

leigh centurions



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a word from the chair

I hope you all had a good Christmas and are ready for a New Year which should be the most exciting for some time.

Today's opponents ambitious Oldham who were priced out of Boundary Park and forced to play at a ground which stretches the imagination of the Double Standards Committee will be there or thereabouts come the end of the season as will full timers Huddersfield with their Super League parachute payment safely in the bank.

To be fair to Oldham they have turned adversity to opportunity and secured a sponsorship from Oldham Council to help them over a difficult period and it is encouraging to see such support from the Council for a community based club like the Roughyeds.

Whilst I'm on the subject I would like to thank Wigan Borough Council for their support of our club over the past couple of years and I hope that the town may soon see the fruits of their efforts in the shape of a new stadium.

As I write these notes we do not know the outcome of the Boxing Day game at Swinton which if we have won will see us still at the head of the League table.

Oldham are a side which Paul Terzis and the players will treat with the utmost respect and a tough game is in prospect in front of what should be a decent crowd.

On that point both of our home games have attracted the biggest gates in the NFP to date and I thank you for your support without which the club would be worthless.

Enjoy the game

Mascots

Liam Bretherton

Age: 10

School: Sacred Heart

Favourite Players: Neil Turley and Liam Bretherton

(see back page for the other mascot)



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MATCH RECORDS Goals: 15 by Mick Stacey v Doncaster 28/3/76
Tries: 6 by Jack Wood v York 4/10/47 & Neil Turley v Workington 31/1/01 Points: 38 by John Woods v Ryedale York 12/1/92 • **WORLD RECORD** Tries in a season by a Full Back: 55 by Neil Turley 2000-01 • **SEASON RECORDS** Goals: 173 by Chris Johnson 1985-88 Tries: 55 by Neil Turley 2000-01 Points: 400 by Chris Johnson 1985-88 • **CAREER RECORDS** Goals: 1,043 by Jim Ledgard 1948-58 Tries: 189 by Mick Martyn 1954-67: Points: 2,492 by John Woods 1976-85, 1990-92 **RECORD APPEARANCES** 503 by Albert Worrall 1921-35, 1936-38 **BIGGEST WIN** 92-2 v Keighley 30/4/86 **HIGHEST ATTENDANCE** 31,224 v St Helens 14/3/53

LEIGH CENTURIONS CLUB OFFICIALS

Hon. Life President: Mr T Sale

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Chairman: Mr Mike Nolan

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The views expressed in this programme are not necessarily those of Leigh Centurions RLFC or the Directors

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action replay

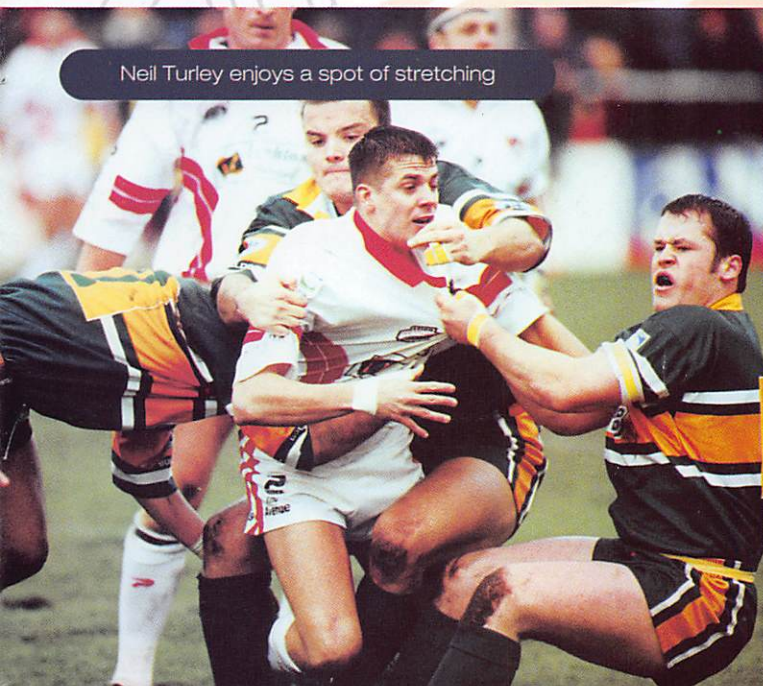
Centurions 68 Hunslet 12

NFP 16th December 2001

The Centurions came to life against a young, inexperienced and depleted Hawks. Simon Svabic returned after knee surgery and looked so much fitter than last season. Paul

Norman and Rob Ball impressed down the middle. Newcomers Andrew Isherwood and Mark McCully had highly promising games. Leigh played some exciting rugby in running in 13 tries before Hunslet, to their credit, came back with two tries in the final stages.

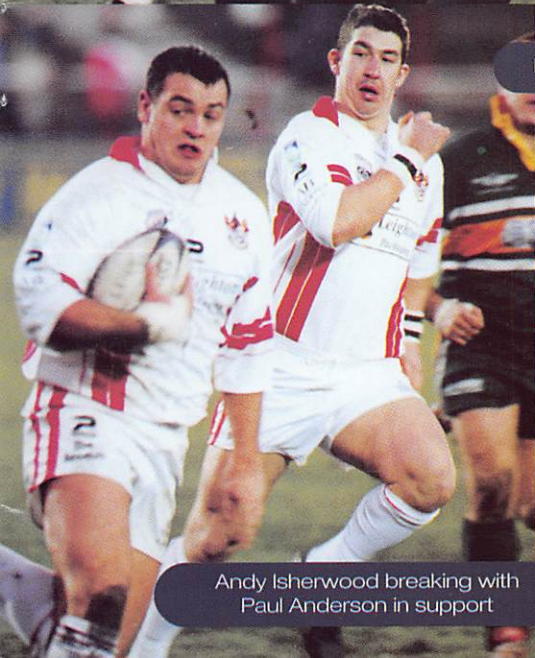
Neil Turley enjoys a spot of stretching



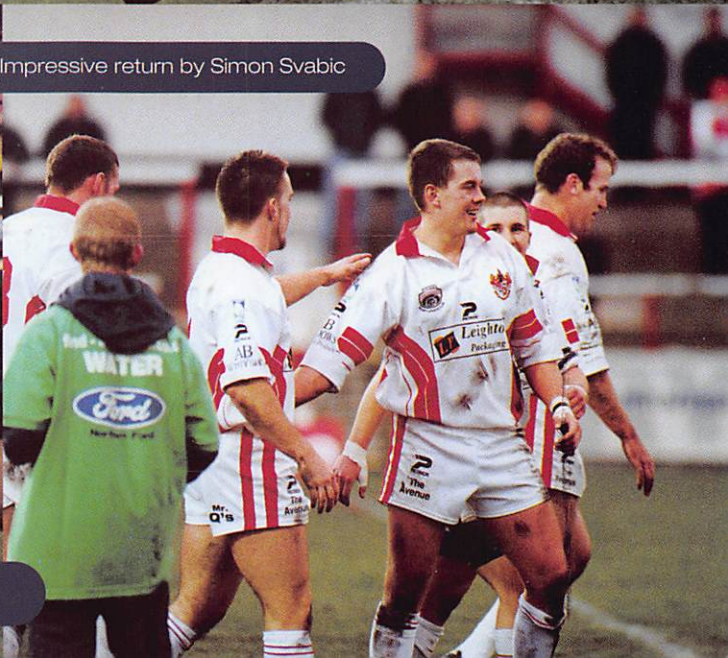
Another break from Jon Roper



Impressive return by Simon Svabic



Andy Isherwood breaking with Paul Anderson in support



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our visitors

Oldham

Good afternoon and welcome to all players, officials and supporters of the Oldham Roughyeds. It has been an eventful twelve months for Chris Hamilton, Mike Ford and his troops.

The year began in splendid fashion and the regular season ended with Oldham comfortably in the play-offs. Following victories over Rochdale, and ourselves, Oldham qualified for the Grand Final, but that elation soon turned to despair when they lost to Widnes when it counted.

The last couple of months have been very unsettling, once more evicted from Boundary Park after talks broke down between the football and rugby club following Oldham Athletics' insistence on a substantial rent increase per game.

Things looked to be improving for Oldham when they agreed to rent Ashton United's ground but ill fate struck once more on the eve of their opening NFP game with Swinton. Local Authorities and Emergency service officials ruled the 3,000 capacity stadium unsafe to hold a rugby game.

With that clash postponed, Oldham started their NFP campaign in earnest on the 16th December with defeat at Hull KR. Despite their preparation being hit by off-field matters Oldham trailed 4-3 at half-time and led 9-4 before a late show from Hull KR took the points.

Armed with a list of work to be completed by Christmas, at the time of going to press Oldham were hopeful that their clash with Rochdale, scheduled for 23rd December, would go ahead.

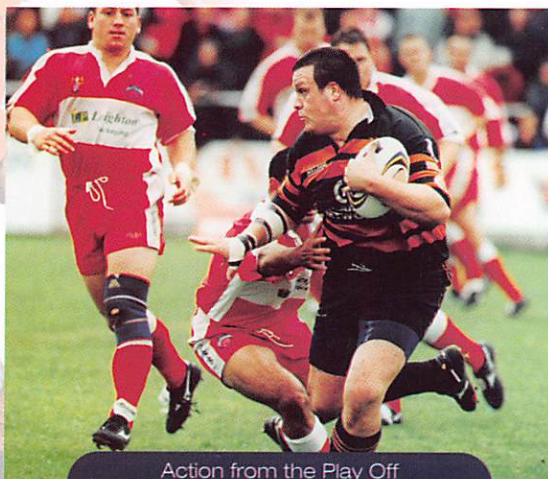
Boosted by a record sponsorship of a reported £60,000 from Oldham Borough Council, the Roughyeds have added a blend of experience and youth to their squad this season recruiting youngsters John Braddish, Will Cowell and John Goddard in addition to elder statesmen Simon Knox and Tommy Hodgkinson, both of whom were talked about as potential Leigh signings.

Other links between Leigh and the current

set-up at Oldham include two members of their coaching staff. In the week prior to their season opener, one-time Leigh scrum-half Ford named John Henderson as his assistant and Mark Knight as his Alliance coach as the Roughyeds also confirmed their intention to retain an under-21 reserve grade.

Now 38, John Henderson played in that speedy Leigh three-quarter line of the early-to-mid 1980's and scored many tries, (please see page 21 for more about the centre) Mark Knight was a less heralded signing, joining Leigh on a loan deal from Warrington in January 1988. He played a total of 10 games and made his debut against Keighley in a season where Leigh swept to the Second Division Championship.

If they can reproduce that form from last season, Oldham will once again prove to be a worthy contender for the Northern Ford Premiership.



Action from the Play Off
Semi Final on 8th July 2001



Oldham Pen Pics

Gareth Barber

20 year old Oldham-born stand-off who was reared on Rugby with his best pal, the Leeds and Great Britain forward Kevin Sinfield. When Sinfield signed for Rhinos, Barber signed for Warrington, but returned 'home' to Oldham before the start of last season. Seven Roughyeds first team appearances behind him. Played for the NFP under-21's at Widnes in the autumn.

Joe McNicholas

One of the original 1997 Roughyeds, wingman Joe made a first-team spot his own midway through last season and went on to score eight tries in 14 consecutive appearances. Fast off the mark and good on his feet.

Danny Guest

Another of the Roughyeds 'originals' who returned to the club two seasons ago. A big prop, he is expected to be a force in the NFP this season after signing a new one year deal.

John Hough

The first player to sign for his home-town club when the new Roughyeds were formed by Chris Hamilton and his fellow directors in the autumns of 1997. Before the start of last season, he had played in 87 of the club's 90 matches and had scored 32 tries, a phenomenal record for a hooker. He didn't enjoy one of his better seasons in 2001, but a change of job, and less travelling, should see him back at his best in 2002.

Jason Clegg

Second biggest forward at the club, behind Guest, Jason is a former Bradford (Northern, not Bulls) forward, who has had four good seasons with Oldham. Powerful on the break he is a people's favourite, who regularly picks up Junior Roughyeds player-of-the-year awards.

Anthony Gibbons

Formed a reliable centre partnership last season with goal-kicking Pat Rich, who has now left the club to go on a 12 months world tour. Looks certain to be first-choice centre again, although he will miss the first two league games of the new campaign because of suspension.

David Gibbons

Anthony's twin. The brothers have moved around together throughout their rugby league careers with Leeds, Bramley and now Oldham. Vice captain

last season, stand-off David has been appointed one of Two Oldham captains this term (now that's a turn up for the books) and is sure to be one of coach Mike Ford's leading lights.

Mark Sibson

Quick full-back who loves nothing better than to attack from deep. Joined Oldham on a two-year contract when he left Bramley at the same time as boss Mike Ford, the Gibbons boys and Andy Proctor and has recently signed a new one-year deal.

Phil Farrell

The 'other' Oldham captain in a new move that Ford believes will work well to the benefit of the entire squad. Phil, younger brother of Wigan and GB ace Andy Farrell, didn't miss a match last season and, in his two seasons with the Roughyeds, has a remarkable record of consistency.

Neil Roden

A clever half-back who joined Oldham from Wigan, with Farrell, a season and a half ago. Has only missed a couple of games since. Can play stand-off or scrum-half and was a key figure in Oldham's run through to the NFP Grand Final last summer. A knee injury kept him out of the pre-season warm-up games, but he is sure to be a regular performer in the long and testing 2002 campaign.

Bryan Henare

Joined Oldham midway through last season from St. Helens on loan. A kiwi back-rower who has played for Auckland Warriors, Henare played a prominent role in Oldham's surge to the Grand Final in July 2001, before signing permanently for the club for 2002 on a one-year contract.

Simon Knox

One of a handful of new recruits for 2002, Simon made his name with Bradford Bulls and Widnes Vikings before signing for the Roughyeds in September. He was an outstanding player for Widnes against Oldham in the Grand Final at Spotland last July and it was soon after the final that Mike Ford started the overtures to sign him.

Keith Brennan

A versatile half-back or hooker, local lad Keith shot to prominence last season when his form was so good that, for a time, he kept John Hough out of the No 9 shirt. A natural footballer with good hands, he damaged a hamstring in the pre-season Law Cup game with Rochdale and is unlikely to be ready for a few more weeks yet.



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from the air-waves

2001 – How was it for you? By Trevor Hunt of BBC GMR

Well here we are already, the end of yet another mammoth 52 week season of Rugby League that has seen every player, official and supporter hit both peaks and troughs as we have headed from year beginning to year end.

In January of last year we had just kicked off the Northern Ford Premiership season, and here in December we are into our fifth round of games for a mammoth new season of ten months. This time last year we suspected that there may be a different format for the NFP come the following Christmas, but we never expected such a marathon to lie ahead of us.

But never the less we can reflect on another marvellous year of rugby League and the highlights therein. So what were they for you?

Who can forget that incredible 20-18 World Club Challenge victory for St.Helens over the mighty Brisbane Broncos at Bolton's Reebok Stadium, it may have snowed , but Ian Millward's boys made it too hot for the Broncos with Paul Sculthorpe giving every indication even then that he was going to be a leading candidate for the Man of Steel. Afterwards Anthony Sullivan said on BBC GMR's Thursday Night Rugby League Hour, " If Wendell (Sailor) thinks it was cold at the Reebok, wait till he starts playing Union on the wing, then he will find what cold is really like!"

Leigh beat Salford in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup, but then lost to Warrington, but by the end of April, Saints were looking to add the Challenge Cup to the World Cup Championship and the Super League title that they had won the previous October. The Final was at Twickenham, it howled down, and the fans got wet at a stadium that was too far out of the capital. I don't care if I never visit there again. Saints fans were happy though , they had the Cup in their grasp with a 13-6 win over Bradford Bulls in which Leigh lad , Tommy Martyn grabbed a try and a drop goal.

In the NFP , Leigh were sailing away with the Minor Premiership, finishing ten points clear of their nearest rivals and taking the Trans Pennine Cup with a 36-0 thrashing of Keighley at Cougar Park. Neil Turley was on his way to a world record breaking 56 tries in the season that included a touchdown in the first Origin Series game as Lancashire beat Yorkshire 36-24 at Headingley. It was great game, a great night and hopefully the first of some meaningful clashes that will aid our

development of our International players.

But when it came to play-off time in the NFP, Leigh had shot their bolt to early and defeats at home to Oldham and then Widnes stunned their expectant fans. It was Widnes that then went on to win the NFP Grand Final 24-14, and Coach Neil Kelly, who had led Dewsbury to the previous two Grand Finals was to crown a remarkable season that had seen him take over from David Hulme by transforming the Vikings from a tenth placed team to one headed to Super League.

In the Super League play-offs big spending Wigan Warriors finally laid the St.Helens bogey to rest and went head to head with Minor Premiers Bradford Bulls. But the Warriors had no answer to the charging Bulls and crashed to a record 37-6 success in front of 60,164 fans at Old Trafford. Then the Aussies were coming,! Or rather then they weren't following the horrendous events in New York on September 11th. But thanks to a lot of work from Greg McCallum and Maurice Lindsay, the Kangaroos finally hopped on a plane and arrived for a three match Test series, that once again restored faith in International Rugby League and the Battle for the Ashes.

Yes the Lions won the first Test, yes we were hammered in the second, but the third was a full bloodied Test in every sense of the word , a classic that eventually just went the Aussies way. Of course I realise that always seems to happen, but we were within ten minutes maybe of an historic win, if only we could have made more of those Keith Senior breaks.

And then the NFP kicked off again with Leigh beating Barrow, to go almost full circle.

The League Express Rugby League 2001-2002 has all the details on everything I have mentioned above , and so much more including all the teams in all the fixtures of Super League, the NFP and anything else you care to mention. It is a must for any Rugby League fan, and if you have any money left after the Christmas excesses, then spend it on this . At £14.99 it is real snip.

Which leaves me to wish everyone a Happy New Year for 2002, and remind you that you can follow Leigh's fortunes on BBC GMR on Sunday afternoons (phone in Number 0161 228 2255) and the Thursday Evening Rugby League Hour, between 7.00pm and 8.00pm. Happy Listening.

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information

Today's Fixtures

Chorley Lynx	v Batley Bulldogs
Gateshead Thunder	v Whitehaven
Leigh Centurions	v Oldham

Monday 31st December Fixtures

Workington Town	v Barrow Border Raiders
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Tuesday 1st January Fixtures

Dewsbury Rams	v Hunslet Hawks
Doncaster Dragons	v Featherstone Rovers
Huddersfield Giants	v Keighley Cougars
York	v Swinton Lions

Directions to Rochdale (Spotland) on 13/01/02

M62 Jct 20, A627(M) to Rochdale. Bear left at first roundabout. At next roundabout take second turn off (B6452)

along Roch Valley Way. Cross B6222. Road becomes Sandy Lane. Ground on the right.



Heath Cruickshank

former Leigh favourite has had his appeal for a work permit turned down by the Home Office. He had just moved from Saints to Huddersfield - the problem being the small number of Super League games he played last season. Ironically if he had played one more season he would have come off the overseas quota.

Programme please note this programme went to the Printers on 18/12/01

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from my point of view ... Paul Terzis

IT was good to go into the Christmas programme of games at the top of the table but to be honest we're not worrying about league positions at this stage. Our main concern is improving on our performances week by week and if we do that the results will follow.

As these notes were written before the Boxing Day game at Swinton, I can only comment on the first three games. In two of those - Barrow and Batley - there were periods of the game where we struggled for consistency but I think anyone who saw the Hunslet game would accept that we were back to something like our best. We scored some great tries that day but I know just how much more improvement we've got left in us.

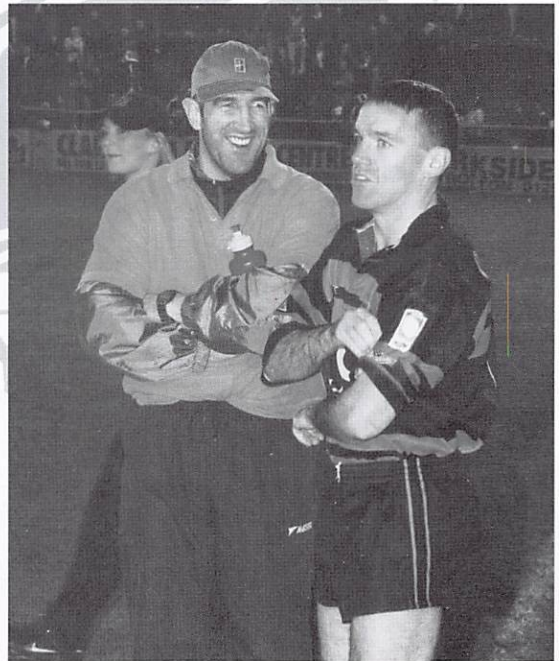
I'm very happy with the way the squad is developing and it was good to see a couple of the new players, Jon Roper and Mark McCulley, performing so well. I knew they were good players when we signed them, now the fans are starting to see it as well.

I know all the squad is looking forward to locking horns with our old friends from Oldham today. They seem to have got a bit of a jinx on us over the past few months, beating us in last season's play-offs and in the pre-season trial game earlier this month. I fully expect Oldham to be there or thereabouts again at the end of the season but their delayed start to the season won't have helped them. You can train and practice for hours on end but it's only in match situations that players are put under pressure.

But make no mistake, Oldham will be up there at the end.

Finally all that's left for me to say is, on behalf of all the players and backroom staff, to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

Don't forget to join me and the players in the Mick Martyn Bar after the game for the Man of the match awards. See you there.



Oldham coach Mike Ford



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facts and figures

Date	Match	Score	Attendance	Goals	Assists	Yellow Cards	Red Cards	Substitutes	Penalties	Set Pieces	Other
02/12/01	Barrow Border Raiders	30-12	2843	10	3	3					
09/12/01	Batley Bulldogs	22-11	1114	2	1	1					
16/12/01	Hunslet Hawks	68-12	2293	10	4	4					
26/12/01	Swinton Lions										
30/12/01	Oldham										
06/01/02	Hull Kingston Rovers										
13/01/02	Rochdale Hornets										
27/01/02	Challenge Cup										
03/02/02	York Wasps										
10/02/02	Challenge Cup										
17/02/02	Dewsbury Rams										
24/02/02	Challenge Cup										
03/03/02	Chorley Lynx										
10/03/02	Workington Town										
17/03/02	Gateshead Thunder										
24/03/02	Huddersfield										
29/03/02	Swinton Lions (NLC)										
07/04/02	Workington Town (NLC)										
14/04/01	Whitehaven (NLC)										
21/04/02	Chorley Lynx (NLC)										
05/05/02	Barrow Border Raiders (NLC)										
12/05/01	OF (NLC)										
19/05/02	SF (NLC)										
26/05/02	Final (NLC)										
02/06/02	Doncaster Dragons										
09/06/02	Sheffield Eagles										
16/06/02	Featherstone Rovers										
23/06/02	Keighley Cougars										
30/06/02	Whitehaven										
07/07/02	Oldham										
14/07/02	Whitehaven										
21/07/02	Hull Kingston Rovers										
28/07/02	Workington Town										
04/08/02	Featherstone Rovers										
11/08/02	Chorley Lynx										
18/08/02	Barrow Border Raiders										
25/08/02	Hunslet Hawks										
01/09/02	Swinton Lions										
08/09/02	Dewsbury Rams										
	Play Offs										

Key

A number on its own refers to position (i.e. 1 = Fullback etc.).

A number followed by "T" is the numbers of tries scored by the player during the match.

A number followed by "G" is the numbers of goals scored by the player and "DG" is for drop goals.

For example: Against Barrow, Jon Roper played number 4 and scored 1 try

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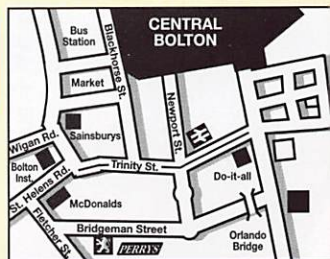
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onside/offside

with Dave Parkinson

Good afternoon and welcome to Hilton Park for the last game of 2001. I see everyone has made it back after the festivities and the short Boxing Day trip to Gigg Lane.

It's been an interesting year and one that will stick in the memory of Leigh fans for right and wrong reasons. Here is a short Onside / Offside review of 2001:

2001 began with a bang when Leigh blasted Swinton 46-4 on New Years Day. The Centurions led 34-0 at halftime and the crowd were treated to 22 minutes of superb rugby and a breath-taking team try finished by Alan Hadcroft.

By the end of January Leigh were on top of their game and Neil Turley was well away in the try scoring charts, helped by a 6-try haul against travelling Workington Town.

February saw the club gain further respect when a crowd of some 5,500 and a watching TV audience of around 1.5M were on hand to see the Centurions defeat the odds to dump big-spending Salford out of the Challenge Cup on a muddy Hilton Park. Two weeks later, the Centurions were at it again and it was only a late show from Warrington's Alan Langer that secured a 20-10 victory for the Wolves.

By March Leigh held onto top spot in the Northern Ford Premiership but Doncaster proved that the Centurions were human, grabbing a deserved victory in the final minutes of a compelling game at Belle Vue.

April began in cracking fashion and continued over the Easter period with Leigh beating Widnes 26-22 in a thriller, then Swinton comfortably. The way the month ended however, left a sour taste and maybe underlined some weakness in the Centurions game as they threw away a twenty point half-time lead to win by just six points.

May saw Leigh firmly get things back on track with convincing home wins posted against Hull KR, Hunslet and Whitehaven. Leigh lifted the Minor Premiership and then the Trans-Pennine Cup with a crushing 36-0 win at crisis-torn Keighley.

With the league title sewn up by June Leigh looked like a side going through the motions until the play-offs. A narrow win at Workington was followed by a 36-4 battering at the hands of Rochdale. Despite remaining calm throughout there were questions being asked of the Centurion's credentials.

July started in enjoyable fashion with a summer romp over York. Retiring legend Tim Street showed his kicking abilities by shooting four goals as Leigh wracked up an 84-1 victory. Then came the hard part as the play-offs finally arrived. The expectation was huge, but it was Oldham who rose to the occasion, winning by a single point with a workman-like performance. Leigh then went on to defeat Featherstone, setting up an intriguing semi-final clash between the Centurions and Widnes.

After dominating the opening half, Leigh led 12-4 but Widnes struck back to eventually take the game 26-18. It was an upsetting time as a team that had done so well faltered on the home straight.

While there was disappointment in first grade, the clubs second string played out a superb Grand Final, overcoming a seven-point deficit to defeat Widnes 19-13 away from home. Leigh Academy also got into their stride.

August saw the Academy take centre stage and they finished their league campaign with just two defeats in 18 games.

For the second successive September, play-offs beckoned for Leigh's youngsters and they qualified for their second final. That game proved to be a superb advert for Academy rugby, but unfortunately, after leading for much of the game, Featherstone hit back to take the crown.

October saw the scrapping of Under-21 Alliance sides and Leigh released most of the members of their Grand- Final winning squad, in addition to a string of First team regulars. Paul Terzis began the task of assembling this season's squad and after several weeks of training, they played a testimonial game against Oldham in November.

NFP 2001/2002 kicked off in December and Leigh included hero Paul Rowley after a seven year absence, winning their first two games in the competition.

So that was 2001 in a nutshell. Let's all hope that 2002 can be equally as memorable, (I'm sure it will be). All that remains for me to say is Happy New Year, and I thought it pretty apt to sign off with that famous song....

"Should auld acquaintance be forgot, And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot, And auld lang syne!"

Leigh Independant Supporters Association

Well its only days to the New Year and hopefully we all survived the Christmas in a fit state to enjoy a good match this afternoon. Today's match is against the side we were defeated by at the end of last Season and I'm sure Paul Terzis will get it right today. Hopefully we should soon be seeing our new signing Vila Matautia in action. Vila should add a lot of experience with his size and power to an already impressive Pack.

season ticket or a weekend away.

Finally enjoy the match and lets all have a happy New Year.



The LISA squad which hammered the club 1st team in a pre-season game of Touch and Pass. Young Nolan (front row, 3rd from left) showed promise before being substituted in the 2nd minute.

On the LISA front the calendars have been selling well and we have already raised a sizeable chunk of the £5,000 we promised the club to support Vila's contract. If you haven't seen one yet make sure you pick one up before it's too late. Before the next home game against Rochdale on the 13th January a band of walkers will set off from Tyldesley in the hope of raising even more money and also helping to lose a few pounds from Christmas. Please keep an eye out for them.

The Proposed New Years Eve draw has been postponed for the time being due to Printing deadlines and also a couple of small Legal issues. But these will be ironed out in the next couple of days so keep an eye out the chance to win a

old leythers

John Henderson

With thanks to Leigh Past Players Association)

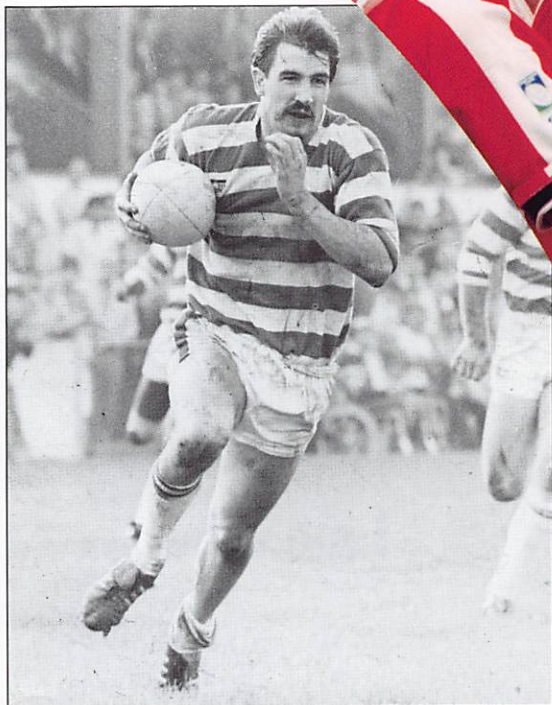
Today we welcome John Henderson to town and congratulate him on his re-appointment as Assistant Coach of the Oldham club.

38-year old John was a speedy and exciting centre who played much of his junior rugby with Saddleworth, from where he came to Leigh's attention in 1982. Then coach Colin Clarke invited Henderson down to Hilton Park and he went on to make his Debut in a thrilling 19-19 with St Helens draw before a home crowd nearing 5,500.

On his debut season Henderson played in 27 games, scoring 5 tries, and he went on to become a regular in the side. It was only after Leigh were relegated in 1985 that he started crossing the try line with more regularity and as the team romped in for a record number of points the following season, Henderson ran in 31 tries.

As Leigh returned to the top flight in 1986-87, John's talent was recognised and he was selected for Lancashire in the autumn before going on to save Leigh's first division status with a smartly taken brace in a 17-10 win against Warrington at Wilderspool.

Unfortunately for Henderson, injury intervened and after a promising opening to the 1987-88 season, John could only make 13 appearances. As the new season dawned, John



got back in the Leigh side and scored a try in a 36-20 home win over Keighley before joining hometown Oldham playing in the First Division. Between 1989 and 1992 played in 68 games, scoring 30 tries before drawing his career to a close.

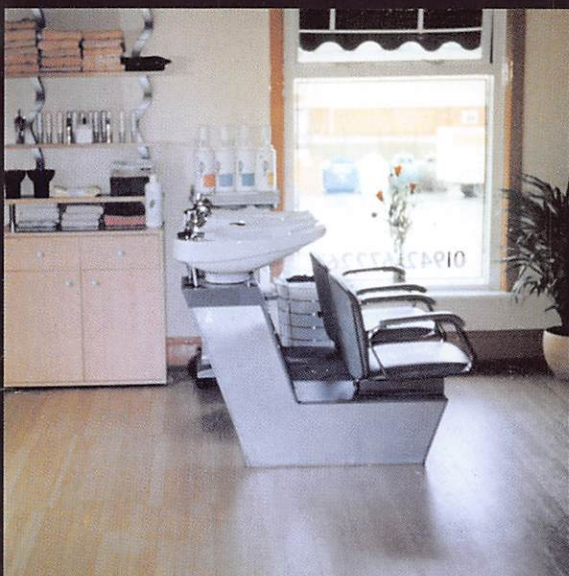
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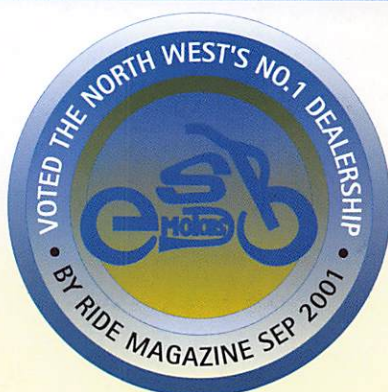
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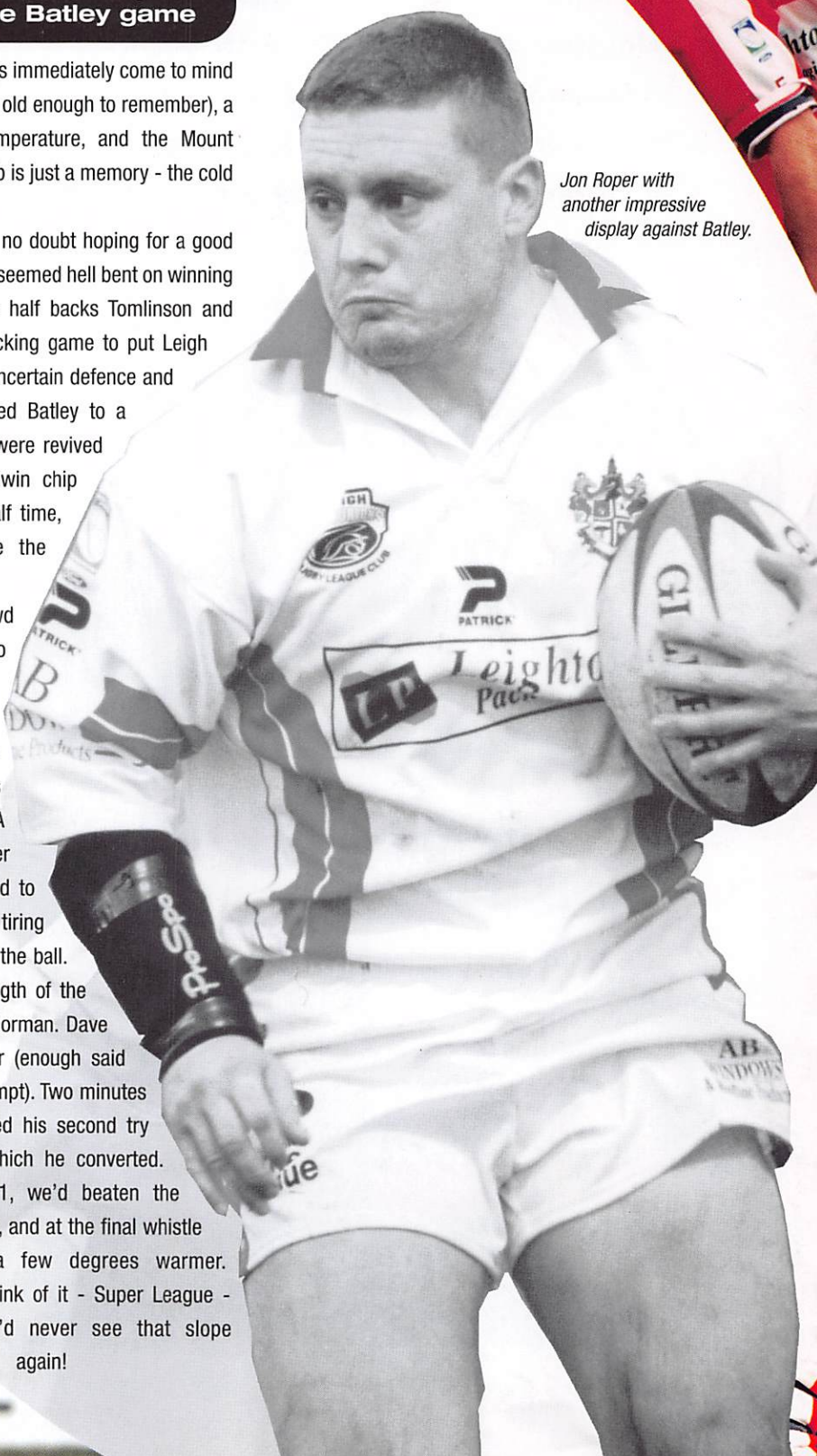
Supporter Keith Hindley looks back at the Batley game

Mention Batley and three things immediately come to mind - Batley Variety Club (for those old enough to remember), a 5 to 10 degree drop in temperature, and the Mount Pleasant slope! The variety club is just a memory - the cold and slope are still with us.

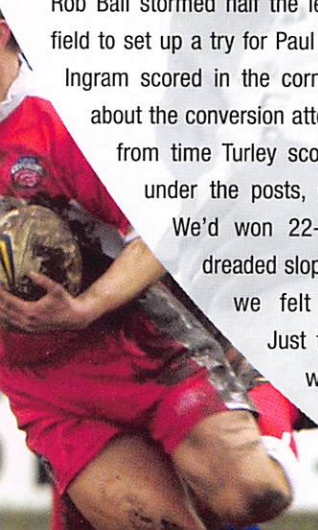
Leigh started down the slope, no doubt hoping for a good lead. On the other hand Batley seemed hell bent on winning the game by half time. Their half backs Tomlinson and Lawford used an excellent kicking game to put Leigh under constant pressure. An uncertain defence and alarming turn over rate helped Batley to a 10-0 lead. Fortunately Leigh were revived by a Turley try from a Baldwin chip through - on the stroke of half time, but they now had to face the slope.....

As usual the Leigh away crowd roared their encouragement to greet their team. The team responded with their tackling to the fore and Paul Norman putting in some tremendous runs down the middle. A penalty for Turley, a one-pointer for Batley. Jon Roper switched to stand off, and coupled with a tiring Batley, Leigh began to spread the ball. Rob Ball stormed half the length of the field to set up a try for Paul Norman. Dave Ingram scored in the corner (enough said about the conversion attempt). Two minutes from time Turley scored his second try under the posts, which he converted.

We'd won 22-11, we'd beaten the dreaded slope, and at the final whistle we felt a few degrees warmer. Just think of it - Super League - we'd never see that slope again!



Jon Roper with another impressive display against Batley.



player profile

Phil Kendrick



Phil with John Duffy celebrating the victory over Salford

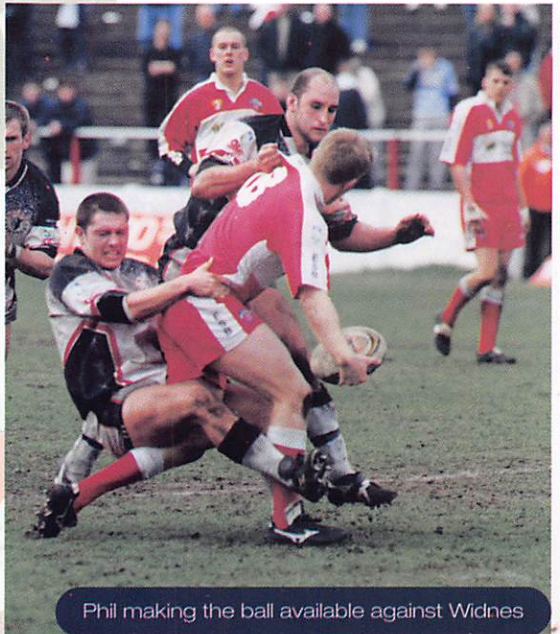
It's interesting to note that 24 year old Phil is one of the longest serving players on Leigh's books - although still a long way behind David Ingram! Born in Leigh, although the family moved to Hindley, he now lives in Atherton with wife Kate, who works for an Insurance broker, and daughter Olivia, aged 4.

Phil's mum and dad are both Rugby enthusiasts. The family were regular at Central Park to support the great Wigan side of the 80's. When 10 years old Phil joined Hindley Junior's then Ince St. Williams, Orrell St. James and finally Rosebridge U16's - the team won everything on offer. In the National Cup Final they beat Hunslet Boys, Phil playing at stand-off was voted Man of the Match, Paul Sculthorpe was loose forward. Phil attended Mornington High School where he played in their teams. He represented Wigan and North Lancashire Schools and was selected for the England Schools side in France at U16 level - they won by a record score of 40 - 0.

He puts his success at junior level down, first and foremost, to his mum and dad who were always keen to watch and support him. They still do. He also picks out Mr. Mullaney, his Wigan Schools U11 coach; Don Preston, the North Lancashire U16 coach; and former Leigh loose forward Dennis Boyd, his coach at Rosebridge.

Phil turned pro with Widnes in 1993. Phil Larder was coach and Dennis McHugh, who had been his England Schools coach was in charge of their Academy. Unfortunately before long they had both left. Widnes missed out on Super League and so it was in Division Two that Phil made his debut - at centre against Huddersfield. He scored and his team won - a

career highlight. He then had a run of games in the final stages of the season under Doug Laughton. But he was replaced first by Bernard Long and then by Graeme West. During 1997 Phil fell out of favour. Widnes received offers from a number of clubs but were reluctant to sell to anyone who might threaten their aspirations. At the time Leigh were no threat. He knew Kath Latham and was happy (with Anthony Murray) to return home to a struggling side. But Leigh were a young team of local lads and the spirit was good. And things were about to change... Phil is now in his fifth season at Leigh. The last three have been highly successful under two coaches. Phil rates highly - the fiery Ian Millward and the more placid Paul Terzis. The club is increasingly able to attract good players and enjoys great support. Phil prefers centre to second row but he really fancies playing loose forward. Other highlights of his career to date have been the 2000 play-off semi-final victory over Oldham, the 2001 Trans Pennine Final win at Keighly, and the 2000 Grand Final at Bury (unfortunately he was injured). Phil works as Menswear Manager at the Trafford Centre River Island. The job sometimes cuts across club training. His Rugby, his job, and his family leave little time for other interests. Whilst at Widnes he attended Wigan College and achieved 3 'A' Levels which may well lead to other job possibilities when his Rugby career finishes. His brother Simon was also with Leigh but is now playing Union with Orrell. He has one Rugby ambition - to get Leigh promoted and play Super League.



Phil making the ball available against Widnes

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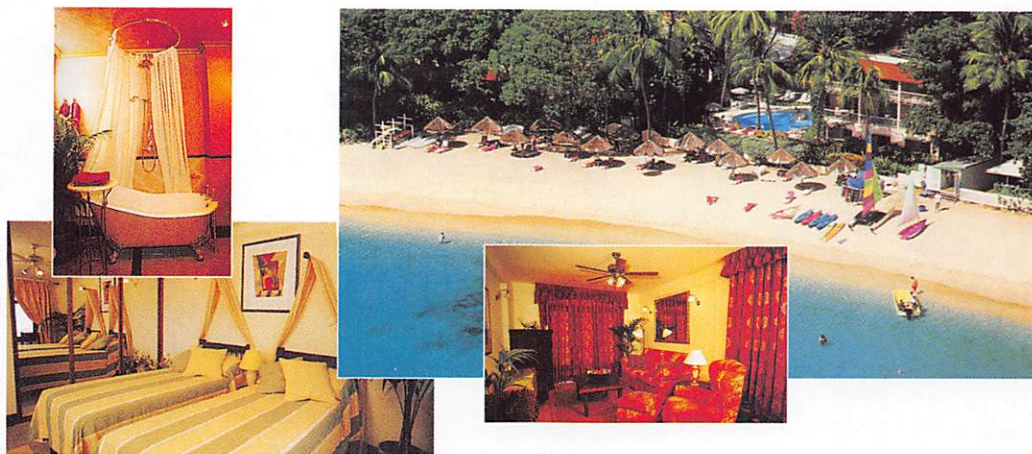
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around & about

Leigh Shamrocks

Founded: 1889

Ceased: 1914

Reason: Lack of players due to start of World War One

Ground: Buck's Farm

Headquarters: Bridge Inn

Colours: Green jersey with white collar and cuffs, blue shorts

In the last programme we followed the development of the club which initially was formed for Leigh Irishmen. In 1897 they elected to join the Northern Union but ran into severe financial and playing problems. They kept going, opting not to pay broken - time expenses, but players who worked in the collieries were often unable to play in away matches. In 1900/01 they were invited to join the Lancashire second Competition, playing alongside Tyldesley, but they were often out of their depth.

Home wins were earned against Altrincham and Lancaster as Shamrocks, when able to field its strongest side, was capable of competing satisfactorily. Even then playing methods did not gain approval. "The Shamrocks do not play a scientific game which true lovers of the game like to see" stated the Leigh Journal.

Absences were the big problem for, as well as the problem of players being unable to leave work, four of the clubs most prominent players, Murray, Coyne, Collins and Lynch were lost to the forces serving in the South African War. It was not uncommon for Shamrocks to start away games with eleven or twelve men with the numbers being made up when more players arrived by a later train.

Attendances were disappointing, numbering only a few hundred for most games. The lack of cover on the Buck's Farm enclosure meant that watching games in bad weather was a far from happy experience. The long awaited Christmas home clash against Tyldesley coincided with a day of steady rain and howling winds keeping the attendance down to 200.

With Fleetwood disbanding during the season, Shamrocks played only 16 league games and had finished its programme by mid January, hardly a satisfactory situation.

"There is little point in carrying on in the Second Competition" commented the Leigh Journal, though Shamrocks' loss for the season, £1, was a modest one. Gate receipts for the campaign had totalled only £70.

Shamrocks finished bottom of the table with only four

league points scoring 33 points and conceding 157. In 16 games Shamrocks scored only five tries. Full-back Caveney, half-backs MacMasters and Rabbitt, three-quarter Shovelton and forwards Roberts and Riley were Shamrocks' most prominent players but over 40 players turned out during the season as the club was rarely able to field a settled side.

In the summer of 1901, Shamrocks was accepted into the newly-formed Central Lancashire League, alongside Leigh St Joseph's, Westleigh Catholics, Tyldesley Shamrocks, Westleigh, Pendlebury, Flixton, Glenby Hornets, Castleton Moor, Salford St Bart's, Rochdale Rangers, Abbey Hills and Lees. The club resumed its place among the junior ranks providing a useful nursery for the town's senior team and other professional outfits. Chief amongst the many Shamrocks players to turn professional was a classy half-back, Bert Ganley, who played with distinction for Leigh, Huddersfield and Leeds.

In 1904-05 Shamrocks won its way through the qualifying rounds to reach the First round of the Challenge Cup losing 0-52 to Hull. The following season Shamrocks again appeared in the first round losing to fellow junior club Egerton at Salford.

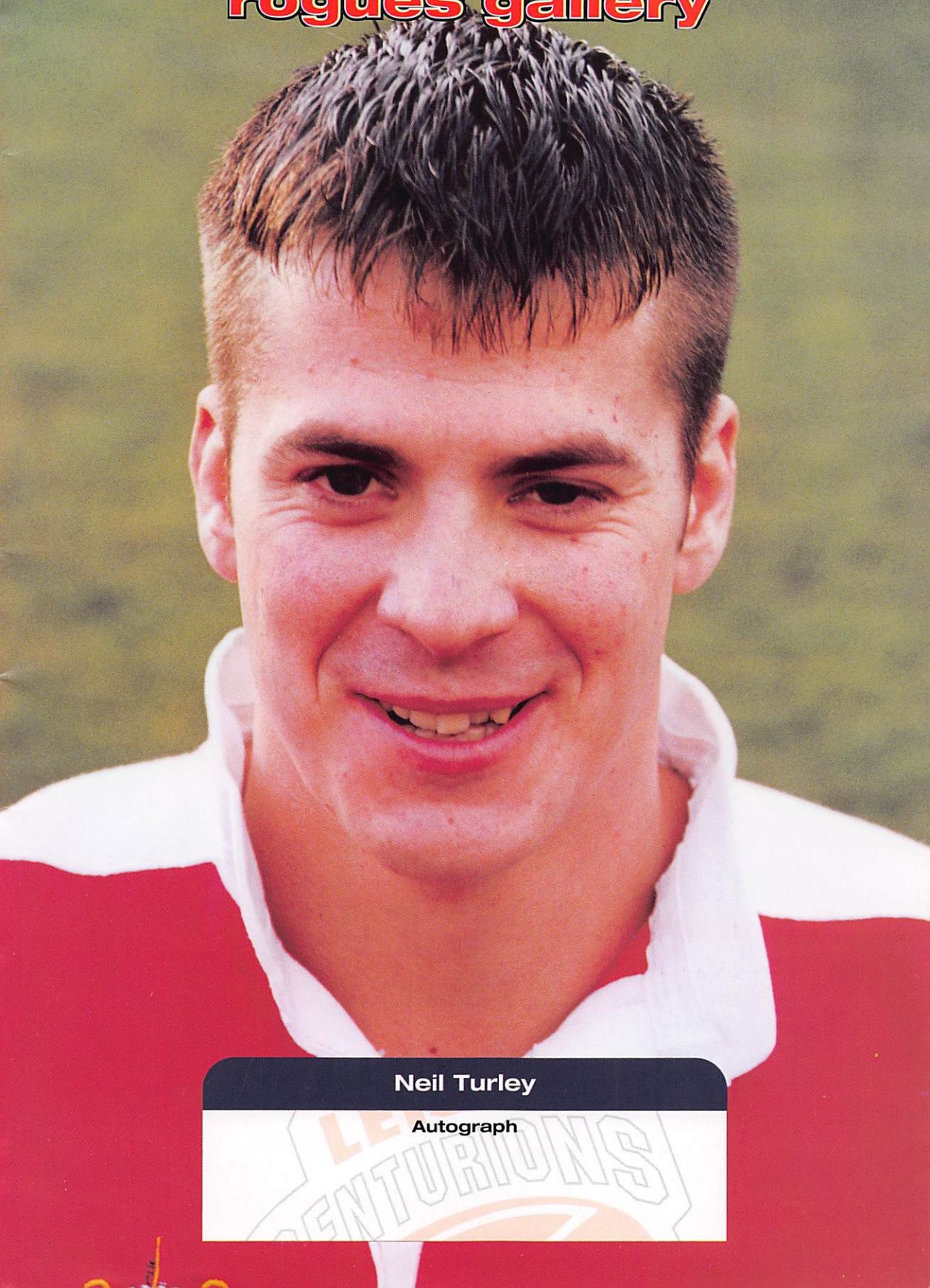
In 1907-08 Shamrocks again moved up in status when the club was rewarded for its consistently good record in the junior game by being invited to join the Lancashire Rugby Combination. It joined other local amateur clubs Wigan Highfield, Ince and Pemberton and competed against the reserve teams of the county's senior clubs.

Games against Leigh A and Wigan A attracted good crowds to Buck's Farm and Shamrocks competed most effectively attaining Fourth place in 1908-09 with 11 wins and 5 draws from 24 games. The league was later amalgamated with its counterpart in Yorkshire to Form a Northern Rugby Combination with positions being decided on a percentage basis. Wigan Highfield, Pemberton, Normanton St.Jude's, Purston and Millom were the other junior clubs involved.

Leigh Shamrocks had established for itself a fine reputation and the club was the leading amateur organisation in a town which was, and indeed still is, a stronghold of the game. The start of the First World War in 1914 signalled the club's demise. Most of the players either joined the Forces or were serving in reserved occupations and the club, suddenly without any playing members, was wound up.

Thanks to Mike Latham for allowing us to include this exert from his book "The Rugby League Myth"

rogues gallery



Neil Turley

Autograph

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Dave Bradbury, Leigh Centurions Player with Andy and Derek Beaumont from AB Windows

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Neil Turley	1
David Ingram	2
Paul Anderson	3
Jon Roper	4
Liam Bretherton	5
Simon Svabic	6
Keiron Purtill	7
Paul Norman	8
Paul Rowley	9
Dave Bradbury	10
Simon Baldwin	11
Chris Morley	12
Adam Bristow	13
Rob Ball	14
Lee Sanderson	15
John Hamilton	16
Andrew Isherwood	17

Mark Sibson	1
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