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TOP OF THE NEST

Chairman's View

When I dictated this column last, a little short of a month ago, we had lost our opening two fixtures and struggled to a less than convincing win against Workington. Since then we have thrashed Barrow and laid to rest our away 'Hoodoo' by convincingly beating Lancashire Lynx and Doncaster. No-one can doubt that we are now serious promotion contenders. My colleagues and I believe that this side is possibly the best York team for 10 years and I know that Dean is certain that the best is yet to come. Today we are entertaining promotion candidates Oldham who will undoubtedly regard today's fixture as being extremely important.

It is clear that the standard of rugby being played in the second division this year is higher than in recent years: it is probably the case that on the day virtually any team is capable of beating any other and it will be the most consistent three teams that win the coveted promotion places. After today's game we will have played all the other teams in our division at least once so we know exactly what we are facing. True enough, one swallow doesn't make a summer but I am genuinely excited about our prospects.

The question still to be answered is whether the public of York want a successful team: certainly anyone reading this article does and your continued support is greatly appreciated by the coach, players and board but as our chief executive has pointed out in stark terms we need to see 1000 paying customers at each home game if we are to successfully pursue our declared strategy. It has always been said that York is a rugby city and that if the board provide the public with a winning team the public will respond. I think the jury is still out but today will provide us with a clue as to whether that contention is correct. Certainly Dean and the players are doing their job and we will shortly know whether their reports will be rewarded by an upturn in support. Once again, thank you all for your faith in the club.

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IN THE WASPS NEST

THE MEN BATTLING FOR THE ROUGHYEDS

KEITH ATKINSON

The Stalwart. This is Keith's 8th comeback! Signed for Oldham in 1985 and hung up his boots for what everyone thought was the final time in 1992. Little did we know! Back come forward who has probably played in every position with the possible exception of scrum half. Broke more bones than a butcher (his own that is!). Superb attitude.

CRAIG BARKER

Young stand-off half and a product of the Waterhead amateur RL club. Signed as a pro for the former Bears club and joined the Roughyeds as a free agent. Captained the Bears Academy side and graduated to the Alliance side, which he also led on occasions.

JASON CLEGG

Big Prop. Started in Union with Littleborough, moved into League with Littleborough based North West Pioneers and turned pro with Bradford Northern, (as they were then called), after being spotted by a Northern scout playing in a BARLA cup tie at Redhill (Castleford). Played several senior games with Bradford and later had a spell on loan with Batley.

SEAN COOPER

Former Saddleworth Rangers star, who was taken to Bradford in the Peter Fox era. Captained the Alliance side at Odsal, won numerous Alliance player of the year awards and joined Oldham as a free agent when the Bulls decided to scrap their reserve team. Impressive so far in the Roughyeds early games.

RICHARD DARKES

Former Huddersfield, Bradford and Dewsbury utility back. Ex-paratrooper. Signed after impressing in a pre season match at Castleford. Played wing in his early days with Huddersfield and Bradford, but has since acquired considerable experience in the centre and in the back row of the pack.

CRAIG DIGGLE

A Rochdalian, Craig played with Rochdale Hornets when Roughyeds boss Paddy Kirwan was Alliance team coach at Spotland. Best position, wing. Scored two tries in Oldham's first competitive match against Heworth in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup.

CHRIS ECKERSLEY

Former schoolboy sprint champion, who signed for the old Oldham club as a 15-year-old on a club record contract for a teenager. A long running contract dispute ended with his move to Warrington before he returned to his new home town club as a free agent after a major shake up of personnel at Wilderspool.

MICHAEL EDWARDS

St Helens born, Michael first joined the old club as a 15-year-old scrum half. Was a regular in Alliance rugby for two or three seasons before Oldham coach Tony Barrow took him to Swinton. Now playing in the pack, he had a spell on loan with Salford last season and was delighted to return to Oldham when the opportunity arose.

NEIL FLANAGAN

Club skipper and an influential leader. A produce of St Anne's, Neil turned pro for his home town club and became its youngest captain at the age of 19. Eventually moved on to Huddersfield, where he also had leadership responsibilities before joining Rochdale Hornets. Proud to be back in his home town and even prouder to be the skipper.

JOHN HOUGH

Made his name as the first player to be signed by the Roughyeds shortly after the new club was formed. A product of the Oldham schoolboy and youth game, John is a determined little hooker, who gained considerable experience from his 30 senior games for Warrington. Expected to have a big season in division two.

AFI LEUILA

Played 22 Super League games for the Bears last season after coming close to representing Tonga in the 1995 World Cup. First played for St Helens. This strong, tough South Sea Islander, born in Tonga, raised in Auckland, will probably figure in the centre this season, although he is equally at home on the flank.

MARTIN MADERS

Young prop, who joined Huddersfield from Saddleworth Rangers

as a club record buy for a teenager. Had a spell in Australia and later played with local amateurs Waterhead before joining Oldham for an undisclosed fee. His father Dennis played for Oldham in the sixties and seventies.

MICK MARTINDALE

Clever ball handler. Represented Oldham schoolboys on tour in Australia with Iain MacCorquodale. Eric Fitzsimons and Fred Laughton in 1988. Turned pro with Halifax, moved to Wakefield as part of a swap deal and joined his home-town club in January. Made his debut in the cup defeat at Widnes. Loose-forward or stand-off.

JOE McNICHOLAS

Out and out winger. Fast, elusive and good on his feet. Still only 18, signed for the Bears as a boy, but played only one senior game, at Leeds in the Premiership play-off last season. Rejected Bradford Bulls in a bid to make his name with the Roughyeds.

AIDRIAN MEAD

A Wiganer, Aidie first played in the Bears Academy side as a winger, but he switched to centre last season and impressed as a strong and pacy runner who could score tries. Keen to improve further and build on the success he enjoyed in the Bears 'A' team in 1997.

MIKE PRESCOTT

Back-row forward, also from Wigan. Made a big name for himself as a strong-running forward in the early days of Academy rugby. Since served his apprenticeship in the Alliance side and capable of doing well for the new Oldham club at prop or in the back-row.

BRIAN QUINLAN

Raised at St Anne's, Brian was one of the three Oldham amateurs taken to Bramley by Maurice Bamford. The others were Jon Perks and Roy Jewitt. A strong prop or second-row, Brian is a useful goalkicker. He also plays, during the winter, for Oldham RU but he is the first to admit that RL is his real sporting love.

PAUL ROUND

Veteran of the squad at 34. Joined Oldham from St Helens in 1987. The fee, £65,000 set by tribunal. Enjoyed the best days of his career at Watersheddings. Since had further experience with Wakefield, Halifax and Castleford. One of the 'old heads' in a young pack.

DARREN ROBINSON

'Baby' of the squad at 18. Scrum-half, who can also operate at stand-off. A Leeds lad Darren played for the Bears Academy and Alliance teams, but never signed on. Signed for the Roughyeds as a free agent and has since caught the eye in warm-up matches, particularly in the 27-26 defeat at Castleford.

GRAEME SHAW

Son of former Oldham Athletic and West Brom soccer star David Shaw. Graeme played Union as a boy at Rakewood (Littleborough), but turned to amateur RL with Moldgreen when his family moved to Huddersfield. Represented the Young Lions against the Junior Kiwis and then signed for Bradford. Made a try-scoring Super League debut at Leeds. Second-row forward.

IAN SINFIELD

Made a big impression so far. Another Oldhamer, a product of Waterhead. Turned pro with Salford, who got an undisclosed fee when he signed for Oldham at Christmas. A natural back-rower, he is the elder brother of England schoolboys star and now Leeds youngster, Kevin Sinfield.

NATHAN WARLEY

A go-go forward, who excelled with his all-round performance on attack and defence in the friendly at Wheldon Road. Not the biggest of forwards, Nathan has a big heart. He won Yorkshire youth honours before rejecting Keighley to sign for Bradford. One of several ex-Bradford men in the Oldham camp.

STEVE WILDE

Utility back. Strong and pacy. Started with Saddleworth Rangers. Signed by Brian Gartland for the Bears. Prominent member of the Bears Alliance side last season. Played with Waterhead when the Bears folded, but was keen to sign for the new club when opportunity knocked.



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A high five is being sought by York Rugby League Club from today's visit of Oldham. Victory for the Wasps in today's second versus third clash would complete a five match winning streak for the club and could see them installed as Second Division leaders. York fans will have to cast their minds back to the 1992/3 season for the last time the club managed such an unbroken stretch of success.

A squad including Nick Pinkney, Stewart Horton, Steve Craven, Rich Hayes and Mick Ramsden, the only current squad member, won six consecutive games between August and October before eventually finishing fourth.

They kicked off their brilliant sequence with a 23-13 victory over Chorley, going on to beat Batley, Whitehaven, Highfield, Nottingham and Doncaster. The six pack of success ended with an 18-12 defeat at Batley.

However, that period featured a record breaking individual performance from dual code international Gary Pearce.

In the 84-0 thrashing of Nottingham, Pearce claimed the club record for most points scored in a match, his one try and 12 goals setting a new best of 28 points.

Since those heady days the Wasps have enjoyed two unbeaten five game stretches of four wins and a draw, in 1994/5 and 1995/6.

In December 1995 they beat Chorley, Bramley, Barrow and Hunslet but drew with Highfield and the previous season they beat Highfield, Batley, Barrow and Leigh, with a draw coming from Keighley.

However, the Wasps must overcome the re-born Oldham club if they are to maintain their winning run and the Roughyeds are also aiming to take top slot this afternoon.

Stuart Martel

I didn't realise until the journey home from Lancashire Lynx, quite how far back you had to go for York's last winning run away from home, since then, I've been told it was 4 years ago. So, as a bit of a trip through time, lets reminisce for a minute or so.

Travel back through the mists of time to the era when the club was still called Ryedale York, with home crowds comfortably over 1000. Rugby League was a winter sport, London had just been renamed the Broncos, and fighting for promotion in the second division. Some things didn't change though, as Highfield were propping up the rest of the table, and York struggled to beat them on their own ground.

Other results weren't that bad though, Roger Milward's team did the double over the Broncos, and also beat Huddersfield at the Ryedale Stadium.

The challenge cup run ended with a fifth round defeat by Leeds at Headingley, after knocking out Barrow Island and Rochdale.

Elsewhere, Doncaster were in Division 1, and the result of the season must have been Barrow beating Hull KR by the narrowest of margins. In fact, it was so narrow, it was a drop goal that won it for them, 1-0.

The stars of the time were a relatively unknown couple of Australians. Jason Laurence was the regular full back, and in the centre, or occasionally stand off, was a chap called Brad Davis. What ever happened to him?

Coincidences start with 1998, when you look at the names of the regulars in the team for the away wins. On the wings were Chris Hopcutt and Leigh Deakin, Mick Ramsden was in the second row, and Andy Precious was at loose forward, sharing goal kicking duties with Hopcutt, Alan Pallister and Lea Tichener also made it on the team sheet that season.

After last weekend's win at Doncaster equalled that run, I don't suppose too many will care about the coincidences, as long as it's not another four years before it happens again!

Sharon Shortle

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COACH'S COMMENTS



Welcome to today's game which potentially should be a 'cracker'. Things have gone well over recent weeks and we must continue with our momentum to achieve promotion.

All the squad are working hard in training and it is becoming increasingly difficult to finalise the team for each game as there are always eight disappointed players on any one particular Friday night.

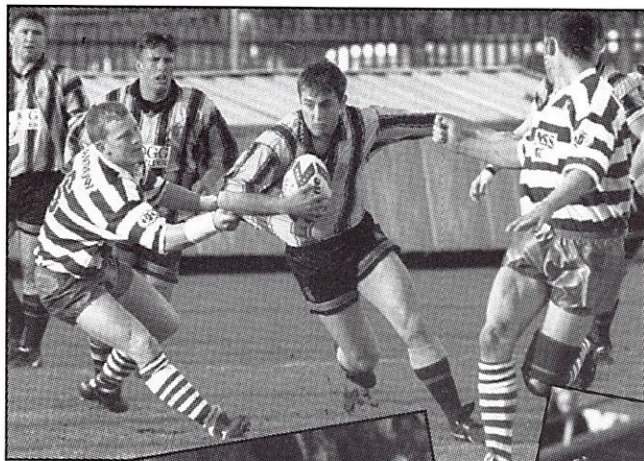
The intensity and spirit that is being generated can only be for the good of York RL.

Oldham will be arriving full of confidence from their win against Barrow and will no doubt want to set up a promotion push themselves. However, we will be giving everything in today's game and I trust your support as always will help us through what will be a tremendous encounter.

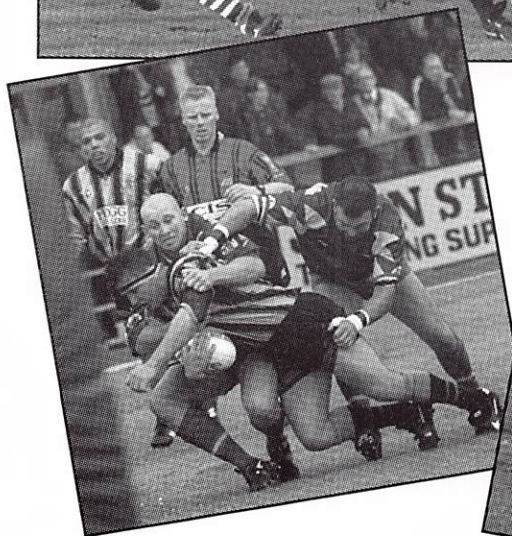
Enjoy the game.

Dean Robinson

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for the 1998 season.*

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FRIDAY, 29th MAY, BRAMLEY

(Away) KO 7.45pm

The Wasps next game sees the start of the White Rose Championship campaign with an away fixture at Bramley.

The White Rose Championship (WRC) consists of those teams in our division from the Yorkshire region playing each other, home and away, with points also counting towards the 2nd Division championship as well as to the White Rose Campaign.

The team finishing top of the White Rose League will then meet the team finishing top of the Red Rose League (Lancs & Cumbria region) in the Trans Pennine Cup on 19 July.

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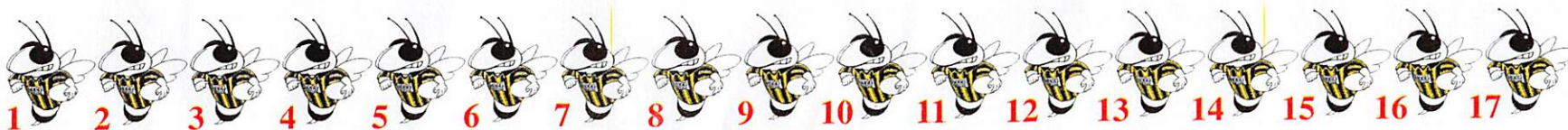
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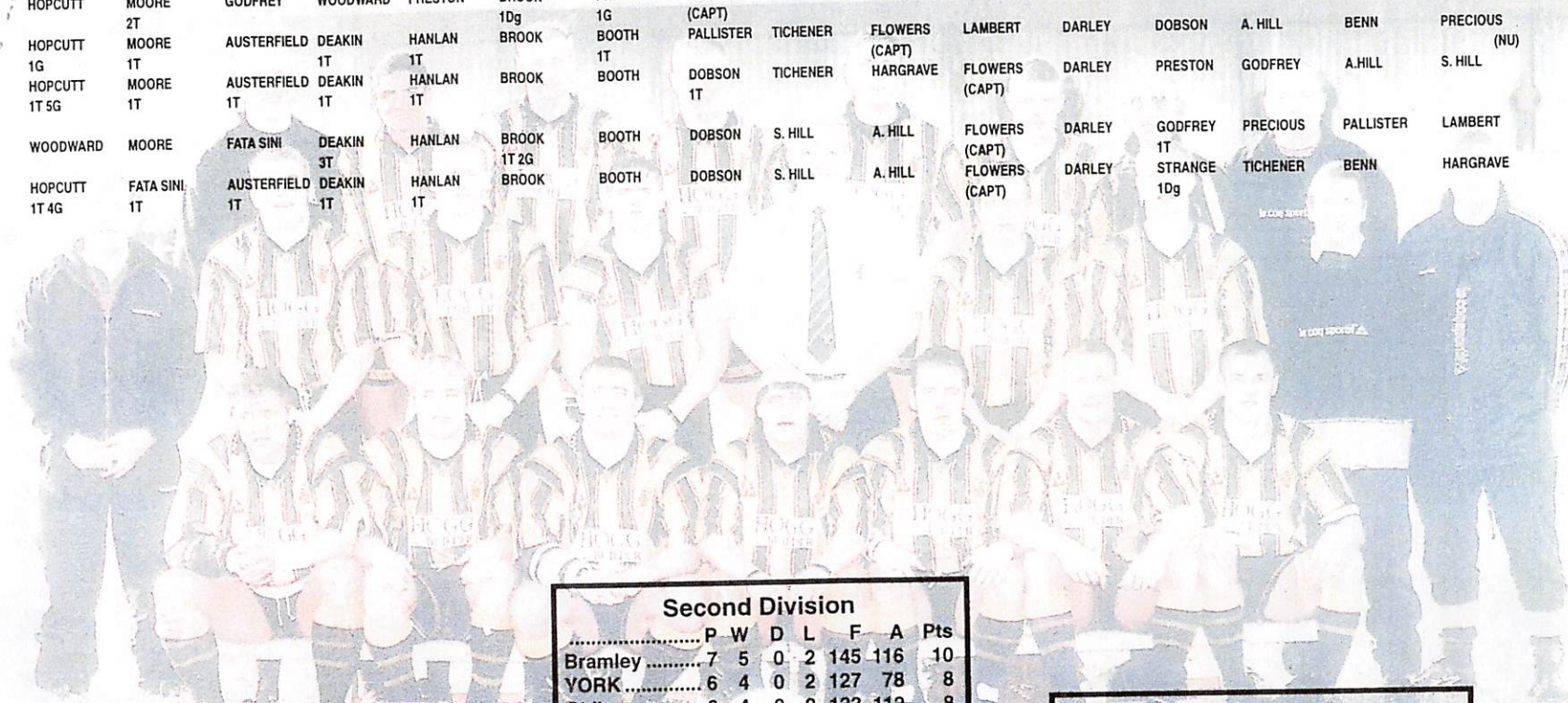
FIXTURES **1998**

			F	A
APRIL				
10th	BRAMLEY	(H) 7.30	6	- 13
13th	BATLEY B.	(A) 3.15	11	- 25
19th	WORKINGTON T.	(H) 6.30	18	- 14
26th	BARROW B. R.	(H) 6.30	38	- 6
MAY				
10th	LANCASHIRE LYNX	(A) 3.00	25	- 12
17th	DONCASTER D.	(A) 3.00	29	- 8
24th	OLDHAM	(H) 3.00		
29th	BRAMLEY	(A) 7.45		
	(WRC)			
JUNE				
7th	BATLEY B.	(H) 3.00		
	(WRC)			
14th	DONCASTER D.	(H) 3.00		
	(WRC)			
21st	BRAMLEY	(H) 3.00		
	(WRC)			
28th	DONCASTER D.	(A) 3.00		
	(WRC)			
JULY				
5th	BATLEY B.	(A) 3.15		
	(WRC)			
19th	TRANS PENNINE CUP			
26th	BRAMLEY	(A) 3.00		
AUGUST				
2nd	BATLEY B.	(H) 3.00		
9th	WORKINGTON T.	(A) 3.00		
16th	BARROW B. R.	(A) 3.00		
23rd	LANCASHIRE L.	(H) 3.00		
30th	DONCASTER D.	(H) 3.00		
SEPTEMBER				
6th	OLDHAM	(A) 3.00		



WASPS '98

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CAIN	HOPCUTT	MOORE 2T	GODFREY	WOODWARD	PRESTON	BROOK 1Dg	PRECIOUS 1G	PALLISTER (CAPT)	TICHENER	HARGRAVE	FLOWERS	DARLEY	PATTERSON	A.HILL	LIMB	LAMBERT
CAIN	HOPCUTT 1G	MOORE 1T	AUSTERFIELD	DEAKIN 1T	HANLAN 1T	BROOK	BOOTH 1T	PALLISTER	TICHENER	FLOWERS (CAPT)	LAMBERT	DARLEY	DOBSON	A. HILL	BENN	PRECIOUS (NU)
CAIN 1T	HOPCUTT 1T 5G	MOORE 1T	AUSTERFIELD 1T	DEAKIN 1T	HANLAN 1T	BROOK	BOOTH	DOBSON 1T	TICHENER	HARGRAVE	FLOWERS (CAPT)	DARLEY	PRESTON	GODFREY	A.HILL	S. HILL
CAIN 1Dg	WOODWARD	MOORE	FATA SINI	DEAKIN 3T	HANLAN	BROOK 1T 2G	BOOTH	DOBSON	S. HILL	A. HILL	FLOWERS (CAPT)	DARLEY	GODFREY 1T	PRECIOUS	PALLISTER	LAMBERT
CAIN 1T 4G	HOPCUTT 1T 4G	FATA SINI 1T	AUSTERFIELD 1T	DEAKIN 1T	HANLAN 1T	BROOK	BOOTH	DOBSON	S. HILL	A. HILL	FLOWERS (CAPT)	DARLEY	STRANGE 1Dg	TICHENER	BENN	HARGRAVE



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Oldham	6	4	0	2	133	112	8
Lancashire Lynx	5	3	1	1	131	71	7
Barrow	6	3	1	2	117	106	7
Batley	6	2	0	4	138	133	4
Workington	6	1	0	5	87	162	2
Doncaster	6	1	0	5	77	177	2

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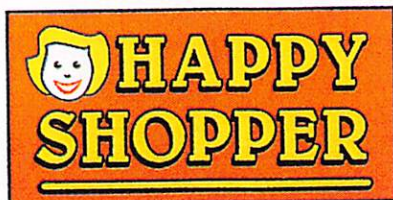
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ACADEMY & YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

At last we have started the season, now the amateur competitions have finished, our squad is looking very impressive. We have attracted young lads from all over North Yorkshire, from as far as Scarborough to Brotherton. The age group of the squad ranges from 15 to 19 years of age, so things are looking good for the future of York RLFC.

14.5.98 YORK WASPS ACADEMY 12 v DONCASTER D 15

The Wasps started the game with a very young and inexperienced side containing a few lads new to Academy and the game of Rugby League.

York's defence, led by Steve Waldren and Russell Jaszewski contained the Dragons more experienced and physically mature team and we took the lead with a fine attacking wide play which led to Steve Irving scoring an unconverted try. York then suffered a bitter blow losing S Waldren with a knee injury. Just before half-time powerful play by the Wasps led to Eddie Keeping forcing his way over for a try, Carl Paterson adding the two points. H/T 12 v 6.

The Wasps spent most of the second half defending in their own half and were under intense pressure and finally gave way and Doncaster scored a converted try. The Wasps defended well, of which Lee Paterson, Jaszewski, Will Neary and Mark Tipping tried very hard. Doncaster took advantage of their territorial domination and kicked three well taken drop goals to win the game. F/T 12 v 15.

17.5.98 YORK WASPS ACADEMY 14 v HEMEL HEMPSTEAD 10

A very warm day and the season's first long away trip set the scene for our first win in the second division. Yet again we were up against a very physical side who have been together for a few seasons.

York started the game suffering from the long journey and went behind by ten points in the first thirty minutes. The introduction of Anthony Howcroft had an immediate impact at scrum half and he scored a good individual try, to which Carl Paterson added the two points. Dan Briggs entered the field of play and strengthened our play and caused Hemel problems in defence. C. Paterson added a penalty. H/T 8 v 10.

Both sides started the second half with their respective defences working very hard despite the hot conditions, none more so for the Wasps the Ryan Calem in the centre. Despite the promptings of C. Paterson, Howcroft and Gareth Ellis, York could not clinch victory until the seventy seventh minute when Adam Briggs finished off a fine passing move and went in at the corner. C. Paterson sealed off the win and kicked a fine touchline conversion. F/T 14 v 10

I have tried to give most of my squad a run out over the two games played, so now I have an idea of the work I require to do at training over the next few weeks. Training takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6.45pm.

Yours in RL
Brian Kellett
Tony Gargan

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IN TOUCH



Good afternoon all. Welcome back to the Wasps nest to what could be one of the most thrilling games of the season. With Oldham in good form and the Wasps stinging everything in their path at the moment you will be sure to see some excellent football.

Hopefully you supporters this afternoon will be in good spirit after our last four wins and slowly but surely people are starting to return to the Wasps nest. Even the ones that say (ever since you left Clarence Street) which seems to be the famous saying when it comes to York Rugby league.

However I do believe that people follow success no matter how far they have to go and the team is confident that we can go all the way. We have proven that we can put points on the board in good style, but one of the biggest things is that we can stop points being scored against us and if we can keep up our solid defensive display, no team within this second division will find the York Wasps an easy side to score points against. Let's hope those points can be proven today.

Till next home game...

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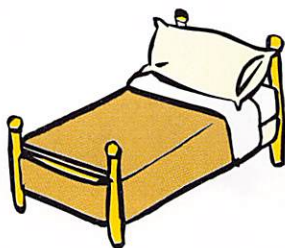
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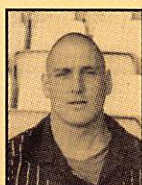
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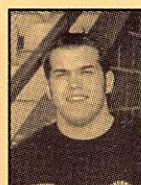
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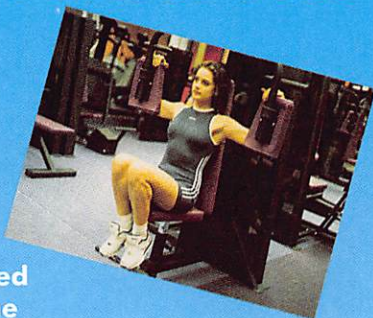
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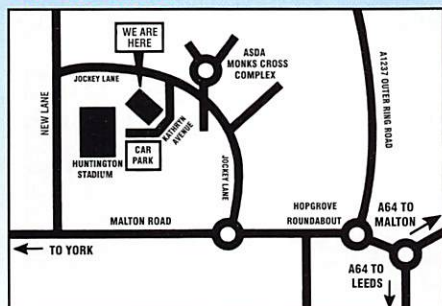
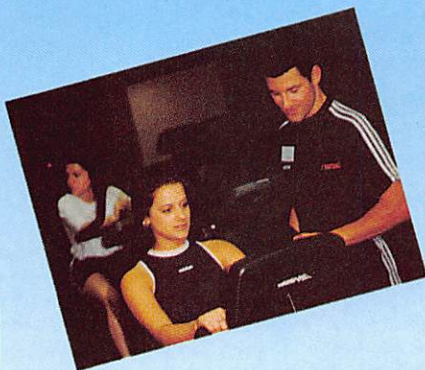


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THE BUZZ

Supporters Club

Supporters Club

Hi and welcome to Huntington Stadium for today's match against Oldham.

The supporters club gives a hearty welcome to Fata Sini and wish him a very enjoyable and successful stay with us in York.

Congratulations to York on their excellent win against Lancashire Lynx and our special congratulations go to Alex Godfrey on his excellent try. The supporters club are pleased to have been able to assist the club in the buying of Alex.

Another Fine display by the York team gave us another excellent result at Doncaster last week. We hope that all these good wins away from home will attract more of the stay-away supporters to return to Ryedale Stadium and give the team the support that they so richly deserve.

The tickets for the summer draw are now on sale at 20p per ticket or £1 per book. We have some excellent prizes. The first prize is a weekend break for two in Bruges.

We would welcome anyone willing to help sell tickets, so if you can help please contact any committee members.

Our Wasp winners tickets are still only 50p and these are on sale before the match at every home game. Please give us your support. All the proceeds from our fund raising events go towards helping the club.

Good luck to the York team for today's game and we look forward to another exciting game and another good win.

Finally, may we wish all the Oldham supporters a very warm welcome and hope you enjoy today's game and have a safe journey home.

Ann Garvey

Supporters Club Secretary

Dennis Baker, Chairman 01904 793344

Ken Pearson, Treasurer 01904 769861

Ann Garvey, Secretary 01759 380298

Fit For It!

Good afternoon everybody

I'm writing this on Tuesday evening, after the training session. I'm pleased to say that, at this point, I'm pretty happy with the way the squad is looking for the game. Although there are lads carrying knocks, the squad on the whole is looking pretty sharp, and are firing on all cylinders (physically anyway). I'd like to praise the vast majority of the squad for the effort and application to their training during the past few weeks.

Particular mention must go to those who have not been selected in the playing 17, and have been training hard with me instead. I'm sure that those who saw the game at Deepdale will have seen the result of the hard work that the lads have been putting in on the training field during the past few weeks.

I'd like to give my best wishes to those returning to fitness, from injury, such as Rich Harrison, John Strange and Mick Ramsden. I'm sure everyone will join me in giving continued condolences to Mick Hagan, who still suffers from the collar/shoulder injury that he sustained in the New Year.

Thanks to those of you who asked about my knee. I am due to go in for surgery in early June, which will tell me what exactly is wrong and what has to be done to correct it.

I hope you all enjoy the game and hope that the lads can keep up the winning form.

Simon Hartley

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YORK WASPS	v	OLDHAM
Mark CAIN	1	Chris WILKINSON
Jamie BENN	2	Adrian MEAD
FATA SINI	3	Afi LEUILA
Shaun AUSTERFIELD	4	Richard DARKES
Leigh DEAKIN	5	Chris ECKERSLEY
John STRANGE	6	Craig BARKER
David BROOK	7	Neil FLANAGAN (Capt)
Craig BOOTH	8	Paul ROUND
Alan PALLISTER	9	John HOUGH
Lea TICHENER	10	Michael EDWARDS
Andy HILL	11	Joe NADIOLE
Stuart FLOWERS	12	Martin MADERS
Paul DARLEY	13	Mick MARTINDALE
Alex GODFREY	14	Jason CLEGG
Steve HILL	15	Ian SINFIELD
Gareth DOBSON	16	Graeme SHAW
Spencer HARGREAVES	17	Nathan VARLEY
<div>  Referee: S K LOWE </div> <div> Touch Judges: <div>  D TIDMAN </div> <div>  J BACKHOUSE </div> </div> <div> Mascots: Ross Varley (8) Acorn ARLFC </div>		