interim period and I look forward to working with Peter, Russell, Shane and our support and office staff to prepare the Club for the Centenary season, “ Mr Kelly said.

“2008 is shaping up as an exciting year for all of our Members and fans as we look to build on last year’s performances both on and off the field, all in our Centenary season.

“The Passionate Group has already provided services to Souths in the past and through Shane’s involvement this will continue. The services The Passionate Group provide to Souths is of great benefit to the Football Club. Shane’s expertise in football and Chris Green’s knowledge of strategy and the corporate dollar within sport have been invaluable to us already and we look forward to continuing to build the Club with their help through The Passionate Group.

“I wish Shane all the best in his new role at The Passionate Group, and I’m excited about working with him on the football operations at our Club. “

Rabbitohs Executive Chairman Peter Holmes Æ Court said: “Shane has done an unbelievable job in his role as CEO since he joined the Club in 2004.

“The three-and-a-half years Shane has spent at Souths have been the veritable rollercoaster ride for him. He’s had to endure a lot of pressure and turn around an underperforming business. This move now gives him an opportunity to focus on what he enjoys doing which is football.

“Shane will maintain his Directorship on the South Sydney Football Club Board of Directors and The Passionate Group is delighted to welcome Shane into our organisation. “

Former South Sydney Football Club Chairman Nicholas Pappas said: “Shane Richardson joined the Rabbitohs in 2004 at a pivotal moment in the Club's history. With the Club still reeling from the aftershocks caused by its exclusion and reinstatement to the NRL, Shane took on Rugby League's toughest assignment so soon after leading the Panthers to their 2003 premiership. “

“With tenacity and determination, he took to the task of re-building the Rabbitohs and over the next two years successfully laid the platform for the Club's momentous transition to its new corporate structure. Since then, he has brought football credibility back to our Club and many of the results of his hard work are still only just becoming apparent.

“Rabbitohs Members and supporters everywhere owe Shane Richardson a huge debt of gratitude and I join with Peter Holmes Æ Court and Russell Crowe, with the directors and staff of all entities within the South Sydney family, and with all our stakeholders and fans in wishing Shane great success in this exciting new chapter in his already stellar career in Rugby League administration.

“The introduction of The Passionate Group to the sports, media and entertainment sectors is an exciting prospect and I wish Peter and his team all the best in their endeavours. Of course, The

Passionate Group and its operations are a separate entity to the South Sydney Football Club, but I'm delighted that both organisations will continue to work so closely. "

Mr Holmes ã Court said the Rabbitohs football team and coaching staff will see no interruption to their pre-season build up to the 2008 season.

"We also want to point out that this announcement is designed to enhance the preparation of the South Sydney Rabbitohs team leading into the season. Jason Taylor and Errol Alcott are still ultimately responsible for the performance of the side, with Shane now able to devote his time to the operations of the SSFC football department. "

Mr Holmes ã Court said SSFC will begin the recruitment process to find a suitable replacement as CEO of the South Sydney Football Club.

"We will begin the search for the best candidate for this position, both domestically and internationally. A recruitment committee has been established with SSFC Directors Anthony Bell, Nicholas Pappas and Shane Richardson reporting back to the co-owners on their progress. "

Headed up by Executive Chairman Peter Holmes ã Court, The Passionate Group focuses on investing in businesses in the sports and related digital media sectors, bringing corporations and sporting teams together.

To view the media conference and to learn more about The Passionate Group visit the website at www.thepassionategroup.com.