

# REVIEW



FEATHERSTONE ROVERS




Champions 1977  
 Challenge Cup Winners  
 1967, 1973, 1983  
 Runners Up  
 1952, 1974  
 Division Two Champions  
 1979-80, 1992-93  
 Divisional Premiership  
 Winners 1992-93

## rovers

colours: Navy & White		Team Manager: David Ward	
1.	Carl Gibson	(Rope Systems)	
2.	Frederic Banquet	(Ross Travel)	
3.	Brett Rodger	(Horners of Manchester)	
4.	Matt Calland	(Blue & White Club)	
5.	Owen Simpson	(David Bishop Associates)	
6.	Brendon Tuuta	(Millards Milkround)	
7.	Alex Thompson	(J.D.Cable•Butchers)	
8.	Steve Molloy (Capt)	(Steven & Jane Bloomer)	
9.	Graham Southernwood	(Francis W. Birkett)	
10.	Leo Casey	(White Rose Inn)	
11.	Daniel Divet	(John Lingard Builder)	
12.	Gary H. Price	(Waterson Travel)	
13.	Richard Gunn	(Steve Lingard Builder)	
14.	T.B.A.		
15.	T.B.A.	(Jonathan Oldfield)	



### today's officials

-  Mr. R. Connolly (Wigan)
-  Mr. F. J. Hawley (Warrington)
-  Mr. J. Molyneux (Runcorn)

scrums						pens					
1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24

## rovers

## oldham

## oldham

colours: Red, White & Gold		Team Manager: Andy Goodway	
1.	Wally Gibson		
2.	Adrian Belle		
3.	Mike Neal		
4.	Paul Topping		
5.	Scott Ranson		
6.	Steve Gartland		
7.	Martin Crompton		
8.	Ian Sherratt		
9.	David Stephenson		
10.	Jason Temu		
11.	Gary Lord		
12.	Joe Faimalo		
13.	Mike Kuiti		
14.	David Bradbury		
15.	David Jones		

scrums						pens					
1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	19	20	21	22	23	24

today's match  
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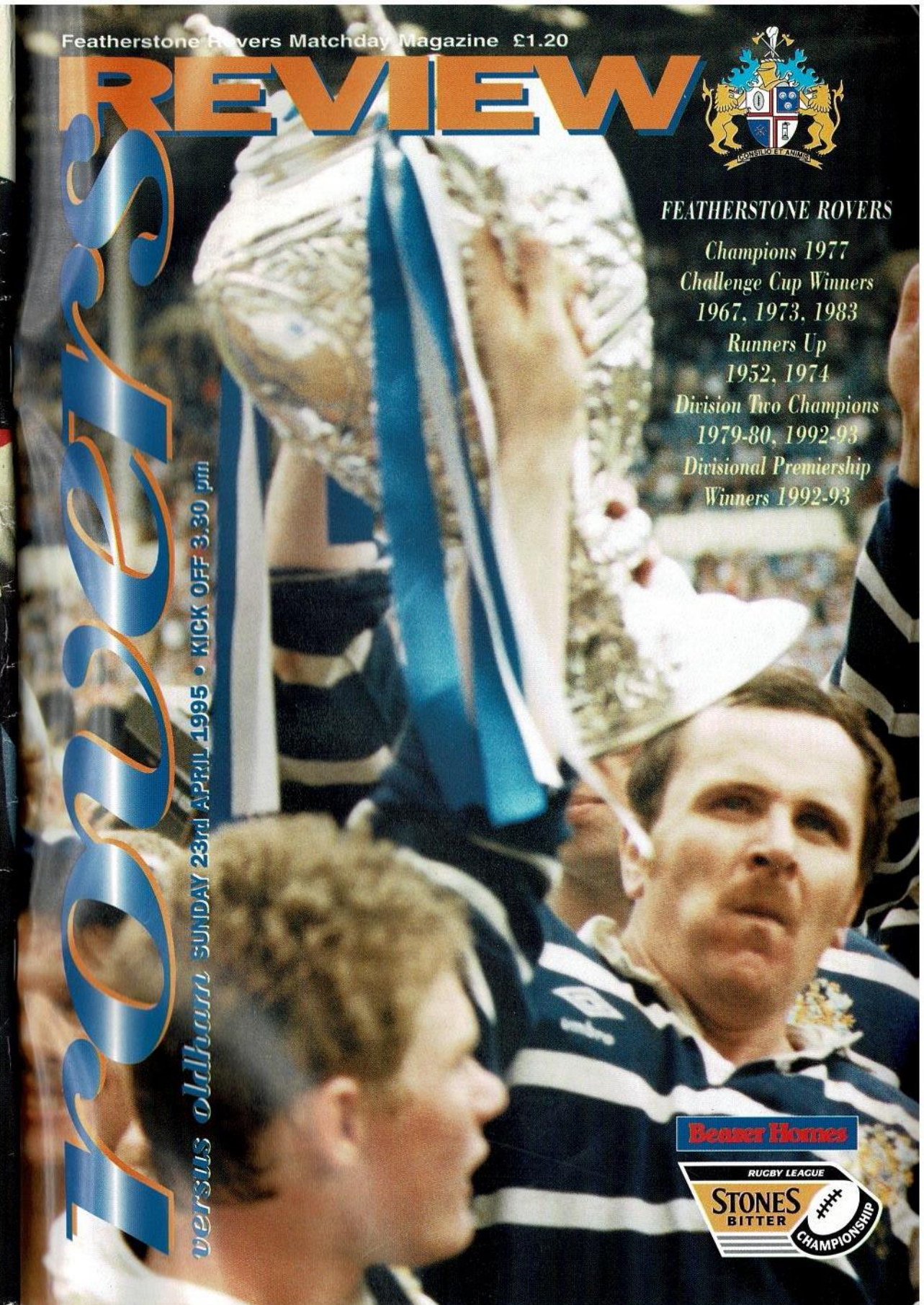
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Terry Mullaney writes...

■ As the game prepares to enter the rugby revolution called 'Super League' I have to admit to being still in a dazed state of mind as I suspect most of you are out there.

Who could have envisaged that within a week of experiencing that special feeling of pride at what our team had achieved in playing in a Challenge Cup semi final, we would be faced with the nightmare of this very great club becoming extinct - gone forever after all that it has given to the cause of Rugby League football.

If ever a club has been a role model to other more affluent members on what can be achieved on very limited resources, then it has to be Featherstone Rovers. A complete Roll of Honour, together with a list as long as your arm of home-spun international players is included elsewhere in this programme. It is doubtful if more than a handful of clubs throughout the leagues can come anywhere near us. We have won every major honour in the game. Featherstone has been an incomparable 'hot bed' of Rugby League, supplying many players to other clubs as well as our own, over many years. Will the conveyor belt now grind to a halt?

And what about this marvelous little stadium with its social facilities that are perhaps second only to Leeds. Has anyone at RL HQ given a thought to that or about the kids, scores of them, that use the brand new changing rooms that have been purposely built for their benefit. The subsequent healthy future of the game that their current participation secures, appears to have been completely overlooked. Can you imagine all of those youngsters suddenly accepting that they can no longer realise their dream of one day playing for Featherstone Rovers and instead, change their allegiance to a new, stupidly named, Calder side for which neither they nor their parents can enthusiastically evolve any affinity. The future development of the game in this area, as well as Castleford and Wakefield, is in serious jeopardy. The long-term casualty is the game itself.

The reply to that from HQ would, I suspect, be that the game is crumbling anyway and that

only a huge injection of cash such as this from Murdoch can save us from oblivion. I can see the merit of such an argument. What baffles me is that we are entrusting this new found fortune and restructured format for the game to the same people who got us into this mess in the first place. Doesn't inspire much confidence to my mind.

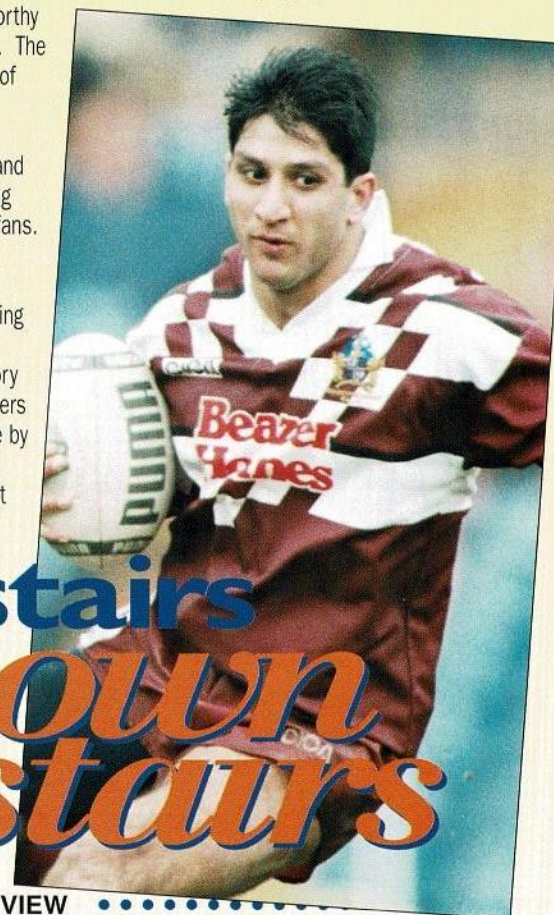
Where is there an organised criteria for entry into the Super League? Is it catchment area that counts? If so, why have St Helens, Warrington and Widnes been allowed entry individually. Widnes weren't even in the running as a club worthy of even merging at the initial meeting of chairmen. Within twenty four hours of that they had become first reserve for Super League status and a couple of days later, low and behold, they're in! I can't explain it and neither can anyone else. If it comes down to the type of ground, then Huddersfield ought to have had a strong case, not to mention Hunslet! The ground you're stood in today could be developed on three sides to become a

fabulous stadium worthy of any super league. The trouble is that a lot of people seem to be running about like headless chickens and that's what's causing anger amongst the fans. We need to be told what's happening. Come Tuesday evening the most important decision in the history of Featherstone Rovers will have been made by the club's membership. It isn't up to me to try to

influence you one way or another in the club magazine. As I write, news has broken that Wakefield are overwhelmingly in favour of biting the bullet and merging, while Castleford have said that they are seeking to go it alone.

Having asked the question myself to the powers that be, you can take it from me that if we choose to go into the new first division and win every game for two years, Featherstone Rovers chances of promotion to Super League status are virtually nil. That's what I was told by the Super League Committee at the recent meeting at Manchester Airport Hilton. A future of second rate football is what you would have.

upstairs  
down  
stairs



# Simply the boss

“  
Right now  
all our  
futures are  
at stake.  
The worrying  
part for me  
is that I'm in  
no position  
to have any  
influence on  
that future.”

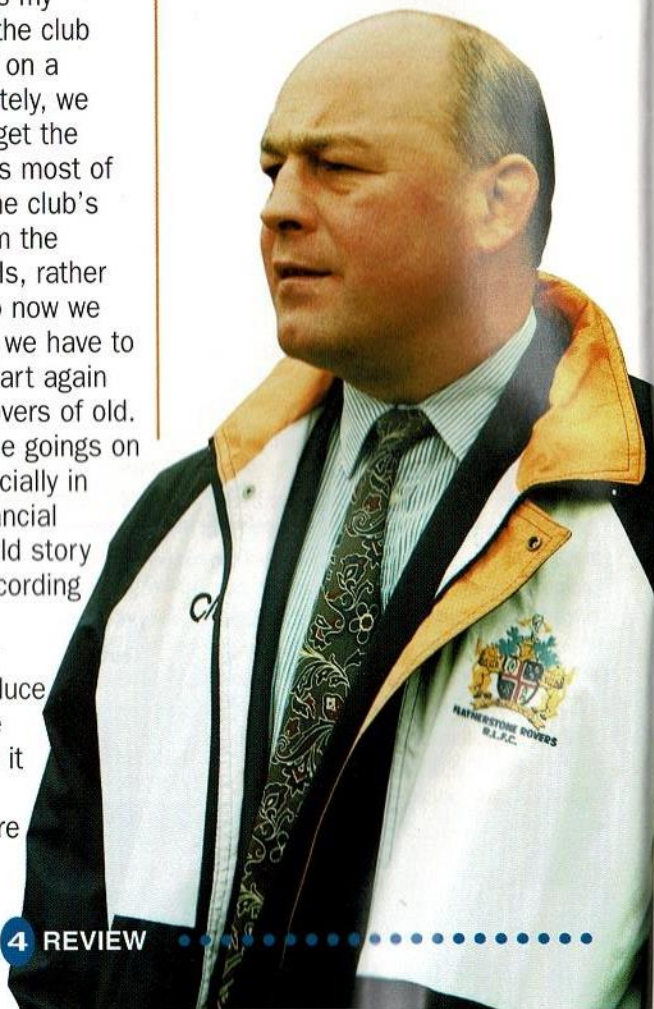
**CW:** It is now the last game of what can only be described as a momentous season, one way or another for Rugby League. What message do you have for the Rovers fans to finish our series of interviews off with?

**DW:** “It's been eventful to say the least, both from the point of view of the club and Rugby League in general. I must express my admiration for the way the club has tried to place itself on a higher level. Unfortunately, we have been let down. I get the impression that perhaps most of the money to finance the club's ambition has come from the guarantees of individuals, rather than the club itself. So now we are in a position where we have to take stock, regroup...start again as the Featherstone Rovers of old. I don't know what all the goings on are or have been, especially in terms of the club's financial structure, but it's the old story of cutting your cloth according to your means.

From now on, whatever happens, we must produce our own talent from the grassroots up and take it from there.

I know one thing for sure

and that is that Rugby League in this country will never die whatever happens... not whilst there are thousands of kids out there who are desperate to become Rugby League players; not whilst there are people like Howard Cartwright and me who gain so much fulfilment in coaching them; not whilst there are people like the Featherstone Rovers fans to support their club and the game. I get more of a kick out of bringing on young players, coaching them to become professionals than any amount of glory. The glory trail is a bandwagon that people jump on.



One of the problems at the moment is that it's so hard to think about the future, but it's impossible not to. Things are changing so rapidly, dramatically and radically every day. I find myself just waiting for the next news bulletin.

Right now all our futures are at stake. The worrying part for me is that I'm in no position to have any influence on that future. Whatever shape the future eventually takes, I know that the supporters of Featherstone Rovers are fantastic and we will all just have to see where we all fetch up... together.”

*It has been one hell of a season, largely for the wrong reasons. But don't forget that the Rovers were eighty minutes from Wembley! Throughout all this, David Ward has shown patience, enthusiasm and candour in our interviews. Even when he must have been under enormous pressure he has been more than willing to give us, the Rovers fans, facts....as well as his thoughts and feelings about all aspects of coaching our team. Thank you David, for all that and plenty more besides.*

## SEASON 1994 • 95

**Founded:** 1902  
**Reformed:** 1908  
**Elected to NR FL:** June 1921

**Ground:**  
Post Office Road, Featherstone  
Telephone: Pontefract 702386

**Colours:**  
Navy, Tangerine and White Jerseys  
Navy Shorts

**Patron:**  
G. Lofthouse, MIPM, JP, MP,  
Deputy Speaker - House of Commons

**President:** R. Ashby  
**Chairman:** S. Wagner  
**Vice Chairman:** T. A. Morris  
**Committee Members:**  
M. Ashby, E. Gardner, B. Hill  
D. Hunt, T. M. Mullaney  
**Secretary:** T. Jones  
**Team Manager:** David Ward  
**Assistant Coach:**  
H. Cartwright

**Academy Coaches:**  
K. Hobbs, R. Spurr.  
**Medical Consultants:**  
Dr J. Rozendaal

**Dr P.G. Gordon,**  
**MRCS, LRCP, DCH**

**Hon. Dental Surgeon:**  
J.G. Milne, B. Ch. D.

**Club Photographers:**  
E. Lorrman,  
C. Westwood

**Videographer:** P. Wroe  
**Timekeeper:** C. Westwood

**Programme Editor:** T. Mullaney  
**Groundsman:** F. Lavine

**Physiotherapists:**  
L. H. Philips,  
GRAD, DIP, PHYS, MCSP, SRP

**D. Fisher**  
**RL Representative:** S. Wagner

**RL Alliance Representative:** D. Hunt  
**Honorary Life Members:**  
R. Ashby, R. Bailey, K. Everson,  
E. Gardner, D. Hobbs, N. Hodgson,  
D. F. Hunt, A. Jepson, A. Morris,  
T. M. Mullaney, J. Reed, J. Williams

**Members for Life:**  
B. Shaw, C. Shaw, S. Wagner,  
Miss N. Wagner,  
Masters O. and S. Wagner

### REPRESENTATIVE PLAYERS

#### Great Britain:

T. Askin, C. Bibb, J. Bridges, T. Clawson, M. Dixon, S. Evans,  
Deryck Fox, Don Fox, D. Hobbs, G. Jordan, A. Morgan, S. Nash,  
P. Newlove, P. Smith, J. Thompson

#### Tourists

T. Askin, C. Bibb, J. Bridges, G. Cooper, C. Dooler, S. Evans, Deryck Fox,  
Don Fox, D. Hobbs, S. Nash, P. Newlove, I. Smales, J. Thompson

#### World Cup Tourists:

A. Morgan, P. Smith, J. Thompson

#### England:

J. Bridges, M. Dixon, S. Evans, V. Farr, J. Hirst, D. Hobbs, A. Morgan,  
J. Mullaney, P. Newlove, P. Smith, R. Stone, J. Thompson, A. Wood

#### Wales: P. Banner, H. Box

#### Great Britain U21s:

C. Bibb, P. Bonson, Deryck Fox, P. Lyman, P. Newlove, M. Pearson,  
I. Smales

#### Great Britain U24s:

K. Bell, S. Evans, D. Fennell, V. Farrar, M. Gibbins, J. Gilbert,  
D. Hobbs, T. Ramshaw, P. Smith, V. Thomas, J. Thompson, L. Tonks

### CLUB HONOURS

#### Championship: 1927-28

#### Division One Champions: 1976-77

#### Division Two Champions: 1979-80, 1992-93

#### Division Two Premiership Winners: 1992-93

#### Division Two Premiership Runners-Up: 1987-88

#### RL Challenge Cup Winners: 1966-67, 1972-73, 1982-83

#### RL Challenge Cup Runners-Up: 1951-52, 1973-74

#### Yorkshire Cup Winners: 1939-40, 1959-60

#### Yorkshire Cup Runners-Up: 1928-29, 1963-64, 1966-67, 1969-70,

#### 1970-71, 1976-77, 1977-78, 1989-90

#### Captain Morgan Trophy Runners Up: 1973-74

#### Yorkshire League Runners-Up: 1928, 1962

### RECORDS

#### In a match

Goals: 13 by Mark Knapper v Keighley - 17 Sept 1989

Tries: 6 by Mike Smith v Doncaster - 13th April 1968

6 by Chris Bibb v Keighley - 17th Sept 1989

Points: 30 by Mark Knapper v Keighley - 17th Sept 1989

#### In a Season

Goals: 163 by Steve Quinn - 1979-80

Tries: 48 by Paul Newlove - 1992-93

Points: 391 by Martin Pearson - 1992-93

Appearances: 46 by C. Woolford - 1959-60

#### In a Career:

Goals: 1,210 by Steve Quinn - 1975-88

Tries: 162 by Don Fox - 1953-66

Points: 2,654 by Steve Quinn - 1975-88

Appearances: 440 by Jim Denton - 1921-34

Highest Score: 86-18 v Keighley - 17th Sept 1989

Highest Score Against: 70-2 at Halifax - 14th April 1941

Attendance: 17,531 v St Helens (RL Cup) - 21st March 1959

Yorkshire Cup: 10,700 v Leeds - Sept 1959

League: 14,990 v Wakefield - January 1962

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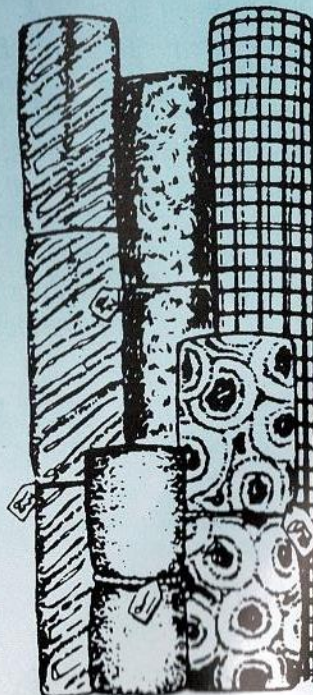
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Ian Clayton  
writes...

“  
Out on  
our ear  
with a  
lump in  
our  
throats  
and  
breaking  
hearts  
”

■ It's got to the stage now where I don't know what to write for fear of it being outdated before the ink dries.

What can I say? It seems that if we refuse to merge we'll not have a team playing in the top flight. If we do merge we'll have lost our identity and if, as seems likely, Cas go for the Super League on their own we'll be out on our ear anyhow. My belief is that you support your team choose what. It is not supporting your team to opt for a merger. Salford and Oldham have been brave enough to stand up and say "No" to merger, perhaps if all the other clubs did it we might start to make these tampering fools sit up a bit.

I put a lot of faith in the saying "If it's not broke, don't mend it"... Featherstone Rovers was already going places as a club. We have a wonderful resource to the community here; facilities for playing this sport, our sport, the people's sport that are second to none. A beautiful ground and a committed and loyal following, with a knowledge of Rugby League without rival. That to me alone is worth more than £75 million over five years. Steve Wagner has appealed to the owners of this club, you the members, to vote for the merger proposals with your head and not your heart. When your heart is breaking I would have thought that will not be the easiest of tasks.

Just a few weeks ago I sat in the south stand at Leeds with a lump

the size of a satsuma in my throat. Featherstone Rovers had lost in the semi-final of the Challenge Cup. Leeds had scored yet another try and the Rovers players stood between the posts dejectedly waiting for the conversion. By instinct the Rovers following began to sing in order to lift their heroes. It was almost as though long caring arms had stretched from the stand to lift up the chins of the players. It was a marvellous expression of the link between the community and the men that represent them.

"This is Clayton again", I hear the cry, "tugging on people's emotions without having any sense of responsibility for the practicalities of the situation." Perhaps that would be fair comment, after all these so called 'visionaries' talk figures and statistics don't they? Well let me throw a few figures your way then; Keighley is held up as THE model of practice to follow in the successful running of a club that is rooted in the community. They have tried to follow "Framing the Future" (remember that bright idea) to the letter. Juvenile crime has decreased by 11% in the last two years in Keighley. On Easter Monday, Keighley attracted nearly three times the spectators as Sheffield did. My advice to followers of this club, for what it's worth, is go with neither head nor heart. Go with your conscience.

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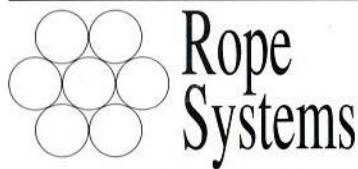
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## up the *rovers*

“  
 Born in Featherstone and taken to my first game at six weeks of age, I have been supporting the Rovers for 49 years. Suffering the agonies of semi final losses and relegation, experiencing the emotional delights of Wembley wins and promotion.”

■ Rugby League is inevitably etched on my soul, indeed a part of my lifeblood. Living and working in Boston South Lincolnshire I have a 200 mile round trip for home games, and often double that for away games.

I take friends who have never experienced live Rugby League. They love it, they love the passionate support generated and are amazed at the amount of people at the games. They quickly understand my passion for my club and why I wear my club clothing with pride in an area that knows little about Rugby League. I was asked in my local the other night what I thought of the proposed Super League and what I thought of losing my club in the merger. They said "You must be gutted". I could not have chosen a better adjective. But what really struck home was, here were people in rural South Lincolnshire who, with little knowledge of our game, understanding how I and thousands of other supporters feel, and treating those feelings with genuine sympathy and consideration. Oh that the money grabbing mandarins at Rugby League Headquarters who purport to be the experts on our game and on what supporters want, were as understanding and considerate as these people. Being so far away, I have to rely on the media for news and updates. It was while watching Maurice Lindsay giving a TV interview that I was finally convinced that my beloved game was going to be stripped

of all that is good. He said words to the effect that this is the golden opportunity to spread our wonderful sport throughout Britain, Europe and the World. When concluding the interview he said what everyone should realise, is that Rugby League is a business. From a sport to a business in one interview says it all. I may be far away but my heart is in the heartland of Rugby League and my support is with all those supporters who are fighting the mergers and are resolved to fighting the money maniacs who seek to rape our sport.

I happen to be a prison governor and often see at first hand the result of thoughtless actions, greed and inconsideration for others."

I think you'll have read by now about the book I helped to co-ordinate as part of the fans fightback. This faxed message from Mel Moxon in Lincolnshire seems to say it all, particularly the last line. A message from nearer home from Alan Tennant whose family have been involved with playing and watching the Rovers for the biggest part of this century had this to say.

"Life has always been a struggle down at Post Office Road but the supporters have always banded together to help the team. All that will disappear with a team who doesn't play in their home town. I will never go and support a merged team. I'm Featherstone born and bred, a true Rover and that's the way I'll stay."

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 CAN RELY  
 ON TO BE  
 ON TIME



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# team talk

The talent on view this afternoon is of such a standard as to be almost unreal. David and Andy are almost too lucky to be true...having such talent in their squads.

From 1-13, the Roughyeds ooze class, aggression and scoring power. The fullback spot almost selects itself with goal kicking machine and record breaker Bernard Ganley, an automatic choice.

Ganley holds the points in a season, goals in a match, goals in a season, goals in a career and points in a career records. Ganley's three international caps are an inadequate reflection of this great fullback's abilities.

Oldham's three quarter line has that threatening look as well, with Billy Hall and James Lomas forming a crackerjack centre partnership. Lomas, a Cumbrian from Maryport near Carlisle, is short and stocky for a three quarter but certainly knows the way to the line. Jim was the first player to be transferred for £100 when he moved to Salford from Bramley earlier in his career. The Cumbrian connection is continued

with Ike Southward on the wing. Ike is in stark contrast with his compatriot, big, direct running and strong, as capable of running through players as he is of running round them. On the other wing, yet another international - Alan Davies who holds his club's tries in a career record with an awesome 173. Also in line for a wing spot is the skilful, deceptively fast John Etty, a true gentleman of the game.

## THE TEAMS OF YOUR DREAMS...

The Oldham half back combination has a strong local connection for both our clubs. Stand-off Bill Francis who has already had a glittering international career at club and international level, with Wigan, Saints, Salford, Great Britain and Wales. Wales? Bill was brought up in Kingsley Avenue, North Featherstone and was educated at Gordon Street Primary and Normanton Grammar, whilst Mike Ford at number seven has returned to his home town club, having had a successful spell with Wigan. Mike played in the classic Wigan versus Hull Cup final in '85.

The Roughyeds have always been known for having a big tackling, no nonsense pack. Loose forward Derek 'Rocky' Turner, tackles everything above grass level, takes no prisoners and is a fine footballing loose forward as well. Joe Ferguson, the prototypical Oldham forward, has played no less than 691 games in a career that has spanned 24 years. David Hobbs and Mick Morgan maintain the international nature of this dynamic Oldham squad, both are Featherstone lads and, of course, David is a recipient of the Lance Todd Trophy for his outstanding performance in that fairytale '83 final. Andy Goodway will have to settle for a place on the bench.

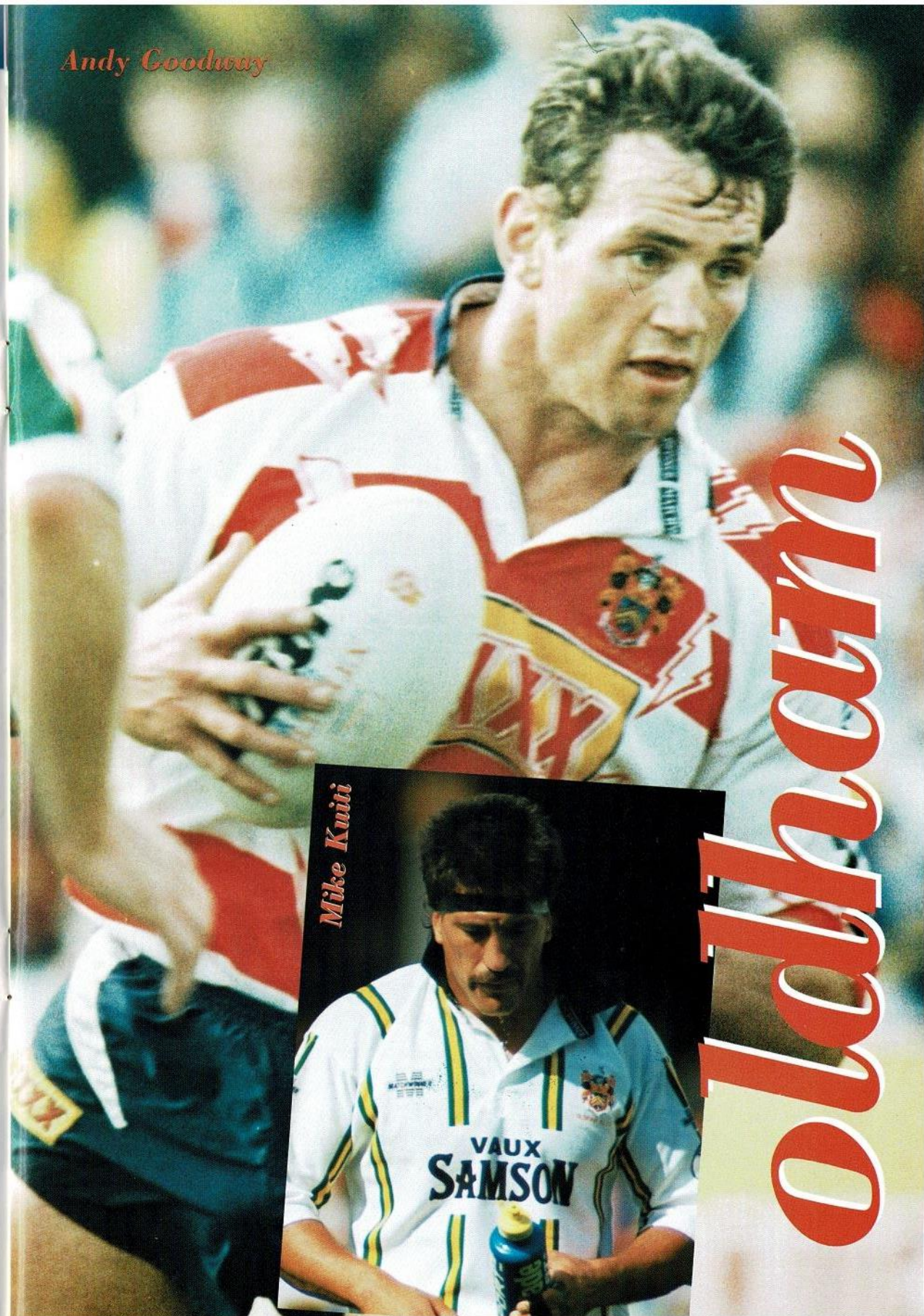
For Rovers, it's great to see Gary Cooper at full back. Incidentally, Gary's sister Cath is a big Rugby League fan and has a big career ahead of her as a Rugby League administrator if you ask me. Cyril Woolford, not the fastest winger you've ever seen, is strong and determined near his opponents goal line and makes a hard hitting partnership with centre Paul Newlove. The same goes for goal kicking ace Steve Quinn, a faster but less robust player than Newlove, but an intelligent player who gives great service to his wing partner Gary Jordan.

What do you say about Joe Mullaney? This man is the 'stand off's stand off', lethal in broken play running and intelligent at set pieces. Joe complements scrum half Steve Nash perfectly. There is a strong body of opinion that says that Nash is the best

number 7 that Rovers have ever had, or indeed ever will have.

Like Oldham, Rovers have some powerful forwards, whose footballing skills are often underestimated by those who think they know their Rugby League; Cliff 'Slam' Lambert, a superb ball handler and reader of the game, Arnold Morgan, who drags gangs of opposing defenders over the goal line with him as if they were a human cloak, Jim Thompson acknowledged by the entire World of Rugby League as the best tackler in the game, Willis Fawley... a hooker in the classic mould, another ferocious tackler and always on hand to make the hard yards, Terry Clawson... almost never known to go down in a tackle who's played for Oldham as well. This big hearted, if sometimes slightly rogueish-looking outfit, is led right from the sharp end by the one and only Vince Farrar, whilst knocking on the door for a place in the side, is all action, hugely popular Kiwi Brendon Tuuta. *St John's Ambulance person: "Are you alright old cock?"* *CW: "Who am I, where am I?"* *St John's Ambulance person: "You're at the Watersheddings, a piece of rusty corrugated iron fell off the stand roof and knocked you out."*

Andy Goodway



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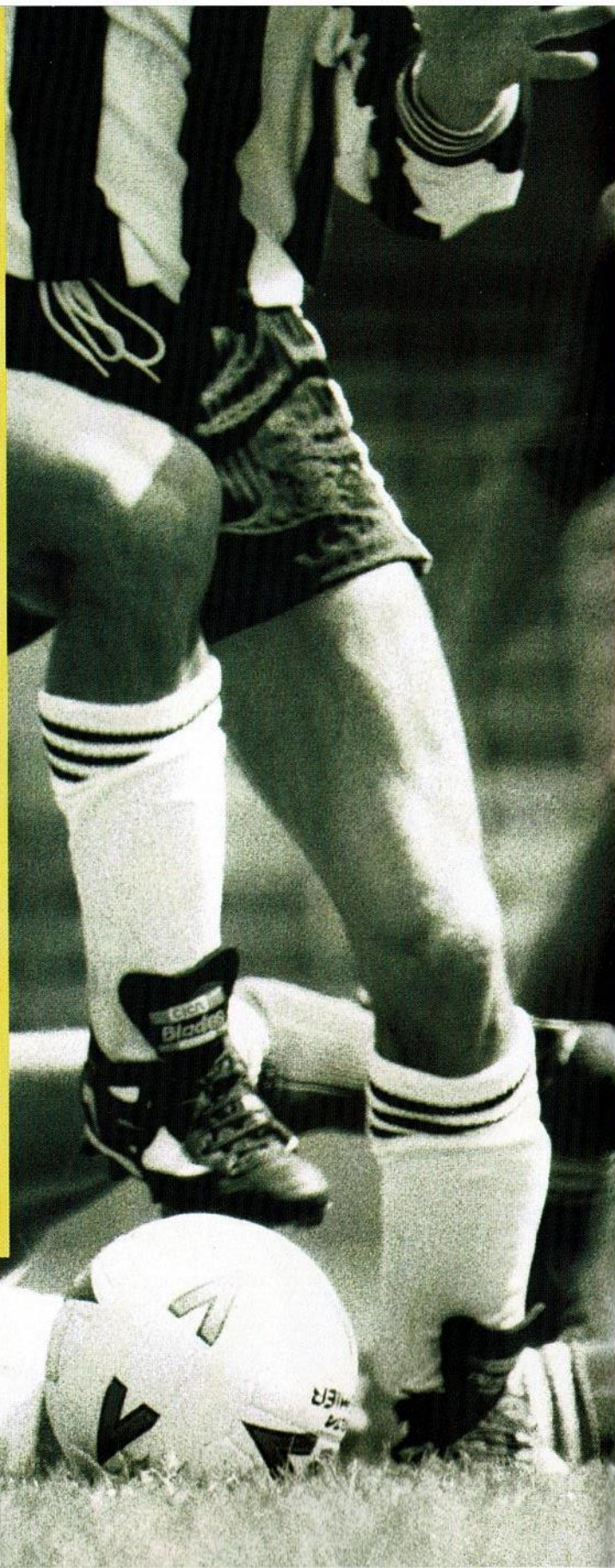
Their unique shape creates a wall of grip giving better acceleration. And because they support a greater area of your foot, they are far more comfortable.

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one up on  
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we did.



APPEARANCES & POINTS SCORERS

Player	SEASON 1994-95						TOTAL SENIOR RECORD					
	App	Sub	T	G	DG	Pts	App	Sub	T	G	DG	Pts
Mark Aston	28	1	5	85	2	192	28	1	5	85	2	192
Frederic Banquet	18	-	11	6	-	56	18	-	11	6	-	56
Ikram Butt	29	-	6	-	-	24	166	-	67	-	-	264
Matt Calland	23	1	13	-	-	52	33	4	19	-	-	76
Leo Casey	22	3	-	-	-	-	123	10	8	-	-	32
Andy Currier	11	-	3	1	-	14	11	-	3	1	-	14
Daniel Divet	26	1	8	-	-	32	26	1	8	-	-	32
Mark Ellis	2	2	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-
Carl Gibson	33	-	10	-	-	40	67	-	27	-	-	108
Richard Gunn	9	7	-	-	-	-	55	13	6	-	-	24
Darren Hughes	14	3	3	-	-	12	14	4	3	-	-	12
Steve Molloy	32	-	4	-	-	16	63	1	6	-	-	24
Mark Nixon	16	6	5	-	-	20	16	6	5	-	-	20
Richard O'Brien	-	2	-	-	-	-	3	4	-	-	-	-
Martin Pearson	5	-	1	20	-	44	106	18	69	304	2	874
Gary H. Price	30	-	6	-	-	24	58	6	14	-	-	56
Gary S. Price	3	17	3	-	-	12	88	37	13	-	-	52
Brett Rodger	13	1	9	-	-	36	13	1	9	-	-	36
Neil Roebuck	23	8	2	-	-	8	38	29	7	-	-	28
Iva Ropati	9	-	2	-	-	8	55	1	31	-	-	124
Lee Senior	3	-	1	1	-	6	3	-	1	1	-	6
Jason Sims	11	2	-	-	-	-	11	2	-	-	-	-
Graham Southernwood	24	3	8	-	-	32	31	5	8	-	-	32
Alex Thompson	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Brendon Tuuta	29	-	8	-	-	32	148	3	29	-	1	117
Warren Wilson	4	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	-	-

by the way...

AND NOW THE GOOD NEWS...  
Well a little bit anyway. Rovers' matchday magazine 'Rovers Review'

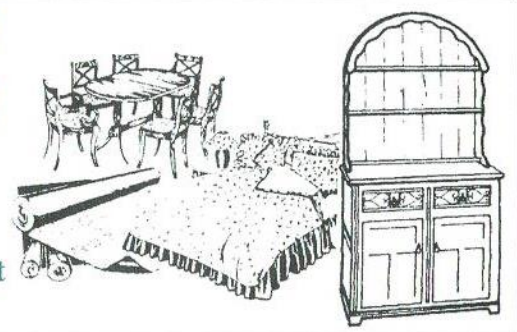
has been nominated best programme in the RFL by the Rugby League magazine 'Open Rugby'. Congratulations go out to the writing team and everyone concerned with putting the mag together.



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■ At the time of writing the chances of Featherstone Rovers maintaining their own identity and being allowed to compete at the highest level look grim to say the least - this could be our last game!

Make no mistake, should the Super League go through in its proposed format, whichever way we opt - merger or go it alone in the new 'First Division' - we will never again see our great club competing at the highest level. A merger will be an immediate and final end, whilst an unjust relegation into second grade rugby will undoubtedly be permanent! Don't be fooled by talks of promotion being available in two years time - there is no valid reason to exclude us now, other than that we, the fans, are required to support the new Calder club - so why should things be different two years hence? Selective invitations there may be, but automatic

promotion, never! There can be no doubt that clubs such as ours are simply not part of HQ's dreams and visions of a new genesis for Rugby League - dreams are exactly what they are! The very fact that we are indeed still a club, located in some 'depressing' ex-pit village and have repeatedly had the audacity to actually win trophies, has probably contributed to our exclusion. Well I can tell Mr Lindsay something! Clubs such as ours are the very roots of the game, the reason for its very existence. Don't forget its original name, the Northern Union, a game for NORTHERN working class people, between 'small town' clubs in the NORTH of England. You, Mr Lindsay, are stealing OUR heritage in the hope of achieving the unachievable. That, by your own admission, the game is virtually bankrupt is not only a serious reflection on your own competency, but also a valid reason for abandoning your ideals. Of course such 'parochialism', together with our 'cloth cap' image has often been cited as the reason for the game not progressing into other regions - yet there is absolutely no evidence that there is a demand for the sport as a 'to be paid for' spectacle elsewhere. History tells us that the London public do not require Rugby League - South Wales with its in-bred passion for Rugby Union will never support it and that all recent and past attempts at establishing professional Rugby League in the outside world have ended with a catalogue of financial disasters - a

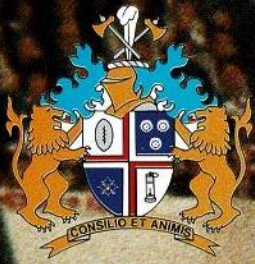
complete and utter waste of resources which could and should have been invested into better facilities for the paying spectator - but then we have never really mattered. We have only been considered as mindless beings who, although shouting 'Gerrum onside' constantly, will always pay in numbers to watch a winning team, despite third rate stadiums, negative patterns of play and inadequate refereeing standards. In trying to provide this 'winning team for all' the game is now so far down a whirlpool of overspending that many clubs will perish - Super League or not. The sale of TV rights should be for the equal benefit of all clubs, indeed, Rugby League as a starving nation, could have been handed a mountain of food in the form of Murdoch's millions, yet tragically only a select few are going to eat. Even more distressing is the fact that the distributors of this 'manna from heaven' are going to be the same irresponsible 'visionaries' who have led the game into the depths of debt and disrepair over the last few years. As for the future of Featherstone Rovers, it would seem our only chances of continued competition amongst the 'elite' are now in the hands of British justice. Hopefully, by the time you are reading this the impending discussion by the Commons Committee will have resulted in a full inquiry into the whole Super League issue being set up and that they will have at least slowed down, if not ended, Lindsay's plans for a 'master race' of Rugby League clubs.

**Alan Brookes**

*Please note the opinions and comments on this page are a personal view and not necessarily those of the Featherstone Rovers Committee or other club officials.*

**D A T A**  
**base**





**F**eatherstone's contribution to Rugby League is encapsulated in the fraction of a second it takes for a camera shutter to click; David Hobbs, Lance Todd trophy winner. How could clubs like Hull have had so much success without Featherstone talent like Steve Evans? And Terry Hudson, the prodigal, returned to skipper his home town club to victory at Wembley.

# rovers

gallery



Brendon Tuuta... a local hero from the other side of the world. Brendon is a current international along with Ikram Butt, Daniel Divet and Frederic Banquet. No one has served the Rovers cause better than Tuuta.

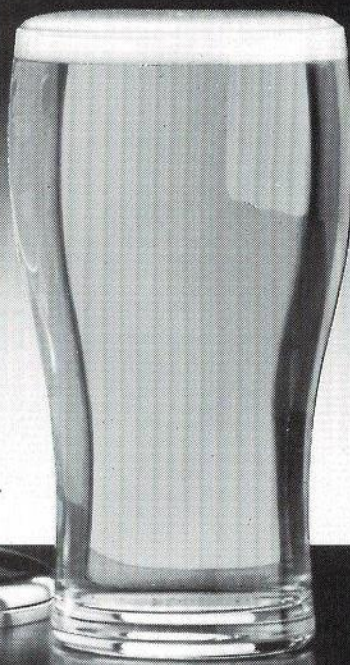
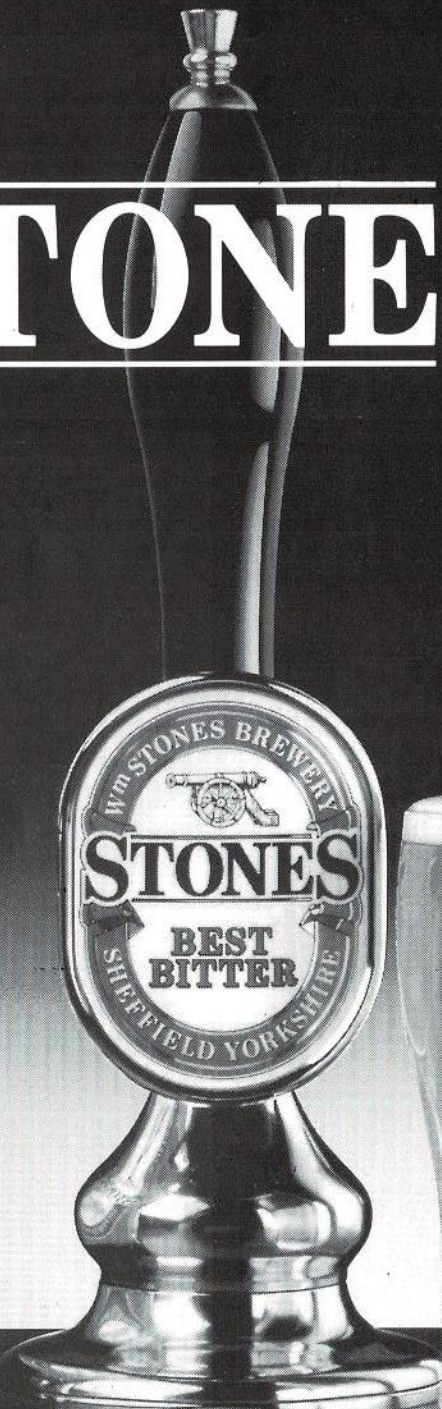
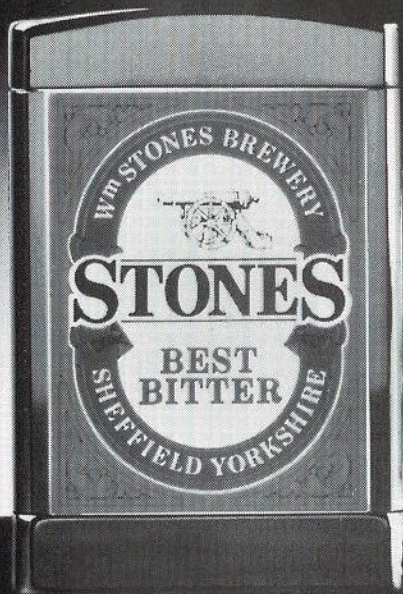


Date	Team	Venue	K.O.	Res.	Att.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15		
<b>AUGUST</b>																						
Sun 21	WIGAN	H	3:30pm	L24-36	5,034	Gibson	Banquet	Ropati	Currie 2T	Calland T	Calland 2T	Butt T	Pearson G4	Aston	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Roebuck	G.S. Price
Sun 28	LEEDS	A	3:00pm	L14-36	12,341	Gibson	Ropati	Currie	Calland 2T	Butt	Pearson G3	Aston	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Roebuck	G.S. Price		
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>																						
Sun 4	WARRINGTON	H	3:30pm	W26-10	3,892	Gibson	Banquet	Currie	Ropati	Ropati	Pearson G7	Aston	Molloy	Gunn	Casey	Divet T2	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Roebuck	G.S. Price T		
Sun 11	SALFORD	A	3:00pm	D04-24	3,410	Gibson T	Banquet	Currie	Ropati	Butt	Pearson T G4	Aston T	Molloy	Gunn	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Southernwood T	G.S. Price		
Fri 16	BRADFORD NORTHERN	H	7:30pm	L16-42	4,252	Gibson	Senior	Currie	Calland	Butt	Pearson G2	Aston	Molloy T	Gunn	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price T2	Roebuck	Southernwood	G.S. Price		
Sun 25	WAKEFIELD TRINITY	A	3:30pm	L0-15	4,503	Gibson	Banquet	Currie	Ropati	Butt	Roebuck	Aston	Molloy T	Gunn	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price T2	Tuuta	Calland	G.S. Price		
<b>OCTOBER</b>																						
Tue 4	WORKINGTON TOWN	H	7:30pm	W46-6	2,862	Gibson	Banquet 2T	Currie T	Ropati T	Ropati T	Nixon	Thompson	Molloy T	Southernwood T	Ellis	Divet 2T	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Aston T6	G.S. Price		
Sun 9	WIDNES	A	3:00pm	L18-28	3,905	Gibson	Banquet T	Calland	Ropati T	Butt	Nixon	Aston 3G	Molloy	Southernwood	Ellis	Divet T	G.H. Price	Roebuck	O'Brien	G.S. Price		
Tue 25	HALIFAX	H	7:30pm	L14-22	4,689	Gibson T	Banquet	Currie	Ropati	Butt	Nixon	Aston 3G	Molloy	Southernwood T	G.S. Price	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	O'Brien	Ellis		
Sun 30	OLDHAM	A	3:00pm	W20-10	3,763	Senior T	Banquet T	Gibson	Ropati	Butt	Nixon	Aston 4G	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.S. Price T	Tuuta	Roebuck	Ellis		
<b>NOVEMBER</b>																						
Sun 13	LEEDS	H	3:30pm	L28-30	5,685	Gibson T	Banquet 2GT	Calland T	Ropati	Butt	Nixon	Aston 1G	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Tuuta T	Roebuck	G.S. Price		
Wed 23	WIGAN	A	7:30pm	L6-30	10,201	Senior 1G	Butt	Calland	Gibson	Currie	Nixon	Roebuck	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Tuuta T	Hughes	G.S. Price		
Sun 27	WARRINGTON	A	3:00pm	L14-8	4,891	Ano	Butt T	Calland	Gibson	Banquet TG	Nixon T	Roebuck	Molloy	Gunn	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Hughes	G.S. Price		
<b>DECEMBER</b>																						
Sun 4	REGAL TROPHY - Round 2	A	3:30pm	L12-18	1,240	Gibson T	Butt	Currie 1G	Calland T	Hughes	Nixon	Roebuck	Molloy	Gunn	Casey	G.S. Price	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Ano 1G	Southernwood		
Sun 11	SALFORD	H	3:30pm	L12-20	2,707	Gibson	Butt	Currie	Calland	Banquet	Nixon	Aston 2G	Molloy	Gunn	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price 2T	Tuuta	Roebuck	G.S. Price		
Mon 26	CASTLEFORD	A	11:30am	L16-32	8,862	Wilson	Butt	Gibson	Calland	Banquet	Nixon	Aston 2G	Molloy T	Gunn	Casey	Roebuck	G.H. Price	Tuuta	Roebuck	G.S. Price		
<b>JANUARY</b>																						
Sun 8	HULL	H	3:30pm	L26-29	2,428	Wilson	Butt T	Gibson T	Calland T	Banquet	Tuuta T	Aston 3G	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	G.S. Price	A.N.O.T.		
Wed 11	SHEFFIELD EAGLES	H	7:30pm	L14-24	2,309	Wilson	Butt	Gibson T	Calland	Hughes	Nixon T	Aston 6	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Roebuck	G.H. Price	Tuuta T	Rogger	G.S. Price		
Sun 15	ST. HELENS	A	3:00pm	L20-26	5,339	Wilson	Butt	Gibson T	Calland T	Hughes	Tuuta	Aston 4G	Molloy	Southernwood T	Casey	A.D.O.	G.H. Price	Divet	Roebuck	Sims		
Sun 22	DONCASTER	H	3:30pm	W 34-16	3,631	Gibson T	Butt T	Rogger 2T	Calland T	Hughes T	Tuuta	Aston 5G	Molloy	Southernwood	Sims	A.N.O.	G.H. Price	Divet	Roebuck	A.N.O.		
<b>FEBRUARY</b>																						
Sun 5	WAKEFIELD TRINITY	H	3:30pm	W22-15	4,086	Gibson	Butt	Rogger	Calland	Hughes T	Tuuta T	Aston 5G	Molloy	Southernwood T	Sims	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Nixon	Gunn		
Sun 12	BRADFORD (S.C.C.C.) - Rd 4	H	3:30pm	W50-22	1,973	Gibson T	Butt	Rogger 3T	Calland 2T	Hughes T	Tuuta	Aston 9G	Molloy	Southernwood T	Sims	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Nixon	A.N.O.		
Sun 19	BRADFORD NORTHERN	A	7:30pm	W24-16	3,127	Gibson	Nixon	Rogger T	Calland	Hughes 2T	Tuuta	Aston 4G	Molloy T	Southernwood	Sims	A.N.O.	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Gunn	G.S. Price		
Sun 26	WARRINGTON TOWN	A	3:00pm	L2-13	3,427	Gibson	Nixon	Rogger	Calland	Hughes	Tuuta	Aston 6	Molloy	Southernwood	Sims	A.N.O.	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Gunn	G.S. Price		
Sun 26	SHEFFIELD EAGLES	A	3:00pm	W30-10	3,829	Gibson	Butt	Rogger T	Hughes	Banquet	Tuuta T	Aston 6G, 2D6G, T	Molloy	Southernwood	Sims	Divet T	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Nixon	Casey		
<b>MARCH</b>																						
Sun 12	WHITEHAVEN (S.C.C.C.) - Rd 6	A	3:00pm	W42-14	4,007	Gibson	Butt	Rogger T	Hughes	Banquet 4T	Tuuta	Aston 7G	Molloy	Southernwood	Sims	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Nixon	Casey		
Sun 19	DONCASTER	A	2:00pm	W22-19	2,853	Gibson	Butt	Rogger T	Hughes	Banquet	Tuuta	Aston 5G, 2T	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Nixon	A.N.O.		
Sun 26	ST. HELENS	H	3:30pm	W34-27	3,621	Gibson T	Butt	Rogger	Nixon T	Hughes	Tuuta T	Aston 5G, T	Molloy	Southernwood	Sims	Divet T	A.N.O.	Roebuck T	Gunn	Casey		
<b>APRIL</b>																						
Sat 1	LEEDS (S.C.C.C.) S / Final, Eilan Road	3:00pm	L22-39	21,185	Gibson	Butt T	Rogger	Calland T	Hughes	Hughes	Tuuta	Aston 3G	Molloy	Southernwood T	Casey	Divet T	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Nixon	A.N.O.		
Wed 5	HULL	A	3:00pm	L8-28	3,219	Gibson	Banquet	Nixon	Calland T	Hughes	Tuuta	Aston 2G	Molloy	Gunn	Sims	A.N.O.	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Divet	A.N.O.		
Sun 9	HALIFAX	A	3:00pm	L8-34	4,580	Gibson	Butt	Rogger	Calland T	Simpson	Nixon	Aston (2G)	Casey	Southernwood T	Sims	A.N.O.	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Hughes	Gunn		
Fri 14	CASTLEFORD	H	7:30pm	L6-27	4,563	Gibson	Butt	Rogger	Calland T	Simpson	Tuuta	Aston G	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Gunn	Sims		
Mon 17	SHEFFIELD EAGLES	A	3:15pm	L16-26	2,116	Gibson	Banquet T, 2G	Rogger	Calland	Simpson T	Tuuta T	Thompson	Molloy	Southernwood	Casey	Divet	G.H. Price	Roebuck	Frankland	Gunn		
Thurs 20	WIDNES	H	7:30pm																			
Sun 23	OLDHAM	H	7:30pm																			

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# STONES



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## Featherstone Rovers Great Britain Roll of Honour

**TOMMY ASKIN:** Tommy played six Tests, three against Australia and three against New Zealand in 1928.

**CHRIS BIBB:** Chris played one Test against New Zealand in 1990.

**JOHN 'KEITH' BRIDGES:** Keith played for Great Britain three times in 1974. Twice against the French, once against Australia.

**TERRY CLAWSON:** Terry gained a total of 14 caps, two as a Rovers player in 1962 against France.

**MALCOLM DIXON:** Mal gained two caps against France in 1962 and 1964.

**STEVE EVANS:** Steve played for Great Britain seven times plus three as substitute between 1979 and 1982, two of these caps were gained as a Hull player. Whilst at Rovers he played once against Australia, four times against New Zealand with two games as sub against Australia and one against New Zealand.

**DERYCK FOX:** Deryck played for Great Britain ten times with four tests on the bench. One of these Tests was the 1992 World Cup final as a Bradford Northern player. Deryck's international career began in 1985 with two Tests against France and three against New Zealand. He started two Tests against both the New Zealanders and the Australians in 1986.

**DON FOX:** Don played one Test against the Australians in 1963.

**DAVID HOBBS:** From a total of ten starts and three as substitute, David played seven games against France, Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea as a

Rovers player with one Test as substitute.

**GARY JORDAN:** Gary played once against France in 1964 and once against Australia in 1967.

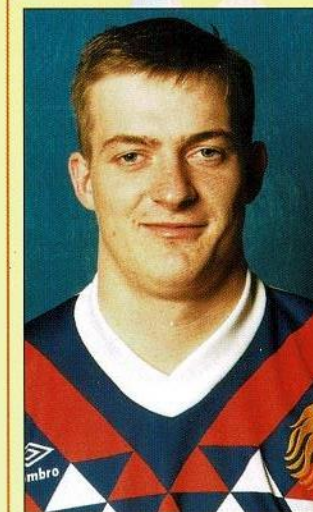
**ARNOLD MORGAN:** Arnie played for Great Britain four times in 1968, three times against France and once against New Zealand.

**STEVE NASH:** Steve gained no less than 24 Great Britain caps, starting in 1971. As a Rovers player, he played four times against France, five times against New Zealand and seven times against Australia.

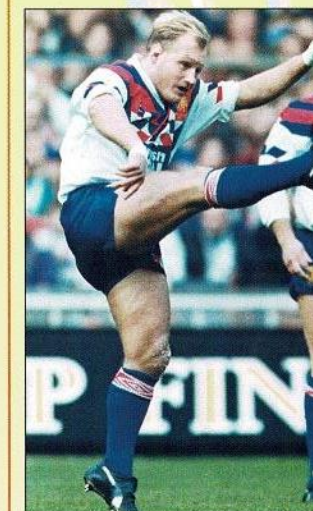
**PAUL NEWLOVE:** Paul has played for Great Britain 11 times, with four games as a substitute. Whilst at Rovers he was the youngest player to play international football when he played against the Kiwis in 1989. Between then and leaving Rovers in 1993, he substituted against New Zealand and Papua New Guinea, but started against New Zealand twice, Australia three times, Papua New Guinea and France once each.

**PETER SMITH:** Between 1977 and 1984 Pete was substitute for five internationals, he started one Test against the Australians in 1982.

**JIM THOMPSON:** Between 1970 and 1978 Jim started 20 internationals, one of these was as a Bradford Northern player. He also made one appearance as sub. With Rovers, he started nine Tests against Australia, seven against New Zealand and three against France.



Paul Newlove



Deryck Fox

# ROVERS



Chris Westwood writes...

I've heard talk of funerals and wakes, tears as deep as the Calder (or something like that) and an entire casualty ward full of broken hearts. And I must say that I've been feeling incredibly down about what's been going on over the last few weeks myself... although I must confess, what has bothered me almost as much as the thought of the demise of the Rovers, has been the way this deal was done and with whom - alongside the fact that it's the same intellectual bankrupts who have failed Rugby League who are being given all this money to waste.

Bradford; a city of half a million people, supposedly deep in the Rugby League heartland (if there is such a thing), attracts a similar level of support to a small town team like Featherstone and how many Asian fans or players do they have?

Oldham, today's visitors and by no means alone, allow their fans to watch the game in a slum and that goes for Widnes who are probably even more cupable as they have had so much success upon which to base a fine Rugby League club but who end up virtually bankrupt and playing in a shanty town. I could go on and I might, if I don't manage to calm down sufficiently before I get to the bottom of the page. The night after watching the BBC 'tears of the Calder' special, I turned on the news as I was having my tea. There was this lad who was about the same age as my own son, he even looked like him, which was even more poignant, was being helped into hospital. The hospital was in Chechnya and it had been ruined by Russian shelling. The boy had had his foot blown off by a land mine. Be fed up, be angry, but spell such deep sorrow as makes you cry for something more than the fact that your rugby team has been asked to merge with two others. Better still, instead of beating your chest for the cameras, do something. Do something which will help your club to carry on. Do something which will help Rugby League to grow. Whilst people's



**TOP TABLE...** The Super League deal is announced parochialism which has been another contributory factor to Rugby League's failure to become a major sport in this country. In France they can blame the French Rugby Union's collaboration with the Nazis during the war for its failure to flourish....what excuse have we got. And finally, I will personally chop off the hands of the first panjandrum in a blazer and a sovereign ring to use his club's 'Murdoch Money', to sign a half-fit yuppie of a Rugby Union player. You know Jeremy Guscott is crap and so are all his chums. The Superleague should be epitomised by, and the money spent on, development officers out there every day, community projects on the go all the time, civilised facilities for the fans (who

# Something for the weekend

“  
Hello...  
Goodbye  
”

tears were dripping into the Calder or whatever, some people were thinking and acting to enable Featherstone Rovers to carry on. Not on the same basis as it has done, but in a vital way as a 'centre of excellence', a focus for the community and would you believe it, an important part of the 'Superleague' concept, even playing in winter. By the time you read this the idea will have been accepted by the gaffers or it might not and you might not go for it anyway, but the point is at least somebody tried to do something positive instead of wallowing in some sickening bog of self pity or proudly parading the kind of small minded

probably deserve to be allowed in free for at least two seasons anyway), competitive competition where one team doesn't dominate seemingly forever, the demise of the drunken racist cretins on the terraces that we pretend don't exist, imaginative but not rip-off marketing, sensible financial management, a positive, nationwide media profile: in other words everything which those running Rugby League since 1895 have almost without exception failed to do, otherwise our last chance is gone and no, I still haven't calmed down.  
*Here's to the future folks, whatever it brings.*

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■ Is it farewell? I hope not. Having been a supporter of Featherstone Rovers since 1952, I have seen and felt the 'highs' and 'lows' we have been through.

When Bob Ashby was Chairman, he phoned me on Thursday 7 February 1985 to tell me the stand and dressing rooms had been burnt down during the night. I could hardly believe it. Shortly afterwards I was at the ground and saw the desolation it had caused. It seemed too big a blow from which the club would struggle to recover. In true Featherstone fashion the accident was turned to our advantage. The foresight and building expertise of our Chairman turned it to our salvation. Resulting in the present stand and clubhouse, which is the envy of many clubs. A few days ago the bubble burst. Rupert Murdoch came up with his massive injection of cash to Rugby League. League in general needed this huge offer. You know the rest. The geographical position of our three clubs called for a merger. Fans of all three clubs hated the prospect of losing their IDENTITY and HISTORY. The season has been one we would rather forget. Pre-season, many good judges predicted a top four place for Rovers, or very near. Then came the blow. The loss of five backs of the

quality of Chris Bibb, Andy Currier, Martin Pearson, Iva Ropati and Owen Simpson. This was a body blow few clubs could have survived, plus a change of coach. Survive we have with good prospects for next season. Then this.

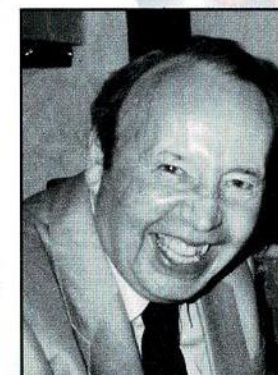
What other club can boast an average 'gate' of a quarter of the total population of their town? We can. Many would be more than delighted with an eighth! The Town has suffered the crippling blows with the loss of the pit and all that entailed. Only Rugby League was left and the pride of our super little stadium and the lads who played.

Surely disaster will not strike again? If we do retain our beloved Featherstone Rovers, what a chance to start again, with local players and local pride. Let's play to our strengths which have carried us through in the past. Such names as David Hobbs, Mick Morgan and Neil Clawson have all crossed the Pennines to play for Oldham, with Leo Casey coming this way.

David Hobbs continued his international career whilst with Oldham. His goal kicking and try scoring abilities made him a great favourite with the club.

Au Revoir and not Goodbye, I hope.

“  
What other club can boast an average 'gate' of a quarter of the total population of their town?  
”



by Donald Hunt

**...they played for us**

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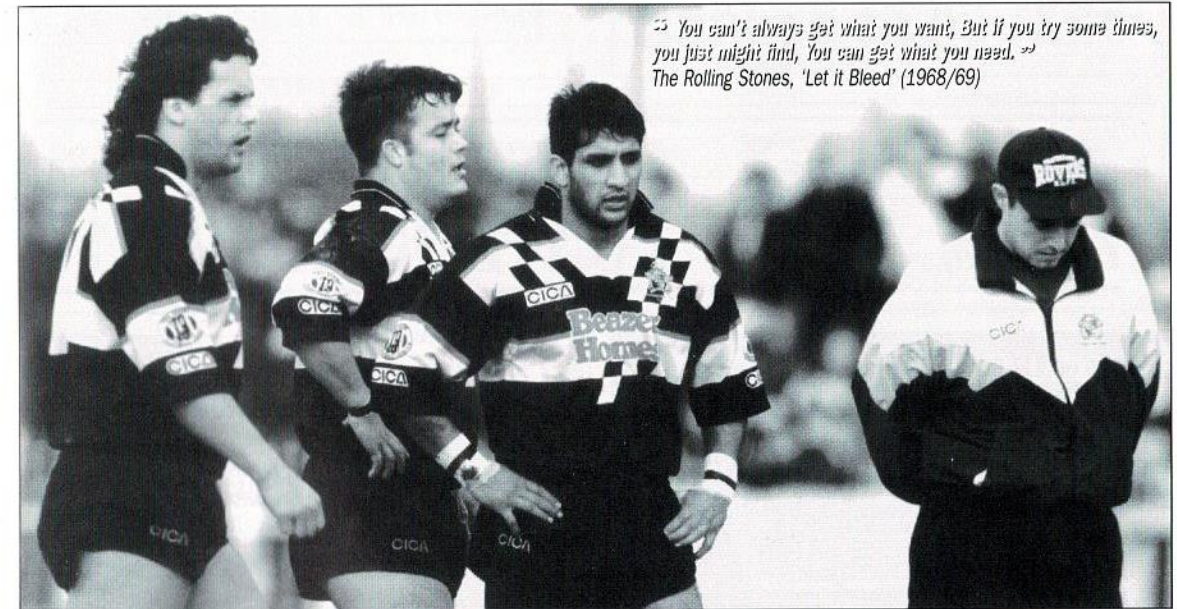
● *by the way...*

■ A nationwide survey amongst fans who support teams in soccer's Premier League, came up with some results which seem highly relevant to our game and perhaps point to one or two of the reasons why families are staying away from Rugby League grounds in droves. People who were bringing children to games more often and were actually attending more games were asked what had attracted them to do so on that particular day; 61.8% of those interviewed said that safer grounds and improved facilities were the deciding factor.

■ Steve Molloy does not appear on the Great Britain Roll of Honour on page 21 as

he is a current Rovers player. Steve had already gained a Great Britain cap against the French in 1993. He gained a further Great Britain cap as a Rovers player... again against France in 1994.

■ Amidst all the tumult that recent... err tumultuous events have caused, we can now reveal that Rovers have been in negotiations to bring an overseas signing to the club of world class status. A Rovers spokesman revealed that "Our new Australian signing can really draw big crowds... his name is Rolf Harris and he has been pencilled in for our next game wherever, whenever and against whomsoever it is."



*"You can't always get what you want, But if you try some times, you just might find, You can get what you need."*  
The Rolling Stones, 'Let it Bleed' (1968/69)

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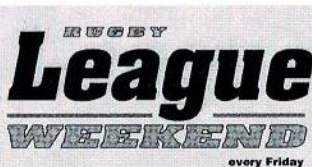
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**W**ell, here it is, the last match of the season already. A game against Oldham is always a cracker. A warm welcome to all young Oldham fans. I expect you are all feeling a bit like us at the moment, wondering what next season is going to bring. Anyway, enjoy the game.

Sorry we can't print the winners of Thursday night's Kentucky draw, as these notes are being written prior to that game. Rest assured if it was you then you will be receiving your voucher shortly if you haven't got it already. Listen out at half time to see if you have won the last Kentucky Draw of the season.

## BIRTHDAYS

As usual for the last programme, here are the birthdays for May and June. If your birthday is in July or August then it will appear in the first programme of next season, hopefully.

### MAY

5th	Andrew Nicholls	13
15th	Laura Appleyard	9
	Chris Appleyard	12
24th	Paul Flaherty	10
26th	David Sharp	13
29th	Matthew Mcguire	10

### JUNE

2nd	Lee Appleyard	9
12th	Richard Hewes	10
13th	Daniel Siddall	8
14th	Gillian Peach	15
16th	Carly Hayburn	15
21st	Gavin Beard	10
28th	Emma Newby	14
29th	Joanne Goodwin	12

Have a good day when it arrives all of you.

**ANSWER TO RUGBY RIDDLE NO 9...** Nigel Wright



Christian received a £10 TSB account and a replica shirt courtesy of M. Worsfold Transport Services.

today's mascot



**Name:** Christian Mcguire  
**Age:** 11  
**School:** St Josephs RC, Pontefract  
**Hobbies:** Swimming and football  
**Ambition:** To run the London Marathon  
**Favourite Fev Player:** Martin Pearson

# *In* league

An Independent View

with... Dave Hadfield

“  
I'm against  
imposing  
mergers on  
clubs  
without any  
consultation  
or consent...  
”

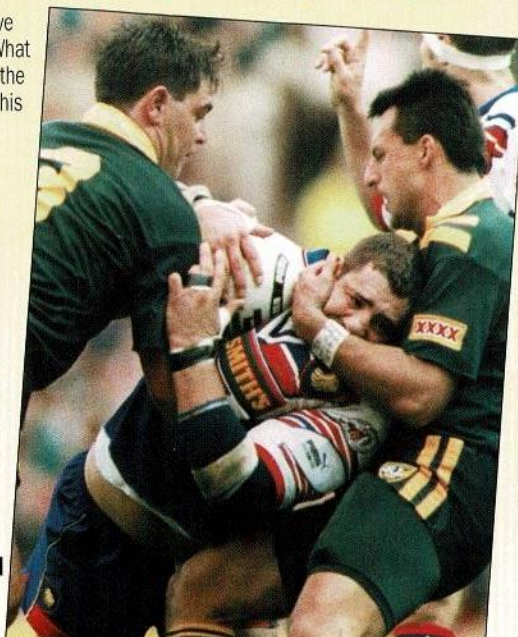
■ Dave Hadfield, Rugby League correspondent of "The Independent", is without doubt the most respected and knowledgeable journalist in Rugby League. He has been present at the most important events in recent Rugby League history both on and off the field and, of course, he is a seriously committed fan. Dave has seen the recent radical and sudden changes in the game from close up so his thoughts need to be taken notice of.

"I applaud these changes if they are pushed by the right people. I am strongly in favour of a small elite League with intense, even competition. This improves playing standards. The money which is being put into the game will, I hope, be used to do something about many of our stadiums which, let's face it, are dumps...we need grounds that are going to take us into the 21st century. I think the idea of having a London side in the competition is a great move, it will provide it with a national dimension which is vital. In theory that goes for the inclusion of the French sides, although things look worryingly vague on that front. However, I'm against imposing mergers on clubs without any consultation or consent and the thought of having a meeting on a Friday and taking such a major decision about the game the next day doesn't seem sound either. Because of this, there are some major loose ends. For instance, and these worry me lot; international football which has always been a weak link in Rugby League's credibility has been weakened even further. Great Britain can't play an Australian team which is under the auspices of the ARL and remember that Papa New Guinea and the teams from the Pacific Islands are affiliated to the ARL as well. There will be no more tours, which is tragic for people who have paid money to go in '96. There seems no sign of compromise, even though the situation changes almost daily. Remember that some of the teams in the Winfield Cup have signed 5 year loyalty contracts with the ARL. What is going to happen to the World Cup? What is the long term future of the Challenge Cup? All of this looks highly 'iffy' to me. The impact of the genesis of the British Super League has had an immense effect upon the southern media. Huge amounts of space are being devoted to it. It's just a pity that they can't devote anything like the space to the actual game and naturally the Murdoch controlled press is all for it. I worry about all aspects of this and other issues of Rugby League and this is reflected in my own journalism. I am able to call it as I see it, not having an official line to follow. The real agenda has nothing to do with British Rugby League of course. The TV rights for pay TV in Australia are the real prize. On top of

that, however, is the fact that News International will become so powerful that they will be able to create their own TV friendly sport of 'World Wide Rugby'. The amateur(sic)edifice of Rugby Union has already almost crumbled totally in Australia and you can see some hybrid game emerging not far down the line.

My personal feelings are mixed about the Super League. I just know that the sport is going to be even more exciting on the field, but I am worried about it. Other things worry me than the one's we've just talked about. I'm not convinced that the move to summer is well motivated. I've actually heard club chairmen say that they won't have to spend money on their stadiums on the strength of playing in summer. People have more options in summer. This is OK if you have the imagination and acumen to compete in this market, but clubs generally haven't shown much up to now. Although it's hard to criticise people who have put their own hands in their pockets to keep clubs going, the people who will be running the Super League clubs are the same ones that are running the game now. They aren't going to become financial wizards overnight are they? Realistically, £75 million isn't that much. It's a pump primer and some acumen is going to be needed to use it properly and make it attract more money. I can see a lot of it being wasted. None of us is seeing anything like the full picture and the situation is extremely fluid. It will be a few months before we see what's really going to happen."

*The end of Test rugby is only part of the price to be paid for the Super League*

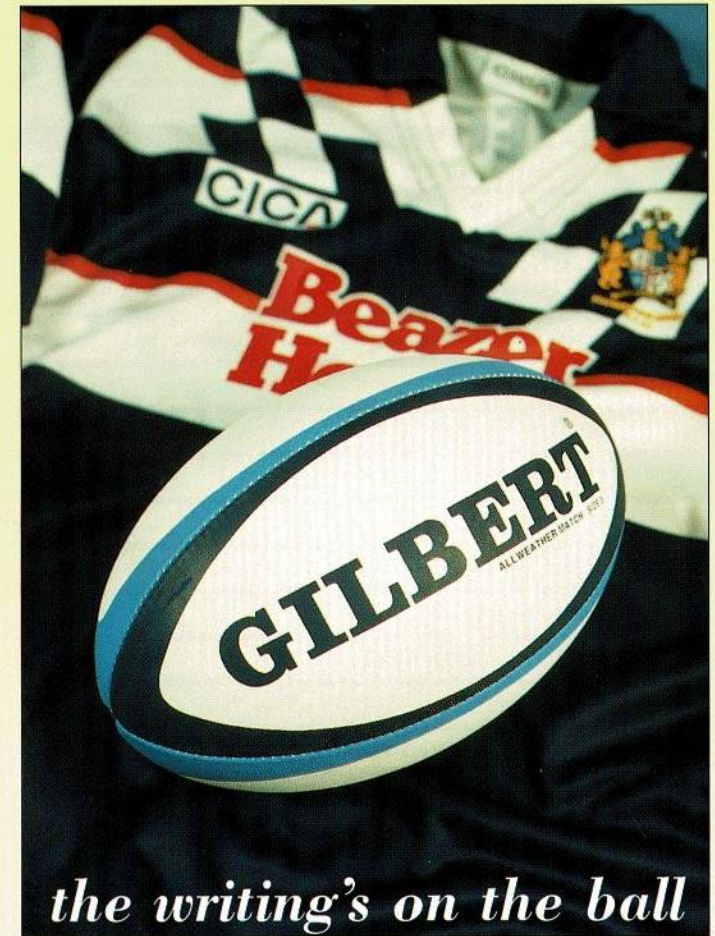


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*the writing's on the ball*

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