

RL: South Sydney ready for innovation

League Souths Innovation
By Brent Read

SYDNEY, July 5 AAP - Innovation - it's not a word normally associated with the South Sydney rugby league club.

But that's exactly what chief executive Shane Richardson is promising.

Richardson, who took over the reins at Redfern last month, held a press conference today to announce the appointment of Shaun McRae as coach for the next two seasons.

And he used the conference to reveal his dream for Souths and the reasons behind his decision to take a job with rugby league's basket case at the expense of his plum position with the premiers, Penrith.

"We want to be looked upon as a club of innovation," Richardson said.

"We don't want to be looked at as a club that's the battling club from the battling areas.

"It's great to have that tradition... (but) to be successful in this competition, to survive in this competition, to be part of the final eight, we have to be innovative."

Richardson wouldn't disclose the details of his plan to build the Rabbitohs back into a competitive force - but he did reveal his desire to unify the Souths factions, including the wealthy juniors.

"What those details are will come out over the next six to 12 months, but it's very important that we understand we have to have a genuine binding together of the stakeholders in this club," Richardson said.

"I think today is about the start of that.

"I have spent a lot of time over the past three weeks speaking to those stakeholders.

"What we're going to do here over the next six to 12 months is based on innovation, it's based on doing things a little differently and it's based on trying to make sure the club fast tracks itself towards success.

"And you don't fast track yourself towards success by just spending money."

Richardson also provided an insight into why he joined rugby league's most famous club.

"I'll tell you why South Sydney appeals to me," he said.

"I can tell you now, unless we get success and bring the crowds back, it's (South Sydney) going to go into oblivion.

"I see an opportunity here at Souths that says something about rugby league.

"It says that a team can come back from nowhere, with all the support of the fans and people...it says going forward that rugby league can create its own fairytale here.

"I am going to do everything I can to make it happen. I don't know if I can or can't.

"But the reality is it's just too big a challenge for rugby league and Souths to knock back.

"I believe we can make it a success.

"If we do that, we will not only survive, we'll flourish."