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DEALERS



Well, here we are again !!
It seems like we are starting a new season with so many matches having been postponed. I know that the players are totally frustrated at having to train three nights a week only to have the games postponed. Unfortunately we don't control the weather so we'll have to accept our fate and get on with the rest of the season.

A special welcome to Oldham for today's game. They are a club with their own internal problems having just lost their coach and struggling to find a home ground for the 2002 season.

Adversity often brings out the best in people and I'm certain that we will have a tough game on our hands.

Things are beginning to take shape off the field and there appears to be a light at the end of the tunnel. Make sure you check on the new stock in the club shop and I'm sure you'll be pleasantly surprised at the changes which have taken place. As of next week the shop will be open every Friday afternoon from 3.00pm till 5.00pm.

Some dates for your diary include our Alliance fixture against Batley on Thursday 17th January at 7.30pm.

Occupying the same time slot on Friday 18th January is the first of our club supporters in the Bailey Bar. Meet the players after training, join in the club raffles and enjoy a drink at Happy Hour prices. This is your opportunity to support your club, your team and your players.

Feedback from local schools on the work being done by our development team has been outstanding in fact the entire staff at Ram Stadium are working overtime to put Dewsbury to the forefront of the National Ford Premiership. It is amazing how much can be achieved when no-one cares who gets the credit.

When mentioning staff I also include our volunteer helpers who play a vital role in our day to day operations.

Thank You !!!

A special mention to Michael Diskin of Halifax Numerical Controls, who are match sponsors. Thanks for your support and along with the rest of the fans I hope you enjoy today's game.

John Harbin

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I'd like to start by saying what a frustrating Christmas we had as a team and club (winter frost), welcome to summer rugby 2002.

On New Years Day I honestly thought we should have played, we trained on the field an hour after and the ground was soft. I take my hat off to Paul Moore who did and would have got the game on but for Jeff Berry to call the match off before the groundsman had time to prepare the field.

So a lot of the time when we don't play it is out of our hands. This means the team gets frustrated and sick of training. They train to play week in week out, not every three weeks. But we move on and put that behind us if winter is kind and

the match is played today we feel we are back to square one starting over again. And so we must win to stay with the leaders we can not afford any slip ups. We start an exciting week with us against Oldham, plus the chance to see the youngsters in the A team, who entertain Batley on Thursday 17th 7.30pm kick off. So I hope we as a club and fans get behind our future. Because we haven't played and had no kit to wash "Chilli" has got cheap soap powder for sale. Contact him. And our physio "Billy" needs some one to one treatment he has very soft hands. All the best



Enjoy the game

Andy Fisher

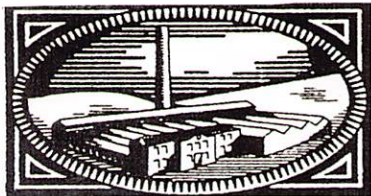
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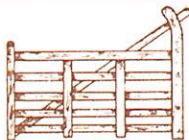


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RUGBY **League Express**

Let's keep the Cup flowing

MARTYN SADLER, the editor of Rugby League Express, wonders whether the RFL should look again at the nature and format of the Rugby League Challenge Cup.

The Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Challenge Cup will spring into life for the Northern Ford Premiership clubs on the last weekend of this month, when the NFP clubs take on the amateurs who have won through to the third round of the competition.

For me the impact of the draw is reduced somewhat by its artificial nature, with the 19 NFP clubs being deliberately kept apart from each other in the 18 ties being drawn out of the hat. The only tie that will be contested entirely by NFP clubs is the one between Gateshead and Featherstone, which will take place at the Thunderdome. Other than that, there will be two ties between NFP clubs and French clubs, and 15 ties between NFP clubs and amateur clubs.

At least this year the amateur clubs have been given the chance to play home games in the Challenge Cup, provided they can find a ground to play on that meets minimum standards.

Nonetheless, for a long time I have believed that we need to look closely at the structure of the Challenge Cup, and its place within the Super League and NFP seasons, especially when the NFP moves once again to become a competition to be played mainly in summer from 2003.

With the rugby union Six Nations competition likely to be played over a seven

week period in February and March next year, the TV slots for the Challenge Cup are likely to be fewer and farther between from then, and perhaps now is the time to decide whether we really want the Cup final to be played at the end of April, or whether we want it to move to a point later in the year.

The final could be played at the time of the Whit Bank Holiday, at the end of May, for example. Or it could be played in July, or even during the Bank Holiday weekend at the end of August. Because I'm certain that the Challenge Cup sits uneasily in its current slot as a virtual pre-season competition, which is what it has been for the Super League clubs since 1996, and what it will be for both Super League and the NFP from next season.

The Challenge Cup final was always one of the climaxes of the Rugby League season, coming as it did almost at the very end of the season, shortly before the old Championship finals. While I don't think it should be played in September or October, I personally think that July would be a very good option, which the Whit Bank Holiday possibly the next best option.

I must say that I was surprised that the RFL's Strategic Review of the game, that took place last season, didn't appear to give any serious consideration to the place of the Challenge Cup in the Rugby League year as a whole. Perhaps now is the time to start having those thoughts if we want the Cup to retain its historical importance in the game.

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It seems an age since we were last at a game and I for one will be glad to see Summer rugby when at least you know that the games are pretty certain to take place. With the game against Hunslet postponed we would like to wish everyone a very belated Happy New Year. I made loads of New Years Resolutions but didn't keep to any!!

We obviously disappointed that the game didn't take place especially when the club had been so optimistic the previous day. However it was incredibly cold and some of our younger members would have found it really hard to keep out the icy weather.

At least the club didn't leave it until the last minute before calling the game off unlike some others. From a personal point of view I have 15-20 calls to make when a game is

postponed and that usually takes up quite a bit of time and money.

Hopefully the weather will be a little kinder today. We understand that Oldham are a well supported team so there should be quite a good atmosphere at the game and it will be nice to perform in front of a reasonable crowd. Unfortunately the club are still having problems with the PA it's not my taping honest!! Let's hope the problems are sorted out soon. If anyone out there is an audio expert and would like to help out I'm sure that the club would be delighted to hear from you.

Finally please don't forget that apart from supporting the Rams we are willing to help out at Charity events and we'll be at the Dewsbury 10k Road Race in early February. If you want us to come to your event please call round and see me.

All the best
Janet Roper



Andy Bates – Aged 8

My favourite Rams player is Danny Brough and I really enjoy eating Yorkshire Pudding and gravy after the Rams game (or when I can). My Dad (Phil Bates) is an ex-Dewsbury player and my favourite colour is blue.



Mark B. Woodhead

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SCHOOLS

With the Christmas holidays now over, Adie, Frank and myself will find ourselves quite busy with the coaching sessions that have been organised at schools in the Kirklees area. The response from the schools has been so good we now find we are booked up to Easter. So any schools wanting coaching by the Rams contact the club ASAP.

OUT & ABOUT

A few weeks ago we started voluntary work at the Ponderosa Rare Breeds Farm. We will be spending half a day a week working at the organisation which is one of the club's sponsors. So far the time spent there has been excellent and we

recommend all fans to pay a visit. We have also been busy in town in the last couple of weeks handing out complimentary junior tickets. You will find we are in the town centre every Friday before a home game. So if you see us come and say 'hello', I promise we won't bite, although Big Frankie (aka SHREK) does get a bit peckish a couple of hours before lunch. Last of all, enjoy the game and we hope to see you out and about.

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Rugby League World
MAGAZINE

Oldham Roughyeds

Under the Spotlight

Weather permitting rugby league action should return to Ram Stadium this afternoon with the visit of Oldham. It has been a pretty traumatic start to the season for the club and hardly the one Chairman Chris Hamilton would have hoped for following their relatively successful season in 2001.

They were faced with logistical problems before the season started when they failed to reach agreement for the use of Boundary Park after being faced with a bill of £150,000 per season if they wanted to continue to share the ground with Oldham Athletic FC. The club considered a number of alternatives but eventually settled on a move to Ashton United's Hurst Cross ground. Ashton play in the Unibond league which is two levels below the Football League Third Division. The club doesn't attract large crowds and prior to the start of the rugby season the facility wasn't really geared up to accommodate the large number of Oldham fans that follow their team both at home and away. These concerns seemed to unsettle Tameside Council and they prevented the Roughyeds from playing Swinton on the opening day of the season because of their concerns over a number of safety issues.

The Oldham board have worked hard to resolve these issues and the club got the go-ahead to play Rochdale Hornets on the Christmas weekend only for the game to fall foul of the frosty weather. With a blank weekend the second weekend of the season the season got off to a frustrating start. With a total lack of match action it was no surprise that they went down 26-10 away at Hull KR as their season finally got under way. However the bad weather meant that it was the only game they would play until the New Year.

Oldham's problems were made greater when they received the news that coach Mike Ford was to leave to take up a position as the defensive coach for the Irish Rugby Union team. Ford, a nominee for the NFP Coach of the Year Award last season understandably saw it as a great career move. It came on the back of a 46-12 defeat at Leigh Centurions and while there was no suggestion that the defeat helped him make up his mind to leave it must have been a contributory factor. Chairman Chris Hamilton was understandably annoyed at losing his highly rated coach accusing the IRU of tapping the player up. Ford's departure has meant that Alliance coach Mark Knight has stepped up to take over the reins with the Chairman indicating that Knight could be considered for the job if the

results go in his favour in the meantime.

There's no doubt that the Oldham team will be fired up for today's visit to the Rams if they want to go one better than they did last season. After finishing in 4th place behind Leigh, Widnes and Oldham they upset the odds to reach the Grand Final. They took the away route to Gigg Lane winning 15-14 at Leigh Centurions and 39-32 at Rochdale Hornets. Unfortunately they didn't reproduce that away form in the final itself and they were beaten 24-14 by Neil Kelly's Widnes Vikings with the Vikings fielding three players, Richard Agar, Sean Richardson and Matthew Long who had appeared for the Rams earlier in the season. Both Richardson and Long also played in the Rams team that beat Oldham 18-13 at Ram Stadium on 11th March. The Rams are of course much changed since then with only Adrian Flynn, Andy Fisher and Gavin Wood still in the squad. Oldham have retained many of last season's players and their experience will be of great benefit as the club attempts to make up on lost time. How they will fare without their guiding hand of recent seasons remains to be seen but it is hard to imagine that they will not make the play offs and of course clinch an all important top nine spot.

Last season we only faced each other once in the league and that game was at Ram Stadium and it's the same again this season although we do visit Oldham in the National Cup. For us not to visit Oldham in the league for two successive seasons would appear to be a criticism of the fixture planners and doesn't really seem to make much sense. But all that changes at the end of this year (or will it!).

For both teams there's much to play for and for Oldham another chapter in their long history that started when they entered the league in 1895-96. They have endured a number of ground changes and they have struggled to keep the great name of Oldham alive at times especially following their liquidation in 1997. The club has won almost every major honour open to them over the years. Their fans have backed the club to the hilt and they have a board of directors and an energetic chairman who care about the club and the game. We wish them well for the remainder of this season and for the future but hopefully we won't be giving them too many presents on the field this afternoon. Enjoy the game.

Tony Scargill

Oldham Roughyeds Pen Pics

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 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 Oldham started the overtures to sign him.

TOMMY HODGKINSON Much-travelled and vastly experienced back-row forward, Tommy joined the Roughyeds from Widnes a week after his Auto Quest Stadium team mate Simon Knox followed a similar path. Did well in the Oldham warm-up games and is expected to be a key figure in Oldham's plans.

GAVIN DODD A local youngster who is learning the ropes at Oldham. A wing or full-back, the 20-year-old Gavin played for the NFP under-21s at Widnes and is sure to be pushing for a regular spot this season, either as competition for Mark Sibson at full back or as a lively winger, who knows how to get to the line.

LEE DORAN Another young player in whom Oldham have a lot of confidence. A Wiganer, Lee has worked his way through the Oldham Academy and Alliance sides and is now on the verge of breaking through to the first team on a regular basis. Showed up well for the NFP under-21s, one of five Oldham players in the squad.

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-21s at Widnes in the Autumn.

JOE McNICHOLAS One of the original 1997 Roughyeds, wingman Joe made a first-team in 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 QUEST 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 autumn 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 best 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 Quest. 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 player of the year awards.

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 and is sure to be one of coach Mike Ford's leading lights.

MARK SIBSON Quick fullback 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 last seasons with the Roughyeds, has a remarkable record of consistency. Played for the NFP's under 21's against their Super League counterparts at Widnes.

JOHN BRADDISH Signed from St Helens on long term loan. Top goal kicker in the Alliance Championship last season and also leading point scorer in that competition. Wanted a change of club because of limited senior opportunities at Knowsley Road and he turned down several other offers to join Oldham where he is developing his half back skills.

JON GODDARD A 19 year old and the youngest member of the squad. Cas lad Jon has joined Oldham on loan from Castleford thanks to the old pals act. Graham Steadman is a firm friend and former team mate of Ford and 'steady' looking to his old mate to bring Goddard along and develop his skills in the NFP.

On behalf of BBC Radio Leeds can I wish everyone a belated happy new year, here's to a very prosperous 2002 for one and all. Let's hope the weather is one thing that improves.

This time of year many people reflect on the year just gone and in the world of Rugby League it was certainly a busy time. None more so than here at Ram Stadium as Neil Kelly decided to vacate the hot seat for the lure of Super league. Whether he has made the right move or not only time will tell though I dearly hope that Neil enjoys success and ruffles a few feathers in Super league. The thankless task went to Roy Sampson who did his very best to carry on where Neil left off but in the end moved back to Hunslet. Some say the YTV documentary was the final nail in the Sampson coffin but I disagree. Each coach has their own individual style of coaching and to be damned for that is unfair.

Away from the NFP, Super league too had it's ups and downs in 2001. The majority of the season was dominated with the 'will they-wont they?' saga surrounding Iestyn Harris and Henry Paul. In the end they both did defect to Rugby Union! Paul however went out in a blaze of glory as the Bulls did a destruction job on Wigan in the Grand Final at old Trafford. This success made up for their Challenge Cup defeat by St Helens. At the other end of the table the relegation issue turned into a dog fight between the

Huddersfield Giants and the Wakefield Trinity Wildcats. It all went down to the wire with the Giants relegated on the very last afternoon, ironically after winning at home to London! In between all of this the 'mid-table' teams were their usual brand of mediocrity and inconsistency.

The Super league Grand Final is normally time for the BBC Radio Leeds Rugby League Producer to put his metaphoric feet up. But then came the controversy of the Ashes tour to deal with. The Kangaroo's decision to call off the tour was met with horror on both sides of the world. In the end they were shamed into coming albeit with a truncated tour. There subsequently followed the customary 2-1 series defeat but there was much to take heart from and next July's one-off test down under may be our chance to set the record straight once and for all.

So plenty to reflect on and plenty also to look forward too!

All the very best for the year ahead.

James Deighton
Rugby League Producer
BBC Radio Leeds



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2	Matthew Griffin			
3	Michael Wainwright			
4	Chris Chapman			
5	Adrian Flynn			
6	Davide Longo			
7	Jimmy Elston			
8	Frank Watene			
9	Andy Speak			
10	Simon Wildman			
11	Paul Hicks			
12	Jim Leatham			
13	Richard Slater			
	Subs			
14	Danny Brough			
15	Chris Parker			
16	Tony Fella			
17	Chris Kitchen			

Referee

S. Addy

Touchjudge

D. Ansell

Roughyeds

NO.	PLAYER	Tries	Goals	Drop goal
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2	Gavin Dodd			
3	Dave Gibbons			
4	Jon Goddard			
5	Joe McNicholas			
6	John Braddish			
7	Neil Roden			
8	Simon Knox			
9	John Hough			
10	Jason Clegg			
11	Phil Farrell			
12	Bryan Henare			
13	Tommy Hodgkinson			
	Subs			
14	Gareth Barber			
15	Leo Casey			
16	Lee Doran			
17	Danny Guest			

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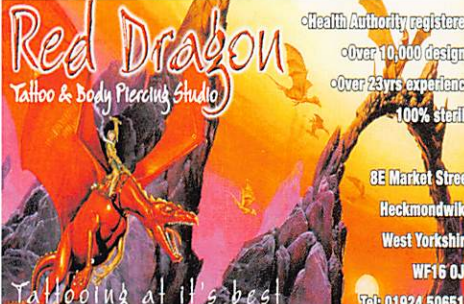
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RAM



"Well, it is a very late Happy New Year to all my fans. As you might guess it's been a bit on the cold side out in the fields these last few weeks and I'm glad I've got a woolly jumper to keep me warm,

It was a bit sad not to play on Xmas Day and New Year's Day but it can't be helped. It tickled me that Batley thought the pitch was playable, when all the other NFP matches were called off. Batley must be a bit nearer the Equator than the rest of us! If it's that warm I might go there for my holidays!

Although there's been no matches, I've been very busy over the festive period - you might have seen me in the Dewsbury Reporter a few times. The Development team of Frank Watene, Harbin Junior and Flynnny make sure I can never put my hooves up and rest.

Fish has been putting the team through their paces, so I'm looking forward to a good game against the Oldham Roughyeds. They've had a

tough start to their season, with ground problems and their coach leaving suddenly. Sound familiar? Their coach Mike Ford has chosen the green, green grass of Ireland to be the Irish defensive coach (the grass is quite tasty over there I hear!).

Enjoy the Match
Go the Rams

Roger Ram



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League

Fixtures

Date	Opponent	KO	Att	Result	1	2	3	4	5
December									
2nd	Keighley	H3:00	1,782	W25/22	Griffin	Wainwright(1T)	Longo	Chapman(1T)	Flynn(1T)
9th	Whitehaven	A3:00	1,323	L27/2	Griffin	Wainwright	Longo	Chapman	Flynn
16th	Barrow	H3:00		L21/31	Batty	Griffin(1T)	Longo	Chapman	Flynn
26th	Batley	A3:00							
January									
1st	Hunslet	H3:00							
6th	Swinton	A3:00							
13th	Oldham	H3:00							
20th	Hull K.R.	A3:00							
February									
3rd	Rochdale	H3:00							
17th	Leigh	A3:00							
March									
3rd	York	H3:00							
17th	Chorley	A3:00							
24th	Workington	H3:00							
June									
2nd	Gateshead	A3:00							
9th	Huddersfield	H3:00							
16th	Doncaster	A3:00							
23rd	Sheffield	H3:00							
30th	Featherstone	A3:00							
July									
7th	Chorley	H3:00							
14th	Rochdale	A3:00							
21st	Barrow	A3:00							
28th	Doncaster	H3:00							
August									
4th	Gateshead	H3:00							
11th	York	A3:00							
18th	Sheffield	A3:00							
25th	Batley	H3:00							
September									
1st	Huddersfield	A3:00							
8th	Leigh	H3:00							

DRISA Fans Forum - 30th January 7.30pm Royal Suite

The next DRISA Fans forum will start at 7:30pm in the Royal Suite at Ram Stadium.

Chief Executive John Harbin, Head Coach Andy Fisher and Club Captain Richard Slater will be available to answer supporters questions.

Admission is free and all Rams Supporters new and old are welcome to attend and take part.

Rugby League Collectors Federation at Ram Stadium - Saturday 16th February 11 am - 1.30pm

The RLCF are holding their next Fair at Ram Stadium and this is a chance to buy or sell all sorts of Rugby League memorabilia. This covers anything from pin badges to shirts, programmes to videos. Admission is free and all are welcome.

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 Redfearn(1G)Elston Hicks Speak Watene Parker Fella Slater Leatham Wildman Hardy Brough
 Redfearn Elston(1T) Watene Speak(1T) Wildman Hicks Leatham Slater Fella Wainright Parker Brough(2G,1DG)

	P	W	D	L	For	Agst	PTS
Huddersfield Giants	5	4	1	0	149	46	9
Leigh Centurions	4	4	0	0	166	47	8
Barrow Border Raiders	5	4	0	1	153	71	8
Rochdale Hornets	4	4	0	0	100	64	8
Whitehaven	5	3	1	1	125	52	7
Hull Kingston Rovers	4	3	0	1	124	46	6
Workington Town	5	3	0	2	112	91	6
Batley Bulldog	5	3	0	2	93	90	6
Featherstone Rovers	5	2	1	2	105	85	5
Sheffield Eagles	5	2	0	3	108	86	4
Doncaster Dragons	3	1	0	2	44	74	2
Dewsbury Rams	3	1	0	2	48	80	2
Oldham	3	1	0	2	54	88	2
Chorley Lynx	5	1	0	4	72	116	2
Keighley Cougars	4	1	0	3	62	165	2
Gateshead Thunder	4	0	1	3	46	94	1
Swinton Lions	2	0	0	2	16	50	0
Hunslet Hawks	3	0	0	3	38	146	0
York Wasps	4	0	0	4	38	162	0

Anthony Gibbons

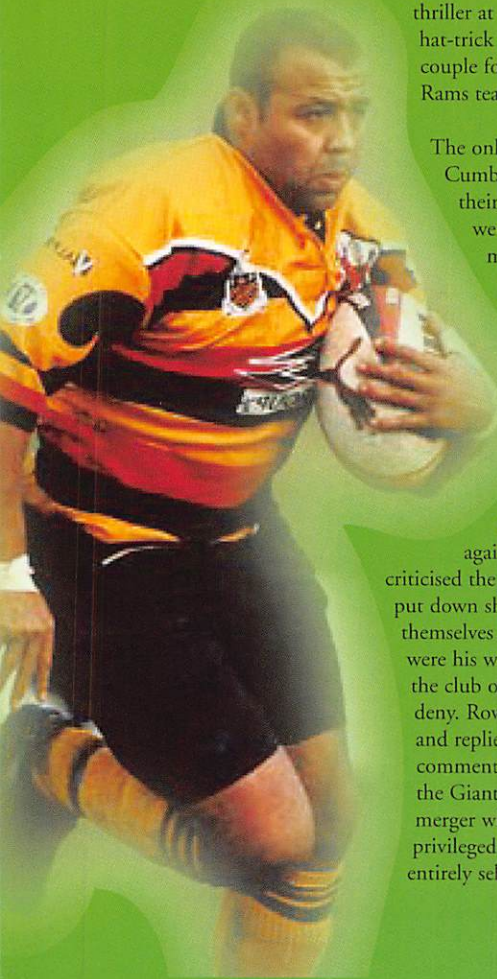
One of the most reliable players in the NFP during the last few seasons will miss the game at Dewsbury dew to injury

Premiersh

The recent spell of wintry weather has played havoc with the fixture list especially over the Christmas and New Year period and much of the talk in the pubs and clubs has had to be directed at off the field activities. It was meant to be the final wave to winter rugby (has that been said before??) but it went out with a whimper rather than a bang. Oldham managed to play a pre-Christmas game but probably wished they hadn't when they were beaten 46-12 by Leigh in spite of being 12-6 ahead at half time. Oldham were full value for their half time lead but they were on the receiving end of a 16 minute blast from Leigh who scored four tries during this crucial period. Oldham could not overcome the 20 minute period when they were down to 12 men as forward Leo Casey spent two spells in the sin bin

for holding down in the tackle offenses. Elsewhere that Sunday Batley edged home 28-14 at Chorley Lynx and Rochdale Hornets won a thriller at snowbound Spotland. Wingman Sean Cooper collected a hat-trick of tries for the home team and Alex Godfrey crossed for a couple for the Rovers as he renewed acquaintances with five former Rams team-mates.

The only game to beat the weather on Boxing Day was up in Cumbria where a crowd of 3,690 saw Whitehaven continue their impressive start to the season. Once again the visitors were ahead at the interval but three tries in 13 minutes midway through the second half sent Whitehaven on their way to a 28-14 derby triumph. Both teams had star players at half back with Leroy Joe again outstanding for Whitehaven and Martin Wood bringing some class to the Town play. Featherstone Rovers game against Huddersfield was postponed on Boxing Day and then re-arranged for the following day. That decision seems to have upset Giants coach Tony Smith who felt that his full time squad of players, the only full time squad in the NFP, didn't have enough time to prepare for both games especially with a McAlpine clash against struggling Keighley on the cards five days later. He criticised the Featherstone club in the media accusing them of failing to put down sheets to cover the pitch. Now if they're too lazy to do it themselves on Christmas Day, then I would have driven over myself, were his words that were reported in the League Express. He accused the club of forgetting to put down the covers, a claim that Rovers deny. Rovers officials were clearly annoyed by Smith's comments and replied that they haven't owned any covers since 1995 and they commented on the financial assistance that had come the way of the Giants during the last five years as well as during the ill fated merger with Sheffield Eagles. The Giants are certainly in a privileged place in the NFP whose other member clubs are now entirely self funded.



ip Review

To rub salt into the wounds Huddersfield scraped home 21-20 when the game was played. The Giants withstood a dramatic late fightback from Featherstone Rovers who scored two tries in the last five minutes to almost snatch an unlikely victory in a game that exploded on 66 minutes when Rovers Jim Carlton and Giants Chris Langley were sent off for fighting.

Five days later Huddersfield swamped Keighley Cougars 66-0 at the McAlpine Stadium. There were hat-tricks for full back Ben Cooper and substitute Darren Turner as the Cougars struggled to overcome the shock loss of coach Steve Deakin to London Broncos. Hefin O'Hare scored the first try in the very first minute as the Giants racked up the points. They didn't have it as easy last weekend as their 100% record disappeared when they could only manage a 12-12 draw away at Whitehaven in spite of leading 12-0 at the break. Two converted tries from Whitehavens David Seeds (56 mins) and Aaron Lester (69) set up an epic finale. Huddersfield screwed three late attempts at a drop goal wide of the mark to leave just Leigh Centurions and Rochdale Hornets as teams with an unblemished league record.

Leigh's game at Hull KR finished in farcical circumstances when the game was abandoned after 51 minutes with because of a floodlight failure. Leigh were ahead 14-6 at the time the game came to its premature end. Leigh coach Paul Terzis blasted everyone in sight about whose fault it all was. Rovers' director Wayne Smith explained that they knew there was a fault before the game started but set off using the greyhound lights and training lights in the hope that the fault could be fixed before the lights were needed in full. The fault couldn't be fixed and referee Stuart Cummings had to abandon the game when he felt conditions had deteriorated enough to make them dangerous leaving Leigh chairman Mike Nolan saying that they will be writing to the RFL to claim the points! It's a farcical chain of events that does little to portray a professional image.

Today's visitors Oldham finally got their home season underway at Hurst Cross as they somewhat nervously put paid to York Wasps hopes of a shock win by beating them 32-16 in front of a crowd of 1,130 - over five times the average gate of the football club. Oldham's fans seemed to favour the upbeat atmosphere of the compact ground. The players took a few moments to adjust to their new surroundings and they conceded a 2nd minute try to York veteran centre Carl Hall. Joe McNicolas scored the first try for the Roughyeds in the 6th minute and then crossed again on 25 minutes. Gavin Molly scored a 31st minute try for York but second row forward Bryan Henare ensured that Oldham were 14-10 ahead at the interval. Tries from Phil Farrell, John Hough and Neil Roden sealed the points for Oldham while York had a consolation try from former Hunslet player Andy Precious.

Elsewhere Barrow beat the improving Gateshead Thunder 32-14, two tries to Scott Dyson for the Thunder. Batley beat Workington Town 18-10, two goals to Dean Lawford (7 games for the Rams last season) and Featherstone beat Sheffield 28-18 to move into 9th position. There's a lot to play for and with numerous games to re-arrange will that spell the end of the National Cup? Only a thought but games could then be re-arranged at leisure and without the inconvenience of a number of mid-week trips!

Enjoy the game.

Tony Scargill

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It has been a long and frustrating break without a match and there's only so much you can do on the training pitch. Understandably, with the ground freezing as badly as it did safety had to come first. With such a long season still ahead of us, it is just not worth the risks. However, there has been a huge buzz of excitement in the build up to today's home match against Oldham. It's a chance for the team to dust away some tension as we look to get our season back on track.

As Grand Final runners-up from last year, Oldham are looking strong again this season. With both squads fresh from the last 4 weeks (ours especially) you can expect some quality rugby today.

As ever, with the crowd having the same time to rest their voices, we will also expect some big cheers from you to get us going.

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The Brooke Report



Steve Brooke

FORMER chairman Bob McDermott may have left the club at a bad time and under the wrong circumstances but while some supporters have turned him into something of a villain in the piece I would urge them to look at some positives for a change. Firstly, under his aegis the Rams achieved more success in 1999 and 2000 than they had done in the previous quarter of a century. And secondly he made some inspired choices in his time. Who could have predicted the meteoric rise of Neil Kelly, once a workhorse hooker new to management but now seen as one of the brightest British coaching prospects in Super League? Who appointed Andy Fisher? And who brought John Harbin to the Rams? Bob McDermott may have excited criticism from the ranks because the Rams flattered to deceive when they had a stab at Super League but the man had a knack of making the right appointments and we have his legacy in charge today.

There's no doubt that John Harbin has one of the toughest jobs in Rugby League. But he's used to battling it out. He did it at Wakefield, remember. People automatically think of him as the archetypal no-nonsense Aussie, but he's nothing of the sort. He is a Yorkshireman by birth and cherishes his roots. Maybe the secret to his battling spirit is the fact that he was born in a castle just after the Second World War. Hazlewood Castle, three miles south of Tadcaster. Built during the reign of Edward 1 it remained in one family's name until becoming a monastery then part-time maternity home in the 1940s. If Dewsbury needed a knight in shining white armour they've got him! Four decades in Australia have left their stamp on Harbin but he genuinely wanted to come back to his Yorkshire roots. The Harbin family lived in Swillington Common, near Leeds, just before John emigrated to Australia in 1957. He was a fanatic Leeds United supporter (and still treasures a Christmas card sent to him by Raich Carter, manager of Leeds 1953-58) when he left Britain.

Arriving in Australia he told everyone he was a footballer and soon found himself playing...rugby league! "Everyone calls it footie over there, so they assumed I played rugby," said John. He went on to play

Queensland County RL until a knee injury forced him to retire prematurely at 24. He took up coaching, however, and stayed within the game, eventually working with players of the calibre of Rod Reddy and Gary Larson at Queensland. "I coached the kids, then the amateurs and finally the professionals, but I always wanted to come back to England. I knew what was going on over here because I got copies of the old Green sports edition of the Yorkshire Evening Post sent to me."

His first post back in Yorkshire was with Wakefield Wildcats where he spent three years as development officer, football manager and head coach. Harbin developed many ties with Wakefield and his many fans within the club were deeply upset when the Wildcats lost him. Wildcats chief scout John Holroyd and the development team at Belle Vue were quoted as being 'devastated' by Harbin's departure. "In my opinion John's a genius," Holroyd is reported to have said, adding: "We learned so much from him. John's one of these people who makes things happen. He does make dreams come true."

Moving across to the Rams Harbin said he wouldn't be pinching for players from Wakefield unless they were available. Nevertheless Andy Fisher has been recruiting heavily from Belle Vue and Harbin finds himself surrounded by familiar faces. "We are in a good situation now because we have been recruiting hungry players. "The downside to that is that if our players re-establish themselves and build a reputation then they could be on their way to a Super League club. "We wouldn't stand in their way." About ten have come from Wakefield.

"We now have an Alliance team, which is something given that most NFP clubs are not fielding one. Their season starts on January 18 when they have an eight-week season of friendlies before a break, then the season proper begins. "We are looking for a top 9 spot this season so that we go into next season's new National League Division 1. "We've got about 36 players in all if you count the six academy lads.



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Rams in

Action

Dewsbury 21 Barrow 31





This week another of our Newcomers is put under the spotlight. It is Chris Parker, a Kentish lad by birth coming from Maidstone but now resident in Keighley where he started playing rugby at the age of nine with Keighley Albion. He turned professional as a nineteen year old with Bradford Bulls. He had an eighteen month stint in Australia playing with the Grafton Club in New South Wales before returning to England and playing with Gateshead Thunder. He joined Dewsbury last September, holding a regular first team place. Chris is single and has a girlfriend Lisa, he lists his favourite food as lasagne and loves Only Fools and Horses on TV, and names American Pie as his best film. BMW

is top of the list in cars, and Stadium Australia is his favourite ground, along with Parramatta as his favourite club. Brad Fittler is listed as his most respected player. Influence on his game has come from his Dad and Darrell Shelford. He says his time in Australia as his best moments as his best moments in Rugby to date. His ambition is to get bigger and fatter and score more tries.



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It is always important for a body like DRISA to maintain its momentum and after a successful Fans Forum and the walkabout in Dewsbury town centre, an event like the Christmas party held after the Barrow game, would be a good indication of how well we were getting on.

Bearing in mind Dewsbury lost prior to the event and the fans were heading for the exits, we were a bit worried. However the turnout was very good and it shows that by attracting families to the club we can begin to grow our fan base via the kids in the Dewsbury area. The disco was a great success encouraging not only the children to get up and dance but also the parents. Whether that's a good thing is another matter but this pointed out to us that there could be a lot more that we could do for families during the forthcoming season and we will be looking into this mid January.

We would like to thank those of you who attended the disco particularly the cheerleaders who showed the way. I guess the Royal Suite is a bit warmer for dancing than the half way line. We would also like to thank the 2 individuals who are interested in increasing the DRISA committee numbers. This is a great help to us and hopefully will bring in fresh ideas.

One final point the next fans forum will be held on Wednesday 30th January at 7:30pm in the Royal Suite. John Harbin, Andy Fisher and Richard Slater will be attending and available for questions.



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AXIS 1700+WK

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