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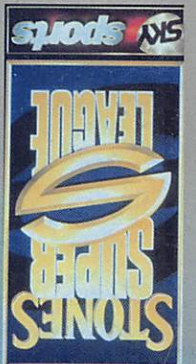


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OLDHAM BEARS RLFC

Bear House, 52 Union Street,
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HONOURS

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1909-10, 1910-11, 1956-57 Runners Up

1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22, 1954-55

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1904-05

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1897-98, 1900-01, 1907-08, 1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57,
1957-58

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1899, 1925, 1927 Runners Up 1907, 1912, 1924, 1926

LANCASHIRE CUP WINNERS

1907, 1910, 1913, 1919, 1924, 1933, 1956, 1957, 1958
Runners Up 1908, 1911, 1918, 1921, 1954, 1966, 1968,
1986, 1989

SECOND DIVISION CHAMPIONS

1963-64, 1981-82, 1987-88

SECOND DIVISION PREMIERSHIP WINNERS

1988, 1990 Runners Up, 1992

CLUB RECORDS

RECORD VICTORY

63-0 v Goole, March 18th 1899 (Challenge Cup Rd 1)

67-6 v Liverpool City, April 4th 1959 (League)

RECORD SCORE

70-10 v Bramley, Feb 12th 1995 (Challenge Cup Rd 4)

67-6 v Liverpool City, April 4th 1959 (League)

RECORD ATTENDANCE

All Time 28,000 v Huddersfield, 4th Feb 1912

Last 20 years 11,254 v Bradford Bulls, 9th March 1997

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

TRIES IN A SEASON

Reg Farrar 49 1921-22

TRIES IN A CAREER

Alan Davies 174 1950-61

TRIES IN A MATCH

James Miller 7 v Barry, Oct 31st 1908

GOALS IN A SEASON

Bernard Ganley 200 1957-58

GOALS IN A CAREER

Bernard Ganley 1,358 1950-61

GOALS IN A MATCH

Bernard Ganley 14 v Liverpool City, April 4th 1959

POINTS IN A SEASON

Bernard Ganley 412 1957-58

POINTS IN A CAREER

Bernard Ganley 2,761 1950-61

POINTS IN A MATCH

Abe Johnson 30 v Widnes (12 goals, 2 tries), April 9th
1928

MOST APPEARANCES

Joe Ferguson 628 Sept 1899 - April 1923

MOST CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES

Joe Lawton 134 Sept 1897 - Nov 1902

all the above records are relevant to Oldham first class fixtures only

A Message FROM THE CHAIRMAN

JIM QUINN

Our plan to market rugby league in Tameside appears to be showing signs of success, judging by the crowd of 710 fans who watched the Alliance team beat Wigan 26-24 at Stalybridge last week. Since we moved to Bower Fold for our reserve team games at the start of the season, attendances have shown a gradual increase. Unfortunately, the ground will soon be unavailable due to re-seeding and other close-season work by Stalybridge Celtic, but I have been having talks with the nearby Hyde United soccer club and we may be moving there for the remainder of the season, although this was unconfirmed at the time of writing.

We are very grateful to Stalybridge Celtic for their help and co-operation, and those fans who have been to Bower Fold don't need me to tell them what a splendid set-up it is.

It is difficult to know how many of the 710 there for the Wigan game came from Oldham, Wigan or Tameside itself, but it is safe to assume the majority came from Oldham.

It is equally safe to say that the game is starting to arouse some interest in Tameside, albeit modestly, and I put that down to three things.

1. As we always believed it would, and with the help of BSkyB, Super League is starting to make an impression this season in areas like Tameside which have previously been barren lands in terms on rugby league.

2. Our Alliance side has put on some cracking games at Bower Fold and news of what's on offer is bound to spread to the local community which, admittedly, is



steeped in soccer.

3. Abe Kerr, our marketing manager, is attempting to get more bums on seats by issuing free tickets to primary schools and this sort of promotional work has spilled over into Tameside. In addition, let me tell you three little stories relating to our experiences in the past couple of weeks.

First of all, I handed out six tickets for the Paris St Germain game to a group of youngsters who live near me in the Hyde area. They had never been to a rugby league game before but I spoke to them again a few days after the match and I was delighted to learn that five of them had gone to the match, with their fathers, and all of them had enjoyed it so much they were wanting to know details of the next match at Boundary Park.

Secondly, each of our season-ticket holders were given an extra complimentary ticket for the Paris game and a couple of regulars who had two 'comps' to give away handed them to a couple in Stockport, who had never previously been to a Super League match.

They enjoy it so much that a day or two later they made the

journey from Stockport to the Bears offices in Union Street to buy a couple of season tickets for themselves.

And so it goes on. Brian Gartland's son, Shaun, who works in Hyde, provided two free youngsters' tickets for one of his workmates with the result that the whole family attended the game and later expressed an interest in taking out VIP tickets for a subsequent game.

All the signs indicate that we are getting there. Long-term injury victims like Nathan Turner and Jason Temu are on the way back and when we are able to choose from a full complement of players I am confident we will start to provide the performances that will be the biggest attraction of all. Today we welcome Halifax and all our old friends from Thrum Hall. Their new coach, John Pendlebury, must be congratulated on his appointment. John is steeped in rugby league and I am sure he will do an excellent job. We wish him well ... but not TOO well today.

JIM QUINN



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THE BEAR FACTS

ABE KERR

A look behind the scenes at the Bears with Media/Marketing Manager Abe Kerr

All involved with the club will acknowledge that we have had an awful start to Super League 1997. One win from seven matches cannot be seen in any other terms. The season is a long one and confidence is high within the club that things are to improve in the near future. In every programme between now and the end of the season you will be given an insight to what goes on behind the scenes at your club.

Attendances

For the first three home matches of

Super League 97 the attendances are up by over a thousand on the corresponding fixtures of last season. These figures will rise further as the season progresses.

Treatment news

To be a centre is a dangerous business. We have only Darren Abram fit of our established centres. Vince Fawcett, Mike Neal, Paul Toppin and Nathan Turner are still injured, although Nathan made an encouraging debut in the A-team on Thursday April 17th. He played despite considerable pain in his foot. Jason Temu also played in that match and came through very well. Rob Myler limped off against Wigan at

Central Park and now faces an operation. Our luck with injuries must improve soon.

Coaching update

The departure of Andy Goodway from the club has been well publicised this week. The events of the last few weeks have intimated that things were not right from his point of view and in this light coupled with poor results the pressure was building up on him. He is a very respected figure and I speak for all the Bears in wishing him well. A successor to Andy will be appointed in the near future.

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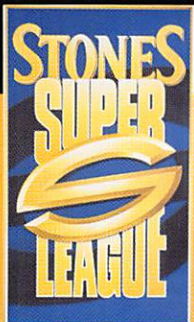
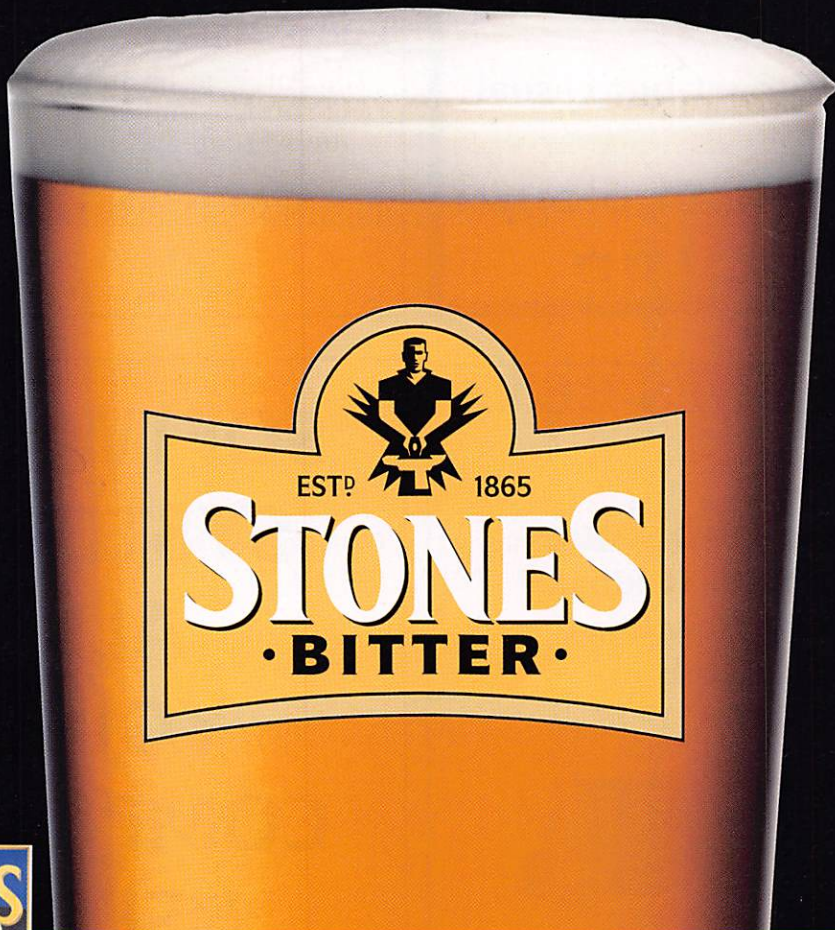
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DOWN MEMORY LANE

DON YATES

Don Yates looks back to a match from yesteryear
When the concept of the Super League burst onto the scene a couple of years ago there were serious concerns that one of the casualties of that revolution would be the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. However, common sense prevailed and the competition which began way back in 1897 as the Northern Union Cup is set to continue as the most prestigious competition in the British game. Oldham's progress in the first Cup campaign was brief. They lost 7-3 at Bradford in the first round. The following season the Roughyeds considerably better. They beat Leeds, Halifax and Runcorn to reach the quarter-finals but at that stage lost 3-0 at Mount Pleasant against Cup holders Batley. The Gallant Youths then went on to retain the trophy with a 7-0 victory over Bradford in the final. The 1899 competition included three clubs from the Oldham area — Oldham, Werneth and Saddleworth

Rangers. Saddleworth were drawn at Huddersfield in the first round and they were eliminated 43-2. Oldham were also drawn away but Goole surrendered ground advantage and the match was staged at Watersheddings. Oldham won 63-0 which remains their biggest marginal victory to this day. Werneth also won but their victory over Salford St Bartholomews was by a much narrower margin, 4-2. Werneth's reward for that hard fought victory was a trip to Salford in round two. They lost there 31-0. Oldham, however, maintained local interest with a 14-0 home victory over Warrington. There was a spot of trouble at Swinton where Hunslet went through on the strength of an Albert Goldthorpe penalty. the referee and some Hunslet players were assaulted after the game and the Swinton ground was consequently closed until the following October. In round three Oldham won 23-3 at Bradford to avenge that

earlier reverse but the talk of the round was Batley's first ever Cup defeat by 16-6 at Leigh.

Widnes visited Watersheddings in the quarter-finals and they returned home defeated by 20 points to nil. Oldham, therefore had conceded only three points in reaching the semi-finals. Hunslet had gone one point better, having disposed of Marypot 11-2, Swinton 2-0, Castleford 16-0 and Hull 9-0.

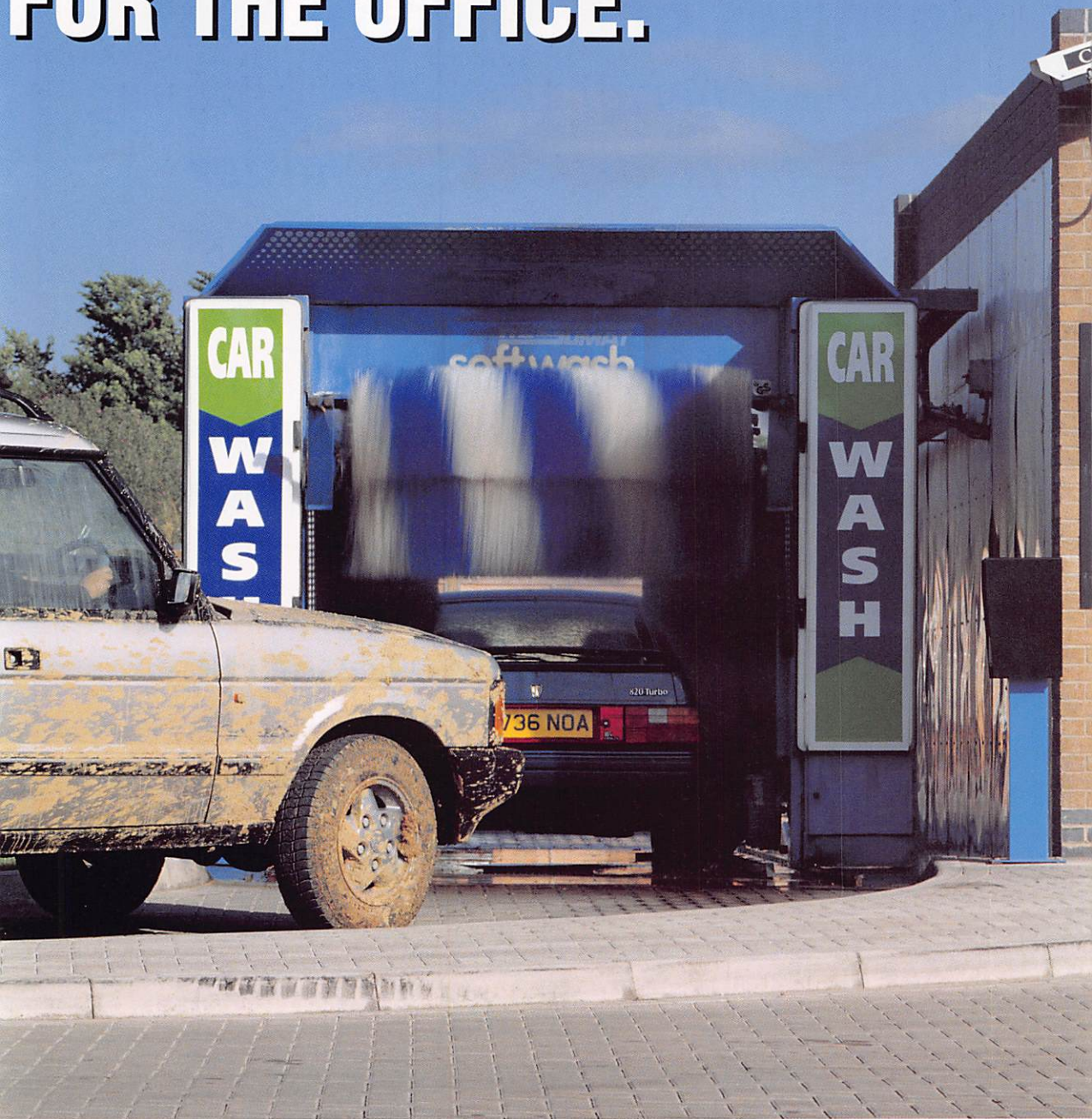


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ON THIS DAY...

DON YATES

Don Yates recalls this day in history
The 27th April is not a happy date in the history of the Oldham Rugby League club because twice on this date the Roughyeds have lost in the final of the Northern Union Cup, forerunner of the Silk Cup Challenge Cup.

The first occasion was on Saturday, 27th April 1907 when Oldham met Warrington at Wheater's Field, Broughton. Oldham began well and at half-time led 3-2 after second-row forward Bert Avery had scored the Roughyeds' try. Things went wrong after the interval when Warrington got on top and went on to win 17-3. Five years later, on Saturday 27th April 1912, Oldham were firm favourites to beat Dewsbury in the final which that season was staged at Headingley. Once again events went to plan in the first 40 minutes and at half-time the Roughyeds led 5-2. Winger G Cook had scored the Oldham try which had been converted by prop Joe Ferguson. With ten minutes remaining, the score remained at 5-2 for Oldham but then disaster struck. First of all Bert Avery was sent off and then winger Billy Rhodes crossed to equalise at 5-5. Two minutes from time Rhodes

scored again and Dewsbury had won the Cup 8-5.

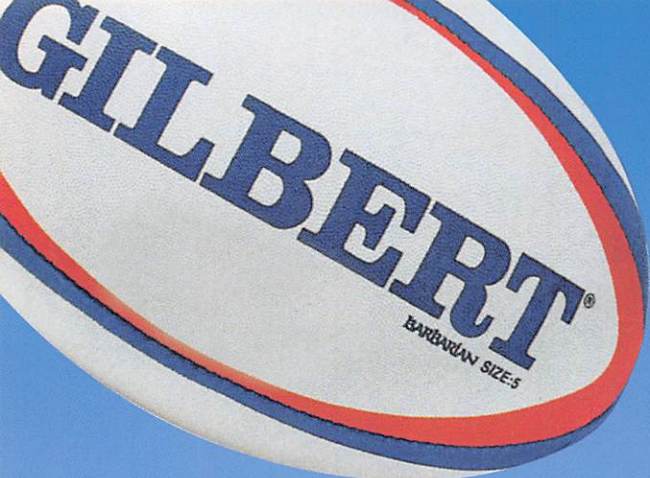
On this day in 1959, Monday 27th April, Oldham fared a little better when they met St Helens at Watersheddings in what was a vital match for the Saints. A draw would have made Saints Lancashire Champions on points difference over Wigan. They came close, scoring four tries to Oldham's three, but the Roughyeds won 15-14 and so Wigan took the title. Jack Keith, Vin Nestor and Ike Southward scored the Oldham tries with Bernard Ganley landing three goals.

In the spring of 1955 Halifax faced a hectic finish to their season. They were called upon to play their closing five league matches in 10 days. They won them all and so qualified to visit league leaders Warrington in the Championship semi-final. That match was played on Wednesday, 27th April 1955, just 48 hours after completing that gruelling finale. Not surprisingly, a jaded Halifax outfit lost at Warrington who had not played for a fortnight. However, they put up a terrific scrap, the final score being 17-9. Winger Arthur Daniels scored the Halifax try to go alongside goals from

Tyssel Griffiths (2) and Derrick Schofield. Twelve months earlier, on Tuesday 27th April 1954, Odsal Stadium, Bradford staged an international between Great Britain and France. Neither Oldham nor Halifax were represented in that match which Britain won 17-8. Billy Boston (Wigan), Phil Jackson (Barrow) and Brian Biggs (Huddersfield) scored the British tries with Lewis Jones (Leeds) landing four goals. The French points came via four goals from the boot of legendary full-back Puig Aubert.

Finally, it was on this day in 1989, Thursday 27th April, that Oldham signed a promising 17-year old back-row forward from the Wigan St Patricks amateur club. His name was Chris Joynt and he went on to make 28 first team appearances for Oldham, scoring 10 tries, before moving to St Helens and further stardom in September 1992.





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AUSTRALIAN SUPER LEAGUE ROUND UP

From Dave Hadfield, the Independent's Rugby League Correspondent



Australian Super League was until this Monday, in danger of turning into a one-horse race - that horse being a Bronco.

Victory at Penrith would have put Brisbane six points clear of the field. Admittedly, the Australian system puts greater stress on the end-of-season play-offs than on first place at the end of the Championship fixtures, but it was still getting a little too processional.

So thank heavens for the Panthers, who won a thriller 27-26, inflicting a first defeat of the season on the Broncos, cutting their lead to two points and making the whole issue look infinitely more open and alive.

It was a particularly good effort by the Panthers in the absence of their inspiration, Greg Alexander. He will be out for several weeks - including this Friday's Test against New Zealand, for which he was a certain starter - with a broken bone in his foot.

In third place in Super League, behind Brisbane and Penrith, are the Canterbury Bulldogs. They came from behind to win 38-24 in Auckland, with last season's London Broncos player Duncan McRae having a big hand in the victory.

The most surprising result of the weekend was Cronulla's 29-18 defeat by the Adelaide Rams. The Sharks are turning out to be something of an enigma: they can look so good on occasions, but they are also

capable of the most horrendous lapses.

The Cronulla and Australia coach, John Lang, believed that this failure may have had something to do with an air of self-congratulation after having five men named in the Test Line-ups. They will not need reminding that reputations can be fragile things.

It was the best day yet for Rod Reddy's Rams, despite what sounds like less than ideal preparation when four of their players were arrested in a brawl outside a strip club three days before the match. Who said league was in danger of losing its rough edges?

The other team newly formed for Super League, the Hunter Mariners, also had a terrific result, beating the Perth Western Reds 36-16 with their half-back, Noel Goldthorpe, having another excellent game.

And the Canberra revival goes on. Mal Meninga's Raiders started to look something like their old selves in thrashing the North Queensland Cowboys 40-16.

That exciting full-back Brett Mullins showed a return to form with two tries, whilst Ricky Stuart and Bradley Clyde gave notice that they want their

Australian jumpers back. One woeful defence of the Cowboys was an even bigger factor, however, and they are now two points adrift at the bottom of the table. Above them on six points are the Mariners, the Raiders, the Rams and the Warriors - who go to Townsville this weekend for a fixture that now assumes extra importance.



Duncan McRae, ex Bronco's now playing for Canterbury Bulldogs

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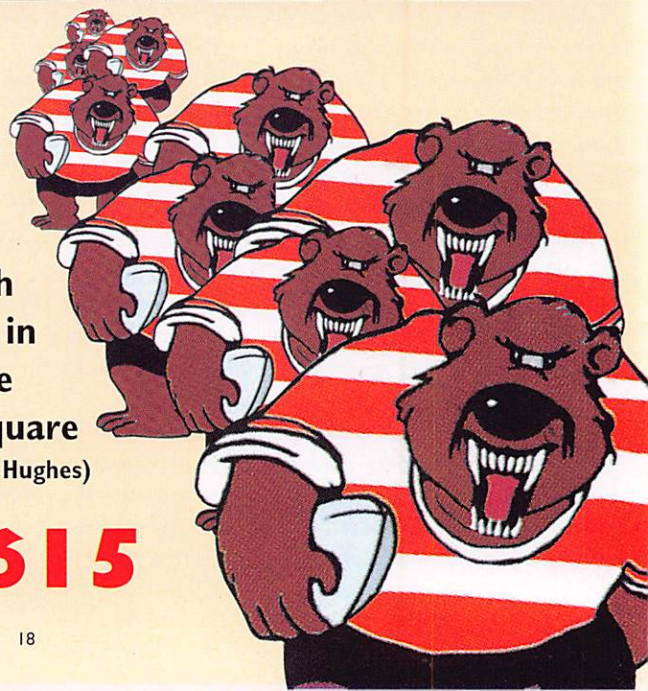
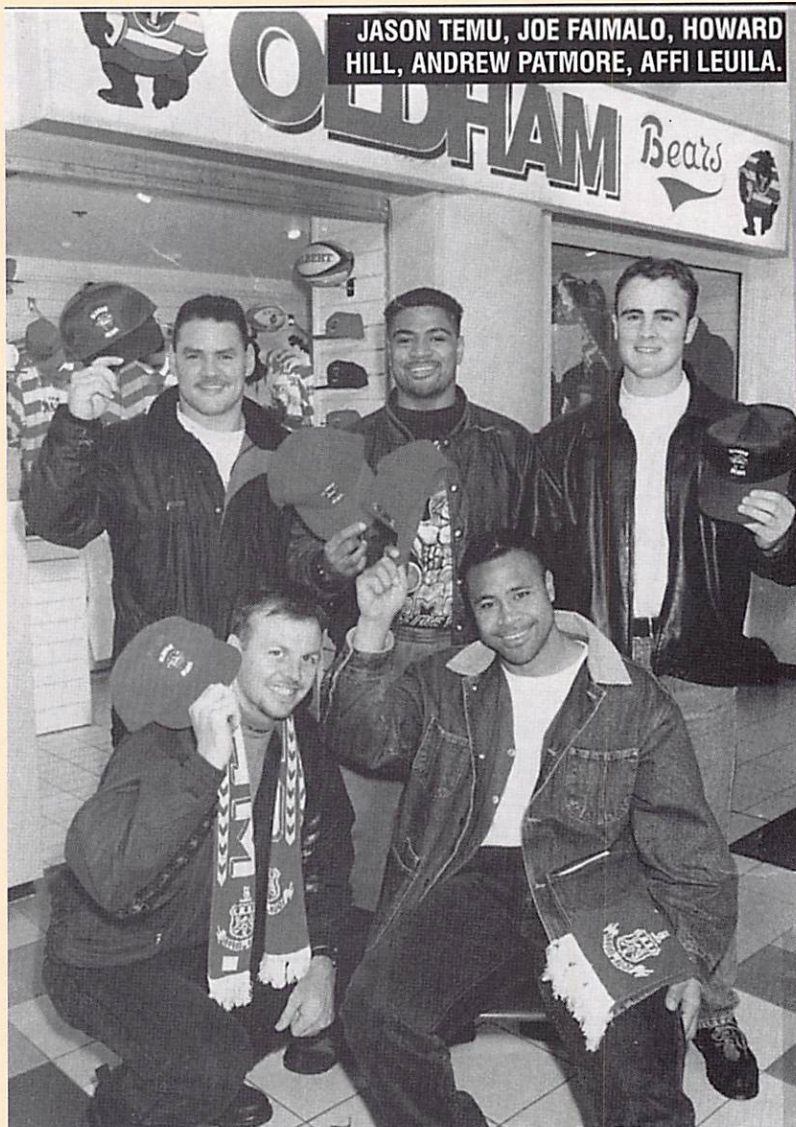
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HERE AND THERE

DON YATES

Although this year there is to be no European Championship competition, international rugby is still on the agenda. On Wednesday, 14th May, Paris will host a friendly match between France and Ireland. It is expected that Martin Crompton will once again be invited to skipper the Irish side and Tony Nuttall could be included in the Irish pack. Then on July 7th, the French will be in action again when they visit Glasgow to take on Scotland. Utility back Jimmy Cowans could be in the running for another Scottish cap in that encounter. At this point in time, those are the only two internationals scheduled to take place before the visit of the Australians in November.

A decision has yet to be made as to whether France will meet the Australians at the end of the British section of their tour. When the Kangaroos last visited France, the hosts crashed to a humiliating 74-0 defeat which followed Australian victories of 42-17, 60-16, and 64-9 in the regional matches. Clearly those results neither encouraged nor assisted the French in their attempts to strengthen the game in France. When Paris were included in the

Super League last year, it was hoped that this move would be of benefit to the French national side. Unfortunately this has not been the case. The Paris outfit is comprised mainly of antipodean players with the French domestic game continuing to be played in the winter months. The few players able to break into the Paris squad found the demands of Super League rugby together with their domestic club commitments much too big a strain. Consequently, their European Championship quest ended in embarrassing defeats at home to Wales 14-34 and away to England 73-6.

The differences between BARLA and the RFL have resulted in the suspension of the annual BARLA Open Age match with the French 'B' team. that is a major blow, not only to France, but also to our amateur open age players.

So where do the French go now with regard to international rugby? It seems that the British or Australian teams will prove much too strong and so the matches against Ireland and Scotland are suitable substitutions. However, it is essential for the well being of the European game that a worthwhile

international programme of matches is set up to assist the Celtic nations. Down in Australia the 'State of origin' series, which now incorporates New Zealand, ensures that players are battle hardened to international level before they set off on an Ashes tour. If we are to match the Australians, or the New Zealanders for that matter, then we, too, must have a series of European internationals which test our top players. The only way in which we can achieve that is by developing the game in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and France. The withdrawal of South Wales from professional rugby when they lost Super League status was a severe body blow to the development of the game in the Principality. It looks now as if France will follow Wales into the international wilderness unless action is taken quickly.

This state of affairs must be rectified if we are to achieve what we have been striving for during the past twenty five years. that is to defeat Australian in a three match test series, a feat that can only be achieved if European players have a suitable platform from which to launch their challenges to the Kangaroos.

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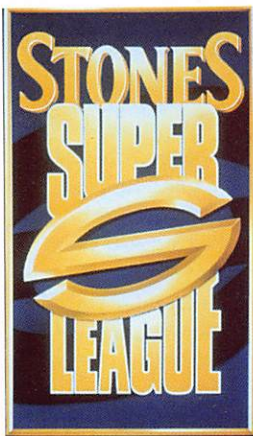
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STAT ATTACK

Raymond Fletcher, Co-author of the Rothmans Rugby League Yearbook

PLATT CHARGING TO TRY CENTURY

Andy Platt ranking as one of Britain's greatest ever forwards is based on a tremendous work rate and blocking tries rather than scoring them. But the Salford Reds veteran is now poised to grab a little glory as a tryscorer for he needs only three more for a British career century of touchdowns.

His total of 97 tries has been steadily built up in 446 matches over 15 years with 68 for St. Helens, 24 Wigan, one for Salford and four in representative matches including two Test touchdowns for Great Britain.

Now 33, Platt's tryscoring peak came in only his third season of 1984-85 when he scored 19 for St. Helens. It must have been quite a season as he had a four-try blast against Warrington and grabbed the only other hat-trick of his career.

Platt's senior career began as a substitute for St. Helens in

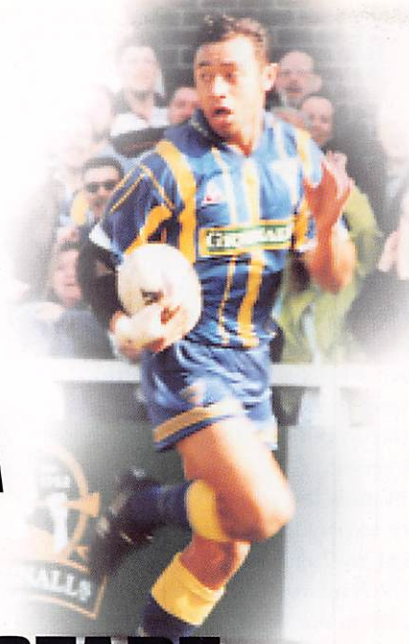
a 19-19 draw at Leigh on 22 August 1982. He was transferred to Wigan in 1988 for £140,000 and six years later joined New Zealand club Auckland Warriors. Widnes signed him for the 1996-96 Centenary season before he made a permanent return to Britain with Salford this year.



PLATT'S TRYSORING RECORD ST HELENS

ST HELENS	App.	Tries
1982-83	14+9	6
1983-84	31+1	10
1984-85	36	19
1985-86	26+3	10
1986-87	34+2	11
1987-88	29	12
Wigan		
1988-89	32+3	6
1989-90	35+1	8
1990-91	32	1
		+1t GB
1991-92	34+1	2
		+1t GB
1992-93	30+1	5
1993-94	30+1	2
Widnes		
1995-96	13	0
Salford Reds		
1997	8	1
Totals		
St Helens	170+15	68
Wigan	193+7	24
Widnes	13	0
Salford R	8	1
Great Britain	*22+4	2
	Incl. 1 non Test	
England	4	0
Lancashire	3	0
Chairman's XIII I		0
1988 Tour		30
Not including 2 Test app.		
1992 Tour		32
Not including 6 Test app.		
Totals	420+26	97

VAGANA MAKES SUPER START



Nigel Vagana is enjoying one of the best ever starts by an overseas player in British Rugby. He has now played in all 10 Cup and League matches for Warrington Wolves this season and failed to touch down in only one.

His total of 14 tries includes a Stones Super League chart topping ten. No matter where he plays - and he has appeared at full - back, wing, centre, and stand-off-tries just keep coming.

OVERSEAS COACHES IN DEMAND.

Welcome to Castleford Tigers' new Australian coach Stuart Raper - the 43rd from overseas to be put in charge of a British club since Chris Anderson set the trend with Halifax in 1984. Anderson was an immediate success, taking Halifax to the championship and winning the Challenge Cup. Since then he has been followed by 31 other Australian coaches plus 11 New Zealanders.

SUPER LEAGUE LEADING SCORERS

(Up to and including 20 April)

TRIES		GOALS (inc drop goals)	
Nigel Vagana (Warrington)	10	Mark Aston (Sheffield)	24
Alan Hunte (St. Helens)	9	Steve McNamara (Bradford)	24
Robbie Paul (Bradford)	7	Steve Blakeley (Salford)	22
Richard Henare (Warrington)	6	Andrew Farrell (Wigan)	22
Nick Pinkney (Sheffield)	5	Bobbie Goulding (St. Helens)	20
Jamie Oiejnik (Paris)	5	Francis Maloney (Oldham)	18
Paul Sterling (Leeds)	5	John Schuster (Halifax)	17
Tommy Martyn (St. Helens)	5	Jon Roper (Warrington)	17
		Terry Matterson (London)	12

QUIZ

- From which club did Bradford sign Glen Tomlinson?
- Which Castleford player played for Wales in 1996?
- Who is Wigan's No.19?
- Add surnames to this front row: Ian, John and Brett.
- Who made the most Halifax appearances in 1996?
- The last Leeds player to finish as top try scorer?
- Who was London's (Fulham) first coach?
- When did Britain last play France?
- The only non-winger to score 10 tries in a match?
- Top Australian try scorer in Super League 1996?

POINTS

Mark Aston (Sheffield)	56
Steve McNamara (Bradford)	55
Steve Blakeley (Salford)	51
Andrew Farrell (Wigan)	47
Terry Matterson (London)	46
Francis Maloney (Oldham)	43
Bobbie Goulding (St. Helens)	43
Nigel Vagana (Warrington)	40
Jon Roper (Warrington)	38
Alan Hunte (St. Helens)	36

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

- Butley
- Diccon Edwards
- David Murray
- Gildart, Clarke, Goldspink (Oldham)
- Asa Amone
- John Atkinson 1972-73
- Reg Bowden
- March 1994
- Shaun Edwards
- Greg Barwick (London) 16

JUNIOR BEARS

Hello again Junior Bears, Buster here.

I will be announcing our banner winner at our next meeting so don't forget to be there will you. Phew!! what a job that was to pick a winner. You were all brilliant and I wish I could give you all a prize.

Did you all see the performance against Paris? I couldn't "BEAR" to look. Well at least we got off the bottom didn't we? The news is picking up for us just now as one or two of our long-term injuries are now back in full time training and are due to return back. It was nice to see Jason Temu and Nathan Turner playing in the A team last week so let's keep our 'claws' crossed and hope that they are ready for Super League.

Anyway back to today's game... let's give a big Junior Bears welcome to our visitors to Boundary Park today, Halifax Blue Sox who have not been without problems this season and are now climbing the Super League ladder under new coach John Pendlebury.

It's Wembley weekend next weekend so there are no matches for two weeks after today's game so I have decided on another postal competition for you all to think about.

Q1. Who is the youngest ever player to play at Wembley in a Challenge Cup final?

Q2. Which two teams are contesting the final?

Answers on a postcard to: Junior Bears, PO Box 117, Oldham OL2 6FB.

The draw will take place at our next meeting on Monday 5th May where the winner will receive a signed baseball cap.

REMEMBERING MICHAEL!

May we extend our deepest condolences to Mr and Mrs Wren and Lorraine in the loss of their son and brother Michael who sadly lost his fight for life at the age of 11. Michael suffered from leukaemia and both he and his sister Lorraine were made honorary members of the Junior Bears at the request of Andy Goodway.

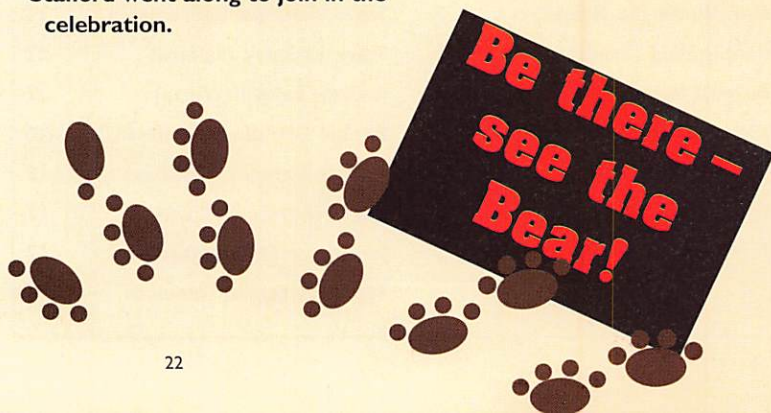
A celebration of Michael's life was held last week at Zion Methodist Church in Lees which was attended by all his classmates and friends. Abe Kerr and Andrea Stafford went along to join in the celebration.



Welcome to our Mascot for the Day who is Daniel Grady. Daniel is 6 years old and he attends Mayfield Primary School in Derker. His favourite player is Martin Crompton. Daniel plays as a utility player for St Anne's and he also likes swimming.

JUNIOR BEAR BIRTHDAYS!!

16th Luke Arundale
17th Chris Barrett
18th Emma Cameron
21st Ian Thornton
25th Paul Gilbertson
26th Gemma Laney, Michael McGroth, Zoe Prescott, Nicola Ashton
29th Gavin Smith, Ashley Smith, Owen Leese
30th Ella Stafford



RUGBY LEAGUE PROGRAMME NOTES

MALCOLM LORD

I still have mixed feelings about many aspects with regard to the presentation of Super League. First of all, I applaud the idea of mascots at games and as I have previously stated mascots like the Oldham Bear and St Bernard do a smashing job providing pre-match entertainment.

I do not however, enjoy the very loud music played at some grounds to celebrate a score. It works for sports like Ice Hockey, but I believe it is out of place in Rugby League.

I would also ask whoever places the screen at grounds when Sky is covering a match to place it in such a way as it can be seen by a

majority. At Wigan recently it has always been placed in a fashion whereby all of one stand cannot view it and at the same time it has obscured the electronic scoreboard.

It is only personal gripe but I would also ask that clubs make sure their numbers on their shirts are clear, it makes identification a great deal easier, especially when you are watching say — a less fashionable club.

The Can-Can girls at Boundary Park, Rio Madness at Central Park, various at Wilderspool and an abundance of dancing girls are another great idea for pre-match entertainment, but I

suppose the best accolades with regard to presentation must go to the players themselves. We are seeing some great rugby, closer games, draws and high drama game after game. The crowds are up and at the moment all seems well, and I wonder what odds you would have got pre-season on Castleford having lost all their first five fixtures and Salford having won theirs. It never ceases to amaze me this Rugby League — after watching it for many, many years I still find myself looking forward with excitement to every game.

Malcolm Lord
BBC GMR

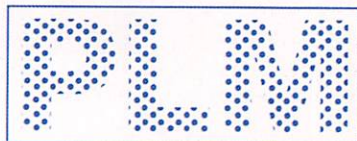
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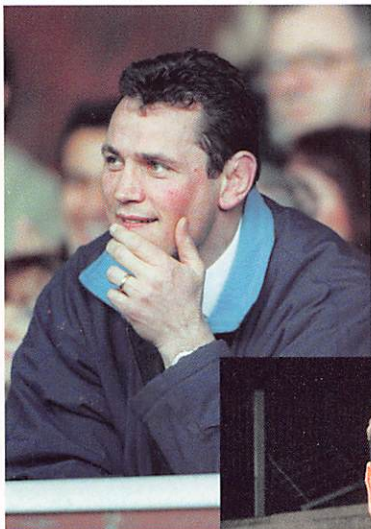
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IT'S THE COACH

By Christopher Irvine, Rugby League Correspondent, *The Times*



Andy Goodway (above)
Departs from Oldham Bears
after 3 years

John Joyner (right)
Recently departed from
Castleford. Joyner, like Goodway,
was once tipped as a future
England Manager



Another week, another sacking. Until Tuesday, Andy Goodway was the longest-serving coach in the Super League, where life expectancy is now roughly equivalent to that of the mayfly. A month shy of three years at

Oldham Bears, Goodway became the fifth Super League coach to part company with his club since the start of the season. In these turbulent times, the ranks of young and

talented English coaches are wearing thin. Goodway followed John Joyner at Castleford Tigers into coaching exile. Two men openly talked about as Great Britain coaches of the future, one of them, Joyner, coach of the year only three years ago, find themselves jobless, casualties of intolerance, short-termism, and the overwhelming desire that now exists in the Super League for instant success, or sheer desperation to survive among the elite.

Before the disappearances of Goodway and Joyner, Graeme West went from Wigan Warriors, Steve Simms departed Halifax Blue Sox and John Dorahy left Warrington Wolves. The merry-go-round is not peculiar to the Super League. Two months into the season and Swinton Lions, Workington Town and Featherstone Rovers, where Simms ended up this week, have all had a change of coaching personnel.

The balance of coaching power among the dozen Super League clubs has irresistibly shifted back the way of the southern hemisphere. Discounting Oldham (without a successor to Goodway up to print, but with Bob Lindner due back from Down Under as football director), Australians are in charge at seven Super League clubs. Ironically, it took an Australian to pinpoint the lack of tolerance in England. Before flying home this week, John Dorahy told the Rugby Leaguer newspaper:

"The system in England seems crazy. The coaching system in Rugby League seems to be very like it is in soccer, with a soccer type mentality. Coaches come and go very quickly. In Australia, you hardly ever see a coach leave a club during the season, unless it is for disciplinary reasons."

THAT GETS IT!

As Dorahy left these shores, Stuart Raper rolled up this week at Castleford from Cronulla, pleading, of all things, for patience. Patience is one virtue not in abundance right now, as a succession of coaches can testify. The remaining Englishmen left in charge of Super League sides are Andy Gregory, at Salford Reds, who has succeeded Goodway as the longest-serving coach (he was appointed in March 1995), Phil Larder (sheffield Eagles), Eric Hughes (Wigan) and John Pendlebury (Halifax). In this age of hire-and-fire, you could get totally ridiculous. Should Gregory be allowed to stay at Salford, if they lose a third successive match, to Wigan on Friday? Can Darryl Van de Velde continue at Warrington after the dismal 60-16 hiding last week by St Helens? Might Eric Hughes survive a fourth Wigan League defeat? In short, enough heads have rolled. With the World Club Championship on the horizon, there has never been a greater need for stability and steady nerves.

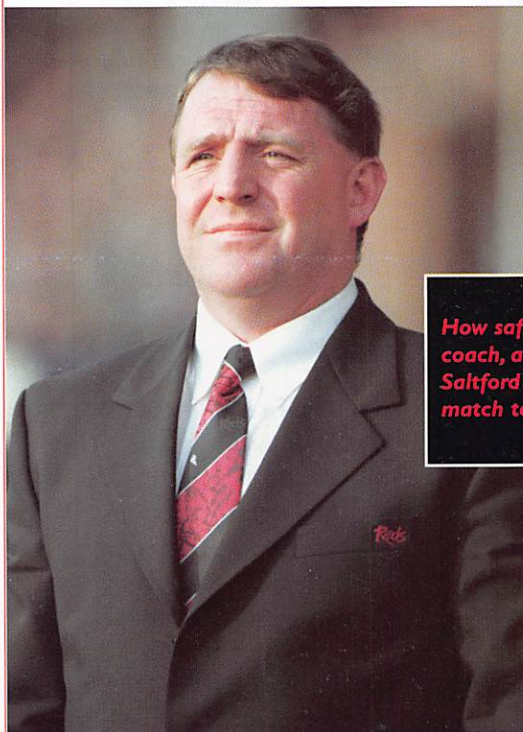
The recent appointments of Raper by Castleford and Van de Velde by Warrington displayed the greater faith again being placed on the Australian coaching system. It is easy to

understand why. At St Helens and Bradford Bulls, Aussies Shaun McRae and Matthew Elliott - not even head men back in Australia - continue to set the standards over here. So where are all the young, up-and-coming English coaches? The National Coaching Scheme production line, once headed up

stified.

What of Goodway? He might fulfill a long-held ambition to learn and prove himself in the hothouse atmosphere of the Australian game. If he does, and should he return, who knows, even Oldham might be glad to get him? One thing is certain.

Since taking up the job last month as the RFL's first technical director, Joe Lydon already has two fewer Englishmen, in Goodway and Joyner, to recommend as the Great British coach, should he



How safe will Andy Gregory, Salford's coach, appointed March 1995, be if Salford loose a third successive match to Wigan today?

look to appoint from among the existing Super League coaches, Might he be tempted, too, to look overseas?

by Phil Larder at the Rugby Football League, is now down to a trickle. With more senior appointments going to Australians, the home produced talent that does exist is being

ACADEMY NEWS

BRIAN GARTLAND

First congratulations are in order for two of our young players Ben Simpson and Paul Rustchynsky who have both been selected to represent England Schoolboys which is a great honour for the boys and also for the club. Ben, who is a back row forward and lives in Rochdale stands well over six foot and I am really looking forward to seeing him play Academy Football, I am sure he will do well. Paul is a prop forward and also lives in Rochdale, although he goes to school in Oldham and is also a very good prospect. Well the Academy boys pulled off a fine win last week, beating

Widnes at home by 19 points to 18 in a thrilling encounter. The match was decided in the last couple of minutes by a drop goal from Paul Deacon our scrum half, he also scored a try and kicked 3 goals the other tries were scored by Joe McNicholas who was playing in the centre and stand off and captain Simon Svabic. New boy Mark Davenport playing his first full game for the Academy was a constant threat to Widnes with his strong runs into the heart of the Widnes defence it would be unfair though not to praise all the lads who gave 100% effort. Well done boys.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE LEAGUE

1996-1997

The 1996-97 National Conference League season is now drawing to a close with both our local clubs having just one home match to play. St Annes look like ending their first season in the Premier Division in a very creditable third position. They entertain Dudley Hill on Tuesday, 6th May with a 6.30pm kick off. It should be an entertaining finish to their season but they then face a hectic summer behind the scenes as the rebuilding of the clubhouse

continues. It should be up and running for the start of the next season. Saddleworth Rangers have had to wait almost a month between their closing two matches. They face Wigan St Patricks at Shaw Hall Bank Road on Saturday, 17th May kick-off 2.30pm. it could be a crucial match for St Pats who are chasing the title and may require to win that match if they are to be crowned Champions.



DEVELOPMENT NEWS

in association with the

DAILY MIRROR

Besides our own two boys Paul Rustchynsky and Ben Simpson, two more of Oldham Schoolboys also caught the England Schoolboys team Kevin Sinfield and Gareth Barber. Kevin, who also captains the side is on Leeds Rhinos Books and I am sure he will go right to the top — an outstanding prospect. Gareth Barber is also a very talented boy and is on Warrington's books as a stand off. It says a lot for the local scene to produce boys of this calibre, pity they are not with the Oldham Bears. Hathershaw Sports Centre is to be the venue for our Mini League Festivals. I hope we will

get plenty of children down to these festivals which is vital for the future of all the local clubs. Manchester Youth Games will be held on 14th and 15th June 1997. The venue is the Armitage Centre, Fallowfield. Training nights for the Youth Games will be held on Thursday nights, 6pm, at Hathershaw Sports Centre. The first of these sessions will be on Thursday 24th April. The Games last year was a great success for the Oldham teams and was held in glorious weather. Let's hope they are just as good this year.

B Gartland

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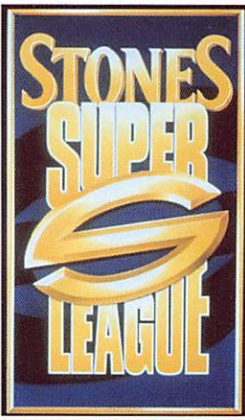
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IN THE THIRD OF HIS WEEKLY INTERVIEWS WITH THE MEN WHO MAKE THINGS HAPPEN IN SUPER LEAGUE, SKY'S IAN PROCTOR MEETS PHIL LARDER, SHEFFIELD EAGLES COACH..

GREAT BRITAIN COACH PHIL LARDER HAS TAKEN ON A NEW CHALLENGE THIS SEASON, SUCCEEDING GARY HETHERINGTON AS THE MAN IN CHARGE OF SHEFFIELD EAGLES. HE SPOKE TO SKY'S IAN PROCTOR ABOUT THE DIFFICULTIES HE HAS ENCOUNTERED.

PHIL, HAVE YOU SETTLED INTO LIFE AS HEAD COACH OF SHEFFIELD EAGLES ?

I was never under any illusions about the scale of the job or the length of time it would take to have Sheffield Eagles playing the way I would like. I'd watched videos of their games from last season and knew that I'd have to change the squad. And, without much money to spend, the only way I could do that was by releasing players and generating the capital to make the signings I wanted. Leeds came in for Anthony Farrell, Dean Lawford and Ryan Sheridan and, while I was reluctant to release Ryan, it was a deal that had to be struck to allow me to sign Martin Wood and Nick Pinkney from Keighley. The only other way I could strengthen the squad was to recruit from the overseas market and we brought in Rod Doyle, Steve Edmed and Willie Morganson, plus Kiwi winger Whetu Taewa..

HOW CLOSE WERE YOU TO JOINING HUDDERSFIELD AND NOT SHEFFIELD AT THE END OF LAST SEASON ?

It was as close as could be, Ian. I

was due to meet the Giants chairman, Bob Scott, on the Saturday afternoon before departing on the Lions tour of the South Pacific and received the call from Gary Hetherington that morning, offering me the Eagles job. Bob Scott greatly impressed me with his plans and ambitions for Huddersfield and had they been in Super League I'd probably have accepted their offer. But, having been denied the opportunity to coach at this level whilst with Keighley, I simply had to take the Sheffield offer and I was delighted when John Kear agreed to come with me.

IS IT FAIR TO SAY THAT YOU AND JOHN KEAR STARTED BEHIND ALL THE OTHER CLUBS IN YOUR PRE-SEASON PREPARATION OF THE SHEFFIELD PLAYERS ?

We were very much behind the other clubs and, while that was something that couldn't be helped, I hated that situation. Anyone who knows me will tell you that I'm methodical and like to do things exactly right. But we've been chasing our tails since the turn of the year and the Eagles players are probably encountering a more intense style of coaching than they have come across before. Gary Hetherington was wearing that many hats in his various roles at Sheffield that, with respect, he was unable to do proper justice to his coaching position, although he had a quality staff around him. John Kear and I have worked very hard on the fitness and preparation of the players and we've seen a gradual improvement in each of our opening five Super League performances. The Paris game (our opener) was embarrassing, but we've steadily progressed, and there is a great deal of improvement to come. It does take time to implement new coaching methods and shape a new team at a club as Brian Smith's arrival at Bradford, last year, illustrated that point. The Bulls made little

impression in the centenary season as Brian moulded a new-look side, but they hit their straps in Super League and the Bulls have kicked on since then. We're gradually getting the response we want from the players and steadily adding to the squad.

NICK PINKNEY AND MARTIN WOOD HAVE MADE A BIG IMPRESSION AND YOU HAVE STEVE McCURRIE TO COME. DID YOU HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO MAKE IT IN SUPER LEAGUE ?

I had no doubts about either Martin or Nick, and Steve McCurrie will prove another quality signing for Sheffield - when we eventually see him and get him conditioned to the required standards. I'm not entirely happy about the fact that we won't get him at Sheffield until Bedford's season is over, but it's a one-off and we have to live with the situation. Nick Pinkney and Martin Wood are both top quality players and there are plenty more like them in Division One. Salford's impressive start in Super League has illustrated that there isn't such an enormous gulf between Super League and the top sides in the

MOVER
ONE TO ONE

First Division. I believe that my Keighley side of last year, Huddersfield and Hull would have held their own in this league.

WHAT HAVE YOU HAD TO WORK ON MOST WITH THE EAGLES PLAYERS ?

I changed last season's defensive pattern completely. We threw that out of the window and started from scratch because Sheffield

were conceding far too many points in their games during 1996. But I took the job on the understanding that the Sheffield public would continue to see attractive, attacking football and I think we've provided that. But once our defence is properly sorted, they should see more winning football. The Castleford game was a case in point, with some wonderful tries, followed by an unaccountable late defensive lapse! Sheffield is a sports mad city and we've got to start attracting more people to the home games...a winning side is the way towards achieving that aim.

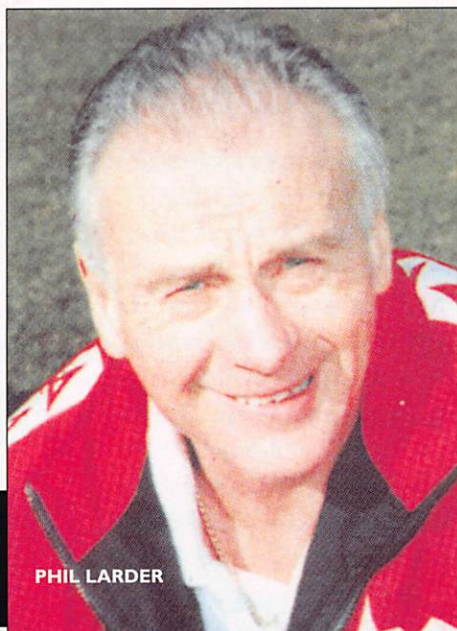
UNUSUALLY, YOU PUBLICLY CRITICISED YOUR PLAYERS AFTER THE NARROW DEFEAT AT HALIFAX - WAS THAT BECAUSE OF THE PRESSURES WHICH ARE NOW ON COACHES ?

No. I just felt that the players lost the game at Thrum Hall because of dumb football, taking wrong options. They know that they should have won that game and I just felt I needed to reinforce the point. I'll always support players giving their all, but, sometimes, they've got to take responsibility for their actions. Regarding pressure, I can honestly say that it doesn't bother me, because, at 3pm (or whenever) on matchday, I know

-it's too easy to sack the poor coach! I was shocked when Graeme West left Wigan and it hurt me to see a good coach (and friend) like John Joyner leaving Castleford recently. And John Dorahy didn't become a bad coach overnight. Warrington looked a particularly well-coached side when we defeated them on Good Friday, yet John got the bullet and the Wolves bounced back to defeat Wigan on Easter Monday. He must have been doing something right.

WHAT IS YOUR POSITION REGARDING THE GREAT BRITAIN COACHING POSITION?

Well, for the first time in history, the GB coaching position has been put on ice because there aren't any matches. But, of course, I'd like to be in charge of the side for the Ashes series against Australia in November. Any coach worth his salt wants to be in charge of the international team and, as the man in possession, I'd like to think I'll be in the frame. I haven't had time to talk to Joe Lydon, since his appointment as Technical Director, but that's probably because he's inherited a massive job and he'll have plenty on his



PHIL LARDER

way they went about their business. Team spirit was fantastic but at the end of the day, we lost a series 3-0 to New Zealand, with two of those reverses by the narrowest of margins. We certainly lacked the personnel required for a tour of that kind. Anyone selecting a GB squad, prior to that trip would have included Jason Robinson, Gary Connolly, Paul Newlove, Martin Offiah, Shaun Edwards, Steve McNamara - none of whom went with us - and we were also denied the likes of Allan Bateman, John Bentley, Scott Gibbs and John

Devereux. We were stretched, that's for sure, but the players were magnificent. Super League has elevated the game to new levels and it's a fabulous concept, but it also brought problems and one of them was the change-over from a winter season to summer. I saw, at first hand, what playing a near-12-month season did to my own

son, David, and then I watched Keiron Cunningham undertake the Lions tour after being ever-present for the St Helens throughout the previous year. No wonder he was shattered at the end of the tour. And there were a lot of Lions tourists who ended that tour completely drained after the busiest 12-months in history.

S & SHAKERS

E - PHIL LARDER

that I've done everything possible to give my players a chance of winning the football game. But there is a disturbing trend creeping into the game. The pressure levels have steadily increased on the players over the past decade; the coaches have also had to cope with more and more pressure and now some of the heat is being directed at the administrators. And some club directors are simply panicking

plate. I don't think it's a bad record. I took charge of England and guided them to a World Cup win over Australia at Wembley in my first game in charge and took that side to a World Cup Final. We won the European Championship in 1996 and then I took Great Britain on tour last winter. I will never criticise the players who undertook that trip, because they gave everything and I was proud of the



This afternoon's visitors to Boundary Park are Halifax who will be playing at this venue for a second time. They came here in February 1986 when Watersheddings was frozen and Oldham took advantage of Latics' offer to play here at Boundary Park which was then equipped with underoil heating. 'Fax took better advantage of the situation because they won 19-14 but Oldham have now beaten Halifax on the last three occasions that they have met and they will certainly be aiming to extend that run today. Halifax and Oldham have met on 145 occasions with Oldham having slightly the better record with 74 wins to Halifax's 64 and seven draws. Oldham's biggest victory against Halifax came way back in March 1924 when the Roughyeds won 33-0 at Watersheddings. Their best win at Halifax was more recently, in April 1978, when Halifax were beaten 24-3 at Thrum Hall. Halifax's biggest victories over Oldham both came in the opening months of the 1978-79 season when in October they won 32-2 at Thrum Hall and then by 25-5 at Watersheddings two months later. In August 1994 Halifax repeated that 20 point winning margin at Watersheddings where they won 40-20.



ASA AMONE

DETAILS OF HALIFAX'S LAST VISIT TO OLDHAM

Friday 5th April 1996

Super League

At Watershedding

OLDHAM 34 HALIFAX 22

Half time 16 - 10 Attendance 3942

Oldham tries: Darren Abram (2), Paul Atcheson, Rob Myler, Martin Crompton and Andy Patmore.

Goals: Francis Maloney (5).

PSG tries: Craig Dean (2), Graeme Hallas and Abi Ekoku.

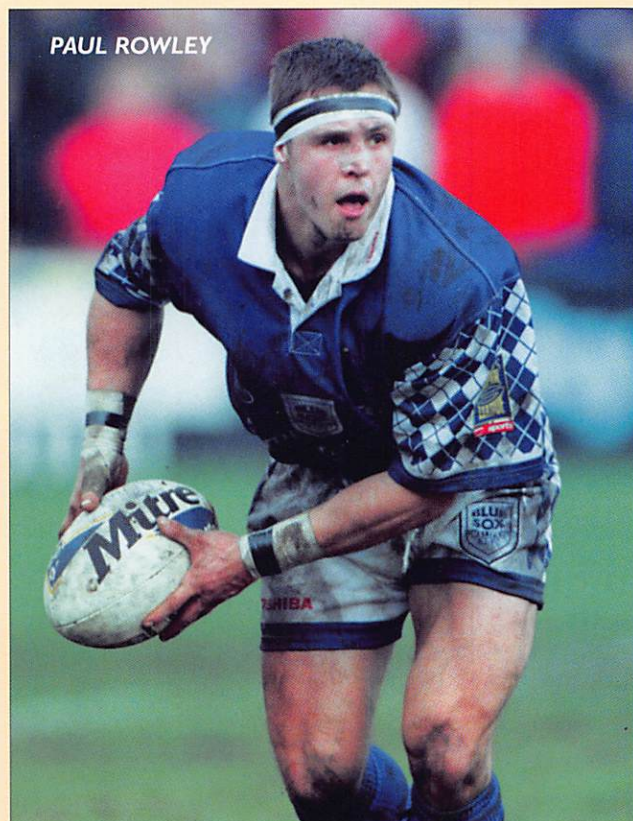
Goals: Mike Umaga (3).

Oldham: PAUL ATCHESON; AFI LEUILA, PAUL TOPPING, DARREN ABRAM, ROB MYLER; FRANCIS MALONEY, MARTIN CROMPTON; IAN SHERRATT, JOHN CLARKE, JASON TEMU, GARY LORD, JOE FAIMALO AND DAVID BRADBURY.

Substitutes: HOWARD HILL, IAN GILDART, MATT MUNRO AND ANDY PATMORE.

Halifax: MIKE UMAGA; BRENDON GREENWOOD, GRAEME HALLAS, FERETI TUILAGI, ABI EKOKU; CHRIS CHESTER, CRAIG DEAN; KARL HARRISON, PAUL ROWLEY, PAUL ANDERSON, SIMON BALDWIN, MICHAEL JACKSON AND WAYNE PARKER.


Substitutes: HOWARD HILL, IAN GILDART, MATT MUNRO AND ANDY PATMORE.



PAUL ROWLEY

RESULTS OF OLDHAM/HALIFAX MATCHES DURING THE PAST TEN SEASONS

1987-88	did not meet
1988-89	Oldham 12 Halifax 14 Halifax 0 Oldham 12
1989-90	Oldham 14 Halifax 3 Halifax 22 Oldham 12
1990-91	did not meet
1991-92	did not meet
1992-93	did not meet
1993-94	Oldham 11 Halifax 28 Halifax 26 Oldham 12
1994-95	Oldham 20 Halifax 40 Halifax 34 Oldham 8
1995-96	Oldham 4 Halifax 21 Halifax 4 Oldham 12
1996	Oldham 34 Halifax 22 Halifax 14 Oldham 20



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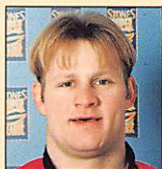


The Bear Facts Super League '97

Rd	Date	Team	Venue	Time	Score	Att
1	Sun 16th March	Leeds Rhinos	A	3pm	L 22-32	11,516
2	Fri 21st March	Bradford Bulls	H	7.30	L 30-18	5461
3	Fri 28th March	Salford Reds	(A)	3pm	L 35-26	5295
4	Tues 1st April	London Broncos	(H)	7.30pm	L 32-22	3556
5	Sun 6th April	Warrington Wolves	(A)	3pm	L 28-18	5370
6	Sun 13th April	Paris St Germain (BSKYB)	(H)	6.35pm	W19-18	3396
7	Sun 20th April	Wigan Warriors	(A)	3pm	L 44-10	7885
8	Sun 27th April	Halifax Blue Sox	(H)	3pm		
9	Sun 11th May	Sheffield Eagles	(A)	3.15pm		
10	Sun 18th May	Leeds Rhinos	(H)	3pm		
11	Fri 23rd May	Bradford Bulls	(A)	7.30pm		
12	Mon 26th May	Salford Reds	(H)	3pm		
13	Fri 30th May	Castleford	(H)	3pm		
14	Sun 29th June	St Helens	(H)	3pm		
15	Wed 2nd July	London Broncos	(A)	7.30pm		
16	Sun 6th July	Sheffield Eagles	(H)	3pm		
17	Sun 13th July	Castleford Tigers	(A)	3.30pm		
18	Sat 19th July	Queensland Cowboys	(H)			
19	Sat 26th July	Adelaide Rams	(H)			
20	Sun 10th Aug	St Helens	(A)	6pm		
21	Sun 17th Aug	Halifax Blue Sox	(H)	3pm		
22	Fri 22nd Aug	Wigan Warriors	(H)	7.30pm		
23	Mon 25th Aug	Paris St Germain	(A)			
24	Sun 31st Aug	Warrington Wolves	(H)	3pm		

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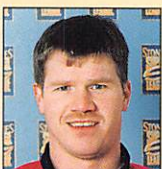
OLDHAM BEARS RLFC SUPER LEAGUE SQUAD



Number 1
Paul Atcheson



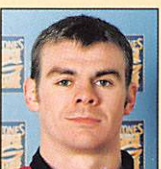
Number 2
Scott Ranson



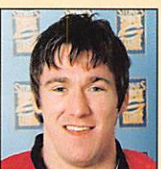
Number 3
Darren Abram



Number 4
Paul Topping



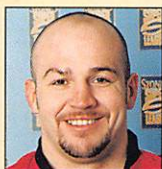
Number 5
Rob Myler



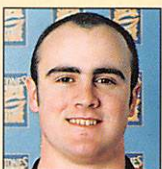
Number 6
Francis Maloney



Number 7
Martin Croft



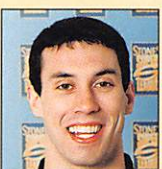
Number 15
Paul Davidson



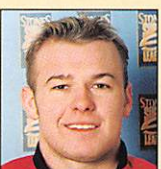
Number 16
Howard Hill



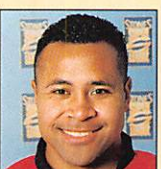
Number 17



Number 18
Mike Neal



Number 19
Chris McKinney



Number 20
Afi Leulua



Number 21
Jim Cowie

1	Paul Atcheson																												
2	Scott Ranson																												
3	Darren Abram																												
4	Paul Topping																												
5	Rob Myler																												
6	Francis Maloney																												
7	Martin Crompton																												
8	Ian Gildart																												
9	John Clarke																												
10	Jason Temu																												
11	Gary Lord																												
12	Joe Faimalo																												
13	David Bradbury																												
14	Matt Munro																												
15	Paul Davidson																												
16	Howard Hill																												
17	Paul Crook																												
18	Mike Neal																												
19	Chris McKinney																												
20	Afi Leuila																												
21	Jim Cowan																												
22	Vince Fawcett																												
23	Brett Goldspink																												
24	Nathan Turner																												
25	Paul Deacon																												
26	Luke Goodwin																												
27	David Stephenson																												

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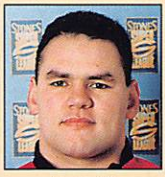
OLDHAM OL1 3BB



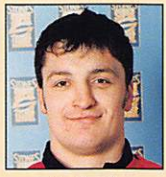
Number 8
Ian Gildart



Number 9
John Clarke



Number 10
Jason Temu



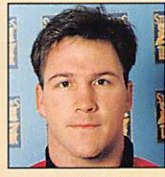
Number 11
Gary Lord



Number 12
Joe Faimalo



Number 13
David Bradbury



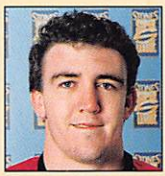
Number 14
Matt Munro



Number 22
Vince Fawcett



Number 23
Brett Goldspink



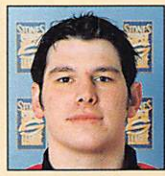
Number 24
Nathan Turner



Number 25
Paul Deacon



Number 26
Luke Goodwin



Number 27
David Stephenson





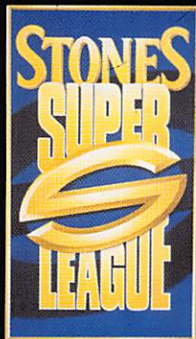
Caught

Ball watching!





STONES COMMENTARY



IN ASSOCIATION WITH STONES BITTER

Dave Woods of Radio 5 Speaks Out . . .

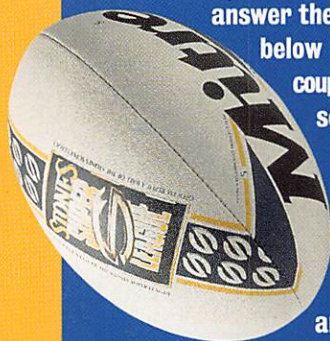
The new season has got off to a flyer, and it's no surprise that everybody's tips for the top, Bradford and St Helens, have set the early pace.

But the most encouraging aspect of the new season is the form and potential of other clubs. Wigan maybe down, but they are far from out. Halifax Blue Sox, Leeds, Salford, London, Paris and Warrington have all proved they can deliver a knockout blow to any side. One or two of them may even go all the way in the title race.

The pre-season prediction that this could be one of the most open campaigns for some time looks like coming true.

the Great Stones Giveaway

Stones Bitter have teamed up with Mitre to offer readers the chance to win an autographed Stones Super League replica ball from a team of your choice. All you have to do is answer the simple question below and complete the coupon provided or send the answer with your name and address on a postcard to the promotional address. There are 5 rugby balls to be won.



Name the Stones Super League team that play at Odsal Stadium?

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Send your entry to: The Stones Super League Mitre ball competition, PO Box 56 Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5UU, to arrive no later than 05.05.97. Winners will be informed by 12th May. To obtain a list of winners please send an SAE to the promotional address.

Answer:

Name:

Address:

Daytime Tel:

PLAYER PROFILE

JOHN CLARKE



NAME:	JOHN CLARKE
DATE OF BIRTH:	3 - 3 - 74
BIRTHPLACE:	LEEDS
HEIGHT:	5'8"
WEIGHT:	14st
NICKNAME AT CLUB:	-
OCCUPATION:	PROFESSIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE PLAYER
HOME:	LEEDS
CAR:	ROVER
MARRIED:	YES
CHILDREN:	I DAUGHTER - KAITLAN

WHAT WAS YOUR AMBITION AS A CHILD:	ASTRONAUT
WHO WAS YOUR BOYHOOD HERO:	DAVID WARD/BENNY ELIAS
WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST THRILL IN RUGBY?	G.B. UNDER 21'S
WHICH PRESENT DAY PLAYER DO YOU ADMIRE THE MOST?	MARTIN CROMPTON
WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB?	WINNING
IF YOU WON THE LOTTERY, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THAT YOU WOULD BUY?	FRANCIS MALONEY TOILETRY SET
WHAT IS YOUR BEST QUALITY?	SUNNY DISPOSITION
WHAT IS YOUR WORST QUALITY?	NONE
WHAT OTHER SPORT AND HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE?	TV
WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PHOBIA?	BEING CAUGHT BY GARY LORD IN TOUCH
WHICH FAMOUS PERSON WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET?	JENNIFER ANSTIS
WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION?	DAUGHTER
DO YOU HAVE AN UNUSUAL FOOD THAT IMPROVES YOUR GAME?	NONE
FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME?	FRIENDS
FAVOURITE POP STAR?	OASIS
FAVOURITE FOOD?	McDONALDS-DO-NUTS
FAVOURITE DRINK?	T-MAX

ALLIANCE NEWS

PADDY KIRWIN

20th April 1997

The failure of the team coach to turn up on time for the away trip to Hull was the start of a very disappointing visit to the Boulevard. When the coach eventually arrived at Union St at 5.30pm for an 8.00pm kick off in Hull it was the start of a frantic rush along the M62 without a stop and with players being strapped on the coach.

It wasn't ideal preparation, but we started well enough with an early try by CHRIS MCKINNEY goaled by PAUL DEACON putting us 6-0 up. From the restart however we gave away the first of a stream of penalties, which interspersed with the inability to go six tackles without making a mistake allowed Hull to go 14-6 in the lead. We then hit back with Danny Guest feeding Howard Hill deep in our own half. Hill went to the half way line before the ball went through 6 pairs of hands leading to CHRIS MCKINNEY going under the posts for the best try of the game. At 14-12 down just before half time we had everything to play for.

In the second half the penalties and mistakes continued and when after 10 minutes I took David Stephenson off for

1st team duty we seemed to surrender. Quality players, who have the benefits of full time training must perform better than this. We played most of the second half with only 12 men as first Paul Norman, then Chris McKinney and Dale Aldred were sent to the sin bin and conceded 24 points with only a HOWARD HILL breakaway try converted by DEACON to show for our efforts before going down 42-18. On the positive side, Paul Norman came through his first game for over two months, David Stephenson is now pushing for a regular 1st team spot and Paul Crook did enough to convince Hull to make Jim Quinn an offer for his services. The move into 1st team rugby in the first division with Hull is good business for Paul and for the Oldham RLFC. It gives him an opportunity to prove his ability which he was unlikely to get at Oldham queueing behind Francis Maloney and Luke Goodwin, and also improves the cash flow situation at the club. Against Wigan at Stalybridge it was a completely different story. Against the recent winners of the Alliance Cup the team was boosted by the return of Jason Temu, and the debut of Nathan Turner.

Showing much more appetite and enthusiasm for the game, we went 6-0 up with a try and goal from CHRIS MCKINNEY and PAUL DEACON respectively. In spite of showing a lot of class on attack which produced tries for COWANS and BURNS, in the first half, we still continued to be indisciplined on defence. Penalties for offside and holding down help keep Wigan in our quarter leading to a half time score of 16-14. In the second half the match was very even until an inspired Nathan Turner kick chased by DAVID JONES put us 26-20 in the lead. During the last 10 minutes as players returning from injury such as Temu, Norman, Turner and Cowans visibly tired, and with Stephenson and Hill on the bench for 1st team duty at the weekend, Wigan smelt success. To their credit the lads held on to restrict Wigan to one try in the corner for a 26-24 victory. As well as the win there were a number of positives from the game, the return of Jason Temu, Nathan Turner and David Jones to increase competition for 1st places and the continued impressive form of youngster Danny Guest and Aidie Meade.

ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

1997

MARCH

THURSDAY 13th	LEEDS RHINOS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 20th	BRADFORD BULLS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 27th	SALFORD REDS	(H) 7.30pm

APRIL

THURSDAY 3rd	WARRINGTON WOLVES	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 10th	HULL	(A) 8.00pm
THURSDAY 17th	WIGAN WARRIORS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 24th	HALIFAX BLUE SOX	A) 7.30pm

MAY

THURSDAY 8th	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	(H) 7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 14th	LEEDS RHINOS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 22nd	BRADFORD BULLS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 29th	CASTLEFORD TIGERS	(A) 7.30pm

JUNE

THURSDAY 5th	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	(H) 7.30pm
FRIDAY 20th	SALFORD REDS	(A) 8.00pm
THURSDAY 26th	St HELENS	(A) 7.30pm

JULY

THURSDAY 3rd	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	(A)
THURSDAY 10th	CASTLEFORD TIGERS	(H) 7.30pm
FRIDAY 18th	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 31st	HULL	(H) 8.00pm

AUGUST

THURSDAY 7th	St HELENS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 14th	HALIFAX BLUE SOX	(H) 7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 20th	WIGAN WARRIORS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 28th	WARRINGTON WOLVES	(A) 7.30pm

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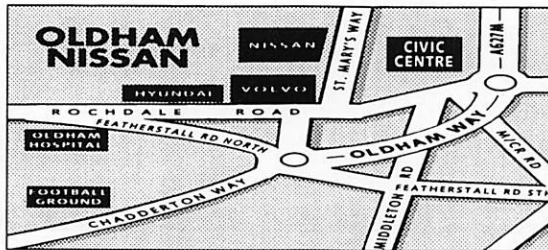
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...and Read'

OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

ROGER HALSTEAD

Bears fans must have been encouraged by the comments of Super League boss Maurice Lindsay after his first visit to Boundary Park for the Paris St Germain game.

For those who might have missed Maurice's words of wisdom, he said he was "very impressed" by the Boundary Park facilities, the match presentation and the general manner in which the Bears had staged a Super League game to go out on Sky.

Almost inevitably, he compared Boundary Park with dear old Watersheddings and left no-one in any doubt that he was right behind the Bears' decision to vacate the old ground up there on the hill, even though they had no permanent home to go to. "Nostalgia is all very well," said Maurice, "but you can't run a modern Super League club on it and you can't build for the future on it. People can come to Boundary Park knowing they will be comfortable and well looked after. That alone will encourage them to return."

The Bears' current agreement with Oldham Athletic for the use of BP covers one season only and even if the proposed new stadium does finally get the go-ahead it won't be ready for 1998 and it will be pushing it to have it up and running for 1999. Councillor John Battye, leader of Oldham Council, took the opportunity to spell out to



Maurice that the proposed new stadium would be similar, but smaller, to the McAlpine Stadium at Huddersfield. It would be situated just across the road from BP and, as such, would enjoy similar benefits to those currently enjoyed by BP in relation to car parking and easy access to the M62 and beyond. "Vital," replied Maurice.

"Absolutely vital. In an ideal world, cars heading for sports stadia would drive straight off the motorway network and into the car parks. That's what they are doing in the States and it's what we will have to do here." One up to Oldham because there can't be many sites in the entire country, and certainly not in the North West, which match up to Boundary Park (or dare we say Westwood Park?) when it comes to easy access.

We have since learned that Government approval or rejection of the planned new stadium will not be forthcoming until after the General Election,

but there has been some movement on the plan to resite the running track at Radclyffe School, which has been approved.

Once Oldham Council are given the green light for the joint-use stadium they will then re-open talks with Athletic on the whole question of stadium planning to take the borough into the next century.

The Council maintain they would like to see a new, state-of-the-art stadium at Westwood shared by both Athletic and the Bears.

Alternative schemes include the redevelopment of Boundary Park to accommodate both clubs on a permanent basis or the building of a smaller, rugby-only stadium on another site in the town, but not at Westwood. Once the Election is over, the big debate locally will start all over again. It will be fascinating to see how it all works out.

ROGER HALSTEAD



OLDHAM BEARS v

SUNDAY 27th APRIL



SCRUMS

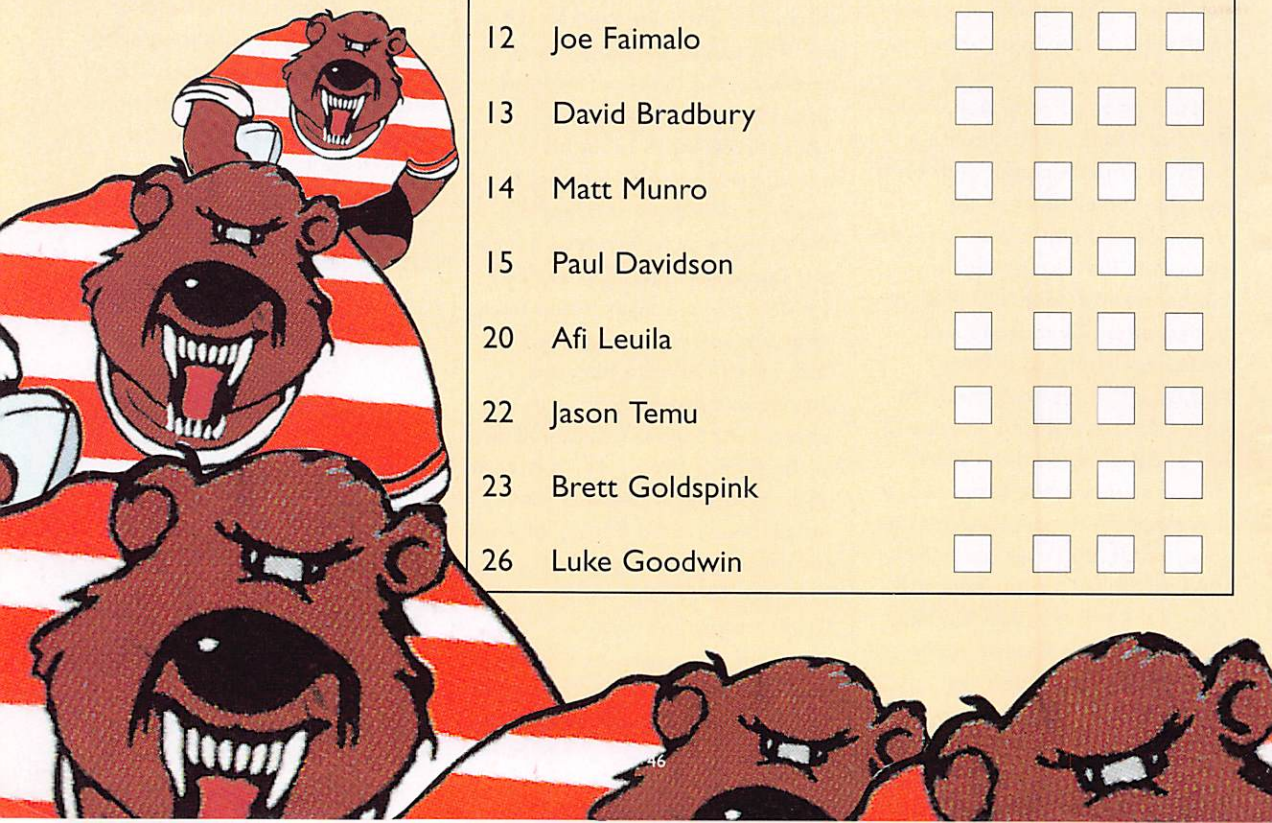
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13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

PENALTIES

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7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

OLDHAM BEARS

	Team	T	G	DG	
1	Paul Atcheson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Scott Ranson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Darren Abram	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Rob Myler	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Francis Maloney	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Martin Crompton	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Ian Gildart	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	John Clarke	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Gary Lord	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Joe Faimalo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	David Bradbury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Matt Munro	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Paul Davidson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Afi Leuila	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Jason Temu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Brett Goldspink	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Luke Goodwin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



HALIFAX BLUE SOX

1997 KICK-OFF 3pm



HALIFAX BLUE SOX

	Team	T	G	DG
1 Mike Umaga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23 Fereti Tuilagi	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Martin Pearson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Asa Amone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Damian Munro	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chris Chester	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Craig Dean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Karl Harrison	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 Paul Rowley	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20 Kelvin Skerrett	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21 Michael Jackson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12 Simon Baldwin	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13 Martin Moana	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Wayne Jackson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22 Carl Gillespie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 Wayne Parker	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
TBA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SCRUMS

1	2	3	4	5	6
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13	14	15	16	17	18
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PENALTIES

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

OFFICIALS

REFEREE

Steve Ganson

TOUCH JUDGES

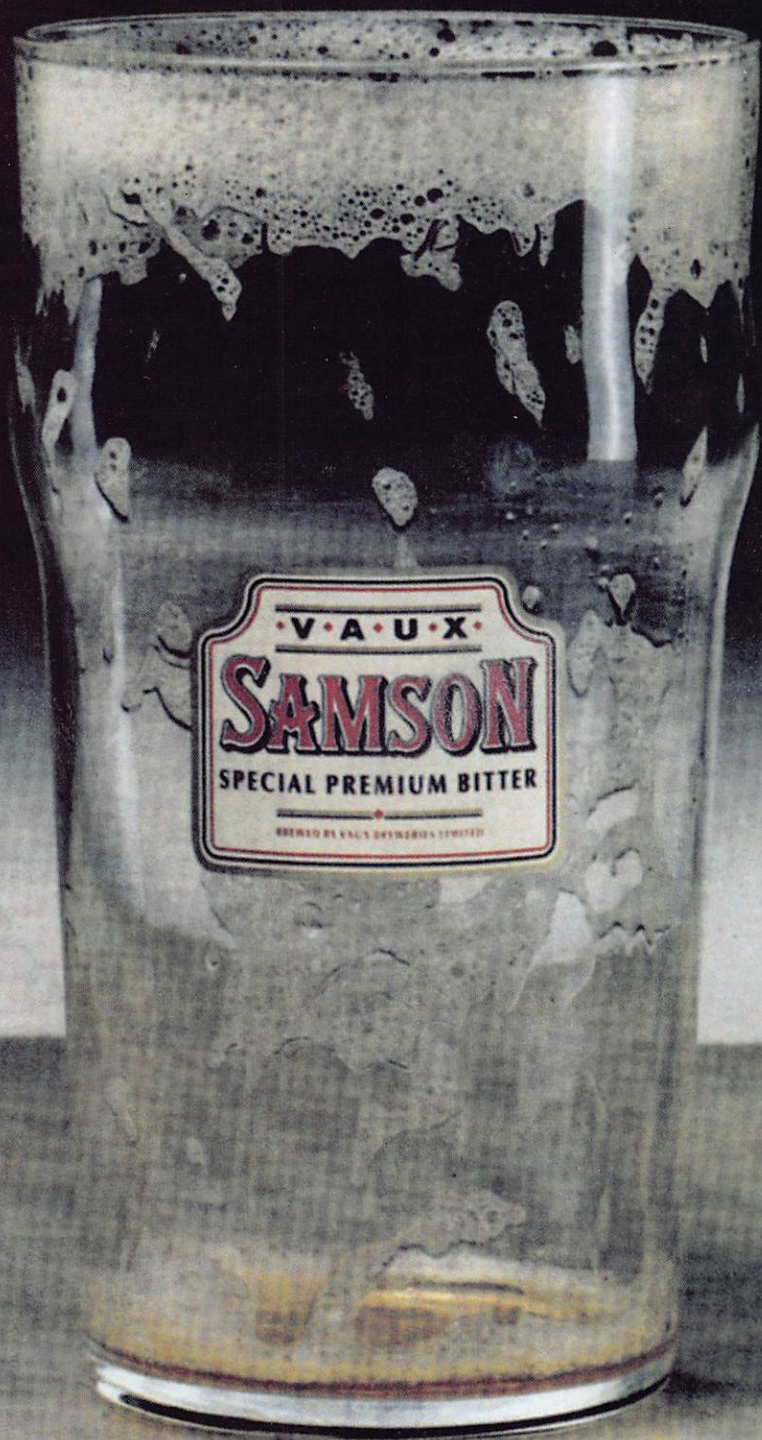
P. Brooks

R. Southwood

IN GOAL

N. Byers

D.F. Redfearn



TRY AGAIN!

VAUX SAMSON - ITS STRENGTH IS ITS TASTE