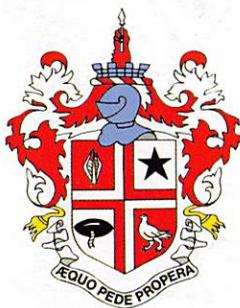




# THE CENTURION

The Official Matchday Magazine of Leigh Centurions Rugby League Club • £1.50  
Sunday 8th August 1999, Kick-Off 3pm  
Ford Northern Premiership

## Leigh Centurions v Oldham



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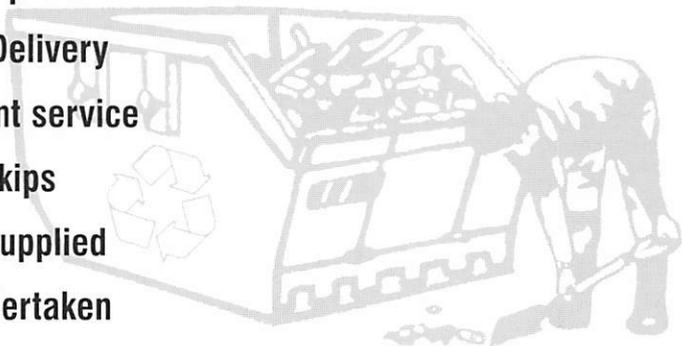
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# Welcome to Hilton Park



## With Chairman Mick Higgins

**WHAT can I say about last week at Widnes. Our support was absolutely tremendous, the players and coaching staff and backroom staff were absolutely tremendous.** The only problem was the result, but for one error, I did not feel Widnes would have scored a try if they had played us until midnight, however people could not ask for any more other than the win that would have taken us top of the table. We will still be up there fighting to finish top of the league, which after last year would be truly remarkable. Once again, thank you for your magnificent support.

We also put our Super League application in last Friday which was the last day for applications to go in. The directors have worked very hard to present a very professional package to the RFL.

Today we welcome Oldham RLFC to Hilton Park in the return league match. They have been to hell and back as we have, so their directors, led by Chris Hamilton deserve better than the results so far. Knowing Chris Hamilton as I do, I'm sure it won't be very long before they are up there, back fighting at the top.

Yours in Sport.

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# Millward

**Coach Ian Millward talks  
about Leigh Centurions**

# Momentum

**I STILL can't believe that we came away from Widnes last week with nothing to show from what was a mighty effort. The result of the game swung on individual errors and that's what is hard to stomach.**

Our completion rate was only 40 per cent in each half and we can't expect to win football games if we turn possession back to the opposition like we did at Widnes. We were particularly careless with our handling in one-on-one situations and at dummy half. We wasted a lot of good work by repeatedly giving them the ball back.

But having said all that I was very proud of the defensive effort from all the players, but especially the forwards who I thought were magnificent in what were very trying conditions. Their work rate was out of this world. They were an inspiration to the rest of the team and it was their efforts that kept us in the game right to the bell. I don't usually like singling out one particular player but I can't let last Sunday's game pass without making reference to Heath Cruickshank who I thought was awesome both on attack and defence. This kid has all the attributes to make it right to the top.

But I'm still not too despondent because our fate now lies in our own hands. We have four games left to play starting with Oldham today, and our target has got to be to win all those four games and collect eight more points to finish with 44 points. When we do finally click and get all areas of our game in order then we're going to give some teams a real hammering. But we've got to correct the deficiencies before we're in a position to make further progress up the table.

Don't forget to join me and the players in the Mick Martyn Suite at 6pm after the man of the match presentation. See you there.



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## LEIGH CENTURIONS RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB HONOURS

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1970-71, 1981-82 • Lancashire Cup Beaten Finalists 1905-06, 1909-1910, 1920-  
21, 1922-23, 1949-50, 1951-52, 1963-64, 1969-70 • BBC2 Floodlit Trophy Winners  
1969-70, 1972-73 • BBC2 Floodlit Trophy Beaten Finalists 1967-68, 1976-77

**MATCH RECORDS Goals:** 15 by Mick Stacey v Doncaster 28/3/76; **Tries:** 6 by  
Jack Wood v York 4/10/47; **Points:** 38 by John Woods v Ryedale York 12/1/92

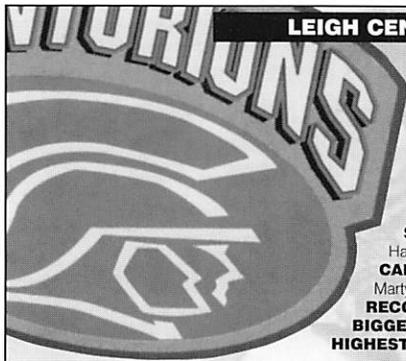
**SEASON RECORDS Goals:** 173 by Chris Johnson 1985-86; **Tries:** 49 by Steve  
Halliwell 1985-86; **Points:** 400 by Chris Johnson 1985-86

**CAREER RECORDS Goals:** 1,043 by Jim Ledgard 1948-58; **Tries:** 189 by Mick  
Martyn 1954-67; **Points:** 2,492 by John Woods 1976-85, 1990-92

**RECORD APPEARANCES** 503 by Albert Worrall 1921-35, 1936-38

**BIGGEST WIN** 92-2 v Keighley 30/4/86

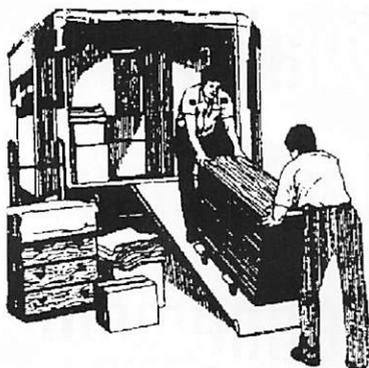
**HIGHEST ATTENDANCE** 31,224 v St. Helens 14/3/53



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Best wishes to Kevin Jenks and Louise Davies on their forthcoming wedding.  
With love from Colin, Brenda and family.



## **TODAY'S MASCOT**

Our mascot today is 11 year old Kristian Spencer Hilton, son of the manager at the Avenue pub in Leigh.

He loves to go swimming and skiing, he also is an avid supporter of Manchester United and most obviously of all a Leigh Centurions' supporter.

So I would like to wish Kristian a happy birthday from everyone at the club and all his family as well.

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# Ford Northern Premiership

## FORD NORTHERN PREMIERSHIP LEAGUE TABLE

As at 1st August 1999

	P	W	D	L	F	A	PTS
Hull KR	24	18	1	5	523	338	37
Hunslet Hawks	24	18	0	6	755	345	36
<b>LEIGH CENTURIONS</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>36</b>
Dewsbury Rams	24	17	2	5	620	421	36
Widnes Vikings	24	17	0	7	654	369	34
Featherstone Rovers	24	15	1	8	604	424	31
York Wasps	24	14	1	9	555	384	29
Whitehaven	24	13	0	11	537	557	26
Keighley Cougars	24	12	1	11	513	533	25
Batley Bulldogs	24	9	3	12	490	440	21
Bramley	24	10	1	13	431	499	21
Barrow Raiders	24	10	0	14	581	639	20
Swinton Lions	24	9	0	15	554	537	18
Workington	24	8	1	15	418	698	17
Rochdale Hornets	24	8	0	16	465	596	16
Oldham	24	5	2	17	401	789	12
Lancashire Lynx	24	5	0	19	437	803	10
Doncaster Dragons	24	3	1	20	407	792	7

## ALLIANCE RESULTS

### 21st July – Leigh Centurions v Oldham (Won 40-20)

**Team:** D Hill, S Millet, S Kendrick, C Halliwell, M Burrows, S Hilton, L Sanderson, D Conway, G Molyneux, A Pucill, P Norman, T Liku, I Lewis, S Leach, M Goulding, L Alred, M Kay.

**Centurions Scorers:** TRIES: Helliwell (3), Conway, Hill, Burrows, Kay, Goulding. GOALS: Sanderson (4)

### 24th July – Leigh Centurions v Barrow Border Raiders (Won 42-24)

**Team:** M Kay, S Millet, S Kendrick, L Alred, M Burrows, S Hilton, L Sanderson, D Conway, G Molyneux, M Goulding, I Lewis, T Liku, S Pheonix, S Fairhurst, J Spark, D Christie, D Leach

**Centurions Scorers:** TRIES: Kendrick (2), Molyneux, Alred, Hilton, Burrows, Kay. GOALS: Sanderson (7)

### 28th July – Cup: Leigh Centurions v St Helens (Lost 16-66)

**Team:** D Hill, D Pilkington, L Allred, M Kay, M Burrows, S Pheonix, L Sanderson, A Pucill, G Molyneux, D Conway, T Liku, J Costello, I Lewis, J Spark, D Christie, C Platt, D Leach.

**Centurions Scorers:** TRIES: Leach, Kay, Pheonix. GOALS: Sanderson (2)



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# Then and Now

by Roger Halstead, Oldham Evening Chronicle

**I MUST have been about ten when I became the envy of rugby league forwards the world over.** Nearly 50 years ago - my how time flies. Forwards were tough men in every sense of the word and I had one of the toughest, Charlie Powsey, right where I wanted him.

It was Derby Day and Central Park. Wigan versus Leigh. And what better place for a rugby-daft schoolboy to soak up the atmosphere than the old Central Park ringside?

Seating spectators so close to the touchline wouldn't be allowed today. But as the forties turned into the fifties and grounds like Watersheddings, Central Park and Kirkhall Lane attracted capacity crowds every other week, it was common for boys and girls to sit on the straw that surrounded many pitches in winter or, in the case of Central Park, to sit inside the boundary wall on the ringside.

It was there that big Charlie crashed over the touchline, rolled over and ended up at my feet and I swear to this day that Charlie gave me a wink and a pat on the head before dashing back to tackle the old enemy.

Many of my earliest rugby league memories are of Leigh. I was born in Rochdale and I loved the Hornets, but my best pal's mum came from Leigh and retained her interest in a Leigh side made famous by the likes of Jimmy Ledgard, Trevor Allen, big Charlie, Billy Kindon and others whom older Leigh fans will recall far easier than I.

As the years rolled by my pal, David Kilpatrick, lost some of his interest in rugby league, switched to soccer and has been chairman of Rochdale AFC for several years.

I went on to become rugby league writer for the Oldham Evening Chronicle, a position I have

held for 35 years, but whenever David and I meet we still talk about those early days when we followed Leigh everywhere.

His grandmother, a Mrs Baines, lived on Wigan Road. An aunt and uncle kept a bakers and confectioners down Plank Lane, not far from the old colliery.

In my more nostalgic moments I can still see Ledgard lining up a kick at goal or Kindon hugging the touchline to the roar of a full-house Kirkhall Lane crowd.

They are but memories, my memories, Leigh memories. But if they mean so much to me, a Rochdalian who used to have an even greater passion for the Hornets and has since spent the last three decades with an allegiance to Oldham, what must similar memories mean to Leigh folk born and bred?

Rugby League in 1999, I fear, is in danger of forgetting its roots and its origins in towns like Leigh, Rochdale and Oldham. It is in danger of trampling all over the men and women of towns like Leigh who have lost their cotton mills and their coal mines but still long for the return of the glory days at their local rugby league clubs.

In my home town of Rochdale we have lost the Athletic Grounds. In my adopted town of Oldham we have said farewell to Watersheddings. For various reasons it had to go. But for local rugby league folk, the town hasn't been the same since and it won't be until a new stadium is built in the next year or two.

So cling on to Hilton Park because you won't appreciate it fully until it is no longer there...and who knows, this very day a starry-eyed Leigh lad might find something in the game that he can tell his grandchildren about 50 years from now.

## TODAY'S MATCHBALL SPONSOR



wish Leigh Centurions the best for the remainder of the season  
and the best of luck for the Play-Offs.

A special thank you to Karen, Jim and all other staff  
for their hospitality throughout this season and many more to come....

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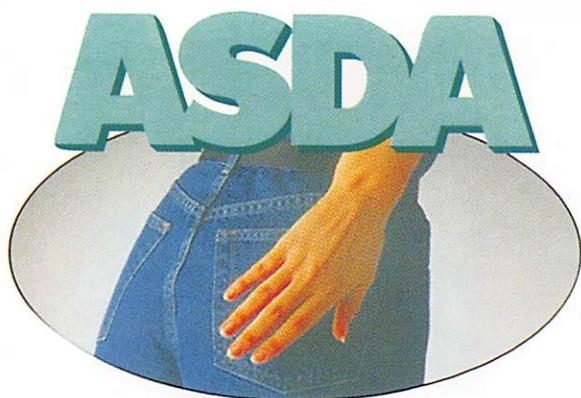
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## **STAN OWEN**

When a young Welshman, stationed at Burscough on National Service, walked into the Leigh ground and asked for a trial, a great RL career was about to begin. A second-row forward, who played for the Pontypridd RU club, Stan Owen took to the new game with relish and made a fine reputation as a strong and fearless prop forward. After making his Leigh debut in December 1951, Owen soon became a regular in the side. In his first full season, 1952-53, he played in 38 of Leigh's 47 games and won a Lancashire Cup winner's medal in only his 19th senior game as Leigh beat St Helens 22-5 at Swinton. Owen went on to make 415 appearances for Leigh and is second to another stalwart prop forward, Albert Worrall, in the all time club appearances list. Together with Walt Tabern and Bill Robinson, Owen formed one of the greatest front rows in Leigh's history. He won one Great Britain cap against France at Grenoble in 1958 and also played for Wales. Transferred to St Helens in February 1964, Owen later played for Rochdale Hornets and Blackpool Borough and was also involved in the game in a coaching capacity.



## **PETER RILEY**

The outbreak of war in 1939 disrupted many a promising career, non more so than that of a teenage scrum half making his mark even in a struggling Leigh side. Signed from Tyldesley RU club, Peter Riley became a regular in the 1938-39 season but had to wait until the cessation of hostilities to fulfil his talents. After serving in the Navy, Riley guested for Broughton Rangers in the 1945-46 season, going close to tour selection before becoming one of the leading players in the re-formed Leigh side of 1946. Modest and unassuming, Riley was a busy and remarkably consistent player and formed a most effective half-back partnership with Jimmy Rowe as the club became firmly re-established. After a well deserved benefit and 245 games for Leigh, Riley ended his career at Keighley, joining the Lawkholmers in the 1951-52 season.



## **TOM SMITH**

A stalwart of the Leigh side for the best part of twenty years, Tom Smith played in every position on the field during that time. He first began playing for the club as a 16-year-old in 1882, making his early reputation as a centre. An accurate place and touch kicker, Smith was also a fast and elusive runner with an eye for the goal line. His greatest moment on the rugby field was captaining Leigh to their famous victory over the Maoris in February 1889 when he scored one of Leigh's two tries. A source of great inspiration in the years prior to the break away of 1895, Smith moved up to the forwards later in his career. He was nearing the veteran stage as Leigh became one of the founders of the Northern Union but continued to play until he retired at the end of the 1899-1900 season, by which time he had appeared in well over four hundred Leigh games. A licensee, he kept the Pied Bull at Leigh for 31 years.

# Looking Back

## to Season 1983/84

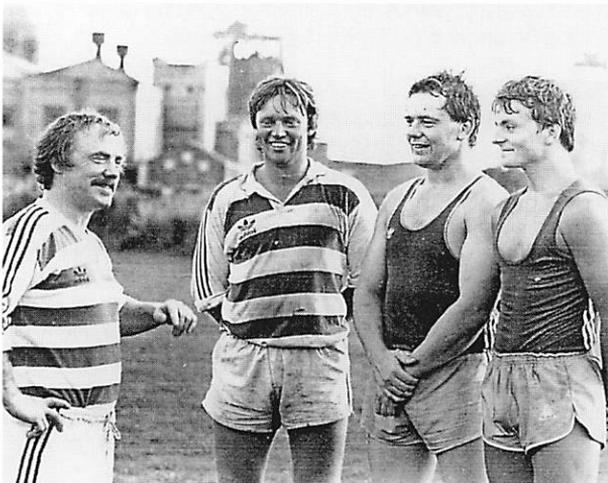
**SEASON 1983/4 was a mediocre one. Tommy Bishop took over from Peter Smethurst as coach and John Woods was captain for the fifth season running. Leigh finished 11th in Division One.**

Most supporters in the early 80s would confidently state that we had the best backs in the Rugby League: John Woods, Steve Donlan, Des Drummond, Phil Fox and John Henderson figures strongly in 1983/4, Woods scoring 27 times and kicking 124 goals.

New Zealand test scrum half, Shane Varley spent the season with us and fellow Northcote Tiger, Jeff Clarke arrived for what turned out to be a long spell at Leigh. Derek Pyke and John Westhead were the mainstays of the pack each making over 30 appearances.

Amongst the debutantes were Tony Cottrell and Chris Johnson. At the end of the season Donlan and Drummond went on the Great Britain Tour of Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

**Tommy Bishop (coach), Eddie Hunter, Derek Pyke, Wayne Atherton**



Form throughout the season was patchy but there were highlights. Two victories over Wigan! On 28th August we beat them 26-12 at Central Park. The return on 9th October was a victory by 24-18.



**Scrum half Kenny Green with Tommy Bishop**

We had a good run in the John Player Cup. In the 1st Round we won at Oldham 20-12. The 2nd Round at Carlisle was memorable for five tries by Des Drummond in a 68-17 victory. The 3rd Round gave us a home tie against Cardiff City which we won 12-8. In the Semi-Final on December 10th we went to Headingley and in front of a disappointing crowd of 5,740 went down 11-18.

Our win against Oldham in the cup was the first of four games between the sides that season. The second game at Watersheddings, I remember, as being very enjoyable until a scrum broke up into a fight which quickly involved almost every player on the field. The referee had a serious problem but I recollect being astounded when he abandoned the game! The third game, a replay of that game, finished in a 13-10 Oldham victory. One week later, at home, Leigh went down again 15-21.

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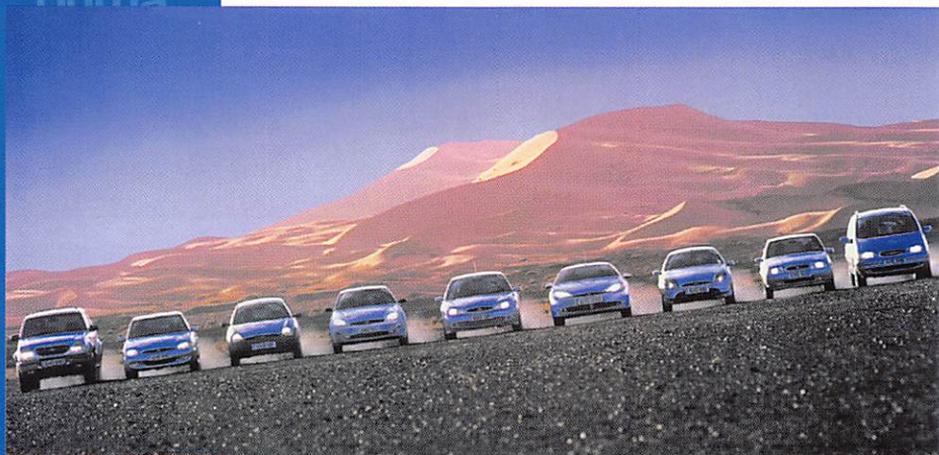
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# RFL Premiership

# What was the Boys' Pen?

**REG SIDLOW, an Athertonian, has been a Leigh supporter for 52 years.** He reckons to have watched over 90% of all home games over those years and that he must have indirectly bought at least two players.

My early involvement in sport, coming from Atherton, was in soccer, my winters being spent watching Bolton Wanderers and local amateur sides. My introduction to rugby came in the 1946-47 season, Leigh's first season after the war, on the Athletic Ground.

There were three home games over the Easter period – Keighley (Good Friday), Liverpool Stanley (Easter Saturday) and Featherstone Rovers (Easter Monday). Interestingly the crowds for those matches were 10,000, 8,000 and 10,000 respectively (where have all the spectators gone?). Fixture compilers and players please note the busy holiday programme of those days.

Anyway I was hooked and it was great to watch the likes of Kerwick, Rowe, Riley, Coffey and Ackers etc – all great servants of the club. In view of the problems of getting re-established, the team acquitted themselves well in their first season, finishing a creditable ninth.

A regular feature of fundraising were collections taken at half-time by throwing coins onto a blanket carried round the ground by enthusiastic helpers.

The following season saw the move to Kirkhall Lane (now Hilton Park) and the big signings – Ledgard, Allan, Egan, Mossop etc. Crowds in that season ranged from 6,000 to 19,500 when Wigan were the visitors.

I remember, particularly, the two leg RL Cup tie

against Wigan in the 1948-49 season. We won 12-11 at Wigan before a crowd of 30,000 and then lost 4-5 at home in front of 28,000. The referee should have played extra-time and the match had to be replayed at Leigh before a bumper crowd of 29,500. Unfortunately we lost 4-11!

The record attendance of 31,326 was achieved in 1952 against St. Helens – how on earth did they get us all in?

A long forgotten method of segregation in those days was the Boys' Pen. This had similarities with a concentration camp where boys (and girls) were herded together and crammed in for the price of 6d (or was it 3d – does anyone remember?).

I recollect it as a section to the left of the main stand facing the pitch and later behind the sticks at the Hayes Mill (now the by-pass) end. It was a common occurrence to find yourself standing behind a 6' Grammar School lad equipped with his school cap to prove his admission.

Looking back, my personal highlights were the 1971 Cup Final, the 1952 Lancashire Cup Final against St. Helens where Ledgard's immaculate touch finding helped us to a 21-5 success, the nerve tingling win at Whitehaven in 1982 to clinch the championship and any victory over Wigan! Happy days.

But let's not dwell in the past too much. This season's performances and the club's spirit have been a tonic – a credit to everyone concerned. Let's win the play-offs, aim for Super League, put Leigh back on the map, bring the crowds back but please don't re-introduce the Boys' Pen!

# David Hill Testimonial

## TESTIMONIAL 1988-98 – Leigh Centurions RLC Honorary Presidents Mick Martyn and John Woods

**Former Leigh players Tony Cottrell, John Woods and Phil Johnson have arranged a “free and easy” night at Toffs Night-club on Sunday 22 August.** This will involve Karaoke and a disco. Leigh players will be in attendance to hopefully celebrate their earlier win at Keighley. Entrance is by payment on the door and all money raised will go towards David's fund.

The ticket sales for our final Mixed Dinner are going very quickly so if you intend coming along I suggest you get your tickets ASAP. Don't forget our star speaker Mr Alex Murphy OBE. Ticket prices are £20.00 each and are available from committee members or from the Lifeline office Tel 768861.

Listed below are future events and venues. Why not come along and challenge players to a game of darts or dominoes?

ROYAL OAK	THU 12 AUG	SPORTS EVENING
CHURCH INN W/Leigh	THU 19 AUG	SPORTS EVENING
TOFFS NIGHTCLUB	SUN 22 AUG	KARAOKE/DISCO
SHEPHERDS INN	TUE 7 SEP	SPORTS EVENING
LETTERS INN	TUE 14 SEP	SPORTS EVENING
MICK MARTYN BAR	SAT 2 OCT	CLOSING DINNER

At all these events players from the CENTURIONS will be in attendance. Help from all the venues is greatly appreciated so why not come along and help to make each event a HUGE SUCCESS.

If you know of any other Pub, Club, or other organisations that can arrange an event the Committee will be only to pleased to arrange player participation. Testimonial brochures are still available price £2.00 each and can be obtained from The Mick Martyn Bar.

Don Boyle  
Chairman of the Committee 01942 603762

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# On the Ball...

by Jack Daniels

**THE 'M' word is back on the agenda as clubs in Super League, and some outside it, again mull over the idea of club mergers.** Back in 1995 when Super League's introduction blew the game wide apart, merger talk was all the rage.

Thankfully the idea withered on the vine - but never completely went away - as outraged fans and clubs kicked up such a stink that Super League bosses retreated deep into their Leeds bunker. Now it looks like they've started to stick their heads back above the ramparts as those that think they know best seek to reduce the number of Super League clubs from 14 to 12 in an effort to supposedly even up the contests and improve the quality. There seems to be a growing feeling in the game that scores of Leeds 86 Huddersfield 6, as happened recently, are unacceptable.

If it was left to some of the half-wits in control of the game there would only be half a dozen clubs of probable equal standing playing the game at all. Sure, no-one wants to see teams flogged week-in and week-out but hasn't it always been the nature of competitive sport that the better teams generally win? Hasn't there got to be a loser in every game? Do other sports throw their hands up in horror at the occasional lop-sided result? Not likely.

If Bolton Wanderers thrashed another side, say 6-0, would the beaten team be cast aside as unfit to play in the competition? Or if England's cricket team lost by an innings to Sri Lanka would they be forced to merge with Scotland to create some airy-fairy 'super' team? No chance.

So why has Rugby League suddenly again become obsessed with 'shotgun marriages?' If Super League had their way they would have Halifax and Huddersfield joining together and playing out of the McAlpine Stadium and railroad Wakefield and Sheffield into another joint venture. The difference this time around from 1995 is that

a massive financial carrot is likely to be dangled in front of the respective clubs. Some reports have it down as much as £1.25m - a sizeable incentive in anybody's book. But look closely at the issue. Who actually wants teams to merge? The fans - no; the clubs - no. All the 'encouragement' is coming from Super League leaders who want to see the back of clubs who, they declare, are feeling the pressure of playing in the elite division. If clubs make those sort of decisions themselves, fair enough. But to be forced into an arranged marriage is likely to fail before the 'couple' get to the altar.

**CLUB chairmen are not always the most popular figures, just ask the likes of Howard Morris at St Helens recently or Leigh's Mick Higgins who've both run the gauntlet of abuse from the terraces.** But neither have been effectively drummed out by their own players like Howard Carter at Keighley recently. Mr Carter apparently scored a double-whammy by upsetting the players twice in quick succession. Firstly the hard-up Cougars couldn't afford the players' monthly pay cheques and then the chairman apparently had a real dig at his players in a programme column. Then player power kicked in. They passed a vote of no confidence in the chairman after a recent defeat at Whitehaven and actually barred him from travelling back from Cumbria on the team bus! Not surprisingly Carter resigned - but the players still didn't get paid on time. No winners there, only losers it would seem.

**IT doesn't look like Northern Ford Premiership leaders Hull KR will be going into the photography business.** A recent commercial enterprise produced a negative result. Individuals or families paid sizeable sums to have their pictures taken in full kit with the Rovers team, the proceeds going to club funds. The only problem was that when the films were sent for developing, the negs were all blank.

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# Action Replay...

**LEIGH CENTURIONS 32 BARROW BORDER RAIDERS 26 (25/7/99)**

**THE sighs of relief that echoed around Hilton Park at full time were almost deafening.** Leigh just managed to edge out an enterprising Barrow side that caused the Centurions more problems than most to move to within a point of the top of the Northern Ford Premiership. But while the fans nervously squirmed in their seats, the calmest man around was Leigh boss Ian Millward.

"I was never feeling like we'd lose," he said afterwards. "We always had the ammunition to do it provided we could get our completion rate up to scratch."

In the end it took a 64th minute touchdown from sub Heath Cruickshank to decide a contest in which the teams shared 10 tries in an attacking feast of football.

"Give some credit to Barrow. Paul Charlton has got them playing some super stuff and they are averaging 24 points a game despite their position in the table. And in Darren Holt they have a player that every Super League club is looking at."

Holt certainly pulled all the strings for the Border Raiders as they lead three times - the widest margin being 10 points just after half time. But Holt, one of the division's top points scorers, could only manage three successful shots at goal while Leigh's Paul Wingfield landed six from six - ultimately Leigh's margin of success. Holt and Aussie hooker Dave Clark might have masterminded Barrow's assault but Leigh had too much all-round firepower with Tim Street, Jamie Kennedy, Paul Anderson and Stuart Donlan in top form. But Leigh were their own





worst enemies in the first half, repeatedly failing to complete their sets of six and turning possession over to the eager Braves.

They didn't need a second invitation. Mike Kavanagh and Jonathan Hughes combined to send Stuart Magorian in for the first six-pointer and when Hughes followed up his own grubber kick to take full advantage of a Donlan fumble, you could have heard a pin drop. In between the lively Mick Higham and Saf Patel set up a try under the posts for Anderson and soon after Barrow had gone 12-6 up, Street blasted clean through from 20 metres to level the scores. Three minutes from the break Leigh were again made to pay for elementary errors when Holt chipped through, regathered and scored to give Barrow a 12-18 half time lead.

Worse was to come for Leigh when, two minutes after the re-start, Phil Atkinson produced a super half break and pass that Paul Salmon collected to race in from 40 metres. Only then, faced with a 10 point deficit, did Leigh come to their senses. Their completion rate suddenly improved, errors were kept to a minimum and the fight back was on.

Just four minutes after Barrow's

fourth try, Kennedy sent in Dave Ingram for his 17th try of the season and when Stuart Rhodes decked Dave Whittle with a high tackle, Wingfield put over the penalty that had Leigh just two points behind. But it was the 55th minute before the Centurions finally got their noses in front. Patel, Radney Bowker and Anderson linked down the left and Donlan romped clear for the six points.

Yet they were only ahead for five minutes as Atkinson burst through Bowker's tackle to level things at 26-26. That forced Millward to show his hand. He had Cruickshank sat on the bench nursing a shoulder injury and was hoping not to have to use his Aussie star.

"I didn't want to use Heath or Alan Hadcroft unless I had to. But at that stage of the game I felt we needed their impact," revealed Millward. Cruickshank soon made his presence felt, shoring up a suspect defence and then spinning out of two tackles to grab the clinching score 16 minutes from time. Millward concluded: "At this stage of the season you just take each game as it comes and pick up what points are on offer. We did that today and now we can concentrate on next week's massive game at Widnes."

Leigh: Donlan, Wingfield, Ingram, Kerr, Arkwright, Bowker, Patel, Street, Higham, Pucill, Anderson, Kendrick, Kennedy. Subs (all used): Cruickshank, Hadcroft, Whittle, Norman  
Attendance: 1720



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## WIDNES VIKINGS 9 LEIGH CENTURIONS 6 (1/8/99)

**THEY sunk to their knees, disappointed and exhausted in equal measure.** But deep down Leigh knew they had blown it. For a third time this season the Centurions were on the wrong end of a titanic struggle against the Vikings and again much of it was of their own making. Had they been able to control possession better and not turned the ball back over to the Vikings with alarming frequency they would have been top of the Northern Ford Premiership today.

Instead they are left reflecting on a defeat that drops them to third place and facing an almighty scrap over the last four games for a leading end of season position. Not that Widnes were much better. They too handled poorly and it was only an interception try midway through the second half that ultimately decided matters.

If you wanted pretty, fancy football the Auto Quest wasn't the place to be. This was a game trapped in a time-warp as both teams slugged it out toe-to-toe in midfield. Both defences were awesome and while there were mistakes aplenty a record NFP crowd of 5,230 was kept spellbound by the passion, commitment and

drama that unfolded in front of them.

Even the weather played its part in adding to the sense of theatre. Starting in blazing sunshine and baking temperatures the Auto Quest was hit by a second half thunderstorm that brought an electrifying finish to a high-voltage game. But the first half was as tight as a drum - a war of attrition with neither side prepared to take a backward step.

Leigh probably created the better openings but each time they got within striking distance they came up with crucial errors. Wingers Paul Wingfield and James Arkwright went closest to breaking the deadlock while Wingfield missed with a presentable penalty shot at goal. The Centurions kept Widnes at arms length with some suffocating defensive work and just when it looked like the half would end scoreless Mark Hewitt clipped over a drop goal in stoppage time to give the Vikings a 1-0 interval lead.

On loan Paul Anderson, despite being hindered by a knee injury, should have put Leigh ahead before they did actually take the lead. Thirteen minutes into the second half he was put in the



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clear by a sweet Jamie Kennedy pass but with support on both sides he opted to try and chip over the full-back, the ball landing harmlessly in the grateful arms of Widnes winger Simon Verbickas.

It was to be the introduction of sub Saf Patel that had a dramatic effect at both ends of the field. His first touch of the ball brought him a try, Heath Cruickshank's break and overhead pass ran free for Patel to gather and slide in for a try goaled by Wingfield.

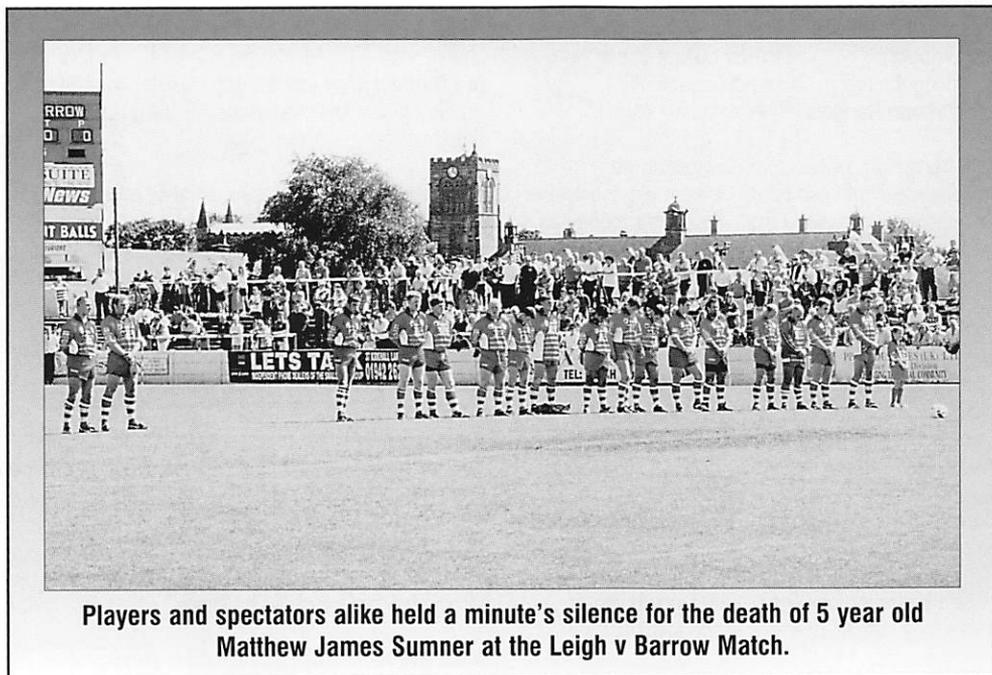
Cruickshank's influence on the game was to grow by the minute; two cover tackles on Paul Mansson and George Mann were right up there with the best. But when Patel tried a long pass down the Leigh line it invited trouble. Kiwi Mansson didn't need asking twice. He was onto the mistake in a flash and had enough pace to beat the last of the Leigh cover in a 40 metre sprint to the posts for a try goaled by Hewitt.

Just six minutes later Leigh were further behind in bizarre circumstances. Referee Steve Presley disallowed Phil Cantillon a try for offside, instead awarding Widnes a penalty for an earlier



obstruction. Amid all the confusion, Hewitt struck a crucial angled penalty. It could still have gone either way as Leigh threw everything bar the kitchen sink at the Widnes defence in the final 20 minutes, yet they still couldn't control the ball and were left to lick their self-inflicted wounds.

LEIGH: Donlan, Wingfield, Ingram, Kerr, Arkwright, Bowker, Purtill, Street, Higham, Cruickshank, Anderson, Kendrick, Kennedy.  
Subs: Norman, Patel, Whittle. Not used: Halliwell  
Attendance: 5,230



**Players and spectators alike held a minute's silence for the death of 5 year old Matthew James Sumner at the Leigh v Barrow Match.**

# Oldham Roughyeds RLFC

THE Oldham team visiting Hilton Park today represents an entirely new club - Oldham RLFC (1997) Ltd - following the relegation from Super League and subsequent liquidation of Oldham Bears.

But for the enthusiasm and commitment of Chairman, Christopher Hamilton and his co-Directors, Melvyn Lord, Sean Whitehead and Stewart Hardacre there would have been no club at all in a town which is a hotbed of schools and amateur RL. Starting, in Chris Hamilton's words, without so much as a bootlace, the new club made its first signing, hooker John Hough, early in December 1997. By New Year's Day 1998 a team had been assembled which contested and won, the Law Cup, against neighbours, Rochdale Hornets.

With the Second Division season not starting until April, Oldham were able to lay down some foundations and enjoyed a successful start to the season, reaching the final of the Trans-Pennine Cup where they lost top Batley at Mount Pleasant. Thereafter, as the scramble for promotion heated up, Oldham lost their way a bit, culminating in the sacking of coach, Paddy Kirwan, to be replaced by his assistant, Mick Coates, the current coach, who was once the highly successful coach of Saddleworth Rangers in the National League.

As it transpired, failure to win promotion was irrelevant, except in so far as Oldham did not get the required level of funding from Murdoch's money as most of this year's Northern Ford Premiership clubs, a situation we at Leigh can sympathise with after our own experience last year. Given that Oldham had no outside funding at all in 1998, the situation now is that, while some clubs have benefited to the tune of around £750,000, the Roughyeds have only received £135,000 over two years, a significant contributory factor in their inability to compete on even terms with the top sides.

Coming to Hilton Park on the back of a record 84-0 defeat by Widnes and heavy losses against Hunslet, Barrow, Hull KR and Featherstone, Oldham will be hoping for better luck against the Centurions to whom they lost 34-12 earlier in the season.

The heart of the team this season has been the front row prop, **Leo Casey**, who started at Oldham St Anne's, was once Oldham's most expensive export when Featherstone paid £100,000 for him a decade ago. An Irish international, Leo was brought back to Oldham from Rochdale this year to captain his home town club which he has done with some distinction. Fellow prop **Jason Clegg** originates from Littleborough, had a spell at Bradford and, since shedding a stone in weight last winter, has had a barnstorming season in 1999. Meanwhile, local lad **John Hough**, once of Waterhead, arrived at Oldham from Warrington Wolves where he had considerable Super League experience. Keen tackling and darts from dummy half are among his trademarks.

Other forwards likely to appear this afternoon include the much travelled **Paul Round**, once the former Oldham club's most expensive signing at £65,000 from St Helens. Since then Paul has seen service at Castleford, Halifax and Wakefield before returning to the Roughyeds.

**Graeme Shaw** is a Scottish international brought to Oldham from Bradford. He father was an inside forward with Oldham Athletic in the 1960s.

**Ian Sinfield** is a local lad with experience at Salford and in France. His brother, Kevin, is with Leeds Rhinos.

**Martin Maders** is in his second spell with Oldham having played at Huddersfield and with Waterhead and Saddleworth. His father was also a Roughyed star.

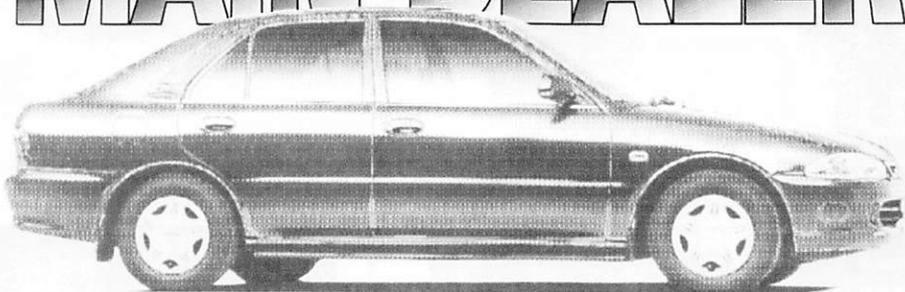
**Joe Nadiole** is also ex Huddersfield and has just started a second spell at Oldham after a period with Hunslet. A fine attacking runner at his best.

**Emmanuel Peralta**, together with injured fullback Laurent Minut, came to Oldham this season from top French outfit, Villeneuve.

**Mark Perrett** is ex Halifax Bluesox and a Welsh international but has not yet shown his best form following a serious shoulder injury.

**Mike Prescott** is one of a clutch of players who

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# How the Play-Offs Work

were also on the books of the defunct Bears. Brought to Oldham from Golborne by John Prince, who now works for Swinton, Prescott is only now beginning to make his mark.

Other ex Bears appear in the backs. **Afi Leuila** is a powerful, abrasive centre whose style of play was better suited to the 1998 team than this year's.

**Paul Crook** was regarded as a loose forward by the Bears, but has appeared mainly at stand off with the Roughyeds. A versatile director of play like his father, Terry, now a Radio Leeds commentator, Paul could be at fullback today. **Aldie Mead** has seven tries from the right wing and is an ex Academy player with the Bears.

On the left wing, Rochdale born **Joe McNicholas** has eight tries and is ever present. His centre is likely to be **Emerson Jackman** a BARLA tourist and a former Saddleworth Ranger.

Halfback positions will be contested by **Danny Webster**, **Keith Brennan** and **Daniel Brown**, with the possibility that the latter, an Australian who appeared with Hull KR last term, will be at loose forward. Brown is Oldham's leading scorer with eleven tries and 38 goals. Brennan, from local amateur club, Shaw Rhinos and Webster an Australian recently arrived from Carcassonne are both relative newcomers who have yet to form an understanding.

Key decisions taken at the birth of the new club included a return to Oldham's traditional colours of red and white hoops and navy shorts, and the adoption of the equally traditional nickname of 'Roughyeds'. Shrouded in the mists of time, no-one is quite certain where the name originated, but the likeliest explanation is that Oldham was a centre of hat making with rough, fustian style material the predominant fabric used as against the smoother fabrics of the Denton area. Unfortunately the third key decision, to play at Oldham Athletic's Boundary Park, had to be abandoned in favour of using Rochdale Horner's Spotland ground for financial reasons.

With Oldham Borough Council committed to building a new stadium a return 'home' cannot come too soon for Oldham's loyal, though diminishing, band of supporters.

Geoff Cooke

**TEAMS finishing in the top five at the end of the season play-off as follows – there's nothing like keeping it simple!**

## WEEK 1 (Sept 5th)

<b>GAME A</b> (Elimination Play-off)	<b>GAME B</b> (Qualifying Play-off)
4th Placed Club	2nd Placed Club
v	v
5th Placed Club	3rd Placed Club

## WEEK 2 (Sept 12th)

<b>GAME C</b> (Elimination Semi)	<b>GAME D</b> (Qualifying Semi)
Loser Game B	1st Placed Club
v	v
Winner Game A	Winner Game B

## WEEK 3 (Sept 19th)

<b>GAME E</b> (Final Eliminator)
Loser Game D
v
Winner Game C

## WEEK 4 (Sept 25th)

<b>GRAND FINAL</b>
Winner Game D
v
Winner Game E

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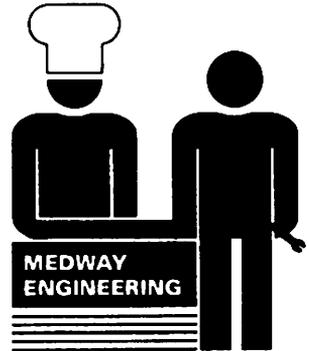
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# Leigh Past Players Association

**AFTER a hard fought victory over Barrow Border Raiders, it enabled the team to edge closer to Hull KR whose advantage was reduced to one point after their defeat at Bramley.**

Last weekend's game at Widnes Vikings proved to be kind, a comedy of errors. Although plenty of commitment was shown by both sides, neither team was able to take advantage of sloppy handling in all parts of the field.

Unfortunately for us, the final result went to the Vikings, mainly due to an interception try mid-way through the second half. This means, with Hunslet Hawks winning at Bramley, we drop a place in the league to third place.

Before the game the Widnes club had organised a 1970s theme occasion, where all the trophies won by either Widnes or Leigh in the 1970s were on display – the Rugby League Challenge Cup, the John Player Trophy, the Floodlit Cup, the Lancashire Cup and the League Cup.

Several players and officials from both clubs who took part in that era paraded around the field to mark the occasion.



Kindon crossing for his first try for Leigh against Barrow.

As far as the Leigh club was concerned, we were very pleased to welcome past players such as Alf Wilkinson, Mick Stacey, Steve Donlan, Alan Rowley, Tommy Martyn, Alan Riding, John Taylor, our secretary Bill Kindon and others. We were provided with a buffet afterwards and



Beatty, Leigh's New Zealand recruit, tackled by an opponent at Kirkhall Lane.

a drink or two loosened the tongue to relate past experiences during that period. It would appear, from many comments received, that the 'get together' had been a very successful occasion, and we hope the former players involved will make further appearances and swell the number in our past players association.

The two photographs of the Leigh and Barrow teams in the semi-final of the Rugby League Challenge Cup in 1957, published in the programme for the Barrow match two weeks ago, are still providing quite a lot of interest.

Although it was coincidental that they should be reproduced in the programme for the Barrow game, it was ironic that John "Dinks" Harris, the Barrow scrum-half at the time, had travelled from Barrow to be present at the match.

"Dinks", as he was normally known, had taken over from Ted Toohey to partner Willie Horne at half-back. He was a very strong player and formed a formidable partnership with Willie. Ted Toohey, as no doubt you will have noticed, played stand-off for Leigh in the aforesaid game.

When "Dinks" was told of the article, he hastily obtained a programme to add to his own memorabilia. It was good to see "Dinks" again and he was welcomed to the fold by several other Leigh past players present at the game.

As promised in past articles, we can now inform you of the details of our past players Annual Dinner in the Mick Martyn Suite on 29th October 1999. The entertainment will be Brodie Fry and tickets for the function will be £20 and are now available from any past player or committee member.

We would still be very grateful to anyone who would be interested in sponsoring our event,

and would be pleased if you could contact us as soon as possible.

Incidentally, regarding the recently advertised function for the memorial to Eddie Trumble at the Mick Martyn Suite on 29th September 1999, we understand that it is a complete sell-out, but if anyone is still interested in attending, last minute cancellations may occur, and could be obtained by contacting the organising committee.

Today's visitors are Oldham Roughyeds to whom we extend a warm welcome to the team and supporters. Let's hope that we can get back on track with a good win!

---

# Bill Kindon Writes...

**AT the Grammar School in Warrington we played little rugby but I did some training under the eye of people associated with the Warrington club, where the manager was Emlyn Jenkins.** It was not possible to take a rugby career any further until I had finished exams and left school.

However on leaving school I had to do national service where my corps was dedicated to Rugby Union. During this time we won the Army Cup which was probably due to having a side full of notable players, many of whom were internationals with Scotland, Wales and England, including my co-centre Jack Matthews who captained Wales.

On leaving the Army I was again approached by the people I had trained with and asked to meet Emlyn Jenkins who had become the manager of Leigh. I signed for Leigh through Warrington and Wigan had shown interest.

I had 10 years at Leigh as a player, being associated with many great players over that period. On finishing playing because of a broken collar bone I was asked to become fitness and sprint trainer at Warrington. I was there for a few years during which I took over

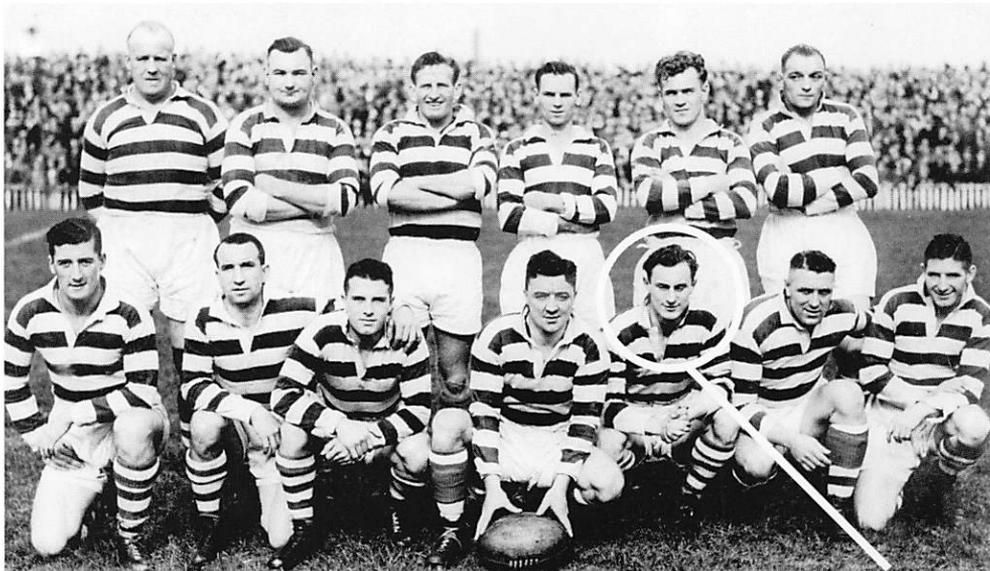
the 'A' team in addition to the other responsibilities. There were some great players there including Brian Bevan. Brian would keep away whilst I trained the others and he and I would have a separate session afterwards.

At the request of Derek Hunt who had become coach at Leigh I came back to perform a similar role. I left after a short while but came back when I was asked by Kevin Ashcroft. Here I stayed under several managers having taken over as Caretaker Coach following Kevin's departure.

The club at that time was in something of an upheaval but I was pleased to be involved in the development of such players as John Woods and Des Drummond who I put in the team when he was a pure novice in the game.

My last years at Leigh were with Alex Murphy and I pride myself in being involved in the Championship and Lancashire Cup winning team.

After Leigh I got a call from Roy Lester to assist him at Fulham and subsequently Carlisle and finishing direct involvement with our game when asked by Tony Barrow to go to Oldham (I had



**Just a little question to get the memory ticking. Can you name all of the players above? We will be printing the names in next week's programme, so don't worry, we will put your mind at rest then.**

**Bill Kindon**

trained Tony during my time at Leigh). Here again we had some success and I was pleased to have trained the young Tommy Martyn (now at St. Helens). I had played with his uncle Mick and trained his dad Tommy.

More recently I was asked to coach Heaton Moor Rugby Union where we managed to get promotion after many lean years but frankly I felt

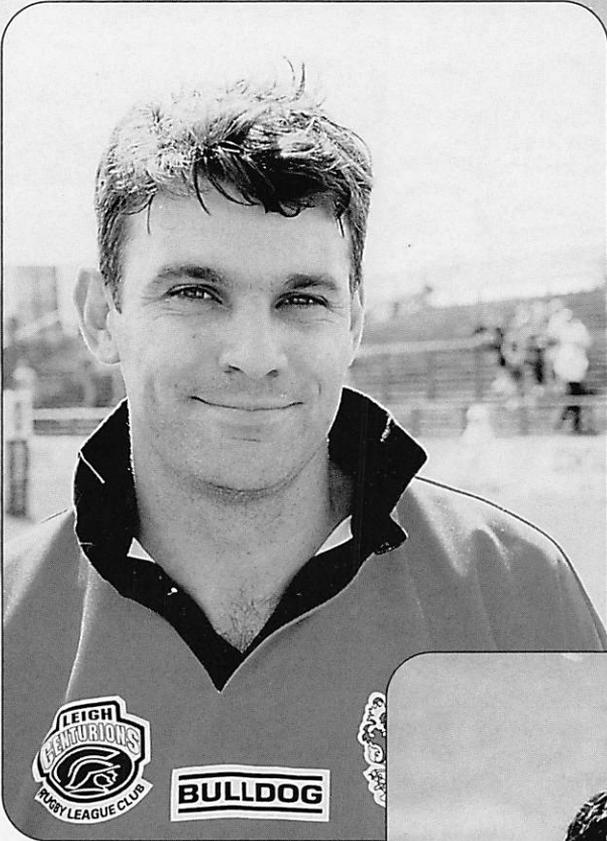
out of touch with attitudes and playing standards after the years of discipline in League.

Nowadays I enjoy involvement with Past Players Associations both at Leigh where I am now and with many other clubs. Our Association are eager and dedicated supporters of the present side and we desperately want success for the club.

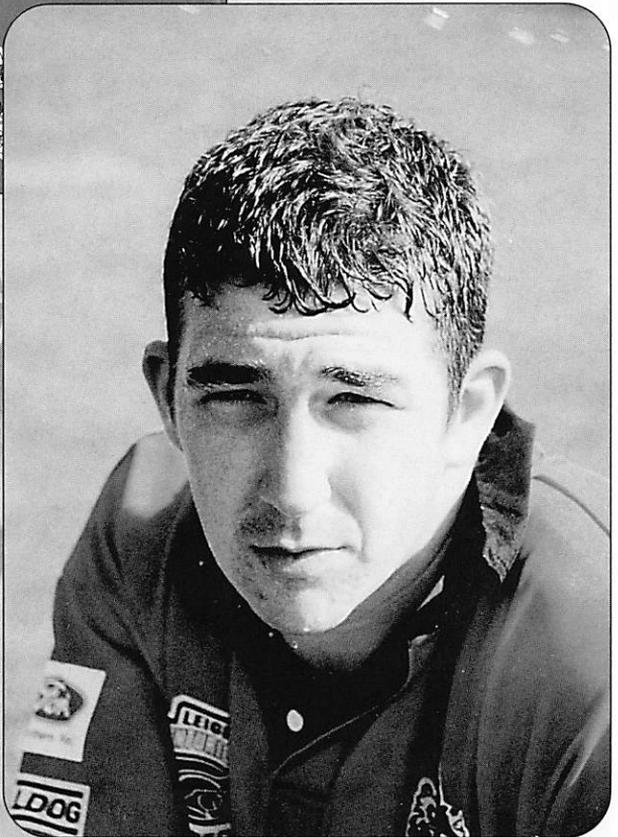


**BRAMLEY v LEIGH, 15TH SEPTEMBER 1949**  
 Kerwick (Leigh) gives the ball to Kindon just as a Bramley defender is about to tackle him.

# Photo Call...



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# Junior Centurions

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**WELCOME to today's Junior Centurions page. This week's match has something of a carnival atmosphere surrounding it as it forms part of the Borough of Leigh Centenary Celebrations.**

The Oldham game was specifically selected as the Leigh Centenary match as the Town of Oldham celebrates its 150th anniversary this summer. There will be plenty of entertainment around the ground for the younger supporters today with many attractions to enjoy. There will also be a Junior rugby match taking place both before the match and at half time between an under 11's team from Oldham and an under 11's team from Leigh. The two teams comprise youngsters selected from the various amateur clubs in the Oldham and Leigh Districts.

The clubs which comprise the Leigh District are Westhoughton, Leigh Miners-Rangers, Leigh East and Golborne Parkside. We would like to wish all of the Oldham supporters who have made the trip this afternoon a warm welcome to Hilton Park. The Oldham club have been going through some hard times recently in much the same way as we have endured at Leigh. This year we have turned the corner and after all of the heartache of the last few years, the good times are returning to Hilton Park. I hope this gives heart to the Oldham supporters, as proof that things can and do change for the better. I'm sure that it won't be long before Oldham can put all of the recent traumas behind them and get back to the top. The main thing is to keep supporting your team through the hard times because believe me, when the good times return it makes it all the more enjoyable.

Last week's defeat at Widnes was disappointing for everyone but we mustn't get too downhearted. The team played their hearts out and defended magnificently, they couldn't have given any more. The support at Widnes was again fantastic, even in defeat the Leigh supporters were raising the roof at the end of the game in saluting the brave Leigh players.

There are still plenty of games to go, and both Hunslet and Hull KR have tricky away games to face while in theory, we have an easier run in to the end of the season. It's not all over yet! With regards the

Widnes game, there were some problems experienced with the organisation at the Auto Quest stadium especially regarding coaches. Despite Widnes being informed that there would be five 'official' supporters coaches going to the game from Leigh, after the coaches had dropped off they were moved (we think by the police). However no one was informed where the coaches had been parked, and so far as I could tell there was no announcement over the stadium public address system regarding the location of the coaches.

Widnes are desperately trying to prove that they justify a place in Super League at the moment, without having to do it on the pitch. Maybe they ought to think about getting their organisation right as they might have to deal with more than one away supporters coach more often if they do get into Super League. We can only apologise to any supporters who experienced difficulties after the game.

We had another Junior Centurions coach trip to the Widnes game last week. The winners of the picture quiz on the trip were: 10's and under - Martin Graine; 11's and over Shuttleworth.

Both won a selection of bags of sweets, and a camera. Don't forget to vote for your Junior Centurions Man of the Match towards the end of today's game. You can pick up a form at the Tuck Shop. The winner of the award at Barrow was the ever popular Tim Street. Well done Tim.

## JUNIOR JOKES

**Which insect lives on nothing?**

A moth – because it eats holes!

**What do you call an eighty year old ant?**

An antique.

**What's white, fluffy and floats?**

A cat-emeringue.

**What did one black cat say to the other?**

Nothing – cats can't speak!



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4. P ANDERSON	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Monks World Travel
5. P KENDRICK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Montford Transport Ltd, Leigh
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9. A MURRAY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hargreaves Transport
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12. J KENNEDY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	M Logan & Sons
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14. K KERR	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESB Motorcycles, Bolton
15. D INGRAM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	ESB Motorcycles, Bolton
16. P NORMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tony's Fish & Chips
17. M HIGHAM	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tony's Fish & Chips

## OLDHAM

	T	G	DG
1. A LEUILA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. A MEAD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. E JACKMAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. K BRENNAN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. J McNICHOLAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. D WEBSTER	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. D BROWN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. L CASEY	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. J HOUGH	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. J CLEGG	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. P ROUND	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. M MADERS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I SINFIELD	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. P CROOK	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. M PERRETT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. J NADIOLE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. E PERALTA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Referee: Mr A Bates

Touch Judges: Mr D C Lowe  
Mr I Fairweather

Fourth Official: Mr C Walker

