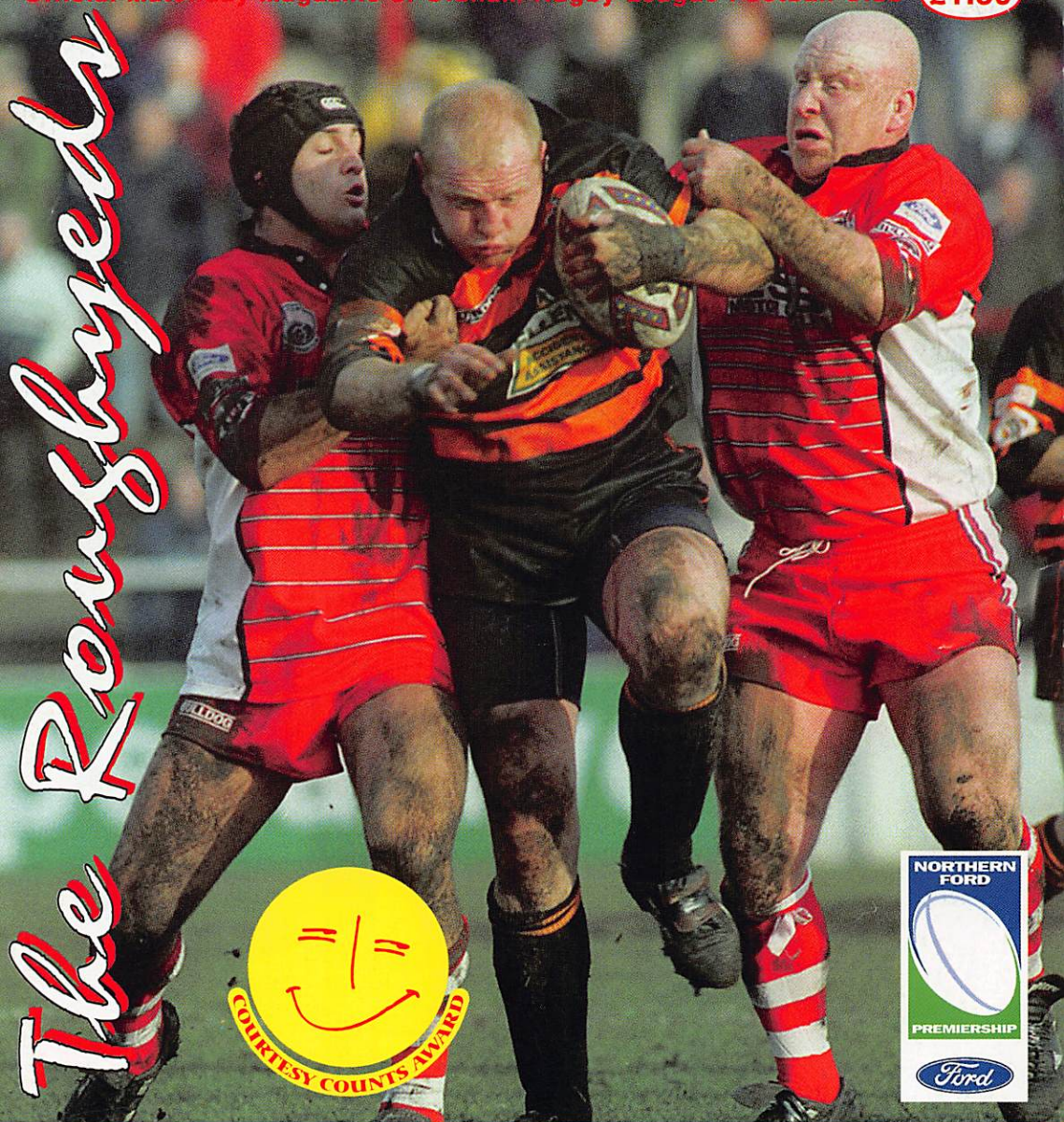


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The Roughyeds



Lancashire Lynx

at Boundary Park Sun 5th March 2000 Kick-off 3.00pm

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Up Front

.....With Christopher Hamilton



WELCOME BACK to Boundary Park for what will be our first home game for nearly a month. Things have started to go against us recently both on and off the field and these act as a painful reminder of just how fortunes can change very quickly in this game.

Our defeat at Doncaster would not have surprised too many people as they are being strongly tipped to reach the Grand Final and have recruited plenty of experience. The performance at Rochdale in the Cup was a big disappointment not only to you but to the board, the coaching staff and the players. The sending off of Leo Casey certainly didn't help but I thought the team showed plenty of character at Leigh two weeks ago when despite being without our influential captain Andy Proctor and Tate Moseley and then losing Tom O'Reilly early on we gave Leigh a fright and could have won the game with better ball control.

The situation with Tate has been very frustrating. We worked hard to get him a work permit, made him feel welcome and then, just over 2 weeks after arriving he decides that the contract he has signed with the club means nothing and goes home. That annoys me because contracts are two way things - we all know what happens when a club breaks a contract and believe me there have been times when I wish the club could have done!

The news on Tom is not much better and by the time you are reading these notes we should know for sure how long he will be out for but the fear is that he has damaged his cruciate ligaments.

I'm sure Lancashire Lynx would be glad to have some of the problems we have as Henry Morris their chairman is trying to lead them through what are obviously very difficult times. We welcome Henry and all his colleagues today and hope that things start to pick up from next week!

Enjoy the game.

Chris Hamilton

The Roughyeds *The Roughyeds*

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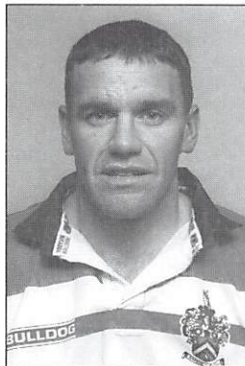
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FORD FOCUS . . . With Mike Ford

Haydn Walker's . . Alliance First Division Round Up



IT'S VIRTUALLY a month since our last home game and, Wigan St Jude's apart, results haven't exactly gone our way. To lose away at Doncaster and Leigh was disappointing but not many teams are going to win at either ground and in each case we were competitive throughout and were only beaten in the dying stages of the game. Indeed at Leigh we might have snatched a point had Russell

Smith not disallowed a 'try' by Anthony Gibbons in the late stages. I've seen it on video and I think it was a good score, but there's no big screen in the NFP and it's always been the case that you get some decisions in your favour and some that go against.

With the Rochdale cup-tie nobody will have been more upset with the outcome than me. Unfortunately, on the day, we just didn't perform and went down to a more committed team. Rest assured

that this result will only serve to spur us on. We will not be outworked by anyone here at Oldham. Remember we are only 4 points off the leaders with a game in hand so there is still plenty to play for. I never promised we would win the League but we are going all out to finish as high as we can. I hope you can be patient because we are trying to build a team to do even better next year and the year after. To that end, as you will know, we have signed several young players largely thanks to Haydn Walker's knowledge of the game at Alliance, Academy, Student and amateur levels. Although we can't compete with Super League clubs for the very best players, one advantage we do have is that we can give them a taste of senior football at an early stage if they are good enough, as you will see today when Warren Barrow and Lee Doran are likely to make their home debuts.

We are sorry meanwhile to be without the services - for various reasons - of Leo Casey, Tom O'Reilly and Tate Moseley. Under the circumstances we will prepare for Lancashire Lynx as though they were top of the League because if we underestimate them they could well turn us over, as they did Whitehaven.

Enjoy the game,

Mike



SINCE MY last column the under 21s have played three games, away to Rochdale and Batley and at home to Featherstone. In addition two games were postponed due to waterlogged pitches.

The 16-4 defeat at Rochdale was not that disappointing a result under the circumstances. That night we had ten teenagers in the line up. Rochdale dropped back a number of first team players including Hudson, Maher and Pucill. We lost the game in a ten minute spell in the first half when poor concentration saw us concede three tries. The second half was a great effort: with all our teenagers out on the pitch we managed to keep it to 4-4. In the long term it is fairly obvious which club gained most from the game. Indeed Lee Doran and Gavin Dodd performed well enough to be offered contracts. I hope these will be the first of many.

Our next fixture was at home to Featherstone and we produced a superb performance that simply blew the Yorkshire team away. It is very gratifying for a coach to see things you work on in training come off on gameday. In this game both our attack and defence were superb. I am trying to get to a situation where every player is comfortable with the ball in his hands and is capable of making the correct decision of what to do with it. Certainly if players want to make the first team they need to be able to demonstrate this. Game on game I believe we can see players making a real improvement in this area.

Last Saturday we travelled to Batley and came away victors 18-11. It was a tough game and we looked a little rusty in the first half having had our games against Leigh and Hunslet in the previous fortnight postponed. Playing down the slope in the first half we only led 6-5. However the introduction of Alex Peet at hooker plus

storming second half performances from props Wes Rogers and Lee Doran saw us gradually get on top. Three other teenagers made their debuts, Dave Harris, Wayne Gittins and Mark Tagg all giving good accounts of themselves. While more established players Craig Barker and Ian Sinfield made big contributions.

Overall the Alliance team is making good progress: we are now joint second in the league. More importantly though we are developing a core of young players who will be the future of the club. Not only that if they continue to progress at the rate they are doing at the moment I can see several pushing hard for first team spots very shortly. **See page 20 for Alliance results and fixtures.**

Haydn Walker

Alliance First Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	PTS
Hunslet Hawks	6	6	0	0	162	82	80	12
Widnes Vikings	6	4	0	2	197	98	99	8
Oldham	6	4	0	2	120	77	43	8
Featherstone Rovers	6	3	0	3	163	142	21	6
Rochdale Hornets	4	3	0	1	58	59	-1	6
Workington Town	4	2	0	2	104	62	42	4
Keighley Cougars	5	2	0	3	146	128	18	4
Leigh Centurions	6	2	0	4	110	168	-58	4
Batley Bulldogs	7	2	0	5	98	160	-62	4
Wharfedale Warriors	4	1	0	3	86	134	-48	2
Barrow Raiders	6	1	0	5	81	215	-134	2

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In Yer Face



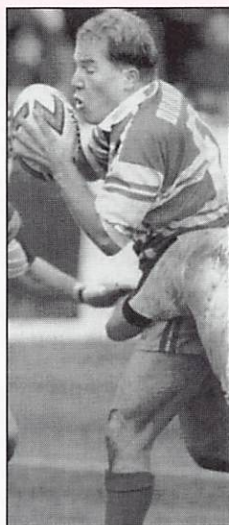
ONE OF Rugby League's better innovations of recent times has been the 'mikeing up' of referees. No spectator can fail to be impressed with the way that referees communicate with the players, appear to keep their composure, and assert their authority on the game. The recent Silk Cut Challenge Cup ties have given the lie to the idea that certain individual players run the game on the field: the referees are clearly in control and even have the ability to make big name players look small, which is precisely what Steve Presley did to Robbie Paul in the Bradford versus Huddersfield/Sheffield game.

On the whole the combination of microphone and big screen replay work to prove the officials right 95% of the time. Nevertheless in a fast moving game no-one can get it right all of the time. Writing this immediately after watching Castleford against Halifax I am amazed that Jamie Benn, Castleford's fullback, could stay on the field after practically decapitating Darryl Cardiss who was rendered unconscious. Commentator Joe Lydon claimed there was no malicious intent in the challenge, but surely recklessness in itself merits dismissal? Referee Steve Ganson took his time to assess the situation - rightly so - but then came up with the 'cop out' decision of "on report". Surely a good rule of thumb would be that if the player fouled cannot resume the perpetrator of the foul should walk? I will be interested to see what verdict the Disciplinary Committee come to, especially in view of the punishment handed down to Oldham's Leo Casey. With one outcry already this season over the six match ban given to Batley's Gary Barnett not being enough after breaking the jaw of a Sheffield opponent, this case can be seen as a test of R.L.'s sincerity in trying to stamp out illegal head tackles and also its consistency in dealing with issues

according to which League, which club and which individual is concerned. Since Jamie Benn stayed on the field and almost won the game for Castleford with his kicking it is perhaps as well that an Andrew Dunemann drop goal clinched victory for the Blue Sox. Anything other than a Halifax win would have been an injustice.

Despite the above comments, the general standard of refereeing this season has been good. Oldham's league fixtures have been well controlled, albeit with largely Super League officials in charge. The exception to the rule was the Rochdale Cup Tie when Alan Bates left a lot to be desired. In the week after a Greg McCallum directive to enforce a full ten metres at play-the-ball we saw the shortest ten metres of the season applied throughout the match. In addition a number of contentious decisions seemed to go Hornets way: it would certainly have been interesting to hear a 'miked-up' official's explanations for, on the one hand, keeping Chris McKinney on the field and, on the other hand, sending off Leo Casey.

Whatever your opinions of refereeing standards and the virtues or otherwise of hearing what referees have to say one thing is for certain, namely that any and every soccer authority going would love to have the quality of referees that R.L. has and the respect shown by the players to the officials. Long may Rugby league set the standards by which others are judged.



Andrew Dunemann

Whatever your opinions of refereeing standards and the virtues or otherwise of hearing what referees have to say one thing is for certain, namely that any and every soccer authority going would love to have the quality of referees that R.L. has and the respect shown by the players to the officials. Long may Rugby league set the standards by which others are judged.

GC

ROGER ROGER

"EVER SINCE he was a kid of six at school Stanley was mad on football. As he raced home after the last lesson it was always with a tin or paper ball at his toes.

"Then, after a slice of bread and jam and a gulped cup of tea, he was off again - to play in a match organised every night on some waste ground in Hanley."

The death of Sir Stanley Matthews, one of our country's greatest sporting ambassadors, carried me back half a century to those austere days of post-war Britain when an entire generation of small boys - and you can count me among them - idolised the Wizard of Dribble.

I took a sickie off school to watch the Matthews final on a 12 inch television at a friend's house. I should have been back at boarding school, after a half-term holiday, on the Thursday but I developed a mysterious stomach bug and didn't go back until the Sunday.

When I got there it quickly became apparent that the school had been hit by an epidemic. They called it Wembley-itis, but in reality it was Matthews-itis: such was the impact the great man had not on one school, or one town, or one county, but on the youth of an entire nation.

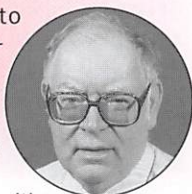


Sir Stanley Matthews

On a personal note I can still recite ad-lib the first two paragraphs at the top of this page, taken from a book about Matthews which I read in 1949 - and when he came to the Co-op at Rochdale to sign autographs one Saturday morning about that time I swear the queue of small boys in school caps, short pants, knee length socks and gaberdine raincoats stretched for quarter of a mile.

Matthews was a role model for millions. How sad, how so utterly, depressingly sad that his end should come at a time when anarchy rules in football and when highly-paid so-called

super stars are allowed to square-up to referees, eye-ball linesmen and generally intimidate match officials as they sour not only soccer, but the good name of British sport.



What has this got to do with rugby league? To start with, top players of whatever sporting persuasion - and that includes rugby league - must appreciate the responsibilities they carry for shaping the hearts and minds of the young fans who idolise them.

Secondly, those who rule and govern sport in this country must work to ensure that the authority of the referee and his helpers is sacrosanct at all times.

Both codes of rugby work strictly along those lines, but it was significant perhaps that on the weekend recently when our TV screens revealed the full and frightening extent of the violation of big match authority in soccer, the sport's rulers seemed more interested in clamping down on players who were having a go at each other rather than on those who were making life hell for referee and linesman.

The culture of rugby football - both codes - would never allow that to happen.

The electronic age of big-screen replays, instant re-runs, referees in radio linking with other officials in the stand and mini-mikes which enable TV audiences of millions to tune in to a referee's dialogue with the players all contrive to put the men in the middle under ever increasing pressure.

Rugby League can be proud of its leading referees and proud of the sport's disciplines, but I do hope we don't get so obsessed with the use of technology in the pursuit of perfection that we lose sight of the fact that the ref is BOSS.

In mourning the passing of Stanley Matthews, meanwhile, we can rejoice that his legacy of unrivalled talent and impeccable behaviour in the public spotlight provided a shining example to all sportsmen of this modern, and often mixed up, era.

Roger Halstead

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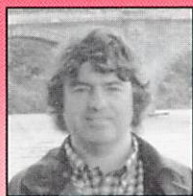


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LIVING HISTORY

From the Pen of Michael Turner

RUGBY LEAGUE MILESTONES - A SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

1915 - 1920

DESPITE the on-going hostilities in the First World War, the 1914-1915 season was played to its conclusion, with Huddersfield winning all four major trophies. They concluded the campaign with a Championship Final drubbing of Leeds 35 - 2 and an equally emphatic 37 - 3 thrashing of St Helens in the Challenge Cup Final at Watersheddings. Competitive matches were then suspended for the duration of the First World War.

Many clubs were forced to temporarily close down as a great number of their playing staff and administrators were away in the armed forces. Indeed forty players and officials from the Oldham club alone answered the "call", seven of whom were destined never to return. However, every club was affected by the conflict and of the many Northern Union representatives to be honoured for their bravery, none were more celebrated than the Hull and Yorkshire threequarter, Lieutenant John Harrison who was awarded the Victoria Cross after he lost his life charging an enemy machine gun nest in defence of his men.

The ban on competitive rugby was lifted in September 1918 with the result that a Lancashire league and a Yorkshire equivalent were commenced in January 1919. One victim of the enforced break was the Runcorn club which went out of existence in 1916. However, this loss was offset by the re-emergence of the St Helens Recs team who would go on to enjoy success in the Lancashire Cup, as well as setting up a fierce local rivalry with the men from Knowsley Road. The first major honour after the resumption went to Rochdale Hornets who triumphed over neighbours Oldham in the Lancashire Cup Final at Salford.

On the whole domestic scene it was a case of "as you were" with Huddersfield again

dominating proceedings. The first fully integrated season of 1919-20 saw Harold Wagstaff and his men come as close as can be, to winning all four major trophies for the second time. The Yorkshire Cup, Yorkshire League and Challenge Cup were all secured but they were denied the "grand slam" by Hull who beat them in the Championship Final by the narrowest of margins, 3 - 2 at Headingley. Three Oldham players, Herman Hilton, Evan Davies and Alf Wood went on the 1920 tour to Australia and New Zealand when the local born Hilton played in all six test matches.



Herman Hilton in his England jersey.

PROBING THE NFP

WITH ONLY three games in the N.F.P. last week Leigh Centurions, Oldham's conquerors of a fortnight ago, seized the opportunity to go top of the League with a significant victory at Hull K.R. by 18 points to 14. The win also puts Leigh in the driving seat of the West of Pennines section for the Trans Pennine Cup and sets into context Oldham's gallant, but unavailing efforts at Hilton Park. Featherstone also moved up, to joint third, with an away win at today's visitors Lancashire Lynx. Widnes, meanwhile, stayed in the hunt with a narrow 3-0 win at home to Sheffield.

Since our last programme a month ago Oldham have managed two away defeats and a home win, largely what one could have expected realistically, though optimism always demands more. Lancashire Lynx meanwhile have continued a losing streak with the exception of a home win over Whitehaven by 22-12. Surprising this, as Whitehaven currently lie eighth in the table and two weeks ago shocked Hornets at Spotland with a close 22-20 victory. They also had an outstanding home result when defeating Widnes 13-6.

Elsewhere, Batley bounced back from cup defeat by Oldham St Anne's to pull off a 10-8 win at York Wasps, followed by an even more sensational victory at Gigg Lane when they overwhelmed Swinton 32-16. Last season's Champions Hunslet Hawks continue to have a bad time of it, their latest disappointment being a 36-4 'hiding' at Featherstone. Failure to gain promotion has cost the Hawks dear with the break-up of their Grand Final team and the onset of disillusion.

Doncaster Dragons, meanwhile, continue to inflict pain on all and sundry. It doesn't help when you lose in the 'House of Pain' as Oldham did, but if ever a bunch of spectators deserved a chance to crow a bit it's the followers of the Dragons. Finally, Keighley Cougars did everyone in the League a favour by beating, and beating well, Dewsbury Rams, thereby proving to everyone else that the Rams are not, as they were beginning to look, invincible. Despite that, as

fellow N.F.P. contenders, we wish the Rams luck in their daunting Challenge Cup tie at Headingley.

Voting by the N.F.P. coaches for the best players in the League so far has thrown up some interesting selections. Oldham had four players nominated in Leo Casey, Mike Ford, Joey Hayes and Tom O'Reilly. But leading the way in the voting were Jamie Rooney, Featherstone's teenage scrum-half



Jamie Rooney

who did such damage to the Roughyeds on that dismal wet afternoon at the Lionheart Stadium last season; and Asa Amone, another thorn in Oldham's side in the same game, but now starring for Doncaster Dragons at prop. However, top of the poll was Keighley's influential play-making stand-off Martin Wood, another who gave the Roughyeds a bad time at Cougar Park last year. It's all worth bearing in mind when we meet these teams again this year, though whether Oldham can snuff out their talent is another matter.

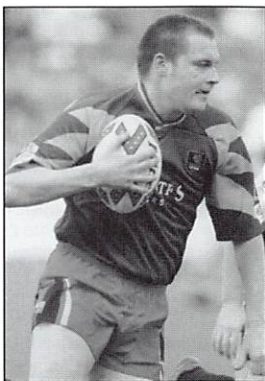


...LANCASHIRE LYNX

LANCASHIRE Lynx are a wholly owned subsidiary of Preston North End F.C. Unfortunately restrictions on the use of the Deepdale pitch since its refurbishment have led to the Lynx having to move out to play at Chorley. This has undoubtedly had a detrimental effect on the Club's spectator base which, even at its best, was not enormous. This, together with the loss of a major part of their playing staff since last season, has meant that the task of Steve Hampson and his assistant, Dennis Ramsdale, has been rendered exceedingly difficult, to the extent that Lynx are currently bottom of the NFP with but one victory from eight games played. A sad situation compared with an excellent season only two years ago when Lynx capped their league success by winning the inaugural (and so far only) Treize Tournoi.

Newcomers to Lynx this season are: Centre PHIL KNOWLES, a strong defensive player formerly with Salford Reds; second-row DANNY HOUGHTON, a long striding ex-Warrington Wolves recruit; and LUKE VINCENT a prop or second-row also once on the books at Salford.

Loan signings PHIL FARRELL and NEIL RODEN have now returned to Wigan, but Neil's brother JAMES RODEN newly signed from Adlington is expected to feature on the wing. Ex-Oldham Bear DAVID JONES usually occupies the other wing spot, but with injury keeping him



Kevin O'Loughlin

out we can expect to see MARK KAY on the right. The elusive KEVIN O'LOUGHLIN, a member of a famous RL family, is Kay's likely centre partner, while ANTON GARCIA will take

the left centre spot. Garcia was in the Widnes line-up last season and adds much needed quality to the Lynx's back line.

Behind these three-quarters at fullback will be 19 year old PAUL ROBERTS, a pacy runner who likes to attack from deep in the manner of his Coach.

In the absence of skipper and stand-off NEIL ALEXANDER with injury, JASON DEMETRIOU has been deputising. The Australian's creativity will have to be watched today. And, although NEIL FLANAGAN, an ex-Roughyed, is still on Lynx's books, today's scrum-half is likely to be DANNY BUTLER, a combative and influential play-maker and a former St. Helens' Academy player.

No. 8 will be big prop DAVE SMITH, now recovered from the injuries that hampered him last term, and always a handful for his opponents. Fellow prop PAUL NORTON also had a disrupted season last term but, now injury free, is returning to something approaching his best form. Young 17 year old hooker CHRIS RAMSDALE is the son of Assistant Coach Dennis and like substitutes STEVE CHARNLEY and NEIL PRESCOTT, has graduated from the Academy ranks.

With previously mentioned Houghton and Vincent in the second-row last man down will be JON-PAUL DOHERTY a ball-playing, loose-forward signed from Widnes Vikings.

In the event of injury other Lynx players include 38 year old veteran CARL BRISCOE, recently brought back from Wigan St. Patricks; big prop LEE PREST, once of Wigan; highly rated prop SEAN



Carl Brisco

GERITAS who showed up well against Oldham last year; long serving and wily utility forward TOMMY HODKINSON; second-row tackling machine ANDY FISHER; and two signings from Leigh Centurions in winger DEREK HARDMAN and ex-RL student international hooker or scrum-half SHELDON HANNON.

NATIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE MUSEUM

AS most Oldham supporters will be aware, the Rugby League have initiated a project to develop a National Rugby League Museum that will house the sport's historical collections and celebrate the history and achievements of players, officials and spectators.

Like the English and Scottish Football Museums at Preston and Hampden Park and Union's 'Twickenham Experience' the RL Museum would become recognised by the Museum and Galleries Commission and would employ the highest standard of display and preservation.

Several sites to house the Museum have been suggested not least the possibility of 'bolting' the project onto Oldham's Sports Park 2000.

The Authorities at St Helens, Warrington, Widnes, Hull and Oldham have all expressed interest. Oldham's geographical position coupled with Sports Park 2000's easy direct motorway access, plus Director of Economic Development Keith Coates' confirmation to League's chief executive Neil Tunnicliffe that the town is more than interested in accommodating this development, placed Oldham early favourites.

St Helens, Warrington and Hull plan new stadia. My understanding is that the St Helens and Hull developments are urban and will not have direct motorway access and that Warrington are considering two sites, one town centre and the other at the side of the M62 close to Burtonwood. Widnes, of course, have redeveloped their old ground to form the fine, but town centre sited, Auto Quest Stadium.

BUT WILL IT HAPPEN? IF IT DOES, WHEN, AT WHAT COST AND WHO PAYS? AN EXCITING PROJECT OR POTENTIAL WHITE ELEPHANT?

Will it happen? Only if the RL don't have to pay! the League don't have the cash and would expect the project to be funded from outside the sport.

So what is the cost? Well, the Football Museum at Preston is costing £11.5 million. This is currently being built under the new Tom Finney stand at Preston North End's revamped Deepdale stadium with the opening scheduled for the back end of this year. Neither the Football League nor the Football Association will be required to spend one penny. Whilst they have given full backing to the project the museum will be 'owned' by a charitable trust who have the responsibility of raising the full set up and ongoing running costs.

The actual building and fitting out of the Football Museum will cost around £7.5m. Whilst Preston NE may not charge the FA/FL for the use of the space in which the museum will be housed the value of this space has been calculated at £4m. The trust has been successful in securing a 65% grant from the Heritage Lottery fund based on a notional cost of £11.5m ie a grant of £7.5m. Further negotiated funds include small amounts of private sponsorship and £250,000 from the Single Regeneration budget. The funding basket therefore is already in excess of the minimum requirements and they are still looking for more!

(The Single Regeneration budget is an amount of cash set up by the Government that can be claimed from by local authorities who believe they have an argument

that parts of their authority have been left destitute or at best run down because of the decline of industry. The authority will be graded either One or Two dependent on the severity of the effect. Merseyside (St Helens) for example is graded One whilst Preston, Widnes, Warrington and Oldham are graded Two.)

When will the RL museum happen? Obviously this will depend on the site chosen and the speed at which the club concerned can build their new stadium or in the case of Widnes as soon as a site is confirmed acceptable and building started.

Exciting development or white elephant? Preston's local authority in tandem with the town's football club sowed the seed of the idea of a National Football Museum to the FA. They want their town firmly on the tourist map and look at this project as the honeypot to help draw tourists off the M6 and into the town.

On the other hand the press have well documented the disappointment at the number of visitors to the prestigious Royal Armouries museum in Leeds. Already too, some doubt is being cast as to the wisdom of the new Imperial War Museum planned for Trafford.

I would not necessarily expect a sports museum to be profitable. Providing it can stand on its own two feet and not prove a drain on the sport's coffers, good luck to the venture. Museums have been defined as the repository of all aspects of national culture. Therefore, as rugby league is a vital and historic part of the culture of the people of the north of England it is high time that it had its own national museum. The increasing popularity of sports museums, of which there are now over twenty in the UK, demonstrates too that there is a significant audience of people interested in the history of sport in general.

As for Oldham being chosen to host the museum?

Much depends on the skill of Oldham Council in obtaining funding. The Heritage Lottery fund has expressed some doubts about awarding any future large single museum project grants, preferring the route of more but smaller grants. The grant basket for a sports museum this time around will be harder to fill. Whilst the Heritage Lottery fund will still be of major importance, the Single Regeneration budget could be more important to this project than for example to the Football Museum. There will also be a need too to look at European grants and to the private sector.

Halton Borough Council have reputedly been quick on their feet, the word on the grapevine being that already they have organised a funding package and are ramming home to the League that a National Museum should not be seen to be part of any 'club' stadium and must be on a stand alone basis. They also point to the existing Auto Quest Stadium and National Chemical museum as proof of their ability to bring home the bacon. St Helens have Grade One access to the Single Regeneration budget and these factors in my opinion place Widnes and St. Helens current favourites to be awarded the project.

To regain possible lost ground Oldham Council must now pick up the pace and equally ram home the excellent design, prestige and position of Sports Park 2000 coupling this to their ability in negotiating the funding.

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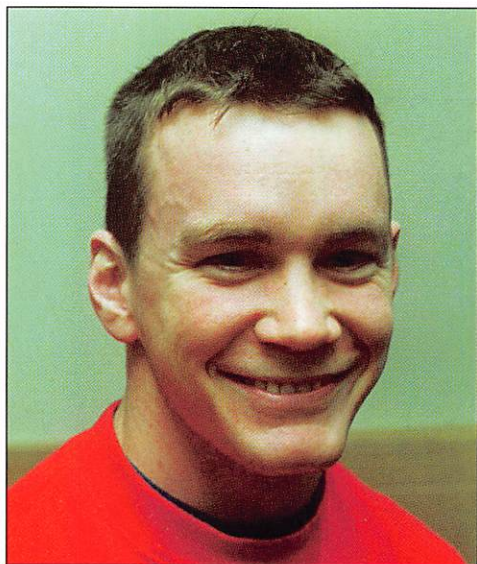
Phyllis Kershaw & her son Billy
of the Tenerife Supporters Club
wish Oldham RLFC all the best for the coming season
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An interview by Dave Roberts withMark Sibson



Why do people call you Ziggy?

I have no idea. It has stuck with me since I was about 3 years old. I remember a character on Grange Hill with the same name (but don't print that). Honest I don't know where it comes from.

Sum up the team's first ten games.

We had a great start and to be honest we were not playing that well but were winning our games. After losing at Barrow and Doncaster we were determined to get a result in the Cup at Rochdale but we showed no enthusiasm and we must put that behind us. At Leigh

we made too many errors but I feel it was a game we could have won. I would like to say the fans here are fantastic: they always get behind us - in fact I like everything about the club.

How about today's game?

There are no easy games in the N.F.P. but this is a game we should win. I remember last season playing for Bramley and losing twice to Lynx. So we need to take two points today. Our aim is to make sure we finish in the top eight: that is something I know we are capable of. I think Dewsbury are looking the best bet to finish top while Leigh are a good side and will prove hard to beat at Hilton Park. Also Doncaster will be there at the finish.

What part of your game would you like to improve?

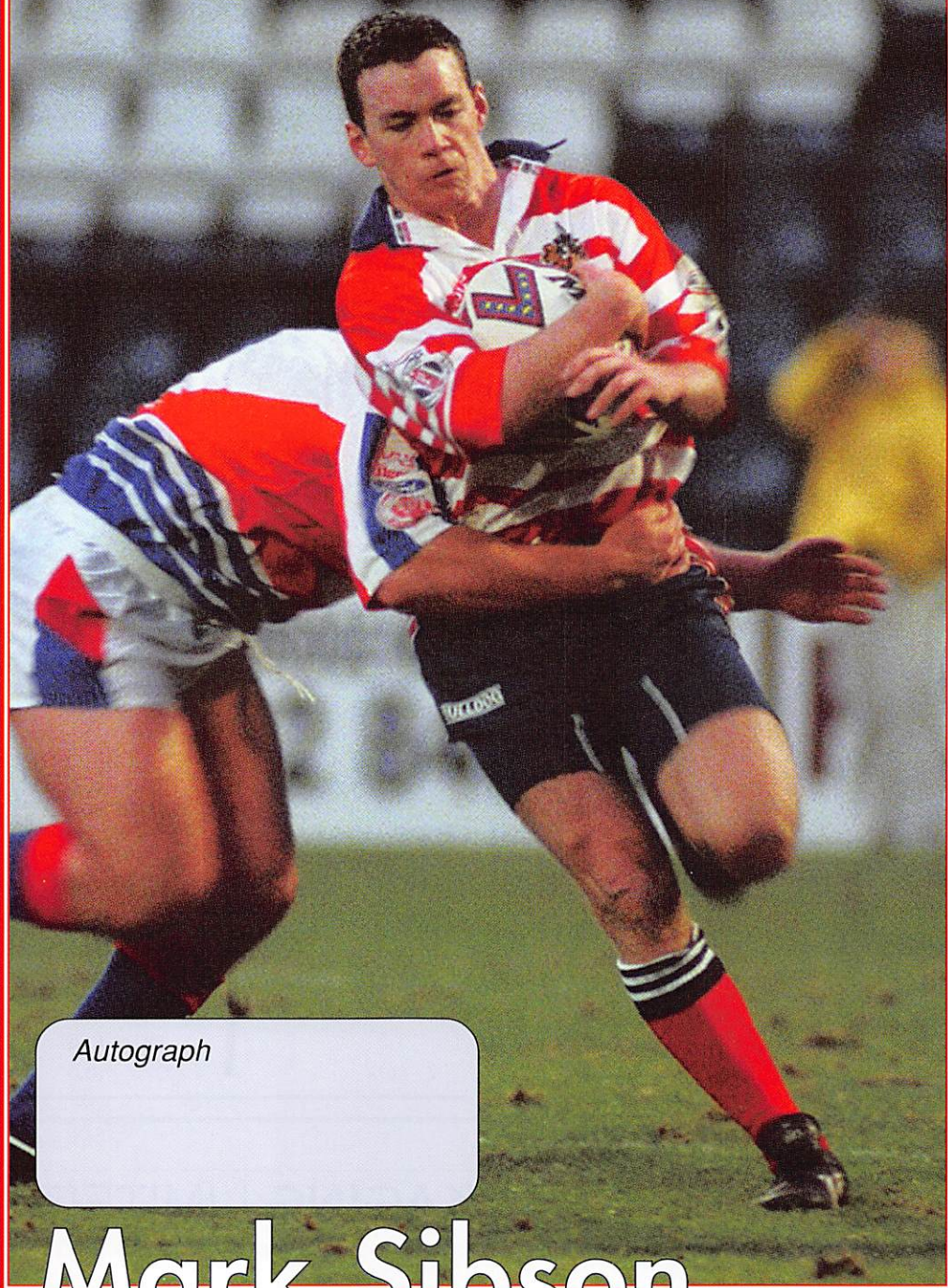
I think I am making too many mistakes, but I am aiming to put it right. Nevertheless I am very happy playing full back and I prefer it much more than playing on the wing where I feel I would have no freedom.

Who do you train with in your own time?

I do weights with David and Anthony Gibbons in my home town (Leeds).

DAVE ROBERTS

Roughyeds Spotlight



Autograph

Mark Sibson

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IVA in his blindness would like to know:-

1. Why would Leigh Centurions have a PIG as their mascot and not a Roman Soldier?
2. Why won't Wigan fans travel to away games?
3. Do Tigers actually live in Jungles?
4. Would you go to Beirut for a Lebanon home game?
5. Can Jamie BLOEM again?
6. What do you think referee Alan Bates was nicknamed at school?
7. Why can't Villeneuve play at home?
8. Has Whelan ('n Dealing) met his match in Wigan Council? If he takes his bat home he can abandon soccer and rugby and take to cricket!
9. How come Huddersfield/SHEFFIELD play in Claret and Gold?
10. Since when has a six year contract tied a player to his club for life (especially when he's 24)?
11. Why can't Oldham players pass to their right?
12. Why aren't they called Clayton INACTION group?
13. Why don't they shoot Henry the Hornet?
14. Which border can they raid from Barrow?
15. Why do half of Featherstone fans live in Pontefract?
16. Why were you daft enough to buy a burger at Doncaster after Roughyed Times warned you off?
17. Why was Chris McKinney not sent off in the Rochdale cup-tie?
18. Was Russell Smith asking the name of

Tim Street's barber (or did he politely remind him that head tackles are outlawed last week)?

19. Is Lancashire Lynx a golf club?
20. What is a Thrum and why did it have a Hall?
21. Why are they not called Gateshull F.C.?
22. What sort of a name is STEELE RETCHLESS? (You couldn't make it up!)
23. If you could have your choice of referee would you have a) Alan Bates or b) Billy Bunter?
24. If you could sign a new scrum-half would you sign a) Bobby Goulding or b) some 'nutter' from Huyton? [Isn't that the same thing? Ed.]



Bobby Goulding

25. If you can't get under the salary cap do you a) try to offload quality players like Tommy Martyn or b) sign an Australian stand-off on a massive contract? [Answers, please, to Ellery from your local psychiatrist].

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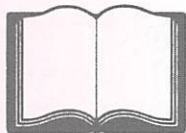


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Amateur Album

SAINT ANNES



IF THERE was a national competition based on after match hospitality provided by rugby league clubs, then St. Annes would win it hands down. The refreshments and friendship shown by Saints after each first team game at Higginshaw Road is far superior to, not only any other amateur club, but all the professional outfits as well. After every Conference League, Challenge Cup or National Cup match at St. Annes the referee, his touch judges, the visiting club's officials and the various sponsors are treated to a four course meal with wine included. That is over and above the hot meal which is provided for every player and back up personnel of the home and visiting teams. The standard of service provided is a credit to the voluntary kitchen staff at St. Annes, led by Bob Jolly and Brenda Graham.

It does help, of course when the club is housed in such lavish social facilities as those at Higginshaw Road. The clubhouse contains large concert room with stage, artist changing rooms, disc jockey facilities and satellite large screen television; smaller, but still spacious, players' lounge with pool table and television; gymnasium, kit and equipment storerooms, secretary's office, kitchen and, of course, a couple of well stocked bars. Despite enjoying facilities which are the envy of many local sporting organisations, St. Annes retain a burning desire to expand even further. Moves are afoot to obtain a sizable grant with which to finance the building of a sports hall with all the facilities necessary to enable the Saints junior teams to train at the same location. Two full sized pitches, a floodlit all-weather training area, floodlights for the first team pitch, a small stand and car park for 350 vehicles are also included in the proposed scheme. President Bill Herron, a former playing member of the club, spoke about the Saints' ambitions, "We aim to make this club the finest and friendliest club in the game. However, we have no ambitions to turn professional and we feel that we are well on the way to achieving those objectives with the facilities that we already own".

Saints were also delighted earlier this year when youth section coaching co-ordinator Steve Kelly, who coaches the under-13s, won the prestigious Greater Manchester Coach of the Year Award. The prize was won in a competition which covered, not only rugby league, but every other sporting activity enjoyed by the youth of this area. Kelly is one of a number of dedicated coaches within the Saints' junior set-up which provides expert coaching for players aged from under 8s upwards. There are teams for every age group representing Saints each week including two open aged teams. The under-18s are coached by Matt Calland, a Wembley finalist with Bradford Bulls, whilst the open age coaches are Chris Deakin, first team, and Keith Atkinson & Dave Hewitt whose 'A' team play in the first division of the North West Counties League, the highest grade of rugby enjoyed by any club in the town outside the National Conference League. Until the sports hall is built, training takes place at Higginshaw Road and also at various education department facilities throughout the town



The Brothers Deakin. Warrington Wolves chief executive Peter, coach Chris and captain Mike ponder the Castleford Tigers challenge.

such as Breeze Hill, Counthill and North Chadderton schools.

There are a good few followers of rugby league, myself included, who consider that the Premier Division of the National Conference League provides the most spectacular action of any game, including Super League. Come down to St. Annes and sample the entertainment and if you wish to take advantage of the Higginshaw Road facilities, match, ball and man-of-the-match sponsorship is available at very reasonable rates. Contact John Fitzsimons on 678 8600 to avail yourself of these terrific deals.

Don Yates

ALLIANCE FIRST DIVISION FIXTURES 2000

JANUARY

8th	Whitehaven Warriors	A	W	18 - 16
15th	BARROW B.R.	H	W	42 - 2
22nd	Workington Town	A	L	26 - 4
27th	Rochdale Hornets	A	L	16 - 4

FEBRUARY

3rd	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	H	W	34 - 6
10th	HUNSLET HAWKS	H	P	
17th	LEIGH CENTURIONS	H	P	
26th	Batley Bulldogs	A	W	18 - 11

MARCH

2nd	KEIGHLEY COUGARS	H	7.30	
8th	Widnes Vikings	A	7.30	
23rd	ROCHDALE HORNETS	H	7.30	
30th	Featherstone Rovers	A	7.30	

APRIL

5th	Hunslet Hawks	A	7.30	
13th	BATLEY BULLDOGS	H	7.30	

MAY

3rd	Keighley Cougars	A	7.30	
13th	WHITEHAVEN W.	H	2.30	
20th	Barrow B. R.	A	2.30	
27th	WORKINGTON TOWN	H	2.30	
31st	Leigh Centurions	A	7.30	

JUNE

15th	WIDNES VIKINGS	H	7.30	
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JULY

1st	TOP FIVE PLAY OFF			
22nd	GRAND FINAL PLAY OFF FINAL			

NOTICEBOARD

RL HALL OF FAME INVITES NEW NOMINATIONS

Rugby League supporters throughout the UK are being invited to nominate three new members for induction into the Rugby League Hall of Fame.

The Millennium Induction will elect three players to join the ten current Hall of Fame members. The induction ceremony will take place in October 2000, just before the Lincoln Financial Group Rugby League World Cup takes place.

"We're inviting all sections of the rugby league community to send in their three nominations for selection to the Hall of Fame," said RFL chief executive Neil Tunnickliffe.

"Entry into the Hall of Fame is the highest accolade any player can receive and we want to make sure that everyone in the game gets the chance to have their opinion heard."

To be eligible, a player must have played in professional British rugby league for at least ten

years, and his professional playing career must have ended by 1 October 1995.

Current members of the Hall of Fame are Billy Batten, Brian Bevan, Billy Boston, Neil Fox, Alex Murphy, Jonty Parkin, Gus Risman, Albert Rosenfeld, Jim Sullivan and Harold Wagstaff.

The closing dated for nominations is 31 March 2000. A shortlist of nominees will be announced before the Induction Ceremony.

The final selection will be made by a panel consisting of Neil Tunnickliffe, BARLA's Billy Fill, RFL statistician Raymond Fletcher, RFL archivist Tony Collins and journalists Ray French, Martyn Sadler and Mick Stephenson.

Nominations should be sent to:

Hall of Fame Millennium Induction, The Rugby Football League, Red Hall, Red Hall Lane, Leeds LS17 8NB



The photograph which is featured on this page of the programme shows ex Watersheddings favourite Billy Mitchell and Mick Downey of Rochdale. Mick also had a spell with Oldham playing 107 games for the club between 1937 and 1944.

It would appear, due to the presence of the two dignitaries, that this is a special match of some kind.

The club has had a request from Mick's grandson, Alex who is keeping a scrapbook of his grandfather's playing career and would be

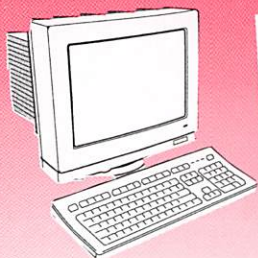
interested to hear from anyone who could shed any light on the date or the occasion of this match.

Initial research would suggest that the dignitaries are not wearing Oldham chains of office and it is probably not a "Law Cup" match.

If anyone could supply any information regarding this photograph or indeed has any other photos featuring Mick Downey could they please contact Alex at the following address.

Alex Majidi,

317, Hills Road, Cambridge. CB2 2QT



WINNARD'S

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With Simon Winnard

THE OVERALL structure of Rugby League in this country is an issue which has rarely been agreed on in recent years. Following the split from Union, Rugby League's own development has been hampered by internal differences over the years. However, what is somewhat ironic is the rift between the amateur and professional game - the very issue which gave birth to Rugby League in the first place.

For far too long, professional clubs have fed off the amateur game with little or no investment at grass roots level in return. The absence of a united governing body dedicated to moving the game forward has left us with a three tiered hierarchy - Super League, the NFP and the Amateur game.

It is only recently that we have seen serious overtures towards reconciliation as the disparity of lottery/external grant funding, when compared to other sports, has been made apparent. It saddens me that once again the clamouring for external funding is the only means of bringing positive reactive change. It is of course difficult to assess the real cost to our game over the years, but in terms of trailing the standards set by our Australian counterparts, it is clearly significant.

Whilst the dispute between the amateur and professional game looks finally set to be resolved, what is again somewhat ironic is the growing gap between SL and the NFP. This has been clearly highlighted by the Challenge Cup results in recent weeks and the gap is undoubtedly widening. With no further News Corporation funding and the demise of smaller clubs like Bramley, it would appear that the RFL would be quite happy for the game outside SL to die a slow and painful death. The trimming of SLE by the farcical exclusion of Gateshead, Sheffield and Hunslet, points increasingly towards a closed shop and what would seem a bleak future for the NFP.

Historically, in order for a smaller professional club to survive and sustain reasonable growth, an investment in and development of young, unproven talent has proven vital. Inevitably this takes time. However the Bosman ruling has meant that to some extent we can no longer guarantee the return on youth investment as in days gone by. A prime example of this would be our own Leo Casey, for

whom the former Oldham club received a massive £100,000 from Peter Fox's Featherstone some years back. That simply wouldn't happen today.

This ruling has had a significant effect on professional RL. Freedom of contract has, to date, been heavily weighted in the players' favour and effectively meant the collapse of the transfer market as we knew it. Former Bear Brett Goldspink is a prime example, having played for four clubs in as many years in the British game. We have seen a massive closed season turnaround of players with another influx of foreigners and relatively few transfer fees changing hands.



Brett Goldspink

Increasingly, the most promising amateur youngsters are snapped up on big money contracts by the age of 14 and 15. This season has seen the 17 year old ex-Royton Tiger Alex Wilkinson given a full time Super League contract at the Bradford Bulls - a fledgling club such as Oldham simply cannot compete with that.

On the bright side, however, the back to basics approach adopted by the NFP this season shows encouraging signs of not only short term survival but long term development. Not least our very own 'A' team who are, for the first time in years, making a real effort to foster young, local talent - a close relationship with the amateur game will surely prove crucial.

The attempt to admit a Huddersfield 'feeder' club into the NFP was a clear indicator that the powers that be merely see our competition as a development league. To that end, the RFL must address the issues raised here and ensure that, if time and effort have gone into the coaching and nurturing of our young talent, sufficient rewards are there at the end to justify that investment.....not merely a breeding ground for easy pickings by the elite few.



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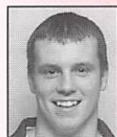
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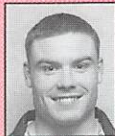
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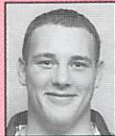
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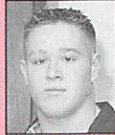
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Club Call

COURTESY WEEK

28th February – 7th March

THE ROTARY CLUB of Oldham with assistance from Admiral Leasing plc, are promoting "Courtesy Week" in Oldham. Involved in the scheme are the Oldham Evening Chronicle, Oldham Chamber of Commerce, Revolution Radio, Oldham Athletic and, obviously Oldham Rugby League Football Club.

The project aims to "put a smile on the face of Oldham". The general public will be invited to write to their local paper giving illustrations of high standards of courtesy and customer service. They can then nominate the person/organisation for a Courtesy Award. The most outstanding awardees will receive special recognition and Manchester/London return tickets sponsored by Virgin Trains.

As a gesture of courtesy to disabled children, the pupils of two special schools (Park Dean and Hill Top) are being invited to express their Millennium Wish to the Mayor of

Oldham. Every wish will be passed to Rotary who, with the help of Admiral Leasing will "fix it".

We at Oldham Rugby League Football Club like to think we are a friendly, community based club. With this in mind, we received a letter from the secretary of Wigan St Judes, Mr Joe Fitzsimmons. It read *"Just a few words of thanks on behalf of St Judes players, officials, sponsors and spectators for the warm and generous hospitality, which we received from Oldham RLFC. Everyone I have spoken to cannot praise people at the club enough. You are on the right track, to make Oldham RLFC a force to be reckoned with and, the club is a credit to this great game of Rugby League."*

Having stood (and Alas! sat) with our supporters I know that they are the best within the game. The banter with opposing fans is always superb. We obviously watch the game through Red & White spectacles but always acknowledge good play and sportsmanship. I am sure we will all support "Courtesy Week". Now don't forget "You were very unlucky then referee!" and "I'm sure you know the rules Sir! but would you mind awfully just looking at them again to refresh your memory, Old Chap?"

Scott

JUNIOR ROUGHYEDS

Hi to all the Junior Roughyeds!!

A warm Oldham welcome goes out to the Lancashire Lynx team and supporters.

The Oldham mascot for today's match

is **Megan Hartley**. Megan is 9 years old and her favourite player is Jason Clegg. Have a good day.

The mascot for next week's away match at Widnes Vikings is **Maria Holmes**. Maria is 10 years old and her favourite player is John Hough.



Megan Hartley



Maria Holmes

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Geoff and Marjorie Cooke of Saddleworth Sports and School Uniform for providing kit socks for the season for all the match day mascots. Many thanks for your continued support.

We are still looking for a main sponsor for the Junior Roughyeds this season. Please contact Chris Hamilton for more details.

Debra Rafferty

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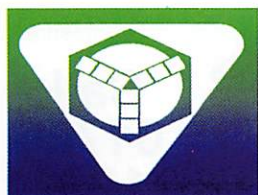
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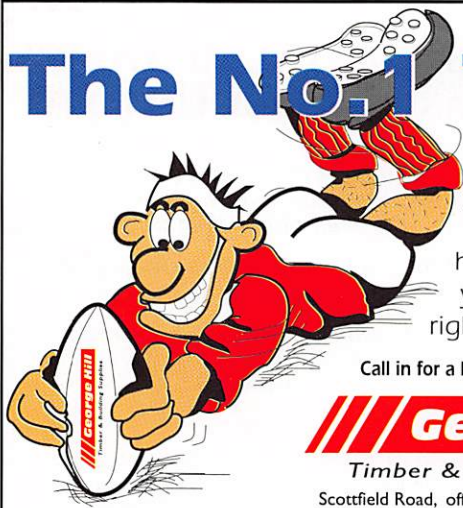
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'THE DON'



DON YATES LOOKS BACK TO MARCH 5TH YESTERYEAR.

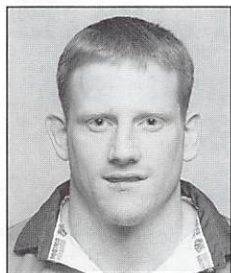
AFTER an absence of almost a month, the Roughyeds return to Boundary Park this afternoon for a match against Lancashire Lynx, a club who rose from the National Conference League and within four years reached the final of the Treize Tournoi, the NFP's version of the European Cup.

That action packed afternoon in Toulouse seemed a million miles away when, on Saturday 5th March 1994, Chorley Borough, as Lynx were then known, lost 20-16 at Dudley Hill in a Conference League fixture. On the same day Saddleworth



Sean Whitehead

Rangers defeated Egremont Rangers 36-22 with current Roughyeds' director Sean Whitehead landing six goals for Saddleworth. Also included in Saddleworth's pack that afternoon was Andy Proctor, the current Roughyeds' skipper.



Andy Proctor

One hundred or so years ago there were about fifty rugby league clubs spread throughout the borough. They were of variable standards but three of the better clubs were Abbeyhills, Lees and Werneth. Way back in 1898 these three clubs won their way through to the second round of the Challenge Cup. Those ties were staged on Saturday 5th March when Werneth, unfortunately, lost 16-4 away to another junior club, Barton.

Both Abbeyhills and Lees were drawn at home to league opposition but both switched the ties to their opponents' ground just as St. Annes did three weeks ago. Not surprisingly, both clubs suffered heavy defeats. Abbeyhills lost 59-0 at Leigh, where stand-off Harry Dundavin scored four tries and a couple of goals, and Lees lost 65-2 at Salford where winger Frank Miles scored six tries, a club record which has yet to be beaten.

Another winger was in try-scoring mood on this day in 1932, Saturday 5th March, when St. Helens defeated Barrow 36-15 at Knowsley Road. In so doing the Saints scored eight tries, six of which were credited to Alf Ellaby. Forty-six years later, on Sunday 5th March 1978, St. Helens scored 15 tries when they defeated Bramley 71-7 also at Knowsley Road. In that match full-back Geoff Pimblett landed 13 goals.

One of the most popular players on the Oldham staff during the 1998 campaign was utility player Michael Edwards who always gave 100% in every game. He joined Oldham two years ago today, Thursday 5th March 1998, from Swinton. Edwards made 20 appearances for the Roughyeds and scored six tries during the 1998 season but, prior to that, he was with the previous Oldham club, the Bears, and he made a couple of appearances during the shortened 1995/96 season before moving across to Swinton.

Two years earlier, on Tuesday 5th March 1996, Oldham signed a relatively unknown forward from Balmain (Australia). Matt Munro proved to be a capable, hard-working and versatile forward who made 37 appearances and scored eight tries during two years of Super League action before returning to Australia on the demise of the Bears.

It was on this day in 1988, Saturday 5th March, that the Australian club Newcastle Knights played their first competitive match. A



Bob Lindner

crowd of 26,340 were attracted to Newcastle Sports ground for the visit of Parramatta. The majority of the crowd would have been pleased to see the Knights take an early lead with a penalty from stand-off Robbie Tew but thereafter it was all Parramatta who went on to win 28-4. A couple of players in the Parramatta line-up, Bob Lindner and Paul Taylor, spent some time here in Oldham playing for the Roughyeds.

Don Yates

Fixtures

Date Opponent Result Att

DECEMBER

F - A

12 ROCHDALE H (LAW CUP) W 30-18
27 ROCHDALE HORNETS W 23-20

JANUARY

2 Swinton Lions W 23-18 2,567
9 WHITEHAVEN W W 26-22 2,446
16 Barrow B.R. L 19-16 1,618
23 WORKINGTON T W 30-17 2,222

FEBRUARY

6 Doncaster Dragons L 16-26 2,130
8 Wigan St. J (SCCC R3) W 44-0 1,376
13 Rochdale H (SCCC R4) L 14-30 2,168
20 Leigh Centurions L 10-28 2,410

MARCH

5 LANCASHIRE LYNX H 3.00
12 Widnes Vikings A 3.00
19 DEWSBURY RAMS H 3.00
26 Featherstone Rovers A 3.30

APRIL

2 Sheffield Eagles A 3.15
9 HUNSLET HAWKS H 3.00
16 Batley Bulldogs A 3.00
21 Rochdale Hornets A 7.30
24 SWINTON LIONS H 3.00

MAY

1 YORK WASPS H 3.00
7 Hull Kingston Rovers A 3.00
10 KEIGHLEY COUGARS H 7.30
14 Whitehaven Warriors A 3.00
21 BARROW B.R. H 3.00
26 Workington Town A 7.30
29 DONCASTER DRAGONS H 3.00

JUNE

4 LEIGH CENTURIONS H 3.00
11 Lancashire Lynx A 3.00
18 WIDNES VIKINGS H 3.00
25 Dewsbury Rams A 3.00

JULY

2 FEATHERSTONE ROVERS H 3.00

Oldham RLFC fully support the let's tackle racism in rugby league campaign and welcomes all players and spectators irrespective of their ethnic or racial origins. Racism has no place in our game and racist chants are totally unacceptable. Allow everyone to enjoy the game.

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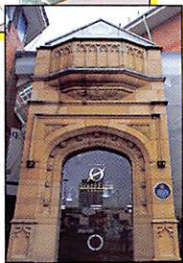
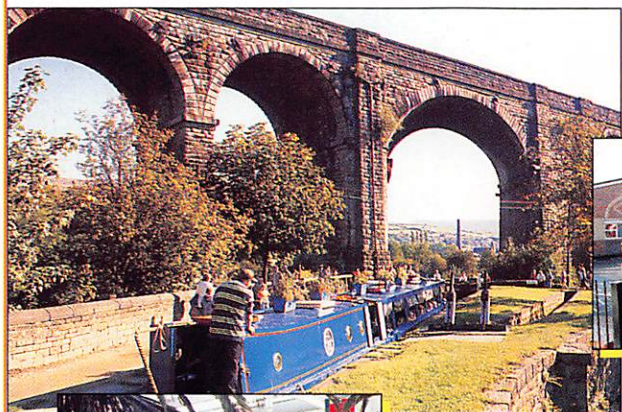
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This endeavour has led to an expanding, improving town centre which has benefited from £100 million investment, 20 new schools in as many years, a national award-winning multi million pound regeneration scheme, development of a new cultural quarter, a new business management school, a town centre based leisure scheme including multiplex cinema, Britain's newest Sixth Form College, a diversity of industry, the planned extension of the Metrolink tram system and much more.

All this, together with Oldham's reputation for innovation, hard work and friendliness means that the Borough finds itself well placed to meet the challenges of the New Millennium.

The Council is committed to continuing to serve the local community and in helping Oldham maintain its significant status in the North West Region.

OLDHAM 
Metropolitan Borough 

Enquiries about the Council's policies and activities, including its regeneration programmes and policies to the Chief Executive's Department, PO Box 160, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UG.



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Warren BARROW

David GIBBONS

Mike FORD

Jason CLEGG

John HOUGH

Andrew PROCTOR

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Kevin MANNION

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Wes ROGERS

Danny GUEST

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