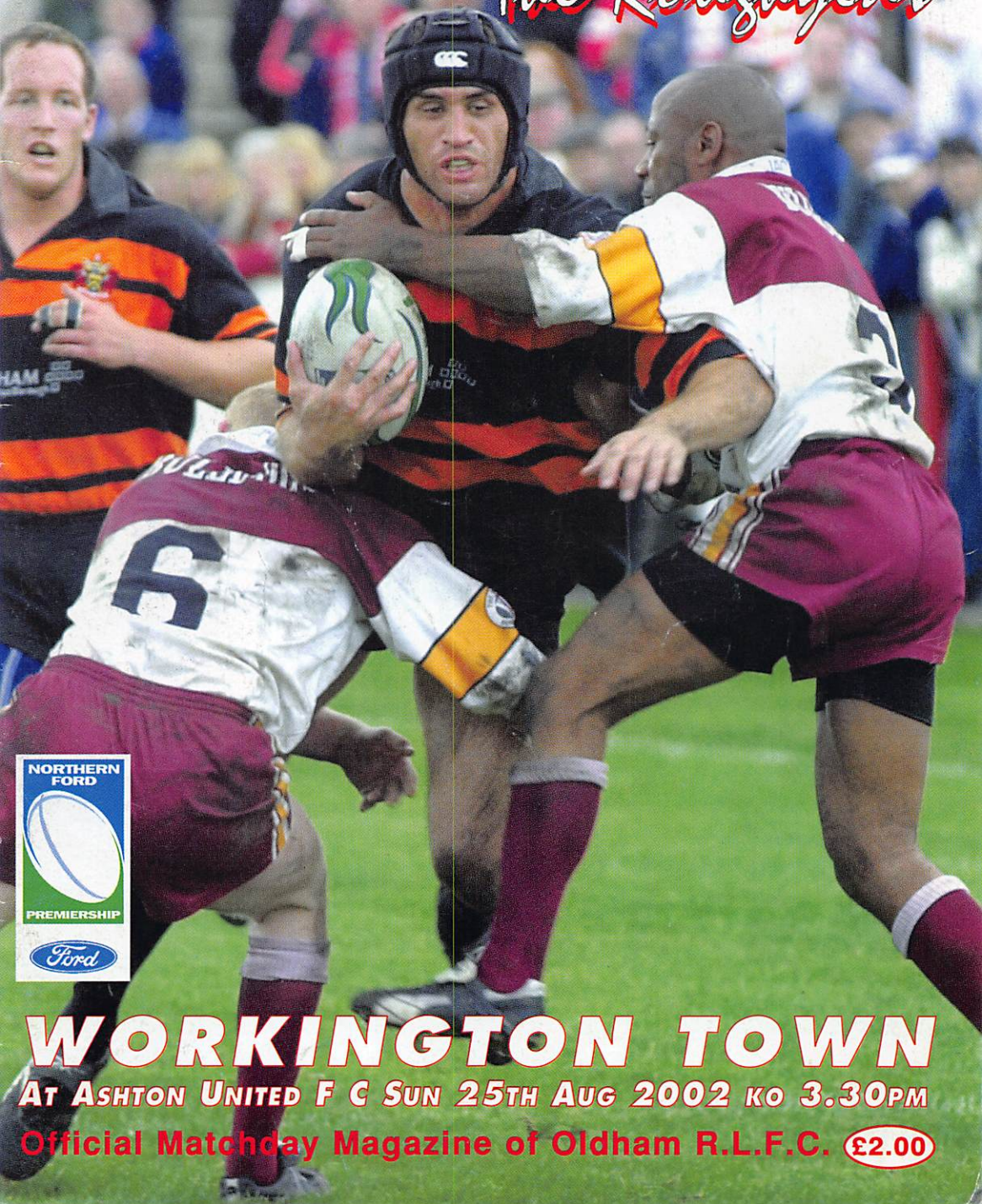


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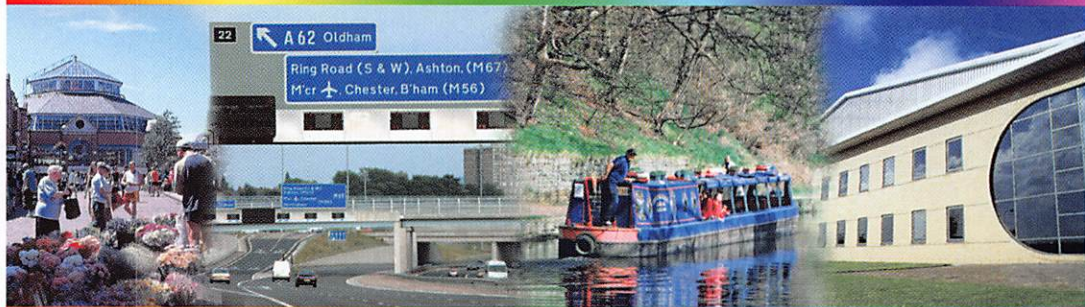
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IN THE HOT SEAT

with Christopher Hamilton

AS WE enter the final straight of this marathon playing season its all to play for. With three games to go - all at home - it's neck and neck for the ninth and final spot in the play-offs.

We know that if we win all 3 games we will make it and as such it's in our own hands. We have had no luck at all this season but the old saying of "You make your own luck" is also true.

By the time you read these notes Friday's transfer deadline will have passed and hopefully we will have a couple of new faces on board to help our final push.

Today's game against Workington will undoubtedly be another nerve wrecker with both teams on the same points from the same number of games. Workington, following the departure of Martin Wood, will be keen to impress and will need no motivation for this game.

Having drawn this season against Doncaster and Batley, having beaten Keighley and Barrow by two points each and having lost against Rochdale (3 times!), Leigh, Whitehaven and Huddersfield by four points or less the need for mental toughness has never been more apparent.

Just imagine had we won those games the extra points would have seen us sitting in something like third place. What a different perspective that would put on this season. One thing is for sure, however, the players have demonstrated that they have the ability to compete with the best teams in the division as they have shown and if they can cut out some of the costly errors we can still be a force to be reckoned with.

With the Dewsbury game coming up on Wednesday your continued support is appreciated and with this crucial time of the season if you can bring along extra 'friends' that would be fantastic.

Who knows it might even be that some of these 'fans' who have been to away matches but not to any at Hurst Cross might even turn up and help financially their own club instead of everybody elses. We live in hope.

Enjoy the game.



Chris



The Roughyeds
Oldham Rugby League Football
Club (1997) Limited

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Ganley 1950-61, John Etty 1954-59,

Derek Turner 1955-59, Bob Irving

1964-74, Martin Murphy 1966-82,

Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS MATCHDAY MAGAZINE DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF OLDHAM RLFC (1997) LTD.

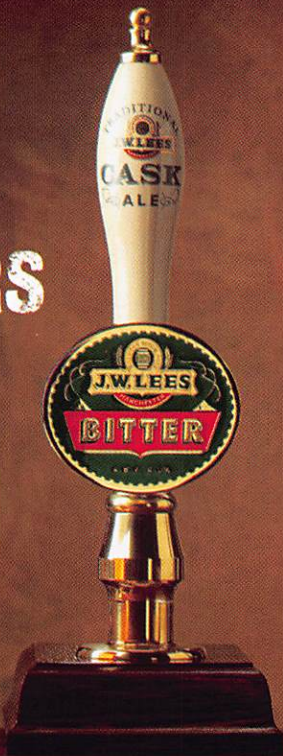
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COACH'S COMMENTS... with Steve Molloy

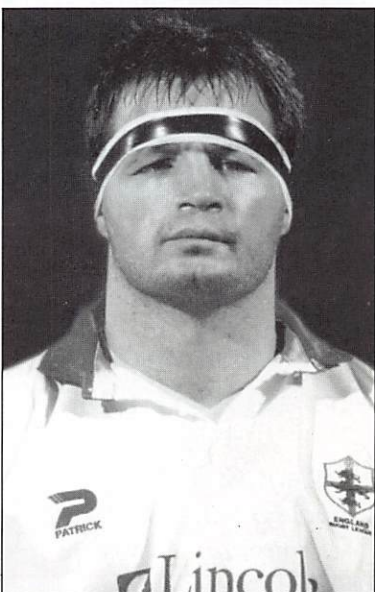
A SPECIAL welcome to all fans, players and officials of Workington Town to what could well prove to be a very crucial game for both clubs. The fight for the ninth spot is proving to be more of a contest than the top spot.

I really feel our spectators will have a massive input into how we actually finish the season with our final three games, before any play-offs, all being at Hurst Cross. It has certainly been a season of turmoil both on and off the field and now our recent injury crisis has just added to this. Your vocal support will be absolutely vital to us and I know you won't let us down.

Again a lot of grey hairs and chewed finger nails have been engendered over the last couple of weeks. I still believe with the Batley game that we controlled the game for such a large period of the game, that to come away with only a point was utterly frustrating. The Rochdale game, like all derbies was close and extremely hard fought. In the end I feel the injury situation probably cost us the game in that we didn't have much experience on the bench and in tight games I am certain that experience on the bench gives you that edge.

This added to some strange refereeing in the two games has cost us dearly over the last couple of weeks, but as ever at this club the lads will never give up and will give their all whatever the circumstances.

Enjoy the game.



Steve



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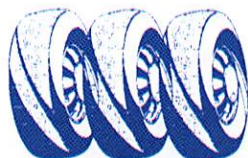
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In Yer Face



A VISIT to the new Manchester City Stadium during the Commonwealth Games was a real pleasure. It is really pleasing to be able to record a British success story and Manchester showed the self regarding, opinionated politicos who run our nation's affairs down in London just how it should be done. The experience knocked a visit to Wembley into a cocked hat. I similarly enjoyed a trip to Cardiff's Millennium Stadium and those who have been to Murrayfield for the Challenge Cup Final have also been suitably impressed. The entertainment and the availability of food and drink at Manchester were good (still a bit pricy, though) and the stewarding friendly and not at all intrusive - others please note! I don't know about parking, but we walked virtually straight onto a shuttle bus back to Victoria and suffered no hassle whatsoever. I know the Commonwealth Games was staffed by volunteers in large part so it will be interesting to see how things go after the conversion work and the arrival of Manchester City F.C. in 2003. However, at this juncture it would be fair to say that here is a venue well worthy of consideration by the Rugby League authorities for the staging of big games such as Test Matches, a venue, what's more, virtually in the heart of a vibrant city with much to offer visitors. And the bonus for we Roughyed followers is it's only about six miles from Oldham!



When Hazem El Mazri kicked a last gasp goal for Canterbury Bulldogs to defeat Newcastle Knights at Marathon Stadium he emphasised once again the importance of a reliable goalkicker, just as Paul Deacon had for Bradford in a key match with Wigan earlier in the season. With the very best kickers averaging a success rate over 90% it is clear where the difference can lie not only in winning or losing but in putting silverware on the sideboard. When put to the test by New South Wales Coach Phil Gould the phenomenal El Mazri proved able to land goals equally well with his left foot and - even

more startling - could land them from the touchline while blindfolded.

All of which causes me to reflect on the absence of Pat Rich from this year's Oldham team. With so many close games either drawn or lost by six points, or fewer where might Oldham have been with a really reliable marksman such as Jamie Rooney or Neil Turley? having possessed a world record breaking goalkicker in the 1950's in the great Bernard Ganley Oldham, above most clubs, should recognise the value of a reliable marksman. Phil Larder was equally prolific and I recall Oldham teams of the past finding places on the wing for steady points accumulators such as Uri Stoudin and Eric Fitzsimmons. There is no doubt that Pat Rich in his time with the Roughyeds was a major influence and game breaker. And the advantage of a kicker with a reputation for converting every opportunity is that it puts pressure on the opposition not to concede penalties, especially in their own half of the field. The N.F.P. currently boasts some outstanding kickers with, in addition to Rooney and Turley, the likes of Johnny Woodcock of Doncaster, Steve McNamara of Huddersfield, Chris Charles of Hull K.R., Tane Manihera of Workington and, as we discovered to our cost at Spotland last week, Rochdale's Danny Wood. The moral is obvious.



I'm not the greatest fan in the world of Bradford Bulls but even I have to admit that their victory in the Middlesex 7s tournament last weekend, coming on the back of a sound thrashing at Valley Parade by St. Helens the night before was a remarkable achievement. I admit to being a doubter about the participation by rugby league clubs in an event of this nature at all, but Bradford's triumph is a real publicity coup. Except of course T.V. and the press studiously avoided much mention of their win in what was the major rugby union event of the weekend. No wonder we're paranoid up North!

G.C.



'THE DON'

ON THIS DAY . . .

Don Yates looks back to August 25th yesteryear

Saturday 25th August 1945 was a very significant day in the history of today's visitors Workington Town. That was the day when the club played its very first competitive match, a home League Championship match against Broughton Rangers. Town had spent the summer recruiting players including scrum-half Wilson Irving from Oldham. Tint, as he was known, skippered Town on that historic occasion and went on to make 28 appearances for the club during the following couple of seasons, scoring five tries and a goal. One of those tries was scored against Broughton in that opening match when Town, although confident of victory, did not expect to win as easily as they did, the final score being 27-5. The player who had the distinction of scoring Workington's first ever try was winger George Armstrong. The other winger, Billy Askew, scored twice whilst centre Hedley Rodgers, stand-off George Jepson and second-row forward Sam Studholme also touched down for tries. The other second-rower, Dennis Cavanagh, landed three goals. That opening fixture was played at Borough Park, the Workington soccer ground because Derwent Park was not completed until 1956. The Broughton match attracted an attendance of 4,100, a disappointing figure in those days.

It was on this day in 1956, Saturday 24th August, that the great Oldham team which went on to win the Championship pulled off a particularly satisfying victory. They won at Rochdale that day and, although any victory over Hornets is a cause for celebration, the score was 43-0. The list of scorers will invoke fond memories for those supporters fortunate enough to have seen the great team play. Tries were scored by Denis Ayres (3), John Etty (2), Frank Stirrup, Jack Keith, Frank Pitchford and Derek Turner. Bernard Ganley landed eight goals. The six players who appeared that day but did not score were Dick Cracknell, Alan Davies, Ken Jackson, Don Vines,

Charlie Winslade and Sid Little. What a team!

On the same afternoon, Saturday 24th August 1956, Workington Town won 13-6 at Widnes. Their try scorers were winger Ralph McCarten and centres Bill Wookey and Ike Southward who also landed two goals. Southward became better known as a winger who was involved in two World record transfer transactions. Oldham bought him for £10,650 in March 1959 and sold him back to Workington for £11,000 just less than two years later.

No player has scored more tries for Workington Town than Ike Southward but the Workington club records for goals and points is held by Oldham born Iain MacCorquodale. He scored 1802 points for Town between 1972 and 1980 including 779 placed goals and 31 dropped goals. On Sunday 25th August 1974 MacCorquodale landed six of those goals against Huyton who were beaten 33-7 at Derwent Park in a Second Division match.

On Sunday 25th August 1996 Watersheddings staged its last competitive



Paul Atcheson

match when the Roughyeds wound up their 1996 Super League season with a 34-25 home victory over Sheffield Eagles. It proved to be a rousing finale for Oldham supporters who saw their side recover from a 21-6 half-time deficit to snatch victory with winger Scott Ranson grabbing a hattrick of tries in the closing 16 minutes. Centre Paul Atcheson (2), hooker Gary Burns and loose-forward David Bradbury scored the other tries with stand-off Francis Maloney and substitute Paul Crook (2) adding goals. The attendance at that historic final match was 2,515.

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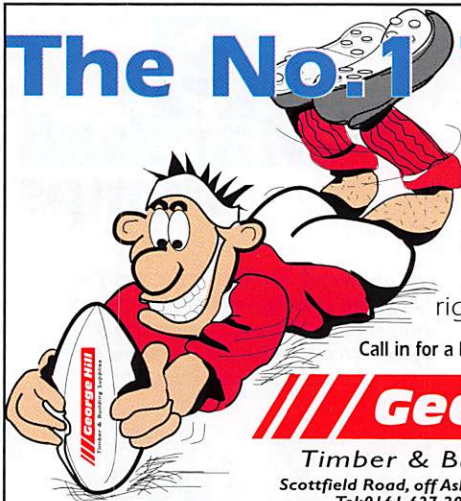
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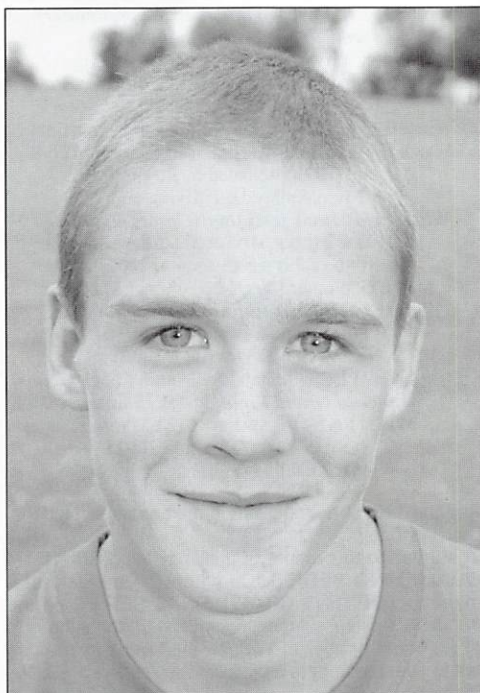
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'Paul Bennett scored a superb last minute try to ensure victory against Dewsbury Rams Academy.'

ACADEMY FIRST DIVISION FIXTURES

MAY

11	OLDHAM	v	Sheffield Eagles	W 22-20
15	OLDHAM	v	Keighley Cougars	W 60-12
18	OLDHAM	v	Workington Town	P
25	Dewsbury Rams	v	OLDHAM	L 20-12

JUNE

2	Keighley Cougars	v	OLDHAM	W 46-26
8	OLDHAM	v	Whitehaven	P
16	Sheffield Eagles	v	OLDHAM	W 40-36
22	OLDHAM	v	Doncaster Dragons	2.30
29	Barrow Raiders	v	OLDHAM	W 31-14

JULY

6	OLDHAM	v	Leigh Centurions	L 6-46
21	Whitehaven	v	OLDHAM	L 35-20
27	OLDHAM	v	Barrow Raiders	W 38-8

AUGUST

7	OLDHAM	v	Dewsbury Rams	W18-10
11	Leigh Centurions	v	OLDHAM	L30-4
18	Workington Town	v	OLDHAM	P
29	Whitehaven	v	OLDHAM	7.00

SEPTEMBER

1	Doncaster Dragons	v	OLDHAM	1.00
8	Academy First Division Grand Final Play Offs			
21	Academy Championship Grand Final Play Offs			
28	Academy First Division Grand Final			

'Workington have indicated that they have disbanded their Academy side but until official notification is received from the RFL the matches are still included within the fixture list'

U21 ALLIANCE SPRING CUP RESULTS

Thursday	14th February	Dewsbury Rams	(A)	Won	18-12
Saturday	2nd March	Rochdale Hornets	(A)	Lost	32-10
Saturday	22nd March	Workington Town	(H)	Won	30-14
Saturday	30th March	Batley Bulldogs	(A)	Lost	74-8
Saturday	6th April	Rochdale Hornets	(H)	Lost	22-10
Saturday	13th April	Batley Bulldogs	(H)	Won	48-20
Thursday	25th April	Batley Bulldogs (Semi Finals)	(A)	Lost	36-18

U21 ALLIANCE CONTINUATION LEAGUE FIXTURES

Saturday	18th May	Batley Bulldogs	(A)	Won	52-6
Thursday	23rd May	Rochdale Hornets	(H)	Won	22-21
Thursday	6th June	Batley Bulldogs	(H)	Won	48-22
Thursday	13th June	Rochdale Hornets	(A)	Lost	52-0

NFP Round Up

WITH just three league games left from which the Roughyeds will need maximum points to have a fair chance of securing ninth spot and with it a place in the **TOP NINE GRAND FINAL SERIES** today's **NFP ROUND UP** zones in to the dog fights surrounding the battle and also what would be required to gain that all important 10th spot in next seasons National League One for those sides failing to qualify automatically by finishing in the top nine.

The league table confirms that none of the four clubs currently holding 6th through to 9th positions, Hull K.R., Whitehaven, Batley and Dewsbury are yet mathematically certain of finishing in the top nine but Hull K.R. with four games left amongst them Hunslet away should easily pick up the single point required. Whitehaven whilst requiring two points from just two games are at home to Chorley and away to Swinton so they too shouldn't have too much trouble and Batley requiring two points from three games entertain Gateshead so they too should certainly qualify.

That leaves Dewsbury, Oldham, today's visitors Workington, Sheffield and Barrow all with a mathematical chance of snatching the vital spot.

Remaining fixtures are:-

DEWSBURY	BATLEY (H), OLDHAM (A), LEIGH (H), HUDDERSFIELD (A) WORKINGTON, DEWSBURY AND KEIGHLEY ALL AT HOME.
OLDHAM	OLDHAM (A), KEIGHLEY (A), FEATHERSTONE (H).
WORKINGTON	SWINTON (A), HUDDERSFIELD (H) HULL K.R. (H), FEATHERSTONE(A), BATLEY (H).
SHEFFIELD	
BARROW	

The key to the solution is undoubtedly Dewsbury. If they win each of their remaining four games they qualify but equally they could lose them all. I certainly wouldn't under normal circumstances back against Leigh, Huddersfield or Oldham and you can't rule out Batley winning the local derby but when end of season tactics and fatigue come into the equation you can never be sure.

I, therefore, plump for Dewsbury collecting just two points. Oldham six, with Workington, Sheffield and Barrow two each. That would give Oldham 9th spot on 30 points, Dewsbury 10th on 28, Workington 11th on 26, Sheffield 12th on 26 the two separated only by scoring average, leaving Barrow 12th on 24 points.

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP

	P	W	D	L	For	Agst	Diff	PTS
Huddersfield Giants	24	23	1	0	1026	216	810	47
Leigh Centurions	22	18	1	3	781	355	426	37
Rochdale Hornets	25	17	1	7	709	532	177	35
Featherstone Rovers	25	16	1	8	741	575	166	33
Doncaster Dragons	24	15	1	8	670	533	137	31
Hull Kingston Rovers	23	15	0	8	619	420	199	30
Whitehaven	25	14	1	10	565	535	30	29
Batley Bulldogs	24	14	1	9	564	571	-7	29
Dewsbury Rams	23	13	0	10	637	521	116	26
Oldham	24	11	2	11	643	503	140	24
Workington Town	24	12	0	12	634	574	60	24
Sheffield Eagles	25	12	0	13	566	578	-12	24
Barrow Raiders	24	11	0	13	606	583	23	22
Keighley Cougars	24	7	0	17	442	799	-357	14
Swinton Lions	23	4	1	18	368	780	-412	9
Chorley Lynx	24	4	0	20	395	858	-463	8
Hunslet Hawks	23	2	1	20	336	801	-465	5
Gateshead Thunder	22	0	1	21	270	838	-568	1

HOW THE TOP NINE GRAND FINAL SERIES WORKS....

WEEK ONE ELIMINATION SEMI FINALS

(SUNDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2002)

Match A Team 4 v Team 9

Match B Team 5 v Team 8

Match C Team 6 v Team 7

Clubs 1, 2 & 3 bye - Winners to the preliminary semi-finals, losers eliminated

WEEK TWO PRELIMINARY SEMI FINALS

(SUNDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 2002)

Match D Team 1 v Team 2

Winners to Grand Final, loser to Major semi-final
Match E Team 3 v Lowest placed qualifying club

Match F Highest placed qualifying club

v Middle placed qualifying club

Winners to Minor semi-finals, losers eliminated

WEEK THREE MINOR SEMI FINALS

(SUNDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER 2002)

Match G Winner Match E v Winner Match F

Winner to Major semi final, losers eliminated

WEEK FOUR MAJOR SEMI FINALS

(SUNDAY 6TH OCTOBER 2002)

Match H Loser Match D v Winner Match G

Winner to Grand Final, losers eliminated

WEEK FIVE GRAND FINAL (AT WIDNES)

(SUNDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2002)

Winner Match D v Winner Match H

And the 10th and final place in next seasons National Division One?

That goes to the winner of the aptly titled **SIX TEAM QUALIFYING SERIES**. Commencing a week later than the **TOP NINE GRAND FINAL SERIES** on the 22nd September culminating with the final being part of a double header at Widnes the teams in position ten to fifteen compete as follows:-

B.W.

HOW THE SIX TEAM QUALIFYING SERIES WORKS...

Week One - Preliminary Semi-Finals

Match A - Team 3 (12) v Team 6 (15)

Match B - Team 4 (13) v Team 5 (14)

Winners to Minor Semi Finals - Losers eliminated

Week Two - Qualifying Semi-Finals

Match C - Team 1 (10) v Team 2 (11)

Winner to Final - Loser to Major Semi Final

MINOR SEMI FINAL

Match D - Winner Match A v Winner Match B

Winner to Major Semi Final - Loser eliminated

Week Three - Major Semi-Finals

Match E - Loser Match C v Winner Match D

Winner to Grand Final - Loser eliminated

GRAND FINAL

Winner Match C v Winner Match E

Winner of Grand Final gains final place in National League One for 2003. Team numbers based on final league positions - home advantage to highest placed team.

IN Town TODAY



WORKINGTON TOWN

BRETT McDERMOTT

Joined Town for the 2002 season with a big reputation from Barrow. After seven years at Craven Park he switched to Town to the dismay of the Barrow fans who saw him as a player of great potential. Utility man who can play centre, stand-off, second row or loose forward. Exciting prospect.

NEIL FRAZER

Former Seaton Amateur flier who had trials with Halifax before signing professional with Whitehaven under Kevin Tamati. Made the switch to Derwent Park for the 2001 season and became a steady, reliable centre who can also operate on the wing.

GRAEME LEWTHWAITE

Would probably win a poll as Town's most popular player of 2001, helped by the fact that he scored 30 tries. An honest, pacy winger who has done exceptionally well following his switch along the coast after turning professional with Whitehaven from local amateurs Hensingham.

TANE MANIHERA

Great talent at half back and with the arrival of Martyn Wood is set to play regularly at scrum-half once he has recovered from the knee operation he had during the close of the season. Kiwi play-maker and goal-kicker who played for Carlisle, Widnes and Barrow before joining Town at the start of the 2001 season.

OWEN WILLIAMSON

Lively hooker from Barrow who made an impression in a trial for the Alliance side and was quickly snapped up by Town. Started his career as a half back but has made the switch a successful one and with Sice gives Town an enviable hand at hooker. A former member of the Barrow Academy Squad.

MATTHEW TUNSTALL

In his second Town career after a switch back to Amateur Rugby League and Rugby Union when his first spell seemed to be going nowhere. Big, strong forward who is still maturing and could be a surprise package in 2002.

CARL SICE

Started career with Kells Amateur club before linking up with Town Academy and soon after turning professional was knocking on the first team door. Quick, elusive hooker whose darting runs from dummy half have threaded their way through the most durable of defences. One of the bright young sparks in the Town pack.

HITRO OKESENE

Powerful, fearless prop forward who has seen it all in his native New Zealand as well as in Cumbria with Carlisle Border Raiders, and also with Featherstone Rovers. One of the best men with an eye for Rugby talent, Cameron Bell first brought him over to Carlisle during his spell as

Coach, and he was a team mate of Town Coach Gary Murdock at Gilford Park.

STUART HOYLES

Followed Coach Gary Murdock to Town from the Amateur ranks at Ellenborough where he was one of the most respected loose-forwards in Cumberland Amateur Rugby League. A rangy, long striding player he has made the switch to the Professional ranks with ease and a consistent performer for the side.

LOKENI Savelio

Powerful Kiwi prop or second row forward who played for Salford and Halifax before linking up with Town for the 2001 season. Very strong and determined, was often used as an impact player from the bench and had some outstanding games for the Cumbrians particularly on their travels.

GARY CHARLTON

Son of Rugby league legend Paul Charlton, he has made his own mark in Cumbrian rugby by becoming the first to play for all four county sides Carlisle, Whitehaven, Barrow and Town. Experienced loose forward, tough but skilful operator and seen as a valuable talker and leader for the younger men around him.

RICKY WRIGHT

Back on home soil for 2002. Started with Town's Academy before linking up with Leeds on a three year contract. Switched to Sheffield but now recruited for his home town club. Strong, ball playing forward who has been a target for coach Gary Murdock for some time.

CRAIG BARKER

Mr Dependable, a hard running forward who is regarded as one of the best Clubmen at Derwent Park. Injuries have held him back in his career over the last two seasons, but has always been consistent and reliable when brought into the first team from the A team, where he has been a much respected Captain. A product of Town Academy system.

JAMIE BEAUMONT

Burst back on the Town scene in a big way after a spell back in the Amateur code at Seaton, and keen to make up lost time as a Professional. Very promising second row forward whose support play makes him a dangerous attacker while his keen tackling gives him a special role to play in Town's defence.

MATTHEW JOHNSON

Flying winger still to be introduced to the senior squad but who created a favourable impression in Town's pre-season friendly. Held in high regard impressing in the Academy team where he scored a number of sensational, long-distance tries through his electric pace. Defensive side of game has picked up well.

Walkerbouts

... with Brian Walker

THE GREAT BEV

The Great Bev

The rugby league career of Brian Bevan



By Robert Gate

THE MAN WHO WROTE IT.....

Robert Gate friend to the Roughyed's matchday programme is a much respected pioneering rugby league author who has taken over four years to research this, his latest book, which is surprisingly the first written specifically about Brian Bevan one of the few rugby players rightly called a legend.

THE MAN HE WROTE ABOUT.....

This Australian speedster scored a record 796 tries in British rugby league a record that will never be broken.

Wingers have always been the idols of rugby league fans, Batten, Boston, Vollenhoven, Sullivan, Freeman, Southward, Fielding, Offiah, Robinson but to quote Robert Gate "One winger, however, arguably emerges pre-eminent when all the comparisons have been made. Through sheer volume of tries, which after all are a winger's 'raison d'être', Brian Bevan must be regarded as the deadliest winger in history!"

Born in Sydney and a member of the Eastern

Suburbs club the 21 year old Bevan was brought to these shores at the end of the second world war as a serving member of the Royal Australian Navy. Whilst here he was refused trials by both Leeds and Hunslet but Warrington gave him a chance and on the 17th of November 1945 he made his debut ironically against Oldham, the first of 620 first team appearances for the Wire a club appearance record only surpassed by Oldham's Joe Ferguson (626 games) and Wigan's Jim Sullivan (774).

Bevan baffled defences with his electric pace and eccentric style of running, often swathed in bandages likened to the resurrected Egyptian mummy from 'Carry on Pharaoh'! In my minds eye I can see him now, scoring in the Watersheddings Pavillion corner having first fielded the ball under the Hutchins stand sticks and weaved his way to the other end of the pitch never having had a finger laid on him, Oldham's John Etty still on the half way line scratching his head!

In those days the Australian International selectors favoured home based talent so consequently the finest winger in the world never pulled on the famous green and gold jersey. Their loss, but Bevan to the delight of British fans was to play 16 times for the celebrated Other Nationalities side. He was also to lift the Challenge Cup twice and win three RFL Championships and 25 years after his retirement awarded his rightful place alongside Wagstaff, Rosenfield, Parkin, Batten, Sullivan, Risman, Murphy, Fox and Boston in the prestigious Rugby League Hall of Fame.

'The Great Bev' is much more than a comprehensive chronicle of Bevan's achievements it is the story of an extraordinary life. Bevan, alas now dead, was a very private perhaps even insular individual and that is perhaps why his biography has not been written before. Robert Gate has teased out Bevan's story and presents this biography in his usual atmospheric style.

Lavishly illustrated and highlighted with observations from Bevan's peers this excellent publication, launched just this week is available mail order from:-

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The price, including postage and packaging, for cheques received before 2nd September is still at the special pre launch price of £14 but after that date it is £14.95. Cheques should be made payable to London League Publications Ltd.

Iwa Slateloose



A TROUPE of Flamenco dancers were booked to appear at the London Palladium. On arrival from Spain they were met by a chaperon and taken to the Dorchester Hotel. Now the Dorchester has a revolving door and as the first Flamenco dancer went in she pushed too hard, flew right round and was flung out under the wheels of a departing taxi. Meanwhile the second Flamenco dancer was already on the way in but she too, having never before used a revolving door, pushed too hard and was flung out again under the wheels of a passing taxi. One after another all the Flamenco dancers tried to enter the Dorchester by the revolving door but each was equally incapable of negotiating the contraption and each was flung out under the wheels of passing vehicles and so came to a bad end.

And the moral of the story? Never put all your Basques in one Exit.

AND speaking of revolving doors is this what they have fitted at Red Hall? Latest departure is RFL Commercial boss Glenn Baker and, with a major force in the development of Rugby league at every level, namely Lionel Hurst, rumoured to be moving to Cheltenham R.U., it really begs the question as to how R.L. is ever to achieve any stability in its administration when changes occur as quickly as a Basque from a revolving door. And it won't end there: more job losses are forecast at Red Hall shortly. Judging by what I read in League Express supporters would rather see job losses elsewhere, with Leeds Rhinos fans leading the way regarding one G- -y H- - - - -ton. They should be so lucky!



FROM LEAGUE EXPRESS

1. "Barrow Raiders forward Matt Leigh has a shoulder problem and is finding it difficult to raise his arm horizontally" (*Might have got him in trouble in Nazi Germany that!*)

2. Chorley Lynx boss Graeme West: "I have told the players they will pay a heavy price if it happens again. Those players who don't talk to referees need not worry". (*That's carrying hostility to the merry whistle - blower a bit far! Perhaps we should re-name it - sent to Chorley.*)

3. Batley Bulldogs will include in their new Challenge family stand conference facilities that will accommodate up to 150 people. (*I didn't realise there were 150 people in Batley capable of attending a conference!*)

4. David Furnee on his proposed move to Headingley next year: "It is unfortunate Wigan were not able to keep me, but if I am going to stay over here I want to stay with one of the big four...I came over here to win or be involved in Challenge Cup and Grand Finals and in Leeds, is a club that can do that". (*Leeds? Has Furner read the papers lately? What can he be taking?*)

5. Hull ground officials are looking at the possibility of hiring a hawk to protect the grass from hungry birds. (Novel idea. What next? Perhaps Wigan could hire an albatross to hang outside Knowsley Road and stop St. Helens winning everything!)

Michael's Match

... from the pen of Michael Turner



TODAY the Oldham club offers a warm welcome to the players, officials and supporters of Workington Town for what looks likely to be another close encounter in the very competitive NFP. For our featured match we go back to the re-launch of the Roughyeds in the 1998 season. After a cup win against the amateurs of Heworth followed by defeat to Widnes in the next round, it was the Cumbrians who, on April 13th 1998, provided the opposition in the first league fixture for the re-born Oldham club.

The match was played at Workington where a goodly following of Oldham supporters were present in the crowd of 1,344. Early on it was all Town with Barry Williams bossing the show. The Welsh international second rower had a hand in setting up tries for Craig Fisher and Paul Riley which together with two goals from Fisher gave Workington a 12 - 0 lead after a quarter of an hour. Just before the half hour a

good break wide out by Ian Sinfield set up a try in the corner for Afi Leuila but this was an isolated Oldham attack in a half otherwise dominated by the home team. Nevertheless some stout Oldham defending restricted the Cumbrians to just one more penalty goal by Fisher to give Workington a 14 - 4 advantage at the interval.

The second period was a totally different story and a devastating ten minute spell turned the match on its head. In that time Oldham crossed for three tries with John Hough causing all sorts of problems for the home side with his breaks from acting half back. First Richard Darkes crossed in the corner after a smart pass from Sean Cooper and it was Darkes again whose forceful run set up the opportunity for veteran Paul Round to crash over. Then a superb solo effort from Neil Flanagan saw the scrum half scoot over under the posts after which Darkes added the conversion for the first Oldham goal after earlier misses from Cooper and Adie Mead. This put the Roughyeds 18 - 14 in front after 55 minutes. Workington fought back and on the hour Williams again set up a try this time for centre Mateaki Mafi. The conversion was missed so the game moved into the last quarter with the scores level. The move that won the match was a reward for the expansive open play that Oldham produced throughout the second half. A beautifully timed pass from Craig Barker put Cooper clear and just as the Town cover closed in, the Oldham centre passed back inside to the supporting Mickey Edwards who dived over for the winning score. There was still fifteen minutes left but good defence from both teams cancelled each other out to leave Oldham the winners by 22 - 18. The only downside for the visitors was a broken leg suffered by winger Joe McNicholas which kept him out for the rest of the season.

OLDHAM:

A Mead, R Darkes, A Leuila, S Cooper, J McNicholas; C Barker, N Flanagan; J Clegg, J Hough, M Edwards, I Sinfield, G Shaw, M Martindale.

SUBS: D Robinson, P Round, M Maders, N Varley.

WORKINGTON:

Arnold, Keenan, Henare, Mafi, Bibby, Fisher, Roden; Whitter, Highton, Riley, Williams, Thursfield, Samuels.

SUBS: Crellin, Heaton, Little, Bethwaite.

Attendance: 1,344

Referee: Mr P Lee - Leigh



John Hough: one of three current Roughyeds (along with Jason Clegg and Joe McNicholas) who played in the first league match for the new club at Workington in April 1998.



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A Chance to Meet

NEIL RODEN

with David McGealy, Radio Cavell 1350AM

Well Neil welcome to A Chance to Meet, a pleasure meeting you, and the first thing I need to know is where were you born, who's in your family and when you were born?

I was born in Wigan, ninth of the fourth, eighty. There's me, my mum and my dad, and my younger sister Joanne. So without being too rude, 'a Pie eater'? (laughter) That's what they say, don't they? So there's a few of us in this team though isn't there? I think we're taking over! Any idea where that's come from, because I have not the foggiest. It's just that there's that many pie shops in Wigan, I think. If you go down Wigan there's that many different pie shops. I think that's where it comes from. OK.

What about your first memory of Rugby League?

Oh. I can remember, I think I was only about just eight or so, just training down at St William's a local amateur club and a lot of the kids were crying, it was so cold. They just didn't want to be there really. I think that's how it starts, a lot start at that age. So an eight year old, primary school, at St William's, yes. What were you doing there? Had you played at school? Or what? I went to the Ince, St William's Primary School as well, so that was a local team there and I played for them before joining St Pats for the Under 13's and Under 14's. Obviously if you were playing for them you must have been quite a reasonable player? Yes, I weren't too bad like. I don't know what to say to that. Right, ok, a bit too modest for it really. So at some stage while you're a young lad doing this, professional clubs come along and start having a look at you. When did you first become aware of that? We played at Under 16's at St Pats and we had a good team. We won the National Cup and everything. Phil Farrell and Chris Farrell played with us and a lot of that team signed up that year. But I didn't sign then, I played Under 18's and I was playing Open Age at St Pats when I went down as an amateur just for a trial game at Wigan. I had a couple of games in the A Team and that and then I ended up signing there. How old were you then? I think I was seventeen and a half when I went to Wigan. Now Wigan at that particular time would have been, well I mean, they're the glamour club aren't they? Well look I'm a Wigan lad and everyone wants to play for your local team, don't they? So it was a dream come true at the time, signing for them. Then things didn't work out and I moved on to Oldham and I'm enjoying it here.

We'll come back to that in a moment but I need to ask is there any history of Rugby League in the family, or

relatives, or what?

My dad didn't play much when he was younger, but he's always been involved with rugby league at the local St Pats club and he actually scouts for Wigan now, he's Head Scout down at Wigan rugby. So he does really enjoy his rugby. A few of my family played like my Uncle Alan Roden who played in the Wigan A Team and that. But we're related to Denis Boyde who used to play at Wigan. So quite a family history. You said you signed for Wigan 'but it didn't work out', what exactly happened? Well, when I signed Eric Hughes was then in charge at Wigan, then weeks later he was sacked and whatever and there was a lot of changes down there. I wasn't getting in at one stage, I had broken my jaw and I was out for a while and I found it hard to get back in (to the side), so I went on loan to a couple of clubs. Chorley, me and Phil Farrell, then we came here and been here ever since.

Why Oldham? Because it's a fair distance I'm sure there'd be other clubs interested in you? What was it about Oldham that attracted you?

It was John Jackson, I think he was scouting down here, and he was a scout at Wigan at one time and that's where the connection was. With Phil Farrell as well. So me and Phil came down here and Haydn Walker as well, he was a Wiganer who was here at the time. I think he was the one who spoke to Mike Ford because he knew the Wigan lads. So I think he had a bit of involvement in it as well. The trouble with sport, professional sport in particular, is that as you've mentioned already, you go along playing for one Manager who highly rates you, he gets the sack or moves on, and all of a sudden you're back sometimes out in the cold, or sometimes just banging on the door trying to get in. It must be difficult in some respects? It can be, but it's just part of the game. You've got to just keep playing. I suppose. Well since I've been here, we've had so many different coaches already. You've just got to keep playing it's part of the game. People move on don't they. **Coaches and venues, eh!**

Who's had the greatest influence on you in your, so far, fairly short rugby league career.

My family really. Probably my dad. He's been a big help to me. My mum as well. They've followed me everywhere and given me a lot of advice as well. Obviously Fordy last year. He was a big help to me. I thought he brought me on a lot in my game and it was good to work under him, being an ex half back himself he taught me a lot really. Was there the opportunity of either watching him and learning from him, or playing alongside him and, more or less, being guided by him? I think it's just experience isn't it? He's got a lot of knowledge of the game and his experience and he did help me a lot with just little things really. Just experience really, he helped me along. That was it.

What's been your most memorable moment in rugby league so far? Or your greatest achievement?

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I think getting to the Grand Final last year was a good achievement for us. We just couldn't take it that step further. It would have been good to have won it, but it's still up there as one of my best achievements.

If that's the best moment, what about the worst moment in rugby league?

Probably realising that I was going to leave Wigan. Being a local lad wanting to sign for them, like I said earlier. You do think that's a bad moment for you, but obviously once you move on to other things, it's forgotten about. So ... You

mentioned earlier that you broke your jaw, do things like that, when you pick up an injury and it's going to put you out for a period of time at a crucial time when you're a young lad thinking "I want to be in there, if I'm not there somebody else is". Does that worry you, or did that knock you back at all? I think the first few games coming back from that you are a bit wary of it but after a couple of games and that you're just back into the old routine. You don't really think about it. It's part of the game isn't it. Injuries are part of the game you've just got to get on with it. A crack across the jaw and then up you go and got to get on!

What about your most amusing moment on a rugby pitch or at a game either now or in the past?

I think you've probably already had this one but when I went on loan to Chorley Lynx and Paul Norton was warming up and as he was coming out to the game he realised he had his shirt on back to front and the lads only told him as we were actually stepping out on to the pitch! That was quite amusing. But you'd all spotted it earlier? Yes, we all spotted it earlier, but we thought we'd let him make a bit of a fool of himself.

When I spoke to Paul I said something like "So he played at Chorley Lynx when they were winning and that was a major achievement, so you must have been there as well at the same time?"

I did four games there before I came to Oldham, me and Phil Farrell had four games on loan there, and we won two and lost two. So it weren't too bad for them really. A fifty percent success rate, not too bad. That was a 'run' for Chorley at the time!

What about the biggest character you've come across in the game of Rugby League?

I don't think there'll be any surprises with this one it's Cleggy. From Oldham he's obviously a good lad to have in your team, when things are down he's always one to crack a joke and lift the lads. A good character. Paul, Knockor, as well, he's another one. Now there's something going on between those two, something on the 'hair' stakes. Now you don't have that problem do you? Oh I don't know. I think some of the boys wouldn't say that. But them two are obviously in the lead at the minute, yes. But I think Paul Norton's the one really. I'd give Cleggy the thumbs up.

Your ambition in Rugby League, because you're still a very young lad really, is it your ambition to go back and show Wigan that they got it wrong?

I think you want to play as high a level as you can and that's obviously Super League. You want to try and play it at that level. Other than that I just want to try and give my best every week and fulfil my potential really by playing to the best of my ability.

This interview will be broadcast in full on Radio Cavell - 1350AM next Friday during "Sports Preview" between 5-00 and 6-00pm.

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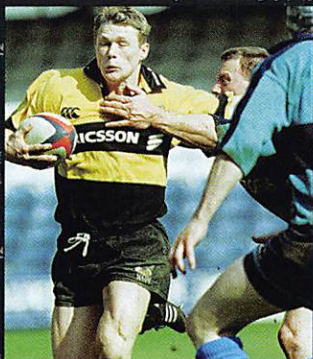
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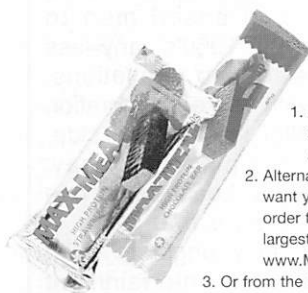
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Wilson's Wisdom

... with Ian Wilson

PARTLY in response to our humiliation in Sydney a few weeks ago, the debate has been rejoined about the pros and cons of overseas players in the domestic game. It is not the first time, of course! And the arguments also rage in other sports, too - soccer, cricket and even rugby union, would you believe?

The cases, on both sides, are familiar. On the one side, greater quality, more spectator appeal, higher media profile, good example to our promising younger players. On the other, money wasted which could be better used domestically, barriers to development of home players (especially in crucial positions), harmful to prospects of the national side.

There is, of course, merit in both camps; if there wasn't, the debate would have been settled long ago! It seems to me that the essence of the issue concerns what professional sport is really all about. And, fundamentally, it is about entertainment, surely? There are crucial spin-offs too, in terms of participation, health, employment and indeed the quality of life - but if sport is not successful as entertainment, then these other aspects would diminish drastically.

Let us not think that overseas players in the British game are a recent phenomenon, ever since the early 1900's, players from Australia and New Zealand, and sometimes South Africa and the Pacific Islands, have come to seek fame and/or fortune over here. One only has to look as the successful Huddersfield side of fifty years ago, Tom Van Vollenhoven at St Helens, Brian Bevan at Warrington, the New Zealanders at Hull in the early '80's and Chris Anderson's successful Halifax

side. How much entertainment had Henry Paul, for example, generated over the past decade at Wigan and Bradford? In all of these cases, and many more, the case for allowing quality overseas players to play for our clubs are made, and only this week, as another example, I heard a piece on the radio claiming that Luke Robinson at Wigan was learning hugely from Adrian Lam.

On the other hand, of course, there are plenty of examples of big money being paid to run-of-the-mill overseas players, who were often no better than local players; and of clubs failing to recruit local youngsters because money was being squandered ineffectively on Aussie journeymen; and of clubs facing financial ruin because of huge over-spending on so-called stars from Down Under. No names, no pack drill, as they say, but it is not hard to give Oldham based illustrations here!

So what is the answer? As usual, surely it is sensible compromise. The fact that Oldham's 1950's successes were based entirely on UK players did not make St. Helens' blending of a few overseas stars with their own home based men to achieve trophies in the 1960's any less valid. Let's say salary cap regulations, ideally dovetailed with those in operation in Australia, look after the financial side, and restrict overseas players to, say, three per club in Super League and one otherwise, to make sure that there is plenty of room for UK youngster, whilst also not losing the star, entertainment attractions.

And let's look for more fundamental reasons for international failure.

Junior Roughyeds



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had a good game last week.

We have now come to the most important part of the season for the Junior Roughyeds, our player of the year award. Over the next week or so I'll be sending out voting forms for you to fill in. For the past few years it has been won by our Jason, 'Cleggy', but I feel that it will be closely contested this year. Watch out for details.

Enjoy the game,

Adele

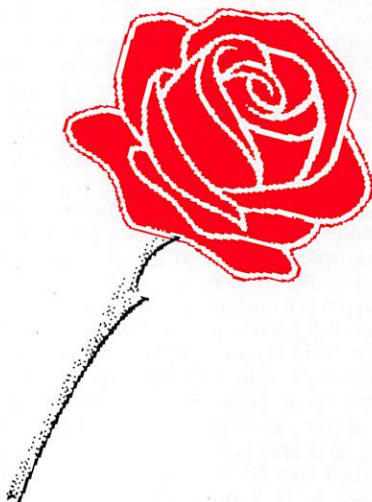
WELCOME TO THE JUNIOR ROUGHYEDS' PAGE.

Once again we have had a thrilling two weeks when Oldham have just been edged out, maybe today is a turning point. **JESSICA FULLALOVE** was the mascot for our away game at Rochdale. Jessica's favourite player is Gavin Dodd she thinks he's fantastic. Glad he

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A Potted History of Workington

The Rugby Football League accepted Workington Towns application to join the league in January 1945.

AFTER a mediocre opening season, Town appointed the legendary Gus Risman as their player-coach and within six seasons the new club had won both League Championship and Challenge Cup. R i s m a n s contribution to the club during his eight years at the helm was immense, both on and off the pitch.



Gus Risman

Only Iain MacCorquodale has scored more points for Town but the 1951 Champions were more than just a one-man band. Risman assembled a powerful squad around him. No fewer than ten of that team won representative recognition during the campaign. Winger Johnny Lawrenson represented both Lancashire & England, centre Eppie Gibson Cumberland & England and loose forward Billy Ivison England. Australian imports Johnny Mudge and Tony Paskins played for Other Nationalities whilst Dennis Cavanagh, Jimmy Hayton, Albert Pepperell, Steve Thurlow and Jimmy Wareing represented Cumberland. The Championship Final against Warrington at Maine Road was a classic confrontation played out before a crowd of 61,618. Town were 8-0 behind just before the break but tries from Tony Paskins, Eppie Gibson (2), George Wilson (2) and Johnny Lawrenson together with four Gus Risman goals saw the Championship going to Cumberland for the first and only time. Twelve months later Town added the Challenge Cup to their list of honours. In another entertaining final, Town beat Featherstone Rovers 18-10 with loose-forward Billy Ivison awarded the Lance Todd Trophy after a near faultless performance. It was also a memorable day for skipper Gus Risman, at 41 the oldest Wembley finalist, who lifted the famous trophy 14 years and a World

War after skippering Salford to success in 1938.

Six years later Town reached both the Championship Final and Challenge Cup Final in the same season. Unfortunately after leading at Wembley they were beaten by Wigan 13-9 and seven days later lost against Hull by 20 points to three. Winger Ike Southward scored all Towns points in those matches. A try and three goals at Wembley followed by a try at Odsal.

Four members of that 1958 squad toured Australasia with the British Lions, Ike Southward, Bill Wookey, Harry Archer and Brian Edgar. In addition to that quartet, team manager Tom Mitchell and coach Jim Brough were also chosen to tour with the 1958 Lions. Second-row forward Brian Edgar is Towns most capped international. He played in 11 tests and was also a tourist in 1962. Tom Mitchell's administrative contribution to the club is also legendary.

Although Town have never repeated the success they enjoyed in the 1950s they have always been capable of causing an upset. In 1962 they lifted the Western Divisional Championship with a surprise 10-0 victory over Widnes in a replayed final, the initial clash having ended in a 9-9 draw. Loose-forward Frank Foster made a significant contribution to that success. He later made a big impact in Oldham as player-coach with the Roughyeds.

Town were involved in another surprise victory in 1977 when they defeated Wigan 16-13 to lift the Lancashire Cup. Wigan scored three tries to Towns two but the goal kicking of Iain MacCorquodale swung that final Workingtons way.

It was no surprise when Town won the Second Division Premiership in 1994. Two tries from winger Stuart Cocker were a feature of that 30-22 victory over London Crusaders at Old Trafford. Cocker had joined Town from Oldham at the beginning of that campaign.

Immediately after that Premiership success, Town spent a difficult couple of seasons alongside Oldham in the Super League. Town were the first club to be relegated from Super League quickly followed by Oldham. Both are now fighting to get back up via the Northern Ford Premiership play-offs. Qualification for that play-off is the main aim for both clubs, which should add even more spice to this afternoons vital confrontation.

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MATCHES TO REMEMBER

SEASON 1955/56

YORK V OLDHAM

24TH SEPTEMBER, 1955

I had been teaching in York from 1951 until the Summer term of 1955 when I moved to Couthill Grammar School in September. Married to a York girl I often boasted to my father-in-law that home team, Oldham, were well nigh unbeatable, and not yet having joined the happy breed of referees in Oldham, I was still a spectator.

So my wife and I decided to go to York for the weekend, and go down to Clarence Street (as the York ground was then known) and see how many points Oldham would win by. To make it even better, I thought, pa-in-law came along as well to see this wonder team I had gone one about so much.

In the event, by half time, three Oldham players had been sent off by referee Alf Howgate: Derek Turner was first to go for foul play; Frank Pitchford followed for kicking an opponent and as the players were leaving the pitch at half time Alan Davies was dismissed for remarks made to the referee in the tunnel.

Naturally Oldham, with only 10 men could not overcome the York 13, and lost 16-10. Oldham's team that day was as follows:

GANLEY
CRACKNELL, NOON, DAVIES, O'GRADY
NESTOR, PITCHFORD
OGDEN, KEITH, LITTLE
ROGERS, GOLDSWAIN
TURNER
TRIES: O'GRADY, CRACKNELL
GOALS: GANLEY (2)

N.B. In that same season Rogers had shared the goal kicking duties with Ganley and Goldswain and had, in fact, kicked 50 goals.

Now for Season 1957/58 and matches against a formidable Hull side. At Hull on Boxing Day 1957 Oldham lost to Hull 12-5. This was the second successive defeat (unknown in those days) Oldham having lost to Swinton at home on Christmas Day 15-9. Hull came next to Oldham on April 16 and suffered a heavy defeat 43-9 with 8 goals from Ganley and 10 tries in all.

Oldham continued in winning vein beating Leeds away and Workington at home and we all looked forward eagerly to the visit of Hull to Watersheddings in the Top 4 Play Off remembering the slaughtering we had given them only two weeks earlier. If my memory serves me right this match was played on Saturday evening, 3rd May 1958. Oldham fielded the exact same thirteen players but Hull had made several changes. Many Oldham fans still believe to this day that the team were hoodwinked in the previous match as the Hull team dominated for most of the game and the plethora of Oldham tries in the previous game was not to materialise. Oldham lost 20-8 with a goal from Ganley and just 2 tries from Duffy and Ayres.

That was one of only 5 defeats all season plus a draw with Wakefield. Talking of games against Hull, no one who witnessed the earlier games against Hull in the Championship Finals at Odsal on 18th May, 1957 when Oldham won 15-14 after a thriller will ever forget that game.

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TOPIC OF THE DAY

...THE 100 BEST PLAYERS OF 1951-2001

COMPILING a list of the one hundred best players of the last half century was bound to be an arbitrary and purely subjective task. Week by week I asked myself, for example, why is so-and-so number 75 and this other guy 93? And, of course, it's a very difficult question to answer. However, as the series progressed certain criteria became obvious. In particular, virtually all the selections had played international football - with the exception of overseas stars such as Brian Bevan and Tom Van Vollenhoven who are nevertheless universally acknowledged as true 'greats' of the game - and, especially, had tested their ability against Australia which, in rugby league terms, is the greatest test of all. At the same time it was also obvious that great players are great players no matter what era they played in. The idea that Alex Murphy or Mal Reilly could not hack it in today's fully professional game is a nonsense, as is the idea that an Andy Farrell or Keiron Cunningham are not as good as the greats of the '50s and '60s. Indeed, one major difficulty which arose when considering current players was at what point they became candidates for inclusion. For example, I excluded Kris Radlinski and Paul Sculthorpe, both players who are surely certainties to be included in any such list compiled but a few years from now. And what about the generation just emerging, players such as Kevin Sinfield, Robbie Paul, Sean Long, Leon Pryce etc. etc. a generation about to be put to the same stern test in the next few years?

Another thing which became clear as the series progressed was the flowering of individual teams, albeit briefly, at particular moments of time. In the early '50s Huddersfield and Warrington were teams to be reckoned with but by the middle and late years of the decade such as Oldham and Hull had emerged. The '50s were also the years of Workington's greatest triumphs and by the end of the decade Wakefield and St. Helens were emerging as the game's powerhouses. If these two dominated the early sixties Leeds quickly became a major force and continued to be into the next decade. Meanwhile, there were brief but glorious achievements for Swinton and Halifax in the mid sixties, then for Salford and Castleford in the late '60s and '70s. St. Helens continued to bubble under but two teams of 'Cup Kings' shone throughout the seventies in the form of Widnes and Leeds. Next came the flowering of Hull and Hull Kingston Rovers before the unprecedented dominance of the game by one club, the Wigan of Graham Lowe and John Monie. The time span of Wigan's utter superiority has probably never been matched in the history of the game, although, but for the intervention of the First World War, Huddersfield

could claim a similar pre-eminence. And, despite, the strength of today's Bradford Bulls, the current era is dominated by St. Helens.

All of which just goes to show what goes around comes round and, however depressing any given moment in time may be for an individual club, a some point fate will intervene and fortunes can be changed. It may be difficult under current full time regulations but the progress of Hull F.C. under Shaun McRae is an encouragement to all, which is why a proper gangway between divisions is so important to the hopes and aspirations of all those clubs currently languishing in the doldrums.

And finally in my own mind I was always clear about who I considered to be my top ten. Based on the criteria I set out listed below is my idea of the best Great Britain side of the last half century. I hope you have enjoyed the series and that you will have felt like disagreeing with me because, after all, the game is all about opinions. If you have any strong feelings and wish to put pen to paper I am sure the Editor will be happy to accommodate your views. In the meantime watch for Oldham's all time best team of the last 50 years based on the same criteria in the next programme.

G.C.

GREAT BRITAIN XIII 1951 - 2001

1. **PAUL CHARLTON**
(Salford & Workington)
2. **BILLY BOSTON**
(WIGAN)
3. **LEWIS JONES**
(LEEDS)
4. **NEIL FOX**
(WAKEFIELD)
5. **MARTIN OFFIAH**
(WIDNES & WIGAN)
6. **ELLERY HANLEY**
(BRADFORD, WIGAN & LEEDS)
7. **ALEX MURPHY**
(ST. HELENS, LEIGH & WARRINGTON)
8. **ALAN PRESCOTT**
(ST. HELENS)
9. **TOMMY HARRIS**
(HULL)
10. **BRIAN MCTIGUE**
(WIGAN)
11. **DICK HUDDART**
(WHITEHAVEN & ST. HELENS)
12. **MALCOLM REILLY**
(CASTLEFORD)
13. **VINCE KARALIUS**
(ST. HELENS & WIDNES)

Stat Attack

SOME weeks ago Rochdale Coach Martin Hall was bemoaning the fact that his side had not won a penalty count for six weeks. Well, excuse me but I thought that rugby league was about winning matches and not about 'winning' penalty counts! Following these remarks was it coincidence that Rochdale then came out in front in the penalty count in the next four matches? Although all club coaches (and supporters) feel harshly done to from time to time when it comes to the award of penalties, by and large the remedy is in the hands of the Coach himself and his players: it can be summed up in one word - discipline.

Below we publish details of penalties awarded and conceded per club compiled as accurately as possible from the information provided weekly in League Express. What is remarkable is that for the second season running Whitehaven, under the just departed Paul Cullen, have far and away the best record. They have been awarded 78 more penalties than they have conceded. Today's visitors, Workington Town, come second with a plus score of 46. There must be something in the air up in Cumbria!

AVERAGE PENALTIES AWARDED PER MATCH		AVERAGE PENALTIES CONCEDED PER MATCH		TOTAL PENALTIES DIFFERENTIAL	
DEWSBURY	8.3	WHITEHAVEN	5.9	WHITEHAVEN	+78
KEIGHLEY	8.3	BARROW	6.5	WORKINGTON	+46
WORKINGTON	8.3	GATESHEAD	6.6	OLDHAM	+28
HUDDERSFIELD	8.2	WORKINGTON	6.8	HUNSLET	+15
WHITEHAVEN	8.1	ROCHDALE	7.1	FEATHERSTONE	+13
OLDHAM	8.0	BATLEY	7.2	DEWSBURY	+4
HUNSLET	7.9	OLDHAM	7.2	GATESHEAD	+3
FEATHERSTONE	7.8	FEATHERSTONE	7.3	HUDDERSFIELD	+3
HULL KR	7.7	HUNSLET	7.3	HULL K.R.	Even
DONCASTER	7.6	SWINTON	7.3	KEIGHLEY	-1
CHORLEY	7.3	LEIGH	7.4	LEIGH	-5
LEIGH	7.3	SHEFFIELD	7.6	BARROW	-10
SHEFFIELD	7.0	HULL K.R.	7.7	SHEFFIELD	-16
GATESHEAD	6.7	HUDDERSFIELD	8.1	DONCASTER	-18
ROCHDALE	6.4	DEWSBURY	8.2	ROCHDALE	-23
SWINTON	6.4	DONCASTER	8.2	SWINTON	-23
BARROW	6.2	KEIGHLEY	8.4	BATLEY	-31
BATLEY	6.1	CHORLEY	8.6	CHORLEY	-36

On these figures compared to last year Keighley, in particular, concede many more penalties and Batley are again the side least likely to benefit from referee generosity. Sheffield have improved their record and, looking at penalties conceded, Rochdale don't have too much to complain about.

Watch out in the next programme for an assessment of individual referees.

G.C.

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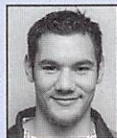
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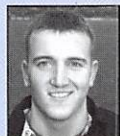
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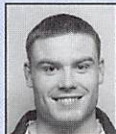
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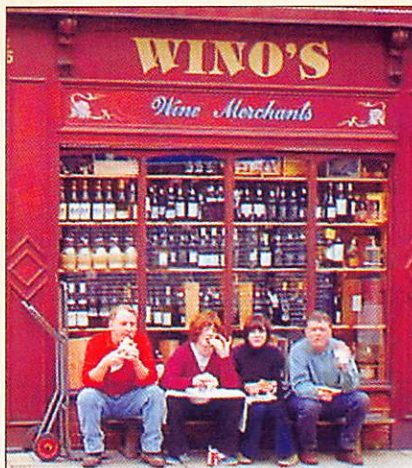
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Fixtures

Date Opponent Result Att

DECEMBER
2 SWINTON LIONS H F - A
P

16 Hull K.R. L 10-26 2032

30 Leigh L 12-46 3388

JANUARY

6 YORK W 32-16 1130

13 Dewsbury Rams L 6-30 1410

20 CHORLEY LYNX W 34-2 1114

27 WEST HULL (C'cup Rd3) W 38-4 1131

FEBRUARY

3 Workington L 20-28 991

10 ST HELENS (C'cup Rd4) L 6-40 4089

17 GATESHEAD W 54-2 931

MARCH

3 Huddersfield L 18-28 3191

10 DONCASTER DRAGONS D 22-22 1067

15 Sheffield Eagles W 25-6 1095

24 FEATHERSTONE W 23-12 1533

29 Rochdale Hornets (NC) L 13-14 2096

APRIL

2 DEWSBURY R. (NC) W 47-12 1056

7 Huddersfield G. (NC) L 16-44 2687

21 Hunslet Hawks (NC) W 56-10 747

MAY

5 BATLEY B. (NC) W 40-16 1204

12 HUDDERSFIELD (NC/F) L 16-36 1699

23 ROCHDALE HORNETS L 24-28 1050

JUNE

2 Keighley Cougars W 34-32 1188

9 WHITEHAVEN W 46-12 867

16 Barrow W 27-25 791

23 BATLEY BULLDOGS L 26-34 1058

30 Hunslet Hawks W 34-20 679

JULY

7 LEIGH L 22-26 1,526

14 Chorley Lynx W 52-10 605

21 Whitehaven L 17-20 1,010

28 HUDDERSFIELD L 30-32 1,339

AUGUST

4 HUNSLET HAWKS W 24-16 907

11 Batley Bulldogs D 20-20 1013

18 Rochdale Hornets L 17-18 1980

25 WORKINGTON H

28 DEWSBURY RAMS H K.O. 7.45pm

SEPTEMBER

8 KEIGHLEY COUGARS H

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Liam NICHOLLS

Matthew WOODCOCK

Brett McDERMOTT

Neil FRAZER

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