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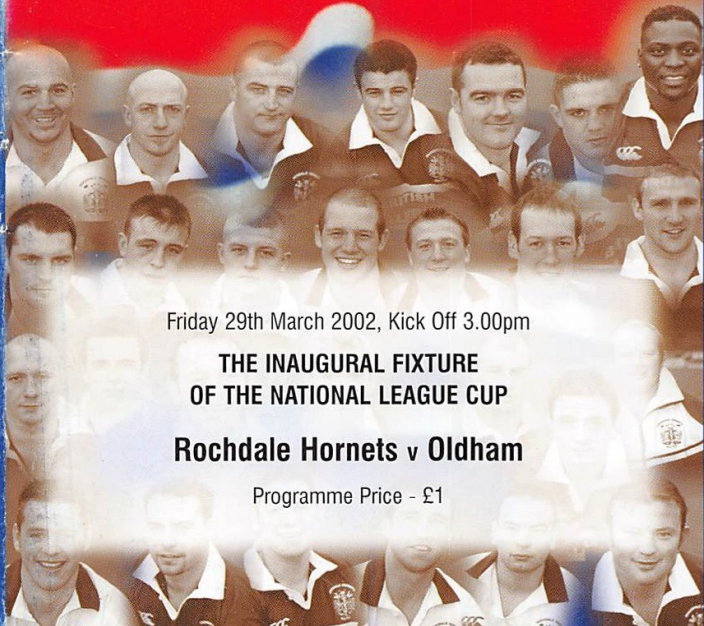
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Friday 29th March 2002, Kick Off 3.00pm

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Rochdale Hornets v Oldham

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WATCH TO THE COACH'S PLAYER OF THE SEASON

martin's corner



Welcome to today's National Cup game.

When the National Cup was first mooted, I along with a number of other NFP Coach's was not too happy with the idea. I appreciate the difficulty of the numbers of teams involved but I would prefer a format where all the Northern Ford Premiership teams played each other twice in the season.



That said, the National Cup is here and it offers the opportunity to win some silverware. That always acts as a bit of a spur and with our first game being against Oldham nobody, will be thinking about taking it easy.

I'll have to weigh things up as we progress over the next two months and if possible I'll be looking to rotate a few of the players to give them all competitive outings. To guarantee progressing from the regional group into the knock-out stage we've got to finish

in the top two, so we'll be trying to get off to a winning start.

The way the competition was set up means that there were bound to be a number of local derbies. These games are always eagerly anticipated by everyone and usually the players of both sides rise to the occasion. I have no reason to doubt that today will any different.

There should be a good bank-holiday crowd in here today and that always generates a great passionate atmosphere which the players usually react to. We've had two disappointing results on the trot and I'll be looking for a positive reaction from the players this afternoon. You can also play your part

by getting behind the team again.

Enjoy the game.

Martin



Photos courtesy of

ROCHDALE HORNETS RLFC

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boardroombrief



Today we offer a warm welcome to all the Board, officials players and supporters of Oldham who have made the relatively short journey for todays National Cup fixture. We also want to welcome todays sponsors and trust they will have a wonderful day's entertainment.

The National Cup competition offers us a two-month break from the NFP. Admittedly the National Cup was criticised in a number of quarters when it was launched and a number of important questions will soon be answered. Will it be popular with supporters? Will Coaches play their best teams or use the competition to give "fringe" players some competitive experience as they build to the second half of the NFP season?

We couldn't have asked for a better game to start with than the one we've got. In whatever sport you care to think about 'local derbies' are eagerly anticipated by everyone associated with both clubs. Winning is particularly sweet and defeat usually more painful. So there's always a lot at stake, no matter which competition we're playing in.

There's a long tradition of games between our two clubs, stretching back to November 1876, something we can both be proud of. Even so called friendly games tend to be more intense, as we know all too well with the competitiveness of games for the longstanding A.J. Law Cup. In recent years both teams have shown that they can beat the other and that unpredictability adds to the anticipation this afternoon. Therefore we should get another cracking game.

Our progress in the NFP has faltered over the last couple of

games and possibly the break from the competition will enable us to re- group before the competition restarts. It's disappointing not going into the break in one of the top three positions but there's nothing we can do about that now. We must look to do well in the National Cup and build to the restart. Hopefully we will peak in the second half of the season, when it matters most.

On the commercial front we were pleased to have sealed a new sponsorship partnership with Kingston Inbusiness Communications who will be our exclusive man of the match sponsors. Kingston Inbusiness is a national business services division of the Kingston Group and has built up a formidable reputation in the business communications market. Obviously we hope it becomes a mutually beneficial relationship.

We have been in discussions for several weeks and know that Kingston have ideas around developing their link with us because they want to be associated with our club in these exciting times and be part of the community development structures the club are formulating. We are looking forward to being partners in these areas as they unfold.

Before the game you will be entertained by a group of local schoolchildren as part of the Arena of Life a community learning programme. We're sure you will appreciate the efforts of the children who have had to plan, promote and present the action here this afternoon. We are pleased to be able to provide a focus for their work and add to your afternoons entertainment in the process.

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The weather has again affected Rochdale Hornets' progress in the Spring Cup competition. Most recently there was a late postponement of the scheduled fixture with Dewsbury Rams on 21 March 2002. The pitch at Butterworth Park was waterlogged in patches and deemed too dangerous to play on by the referee.

The club apologises to those fans inconvenienced by the late postponement.

Sat 2nd Feb	2.30 p.m.	Batley Bulldogs	A	10 -20
Sat 2th March	7.30 p.m.	Oldham	H	32 - 10
Sat 9th Mar	2.30 p.m.	Workington Town	A	6-17
Sat 16th Mar	2.30 p.m.	Workington Town	H	40- 6
Thurs 21st Mar	7.30 p.m.	Dewsbury Rams	H	TBA
Sat 6th April	2.30 p.m.	Oldham	A	
Sat 20th April	2.30 p.m.	SPRING CUP FINAL		

springcup table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
Rochdale Hornets	4	4	0	0	109	32	77	8
Batley Bulldogs	4	3	0	1	113	52	61	6
Oldham	2	1	0	1	28	44	-16	2
Workington Town	3	0	0	3	26	86	-60	0
Dewsbury Rams	3	0	0	3	30	92	-62	0

oldham

Our visitors in focus



CLUB HONOURS

Rugby League Championship Winners : 1909-10, 1910-11, 1956-57
 Runners Up : 1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22, 1954-55
 First Division Winners : 1904-05

Challenge Cup Winners : 1899, 1925, 1927
 Runners Up : 1907, 1912, 1924, 1926
 Lancashire Cup : 1907 1910, 1913, 1919, 1924, 1933, 1956, 1957, 1958
 Lancashire League : 1897-98 1900-01 1907-08 1909-10 1921-22 1956-57 1957-58
 Second Division : 1963-64, 1981-82, 1987-88
 Divisional Premiership : 1988, 1992

10 OLDHAM MILESTONES

- 1895 First game in the Northern Union, a 16-8 defeat at Hunslet
- 1899 Oldham beat Hunslet to become the first Lancashire club to win the Challenge Cup
- 1922 Reg Farrar sets a club record of 49 tries in a season
- 1927 The first radio broadcast of a challenge cup final takes place when Oldham play Swinton at Wigan
- 1933 Alex Givovons makes his debut for the club he would be associated with for 60 years
- 1956-57 A three trophy season, Lancashire Cup, League and Championship Final
- 1959 Oldham pay a world record £10,650 to Workington Town for Ike Southward
- 1981-82 Mike Parrish becomes the only Oldham to score in every game in a season
- 1997 Oldham beat Swinton 20-16 in their last game at Watersheddings on 19 January
- 1997 Oldham Bears drop out of Super League, go into liquidation and are resurrected as a second division team

OLDHAMS RESULTS THIS TERM

16/12/01	Hull K R	26	V	10	Oldham	2032
30/12/01	Leigh Centurions	46	V	12	Oldham	3388
06/01/02	Oldham	32	V	16	York Wasps	1130
13/01/02	Dewsbury Rams	30	V	6	Oldham	1410
20/01/02	Oldham	34	V	2	Chorley Lynx	1114
27/01/02 CC	Oldham	38	V	4	West Hull	1131
03/02/02	Workington Town	28	V	20	Oldham	991
10/02/02 CC	Oldham	6	V	40	St Helens	4089
17/02/02	Oldham	54	V	2	Gateshead Thunder	931
03/03/02	Huddersfield Giants	28	V	18	Oldham	3191
10/03/02	Oldham	22	V	22	Doncaster Dragons	1067
15/03/02	Sheffield Eagles	6	V	25	Oldham	1095
24/03/02	Oldham	23	V	12	Featherstone Rovers	1533

the national cup



Today sees the start of a new competition, the National Cup. The National Cup is a mid season departure from the Northern Ford Premiership, albeit an unwelcome one in many peoples eyes.

It remains to be seen how popular the competition will be in the fan's eyes and more to the point, how seriously the clubs, coach's and players take it. The regionalised format offers a number of "local" games which by their very nature usually prove popular with the fans. A reasonable bank-holiday crowd is expected here today.

One fact remains, any opportunity for a club to win some silverware will always have a certain fascination and few Oldham or Hornets fans in the crowd today wouldn't welcome the opportunity of cheering their team on in the final.

The National Cup competition starts off with a zonal, league format. All the in a group teams play each other once and the top two from each Group along with the two best runners-up progress to the quarter-finals on 12 May 2002. The competition then becomes a knock-out cup competition with the final scheduled to take place on 26th May 2002, at a venue to be decided.

THE NATIONAL CUP REGIONAL GROUPS

CENTRAL

Batley Bulldogs
Dewsbury Rams
Keighley Cougars
Huddersfield Giants
Hunslet Hawks
Oldham
Rochdale Hornets

WEST

Barrow Border Raiders
Chorley Lynx
Leigh Centurions
Swinton Lions
Whitehaven Warriors
Workington Town

EAST

Doncaster Dragons
Featherstone Rovers
Gateshead Thunder
Hull KR
Sheffield Eagles
York Wasps

TODAYS NATIONAL CUP FIXTURES

EAST

York Wasps v Featherstone Rovers 3.00 Huntington Stadium
Gateshead Thunder v Hull Kingston Rovers 7.30 The Thunderdome
Doncaster Dragons v Sheffield Eagles 7.30 Belle Vue

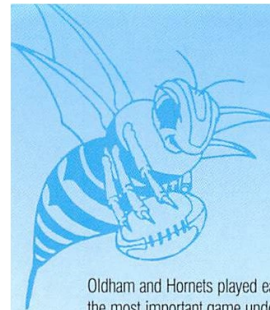
WEST

Workington Town v Whitehaven 3.30 Derwent Park
Leigh Centurions v Swinton Lions 3.00 Hilton Park
Chorley Lynx v Barrow Raiders 3.00 Victory Park

CENTRAL

Rochdale Hornets v Oldham 7.30 Spotland
Huddersfield Giants v Hunslet Hawks 7.30 McAlpine Stadium
Dewsbury Rams v Batley Bulldogs 7.30 Ram Stadium

looking back



...to the last time we met

Oldham and Hornets played each other several times last year, the most important game undoubtedly being the Play-off Semi Final. However we have chosen to look back to a game played a few months before the Semi Final, a far happier reflection for Hornets fans!

13 April 2001

Oldham 10 v 38 Rochdale Hornets

(Att: 2,398)

With both sides in impressive form going into the game this was expected to be one of the most exciting derby games for years. Rochdale's team included six former Oldham players and another two who were born in the town, as well as a Coach who had been involved with Oldham early in his career.

The opening minutes were dominated by Oldham and gave no clue to the course the game would follow. Oldham deservedly scored the first points after five minutes with a Pat Rich penalty. Against the run of play and in their first worthwhile attack of the game Hornets replied with a converted try from Dave Watson. On 14 minutes Pat Rich converted his second penalty but by now Rochdale were looking a much more organised and dangerous team. In the 20th minute Danny Wood converted a penalty to extend Hornets' lead even further.

Rochdale Hornets continued to push forward and good work by Sean Cooper set up the supporting Dave Watson to score.

Wood converted and kicked a second penalty in the 34th minute. With only a minute of the half remaining, James Bunyan was put through by Latham Tawhai for another converted try leaving the half time score Oldham 4 Rochdale Hornets 22.

Within five minutes of the restart Sean Cooper and Matt Calland touchdowns extended the lead even further. Hornets were now rampant, their support play was exemplary and it was no surprise when Latham Tawhai burst through again this time to set up Paul Owen, who gratefully accepted the chance to stroll over the line. Danny Wood again converted.

In the dying seconds a rare attack by Oldham resulted in a try for Phil Farrell and Pat Rich converted the goal- kick to leave the final score Oldham 10 Rochdale 38.

OLDHAM Team: D Arnold, J Hayes, A Gibbons, P Rich, W Barrow, D Gibbons, N Roden, L Casey, J Hough, J Clegg, P Farrell, P Norton, I Sinfield. Subs: G Dodd, A Proctor, C Farrell, D Lacey.
Tries: P Farrell(1) Goals: Pat Rich (3)

ROCHDALE HORNETS Team: P Owen, S Cooper, B O'Meara, M Calland, M Billy, Danny Wood, L Tawhai, D Sculthorpe, D Robinson, A Ireland, D Stephenson, J Bunyan, D Watson Subs: W Rogers, D Larder, M Bunce, W Ayres.
Tries: P Owen, S Cooper, M. Calland, D. Watson (2), J. Bunyan Goals D Wood (7)

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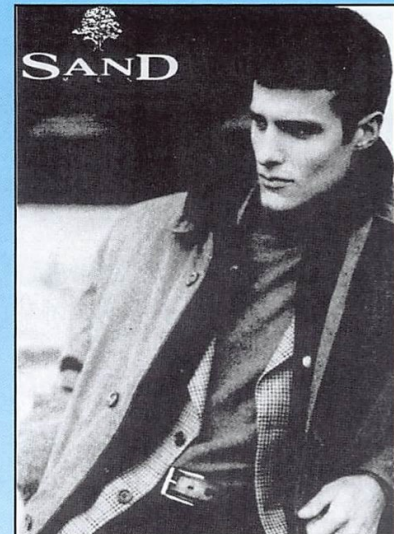
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news & views

by David Ledsham



Nothing seems to change. The Rugby League headlines are all made up of depressing stories once again. And I don't just mean reports of the Huddersfield mauling or a failure to kill off twelve-man opposition!

Last month it was the Gateshead Thunder's 'will they/won't they go bust' story. In the last couple of weeks it's the same again, this time York Wasps' future is the subject of speculation. It seems that anyone with a spare £30K could have themselves a controlling stake in the ailing club. However other reports suggest that the figure needed to get York to the end of the season is really about £100K.

Whatever, look for a mass exodus of players as the Wasps try to prune their wage bill and players refuse reduced contracts. By the time you read this the story may have taken a few new twists. A meeting was due to take place on Sunday 24th March to form a Supporters Trust to try to ensure the survival of York Rugby League Football Club. But the Wasps might already have folded. I hope not - I so like the corny "Hornets sting Wasps" headlines and '98-0' against a current NFP team looks far more creditable in the record books than if it were against a non-existent team.

Last week a petition of 30,000 names was presented to the House of Commons. Initiated by St.Helens fan Ray Gent, the Petition was formally introduced by the All-Party Parliamentary RL Group. The petition condemned the attitude of some parts of the media; particularly the London based media, which ranges from hostility to simple ignorance about the country's second major spectator sport at club level. Rugby League Supporters Association Chair, Cliff Spracklen commented that "the petition is massive testimony to the feeling of Rugby League fans generally, and a reminder to the media and authorities that they represent a sizeable, articulate (not writing columns like wot I wrote) and determined constituency". It certainly gets my vote, even if I wasn't one of the 30,000 signatures.


Nice to see that Leigh have pledged to hunt down the troublemakers who marred their Challenge Cup quarter-final against Wigan. Club Chairman Mike Nolan said he wants fans at the game to name and shame the culprits based on CCTV footage. "We wanted to show we could stage a big show and this almost ruined it," he said. (Only almost?).

He also said that "the game has moved on from hooliganism and we have to move with it". Shame the same attitude wasn't adopted a couple of weeks ago when they seemed to be more concerned with brushing accusations of hooliganism under the carpet following the Workington Town game.

BBC Sport Online is behind a new monthly award designed to recognise the stars and unsung heroes of British Rugby League. Their 'Personality of the Month Award' is intended to ensure coaches, referees, chief executives and even the tea lady gets a share of the limelight, not just the players. The first of the engraved crystal trophies will be handed out at the end of March. Deciding who wins each monthly award will be BBC Sport Online Rugby League editor Phil Gordos and BBC commentators Ray French and Dave Woods. "It comes at a time when rugby league's popularity is on the rise. There is a real sense of optimism, especially in light of the decision to give the international game a much higher profile coverage. We are determined to make BBC Sport Online the first port of call for all Rugby League enthusiasts."

Fans can contact BBC Sport Online with any suggestions for their 'Personality of the Month' at rugbyleague@bbc.co.uk. So get your suggestions in for your Personality of the Month. Don't forget its spell Ledsham, not Leadsham!

Footnote: What a bad day at the office for Paul Mansson, last week. Sent off in the first quarter, banished to the stand by the Fourth Official when he returned after his early bath and finally told by a Steward to take his feet off the seat. Still he had a big win bonus type grin on his face at the end.



thearenaoflife

by Ian Langley, Robert Mooney
Amanda Bostock & Katie McGowan

Lights, sound, camera, action as the pupils of Oulder Hill, Failinge, Spring Hill Boulderstone Tech. provide the pre-match entertainment for the today's huge derby game against Oldham.

The 60 pupils from nine different local schools have been working frantically on the award-winning Arena of Life Project and we have sacrificed our (hard earned might I add) half-term holidays to bring you today's top class pre-match entertainment featuring the mind-blowing, Moulin Rouge Show. Every single one of us had a different deadline to meet whether it be writing articles for the marketing workshop, learning the 'show's' great songs or the dance team perfecting their funky moves for today's spectacle. (Yeah right slave drivers!) It was hard work but everyone got there in the end.

The Arena of Life was set up for kids between the ages of eleven and sixteen who are believed to have active imaginations and high potential this was to get the kids involved and give them a once in a lifetime opportunity. The workshops ran for two weeks, 35 hours of the kid's time in total. Rochdale are indeed the very first NFP side to become involved with the Arena of Life project following hot on the heels of top Premiership Football Clubs.

Rochdale Excellence in Cities department are the key people who have made the project happen and have supported the project superbly throughout. Marek Barenski, Excellence in Cities, Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator commented

"It was a real coup to be invited to allow so many of our G+T pupils to work with the Arena of Life to produce this brilliant showpiece. Pupils have worked extremely hard to achieve professional levels of performance both in front and behind the cameras.



The enthusiasm and hard work of the young people cannot be stressed too highly and it has been a real pleasure to see that hard work can be rewarded with large smiles and a wonderful performance."

Diane King, Director of Excellence in Cities, Rochdale added: "We are always trying to promote success and excellence in Rochdale and working with the Arena of Life has enabled a large number of Rochdale pupils to achieve these goals. There are so many young people whose talents are often overlooked. What Excellence in Cities manages to achieve amongst other things is raising the levels of achievement of our more able pupils. An occasion like this allows us to work with local partners to put on a very public opportunity for these achievements to be recognised."



"Rochdale Hornets are delighted to welcome the school sand Arena of Life team to Spotland. It is a clear aim to make our club a pivotal part of the community and this project clearly embraces that ethos. We are delighted to be only the second rugby league club to host Arena of Life. Most importantly we want

thank the young people for all their hard work in putting together the show, and we wish all the very best for their big day!" added Hornets General Manager Liam O'Reilly

The workshops ran for two weeks, 35 hours of the kid's time in total. Rochdale are indeed the very first NFP side to become involved with the Arena of Life project, and only the second League club to perform the show, ahead of a number of Super League sides and indeed top Premiership Football Clubs.

So there we have it the kids of Rochdale, a top class derby, we're in charge. Well guess what? The kids are taking over!!

Enjoy today's show

Today's pre match entertainment is being presented by pupils from a number of local schools through the 'Arena of Life' initiative.



Pupils from Falinge, Oulder Hill. St. Cuthberts, Balderstone Technology and Springhill High Schools as well as Hopwood Hall College have been involved in planning, promoting and delivery of the event.

Arena of Life projects require pupils to employ a variety of learning skills in designing and producing a musical show through a collaborative approach, using a broad range of performing, arts and media skills. Similar events have been showcased at other stadiums across the country and has already attracted significant media exposure with two four page newspaper supplements and Sky Sports coverage.



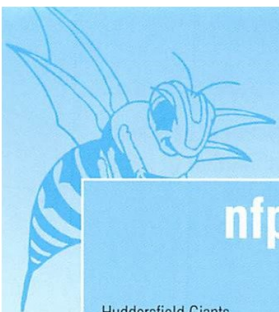
Aimed at gifted and talented pupils as well as those who may be underachieving or disaffected, the project allows pupils to develop their skills, collaborate with other schools and employs a variety of learning styles in a challenging environment. Through practising and developing their specialist skills it is hoped to close the all too wide gap between education and industry in a wide variety of arts and media related areas. Some of the pupils involved in organising or delivering today's event may have already come to the notice of influential people and are on their first steps to successful careers.



The Arena of Life initiative continues to encourage industry and business links to add weight and increase public awareness in the events.

As well as achieving the learning partnership objectives there will be a video of this event outlining achievements in the workshops. This will be a valuable addition to the participant's portfolio of achievement and may assist pupils in obtaining places at University or College.

For more details about The Arena of Life project visit their web site at www.arenaoflife.co.uk



nfp Premiership 2001/02

As at 24th March 2002

	P	W	D	L	For	Agst	Diff	PTS
Huddersfield Giants	13	12	1	0	464	98	366	25
Whitehaven Warriors	12	9	1	2	314	148	166	19
Hull KR	11	9	0	2	268	133	135	18
Leigh Centurions	10	8	1	1	354	154	200	17
Featherstone Rovers	12	8	1	3	332	195	137	17
ROCHDALE HORNETS	12	8	1	3	324	241	83	17
Dewsbury Rams	12	8	0	4	345	214	131	16
Workington Town	14	8	0	6	340	235	105	16
Sheffield Eagles	13	7	0	6	301	225	76	14
Doncaster Rovers	10	6	1	3	256	188	68	13
Batley Bulldogs	13	6	0	7	253	329	-76	12
Oldham	11	5	1	5	256	218	38	11
Barrow Border Raiders	12	4	0	8	281	276	5	8
Keighley Cougars	12	4	0	8	190	424	-234	8
Chorley Lynx	12	2	0	10	206	358	-152	4
Hunslet Hawks	13	2	0	11	194	462	-268	4
Swinton Lions	10	1	0	9	113	362	-249	2
York Wasps	11	1	0	10	105	430	-325	2
Gateshead Thunder	11	0	1	10	106	312	-206	1

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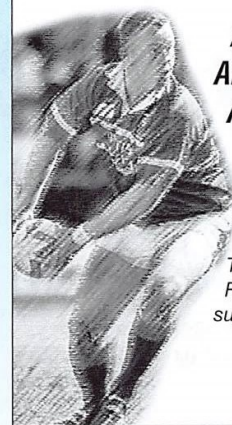
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Lancashire Cup Winners, 1911-12, 1914-15, 1918-19
Beaten Finalists, 1912-13, 1919-20, 1965-66, 1990-1991
Regal Trophy Beaten Finalists, 1973-74
BBC2 Floodlight Trophy Beaten Finalists, 1971-72

CLUB RECORDS

Debut Season, 1895-96
Biggest Victory, 98-0 v York Wasps, 2000-01
Heaviest Defeat, 10-82 v Hull Sharks, 1999-2000

Most Tries: In a Career - 103, J. Williams, 1931-37
In a Season - 31, M. Billy, 2000-01

In a Match - 5, J. Corsi, J. Williams, N. Brelsford, M Billy, 1921 & 22, 1933, 1972, 2001

Most Goals: In a Career - 733, W. Gowers, 1922-36
In a Season - 150, M. Strett, 1994-95
In a Match - 14, S. Turner, 1989

Most Points: In a Career - 1481, W. Gowers, 1922-36
In a Season - 346, M. Strett, 1994-95
In a Match - 32, S. Turner, 1988-89

Most Appearances: 455, W. Gowers, 1922-36

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