



CENTRAL COAST BEARS SIGN MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SPONSORSHIP

The Central Coast Bears have signed a multi-million dollar sponsorship with leading non bank lender Mortgage House of Australia, which is set to underwrite the fledgling club's bid for an NRL licence in 2013.

The five-year contract has an extension clause, and is one of the most lucrative club sponsorships in the game.

"This is a major breakthrough for the Central Coast Bears," said Greg Florimo, CEO, Central Coast Bears. "We're able to deliver a premium brand into the game and we don't even have a licence yet.

"It proves our ability as a Central Coast business and the fact we can deliver the game fantastic opportunities.

"It shows that Mortgage House, which is a major brand, wants to be part of this journey and we want the journey to end with a licence for the Central Coast Bears."

Mortgage House has a long association with rugby league, having sponsored teams including Parramatta, Melbourne and the Roosters.

Ken Sayer, Managing Director/CEO of Mortgage House, said, "We've been involved in sports sponsorship before but we've never been there from ground zero, it has always been established clubs.

"This is significantly more hands-on for us. This is essentially one step removed from being a shareholder. When it comes to

advertising, marketing, brand-building, investing in a franchise - it's all of the above.

"We hope to bring additional corporate accounts to the table as well. It's about being very close to being part of the action, without being in it," said Mr Sayers.

The Central Coast Bears have already appointed David Fairleigh as Head Coach and have earmarked Wests Tigers and former Umina Bunnies forward Chris Heighington as their first signing and captain.

The Central Coast Bears have a number of initiatives including the official opening of an office and the launch of a foundation membership drive.

"There are many compelling reasons for a Central Coast team in the NRL. The team will represent a population catchment of over one million people, it has the third largest junior league in NSW, plus a purpose-built playing arena in Gosford – the magnificent Bluetongue Stadium," said Florimo.

"To be admitted into the NRL we need to prove the Central Coast is an established rugby league heartland, with an existing and dedicated fan base, and an established junior rugby league competition. We tick these boxes, and the Central Coast Bears also require the support of TV networks and Gosford and Wyong councils - which we have.

"We have a strategy in place to engage with the Central Coast community and as part of this strategy, we have established our corporate office in the state-of-the-art Fortunity Building at Erina, which we will open officially very soon.

"The Central Coast Bears are the best thing to happen to rugby league for a long time and it's time for the NRL to stand up to endorse and qualify our bid," Florimo said. "I think every CEO - and that includes [NRL chief executive] David Gallop - needs to take notice."

For Further information call Chief Executive Officer Greg Florimo on 0421 695 594.