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CHRISTOPHER HAMILTON

Chairman's Chatter



ITS ANOTHER WARM welcome to everyone tonight only a short number of days after Monday's epic performance against Dewsbury. The lads played like we knew they could and everyone now has to strive to try and produce that level of performance on a more consistent basis. The way the crowd got behind the team in the second half was magnificent and the players were commenting on it in the dressing room after the game. We now face a long trip to Whitehaven in the next round but I'm sure everyone will agree that if we play like we did against Dewsbury we are capable of winning.



It has also been interesting reading some of the comments of our Super League counterparts concerning the Challenge Cup, and the fact that they don't like a random draw. The beauty of a random draw is that it keeps the romance alive for players, officials and supporters alike and as soon as you change that you have lost the appeal of the cup competition. Unfortunately at the present time it seems that nobody wants any stability in this game, and the sooner people realise the damage that causes, the better the game, on and off the field, will be.

Before that we entertain Featherstone and they are another team whom I expect to at least make the top five this season. It means therefore another tough challenge for our lads tonight but one which they will relish and one in which your vocal support can play an important part.

Its been a hectic few days with the result of the public enquiry into the new stadium and, following the sale of Watersheddings, John Prescotts "OK" is a major step forward for the Club. Hopefully some of the doubters in the town will realise that a new stadium can be a flagship for the borough and matters can perhaps now move more quickly than they have.

Enjoy the game and shout the lads on to victory,
Best Wishes,

Christopher Hamilton

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OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE'S

Roger Halstead

ENVIRONMENT Secretary John Prescott's decision to approve Sports Park 2000, after a public enquiry, was just the tonic Oldham Roughyeds required as they prepared to square up to the demands of the Northern Ford Premiership.

A 30-0 defeat at Batley in the opening game put everyone at the club on a "downer", but four days later came the much-delayed and long-awaited verdict from the Government on the plans to centre a massive £20 million leisure complex around a new stadium on Clayton Playing Fields.

It was a thumbs-up for the stadium....and as far as professional sport in Oldham is concerned that was the most positive signal yet that both Oldham Roughyeds and Oldham Athletic can look to an uncertain future with at least a hint of confidence and conviction.

What disappoints and saddens me about the whole stadium issue is the amount of opposition to it within a borough, soon to celebrate its 150th Anniversary, which once boasted that, in many walks of life, its sons and daughters could match the achievements of the nation's best.

In the theatre, music and sport Oldham has a rich heritage going back across the 150 years that will be celebrated in some style this summer.

Sport has been to the forefront of Oldham life throughout the last century. Which northern town gave Walter Winterbottom, David Platt and many other big names in soccer? In the world of cricket no prizes for guessing where Michael Atheton was reared. Or which Central Lancashire League club gave Geoff Pullar to Lancashire and England, Malcolm Hilton, (the only man to bowl out Don Bradman twice in one match), to Lancashire and England, Jim Hilton to Somerset, Keith Andrew to Northants and Jack Dyson to Lancashire, not to mention his feats with Manchester City.

The list is endless. In Rugby League, Oldham men have played significant roles in the history of the sport since Joseph Platt became the breakaway code's first secretary in 1895.

The history of the game is filled with the achievement of Oldham men and Oldham teams, both at Watersheddings and on foreign fields.

In recent times, the town provided the Rugby League's Director of Coaching and later Great Britain boss in Phil Larder. It produced the man widely recognised as one of the leading marketing whizkids in sport, Peter Deakin.

And you've only to look around the leading clubs to pick an entire team of Oldhamers, from Iestyn Harris at full-back to Paul Sculthorpe at loose-forward.

Why, it's only nine years since Athletic were in the semi-final of the Littlewood Cup at the same time as Oldham Rugby met Warrington in the semi-final of the Challenge Cup.

Latics got to Wembley, Oldham didn't. But what an achievement for a town the size of Oldham to produce semi-finalists in competitions of such stature.

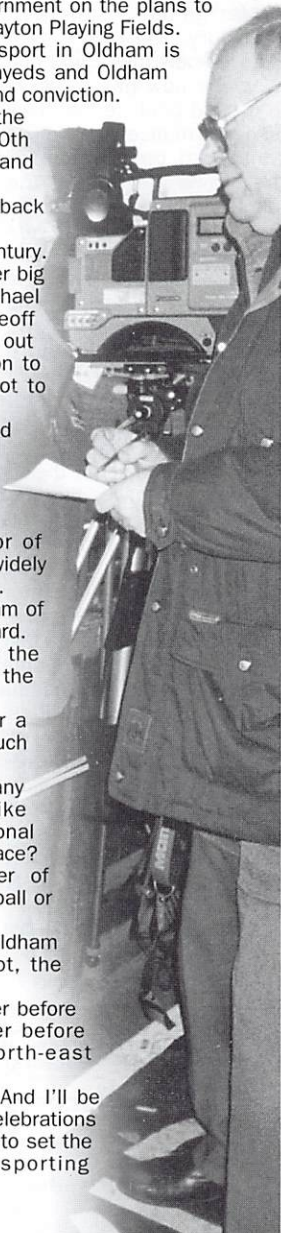
Less than a decade on, times have changed. But how can so many Oldham people question or oppose a new stadium when towns like Warrington, Widnes and St. Helens, which don't even have a professional soccer team, are looking bravely to the future and putting their stadia in place?

In these days of centralisation, towns like Oldham are in grave danger of losing their identity and nothing gives them an identity more than pro football or rugby league teams. Whoever heard of Accrington?

A new stadium must be the centre point of Oldham professional sport into the next century. If not, the clubs could wither and die as the years unfold.

And once they've gone how much longer before other institutions fold? How much longer before Oldham becomes little more than north-east Manchester?

A cry from the heart. You bet it is. And I'll be crying right through the 150th birthday celebrations if the town fails to grasp the opportunities to set the stage for another 150 years of sporting achievements.



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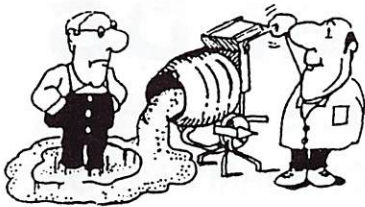
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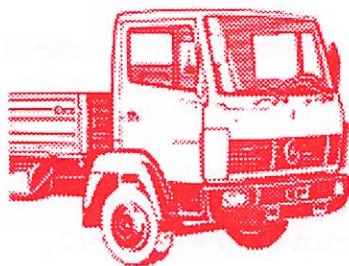
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MICK COATES

Game On...



WELCOME TO all Featherstone officials, players and spectators. I hope your journey home is not too happy.

Well, what a difference a week makes! After our disappointing start to the League at Batley, I said in Monday night's notes that we are not 30 points worse than Batley and Monday's result will hopefully back that argument.

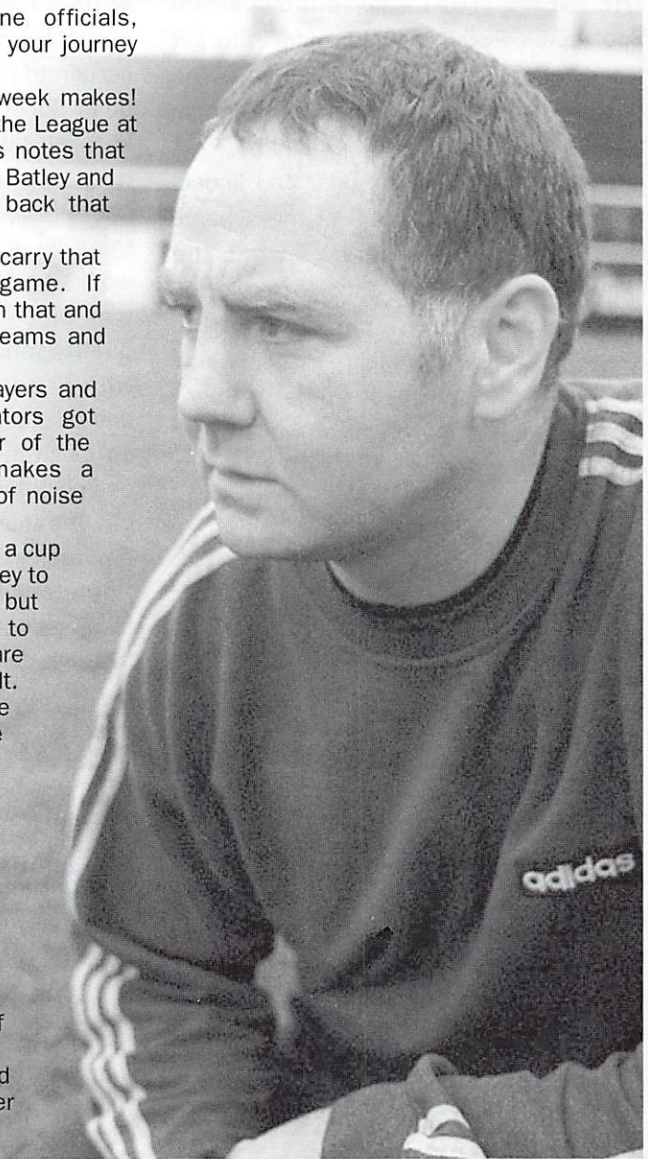
What we need to do now is carry that performance into tonight's game. If anything, we need to improve on that and earn the respect of opposing teams and our spectators.

It was noted by several players and officials the way the spectators got behind us in the last quarter of the game, and believe me it makes a difference. Lets hope for lots of noise off you all tonight.

Monday night of course was a cup match, and we now have a journey to Whitehaven. It's a difficult trip, but it's also one that we can go to knowing that if we perform we are more than capable of a result. Then it gets the hair up on the back of the neck because the next round is the quarter finals. Well, I'm wandering off course a bit there from what is happening tonight.

A couple of pleasing performances on Monday but I'm afraid our wee Frenchman may be missing tonight; he's been in the wars a bit since his arrival but the injury to his ankle looks certain to keep him out of tonight's game.

Anyway I hope it is a good game, and of course the better side to win!



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FROM

The Editor

THE NEWS THAT the controversial Sportspark 2000 Stadium plan is to get the go-ahead is good news indeed. The prospect of Oldham R.L.F.C. and Oldham Athletic playing at the new ground by 2001 is truly a mouthwatering one. And should anyone doubt the wisdom of the scheme they need only to look at what the McAlpine stadium has done to revive the fortunes of professional rugby in the shape of the Huddersfield Giants, a club which now has the best arena in Rugby League, the best coach in the world and a bright future in Super League.

So, could Sportspark 2000 help catapult Oldham back to Super League status? Who knows? But ask anyone in Derby, Middlesbrough, Sunderland or Bolton - to name a few - whether new facilities can be the catalyst which improves on-field performance and see what answer you get. Do you think anyone in those towns would honestly want a return to their old grounds? Of course it is nice to honour tradition, but this can be achieved in a myriad of ways as Oldham have tried to do in their choice of colours, their nickname and the Hall of Fame. But when it comes to comfort let's have the best and say goodbye to make-do-and-mend, second-rate, victorian, past their sell by date facilities.

WITH BOTH LAST year's finalists already eliminated the Silk Cut Challenge Cup is certain to generate plenty of interest. With other Super League big guns certain to be knocked out in the next round this could just be the year of an underdog like Castleford, Huddersfield or London. Just think what an appearance at Wembley would do for the profile of the game in their area if either of the latter two could qualify, and though followers of Wigan won't agree, doesn't the current unpredictability of the competition make it so much more enthralling than the era of one club dominance?

The fourth round didn't really throw up any major surprises, although Rochdale Hornets will have been disappointed to lose against York, and Barrow to go down to Leigh. In view of Dave Hadfield's article in the Dewsbury programme it is interesting to note that the only clubs to overcome opposition placed higher than themselves in 1998 were Salford (against Sheffield) and Widnes (against Keighley), both of whom had home advantage. (This was written before Oldham v Dewsbury). This probably means that the intriguing ties in the fifth round are Huddersfield v Salford and Warrington v Halifax. Home advantage is likely to prove decisive in each case. And my tip for this year's winners? It has to be Bradford Bulls.



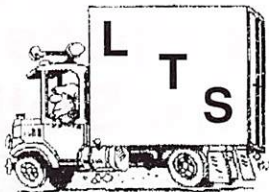
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JUNIOR

Roughyeds



HI TO ALL THE JUNIOR ROUGHYEDS

A very warm Oldham welcome to the players, supporters and juniors of Featherstone Rovers.

The Junior Roughyeds held their first meeting of the season on Monday 8th February. Lots more Junior Roughyeds enrolled on the evening. It was great to have so many come along. Any Juniors wishing to enrol can do so at the Club Shop, Union Street, Oldham.

Four players attended the Juniors meeting and were great sports as always. Those attending were:- Afi Leuila, the Junior Player of the Season last year, Jason Clegg, who was a great favourite, Josh Bostock, who was treated to a warm Oldham welcome, and Mick Farrell, who had a great time with the games even though his team came last.

The Oldham mascot for today is **ZOE BUCKLEY**. Zoe is 9 years old. Her favourite player is John Hough.



Zoe Buckley



Debra Rafferty

The mascot for the day at Batley on Sunday 7th February was **MEGAN HARTLEY**. Megan had a great time although it was very cold.

I WAS really excited. As I counted the hours down I got more and more nervous. I had my picture taken with Afi. He's my favourite player. It was that cold I couldn't feel my fingers, (summer rugby what's that?). I ran on the pitch with Leo, it was fantastic but I was still very nervous. When the ref tossed the coin Batley won. Even though Oldham lost the game I still had a great time.



Megan Hartley

Debra Rafferty

WANTED

BALLBOYS/BALL GIRLS FOR A TEAM MATCHES

We are looking for Ballboys/Ballgirls for the soon to be formed Oldham Alliance team.

We require 6-8 reliable young people over the age of 13, as most of the matches will be played mid week in the evening. The matches will be played at Castleton Gabriels Ground in Castleton, Rochdale. You do not need to be a Junior Roughyed, but a knowledge of the game would be an advantage.

*If you are interested or want more details contact **Debra Rafferty** on **678-8256** or contact **Jenny** at **O.R.L.F.C.** on **628-3677**.*



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BRIAN WALKER

Watersheddings

By now everybody with a passing interest in the Oldham Club will be aware that Oldham MBC have insisted that the street names within the new Watersheddings Housing Development will be sympathetic to what went on there during the previous 110 years – the sport of rugby and those who played it! This was well documented in the press during the close season. It was pleasing to see this featured article in The South Wales press last week.



Tribute: Street named after former Cross Keys rugby player



(Picture: Pendre Sims)



Marje Le Clare, of Daniel Place, Pill, with a photograph of her brother, Alex Givvons, when he was capped for Wales against England in 1938. Mr Givvons, also pictured above, has had a street named after him in Oldham.

HAVING a street named after you is something usually reserved for the very famous – and the dead. But former Cross Keys Club rugby player, Alex

Givvons will soon see a street plaque erected bearing the name Givvons Fold in Oldham where he lives.

Newport-born Alex Givvons, now 85, travelled

(continued on opposite page)



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to Oldham in January, 1933 to play half-back for Oldham Rugby League Club.

Sixty-six years later, he is one of four former club players being honoured by the council.

The Old Rugby Green development is being built on the spot where Watersheddings Rugby Club once stood.

The streets will be named after the great in Oldham's rugby history – including Welshman Alex Givvons.

Alex was born in Newport in 1913 and discovered rugby at nine, at High Cross School, Emlyn Street.

He played half-back for Pill Harriers RC before moving to Cross Keys.

In January 1933, Alex moved to Oldham and remained there, except for a brief spell at Huddersfield in the mid 40s, for the rest of his playing days.

Alex Givvons was regularly capped for Wales. Sixty years after he first went to Oldham RC, he was still employed as their kit man.

His sister, Marge Le Clare, 80, of Daniel Place, Pill, treasures newspaper cuttings and photographs cataloguing Alex's rugby career.

"He was so well-respected. People still ask me 'How's Alex?'" said Marge. "I am so proud of him".

Marge and Alex last got together about 18 months ago but they keep in touch by phone.

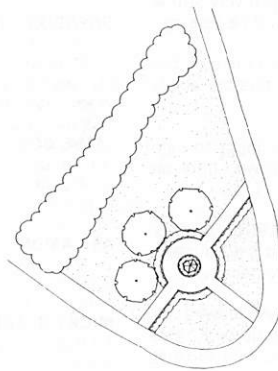
When he first heard that a street was to be named after him Alex said: "It is a great honour for me. I can't really believe it to tell the truth."

A spokesman at Oldham council said: "In Mr Givvons case, we don't normally do this before someone has died, but he has such a long a distinguished career with the club that we had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reward this."

A BLUE commemorative plaque is to be placed within the small park at the junction of Counthill Road and Ripponden Road. This area is to be upgraded by builders Roland Bardsley during the next few weeks and the plaque is expected to be unveiled early spring. The following plans have now been received:-



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Plinth surrounded by paved area with low hedges and specimen trees.



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TONIGHTS VISITORS

Featherstone Rovers



KEVIN HOBBS - Head coach

Takes over as Head Coach after considerable success with the Rovers Alliance and Academy teams. Last season he was Assistant to Steve Simms, whom he helped to bring dramatic success at the end of the season. Featherstone were out of the top five before a headlong dash of famous victories took them to the Grand Final.

MATT BRAMALD - Full Back or Winger

Matt was a close season signing from Dewsbury. He is the type of player who can sniff out a try from nothing. Last season he was leading try scorer at the Rams and Rovers were fortunate to gain his signature. An exciting player, especially when he joins the line.

IAN THOMPSON - Winger

Comes from the Hunslet area and was originally snapped up by Wigan. He became a victim of the salary cap, forcing the Lancashire club to release him. Featherstone were quick to snap up the pacy youngster. An exciting player, who could easily fill Karl Pratt's position. Has just broken into the first team this year.

MARTIN LAW - Centre

Was Wakefield's 'Man of Steel' last year. Originally he played in the pack but made the successful transition to the backs. Big and strong he is likely to be a big asset to his new club.

CARL HALL - Centre

He was greatly honoured to be asked to skipper the side by Kevin Hobbs. He has had previous experience with Doncaster, Bradford and Leeds, as well as a brief spell with Mosley R.U., where he was not happy. A very strong player, who can be used in the second row if necessary.

JAMIE STOKES - Winger

He was an Academy tourist at 17. A product of the Dewsbury area. Very fast and exciting, he has the ability to reach the top.

RYAN HORSLEY - Stand Off

As a life long Rovers supporter Ryan was happy to sign for Rovers from nearby Trinity, where he played a lot on the wing. Prefers the half back position.

PADDY HANDLEY - Scrum Half

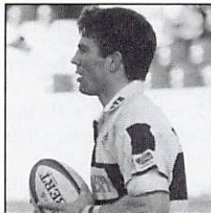
Signed from Heworth by Leeds Rhinos in 1996. Used as a utility player a lot last season but would like to make the scrum-half berth his own. A tricky customer.

HITRO OKESENE - Prop

Nick-named 'The Maneater'. The giant Kiwi played for Hull Sharks last season and was snapped up by Rovers when his contract ended. A very strong, ball playing forward, who tackles with power.

STUART DICKENS - Prop

Incredibly at 18 has made the position his own. Must have a great future. Plays with power and experience above his years. A very good goal kicker. An Academy international.



RICHARD CHAPMAN

Hooker

Formerly played with Sheffield Eagles. One of the best in the game. Very lively about the park. Last season scored 18 tries and kicked 83 goals to become leading points scorer for Rovers.

NEIL LOWE - Second Row

Another young player who is a great prospect. Academy international with only one season under his belt. Looks to have a great future. Pace combined with a sure defence.

STEVE DOOLER - Second Row

Another young player who forced his way into the team at the end of last season. Again another young Rover who looks an outstanding prospect.

RICHARD SLATER

Loose Forward

A tackling machine. The longest serving player on Featherstone's books, who made the short journey from Wakefield. An outstanding defender, whose technique, style and workrate are all fantastic. He combines this with great ball handling.



BRENDON TUUTA - Loose Forward

Toured Great Britain with the Kiwi's before joining Featherstone Rovers. A New Zealand international who has also played Super League for Castleford Tigers and Warrington Wolves. Back for a second spell with Rovers. Hugely popular.

JAMIE COVENTRY - Stand Off

Has pace to spare. A very relaxed player, defensively sound and an outstanding stand-off. Had Super League experience with Castleford Tigers and Huddersfield Giants.

ASA AMONE - Utility Player

Tongan international. Very powerful, Signed from Halifax Blue Sox. Turns many a game when coming off the bench. Takes three or four men to stop him.

MICKY CLARKSON - Second Row

Another player from Wakefield Trinity. Tremendous worker. Fast and strong, Began his career with Stanley Rangers.

DANNY EVANS - Utility Player

Can fill any pack position. Came through the Club's juniors. Powerful forward who always gives 100 per cent. Strong family ties as his father and grand-father played with the Club before him.

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Down Memory Lane



DON LOOKS BACK TO A FEATHERSTONE MATCH FROM YESTERYEAR



IT MAY BE because I am growing old but there are certain things in life which I am beginning to dislike. The wearing of baseball caps the wrong way round; that dreadful noise which blasts out at Salford under the guise of pre-match entertainment; mobile phones ringing our on railway trains; summer rugby; I've never liked Manchester United; field goals instead of dropped goals and, come to think about it, the wearing of baseball caps the right

way round.

There are certain things which do make life tolerable. My grandson, even though he does wear a baseball cap; travelling through Leigh where all the playing fields have rugby posts, not soccer just rugby league posts; the financial tangle which rugby union has got itself into; eating dinner at the Town House in Greaves Street; and Featherstone.

Yes, I love Featherstone. It's a rugby league town. Even progress has not altered the fact that Featherstone is a rugby league town. The amalgamation of Travellers Saints and Jubilee has resulted in a superb complex appearing at Mill Pond Stadium and an even better team called Featherstone Lions. The reconstruction of Post Office Road has left Rovers with two superb stands in a brilliant, compact, little ground but one which still has character. That quaint scoreboard, manually operated, not a neon monstrosity. That damned slope which Rovers have mastered so that it's more difficult to play down it than up it. And then there's the spectators. Totally biased and offering ferocious advice to visitors and referee alike. I recall visiting Post Office Road not long ago when even I thought the referee was having a good game. Not so the Featherstone

speciecs. 'The last right decision you made ref', yelled a voice from the crowd, 'was when you put the right boots on the right feet.' And Rovers were winning 31-0 at the time!!

Yes Featherstone is a rugby town alright and so it was appropriate that, in 1987, when Papua-New Guinea made their first tour against professional opposition, that tour began at Post Office Road. The line up for that historic match was as follow:

Rovers: Chris Bibb; David Jones, Danny Beach, Ian Smales, Richard Marsh; John Crossley, Deryck Fox; Tim Slatter, Tony Staniforth, Gary Siddal, Alan Dakin, Peter Smith & Paul Lyman. Substitutes, Paul Geary & Keith Bell.

P-NG: Mathias Kitimun; James Kapia, Lautu Atoi, Bal Numapo, Kepi Saea, Darius Haili, Tony Kila; Joe Tep, Roy Heni, Ati Lomutopa, Mathias Kombra, Bernard Waketsi & Arebo Taumaku. Substitutes: Dairi Kovae & Thomas Rombuk.

The Kumuls displayed a refreshing brand of attacking rugby that afternoon which brought several bouts of spontaneous applause from an appreciative audience. Stand-off Darius Haili had the distinction of scoring the first try of the tour in the seventh minute and Mathias Kombra added another shortly afterwards. Bal Numapo converted both to put the Kumuls 12-2 in front, Deryck Fox having landed a penalty for Rovers. Peter Smith reduced the arrears before half time and then, during a five minute spell early in the second-half, Ian Smales scored one try, converted it, and put Richard Marsh over for another. Rovers were 16-12 in front and heading for victory. However, the Kumuls, with total disregard to what for them were unfamiliar conditions, turned the game round in the closing quarter. Kepi Saea and Thomas Rombuk scored tries, Bal Numapo converted the first and Papua-New Guinea had won 22-16.

We came away from the match having been richly entertained, been present on an historic occasion, and with memories of rugby mad Featherstone further enhanced.

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Back Row (left to right) Kevin Fitzpatrick, Daniel Brown, Mick Farrell, Craig Barker, Emerson Jackman,
 Middle Row: Emmanuel Peralta, Josh Bostock, Jason Clegg, Gary Coulter, Graeme Shaw, Nathan Varley,
 Mike Prescott, Brian Quinlan,
 Front Row: Mark Perrett, Laurent Minut, Joe McNicholas, John Hough, Leo Casey, Paul Crook, Adrian Mead, Afi Leuila

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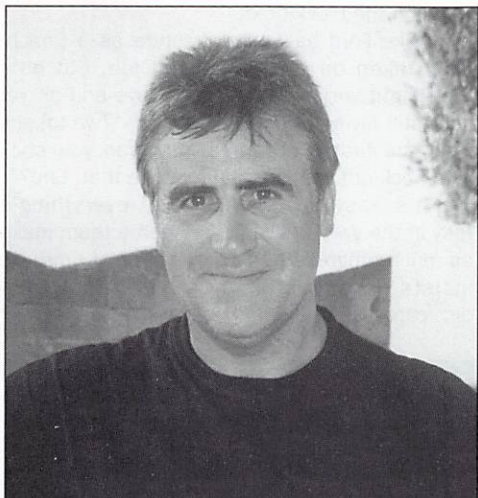
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TODAY'S GUEST

Eric Fitzsimons



Eric Fitzsimons

ERIC FITZSIMONS was a member of the Oldham first team squad between 1978 and 1981. Threequarter and prolific goalscorer he was one of only a handful of Oldham goalkickers to kick more than 100 goals in a season. Eric also played for Hunslet where he is still their record goalscorer.

As the Oldham Coach he succeeded in winning both the 1987/88 second division Championship and the second division Premiership Final v Featherstone at Old Trafford.



I WATCHED the "re-birth" of Oldham RLFC at Spotland last year and I must admit, I felt a buzz as the red and white hoops crossed the touchline at the start of the game. My first year as a spectator in 22 years of the game of RL, and suffering in my new role. My wife, Liz, had the benefit of my expert game commentary. Needless to say she's pleased I'm back in the game now. That game was won on sheer enthusiasm. What a great spectacle when the underdog has his day . . . the feelings flow from field to terrace, players begin to ride the high waves . . . tackles become easier, recovery is quicker, you are in control and you can sense victory. The performance had a little hint of Paddy Kirwan about it.

Two weeks ago, Bramley were on the receiving end. Leigh Miners Rangers, coached by my old mate Ian Taylor, really hit the high waves and defeated us by taking their 3 chances. Bramley scored twice but "bombed" ten others. And I ask myself "who would want to be a coach"? . . . and I answer myself "Well, it's better being here than in the crowd!".

Another question for you: what have Oldham, Lynx, Swinton and Bramley got in common?

Answer: they are all squatters!

Who would have thought that a team like Oldham with such RL history and such a weight of talent could end up squatters at a smaller town which, until recently, were always viewed as also-rans to Oldham. There's not much to be

gained from travelling down (Bad) Memory Lane; the new regime must aim to get it right because, if they do, they'll find a well of support. Evidence of that support has been demonstrated lately, and regrettably, at a series of funerals . . . Karl, Roy and then Brian. God Bless them all, their families and the people who travelled to mourn with their families . . . it's a strong local fraternity and we should all be proud to be a part of it. Oldham lads from Leeds, Sheffield, Hull, St.Helens, Warrington,

Continued on following page



TODAY'S GUEST (continued)

Eric Fitzsimons

Salford, Rochdale and Bramley were all there. Look at the progress of other local successes; Peter Deakin, a huge success in the world of Rugby in both codes; their kid, Steve were on telly when th'Eagles won t'cup last year; Corky, an influence on so many youngsters in the Oldham area now playing roles in both codes; Phil Larder, who's got a big input in the RFU National set-up; Ray Hill, the friendliest Marketing man in the world (and he's not a bad Vets player either you know). I think sometimes we can be too negative, just look at what we have, and be proud of it!

Head on the block time;

Mike Ford has a great future as a Coach. He's taken on a very difficult job, but he's handling it very well. It's early days and as yet he's still laying down foundations. "Two losses from the first two games, how can you stick your neck out with a statement like that, Eric?"

It's easy to forecast when everything's rosy in the garden I've never seen a team make as much progress in a short space of time. He insists on high standards and strong self-discipline. He's a winner, watch this space!



Eric Fitzsimons holds aloft the 1988 Second Division Premiership Cup along with Mel Graham. Featherstone 26, Oldham 28.

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THE INCORRIGIBLE

Iva Stateloose



Little Mo-Peep has lost his sheep
And doesn't know where to find them;
Leave them alone, and they'll come home,
Wagging their tails behind them.

Little Mo-Peep fell fast asleep,
And dreamt he heard them bleating;
But when he awoke he found it a joke,
For they were at a meeting.

Then up he took his little crook,
Determined for to find them;
He found them indeed, but it made his heart bleed,
For they'd put his power behind them.

It happened one day as Mo-Peep did stray
Into a meadow near by,
There he espied two leagues side by side,
Which brought a tear to his eye.

He heaved a sigh and wiped his eye,
And set off for the borders,
To try to forget his last lousy bet
To make little clubs obey orders.

So now Mo-Peep has cause to weep
As others rise to fame;
For his vision has gone to have only one
Super League of the Rugby League game.

There was a young winger called Mead
Very quick on his feet, yes indeed!
Could he go past 'em?
Or would he just blast 'em?
Or burn them all off with his speed?

A second-row forward named Shaw
Would always want to do more;
He'd follow the ball
And tackle them all
To prevent any kind of a score.

A well-known player called Round
Could always gain lots of ground;
Quick off the mark,
He'd run down the park
Leaving tacklers
scattered
around.

There was a scrum-half
called Brown
An Aussie who was new
to the town;
His passing was
great
Fast, accurate, straight
Bringing Oldham a
certain touchdown.



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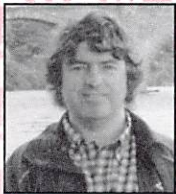
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MICHAEL TURNER

First Time-Last Time

A WELCOME to Featherstone Rovers for our opening First Division "home" fixture for the 1999 season. I am sure everyone connected with the "Roughyeds" will be looking forward to a continuation of the fine history of encounters between these two famous members of the Rugby League.

The first meeting between the clubs took place at Watersheddings on February 18th 1922 (Rovers' first season as a senior club) with victory going to the "Roughyeds" by 28 points to 5. Star of the show for Oldham was the Halifax born wingman Reg Farrar who crossed for five tries. This was the season that Reg set the club try scoring record with 49 touchdowns, which was also the top tally for all of the Rugby League in the 1921-22 season. In all Oldham scored eight tries that

day with the others coming from Evan Davies, Maurice Tighe and Herman Hilton. The goal kickers seem to have had an off day with scrum half Tighe only managing to convert two to the tries.

The return match at Featherstone a month later was a much closer affair with the Roughyeds completing the double by means of a Jim Finnerty try. This was the only score of the match in a 3-0 win for Oldham.

The Oldham team for that first match 77 years ago was as follows: **E. Knapman; J. Finnerty, W. Hall, E. Davies, R. Farrar; J. Donovan, M. Tighe; F. Brown, A. Tomkins, R. Marlor, T. Rees, H. Hilton, J. Collins.** Attendance: 7,000

THE LAST match between the clubs took place at Post Office Road on April 23rd 1995. This was the last match of the 1994-95 campaign and this time it was Rovers turn to complete the double with a 36-14 victory, having already won at Watersheddings 20-10 earlier in the season. This was the last game "Pre-Super League" and with the clubs to be included already decided, it might have been expected to be a tame end of season wind down for the two teams. Not a bit of it! The match was a bruising encounter like so many before between these two great trans-Pennine rivals and the heated exchanges culminated in the dismissal of Oldham prop Jason Temu five minutes from the end of the game. Frenchman Frederic Banquet had a match to remember with seven goals and two tries and the Rovers pack was in dominant form with current "Roughyed" skipper, Leo Casey leading the charge. The Oldham points came from three tries from Darren Abram and Joe Faimalo with Paul Topping landing three goals.

Oldham Team: **P. Topping; A. Gouldbourne, M. Neal, D. Abram, P. Davidson, S. Gartland, M. Crompton; C. Richards, D. Stephenson, J. Temu, G. Lord, J. Faimalo, M. Kuiti, Subs: G. Burns, D. Bradbury.** Attendance: 3,284



Martin Murphy breaks clear supported by Norman Hodgkinson - Oldham v Featherstone October 2nd 1971.

IT IS HOPED TO CONTINUE THIS FEATURE IN THE PROGRAMME SHOWING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE 'ROUGHYEDS OF YESTERYEAR'.
IF ANYONE HAS ANY PHOTOS THAT THEY THINK WOULD BE OF INTEREST PLEASE CONTACT
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DON YATES

On This Day

DON RECALLS THIS DAY IN RUGBY LEAGUE HISTORY

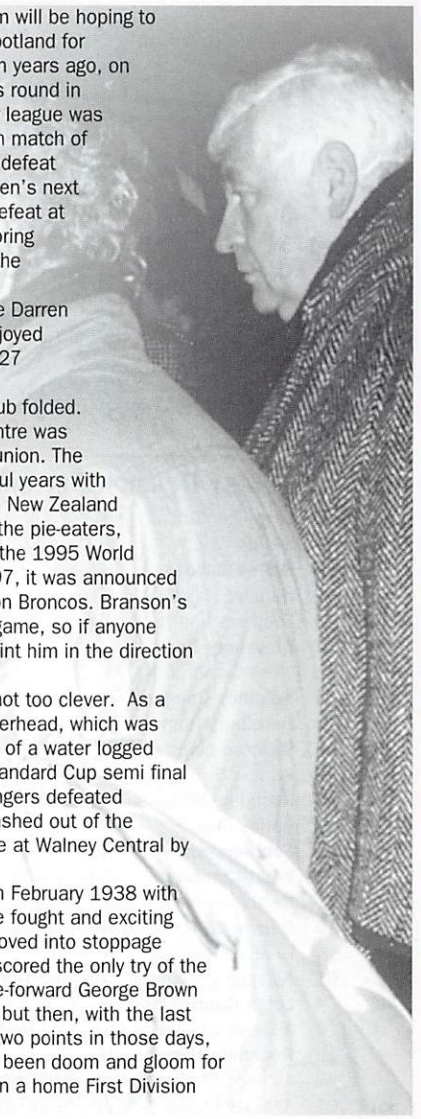


AFTER THE disappointing defeat at Batley two weeks ago, Oldham will be hoping to turn things round this evening when Featherstone Rovers visit Spotland for Oldham's first home league match of the 1999 campaign. Fifteen years ago, on Sunday 19th February 1984, Whitehaven were able to turn things round in spectacular fashion. In those days, of course, professional rugby league was played in the winter and Whitehaven were preparing for their 24th match of the season. The previous twenty three matches had all ended in defeat with no fewer than 793 points conceded. Unfortunately Whitehaven's next opponents were Oldham and the Roughyeds crashed to a 42-8 defeat at the Recreation Ground. Loose forward Milton Huddart led the scoring spree with a hat-trick of tries in what was a dismal afternoon for the Roughyeds.

It was on this day in 1993, Friday 19th February, that centre Darren Abram was signed by Oldham from Rochdale Hornets. Abram enjoyed over four years with the Roughyeds during which time he made 127 appearances and scored 64 tries and 11 goals. He moved on to Lancashire Lynx in December 1997 after the previous Oldham club folded. Four years later, on Wednesday 19th February 1997, another centre was on the move although the move was from rugby league to rugby union. The player concerned was Vaiga Tuigamala who, after three successful years with Wigan, joined Newcastle RUFC. Tuigamala had joined Wigan from New Zealand rugby union in January 1994 and he made 102 appearances for the pie-eaters, scoring 62 tries and 3 goals. He represented Western Samoa in the 1995 World Championships. On the same day Wednesday 19th February 1997, it was announced that Richard Branson had bought 20% of the shares in the London Broncos. Branson's interest and involvement in rugby league was a big boost to the game, so if anyone knows of another millionaire looking to invest in rugby league, point him in the direction of Chris Hamilton.

The weather on that Wednesday, 19th February 1997 was not too clever. As a result, the Standard Cup semi-final between Higginshaw and Waterhead, which was scheduled to be staged at Saddleworth, was postponed because of a water logged pitch. Two years previously, on Sunday 19th February 1995, a Standard Cup semi final did go ahead as scheduled at Hollinwood where Saddleworth Rangers defeated Waterhead 18-2. On Saturday 19th February 1994, St. Annes crashed out of the National Conference League Cup when they lost a quarter final tie at Walney Central by 22 points to 4.

It was the first round of the Challenge Cup on Saturday 19th February 1938 with the Roughyeds facing Batley at Watersheddings. It proved a close fought and exciting encounter which looked like going Oldham's way as the match moved into stoppage time. The Roughyeds led 7-6 with stand-off Mick Downey having scored the only try of the match and full-back Tommy Rees adding a couple of goals. Loose-forward George Brown had landed three penalties for Batley to keep them in contention but then, with the last kick of the match, scrum-half Dicky Ralph dropped a goal, worth two points in those days, so Batley went through 8-7. Finally, just to prove that it hasn't all been doom and gloom for Oldham on February 19th, in 1989 the Roughyeds beat Hull 9-7 in a home First Division match.



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Feb	24	Leigh Centurions	A
Mar	3	Swinton Lions	A
	17	Batley Bulldogs	H
	31	Hunslet Hawks	H
April	8	Featherstone R.	A
	14	Dewsbury Rams	H
	24	West Cumbria	A
May	5	Keighley Cougars	H
	13	Dewsbury Rams	A
	19	Swinton Lions	H
	29	Barrow B. R.	A
June	10	Rochdale Hornets	A
	19	Batley Bulldogs	A
	23	Featherstone R.	H
July		West Cumbria	H (Date to be con')
	1	Keighley Cougars	A
	10	Barrow B. R.	H
	14	Hunslet Hawks	A
	31	Alliance Challenge Cup - 1st Rnd	
Aug	4	Leigh Centurions	H
	14	Alliance Challenge Cup - 2nd Rnd	
	18	Rochdale Hornets	H
	28	Alliance Challenge Cup - 3rd Rnd	
Sept	11	Alliance Challenge Cup - Semi-Final	
	25	Alliance Challenge Cup - Final	

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THERE ARE 2 Alliance Leagues this season to be known as the Championship and the First Division. There will be 25 clubs in total with 14 teams in the Championship and 11 in the First.

The Championship is made up primarily of the Super League reserve sides with the exception being the inclusion of Widnes. Gateshead will not field a second team in this their inaugural season.

Lancashire Lynx, Bramley, York, Doncaster and Hull KR will also not field reserve teams this season.

Promotion is one up and one down providing the promoted club meet the minimum ground requirement criteria. Hemel Hempstead for instance won the Alliance First Division last season but having failed this season to secure a ground that meets the Leagues minimum standard will play instead in the Southern Conference.

Clubs are required to include in the squad 8 players under 21 years of age. The following season this will increase to 10 and the season after that to 12.

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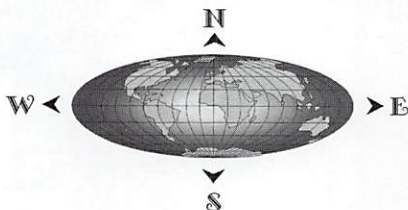
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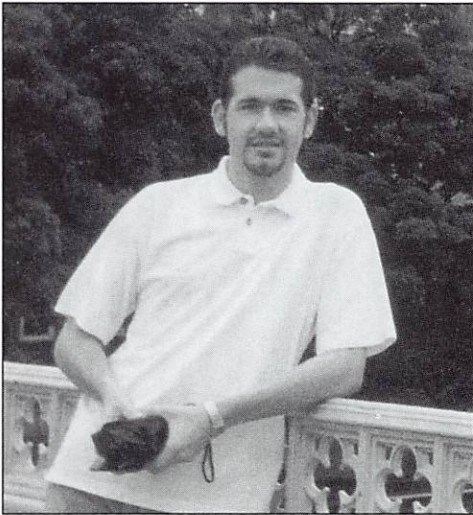
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STAFF PROFILE

Scott Claber

**Name:**

Scott Claber

Age:

26

Born at:

Oldham

Educated at:

Counthill School, Oldham

Qualifications:

8 GCSEs, 1 'A' Level, BA (Hons) Business Studies

Previous employment:

Littlewoods Home Shopping and Boots The Chemist

First interest in or involvement with Rugby League:

Going to Watersheddings with my family. My grandparents have watched Oldham for over fifty years. Feels like I have as well sometimes!!

Current job and responsibilities:

Actual title is Lottery Manager but we all muck in. I run "The Saturday Yankee" and liaise with our agents and members.

Ambitions/future plans:

To have a successful career and see Oldham

back to where it belongs.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Meeting people. The club has some tremendously dedicated supporters who back the club to the hilt. They understand our situation and continue to show support. On the other hand there is also an element who like to knock everything but offer no ideas and no realism. They do not realise the hard work that is required to run a rugby club.

How do you see Oldham developing in the future?

Hopefully with strong foundations and common sense management the club will get stronger and stronger. I would love to see us one day signing the best young players from within the town and see us playing at the top level.

What would you do to improve R.L. in general?

The game is crying out for strong leadership and direction. I would love somebody to say this is the format and we are going to stick with it for the next five years.

Hobbies/favourite relaxation:

Spending time with my girlfriend, Catherine. Watching rugby and football, reading, going to concerts and having the occasional drink!

Favourite film:

The Godfather

Favourite TV:

Auf Wiedersein Pet, Our Friends in the North, I'm Alan Partridge.

Favourite music:

Depeche Mode. Various 60's and 80's music

Favourite reading:

John Harvey, Ian Rankin and of course Roger Halstead!!

Favourite other R.L. club/ground:

Ground has to be Watersheddings. So many memories and great atmosphere, especially night games. Also like the quiet, relaxing atmosphere of Post Office Road.

Favourite other sport:

Football.

SPEEDY HIRE CENTRES (NORTHERN) LTD.

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Good Fortunes to the Roughyeds throughout the 1999 Season



**Oldham Council is proud to celebrate
the 150th Anniversary of the Borough's
municipal status in 1999.**

The Council is committed to continuing the good work of all its predecessors in serving the people of Oldham and in driving the Borough's economic, social, environmental, educational and recreational aspirations into the new Millennium.

To invest in Oldham and take advantage of its central location and excellent communications links contact the Council's Economic Development Department now.

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email edd.jblair@oldham.gov.uk
web-site www.oldham.gov.uk

OLDHAM 
Metropolitan Borough 

Today's Sponsors

Match

Reddish Demolition

Associate Match

Neil Gibbison

Man of the Match

Saturday Yankee

Promotions

OLDHAM

Coach: Mick Coates

- | | | | | |
|----|------------------|----|------------------|--|
| 1 | Laurent MINUT | | | |
| 2 | Adrian MEAD | | | |
| 3 | Afi LEUILA | | | |
| 4 | Josh BOSTOCK | | | |
| 5 | Joe McNICHOLAS | | | |
| 6 | Emmerson JACKMAN | | | |
| 7 | Daniel BROWN | | | |
| 8 | Leo CASEY | | | |
| 9 | John HOUGH | | | |
| 10 | Jason CLEGG | | | |
| 11 | Graeme SHAW | | | |
| 12 | Mark PERRETT | | | |
| 13 | Mick MARTINDALE | | | |
| 14 | Gary COULTER | 16 | Brian QUINLAN | |
| 15 | Mike PRESCOTT | 17 | Emmanuel PERALTA | |

Today's Officials

Today's Referee

Mr C. A. Morris



Touch Judges

Mr P. Taylor &

Mr P. Brooks

Reserve Mr D. Ansell

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS

Coach: Kevin Hobbs

- | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|----------------|--|
| 1 | Matthew BRAMALD | | | |
| 2 | Jamie STOKES | | | |
| 3 | Carl HALL | | | |
| 4 | Martin LAW | | | |
| 5 | Ian THOMPSON | | | |
| 6 | Ryan HORSLEY | | | |
| 7 | Paddy HANDLEY | | | |
| 8 | Stuart DICKENS | | | |
| 9 | Richard CHAPMAN | | | |
| 10 | Hitro OKESENE | | | |
| 11 | Neil LODGE | | | |
| 12 | Steve DOOLER | | | |
| 13 | Richard SLATER | | | |
| 14 | Jamie COVENTRY | 16 | Asa AMONE | |
| 15 | Danny EVANS | 17 | Micky CLARKSON | |

AFTER THE MATCH VISIT MR WRIGLEYS