



Bluebells blitz earns return to top league

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Date: 08/08/2007
Words: 284
Source: NCH

Publication: Newcastle Herald
Section: Sport
Page: 73

WEST Wallsend are headed back to the Northern NSW State League after a seven-year absence and have warned they won't be there to "make up the numbers".

President Greg McLeish said the Bluebells intended on making a mark in their return season.

"We're in the process of trying to secure sponsorship and secure players so that we can be competitive and hopefully push for a semi-final berth," McLeish said.

"We don't want to go up there and make up the numbers and get kicked in the butt and sent back down again next year."

The Bluebells were relegated to first division after claiming the state league wooden spoon in 2001.

They have not finished lower than fifth since dropping to the second-tier competition and finally earned promotion back to the top-flight league by clinching the first division minor premiership with a 1-1 draw against Singleton on Sunday.

West Wallsend, who will replace Adamstown in the state league next year, are undefeated this season and have amassed 50 points, seven points clear of second-placed Lambton Jaffas with just two rounds to be played.

"It's been a five-year plan that we put in place to build us up gradually to bring some of the young blokes through . . . and it's all come to fruition this year," McLeish said.

The club has reappointed coach Mark Beagan for next season and hope to retain former national league players Todd McManus and Antony Surjan and former state league player of the year Wayne Bailey.

They are also banking on the return of McPherson twins Scott and Peter, who played the first 12 games for the Bluebells before heading overseas on holiday.
