



The Roughlyed

OLDHAM RLFC

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Dewsbury Rams
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Up Front

.....With Christopher Hamilton



WHAT A difference a week makes! In the last two games we have scored 81 points, won two games and in the second of those, away at Widnes, probably posted (outside the club) one of the shock results of the season to date.

More importantly it should also send a message to our many doubters and knockers that they will have to wait a little longer before we hear their voices again. It is very difficult as Chairman to sometimes rise above all the negatives that are directed at **everything** we do at the club but, if nothing else, over the last 28 months I have learned to be tough and resilient. Indeed with the politics

attached to this game we have no choice.

Talking of which the Northern Ford Premiership Chairman, Bob McDermott, brings Dewsbury "Into Town" today for what is sure to be a very demanding game. Dewsbury have proved to be the division's most consistent side over the last three years but it's another chance for our players to gauge their progress and hopefully to take the two points. The Division has already shown that most teams are well matched and consistency will be the key to success.

Enjoy the game.

The Roughyeds The Roughyeds

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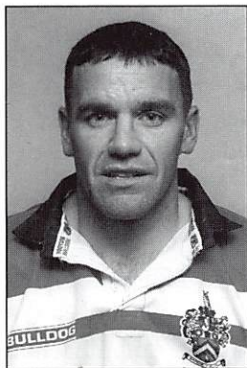
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WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY



FORD FOCUS . . . With Mike Ford

Haydn Walker's . . Alliance First Division Round Up



WELCOME to Boundary Park for this afternoon's game against Dewsbury. The Rams are an exceptionally good team with a top class coach in Neil Kelly who I greatly respect. They do the basics well and will give us a tough test.

We played Lancashire Lynx at a good time for us, and running up 50 points restored a lot of confidence. It takes some doing to score 50 at any time and the result removed a lot of self doubt. We are not a flamboyant side and try to stick to a game plan and we felt this worked well against Lynx.

We prepared as normal for the game

against Widnes but put a lot of stress on SELF BELIEF. It was a big game to win and players had to stand up and be counted, which they all did. We feel we perform better against good sides but must ensure we tackle well. Although we tackled generally okay against Widnes we still missed twenty so that gives us something to work on. I watched a video of Widnes and their so-called 'stars' and thought to myself 'my players are better than them and they're younger'. I'm glad they proved me right! What we want now is CONSISTENCY in winning and not just playing well. I think the crowd can help us there with their vocal backing. It was very noticeable at Widnes how the fans were backing us and it really gave the boys a lift. I hope you can do the same again for us today.

Enjoy the match,

Mike



THE Alliance squad just keeps getting younger. Since my last column we have played Widnes away and lost 40-6 and Keighley home and won 34-12.

At Widnes we had thirteen players under the age of twenty-one, along with three who are only just twenty-one. The result didn't really reflect the game and we were still in it right up to the last twelve minutes. Sheer physical power, however, did for us as we tired under a late onslaught. I was most pleased with our performance especially our front row of Howieson, Peet and Doran who are all eighteen. Ian Sinfield was our best player on the night.

Our unbeaten run at home this season continued with a good win over Keighley. Leo Casey got back into things following his three game absence holidaying at the Costa Del St Annes courtesy of the RFL Disciplinary committee. Leo's professionalism and great handling ability was the spark our young players needed. The game was never in doubt with a clinical first half performance that saw us not concede a

single penalty. Mark Tagg grabbed two tries – his first for the club, Dave Harris, Ian Sinfield (again), Danny Guest, Alex Peet and Chris Naylor all had fine games.

The team continues to impress and improve. Our next match is at home to Rochdale and it is very much a game we would like to win following our defeat earlier in the season up at Saddleworth.

Haydn Walker

Alliance First Division

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	PTS
Widnes Vikings	8	6	0	2	277	120	157	12
Hunslet Hawks	7	6	0	1	162	134	28	12
Featherstone R	7	4	0	3	205	146	59	8
Oldham	7	4	0	3	126	117	9	8
Workington Town	6	3	0	3	174	114	60	6
Leigh Centurions	7	3	0	4	162	168	-6	6
Rochdale Hornets	5	3	0	2	70	113	-43	6
Keighley Cougars	5	2	0	3	146	128	18	4
W'aven Warriors	5	2	0	3	134	154	-20	4
Batley Bulldogs	8	2	0	6	102	202	-100	4
Barrow B Raiders	7	1	0	6	101	263	-162	2

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In Yer Face



YOU FOLLOW Oldham through thick and thin (mainly thin) and end up at York conceding just enough points to avoid 1000 for the season and you wonder what on earth you are doing. And then you go to Widnes not expecting to win and reflecting on a record 84-0 defeat last year. And you come away with a win and suddenly you know why you follow your team despite everything! All that disappointment, all that frustration, all that heartache suddenly transformed into moments of rapture, sheer joy shared by players and fans alike. Perhaps not yet quite their finest hour - hopefully that is yet to come - but certainly something close to it. And all inspired by Oldham's best team performance to date and a posse of 'barmy army' supporters whose constant clapping, chanting and singing undoubtedly buoyed up the team on the field when Widnes threatened to turn the tide. Big game, big result: let's hope for a repeat today.



Gamestars, Jason Clegg and John Hough

THE RADIO FIVE LIVE programme branding Rugby League a 'failing' sport was a disgrace. But what is worse is the thought that a British University would award a PhD to someone for a piece of so-called 'research' which is not fit to grace the nail on the back of my lavatory door. From all I have heard and read so far, and admittedly that does not include the full thesis, the research is fundamentally flawed, if for no other reason than there is no context or perspective to it.

Rugby League is losing terrestrial T.V. viewers: yes, but since Grandstand and the BBC's sporting coverage in general is 'failing' is that surprising? What evidence is there that other sports covered by the BBC are holding their own or increasing their audience? If there is none the conclusion regarding Rugby League is invalid.

Expansion of the game has failed. Not entirely true. Some attempts (eg Paris and Gateshead) have not been successful, but what other sport has pursued a committed policy of introducing itself to a new audience in the way that R.L. has? Look beyond the obvious and observe the expansion of the Summer Conference League, of the amateur game and of the student game, not to mention the international scene, and the picture is not quite so bleak.

Super League attendances have declined. I'll leave that one to the statisticians. According to Chris Caisley and S.L.E. average attendances have increased by over 600 spectators per game. Whose figures are flawed? At least Rugby League is prepared to publish its attendances unlike some other sports whose spectator base on a pro-rata basis would reduce their TV and press coverage to a footnote on page 34 (Miscellaneous Sales) instead of the reams of fawning propaganda they now receive.

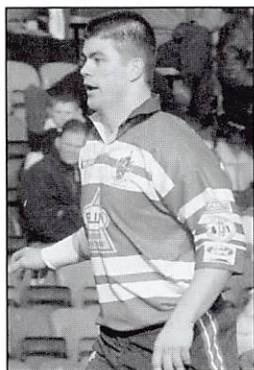
News Corporation funding has been wasted on player salaries and payment to an ever growing band of administrators. Well, that little gem didn't tell us anything we didn't already know and certainly didn't require government or university funding to find out. Indeed the funding of such sloppy thinking in pursuit of a PhD is an even bigger waste of cash than that attributed to Rugby League. And yet, is it not an interesting question whether payments to players, the key people who generate the wealth of the game, is ever wasted? And further is it not the case that Rugby League, unlike any other sport you care to name, has tackled the problem of finance via the salary cap even if, as yet that system is imperfect?

Conclusions: instead of attacking Rugby League the BBC, with its outmoded coverage and attitudes to sport, might do well to look at itself. With next to no sport of significance left to it, give or take Wimbledon and the odd horse race, and the coverage of what is left looking primitive compared to BSkyB, Channel Four, Talk Sport and, even, Eurosport, the obvious conclusion is that it is the BBC that is dying not Rugby League. No one is more critical of how Rugby League is administered than the average Rugby league fan: he or she do not need a jumped-up student (mature or otherwise) and an organisation still bound by the thought process of Lord Reith to tell them what is wrong with their sport.

ROGER ROGER

SHAYNE McMENEMY, the Roughyeds new Australian forward, has a wonderful opportunity to make a name for himself among Oldham fans.

The Boundary Park faithful are crying out for an overseas player with the luck to avoid serious injury and with the ability to make a real impact.



Shayne McMenemy

If you come from 12,000 miles away on the other side of the world you require a large slice of both to win the hearts and minds of Oldham fans.

And club officials will be the first to admit that their excursions so far into overseas territory have not produced the results they had hoped for.

Luck, certainly, has not been on their side - and you require some good fortune whether you are signing a pack man for Parramatta or a whizz kid from Waterhead.

Last season, Josh Bostock came with a big reputation as a wing or centre after helping to push Wakefield into Super League the year before, but after only a handful of matches he smashed the cruciate ligament in a knee at Hunslet - and that was the end of that.

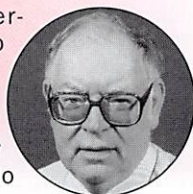
Plans to sign Aussie scrum-half Chris Orr, who had been at Huddersfield the previous season, broke down at the last minute - again through no fault of the club - when the player's wife was taken ill.

Daniel Brown came instead to play in 31 of the Roughyeds 32 matches and to score 140 points with 42 goals and 14 tries - six more than his nearest challengers, wingers Joe McNicholas and Aidie Mead.

Within his capabilities, the scrum half contributed much in a difficult season while rarely climbing beyond the journeyman level and struggling to become a fans' favourite although, that was difficult for anyone last

season outside the ever-popular front row trio of Leo Casey, John Hough and Jason Clegg.

So to this year...and high hopes that Tom O'Reilly and Tate Moseley would do the business.



In the case of Tom, how unlucky can you be? He had broken a leg while playing for Bramley last season, but had so impressed Mike Ford with his performance on the field and the hard work he put into his rehabilitation programme that Oldham's boss had no hesitation in signing him up for the Roughyeds.

What happened? Only seven games into a 28 match Northern Ford Premiership season he suffered a similar injury to Bostock's and was forced to reluctantly accept that his season had come to a premature end.

Although we didn't know it at the time O'Reilly went down injured at Leigh, Moseley had already caught the plane home after only two weeks and three matches with the Roughyeds.

So it now falls to McMenemy to show what he can do as O'Reilly's replacement after impressing Ford in each of his three appearances for Rochdale Hornets against the Roughyeds so far this season.

Although he played as a prop with Hornets, the former Western Suburbs forward played most of his 44 senior games for Wests in the second-row, and that's where Ford will intend to use him as he bids to put more impact into his back three.

When the signing was announced, Oldham's player-coach paid tribute to the "speed, commitment and professionalism" which the club had employed to acquire the services of McMenemy on contract to November 30.

The club backed Ford's judgement and the coach is also impressed by the player's commitment in flying straight back to Britain only 12 hours after arriving home.

So it's over to you Shayne - and the best of luck.

Roger Halstead

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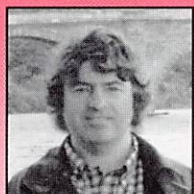
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LIVING HISTORY

From the Pen of Michael Turner

RUGBY LEAGUE MILESTONES - A SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

1921 - 1930

IN 1922 the Northern Union changed its name to the Rugby Football League. The early 1920s was a boom period for the game on Humberside with Hull taking the championship in 1920 and retaining the title in 1921 against local rivals Hull K.R. The "Robins" were not to be out done and they in turn were champions in 1923 and 1925. In that latter victory their opponents in the final were Swinton who were defeated by nine points to five at Rochdale. The following season the "Lions" won the Lancashire Cup for the first time defeating Wigan in the final and gained their first championship title in 1926-27 when the now defunct St Helens Recs team were defeated in the final at Warrington 13-8.

In 1927 the BBC made their first radio broadcast of a RL game for the Challenge Cup Final when Oldham defeated Swinton at Wigan. This was the last of four consecutive Challenge Cup Final appearances for the "Roughyeds".

Four Oldham players; Sid Rix, Albert Brough, Ernie Knapman and Bob Sloman were selected for the 1924 tour to Australia and New Zealand.

1927-28 was the high spot of Swinton's history for it was in this season that the "Lions" became only the third club to win the four major trophies available in the senior game. Wigan were again defeated in the Lancashire Cup

Final (5-2). The Challenge Cup came by way of a final victory over Warrington (5-3) and the Championship final saw Featherstone Rovers, who were appearing in their first major final, succumb to the "Lions" 11-0 at Watersheddings. This was the only occasion the Championship final was held in Oldham.

Bob Sloman was again selected to tour in 1928. This time he was the club's only representative.

For the 1928-29 season the Rugby League authorities made the momentous decision to switch the Challenge Cup final to Wembley. In the final Wigan defeated Dewsbury 13-2.

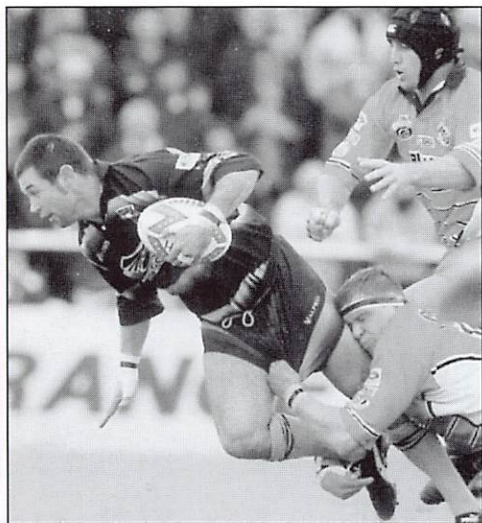


Bob Sloman - Great Britain tourist in 1924 and 1928 and the last Oldham player to captain a Challenge Cup winning team in 1927.

PROBING THE NFP

THE BIG SURPRISE of week nine in the N.F.P. was Workington's 16-10 defeat of Widnes Vikings. Stand-off Paul Cook had a big game with his kicking, and prop Matt Sturm stood up to everything the Vikings has to offer. The result, of course, was great for the other sides challenging at the top of the table. Leigh Centurions clawed back a 20 point half-time deficit to win 36-28 at Cougar Park. The sin-binning of Ian Hughes upset the Keighley applecart as Leigh scored two converted tries to get back in the game, all of which goes to show the importance of discipline in the modern game.

Dewsbury Rams, meanwhile, took revenge for last season's Grand Final defeat by overcoming Hunslet Hawks at South Leeds stadium 22-10. Nathan Graham, Adrian Flynn and Ian Talbot were reportedly the players in form.



Adrian Flynn

Featherstone maintained their challenge with a fifth successive victory at York Wasps by 25-12. Jamie Rooney was the stand out player with a try, four goals and a drop goal and several telling breaks. Another scrum-half in fine form was Hull K.R.'s Mark Hewitt who orchestrated his team's 32-14 win at Mount Pleasant. Doncaster Dragons got the result they wanted with a 16-10 victory at Sheffield, an outcome achieved without ever hitting top form and confirmed only by a Carl Hall try with six minutes remaining.

Elsewhere, Barrow maintained their home form by defeating Hornets, Oldham strolled to victory over Lancashire Lynx and Swinton pulled off an excellent result at Whitehaven, the Warrior's first defeat on home territory.

Week 10 saw Widnes humbled again, this time at the Autoquest by a rejuvenated Oldham. Every Oldham player performed, but front row pair John Hough and Jason Clegg had especially big games.

Other games probably went to form. Leigh thrashed Lancashire Lynx 68-6 at the inappropriately named - for Lynx - Victory Park. Paul Wingfield finished with a try and ten goals to send coach Ian Millward on his way to Knowsley Road a happy man. Interestingly referee Colin Morris's penalty count was a remarkable two to Lancashire and three to Leigh.

With Dewsbury having given a good account of themselves in the Challenge Cup at Headingley other clubs took advantage to leap frog them, at least before Wednesday's home game with York. Featherstone went second by beating Batley Bulldogs 78-16, with Jamie Rooney again the mastermind.

Hull K.R. are now third after a 22-14 home win against Whitehaven, Dean Andrews scoring two all important tries. Fourth placed Doncaster Dragons ran up 25 points to the Hawks 12 in the "House of Pain". St. John Ellis described his side's rugby as "breathtaking". Full-back Lynton Stott scored a spectacular hat-trick to emphasise just what a force the Dragons now are.

Swinton Lions maintained their recent form to overcome Barrow 35-22, wingman Marlon Billy being another hat-trick hero, and big second-row Ian Pickavance leading the way in the pack. Meanwhile Keighley also had a three try star in substitute centre Paul Owen, as the Cougars registered a comfortable 36-2 win over Sheffield.

Finally, Hornets edged out Workington 32-28 despite a late rally by the visitors Martin Bunce had a big game at No. 10 with Dane Dorahy, Danny Wood and new signing from the Lynx Jason Demetriou showing flashes of brilliance behind the pack.

As for this week there are some really big games, all of which will be hard to call. Hull K.R. at home to Swinton maybe just favours the home side, but I wouldn't put money on any of Leigh v Doncaster, Oldham v Dewsbury and Workington v Featherstone. Home advantage might be crucial in all these top fixtures.

In Town Today



...DEWSBURY RAMS



HAVE no doubt about it, Dewsbury Rams are the best team in the NFP. Who says so? Their playing record says so. In two and a half years to date the Rams have won more League games than any other current NFP team. Last year's beaten Grand Finalists and Quarter-Finalists in this season's Challenge Cup, Dewsbury will be one tough nut to crack. All the more impressive, therefore, that Oldham knocked them out of the Cup last season, although the Rams did take their revenge in the league fixture at Spotland. Following Oldham's victory at Widnes last week today's game promises to be an absolute cracker.

Coached by 1998 Coach of the Year NEIL KELLY, himself an ex-Dewsbury player with over 300 appearances to his credit, Dewsbury's key playmakers are half-backs BARRY EATON and RICHARD AGAR. Scrum-half and goal-kicker Eaton signed from Wakefield in 1995, while his partner Agar, an astute field kicker, has played for Featherstone Lions and Rochdale Hornets. His father Alan played in Dewsbury's 1973 Championship team.

In a powerful pack prop MATTHEW LONG, ex-Thornhill, returned home after a spell with Hull Sharks, Hooker IAN TALBOT signed from Wakefield Wildcats

after playing in 15 Super League fixtures last term. He was previously on Wigan's books. No. 10 SHAYNE WILLIAMS has played all his career with the Rams after signing in 1992 from Dewsbury Celtic. He is rivalled for his position by ROBIN JOWITT, a local lad who has graduated from the Academy side.

In the second-row SEAN RICHARDSON and BILLY KERSHAW have been the recent first choices. Richardson is on loan from Wakefield having also appeared with Widnes and Castleford, while Kershaw is

another ex-Dewsbury Academy and Alliance team graduate.

Loose-forward DAMIAN BALL, one of the best in the League in his position, came to Ram Stadium from York in 1995.

Other forwards likely to feature include SIMON HICKS, ex-Stanley Rangers and Wakefield Trinity and PAUL DELANEY, a Mr. Versatile originally with Dewsbury Moor but signed by the Rams from Leeds. Young prop RYAN McDONALD will be known to many Oldham players having been on Bramley's books last season, while GARETH COCHRANE, a second-rower hailing from Hull, came to the Rams from Hunslet Hawks having also appeared with Keighley. Additionally, brothers ANDREW and KEVIN SPINK, local lads both, the former from Thornhill, the latter from St. John Fisher, are available for selection.

In the backs, last line of defence NATHAN GRAHAM, a quality player of high repute, is in his second spell with the Rams after a high profile spell at Bradford Bulls. On the wings RICHARD BAKER and ADRIAN FLYNN have been the recent first choices. Baker has come through the ranks, whereas Flynn has done the rounds with Wakefield, Castleford, Keighley and Leeds.

Centre DAN POTTER was a star of Mike Ford's Bramley team in 1999 and will need some watching. Ford would have liked to bring Potter to Boundary Park, so judge for yourselves whether he would have been a valuable acquisition. His partner BRENDAN O'MEARA is an Australian with experience at South Sydney and Illawarra Steelers.

Back up is provided by ALEX GODFREY, a winger signed from York after playing with Hull Academy; by DAVID MYCOE, an elusive halfback with many years' Super League experience at Sheffield Eagles; and by GAVIN WOOD, a local youngster breaking through from the Academy ranks.



Nathan Graham



Paul Delaney

NEW ADDITIONS TO OLDHAMS HALL OF FAME

(Sponsored by J. W. LEES, BREWERS)

ITS TWO YEARS almost to the day that Martin Murphy was invited to join the magnificent seven already in the Hall of Fame. For a club that has produced 86 internationals, brought in players from not just every corner of the UK but also from every serious league playing nation consideration to increase the members of this 'elite' club is ongoing. There have been lots and lots of cracking players that are not yet members!

The selection of the original Hall of Fame came from within the old club but more recently a small group including club historian, Michael Turner and myself have taken on the job of considering possible new contenders. Oldham's Hall of Fame was the first to be set up by any of the British professional clubs and we believe we have the responsibility to ensure it remains the best!

When 'Murph' was inaugurated the evening at the Clayton Arms was not just a roaring success but the publicity surrounding the event was astonishing. Towards the end of this season we hope to organise a further inauguration involving one or possibly two new Hall of Fame members. This time around all Oldham supporters young and old will be given the chance to have their say.

Detailed below are eight players that we think have the pedigree to deserve consideration but there will obviously be others. HAVE YOUR SAY! Simply fill in the form on page 21 and return it to the club. Remember those players listed are only suggestions and you can nominate any player you think deserves the honour. (The 8 existing members are listed on p3).



ABE ASHWORTH
(circa 1888-93)

Oldham started life as a rugby union club and in those days the England national team was selected on a truly national basis. Oldham only had one England international - Abe Ashworth - a forward who in 1882 was selected to play against the Irish in Manchester. Abe had joined the Oldham club from Mossley RU and

along with the signing went the promise of a 'new job'. As the code was strictly amateur and Abe was seen by RU to have 'bettered' himself he was for a time suspended from the sport! Larger than life Ashworth was one of the early characters of the game.



TERRY FLANAGAN
(1979-89)

At just 19 the ball playing loose forward became the youngest ever club captain. He led the side to the second division championship in 1982 and was a major influence in the club consolidating its position in the first division in the mid 80's. Represented GB at colt and under twenty four levels before winning the first of four full caps in

1983. Toured in 1984 and played a total of 281 first team games.

ALEX GIVVONS
(1933-93)

The 19 year old Newport scrum half arrived in Oldham in 1933 and is still here! Served the Oldham club for 60 years. One of the first coloured players to enter the world of rugby his speed and agility quickly made him a favourite with the Oldham crowd. His Oldham service was broken only by a short period with Huddersfield playing 241

first team games. Coached both first and second teams and later helped out the club as kit manager. Gained 6 Welsh caps and twice toured France with British representative sides. Alex opened the Oldham Hall of Fame in 1995.



HERMAN HILTON
(1913-25)

One of the greatest forwards ever to play for Oldham. A local man who played 7 times for GB and 3 for England. Toured in 1920 and scored 2 tries in the Ashes winning third test. Captained Oldham to their Challenge Cup final win against Hull KR in 1924. Played 253 first team matches.

Continued on page 21

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Bryn Day, Alan Davies, Bernard
Ganley, Derek Turner, Martin
Murphy, Terry Flanagan and Co.

121

An interview by Dave Roberts with Jason Clegg



spot on. We have had a lot more info than last season. Sometimes we go to Pilsworth to play bowls which is a good laugh. After the last home game we (or should I say 'they') went for a Chinese. I could not go as I had an engagement to go to.

What's it like being the fans' favourite?

I enjoy it but sometimes it's embarrassing. However the fans here are top class and very vocal, but I think I might be losing the title to Joey Hayes.

You have just moved house!

I have moved from my parents house and bought a cottage, but I still go back to my mum's to get my washing done as I have not got a washing machine yet. It's strange when my mum does my washing because it always comes back ironed and folded. She must have a good machine!

Tell me something amusing that has happened during a game.

The only thing that comes to mind is when we played at the Autoquest Stadium last season. Some Widnes fans were giving me a hard time and decided to shout Butch Dingle at me, but people can shout what they like, it never gets to me.

So what about today's game?

We need to show that it was no fluke winning at Widnes. We know it wasn't but we need to get a result against Dewsbury who, I suspect, are a little weaker than last season, but there is no way we will be underestimating them because they are still a very good side and if we win people should sit up and take notice because we are taking things very seriously here.

DAVE ROBERTS

A great result against Widnes Jason?

Yes! I felt confident on Friday that we could go and get a result. But if Widnes had got back into it and stolen two points it would have been a real bad result. It was the best result from the new Club so far.

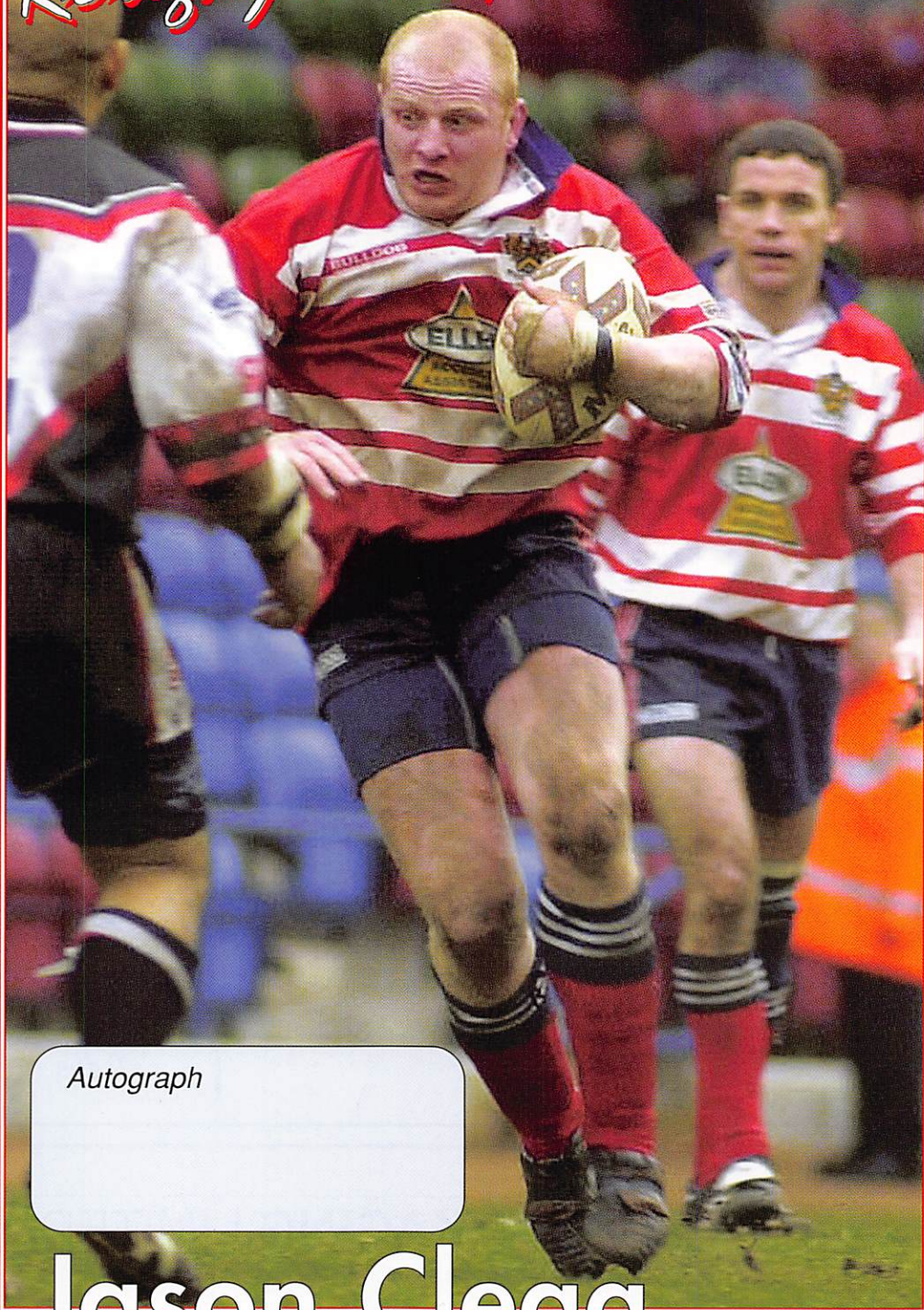
You picked up a knock in the second half?

I got a bang on my head and had to have four stitches, I wanted to stay on and finish the game. As for the stitches, I'm not bothered about needles and things, so it's no big deal.

How do you find Fordy's training programme?

He is very well organised. He should have been a school teacher, everything is

Roughyeds Spotlight



Autograph

Jason Clegg

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THE OLDHAM ELASTIC COMPANY

A Modern Day Fable

IF YOU LOOK on the higher ground above Huddersfield Road, you will find all that's left of the Oldham Elastic Company.

A low wall is now all that remains of its former structure, the demolition men having moved in and all but razed it to the ground. Nothing remains of its famous history.

In the late 1800s when cotton was king, a group of entrepreneurs discovered how to weave elastic into cotton fabric. This would require a more skilful workforce and overtime would have to be paid.

The Cotton Exchange barons and their union were shocked by this development and would not accept such payments were necessary, but the entrepreneurs were determined to go ahead and at a famous meeting in the Prince Albert Hotel it was decided that the workers would break away from the cotton union and, form the 'League of Elastic Workers'. Word spread around the North of England and companies in other towns also broke away, a breakaway which was to last for one hundred years.

Oldham Elastic prospered as news of the new fabric spread and many skilful cotton workers soon joined the company. Before the outbreak of the First World War orders came in from all over the world, especially Australia and New Zealand, for this modern fabric and Oldham Elastic won many major honours for their outstanding product. During the war some of the workers volunteered and fought in the great battles in France where unfortunately six of them lost their lives.

The twenties was a boom period for the company and many export awards were won especially in the years 1924-27 consecutively. (Best Elastic Product).

The workforce was again depleted at the onset of the Second World War and once again many workers volunteered their services for king and country.

The 1950s were great times for the Oldham Elastic Company; new products were sold, the workforce grew and made more money, exports increased and the company won many awards except for the elusive Queens Award for Industry, an award which eludes them to this day.

Alas some of the workforce were persuaded

to move to other companies, especially in Wakefield, and sales began to fall. The sixties was a forgettable decade for the company.

In 1970 the board were almost totally replaced and the new board was headed by the ex-chairman of Rochdale Elastics Ltd. Things then started to improve for the company, but only slowly.

In 1982 a new batch of eager young apprentices were employed, some of the best 'elastic' men from the North of England and these were to form the backbone of the workforce for ten years.

In 1988 a bold decision was taken to become a Public Limited Company (PLC) and shares were sold to the people of Oldham in order to purchase new machinery. This was duly done and for a time sales were brisk and the PLC were looking forward to reviving the successes of the '20s and '50s.

However in 1995 came the bombshell. The elasticated fabric industry was suffering throughout the North, and an Australian Elastic mogul bought out all the companies in Britain.

At first he insisted on 're-structuring', with companies having to merge - Oldham with Salford Stretchers, Widnes Waistcoats with Warrington Corsets etc. The public were furious and many demonstrations were held. Thankfully they had their way and there were no mergers.

After this the workers' paypackets doubled and trebled and new houses and cars were bought without any discernible improvement in production. Something had to snap!

The Oldham Elastic Company by now owed millions of pounds to its creditors and the decision was made to sell the factory to property developers. There was a public outcry, but the deed had to be done.

The factory was sold and was demolished with such indecent haste that ex-employees now feel a pang of remorse whenever they pass the site.

Today the question on everybody's lips is 'Can the company, just like elastic, spring back into its old shape?'

Well, we'd like to think so.

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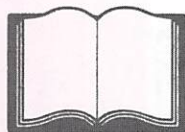
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Amateur Album

..... WATERSHEDDINGS WANDERERS



Watersheddings Wanderers 1999 – 2000

THE youngest club in membership of the Oldham Amateur League are Watersheddings Wanderers who were founded in 1994. The founder of the club was Jake Ashworth, one of the great characters of amateur rugby in this area. After a lengthy playing career involving various clubs, Jake enjoyed several coaching appointments, including a spell in the National Conference League, but when he found himself without a club he decided to set up his own. 'Various clubs declined my assistance', said Jake, 'And a number of players said they would play for me if I set up a club. So I did.'

Amongst the players recruited by Wanderers was John Stapleton, the former Swinton, Rochdale Hornets and Mansfield professional whose experience in the early days was a big help to the youngsters in the squad. Another famous player to appear briefly for the Wanderers was Geoff Munro, the utility player whose try scoring feats in the late 70s and early 80s were a feature of the Oldham professional club.

Wanderers, however, have unearthed several scoring sensations of their own during their short history. During 1997 they were involved in several high scoring matches. The Halifax based Lonsdale club twice suffered heavily at the hands of the Wanderers during that year. Watersheddings beat them 106-0 at Stoneleigh Park where John Kenway scored two tries and 12 goals and then in the away match, Wanderers again topped the century mark, winning 106-6 with Steve Ellsworth scoring five tries and 15 goals. Ellsworth claimed an even bigger haul during a 108-1 victory over Prospect Warriors, this time scoring seven tries and 14 goals, a Pennine League record. Later in the year centre Eddie Aspin scored six tries and eight goals when Prospect Warriors were again hammered, this time 86-0 in a Presidents Cup-tie.

Wanderers, currently in the fourth division of the Pennine League, play their home games at Stoneleigh Park, changing at Watersheddings School off Broadbent Road, and providing after match entertainment and refreshment at the Weavers Arms, Huddersfield Road. Landlord Tony Finan provides generous assistance and was involved in talks which led to the John Willie Lees Brewery sponsoring the playing kit for this season. The

loyalest club sponsor, though, has been Alex Haynes of Haynes Pies, Huddersfield Road, Waterhead, who provided the original playing kit, further items of playing gear and, this season, post protectors, equipment which, over the years, has cost a small fortune. Other Sponsors have also helped such as Ian South, butcher, of Chew Valley Road, Greenfield, so anyone interested in offering any assistance to the club should contact club secretary and hard working prop-forward Dave Hayes on 624 - 3027.

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
26th	Batley Bulldogs	A	W	18 - 11

MARCH

8th	Widnes Vikings	A	L	40 - 6
14th	KEIGHLEY COUGARS	H	W	34 - 12
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	
20th	LEIGH CENTURIONS	H	7.30	
27th	HUNSLET HAWKS	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			

Walkerbout

Continued
from page 14



SID LITTLE OBE
(1952-59)

Little came to Watersheddings in 1952 via the RAF, Harlequins, and Cumberland RU county side. The sort of player you would perhaps expect to see grace the pitch at Twickenham rather than Watersheddings. Nevertheless Sid, a tremendous running second rower, provided,

with Charlie Winslade, in the 50s the best back row in the business. The fabulous Oldham side of that period owed much to Little. Chosen 10 times for GB he would, if selected, join former team mates Alan Davies, John Etty, Bernard Ganley and Derek Turner in the Hall of Fame. A successful businessman in the Midlands he is currently recuperating from heart surgery. Played 249 first team games.

BOB SLOMAN
(1921-29)

This towering forward was enticed north in 1921 from Plymouth RU. For the next eight years he was an automatic selection in the second row. This was the most successful period of the club's history when it appeared in 4 consecutive Challenge Cup finals a record that stood until the 90s. He was the last Oldham skipper to hold the trophy aloft. One of only two Oldham players to be selected for two tours, Bob played 5 times for GB and 5 for England. Played 268 times for the club.



There are dozens more - Ike Southward, Mike Elliot, Kevin Taylor, Mike Ford, Terry Clawson, David Hobbs, Hugh Waddell, Dave Parker, Frank Pitchford, Ken Jackson, Terry O'Grady, Jack Read, Harry Ogden, Charlie Winslade, Bryn Goldswain, Sid Rix, Billy Hall, Dave Holland, Jim Lomas, Tiny Solomona, Ken Wilson, Arthur Lees, Jack Keith, Don Vines, George Smith, Len McIntyre, Alan Kellet, Bobby Lidner, Frank Foster, Johnny Noon etc. etc. Just let us have your choice!



FRANK STIRRUP
(1951-60)

Signed from Salford. A ball handling half back of such skill he was known throughout the sport as Mr Football. His sleight of hand exchanges particularly with out half Frank Daley became legendary at Watersheddings. Frank's introduction proved to be the turning point in the fortunes of the club.

Frank was the first Oldham captain to get his hands on a major trophy for over twenty years when he was presented with the Lancashire Cup following the 1956 victory over St Helens. Desperately unlucky not to represent his country Stirrup did, though, gain county honours. There have been very few players over the years who left such a lasting impression with the Oldham supporters.

ALF WOOD
(1908-20)

The most famous rugby match of all times was the 'Rorke's Drift' test held in 1914 at Sydney Cricket Ground. The series was at one each and in the Ashes decided the Lions were down to nine men but still managed to win 14-6. Alf Wood played the full game with a broken nose. Oldham had two other players in that monumental match, Billy Hall and Dave Holland. Alf, already an England RU international, joined the club from Newton Abbot RU and was selected for the 1914 and 1920 tours. At the commencement of the 1920 tour Wood was 36, still a record age for a tourist.



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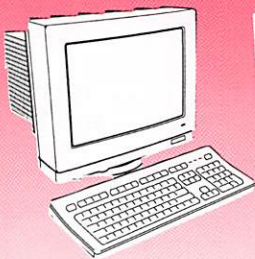
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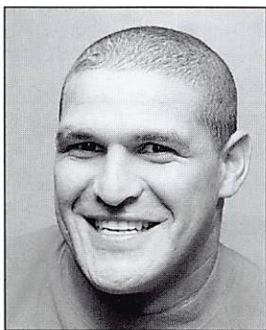
With Simon Winnard

A LETTER to last week's Rugby Leaguer raised an interesting point. Last season, a critical analysis of Rugby League was carried out by the powers that be. Mergers were once again on the agenda and financial carrots dangled which eventually saw the much maligned departure of Sheffield and Gateshead. A new, trimmer, meaner and more competitive Super League was heralded. Future tough decisions were promised, strict benchmarks to be set for the remaining clubs from which the game was set to build on and move forward into the 21st century . . . it almost sounds too good to be true!

Those proposals stated that every club must apply for a Super League 2002 franchise by the deadline of March 31st 2000. Indeed, some months ago, SLE, representatives went to great lengths to assure us all that the minimum criteria were being formulated ready for publication. This was intended to not only keep the paying public fully informed but also allow clubs the time to prepare their franchise bids for the deadline. However, like so many grand promises, these criteria have simply not materialised. Will we, therefore, have a frantic next twelve days, have an even trimmer Super League in 2002, or have we conveniently moved the goal posts once again when it suits?

Perhaps SLE should take a leaf out of the NFP and, more specifically, Gateshead Thunder's book who have finalised their application to enter next season's NFP two months in advance of their May deadline.

✧ ✧ ✧
Closer to home, we have seen the departure of back row forward Tom O'Reilly back down under in similar ill-fated circumstances to those of Josh Bostock last season. Whilst we wish him a speedy recovery, Mike Ford's attentions have now been firmly fixed on



Tom O'Reilly

an area which was already causing some concern prior to this latest setback.

The decisive move to sign Shayne McMenemy looks an inspired one from what I have seen of the player so far this season. Rochdale's loss I'm sure will prove to be Oldham's gain as the Australian has no shortage of power, pace and the ability to offload in the tackle. He particularly impressed me during the Law Cup final where, alongside Dane Dorahy, he excelled from within a mediocre Hornets team performance. Today will likely see his home debut and we wish him well.

It was so refreshing to witness the Oldham performance in the Lancashire Lynx game. Not only was it the first time since the Roughyeds' rebirth that we have controlled a game from start to finish against league opposition, but the result was never in doubt and the team stuck to a disciplined game plan despite the 'throw it out wide on the first tackle' brigade.

I love to see an exciting and expansive game as much as the next man, but there is a time and a place for it and that's not on the first tackle and close to your own line. Indeed, there have been times when the undoubted speed and talent of Messrs. Hayes and Sibson could have been utilised more. However there has been some unwarranted criticism and particularly that directed at Mike Ford. Mike didn't have the best of games as a player and he'd be the first to admit it. However, his presence on the pitch gives Oldham direction and purpose and his efforts for the club this season deserve better than that.

Last season we were struggling to even compete with the likes of Lancashire Lynx and now a 50-8 victory isn't good enough? . . . Please, lets put this into some form of reasonable perspective. What's more, adopting good habits in Rugby League in the easier games leads to improved performances against a better standard of opposition . . . and what a fantastic result against Widnes last week with a great individual performance from Mike Ford. What a difference a week makes or should that be a year . . . remember our visit to Widnes last season?

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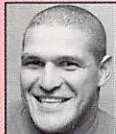
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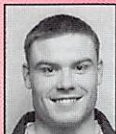
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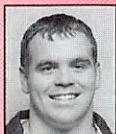
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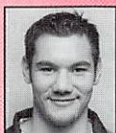
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Club Call

Leisure Tops. So watch this space for further details.

'ELITE' CLUB

A big Thank You to all supporters who have joined our new membership scheme the 'Elite'. By the time you are reading this the result of the draw for the VIP day for two at the Hunslet Hawks game will be known. Well Done to the winners!! There is no deadline for joining the 'Elite'. Membership costs £15 and there are numerous benefits to be had . . . not least the fact that you are helping YOUR Club. *For further details please contact the Club.*

AWAY MATCH TRAVEL

The Club is organising travel to away matches this season. We are using Barlows Coaches and you can either book directly through the Club on 0161 628 3677 between 9 and 5pm Monday to Friday (or on 0161 627 2141 9-1pm Saturdays) or phone Joyce Pilkington on 0161 665 3175. 'Elite' Club members receive extra discounts on away travel. So there is no excuse for not being part of the 'Roughyeds Barmy Army!'

'SCRUFFY HOUGHY SUPERDAD!'

A belated congratulations to John and Louise Hough on the safe arrival of their baby son Joseph. Everybody at the Club hopes both Mother and Baby are doing well. Let's hope our scouts keep an eye on Hough Jnr, if he's half as good as his Dad we'll have another good 'un!

Until next time, Enjoy your Rugby.

Scott

A WARM welcome to Boundary Park to all supporters. It seems a long time since I had the opportunity to update you with what is happening in and around the Club. Recent events seemed to be turning against us . . . that was until Widnes! What a tremendous performance by Mike and the boys! I wasn't nervous in the last five minutes – honest!

PLAYER SPONSORSHIP

As you may be aware we try to get all our players sponsored at the start of the season. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Alan Butterworth of Shaw Finance Company and Mr Neil Haughton of Moorside Electrical Contractors. They sponsored Messrs. Moseley and O'Reilly and have been very understanding in the difficulties we have had with these players. They have now kindly agreed to sponsor Warren Barrow and Shayne McMenemy.

Whilst we are on the subject of player sponsorship we are looking for a sponsor for young prop Lee Doran our recent signing. *Anyone interested please contact me at the Club on 0161 628 3677.*

MATCH VIDEOS / CLUB SHOP

All match videos can be ordered in the Shop for the very reasonable price of £9.99. The Widnes match seems to be very popular!! The Club Shop will also be receiving some new merchandise in the next few weeks. Included will be Jackets, Fleecees, Polo shirts and other

SUPPORTERS CLUB

Hi Folks,

We would like to thank you all for the support you gave us last season.

As you will know we carried out a survey regarding the nature of the Supporters Club for 2000 and beyond. The result of this survey will be announced and discussed at a meeting to be held

THIS TUESDAY, 21ST MARCH IN THE CLAYTON ARMS beginning at 7.00pm. Everyone with the interests of Oldham Roughyeds at heart is invited to attend and put their point of view.

Further details, if required, from David Patterson on **0161 345 8566**.

NEIL GIBBISON

—B.D.S., V.U. Manc—

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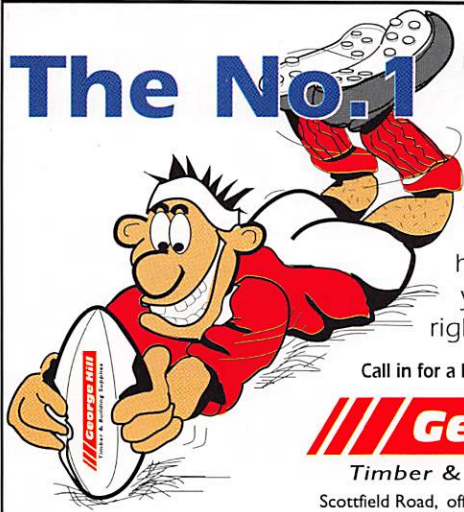
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'THE DON'



ON THIS DAY

DON YATES LOOKS BACK TO MARCH 19TH YESTERYEAR.

THIS afternoon Dewsbury will be making their first ever visit to this stadium although, of course, they have visited Oldham on many occasions when the Roughyeds were stationed at Watersheddings.

They have also visited a few other grounds which are now housing estates. For example, ninety-six years ago, on Saturday 19th March 1904, Dewsbury appeared at the Moss Lane ground at Morecambe who then had a team in the league. It was a successful trip to the seaside for Dewsbury who won that match 18-5.

Eight other now defunct league clubs were in action that afternoon, Saturday 19th March 1904. South Shields lost 6-0 at Rochdale, Birkenhead beat York 5-0, Brighouse Rangers won 11-6 at Lancaster and Broughton Rangers beat Runcorn 11-0. In the Challenge Cup, Pontefract knocked out Batley 9-3 but Holbeck's cup interest ended at Bradford where they lost 9-0.

Another rugby league facet which has long since disappeared is the staging of tour trials, matches involving teams of players who were under consideration for selection on a Lions tour later in the year. On Wednesday 19th March 1958 one such tour trial was staged at Headingley where the 'Greens' defeated the 'Whites' 41-18. Oldham centre Denis Ayres was a try scorer for the 'Greens' and another Roughyed involved in that match was 'Whites' second-row forward Charlie Winslade.

Unfortunately neither player was chosen for that 1958 Australasian tour. Saturday 19th March 1955 was a significant day in the career of Robert Jennings. That day Jennings made his Oldham debut when he was hooker in the Roughyeds' team which defeated Widnes 36-2 at Watersheddings. Despite scoring a try in that match Jennings

never played another first team match for Oldham.

Goal kicking stand-off Chris Wilkinson played thirteen matches for Oldham and he also played 55 games for Dewsbury. At one time Wilkinson held the Dewsbury Club record for goals landed in one match, ten against Huddersfield. On Sunday 19th March 1989 Wilkinson got some practice in for his record breaking feat when he landed eight goals in Dewsbury's 48-8 Second Division victory at Runcorn Highfield.

On that same afternoon, Sunday 19th March 1989, Oldham entertained Wakefield Trinity in a First Division match. At stand-off for Oldham that day was current player-coach Mike Ford during his first spell with the club. Ford was a try scorer as Oldham went on to beat Trinity 24-8.

Saturday 19th March 1932 was another disappointing afternoon for Wakefield Trinity. That day they were beaten 7-4 by Swinton at Rochdale in the semi-final of the Challenge Cup. In those days semi-final ties were played simultaneously, although the other semi-final that year ended indecisively with Halifax and Leeds drawing 2-2 at Huddersfield. Over 53,000 spectators attended those two ties with 21,273 at Rochdale and 31,818 at Huddersfield.

With Dewsbury enjoying a successful season, the Roughyeds will be hoping for a bumper gate this afternoon. However, it is unlikely to approach the 18,500 crowd, a ground record, which was attracted to the Recreation Ground, Whitehaven 40 years ago, on Saturday 19th March 1960. That day Whitehaven met Wakefield Trinity in the quarter-final of the Challenge Cup, a tie which Trinity won 21-10. There were three former Oldham players in the Wakefield line-up that afternoon, winger John Etty, second-row forward Don Vines and loose-forward Derek Turner who crossed for a couple of tries.

Fixtures

Date	Opponent	Result	Att
DECEMBER			
		F - A	
12	ROCHDALE H (LAW CUP)	W 30-18	1,204
27	ROCHDALE HORNETS	W 23-20	3,562
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	W 50-8	1,522
12	Widnes Vikings	W 20-31	3,300
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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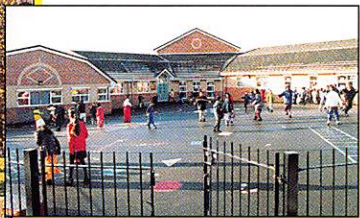
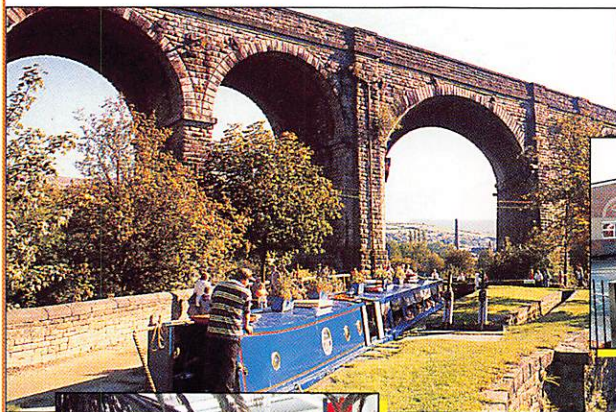
Programme

Mr Ron Williams
Happy 60th Birthday
From all friends and family

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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 
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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.



TODAY'S TEAMS



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Anthony GIBBONS

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Joe McNICHOLAS

David GIBBONS

Mike FORD

Jason CLEGG

John HOUGH

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Mark CAMPBELL

Leo CASEY

Wes ROGERS

Ian SINFIELD

Danny GUEST

DEWSBURY RAMS

Coach NEIL KELLY

Nathan GRAHAM

Richard BAKER

Gavin WOOD

Dan POTTER

Adrian FLYNN

David MYCOE

Barry EATON

Matthew LONG

Ian TALBOT

Robin JOWITT

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Sean RICHARDSON

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