



# The Roughyeds

Arriva Trains Cup  
West Group Match v Chorley Lynx

**OLDHAM**

**V**

**CHORLEY  
LYNX**

|                |    |                |
|----------------|----|----------------|
| Jon Goddard    | 1  | Rob Smythe     |
| Will Cowell    | 2  | David Cunliffe |
| Iain Marsh     | 3  | Carl Jones     |
| James Bunyan   | 4  | Daryl Lacey    |
| Nick Johnson   | 5  | Lee Paterson   |
| Neil Roden     | 6  | Neil Alexander |
| Ian Watson     | 7  | Martin Gambles |
| Steve Molloy   | 8  | Gareth Jones   |
| John Hough     | 9  | Martin Roden   |
| Paul Southern  | 10 | John Hill      |
| Martin Elswood | 11 | Chris Newall   |
| Lee Doran      | 12 | Gary Smith     |
| Lee Marsh      | 13 | Daniel Barton  |
|                | 14 |                |
|                | 15 |                |
|                | 16 |                |
|                | 17 |                |

**Subs From:**

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Gareth Barber     | Simon Smith     |
| Martin McLoughlin | Eddie Kilgannon |
| Simon Svabic      | Anthony Murray  |
| Craig Farrimond   | Ian Parry       |
|                   |                 |
|                   |                 |

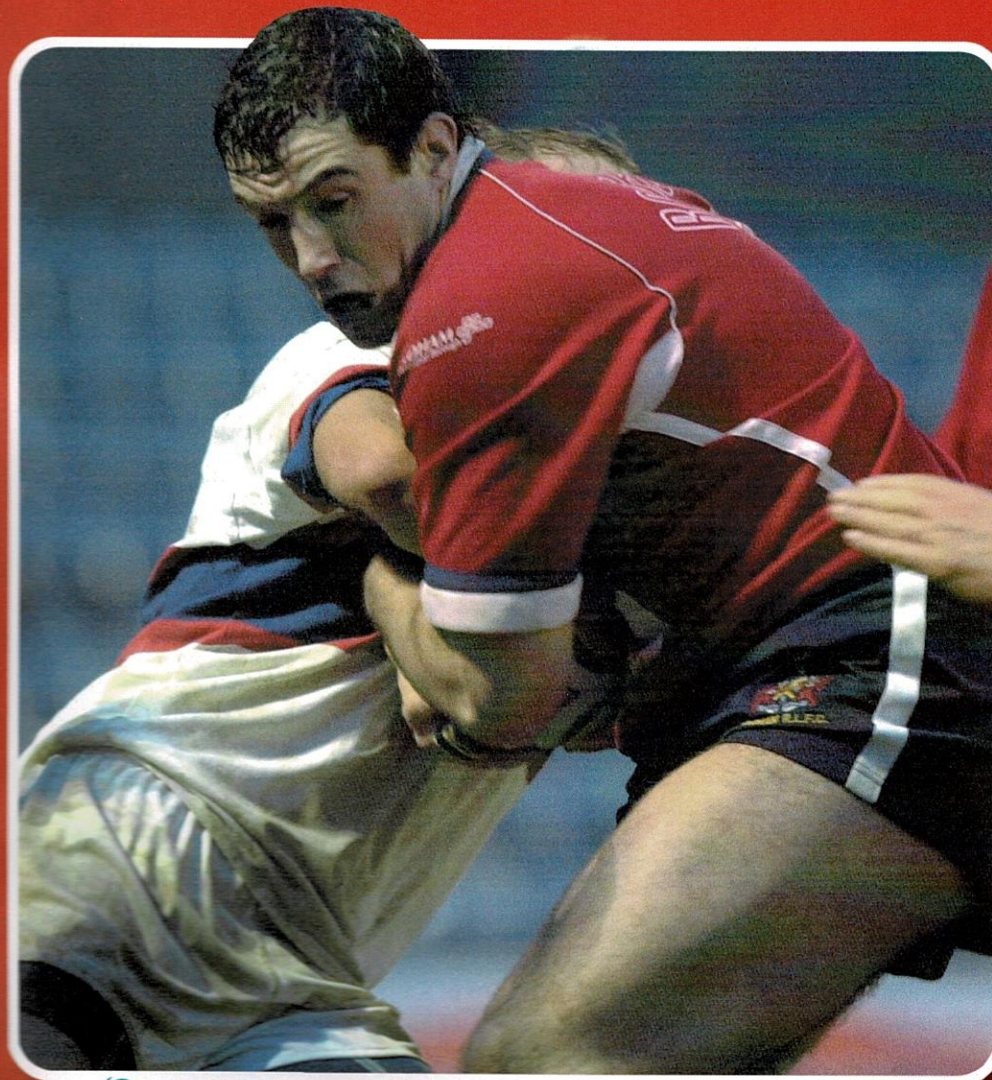
**Match Officials:**

**REFEREE:** Ben Thaler  
**TOUCH JUDGES:** Dave Griffith & Paul Stockman  
**RESERVE REFEREE:** Clive Walker  
**MATCH COMMISSIONER:** Gerry Kershaw



# The Roughyeds

Arriva Trains Cup  
West Group Match v Chorley Lynx



**BOUNDARY PARK**  
**SUNDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2004**  
**KICK OFF 3.00pm**



The Roughyeds

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Oldham OL1 1SQ

Telephone: 0161 628 3677

Fax: 0161 627 5700

Club Shop: 0161 627 2141

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Shaun Gartland

#### CLUB CAPTAIN

Phil Farrell

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#### OFFICE MANAGER

Jackie Collier

#### PROGRAMME EDITORS

Nigel Marland & Brian Walker

#### HALL OF FAME MEMBERS

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Joe Ferguson 1899-23

Herman Hilton 1913-26

Alan Davies 1950-62

Frank Stirrup 1950-62

Bernard Ganley 1950-61

John Etty 1954-56

Derek Turner 1955-59

Bob Irving 1964-74

Martin Murphy 1966-82

Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

## 1895-1997

### RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

Winners: 1909-10, 1910-11, 1956-57

Runners up: 1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22, 1954-55

### FIRST DIVISION

Champions: 1904-05

### RUGBY LEAGUE CHALLENGE CUP

Winners: 1899, 1925, 1927

Runners up: 1907, 1912, 1924, 1926

### LANCASHIRE CUP

Winners: 1907, 1910, 1913, 1919, 1924, 1933, 1956, 1957, 1958

Runners up: 1908, 1911, 1918, 1921, 1954, 1966, 1968, 1986, 1989

### LANCASHIRE LEAGUE

Champions: 1897-98, 1900-01, 1907-08, 1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57, 1957-58

Runners up: 1895-96, 1896-97, 1898-99, 1899-1900, 1908-09, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1923-24, 1954-55

### SECOND DIVISION

Champions: 1963-64, 1981-82, 1987-88

### SECOND / DIVISIONAL PREMIERSHIP

Winners: 1988, 1990

Runners up: 1992

**RECORD VICTORY:** 63-0 v Goole - March 18th 1899 (Challenge Cup 1st Rnd)

Record victory in a league match: 67-6 v Liverpool City - April 4th 1959

**RECORD SCORE:** 70-10 v Bramley - Feb 12th 1995 (Challenge Cup 4th Rnd)

Record score in a league match: 67-6 v Liverpool City - April 4th 1959

**RECORD ATTENDANCE:** 28,000 v Huddersfield - Feb 4th 1912

Record attendance in a cup match: 25,000 v Huddersfield -

March 23rd 1912 (Challenge Cup 3rd Rnd)

Record attendance (All games): 62,217 v Hull - May 18th 1957

Championship Final at Odsal Stadium, Bradford

**MOST APPEARANCES:** Joe Ferguson, 627 - Sept 1899 - Apr 1923

**CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES:** Joe Lawton, 134 - Sept 1897 - Nov 1902

**TRIES IN A SEASON:** Reg Farrar, 49 - 1921-22

**GOALS IN A SEASON:** Bernard Ganley, 200 - 1957-58

**POINTS IN A SEASON:** Bernard Ganley, 412 - 1957-58

**DROP GOALS IN A SEASON:** Ray Ashton, 9 - 1979-80

**TRIES IN A CAREER:** Alan Davies, 174 - 1950-61

**GOALS IN A CAREER:** Bernard Ganley, 1,358 - 1950-61

**POINTS IN A CAREER:** Bernard Ganley, 2,761 - 1950-61

**DROP GOALS IN A CAREER:** Ray Ashton, 26 - 1979-1987

**TRIES IN A MATCH:** James Miller, 7 v Barry, October 31st 1908

**GOALS IN A MATCH:** Bernard Ganley 14 v Liverpool City April 4th 1959

**POINTS IN A MATCH:** Abe Johnson, 30 (12 goals + 2 tries) v Widnes,

April 9th 1928

## 1998-2003

### Trans-Penine Cup

Finalists - 1998

### Northern Ford Premiership

Club of the Year - 2000

Grand Finalists - 2001

**MOST APPEARANCES:** John Hough, 175 - Jan 1998 - September 2003

**CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES:** Phil Farrel, 67 - \*April 2nd 2000 - March 15th 2002

\*John Hough was on the team for every match February 1st 1999 - April 16th 2001 (82)

**TRIES IN A SEASON:** Mark Sibson, 23 - 1999-2000

**GOALS IN A SEASON:** Pat Rich, 146 - 2000-2001

**POINTS IN A SEASON:** Pat Rich, 320 - 2000-2001

**DROP GOALS IN A SEASON:** Neil Roden, 7 - 2001-2002

**TRIES IN A CAREER:** Mark Sibson, 60 - 1999-2002

**GOALS IN A CAREER:** Pat Rich, 254 - 1999-2001

**POINTS IN A CAREER:** Pat Rich, 576 - 1999-2001

**DROP GOALS IN A CAREER:** Neil Roden, 18 - 2000-2003

**TRIES IN MATCH:** Mark Sibson v Wigan St. Judes, 4 - Feb 8th 2000 at Boundary Park

Mark Sibson v Queensbury, 4 - Jan 28th 2001 at Boundary Park

David Gibbons v Chorley Lynx, 4 - Jan 30th 2001 at Boundary Park

**GOALS IN A MATCH:** Simon Svabic v Swinton Lions, 10 - Apr 6th 2003 at Boundary Park

**POINTS IN A MATCH:** Gareth Barber v Dewsbury Rams, 26 - Apr 2nd 2002 at Hurst Cross

(7 goals, 3 tries)

**DROP GOALS IN A MATCH:** Neil Roden v Workinton Town, 2 - Dec 17th 2000 at

Derwent Park

John Braddish v Hull KR, 2 - Dec 16th 2001 at New

Craven Park

**HIGHEST SCOREWINNING MARGIN:** v Yorks Wasps, 70-6 - Apr 1st 2001

at Huntington Stadium

v Queensbury (amt), 64-0 - Jan 28th 2001

RLCC 3rd Rnd at Boundary Park



# IN THE CHAIRMAN'S OPINION

with CHRIS HAMILTON

**Here we go - hold on tight!! If previous seasons are anything to go by we are in for another roller coaster ride as we kick off season 2004.**

Like every other team we will be looking to win trophies and be as successful as we possibly can. For some strange reason it seems to have been an exceptionally long close season and even though we are effectively starting 2 weeks later it seems like an age since the last season finished.

The Arriva Trains Cup again starts the campaign and our group containing Leigh, Swinton, Chorley and cross group games against Rochdale will be tough.

Some people see this competition as a warm up exercise but woe-betide anybody at our club who views it that way. In my opinion the Arriva Trains Cup is growing in stature and you only have to look at the crowds and interest generated in the later stages of the competition to realise that you are missing something if you are not part of it. Success breeds success and I don't think you can suddenly turn on form once the League season gets under way.

With that in mind I expect to see a determined performance today and knowing how hard the players have worked pre season they will want to get into the flow as soon as possible.

Our opponents today, Chorley, Lynx come both with a new coach in Mark Lee and several new players from last season when they were unlucky not to see some success for all their hard work.

Their change in fortunes last year was remarkable compared to previous seasons when they struggled and it must have been very rewarding for Chairman Henry Morris and all at the club to savour the benefits that a winning side brings.

Of course success brings pressure of a different kind and people will be expecting more of the same this season which will be a tall order but one that all at the club will be striving to achieve.

For our part we must be on our guard and ensure that we pick up the two points against what will be, without doubt, a very enthusiastic side.

I PERSONALLY NEVER WANT TO HEAR PEOPLE FROM OUR CLUB SAYING THE OPPOSITION WERE MORE ENTHUSIASTIC THAN US. There is no excuse whatsoever for that - opponents can be more skillful, fitter etc, but NEVER should they be more enthusiastic. There is no doubt that the considerable investment that Sean Whitehead and myself have made in the playing squad is reflected in the quality of players we have not only brought to the club but also kept from last season and it's now over to those players to show they are up for it.

The season will be long and hard - looking at how other teams have strengthened there is no doubt about that - but as ever you have a big part to play. Please get behind the team vocally and make them feel they are unbeatable.

Enjoy the game

**CHRIS HAMILTON**

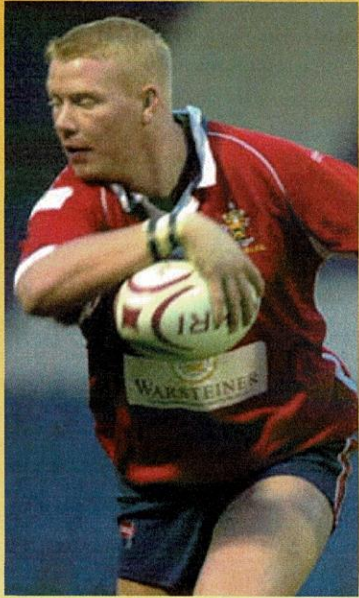
**"In my opinion the Arriva Trains Cup is growing in stature, you only have to look at the crowds to realise"**

The views expressed in this matchday magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the management and staff of Oldham RLFC (1997) Ltd.

We would like to express our thanks to the Oldham Evening Chronicle, League Publications Ltd, Phil Burdge and all concerned for the use of photographs.

[www.roughyeds.co.uk](http://www.roughyeds.co.uk)

# Together, a winning team



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## COACHLINES

with **STEVE MOLLOY**

At last the start of the 2004 season proper has arrived and promises to be even more competitive than last, kicking off with the Arriva Trains Cup group matches which should give an early insight to this season's front-runners.

The group matches pitch NL1 and NL2 sides against each other and whilst the higher division sides will have one eye on lifting the trophy and the other on building an understanding between the players in time for the tough league programme ahead the lower strata side will be just itching to get one over on their more illustrious opponents and obviously we will have this in mind when taking to the field today to face those sharp claws of the Lynx.

**"Our new look side, I am sure, has the right blend of youth and experience"**

Chorley are coached by former Salford favourite Mark Lee and I expect he will know one or two points surrounding our former Willows' boys Ian Watson, Paul Southern and Lee Marsh. The match will certainly test our resolve and we will have to be on our metal to ensure the season gets off to a winning start.

Pre season training has gone well, the squad finalising their preparation with an intensive training stint at Stalag Hopwood Hall. I must congratulate the squad on it's work ethics and the way the players took everything in their stride especially the boxing! This demanding regime will help foster team spirit and will stand the guys in good stead for the battles to come.

Our new look side, I am sure, has the right blend of youth and experience and will enable us to further pursue our search for the Holy Grail----Super League but then again Halifax, Leigh and Hull KR amongst others will be sure that this season is theirs too and for sure its going to be fiercely competed!!

Enjoy the game.

**Steve**



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## IN THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

with **PHIL FARRELL**

Welcome to the first "Captain's Corner".

I'd like to begin by taking a look back at the pre season friendlies against Whitehaven Warriors and Hornets. The match up in Cumbria was always going to be difficult and with the number of new members in the squad we new it would take time to gel. Not one of our happier hunting grounds and our post Christmas trip was again no exception although we all gained from an extra days training up on the Cumbrian coast.

We started well against Hornets and for 20 minutes we looked like we were getting it together but the second half was disappointing. We have studied the videotapes and as we new they would, they have confirmed that there were too many instances of the individual putting himself before the team.

I'm sure that you will agree though, that this is what pre season games are about and because of those matches today you should hopefully see a much improved performance.

Away from the pitch. Some of the lads came over to Wigan to see in the New Year, fashion guru Gareth Barber arriving in jeans, T shirt and school blazer! Now, knowing Barbs as I do I watched him roam the Wigan pubs strutting his stuff as if on his own catwalk showing off his newly dyed blond streaks. A young lady asked for his autograph! Barbs as vein as ever asked her "So you recognise me from the Roughyeds?" Looking puzzled the girl said "No, your not Will Young then?"

Enjoy the game.

Faz



" There were too many instances of the individual putting himself before the team "

## ARRIVA TRAINS CUP FORMAT

The competition includes all 20 National League clubs.

It commences Sunday 1st February with 5 groups of 4 teams. They are North, West, East, Pennine and Yorkshire. The West group includes Leigh Centurions, Swinton Lions, Chorley Lynx and Oldham Roughyeds. Each club plays the other three home and away plus one other team home and away from one of the other groups. In Oldham's case this is Rochdale Hornets.

To qualify automatically for one of the eight quarter final positions a club must finish top of its group. The other three qualifiers will be decided by the five group runners-up plus the best third placed club (based on points/points difference) entering a free draw. The draw will produce three matches, the winner of each will provide the other three quarter finalists.

The quarter finals and semi finals will be 'out of the hat' with the first team out having home advantage.


The final is scheduled for Sunday 18th July with the venue to be decided.

The previous winners are Huddersfield Giants and Salford City Reds.

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BEERS

# in yer face

WITH GEOFF COOKE

**A new season of summer rugby kicks off today (on February 1st!) with the visit of Chorley Lynx in the Arriva Trains Cup.**

Last season the Lynx played exceptionally well under the coaching of a former Oldham favourite in Darren Abram to finish joint top of National League Two, so even though Abram has now departed to take up the reins at Leigh it would be foolish to underestimate Chorley's capabilities.

Judging by attendances at some of the friendlies spectators are already looking forward to the new season after being starved of their favourite sport for four months, at least in terms of cheering on their own club team.

The changes here at Oldham suggest a stronger side than last term with the addition of the former Rochdale contingent of James Bunyan, Paul Southern and Ian Watson. Watson in particular is an outstanding capture, a current Welsh international who, in my opinion, is the best scrum-half in National League One. A fine playmaker and accomplished kicker, he should add variety to the Oldham attack and give the side more options. Bunyan and Southern will provide plenty of go-forward and both were star performers in what was, if we lay local prejudice aside for a moment, an excellent Rochdale Hornets combination. In addition, Oldham have added pace on the wing with the permanent signing of Nick Johnson, so we must try to out flank defences, most especially here at Boundary Park on a wide pitch.

Of course, hope springs eternal at the commencement of a new season and it is easy to get carried away with the potential of one's club. Just as we at Oldham will be quietly confident of making progress during the season, so too will the followers of the likes of Featherstone, Doncaster, Whitehaven and Batley. The Press seem to have decided that National League One has a big three consisting of Halifax, Leigh and Hull K.R. On paper that might look realistic but the other clubs mentioned will not be daunted, especially knowing how competitive the league was last year. There will be no runaway leader this time so expect the league table to be fairly fluid, with some rapid changes of position week by week. The obvious target in the league is to win your home fixtures and about one third to a half of your away games, a situation which should guarantee a top four place. Thereafter it's all in the melting pot of form, injuries and loan signings as the Holy Grail of Grand Final and promotion to Super League looms.

In the meantime there is the little matter of the Arriva Trains Cup. In my view clubs need to treat this as an important competition in its own right. Using it to experiment with your squad is tantamount to saying it doesn't matter and if you say that you can't grumble if the fans stay away. A good cup run breeds confidence and everyone likes a bit of silverware on the sideboard as well as the potential for extra revenue. And, unlike the Challenge Cup, everyone has a realistic chance of doing something in the Arriva Trains. Sheffield, Hunslet and Chorley will be among those looking to spring surprises and it will be good for the game if they do. So, who are my qualifiers for the knock-out stages of the cup? In the Northern group Whitehaven should account for Gateshead, Barrow and Workington but runner-up is intriguing with Barrow my tip to pip Workington. In the West I'd like to think Oldham can pip Leigh, these two hopefully too strong for Chorley and Swinton. Halifax start favourites in the Pennine section but don't be surprised if Keighley knock them over in their home fixture, Hunslet and Rochdale are the other contenders here. Hull K.R. and Doncaster will battle it out to head the Eastern division. Top will be decided by whoever loses to Sheffield. And the 'group of death' this time is the Yorkshire section where, despite the difference in divisions, National League One sides Batley and Featherstone won't find it easy against National League Two sides York and Dewsbury. Batley's cross group games against Doncaster as against, Fev's with Hull K.R. could make all the difference.

Enjoy the competition: it promises to be a cracker!

**GEOFF COOKE**



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# TODAY'S OPPONENTS - CHORLEY LYNX

**EDDIE KILGANNON** previously with Widnes, a centre/back row forward now in his third season with Chorley. Has matured into a good club man.

**DANNY BARTON** followed Mark Lee from Salford, a young player who has a great future in the game, plays loose forward.

**GARY O'REGAN** signed on loan at the end of last season from Salford, Mark has now made the deal permanent, plays wing/full back.

**JOHN HILL** was on loan with Chorley two seasons ago from Warrington, signed now from St Helens. An experienced prop/second row despite being only 22.

**MARTIN RODEN** now in his third season with Chorley having previously been at Wigan and Leigh. Played most of last season at prop, good utility player.

**CHRIS NEWALL** previously with Swinton and Rochdale signed on loan last season and was an ever present. A very useful second row/loose forward.

**GARY SMITH** graduate student, signed from the amateur club Skirlaugh. Plays second row and scored two tries on his debut - a player to watch.

**DARYL LACEY** had injury problems whilst at Wigan and Oldham and now making his come back with Chorley. A very promising fullback/wing or centre.

**CHRIS RAMSDALE**, a product of the Lynx academy he had a spell out of the game whilst working in Norwich. Now back at home and looking forward to the new season. A very useful utility player.

**ADAM BRIGGS** previously with Heworth ARLFC and York Wasps, now playing at University. A loose forward/ second row who is on trial.

**ROB SMYTH** is extremely well known in the game and an excellent signing for Lynx. Previously with Wigan and Warrington, played in the World 7's in 2003.

**GARETH JONES** has played for Leigh East and Wigan. A strong young prop who has a good future in the game.

**IAN PARRY** previously with Warrington has now played three seasons at Chorley. A prop or second row he is Mr. Dependable, always giving 110%.

**MICK REDFORD** is a strong running centre/back row forward, he has made a big impact since signing from the amateur club Leigh East. Now in his second season with Chorley.

**NEIL ALEXANDER** is back for his second spell at Chorley having previously played for Salford and Workington. Plays in any of the half back positions.

**MARTIN GAMBLES** is a diminutive half back with a big heart. Previously with Wigan and a loan spell at Gateshead as well as playing union with Orrell.

**STEVEN HAMER** is an amateur player who is on trial at Lynx. Plays fullback.

**DAMIAN DUNCAN** currently playing amateur rugby with Bamber Bridge, he is another player on trial.

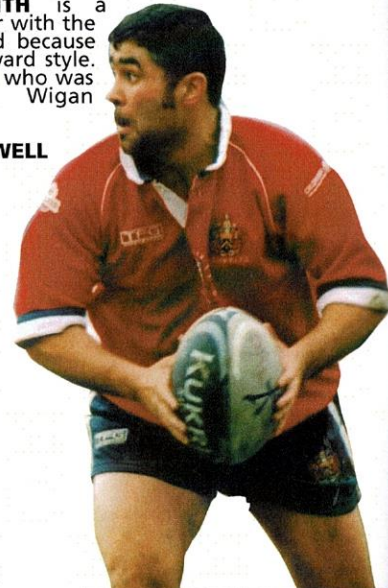
**ALISTAIR ATKINSON**, 6' 5" prop who has also played union with Orrell. Another trialist at Lynx.

**ANTHONY MURRAY**, hooker or scrum half, who was at Workington last season. A vastly experienced player who will be a good addition to the Lynx squad.

**LEE ROWLEY** is a promising young prop who is unfortunately injured at the moment. Signed from Leigh East last season.

**SIMON SMITH** is a popular player with the Chorley crowd because of his go-forward style. A local player who was with the Wigan academy.

**BRIAN CAPEWELL** a 6' 6" loose forward or second row who has signed from Simms Cross after having played for St Helen's and Lancashire Lynx.



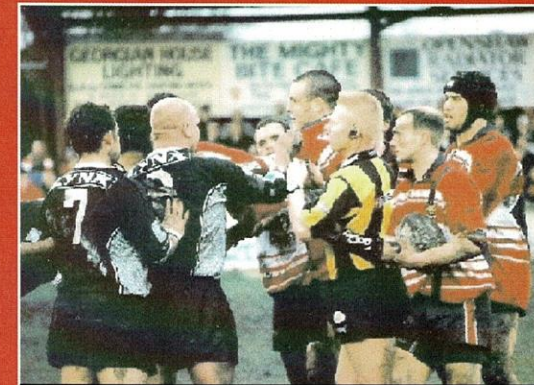
**ANTHONY MURRAY**

## From the pen of... Michael Turner

For the new 2004 season Michael's page will be featuring imagery and match details from previous fixtures against the opponents of the day.

*Picture 1.*

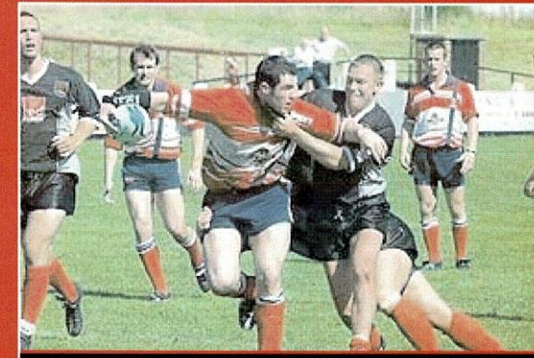
Just over two years ago the Roughyeds entertained the Lynx at Hurst Cross with the home side taking the spoils 34 - 2. A crowd of 1,114 were in attendance and the picture shows a flashpoint when players from both teams squared up to one another while referee Ron Laughton goes in to break them up.



Picture 1 - Both teams squaring up

*Picture 2.*

The return match was six months later on July 14th when Oldham enjoyed a sunny day out in Chorley to register a 52 - 10 success. The photo shows Lee Doran looking for support as he takes a two man tackle.



Picture 2 - The return match

*Picture 3.*

The history of the Lynx can be traced back through the old Chorley Borough club to the sea-siders of Blackpool Borough. So our third image goes back to September 16th 1963. This was the traditional September Monday fixture when many Oldhamers would combine a day at the popular resort with the chance to cheer on the Roughyeds. So it was, that a crowd of 5,000 packed Borough Park to see Oldham win 24 - 10. The action shows Geoff Sims and Brian Lord about to bring down a Blackpool opponent with the famous tower in the background.



Picture 3 - Before they were Chorley

# IN THE NEWS

Pre season matches can create many differing opinions and the Law Cup match against Rochdale was no exception.

In the first period of play we recorded a 16 point advantage only to see it evaporate early into the second half. What a relief to see us edge in front by 2 points at the final hooter.

Should we use so many subs?

Does it ruin the consistency of play by continually changing the personnel?

Or can the coach be forgiven for protecting the 1st team personnel for the real thing?

Today is the real thing and there can be no substitute for getting it right.

This season promises to be even tighter than last year at the top as many believe that Halifax will not follow in the footsteps of Huddersfield and Salford and dominate the league. So if Halifax are not to dominate, who will be up there at the end of the season.

I think Leigh have a very strong squad this season and a coaching team almost as long as the playing squad, what remains to be seen is how they all get together and whether players not regularly in the squad can be kept happy. Hull K.R. have also bought well and Martin Hall and his extended coaching team will be keen to impress. My only negative with Hull K.R. is whether they can improve their results away from home.

Halifax, as we have said, are not being rated by many but I don't think we can write them off and I feel they will be there or thereabouts. I certainly feel that the dark horses could be Whitehaven who have kept the nucleus of last year's side and bought in some more good players. Their coaching set up is good and the whole club appear to be on a very positive wavelength and keen and eager to do well.

How about ourselves? I think we have the nucleus of an excellent team with a fine balance of youth and experience. To my mind our season will depend on how our young academy stars make the transition from academy to National League One football. With the squad being relatively small we are going to need these young lads at some time in the season and this could be the making or breaking of their rugby careers and vital to the clubs progress. Let's hope the boards investment in youth will begin to pay off this season.

As for the rest I feel Rochdale, Keighley and Batley will struggle, which just leaves Doncaster and Featherstone, who I see as middle of the table this season.

NM



# AS IAN SEES IT

with IAN WILSON

As usual, I start the new RL year with extracts from my off season 'diary.'

**September 21st.** A brave effort, maybe, at Hull K.R. – but, in truth, we weren't good enough, and never looked like winning. 5th place was a great effort, considering the quality of our players –but I can only repeat my view that our new signings were not the quality, or the type of player we needed. Whose fault was that?

Anyway, enjoyed a fantastic Sunday afternoon. Started at Salford, to see a really competitive Leigh side genuinely take on the full timers. Only 12-8 at half time. But when typically disgraceful Leigh discipline saw them have 2 men sent off in the first few minutes of the 2nd half. Ran out of ground to car, and drove (perhaps slightly more rapidly than I should!) to Spotland. What a fantastic game! Hull KR won an unbelievably see saw affair in the very last seconds.

**September 28th** What a let down! Hull K.R. simply didn't turn up, and was very depressed to see Leigh (for whom I have no affection whatsoever since they beat us in the Cup in the snow in 1957!) walk it 42-12.

**October 5th** A very enjoyable afternoon at Halton Stadium. First, a cracking contest between Keighley and Sheffield, with Ian Sinfield playing solidly for the winners, and Phil Stephenson, always a personal favourite, showing genuine old-fashioned prop qualities. I look forward to revisiting "Cougar Park" next season. Then a fairly comfortable Salford win over Leigh. Couldn't really get too excited, though, since I really wanted both sides to lose!

**October 12th** Stayed at home to watch Leeds v Wigan on TV –who the hell fancies the M62 on a Friday evening? Very brave effort by Wigan, but once again Leeds under-performed on the big occasion. A great pity, I felt, because I thought Leeds had a much better chance of giving Bradford a game.

**October 19th.** As usual a great night out at Old Trafford for the Grand Final. Managed to find a new non-RL mate to take for the first time – and he was completely bowled over by the

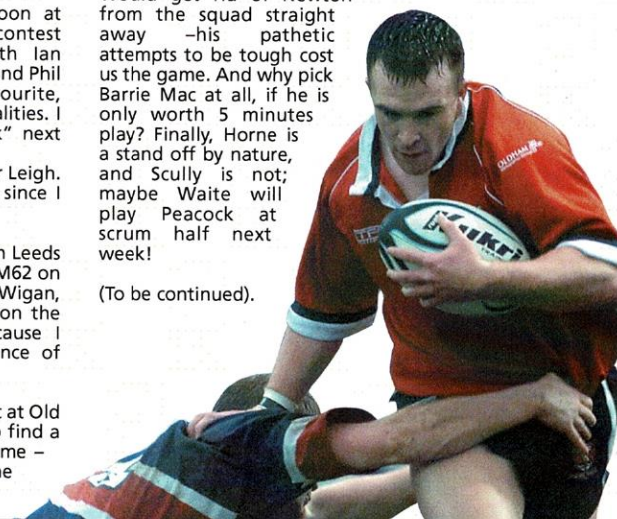
whole event. Another brave effort by Wigan, but you got the feeling in the final 10 minutes of the first half, even though they were still ahead, that the tide was beginning to turn, and so it proved. To be fair, though, surely the right team won it at the end. Can't wait for Bradford v Penrith – and what a fantastic performance it was by Richo's Panthers to win in Aus. It says an awful lot for the spirit there, and even more about the whole Aussie competition. It is like Wakefield winning Super League here in 2004; what a hope!

**October 27th.** Great to see Roden and Barber signed up again. Rumours of Watson and Southern too-which would certainly be better than more Leigh rejects!

**November 3rd.** Fantastic effort by young England 'A' v Australians, but can't say I am optimistic about the first test. League Express had a headline on its letter page "Pick a genuine stand off ", but I bet he won't.

**November 8th** What a fantastic effort by GB after Morley's moment of madness –but the frustrating thing is that, even with only 12 men on, we should still have won. Would get rid of Newton from the squad straight away –his pathetic attempts to be tough cost us the game. And why pick Barrie Mac at all, if he is only worth 5 minutes play? Finally, Horne is a stand off by nature, and Scully is not; maybe Waite will play Peacock at scrum half next week!

(To be continued).





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1899 to 1923

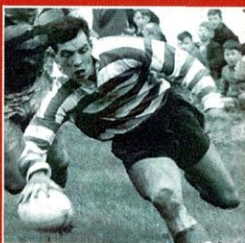
Arguably the greatest ever Oldham player, Joe made a record 627 appearances for the club. But for the First World War his appearances may have crept up to 700, a fantastic record



## Alan Davies

1950 to 1961

Of all the big-name players who graced Watersheddings in the "Fabulous Fifties", Alan Davies was king. One of the greatest centres the sport has ever produced, Davies was the complete rugby league player



## John Hough

1998 to present

John, a local lad, made Oldham RL history on December 2, 1997, when he became the new Roughyeds club's first signing. With 180 appearances, he is now contracted for 2004 and looking forward to his 7th season as a Roughyed



Across the decades, the Chronicle has kept its readers on the ball with match reports, news and views from Oldham Rugby League Club — the Chronicle's reporters and photographers have been there for every game.

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BY DOUG LAUGHTON



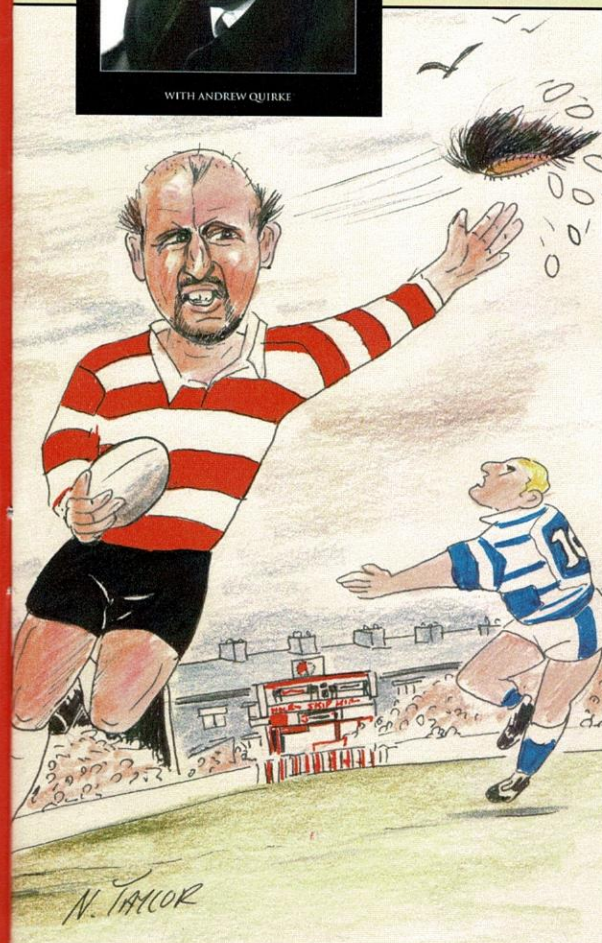
WITH ANDREW QUIRKE

Doug Laughton, one of the larger than life characters of rugby league for over 40 years, top player with 15 Great Britain caps, top coach famous for signing Martin Offiah, Jonathan Davies and Alan Tait out of rugby union has succeeded in telling his fascinating biography in humorous detail but without either fear of being controversial or pulling punches.

As an Oldham supporter I zone into anything 'Roughyed' and enjoyed Laughton's recollection of when touchy ex Oldham prop Geoff Fletcher infamous for wearing outlandish hair pieces left his new and expensive 'rug' in a cake box on the dressing room bench only for one wit to shape it into a birds nest and fill it with eggs!

Anyway, it seems that the St Helens pig farmer had his 'day in court' when he hosed down a consignment of fruit and veg meant for the pigs and dished it out amongst his team mates!

A Dream Come True is an entertaining yet brutal read well worth the £14-95 especially for anybody wanting to understand the game just prior to Super League. Available in hardback from Sportspages who are just off St Ann's Sq in Manchester's city centre or ring London Publications 0207 5152001 for other stockists.





# NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



## READY TO RUMBLE

THE months of waiting are finally over - the Rugby League season gets underway today as the Arriva Trains Cup embarks on its journey.

All 20 National League One and Two clubs will had into today's matches rife with hope and optimism for the new campaign - whatever their varying targets for success might be.

While still considered a pre-season competition in some quarters, the ATC nevertheless has several merits, the major one being that it is a realistic opportunity for clubs at this level to win some silverware.

And with the Finals of this competition growing in stature during its two year's of existence (the first was the slightly different Buddies Cup, held mid-season in 2002), there is also a significant financial boost awaiting the winners.

Over 6,000 attended last year's ATC Final between Leigh and eventual winners Salford at Spotland, and this year's event has the potential to be even bigger.

There have been a couple of slight modifications to last season's competition, with the groups changing a little and a new method of deciding the eight

quarter-finalists from the five groups.

The first five places are taken by the respective group winners.

The five group runners-up, plus the best third place club (based on competition points, then points difference), enter a free draw

The three clubs who win their play-off game go forward to the quarter-finals, along with the five group winners.

So who will progress from the group stages? For my money, the five group winners will be Whitehaven, Leigh Centurions, Halifax, Hull Kingston Rovers and York City Knights.

NL2 side York could emerge as the competition's surprise package - already they have built up some considerable momentum during the close season, and despite being in the toughest group, they might just have enough quality to make it to the last eight. But doubtless Batley, Featherstone and Dewsbury will have plenty to say about that.

Whoever progresses, it should be fascinating to watch it unfold, as well as laying down some genuine markers for the National League seasons. Enjoy today's game.

### NORTH

Barrow Raiders  
Gateshead Thunder  
Whitehaven  
Workington Town

### WEST

Chorley Lynx  
Leigh Centurions  
Oldham  
Swinton Lions

### PENNINE

Halifax  
Hunslet Hawks  
Keighley Cougars  
Rochdale Hornets

### EAST

Doncaster Dragons  
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Sheffield Eagles

### YORKSHIRE

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PLAYER  
PROFILE

# SIMON SVABIC

**SIMON Svabic, a baby-faced lad from Ashton-in-Makerfield, was barely 16 when he first linked up with Oldham. His father Peter, himself a rugby league nut and actively involved in the coaching and administration of the grassroots game, drove him to the old Watersheddings ground for talks with the club's academy coach at that time, Brian Gartland.**

Brian, a talent spotter of some repute, had exceedingly high hopes of the bright young boy he had seen playing youth rugby down the East Lancs Road. One thing led to another and, while still at school, the Lancashire lad with the Yugoslavian surname signed on the dotted line.

It was 1996. The Bears were in Super League, with an alliance team and an academy side. Like a certain Paul Deacon a few months earlier, Simon settled quickly at Watersheddings. Brian said at the time: "He has good hands, good vision and for a lad of such slender years he is a good organiser."

Despite being so young, Svabic played regularly in the academy side of '96. A year later, with the financial storm clouds gathering over Watersheddings, he was playing in both academy and alliance sides - and regularly scoring tries and kicking goals.

The future looked bright for him. But, like so many other players of all ages, he suddenly found himself at sporting crossroads when the storm clouds burst and the old club was liquidated.

The players became free agents and went their separate ways. Simon, for better or worse, moved to Salford, but it is interesting to record that his last appearance for the Bears was in the final alliance game of the 1997 season, a 22-18 defeat by Warrington.



OLDHAM RLFC v CHORLEY LYNX PAGE 17

## SIMON SVABIC CONT..

He kicked two goals, Deacon one, and tries were scored by Switzer, Gumbs and Prescott.

Team: Brassington; Wilde, Mead, Myler, McNicholas; Svabic, Barker; Switzer, Robinson, Sutcliffe, Leuila, Milne, Prescott. Subs: Deacon, Mike, Jones, Gumbs.

Svabic was still only 17 when he arrived at The Willows, but he eventually made the City Reds' Super League team and, while still a teenager, made a total of 18 appearances in the elite division, scoring three tries and kicking 19 goals for a haul of 50 Super League points.

From there it was on to Leigh, where he helped them to top the league in 2001 and to finish second in 2002 when the Centurions reached the Grand Final for the second time in three years only to go down 38-16 to Huddersfield at Widnes.

By that time changes were also taking place at cash-strapped Leigh and several players were on

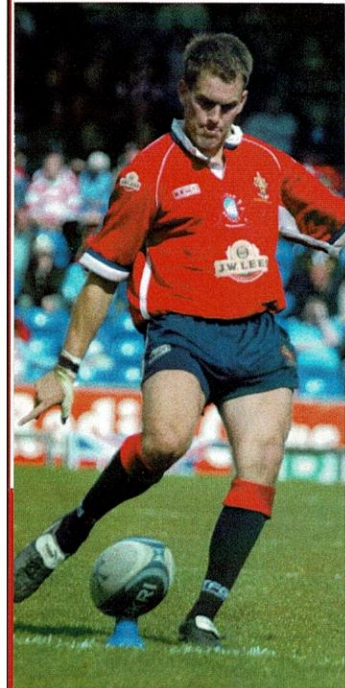
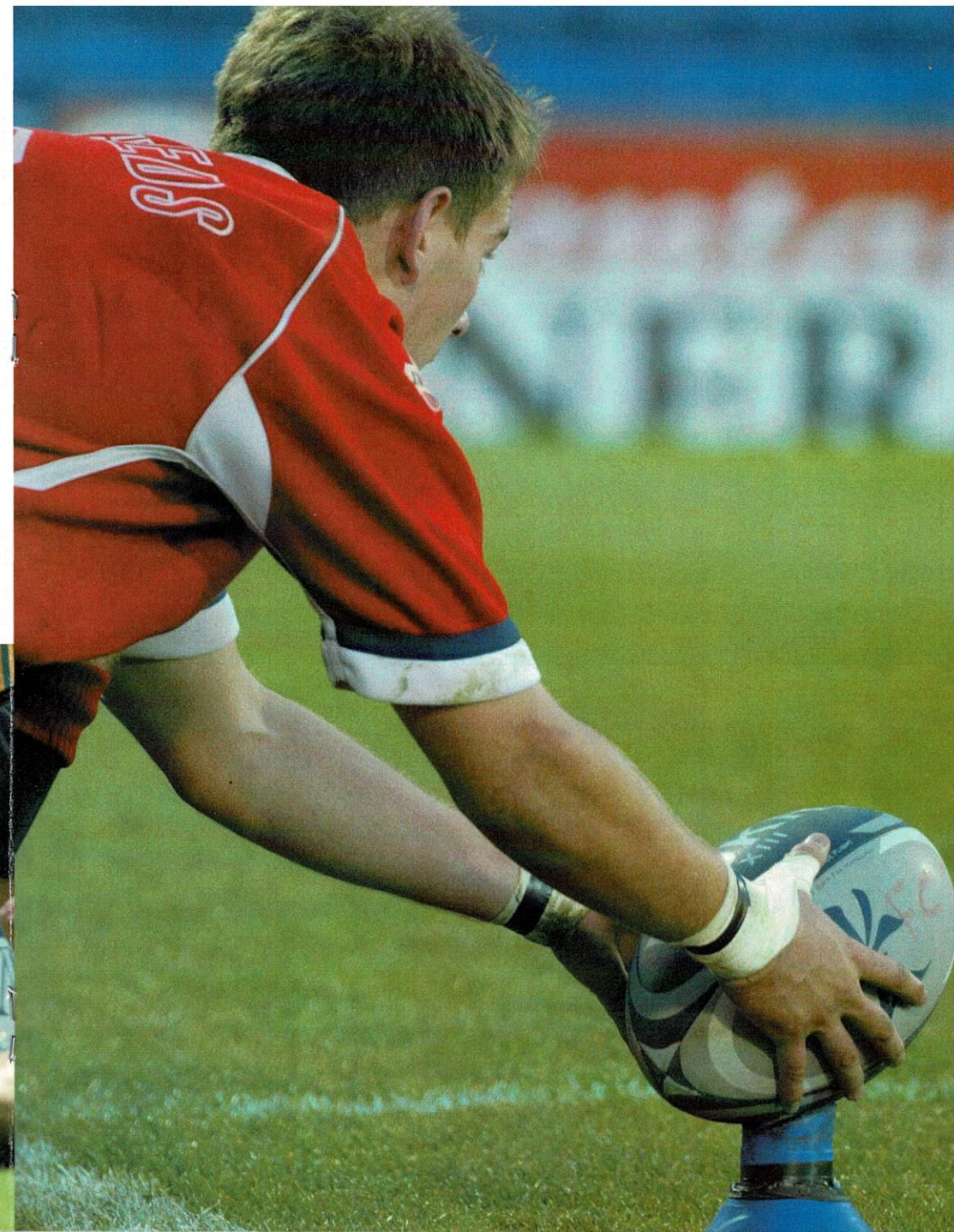
the move at the end of that season, including Paul Anderson, Chris Morley, Chris Irwin and Svabic, all of whom came to Oldham.

In his first season with the Roughyeds, the stand-off half, who can also play full-back, shared with Lee Doran the distinction of playing in all 32 games. Along the way he kicked 82 goals and two drop goals and scored five tries to become last season's top points scorer with 186.

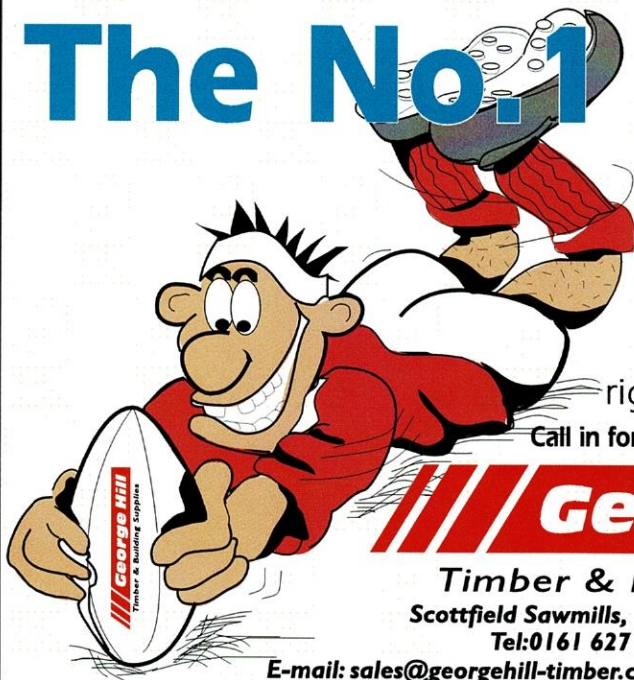
Of the four who took the road from Hilton Park to Boundary Park in the late autumn of 2002, only Simon still remains with the club. He has signed a new one-year contract for 2004 and he is sure to play a key role in whatever the Roughyeds achieve in the coming season.

And THAT surname? His grandfather was Yugoslavian, but Simon and both his parents were born in Lancashire . . . Simon with a rugby ball in his hand.

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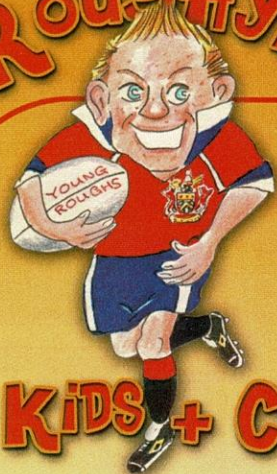
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# ROUGHYED



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During the close season, Carole and myself have been out drumming up support and would like to say a big thank-you on your behalf to Saddleworth Sports, F R Elsworth Ltd, The Oldham Advertiser and Cartridge World for their sponsorship for 2004.

There is still time for you to join the Roughyed Kids and anyone wishing to do so can contact myself (Janet) on 652 9360 or Carole on 643 8712. Membership costs only £15 and includes a season ticket for the Rochdale Rd End. Loads of other benefits are attached to this year's membership and we will tell you more about these in future programmes.

Unfortunately we have not been able to arrange a meeting prior to the printing of this programme, as the season tickets did not arrive until after we had gone to

print. No meeting, no mascot, equalled panic stations until Dane Morgan kindly stepped in to help, and on a cold wet Saturday morning pulled the names from the hat.

First out was today's mascot, eleven-year-old George Yewdale. George plays rugby for Royton Tigers as well as watching Oldham. Coincidentally his favourite player is Dane. (The word "fix" springs to mind).

We'll hope you all enjoy the game and watch this space carefully, plenty will be happening on the "Kids" front this year.

**Janet & Carole**



## TODAYS MASCOT

**George Yewdale**

**Age:** 11

**Hobbies:** Rugby, plays for Royton Tigers

**Favourite Player:** Dane Morgan

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# ON THIS DAY

DON YATES LOOKS BACK TO FEBRUARY 1ST YESTERYEAR

This afternoon Oldham will be hoping for a much better result than the one they suffered in the Challenge Cup six years ago. On Sunday 1st February 1998 the Roughyeds visited Widnes where they conceded nine tries in a 48-8 defeat. Two of those Widnes tries were scored by full-back Jim Salisbury who was making his debut for the Vikings after being signed from Liverpool-St.Helens RUFC the previous month. In August 1999 Salisbury spent a three-match loan spell here in Oldham with the Roughyeds but was not signed permanently. The Oldham try at Widnes was scored by hooker John Hough with second-row forward Brian Quinlan landing two goals.

On the same afternoon, Sunday 1st February 1998, Chorley Lynx, then playing under the name Lancashire Lynx, also ran in nine tries as they demolished West Hull 46-0 in the same competition. Making his debut for Lynx was centre Darren Abram, signed from Oldham a couple of weeks earlier. He was a try scorer against the Humberiders and then developed into a superb coach at Chorley before moving on to Leigh.

In 1936 Wales won the International Championship for the first time and they did so with the help of two Oldham forwards. The title was clinched at the old Craven Park ground of Hull Kingston Rovers on Saturday 1st February 1936 when Wales defeated England by 17 points to 14. The Oldham forwards involved were prop Lou Rees and second-rower Norman Pugh. Rees, a former Welsh rugby union international, joined the Roughyeds from Cardiff RUFC and Pugh from Swansea RUFC. They were both loyal and reliable servants to the Oldham club and epitomised the Welsh team. Although England fielded a glamorous line-up of household names, the lesser known but more workmanlike Welsh were well worth their victory.

Great Britain entered a team in the 1997 World Nines Competition, which was staged in Townsville, Queensland, Australia. Oldham had one player included in the British squad, talented half-back and playmaker Martin Crompton. On the second day of the three-day tournament, Saturday 1st February, the British boys defeated France 20-0, Japan 46-0 and trophy holders New Zealand 12-10. Crompton scored two tries in the victory over Japan and acquitted himself well in the other matches but could not prevent Britain from losing to Western Samoa in the semi-finals. New Zealand went on to retain the trophy.

Twelve months ago, on Saturday 1st February 2003, the rugby league world was rocked with the news of the death of former St.Annes', BARLA Great Britain and Oldham forward Peter Deakin. He was aged just 49. Peter was a larger-than-life character with an infectious enthusiasm for the game. The rugby world in general will probably remember him most for his commercial acumen which caused crowds to rocket so spectacularly at Bradford Bulls. But there was much more than that to Peter Deakin whose legacies are scattered throughout both codes of rugby. The new stadium at Warrington; the World Club Challenge; the Sale Sharks move to Stockport; and the success enjoyed by Saracens RUFC all occurred as a direct result of Peter Deakin's perception. Here in Oldham he will constantly be remembered with affection at St.Annes, where he was always on hand to offer advice and assistance, and at Watersheddings where he made four appearances for the Roughyeds during the late 1970s. Injury cut short memories of Peter on the field of play but, off it, he will always be remembered.

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26th February - Quiz Night - 8pm

21st February - 'Grease' Party Night

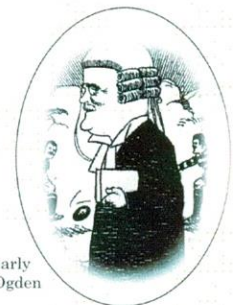
25th March - Quiz Night - 8pm

All events will be held in the social club.

Please watch this space for future events/details or telephone the club office on 0161 628 3677



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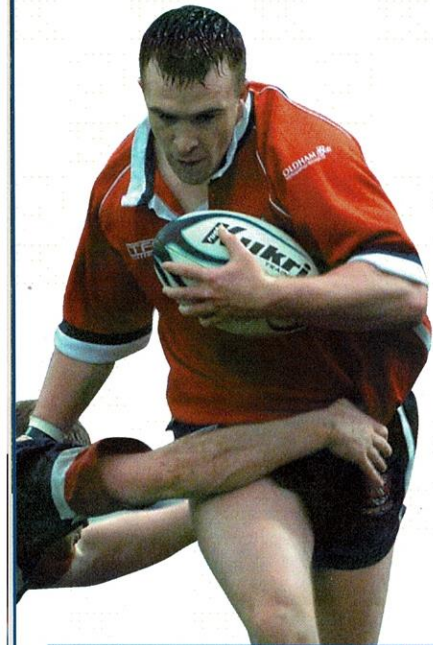
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# STATS & FACTS

Printed here are the complete club stats and facts for last season. The 2004 tables will commence in the Powergen Challenge Cup v Castleford Panther's match programme this coming Friday.

| NAME              | Season | APPS | SUB | Total | n/p | T  | G  | D | PTS |
|-------------------|--------|------|-----|-------|-----|----|----|---|-----|
| ANDERSON Paul     | 2003   | 15   | 7   | 22    |     | 8  |    |   | 32  |
| BARBER Gareth     | 2003   | 11   | 15  | 26    |     | 13 | 32 |   | 116 |
| BRANNAN Keith     | 2003   | 10   | 11  | 21    |     | 5  | 1  |   | 21  |
| CAMBELL Chris     | 2003   | 9    |     | 9     |     | 5  |    |   | 20  |
| CLEGG Jason       | 2003   |      | 3   | 3     |     |    |    |   |     |
| COWELL Will       | 2003   | 11   | 1   | 12    |     | 2  |    |   | 8   |
| DODD Gavin        | 2003   | 27   | 2   | 29    |     | 14 |    |   | 56  |
| DORAN Lee         | 2003   | 31   |     | 31    |     | 14 |    |   | 56  |
| FARRELL Phil      | 2003   | 25   |     | 25    |     | 8  |    |   | 32  |
| GODDARD Jon       | 2003   | 24   | 1   | 25    |     | 5  |    |   | 20  |
| GUEST Danny       | 2003   | 3    | 16  | 19    |     |    |    |   |     |
| HOUGH John        | 2003   | 25   | 2   | 27    |     | 5  |    |   | 20  |
| IRWIN Chris       | 2003   | 12   |     | 12    |     | 4  |    |   | 16  |
| JOHNSON Gavin     | 2003   | 1    | 4   | 5     |     |    |    |   |     |
| JOHNSON Nick      | 2003   | 4    |     | 4     |     | 4  |    |   | 16  |
| MARSH Iain        | 2003   | 24   | 1   | 25    |     | 4  |    |   | 16  |
| MARSH Lee         | 2003   | 5    |     | 5     |     |    |    |   |     |
| McDOWELL Craig    | 2003   | 4    |     | 4     |     |    |    |   |     |
| McLOUGHLIN Martin | 2003   | 5    | 16  | 21    |     | 1  |    |   | 4   |
| McNICHOLAS Joe    | 2003   | 8    | 1   | 9     |     | 2  |    |   | 8   |
| MOLLOY Steve      | 2003   | 26   | 3   | 29    |     | 2  |    |   | 8   |
| MORGAN Dane       | 2003   | 17   | 8   | 25    |     | 6  |    |   | 24  |
| MORLEY Chris      | 2003   | 21   | 6   | 27    |     | 4  |    |   | 16  |
| MURRAY Anthony    | 2003   | 4    | 1   | 5     |     | 1  |    |   | 4   |
| NORTON Paul       | 2003   | 9    | 1   | 10    |     | 1  |    |   | 4   |
| PERCIVAL Chris    | 2003   | 3    |     | 3     |     | 1  |    |   | 4   |
| POTTER Dan        | 2003   | 4    |     | 4     |     | 2  |    |   | 8   |
| RODEN Neil        | 2003   | 22   | 5   | 27    |     | 7  | 3  |   | 31  |
| SHARPLES Adam     | 2003   |      | 1   | 1     |     |    |    |   |     |
| SHAW Darren       | 2003   | 10   | 3   | 13    |     |    |    |   |     |
| STAZICKER Ryan    | 2003   | 13   | 5   | 18    |     | 4  |    |   | 16  |
| SVABIC Simon      | 2003   | 20   | 10  | 30    | 1   | 5  | 81 | 2 | 184 |



|          |                 |                |       |       |            |                                 |  |      |  |
|----------|-----------------|----------------|-------|-------|------------|---------------------------------|--|------|--|
| 19.01.03 | Leigh C         | A.T. Cup       | Away  | Lost  | 14-22      | Svabic, 2. Barber               | Dodd, Farrell  | 3070 |  |
| 26.01.03 | East Hull (amt) | RLCC 3rd Rnd   | Home* | Won   | 32-6       | Barber, Svabic                  | Campbell, 2. Farrell, Dodd, Anderson, McNicholas, Roden                        | 1270 |  |
| 02.02.03 | Rochdale H.     | A.T. Cup       | Home  | Draw  | 22-22      | Barber, 3.                      | Doran, Barber, Farrell, Morley   | 2050 |  |
| 09.02.03 | London B.       | RLCC 4th Rnd   | Away  | Lost  | 12-42      | Barber, Svabic                  | Dodd, Stazicker  | 1514 |  |
| 23.02.03 | Swinton L.      | A.T. Cup       | Away  | Won   | 24-16      | Svabic, 4.                      | Doran, Goddard, Hough, Barber  | 923  |  |
| 02.03.03 | Barrow R.       | A.T. Cup       | Home  | Won   | 50-11      | Svabic, 9.                      | Dodd, 2. Morgan, Farrell, Murray, Goddard, Barber, Anderson                    | 1280 |  |
| 09.03.03 | SALFORD C.R.    | A.T. Cup       | Home  | Lost  | 4-62       |                                 | Irwin  | 2839 |  |
| 16.03.03 | LEIGH C.        | A.T. Cup       | Home  | Lost  | 26-31      | Barber, 3.                      | Hough, Barber, Irwin, Brennan, Dodd  | 1945 |  |
| 23.03.03 | ROCHDALE H.     | A.T. Cup       | Away  | Lost  | 25-34      | Barber, 4. Roden (dg)           | Stazicker, Anderson, Goddard, Brennan  | 1314 |  |
| 30.03.03 | BARROW R.       | A.T. Cup       | Away  | Won   | 23-16      | Svabic, 5. Roden (dg)           | Marsh, Irwin, Doran  | 781  |  |
| 06.04.03 | SWINRON L.      | A.T. Cup       | Home  | Won   | 68-14      | Svabic, 10.                     | Marsh, 2. Dodd, 2. Svabic, Morgan, Roden, Anderson, McNicholas, Irwin, Brennan | 1032 |  |
| 13.04.03 | Salford C. R.   | A.T. Cup       | Away  | Lost  | 12-54      | Svabic, 2.                      | Svabic, Hough  | 2162 |  |
| 17.04.03 | Rochdale H.     | Division 1     | Home  | Lost  | 28-33      | Svabic, 4. Barber 2.            | Norton, Stazicker, Campbell, Doran   | 1754 |  |
| 04.05.03 | Dewsbury R.     | Division 1     | Home  | Won   | 41-21      | Barber, 6. Roden (dg)           | Anderson, 2. Morley, Morgan, Molloy, Stazicker, Barber                         | 1198 |  |
| 11.05.03 | Salford C. R.   | Division 1     | Away  | Lost  | 12-44      | Barber, 2.                      | Morgan, Barber   | 1657 |  |
| 18.05.03 | Doncaster D.    | Division 1     | Away  | Lost  | 24-52      | Barber, 2.                      | Campbell, 2. Dodd, Doran, Barber   | 860  |  |
| 25.05.03 | Leigh C.        | Division 1     | Home  | Won   | 12-10      | Svabic, 4.                      | Dodd   | 1691 |  |
| 01.06.03 | Hull K.R.       | Division 1     | Away  | Lost  | 10-23      | Svabic                          | Farrell, Anderson  | 1300 |  |
| 15.06.03 | Whitehaven W.   | Division 1     | Home  | Draw  | 22-22      | Barber, 3.                      | Moloy, Potter, Barber, Goddard   | 1096 |  |
| 22.06.03 | Batley B.       | Division 1     | Draw  | 20-20 | Svabic, 2. |                                 | Dodd, 2. Potter, Barber  | 821  |  |
| 29.06.03 | Rochdale H.     | Division 1     | Away  | Lost  | 14-58      | Barber, 3.                      | Brennan, Barber  | 1425 |  |
| 13.07.03 | Feathestone R.  | Division 1     | Home  | Won   | 35-24      | Svabic, 5 + (dg)                | Doran, 2. Roden, 2. Cowell, Anderson   | 1239 |  |
| 20.07.03 | Doncaster D.    | Division 1     | Home  | Won   | 31-20      | Svabic, 5 + (dg)                | Doran, 3. Svabic, Dodd   | 1254 |  |
| 27.07.03 | Dewsbury R.     | Division 1     | Away  | Won   | 32-26      | Svabic, 4.                      | Doran, 2. Brennan, Morley, Dodd, Roden   | 1098 |  |
| 03.08.03 | Salford C. R.   | Division 1     | Home  | Lost  | 23-32      | Svabic, 3.                      | Farrell, Doran, Morley, Barber   | 1765 |  |
| 10.08.03 | Leigh C.        | Division 1     | Away  | Lost  | 2-38       | Svabic                          |  | 2287 |  |
| 17.08.03 | Hull K. R.      | Division 1     | Home  | Lost  | 24-29      | Svabic, 4.                      | Farrell, McLoughlin, Doran, Morgan   | 1414 |  |
| 24.08.03 | Whitehaven W.   | Division 1     | Away  | Lost  | 20-24      | Svabic, 2.                      | Johnson, Goddard, Cowell, Barber   | 1132 |  |
| 31.08.03 | Batley B.       | Division 1     | Home  | Won   | 36-10      | Svabic, 6.                      | Johnson, 2. Roden, 2. Svabic, Barber   | 1461 |  |
| 07.09.03 | Featherstone R. | Division 1     | Away  | Won   | 19-14      | Svabic, 2. Barber, Brennan (dg) | 1 Marsh, Farrell, Morgan   | 1504 |  |
| 14.09.03 | Hull K. R.      | NFF elim p/off | Away  | Lost  | 24-38      | Svabic, 4.                      | Johnson, Hough, Svabic, Percival   | 2250 |  |
|          | Other           | Matches        |       |       |            |                                 |  |      |  |
| 29.12.02 | Rochdale H.     | Law Cup        | Away  | Won   | 28-22      | Barber, 3. Svabic.              | Farrell, 2. Hough, Roden, Goddard  | 2141 |  |

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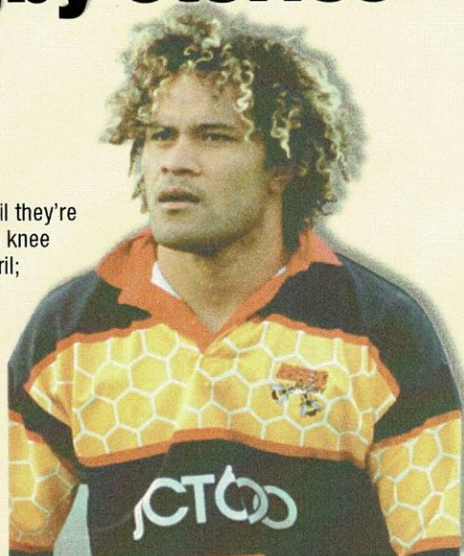




**By Danny  
Lockwood**

# rugby stories

**Publisher  
League Weekly**



IT'S THAT time again. Legs massaged with wintergreen until they're as smooth as a baby's bottom. A dollop of vaseline on each knee and rubbed into the eyebrows; a dab of Vicks up each nostril; maybe some Fiery Jack on that troublesome lower back or shoulder. Ankles and wrists are taped, calves, groins and thighs are stretched. Outside, the ref has decided that rutted, icy patch under the stand will be playable once it's had a bit of weak January sun on it. On the terrace hundreds of jets of steamy breath pierce the chill afternoon air. Thermals and extra pairs of socks have been donned, scarves and hats pulled tight around necks and ears, collars pulled tight against that open fridge door otherwise known as the Pennines. Hallelujah. 'Summer' rugby's here again!

The whole summer/winter argument seems to have faded like a cheap shirt in a hot wash. Well, there was only a month between the sell-out at the third test and Leeds packing over 13,000 in for a Boxing Day friendly. And with the collapse of the prohibitive old player contracting system, lads are turning out all over - in the National Conference, picking up boot money at the local union club, then auditioning for the National 1 and 2 teams. The next time someone argues that our top players face too much rugby, just recall the picture of Tevita Vaikona turning out for Bradford and Bingley with barely time to get his breath from the Tetley's Super League grand final. Having said that, at the National League awards evening, I was chatting with Bradford Dudley Hill player-coach Chris Robinson. Chris had just led the Bradford side through a momentous first ever National Three summer campaign, culminating on a day at the Neil Hunt Memorial Ground when the club finished one season and started another. Chris was cream-crackered, bless him.

Which brings us neatly onto the new Arriva Trains Cup campaign and the launch of the expanded National Three and Summer Conference. It's wonderful to welcome the Bramley Buffaloes back into the fold (led by another ex-Dudley Hill old boy, Phil Helliwell). It's been a tough - and long - winter for those League fans who get nervous twitches at the mere mention of Union, Jonny, Jonno and knighthoods. And there are more than a few who resent the fact that the Summer Conference leagues are largely made up of union players, doing their own bit of moonlighting. They shouldn't, because as someone who played years of both codes (the union was in the USA, in my defence), the more athletes are exposed to both, the more they will enjoy, and be drawn, to League. Why? Well, for starters you don't spend half the time either with your head up a bloke's jacksy, mud wrestling, developing a bad neck from watching a badly kicked ball fly to and fro overhead, or trying to decipher a line-out call that would have stumped the Engima crew at Bletchley Park. The ball is in play twice as long at League. You get to run and pass and try to beat men. On the down side (for almost every union player below Zurich Premiership level) you may have to tackle one or two as well. But hey, it'll make a man of you. League. The Greatest Game. Back on a ground near you. Don'cha just love it?

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# SENIOR ACADEMY

with **SHAUN GARTLAND**

**The club will run a Senior Academy Under 21 side this season playing its home matches at Manor Park. The early fixtures are included elsewhere on this page, the season getting underway the weekend of the 28th of February.**

The nucleus of the squad will be formed from the likes of Andy Gorey, Matty Harland, Chris Carter, Martin McDermott, Paul Bennett, Kiel Lancashire, James Kirkland, Danny Nanyn, John Mitchell, Michael Rowe, Adam Clayton and one or two other youngsters who all gained valuable experience last season.

Dependent on first team calls coach Shaun Gartland will also have available Dave Newton, Adam Sharples, James Lomax, Martin Elwood, Nick Johnson, and Craig Farrimond plus a number of other young players who are currently under the microscope.

### Senior Academy Under 21 Clubs

More games are in store for our under 21s this season and firstly they will compete in a grading phase for the senior academy season proper.

**Group A.** Wigan Warriors, St. Helens, Huddersfield Giants, Wakefield Trinity Wildcats.

**Group B.** Bradford Bulls, Widnes Vikings, Halifax, Hull F.C. Oldham.

**Group C.** Leeds Rhinos, Warrington Wolves, Salford City Reds, Castleford Tigers, Leigh Centurians

Each team will play four games and then all results will be entered into a composite league table. The top ten clubs will form the Championship League and the remaining four clubs will be joined by Dewsbury Rams, Doncaster Dragons, Featherstone Rovers and Keighley Cougars to form the First Division.

### EARLY FIXTURES

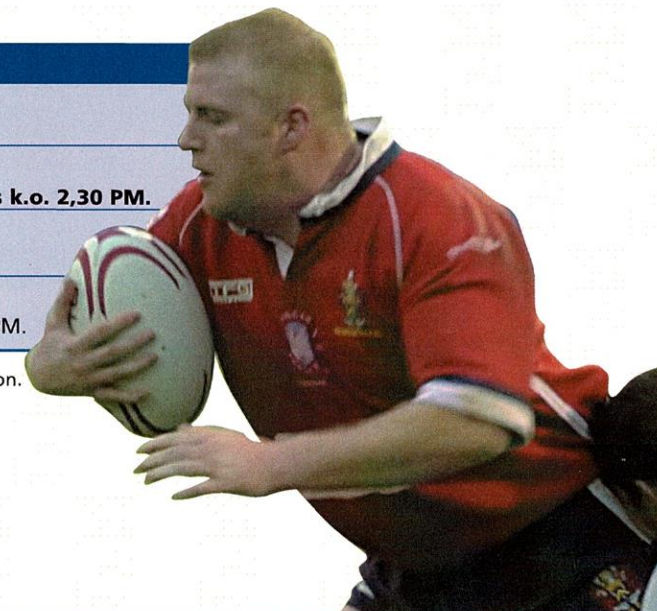
Tuesday 2nd March  
Halifax R.L. F. C. v OLDHAM

Saturday 6th March  
**OLDHAM v Widnes Vikings k.o. 2,30 PM.**

Saturday 20th March  
**OLDHAM v Bradford Bulls**

Saturday 27th March  
Hull F.C. v OLDHAM k.o. 2PM.

All fixtures are subject to final confirmation.



## Fixtures

| DATE     | OPPONENTS                         | CUP            | VENUE | K. O. | RESULT | W/L |
|----------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-----|
| 01/02/04 | Chorley Lynx                      | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 06/02/04 | Castleford Panthers               | AT Cup         | Home  | 19.30 |        |     |
| 15/02/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | AT Cup         | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 22/02/04 | Swinton Lions                     | AT Cup         | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 29/02/04 | Powergen CC R4                    | Powergen CC    |       |       |        |     |
| 07/03/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 14/03/04 | Powergen CC R5                    | Powergen CC    |       |       |        |     |
| 21/03/04 | Chorley Lynx                      | AT Cup         | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 28/03/04 | Powergen CC<br>Quarter Finals     | Powergen<br>CC |       |       |        |     |
| 28/03/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 04/04/04 | Swinton Lions                     | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 09/04/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | AT Cup         | Away  | 19.30 |        |     |
| 12/04/04 | Featherstone Rovers               | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 18/04/04 | Powergen CC<br>Semi Final 1       | Powergen<br>CC |       |       |        |     |
| 18/04/04 | Halifax                           | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 25/04/04 | Powergen<br>CC Semi Final 2       | Powergen<br>CC |       |       |        |     |
| 25/04/04 | AT Cup Play-offs                  | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 02/05/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 09/05/04 | Hull Kingston Rovers              | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 15/05/04 | Powergen CC Final                 | Powergen CC    |       |       |        |     |
| 23/05/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 30/05/04 | Batley Bulldogs                   | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 06/06/04 | AT Cup Quarter Finals             | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 13/06/04 | Keighley Cougars                  | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 20/06/04 | Whitehaven                        | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 27/06/04 | AT Cup Semi Finals                | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 04/07/04 | Doncaster Dragons                 | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 11/07/04 | Halifax                           | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 18/07/04 | AT Cup Final                      | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 25/07/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 01/08/04 | Hull Kingston Rovers              | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 08/08/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 15/08/04 | Batley Bulldogs                   | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 22/08/04 | Keighley Cougars                  | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 29/08/04 | Whitehaven                        | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 05/09/04 | Featherstone Rovers               | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 12/09/04 | Doncaster Dragons                 | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 19/09/04 | NL 1 & 2 Play-offs                | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 26/09/04 | NL 1 & 2 Play-offs                | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 03/10/04 | NL 1 & 2 Play-offs                | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 10/10/04 | NL 1 & 2 Grand Finals             | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 17/10/04 | NL 1 & 2 Prom/Releg.<br>Play-offs | NL1            |       |       |        |     |

### Key

AT Cup – Arriva Trains Cup  
Powergen CC – Powergen Challenge Cup  
NL1 – National League Division 1

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