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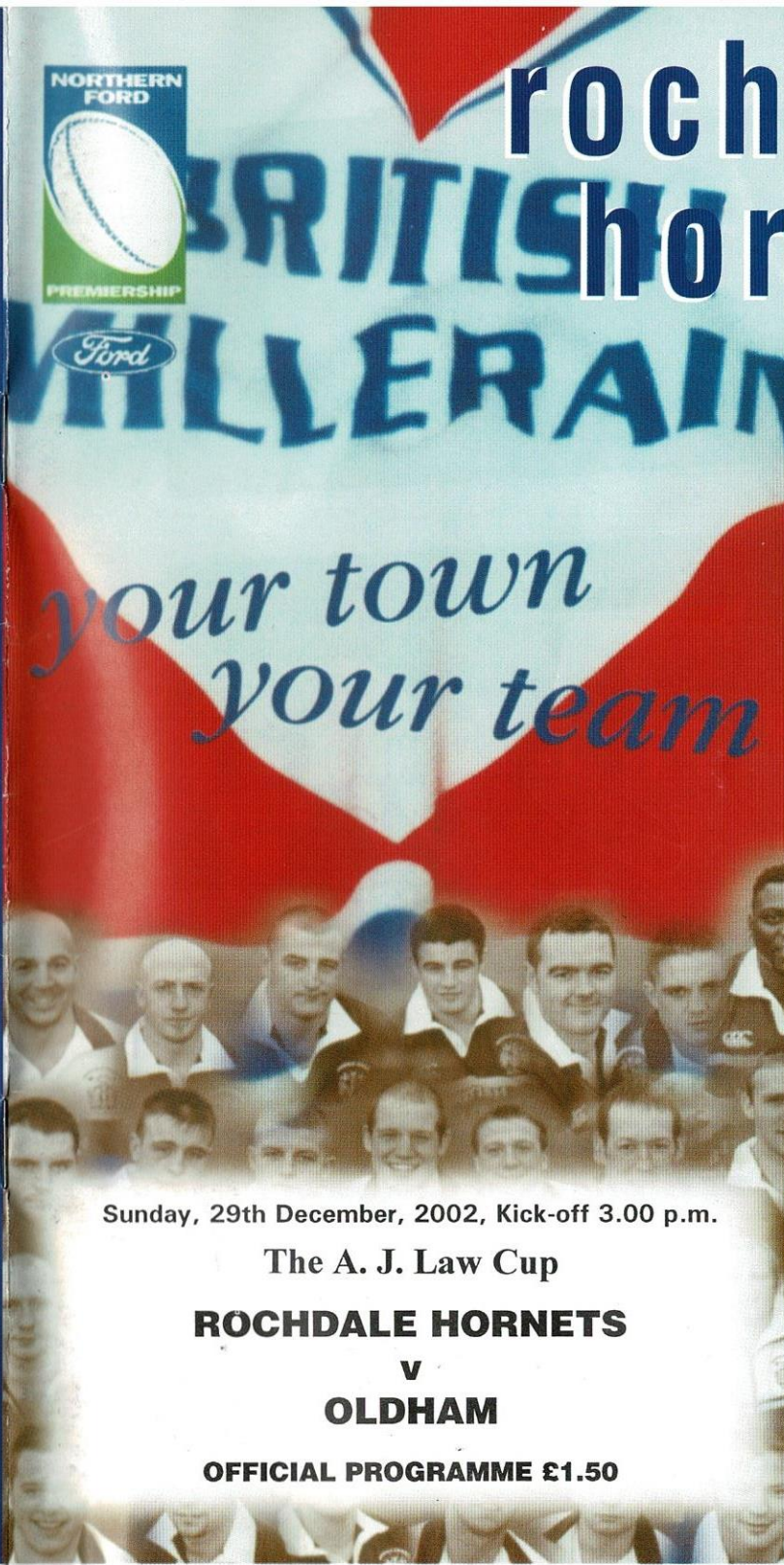
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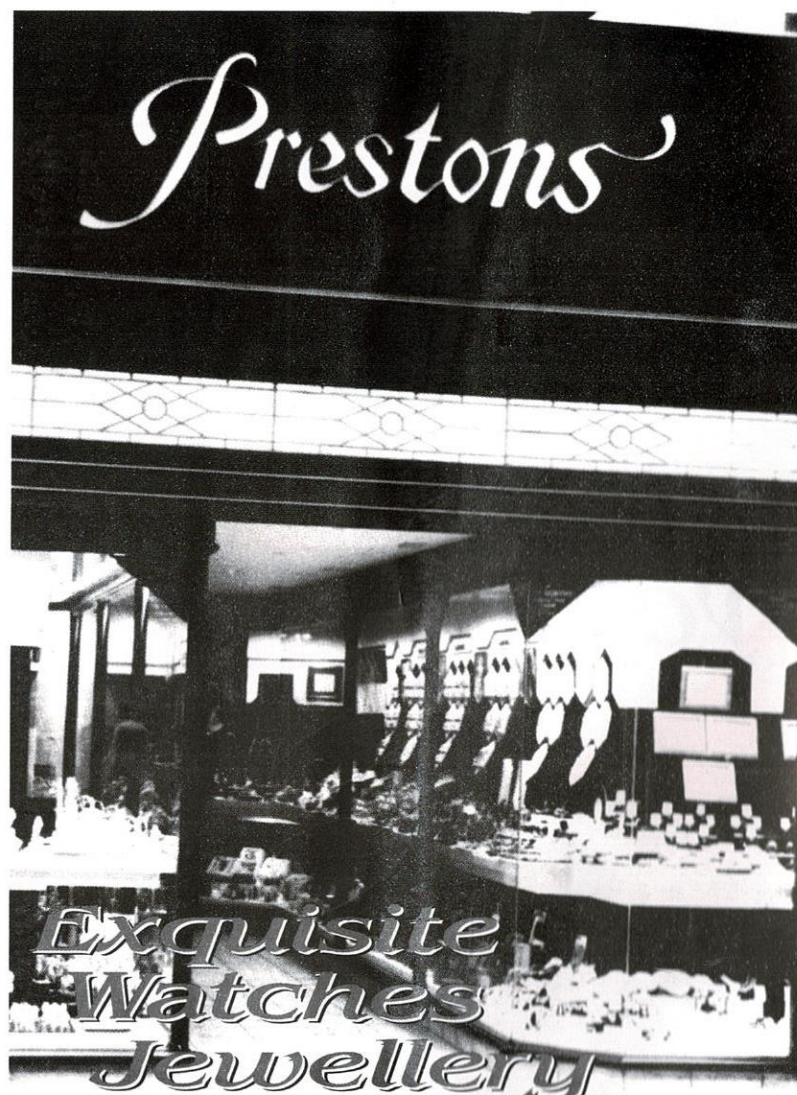
The A. J. Law Cup

ROCHDALE HORNETS

v

OLDHAM

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 WATCH TO THE COACH'S PLAYER OF THE SEASON**

MARTIN'S CORNER



SEASONS greetings and welcome to Spotland for what promises to be another exciting A. J. Law Cup game.

These fixtures have become a traditional curtain raiser for the new season and gives me a chance to assess our pre-season preparations. There's a lot of local pride at stake and the fans of both sides always contribute to make these games passionate affairs. I doubt today will be an exception to the rule.

There are a number of new players in our squad and today will provide me with a good opportunity to see them in competitive action. We've been working really hard in training but there is no substitute for match practice. There might be a bit of 'rustiness' as we're still a few weeks away from the start of the season proper, nevertheless I'll expect to see good commitment and attitude from everyone who pulls on a Hornets shirt this afternoon.

We are hoping for another big season for Rochdale Hornets, what better way of starting it than by retaining the trophy we won last year.

You, the supporters, can also help. I know from the past that you can be pretty vocal and it's a great help to the players when they sense the crowd is behind them. We all know how important it is that more fans turn up to our games but if we can start getting good results on the field, hopefully gates will also increase.

The main thing is, enjoy the game and get behind the players.

Martin

ROCHDALE HORNETS RLFC

P.O. Box 48, Rochdale OL16 1PE Tel: 01706 648004 Fax: 01706 344545

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Vice Chairman: Mr. N. Halsall
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Directors: Mr. N. Halsall, Mr. K. Oldham,
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Groundsman: Andy Houghton
Programme Contributors: David Ledsham,
 Gareth Walker, Mike Floyd, Jim Stringer

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS MAY NOT REFLECT THE VIEWS OF ROCHDALE HORNETS RLFC

BOARDROOM BRIEF

Today we offer a warm welcome to the Directors, Officials, playing staff and supporters of Oldham RLFC who have made the short journey for today's A J Law Infirmary Cup game. This fixture is officially classed as a friendly but the local rivalry and the fact that there is some silverware on offer means that we can expect a hard fought contest.

Every close season the Board know they will have a hectic time in agreeing contracts with the players to be retained and negotiating with new players that the coach wants to bring to the club. It has become an annual merry-go-round and inevitably you lose some players that you would like to retain. On the plus side Martin Hall has had the opportunity to bring in several new faces and strengthen the squad in a number of areas. Through these pages we want to formally welcome all the newcomers and hope they have a successful stay here at Rochdale Hornets.

With the new season only a matter of a few weeks away we feel we've again got a strong squad and can be looking to build on the successes of the last couple of seasons. Once again we will have a new format to the season. It begins in January with the National Cup and TXU Energi Challenge Cup competitions. Then the National League competition starts in April and with it's two Division format promises to be even more competitive than the Northern Ford Premiership - and we know how good that was.

As we look forward to a new season there has been a timely reminder of the perilous state of the games financial affairs with the news that the Administrators have been called into Leigh. Hopefully they will sort themselves out, but this comes on top of the withdrawal of York last year and seemingly a week does not pass when one club or another declares that it is in dire financial straits.

Of course we are no different from everyone in that making ends meet is very difficult. We can be pretty satisfied with our achievements over the years. We have a Stadium to be proud of and having finished third in the NFP for the last two seasons can claim to be pretty successful on the pitch. However, as everyone knows our gate receipts are never going to cover the costs of running the club and we rely heavily on other sources of income. Advertising, sponsorship and especially Saturday Yankee Lottery provide the lifeblood for Rochdale Hornets.

In the past few weeks we have seen a supporters initiative which we hope gets off the ground. In addition we have written to all the club's shareholders and friends of Rochdale Hornets to see if they would be prepared to contribute £500 a year for the next two years. The hope is that if 100 people agree to the scheme it would provide a cash injection of £50,000 per year and would offer us a major lifeline. Tony Pratt has been working very hard on the initiative and anyone interested in finding out more can contact him through the club office.

Finally, at this festive time of the year it only remains for us to hope that you have had a merry Christmas and here's hoping that all Rochdale Hornets' fans wishes come true in the new year!

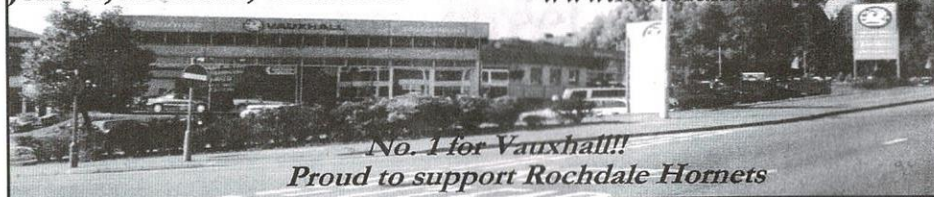
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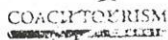
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Gavin DODD A local youngster who is learning the ropes at Oldham. A wing or full-back, 21 year old Gavin played for the NFP under 21's at Widnes and is sure to be pushing for a regular place this season, either at full-back or as a lively winger who knows where the try (goal) line is.

Jon GODDARD A 20 year old and the youngest member of the squad, Cas. lad Jon has joined Oldham from Castleford thanks to the old pals act. Graham Steadman is a firm friend and former team mate of former coach Ford, and saw a loan spell with Oldham as the ideal way to bring Jon along. Already this is bearing fruit as Goddard's defence has been superb and as his confidence grows it is expected that the tries will soon be coming.

Joe McNICHOLAS One of the original 1997 Roughyeds, wingman Joe made a first team spot his own midway through last season and went on to score eight tries in 14 consecutive appearances. Fast off the mark, god on his feet and always gives 100%.

Will COWELL A 22 year old who played at Warrington, this Cumbrian utility back is equally at home at full-back, wing or centre. Played 18 Super League games for Warrington after signing from Kells, the Whitehaven amateur club. Recommended to Oldham by former Wolves boss Daryl van de Valde, Will has kick-started his career in the NFP with the Roughyeds.

Chris CAMPBELL 22 year old utility back, signed from Whitehaven after impressing in trials. Is the son of ex referee David Campbell. Signed for Warrington from Crossfields amateur club as a seventeen year old and was the top Alliance try scorer in his first season with 26 tries from full-back. Played 10 matches in Super League before following coach Paul Cullen to Whitehaven on a full-time contract. Unfortunately broke his jaw early in his Whitehaven career.

Gareth BARBER 21 year old Oldham born half-back or centre who was reared on rugby with his best pal, the Leeds and Great Britain loose forward, Kevin Sinfield. When Sinfield signed for Leeds Rhinos, Barber signed for Warrington, but returned home to Oldham before the start of the 2000-01 season. Played for the NFP under 21's at Widnes in the autumn.

Steve MOLLOY Player coach Steve had been playing for Batley on a short term contract after leaving Huddersfield at the end of 2000. A strong

prop forward and ex captain of England, Steve's other previous clubs are Featherstone and Sheffield.

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 2000 season, he had played 87 of the club's 90 matches and had scored 32 tries, a phenomenal record for a hooker. He didn't enjoy one of his better seasons in 2001, but a change of job, and less travelling, has seen him back at his best in 2002.

Jason CLEGG Second biggest forward at the club after Danny Guest. Is a former Bradford (Northern, not Bulls) forward, who has had four good seasons with Oldham. Powerful on the break, he is a favourite of the Oldham supporters and regularly picks up the Junior Roughyeds Player of the Year award.

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 he has now broke through to the first team on a regular basis. Showed up well for the NFP under 21's last year as one of five Roughyed players in the squad.

Paul ANDERSON One of four players snapped up from Leigh Centurions. Originally a forward Paul played for St. Helens and Sheffield Eagles before the then Hilton Park boss Ian Millward took him to leigh - and converted him into a centre. Big and strong, Paul has signed a one-year deal with the Roughyeds, similar to all the other new signings.

Neil RODEN A clever half-back who joined Oldham from Wigan, with Farrell, two and a half seasons 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 in 2001. He is sure to be a regular performer in the long and testing 2003 campaign.

Gavin JOHNSON A young centre or wing, or occasional back-row forward, Oldhamer, Gavin spent two seasons at Odsal in the Bradford Academy side and made the occasional appearance for the Bulls in the Alliance Championship. Spent almost a season earning his Oldham spurs in the Alliance team before signing a two year deal in September 2001.

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

Our visitors in focus

OLDHAM

Club Honours

Rugby League Championship Winners: 1909-10, 1910-11, 1956-57

Runners Up: 1906-07, 1907-08, 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, 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 Givvons 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 player to score in every game in a season
- 1997 Oldham beat Swinton 20-16 in their last game at Watersheddings on 19th January
- 1997 Oldham Bears drop out of Super League, go into liquidation and are resurrected as a Second Division team

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JOIN THE VICE-PRESIDENTS CLUB

Following the recent shareholders meeting, ex-player and Director Tony Pratt has launched a major new fund-raising scheme to help Hornets.

Anyone can join: for details see Tony Pratt or any board member.

Members so far (in alphabetical order) are:-

B & O Belfield
Peter Birchall
Norman Halsall
Cameron Heap
R & M Hindle
Alan Hindle
Beryl Lloyd
John McCormack
Victor Mills
J & C Nicholson
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FIXTURES 2003

January

19	WORKINGTON	(H)	NC
26	Challenge Cup	(3)	

February

2	Oldham	(A)	NC
9	Challenge Cup	(4)	
16	SWINTON	(H)	NC
23	Salford	(A)	NC

March

2	Challenge Cup	(5)	
9	LEIGH	(H)	NC
16	Workington	(A)	NC
23	OLDHAM	(H)	NC
30	Swinton	(A)	NC

April

6	SALFORD	(H)	NC
13	Leigh	(A)	NC
18	Oldham	(A)	
21	HULL KR	(H)	
26	TXU Energi Final		

May

4	Doncaster	(A)
11	Whitehaven	(A)
25	Dewsbury	(A)

June

1	Batley	(A)
15	SALFORD	(H)
22	Featherstone	(A)
29	OLDHAM	(H)

July

13	LEIGH	(H)
20	Hull KR	(A)
27	DONCASTER	(H)

August

3	Whitehaven	(A)
10	DEWSBURY	(H)
17	BATLEY	(H)
24	Salford	(A)
31	FEATHERSTONE	(H)

September

7	Leigh	(A)
---	-------	-----

NC - National Cup

THE A. J. LAW CUP

The first match took place on 7th May, 1921, finishing in a inauspicious 0-0 draw. Oldham were the first holders, winning the replay 12-2 at Watersheddings on 13th May, 1921.

Rochdale Hornets biggest win came in 1999 when Deryck Fox's side won 48-10.

Oldham's biggest win was 53-13 in 1961.

Oldham have won the trophy 40 times to Hornets' 17 times.

Hornets' win in 1999 ended Oldham's longest winning sequence of 7 consecutive victories, the longest in the Cup's history.

Hornets' best run of consecutive victories was between 1947 and 1952.

Oldham were the first team to win the trophy away from home, at the tenth time of asking. In those first 10 years the away team failed to reach a double figure score 9 times!

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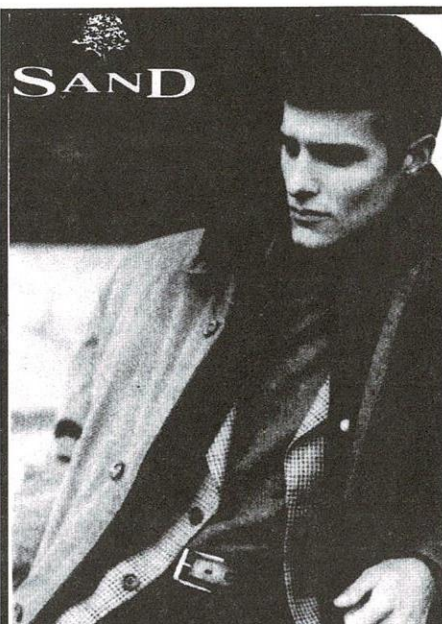
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Changing Faces

by **GARETH WALKER** of Rugby Leaguer & League Express

IN the modern game, the close season usually equates to a flurry of transfer activity, and the period since Huddersfield Giants' October Grand Final win has been no different. All ten National League One clubs have been busy building new squads for the 2003 campaign, with some noticeably more active than others.

Today's two teams have both had a significant turnover of players. At Oldham, it's been a case of seven in, seven out for player coach Steve Molloy, with four of his recruits coming from Leigh Centurions.

Hornets had also added seven new faces at the time of writing, with the batch headed by Salford's International duo Ian Watson and Paul Southern, who have represented Wales and Ireland respectively in recent years.

On the way out of Spotland for various reasons have been six Hornets. But despite the moves, this close season represents a little more stability for Hornets after many recent years have seen massive turnovers of both players and coaches.

In fact, Hornets and Oldham look to have profited from the off-season change-around more than most. Leigh Centurions and Hull Kingston Rovers look noticeably weaker than last season at least in terms of numbers, though both were still hoping to recruit as this piece was being written.

Batley Bulldogs look considerably stronger despite the loss of key halfbacks Dean Lawford and Glen Tomlinson, while Featherstone's fortunes without points machine Jamie Rooney will be interesting to monitor.

Whitehaven, Dewsbury and Doncaster look to be among the most stable of clubs in terms of player movement.

Which only leaves newly relegated Salford City Reds. They have lost a significant part of their Super League squad, but have also retained plenty of quality players and with some impressive new additions and their full-time status will undoubtedly start as strong favourites for the title.

But it is far from a foregone conclusion and 2003 again promises to provide Rugby League supporters with a feast of passion, excitement and entertainment.

NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE TRANSFER MOVEMENTS (Correct at 16.12.02)

BATLEY BULLDOGS

INS: Barry Eaton (Widnes Vikings), David and Anthony Gibbons (Oldham), Joe Berry (Rochdale Hornets subject to confirmation), Matt Bramald, Gavin Swinson, Chris Spurr, Craig Booth (all Featherstone Rovers), Adam Hayes (Huddersfield Giants).

OUTS: Glen Tomlinson (retired), Dean Lawford (Widnes Vikings).

DEWSBURY RAMS

INS: Scott Rhodes (Sheffield Eagles), Danny Evans (Featherstone Rovers), Billy Kershaw (Sheffield Eagles), Andy Heptinstall (unattached), Mark Barlow (Wakefield Trinity Wildcats), Paul Steele (Castleford Tigers).

OUTS: Adrian Flynn (Featherstone Rovers), Carl Briggs (Featherstone Rovers), Brad Hepti (released), Davide Longo (released).

DONCASTER DRAGONS

INS: Mark Moxon (Huddersfield Giants), Matt Walker (Huddersfield Giants).

OUTS: Maea David (Hull RU), Jamie Fielden (London Broncos), Anton Garcia (Chorley Lynx, season loan).

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS

INS: Brendan O'Meara (Rochdale Hornets), Adrian Flynn (Dewsbury Rams), Carl Briggs (Dewsbury Rams), Ian Brown (Sheffield Eagles), Andy Rice (Huddersfield Giants), Andy McNally (Castleford Tigers), Chris Molyneux (Huddersfield Giants).

OUTS: Jamie Rooney and Richard Newlove (Wakefield Trinity Wildcats), Neil Lowe (Salford City Reds), Danny Evans (Dewsbury Rams), Matt Bramald, Chris Spurr, Gavin Swinson, Craig Booth (all Batley Bulldogs), Andy Bastow (Hunslet Hawks), Ricky Helliwell (Keighley Cougars).

HULL KINGSTON ROVERS

INS: Nick Pinkney (Salford City Reds).

OUTS: Chris Charles (Salford City Reds), Bob Everitt (Australia), Richie Hayes, Mark Cain and Alex Godfrey (all York City Knights), Whetu Taewa (retired), Jon Wilkin (St. Helens), Dane Dorahy (Australia).

LEIGH CENTURIIONS

INS: Damian Munro (Widnes Vikings), Sean Richardson (Widnes Vikings), Pat Weisner (Canterbury Bulldogs), Bryan Henare (Oldham), Dale Holdstock (Swinton Lions), Michael Watts (Chorley Lynx), Alan Hadcroft (Western Suburbs Illawara), Dave Alstead (Warrington Wolves).

OUTS: Simon Baldwin (Salford City Reds), Bobbie Goulding and John Hamilton (released), Dave Whittle (Chorley Lynx), Chris Morley (Oldham), Paul Anderson (Oldham), Andrew Isherwood (Widnes Vikings), Simon Knox (Swinton Lions), Simon Svabic (Oldham), Gareth Price (Rochdale Hornets), Chris Irwin (Oldham), Ian Hodson (Chorley Lynx), Vila Matautia (retired), Mark McCully (Chorley Lynx), David Ingram (Chorley Lynx), Liam Bretherton (retired).

OLDHAM

INS: Chris Morley (Leigh Centurions), Paul Anderson (Leigh Centurions), Darren Shaw (Salford City Reds), Martin McLoughlin (Barrow Raiders), Chris Irwin (Leigh Centurions), Simon Svabic (Leigh Centurions), Iain Marsh (Barrow Raiders).

OUTS: Bryan Nenare (Leigh Centurions), John Braddish (Chorley Lynx), Keith Brennan (retired), Anthony and David Gibbons, Mark Sibson (all Batley Bulldogs), Joey Hayes (released).

ROCHDALE HORNETS

INS: Ian Watson (Salford City Reds), Paul Southern (Salford City Reds), Mick Nanyn (Swinton Lions), Gareth Price (Leigh Centurions), Matt Leigh (Barrow Raiders), Andy Grundy (Chorley Lynx), Matt Bateman (unattached).

OUTS: Matt Calland (Huddersfield Giants), Brendan O'Meara (Featherstone Rovers), Latham Tawhai (released), Joe Berry (Batley Bulldogs subject to confirmation), Ian Higgins (Hunslet Hawks), Ian Sinfield (Keighley Cougars).

SALFORD CITY REDS

INS: Gavin Clinch (Halifax), Radney Bowker (Barrow Raiders), Cliff Beverley (Barrow Raiders), Neil Lowe (Featherstone Rovers), Chris Charles (Hull Kingston Rovers), Jason Flowers (Halifax).

OUTS: Darren Treacy, Mark Corvo, Greg Ebrill, Michael Hancock (all released), Paul Southern (Rochdale Hornets), Ian Watson (Rochdale Hornets), Damian Gibson (Castleford Tigers), Gary Broadbent (Whitehaven), Graham Holroyd (Halifax RU), Warren Jowitt (Hull FC), Mike Wainwright (Warrington Wolves), Francis Maloney (Castleford Tigers), Darren Shaw (Oldham).

WHITEHAVEN

INS: Gary Broadbent (Salford City Reds), Darren Holt (Barrow Raiders), Mike Whitehead (Barrow Raiders), Steven Wood (Workington town), Jamie Stenhouse (Swinton Lions), Glen Hutton (Barrow Raiders).

OUTS: Mark Cox (London Broncos), Warren Stevens (Warrington Wolves).

RESULTS 2001-02

			H/A	Score	Att.
Dec	SUN 2	BATLEY B	H	26-14	1,133
	Sun 9	Hunslet H	A	28-20	637
	SUN 16	SWINTON L	H	22-10	1,035
Jan	Sun 30	Hull KR	A	24-20	1,305
	Sun 13	Leigh C	A	14-14	3,444
	SUN 20	YORK W	H	54-0	1,044
Feb	SUN 27	FARNWORTH (CC 3)	H	44-28	626
	Sun 3	Dewsbury R	A	20-25	1,201
	SUN 10	LEIGH C (CC 4)	H	20-24	2,710
Mar	SUN 17	CHORLEY L	H	32-22	771
	Sun 3	Workington T	A	20-10	1,093
	SUN 10	GATESHEAD T	H	58-24	737
Apr	Sun 17	Huddersfield G	A	4-58	2,938
	SUN 24	DONCASTER D	H	22-24	1,138
	FRI 29	OLDHAM (NC)	H	14-13	2,096
May	Sun 7	Dewsbury R (NC)	A	7-6	874
	SUN 14	HUDDERSFIELD G (NC)	H	10-30	1,476
	Mon 29	Batley B (NC)	A	24-25	457
June	SUN 5	HUNSLET H (NC)	H	42-11	879
	Sun 12	Doncaster D (NC)	A	33-20	1,219
	SUN 19	BARROW R	H	46-32	1,106
July	Tue 28	Oldham	A	28-24	1,050
	Sun 2	Sheffield E	A	26-14	910
	SUN 9	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	H	33-16	1,117
Aug	Sun 16	Keighley C	A	32-21	1,005
	Sun 23	Whitehaven	A	16-28	902
	Sun 30	Barrow R	A	8-15	654
Sept	Sun 7	Featherstone R	A	24-31	1,402
	SUN 14	DEWSBURY R	H	40-30	1,013
	SUN 21	SHEFFIELD E	H	64-2	1,038
Oct	SUN 28	WHITEHAVEN W	H	30-28	914
	Sun 4	Hull KR	A	12-13	1,502
	SUN 11	WORKINGTON T	H	62-20	1,029
Nov	SUN 18	OLDHAM	H	18-17	1,980
	Sun 25	Chorley L	A	60-14	334
	Sun 1	Doncaster D	A	40-36	1,041
Dec	Sun 22	Play-offs OLDHAM	H	6-20	2,573

ROLL CALL 2001-02

The following statistics reflect the withdrawal of York Wasps from the NFP

	P	Sub	Tries	Dg	Goal	Pts	Sponsor
Richard Agar	13		3		12	36	Mike & Lindsay Owen
Warren Ayres	15	7	6		23	70	The Moorcock Inn
Damian Ball	23	4	4			16	Mack 2
Joe Berry	9	17	1			4	Keith & Sheila Brierley
Marlon Billy	6		3			12	Interbake Limited
Martin Bunce	5	4	1			4	Coward & Sons, Printers
James Bunyan	24	7	9			36	Spot. League of Gentlemen
Matt Calland	31		15			60	Vining Solicitors
Sean Cooper	33	2	16			64	Tommy Cooper Appre. Soc.
Paul Davidson	20	5	7			28	
Steve Gartland	2	2				0	
Iain Higgins	13	2	7			28	Coward & Sons, Printers
Andy Ireland	1					0	
Dave Larder	13	13	7			28	Ged Davenport
Matt Long	2	29	8			32	Coward & Sons, Printers
Casey Mayberry	16	3	14			56	Barbara Taylor
Wayne McHugh	8	2	2			8	Coward & Sons, Printers
Marlon Miller	3					0	
Brendan O'Meara	18	6	8			32	Ray & Ena Myers
Paul Owen	30		15			60	Albany Hotel
Richard Pachniuk	32		11			44	Eric & Rita Armitage
Darren Robinson	1	1	1			4	
Wes Rogers	20	10	1			4	Mike Ashworth
Danny Sculthorpe	3					0	rochdalehornets.com
Ian Sinfield	4	10	1			4	Coward & Sons, Printers
Paul Smith	33		13			52	North Builders
David Stephenson	26	2	2			8	Spot. League of Gentlemen
Latham Tawhai	30		5	1	1	23	Heywood Market Traders
Andy Wallace	1	3				0	Coward & Sons, Printers
Dave Watson	6	2	2			8	Gary Webster
Lee Wilson	1	2				0	Coward & Sons, Printers
Danny Wood	26	8	10	1	119	279	Rossendale Engineering Ltd.

NOTICE BOARD

KARL MARRIOTT MEMORIAL TROPHY

The Rochdale Hornets Player of the Match will be awarded the Karl Marriott Memorial Trophy after the game. Last years winner was Richard Pachniuk.

HAVE YOUR SAY

You can send any letters or articles you wish to have considered for inclusion in the matchday programme to the Club Office.

For example you might want to write about your favourite player or a match from the past. Perhaps you want to share your memories of the first time you watched Hornets or some other experiences of supporting Hornets.

All contributions will be welcome.

NEXT UP

The next match here at Spotland Stadium will be in the National Cup against Workington Town on Sunday, 19th January, 2003. Hornets will be keen to get their season off to a winning start against a team they did the double over last year, including a remarkable 62-20 demolition of the Cumbrians last April. For their part Workington will be looking for revenge, so a great game is in prospect.

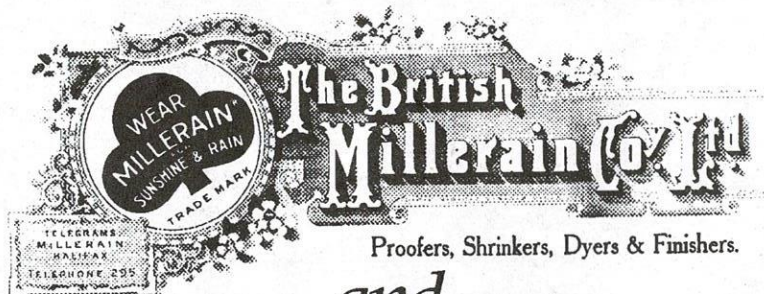
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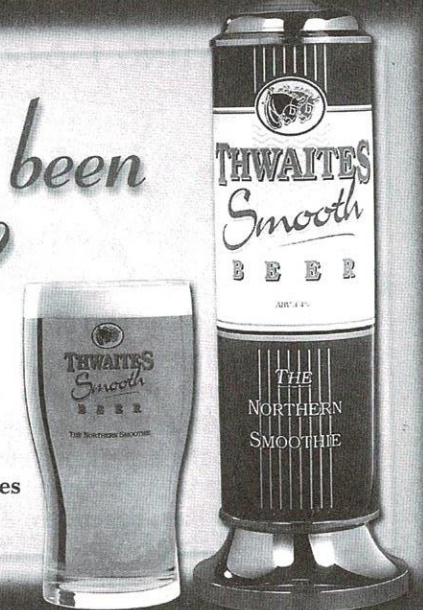
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NFP FINAL LEAGUE TABLE 2002

	P	W	D	L	For	Agst	Diff	Pts
Huddersfield Giants	27	26	1	0	1156	256	900	53
Leigh Centurions	27	21	1	5	1021	426	595	43
Rochdale Hornets	27	19	1	7	809	582	227	39
Hull Kingston Rovers	27	18	1	8	715	468	247	37
Featherstone Rovers	27	18	1	8	836	604	232	37
Doncaster Dragons	27	16	1	10	741	603	138	33
Batley Bulldogs	27	16	1	10	658	666	-8	33
Whitehaven Warriors	27	15	1	11	647	600	47	31
Oldham	27	13	3	11	748	553	195	29
Dewsbury Rams	27	14	1	12	723	616	107	29
Workington Town	27	13	0	14	677	677	0	26
Sheffield Eagles	27	13	0	14	597	648	-51	26
Barrow Raiders	27	12	1	14	707	670	37	25
Keighley Cougars	27	7	0	20	488	906	-418	14
Swinton Lions	27	6	1	20	473	918	-445	13
Chorley Lynx	27	5	0	22	477	994	-517	10
Hunslet Hawks	27	3	1	23	438	954	-516	7
Gateshead Thunder	27	0	1	26	338	1108	-770	1

SUPPORTERS LAUNCH HORNETS NEST-EGG

by Jim Stringer

Rugby League as a sport is suffering financially at the moment, with several clubs in very dire straits indeed. No-one can have failed to notice the stories in the local press that have highlighted Hornets' situation - but loyal Hornets fans are playing a vital part in helping secure the future of our club.

Last month saw the inaugural meeting of the Hornets Nest-Egg - an independent supporters' fund-raising association. Several clubs already have 'squadbuilder' schemes and independent supporters' associations and this will follow similar lines.

We are asking supporters to make either a single contribution of £100 or £10 per month - but all donations are welcome and will guarantee full membership. A democratic voting system ensures that members always have the final say in how the money will be spent.

In a perfect world we'd have 1000 fans paying £100 and we'd have the cash-richest club in the league - but all we can do is try and get as many people as possible involved and raise as much as we can. It's envisaged that all funds raised will be used for the acquisition, retention and development of the best quality players we can afford. We are currently talking to Martin Hall about his plans for the forthcoming season and it's hoped that the Nest-Egg will go some way to ensuring that Hornets remain a competitive team that we can all take satisfaction in watching.

Rugby League's at a crossroads - those clubs that can hang in there through the next few difficult years will have a better chance of long-term survival. If Hornets are to remain serious challengers next and every season, we can all make an investment in the future of our club by getting behind it. £100 sounds like a lot of money - but it works out at less than £2 a week to help maintain a competitive team - and ensure that we have a successful future.

The Hornets Nest-Egg is an independent supporters' movement, run by supporters for the good of the club and the survival of professional Rugby League in Rochdale. Hornets is your club as much as it is anyone else's - and the Nest-Egg has the potential to be 'fan-power' in action.

Hornets have been struggling on since 1871 - now the future is in our hands. If enough people get behind this idea, its potential is huge. We're just supporters like you are - but we think that together we can do something that will have a positive effect on our club.

The next Hornets Nest-Egg meeting takes place at The Baum, Toad Lane, Rochdale on Wednesday, 8th January, 2003 at 8 p.m. Martin Hall has agreed to come along to talk about his plans for the season and answer questions. And, in addition to the Raffle, we will be auctioning ex-Kiwi Dave Watson's Hornets playing jersey.

To make a donation, pledge a donation or for further information about Hornets Nest-Egg, e-mail me at stringer_jim@hotmail.com or call me on 07876 011 084.

LOOKING BACKTO LAST YEAR

25th November, 2001

Rochdale Hornets 27 v 14 Oldham (HT 16-2)

Attendance 1,480

Both teams went into this game on the back of impressive pre-season results but Hornets ended the game as convincing winners and collected the A. J. Law Infirmary Cup for the first time since 1988.

It was Hornets' new boys who did most of the damage, with new signings Richard Pachniuk, Richard Agar and Matt Long scoring 20 of their 27 points. Agar finished with 12 points from 2 tries and two conversions but it was hooker Pachniuk who stole the show on his return with an accomplished display around the play-the-balls. Fittingly "Pach" received the Karl Marriott Memorial Trophy, particularly poignant as he had played alongside Marriott on several occasions in his previous spell with Hornets.

Matt Calland was another player to have a big game, as he regularly punched holes in the Roughyeds defence. Marlon Billy started the season as he had finished the last, with a try and Danny Sculthorpe signed off with a reminder of his full repertoire of rugby league skills by landing a long-range field goal.

Oldham lacked the cohesion they had shown in beating Leigh a week earlier and despite Hough's prompting did not cross Hornets' line until Brennan's 52 minute effort: It was only a last minute consolation try from Henare that gave the game a respectable look.

Martin Hall was reasonably satisfied with the performance "we were disappointed with conceding the try at the end but generally I thought some of the guys played particularly well. There is more depth and quality in the squad and that brings more options."

Hall's counterpart Mike Ford said "Rochdale played well and we're disappointed, we've got a lot of work to do. But I saw one or two signs that we're going to be up there at the end of the season, and certainly Rochdale will be as well."

TEAMS and SCORERS

HORNETS: Owen, Cooper, O'Meara, Calland, Billy (T), Agar (2T 2G), Tawhai, Sculthorpe (Dg), Pachniuk (T), Rogers, Smith, Larder, Wood (G). **Subs:** Ball, Berry, Bunyan, Long (T).

OLDHAM: Sibsen, Dodd, Gibbons, Barber, McNicholas, Braddish (3G), Brennan (T), Knox, Hough, Clegg, Farrell, Henare (T), Hodgkinson. **Subs:** Goddard, Doran, Guest, Casey.

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HORNETS

Blue, Red & White

1. Paul OWEN
2. Sean COOPER
3. Mick NANYN
4. Gareth PRICE
5. Casey MAYBERRY
6. Danny WOOD
7. Ian WATSON
8. Matt LONG
9. Warren AYRES
10. David STEPHENSON
11. James BUNYAN
12. Damien BALL
13. Paul SMITH
14. Andy WALLACE
15. Andy GRUNDY
16. Wes RODGERS
17. Matt BATEMAN

OLDHAM

Tangerine & Black

1. Gavin DODD
2. Iain MARSH
3. Simon SVABIC
4. Jon GODDARD
5. Joe McNICHOLAS
6. Gareth BARBER
7. Neil RODEN
8. Steve MOLLOY
9. John HOUGH
10. Jason CLEGG
11. Lee DORAN
12. Paul ANDERSON
13. Chris MORLEY
14. Darren SHAW
15. Gavin JOHNSON
16. Will COWELL
17. Danny GUEST

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: Mr. C. A. Morris

Touch Judges: Mr. R. Huddleston, Mr. P. Johnson

The Christmas holiday period meant that the printers deadline was well in advance of today's game and therefore both teams are subject to change. These changes will be announced over the public address system.

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