

Sydney football has gone backwards in the past three years . . .

This is the strong claim of NSW state captain-coach John Northey and it has Sydney officials hopping mad.

Northey, who has been in Sydney on a three-year coaching contract with Western Suburbs, will return to Victoria at the end of this season.

"There is a floating population of good footballers in Sydney. But most of the players are only here on a temporary basis," Northey said.

Northey's comments brought a rebuff from NSW League secretary Mr. Lionel Beale.

"John would be the only one interested in the code in Sydney who thinks that way," Mr. Beale said.

"Figures speak for themselves. In those three years the number of players has increased 100 per cent.

# Northey slams NSW standard

## OFFICIALS 'HOPPING MAD'

"Three years ago we could only muster 10 teams in the competition. Now we have 21 teams," he said.

"And surely our representative record proves we are going ahead.

"In 1971 we beat the Australian Amateurs — the first time anyone had done this in 22 years.

"Last year we beat Queensland, downed the VFL Reserves side by 70 points and then our 'leftovers', playing as Sydney had a big win over the Farrer League on the same day," Mr. Beale said.

"In fact the only black mark against us in the three seasons was the recent loss to the ACT in Canberra — and we know where we went wrong there.

"Surely that is a record of progress," Mr. Beale said.



JOHN NORTHEY