

Craig Fitzgibbon was supposed to be in the twilight of his career but the evergreen forward has carved himself a following in the UK off the back of some stellar performances for which he was well known in Australia.

THE LAST STAND

And while most players head to the UK towards the end of their careers, Fitzgibbon was quick to point out that playing Super League with the wrong mindset and you will get caught out.

In his first season with Hull, Fitzgibbon has taken the transition between the NFL and Super League well, winning the player of the competition in the very first month of competition.

A few injuries have seen him sidelined however he finished the season on the field and is looking forward to a big 2011.

"We had a pretty successful year," said Fitzgibbon of the 2010 season.

"The club came 13th last year and we were pretty much entrenched in fourth position for most of the year so it was a pretty successful year for the club.

"I had a shoulder drama at the beginning of the year which kept me out of the game for a while and basically needs a repair and surgery in the off season but I will be right for the pre-season.

"Hopefully that is all behind me now."

With the comparison between the NFL and Super League a constant between the two competitions, Fitzgibbon says the professionalism of the UK competition has increased in the past few years.

"Obviously rugby league is rugby league," he says of the game.

"They have a lot of similarities the clubs (to those in Australia) and they are quite professional and the standard of footy is quite high.

"I think if you come over here expecting it to be easy then you get found out."

Fitzgibbon's one year deal was extended to include the 2011 season and he has set some lofty goals for that time.

"I'd like to win some sort of silverware, whether it's the Challenge Cup or the Super League," he says.

"I've certainly come over here trying to achieve something and challenge myself in a different competition. I'm 33 now so I find different ways to challenge myself and I'm really enjoying the different style of play over here."

So with the football side on track, how does Fitzgibbon feel about the lifestyle change between Australia and the UK.

"I miss friends and family, that's probably the hardest thing," he says of the UK.

"I'D LIKE TO WIN SOME SORT OF SILVERWARE."

"It's a complete change to what we are used to (over in the UK). We were greeted with the coldest winter since 1964 but the lifestyle is really laid back and we live out on a farm which is something I have never done before and the kids are enjoying it so it's a really nice change.

"But geez I'd love to go for a surf."

And when you ask him about continuing for the 2012 season?

"You've got to be realistic, I turn 34 next year. But you never say never," he laughs ▶

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