

Oldham RLFC



The Roughyeds

LHF HEALTHPLAN NATIONAL LEAGUE 1
V HALIFAX

OLDHAM

V

HALIFAX

Jon Goddard	1	Scott Grix
Gavin Dodd	2	Rikki Sheriffe
Iain Marsh	3	Ben Feehan
Pat Rich	4	Alan Hadcroft
Nick Johnson	5	James Haley
Simon Svabic	6	Pat Weisner
Ian Watson	7	Mark Moxon
Paul Southern	8	Anthony Farrell
Keith Brennan	9	Phil Cantillon
Dane Morgan	10	Chris Birchall
Lee Doran	11	Ged Corcoran
Phil Farrell	12	Chris Morley
Lee Marsh	13	Jamie Bloem
John Hough	14	Gareth Greenwood
Gareth Barber	15	Simon Grix
Martin McLoughlin	16	Ryan MacDonald
Gavin Johnson	17	David Bates

Match Officials:

REFEREE: Colin Morris

TOUCH JUDGES: P Meadows T D Beech

4TH OFFICIAL: R Hicks

Oldham RLFC

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME £2.00



The Roughyeds

LHF HEALTHPLAN NATIONAL LEAGUE 1
V HALIFAX



The Roughyeds at Victory Park, Chorley

SATURDAY 10th JULY 2004 • KICK OFF 3.00pm



The Roughyeds

**Oldham Rugby League
Football Club (1997) Limited**

14 Waterloo Street
Oldham OL1 1SQ

Telephone: 0161 628 3677

Fax: 0161 627 5700

Club Shop: 0161 627 2141

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Herman Hilton 1913-26

Alan Davies 1950-62

Frank Stirrup 1950-62

Bernard Ganley 1950-61

John Eddy 1954-56

Derek Turner 1955-59

Bob Irving 1964-74

Martin Murphy 1966-82

Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

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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 Farrell, 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 Workington Town, 2 - Dec 17th 2000 at

Denwent Park

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

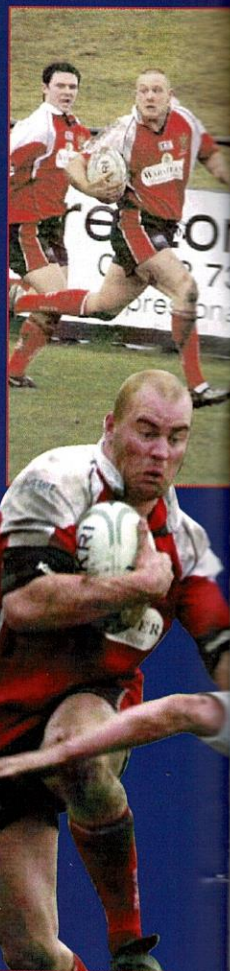
Craven Park

HIGHEST SCORE/WINNING 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**

Oldham RLFC (1997) Limited tread on new ground today with the staging of a first ever Saturday league fixture for our club.

The only time we have previously played on a Saturday was in the Grand Final in 2001 so it's not a bad example to follow!

The change from a the original date of Sunday was because our temporary hosts, Chorley were unable to accommodate us on any other time this weekend.

Our opponents today, Halifax, have suffered something of a traumatic few months with their relegation from Super League and their disappointing start to life in National League One.

We must not however be complacent in our approach to today's game as you can be sure that having had a big win in a local derby last week Halifax will come here today looking to maintain their improvement and after last week's results I think it is fair to say any team from eight upwards in this division is capable of getting into the end of season Play Offs.

Our own defeat at Doncaster was all the more hard to swallow when having given the Dragons the initiative with a well below par first half performance we then decided to play to something like our potential but yet still came up short in the last five minutes.

A win last week would have been a great two points given the other scores but as I previously stated it underlines the fact that this season, more than ever, any team is capable of beating any other.

It is important that we make a special mention today to the FIRST GROUP and in particular Paul Knight, Employee

Development Manager, who have shown their faith in the club by laying on free transport for our fans. I hope that plenty of you will have taken advantage of this offer because given the circumstances I cannot see what more we as a club could have done to encourage as many of you as possible to get to today's game.

Those of you who are reading these notes will understand our predicament but it is getting very close to the time where people who want to see a professional rugby league club in Oldham - as many profess to want - need to show their support through the turnstiles because without it we cannot deliver what we all want - a successful team.

As a club we have to encounter many unique problems -the ground situation is only one of them- but please remember this:- myself and Sean Whitehead inherited this position - we did not create it - and despite this we have worked to unbelievable lengths to keep a club going - to the extent that many people would not believe but we need the help of you, our loyal fans to be missionaries on our behalf in the town to get people along to games. We have an enviable bond between everybody connected with the club because of the exceptional circumstances we come up against, let's use that as a springboard to move this club forward.

As ever thank you for your support and please get behind the team today.

Enjoy the game

Chris

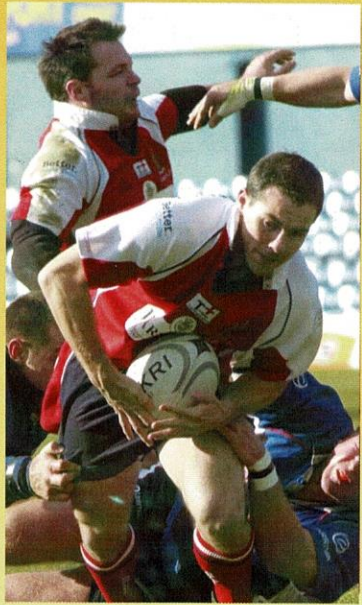
" This season,
more than ever,
any team is
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beating any
other. "

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.

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COACHLINES

with **STEVE MÖLLOY**

Welcome to our home from home, Victory Park, in what will hopefully be the final chapter, at least this season, of the Roughyeds' Will Travel story. I just hope the attendance reflects the quality and competitive nature of this division.

Today's opponents, Halifax, look to have turned the corner under Andy Farrell, which is no mean feat, as I know the demands only too well that are involved in being one of the few other player coaches in the game.

Our form, as the case seems to be, is inconsistent, but I think that is proving to be the case across the board at the majority of clubs in this division. There is no doubt in my mind that the first club to put together four or five consecutive wins will pull away from the bunch and secure the top spot.

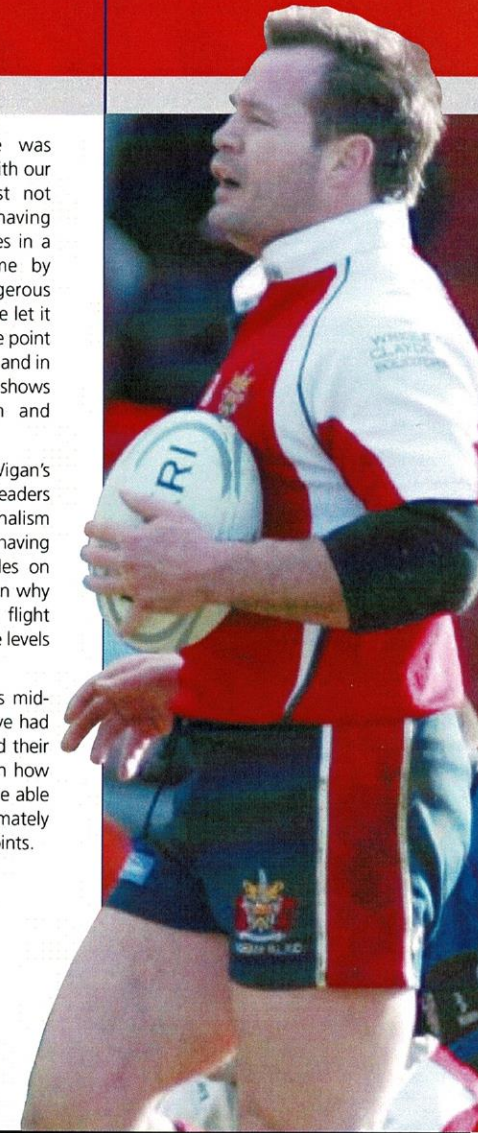
"There is no doubt in my mind that the first club to put together four or five consecutive wins will pull away from the bunch and secure the top spot."

Last week's performance was frustrating in the extreme with our first half performance just not good enough. Then having regrouped and got ourselves in a position to win the game by showing what a dangerous offensive side we can be, we let it slip again when we were one point up with three minutes to go and in possession of the ball. This shows a lack of professionalism and concentration.

Anybody who watched Wigan's recent victory over league leaders Leeds, saw the professionalism and commitment shown, in having to defend six sets of tackles on their own line, will have seen why these guys are playing top flight rugby league. These are the levels we must strive towards.

With the season now at its mid-point and the sides who have had poor starts beginning to find their form, it is vital that we learn how to shut a game down and be able to defend leads and ultimately convert them into league points.

Steve



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IN THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

with PHIL FARRELL

Well we were just awful in the first half against Doncaster and our completion rate must have been the lowest we have had since I started playing for Oldham. We had a long chat about it at training on Monday and we all concluded that we must follow the game plans that Molly sets out for us more carefully in future. He is planning successful ways for us to beat teams and too often we don't follow them until it's too late. We were certainly better in the second half but you can't give any team in this division a twenty odd start and then expect to win the game.

It was this poor football in the first half rather than the mistakes at the end of the second half when we gave up our tiny lead by losing valuable possession that in the end lost us the game.

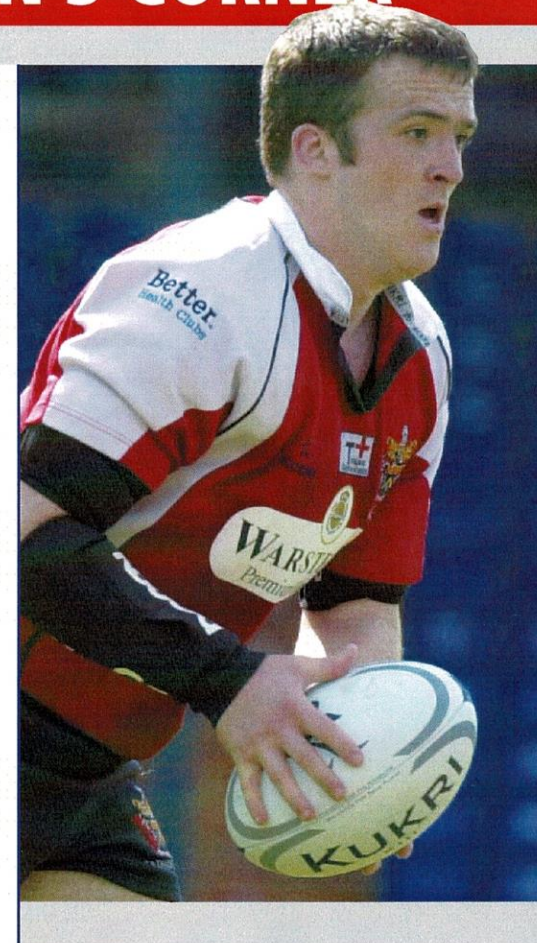
It was good on Monday to see "The Rat" doing some running on the treadmill for the first time. Hopefully he will be training with us on Wednesday and who knows he could be available for selection for today's game. He really has had an unlucky season with injuries getting over a bad shoulder injury and then going over on an ankle. We were all sorry to see "Bunny" go as he was very popular with the lads but was having trouble travelling and it is great to get someone as experienced as John Roper to replace him. When playing for Leigh and Rochdale he always caused us trouble and he should prove an important acquisition.

Halifax at Chorley will be a tough physical encounter but it is a MUST WIN game for us and we must ensure we follow Molly's plans to the letter. It didn't help on Sunday losing Molly as a player with a freak injury in the last few minutes of training on Friday. After two really tough sessions, which he came through unharmed, he bizarrely dislocated his shoulder and damaged his collarbone doing a John Rambo impression. He tried to trap the ball football fashion but it bounced off his knees and he tried to do a commando roll and pick up the ball in the same motion, I expected him to get up and start shooting. In true Rambo style he carried on for the rest of the session despite the injuries.

Although we are having to not only play in Chorley but also on a Saturday we hope as many of you as possible have made the trip and support us in your usual way, it really does help.

Cheers

Faz



" we must ensure we follow Molly's plans to the letter. "

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them every success for the season



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AS IAN SEES IT

with IAN WILSON

How can a performance by the side that defeated Whitehaven at Chorley be produced by virtually the same group of players who capitulated so alarmingly in some previous games? It is very difficult to comprehend, or to explain.

Of course, there were not many of us there to witness it, sadly. I suppose an attendance figure of 752 was not actually too bad, in the circumstances – so far away from Oldham, and the relatively poor previous performances. But it is certainly rather sad that some of our best efforts for some considerable time, at least in my view, should have been seen by so few of the Oldham people on whom, ultimately, the club's existence depends. I only hope that there will be a few more here today, and then, assuming the playing performances have been sustained in the meantime, when we return "home" for the final three league games of the season.

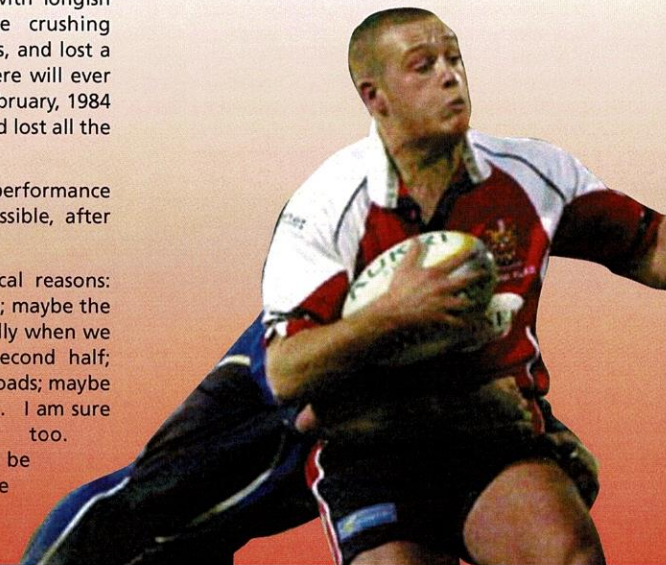
Whitehaven, it might be added, hold some bitter – sweet memories for supporters with longish memories. We have won some crushing contests against them over the years, and lost a few too. And no-one who was there will ever forget the infamous defeat on 19 February, 1984 8 – 42, to a Whitehaven side who had lost all the previous 20 league games!

Bit I digress. What about that performance three weeks ago? How was it possible, after Rochdale and Batley in particular?

There may well have been technical reasons: maybe a more even use of the props; maybe the quality of the kicking game, especially when we had the wind behind us in the second half; maybe fewer attempts at 50-50 off-loads; maybe better discipline in the tackle etc., etc. I am sure there are lots of others, too. Fundamentally, however, it must be down to attitude, and defensive commitment, surely?

The performances weren't perfect, inevitably. For instance, Whitehaven scored four tries, and certainly three of them would not have happened if not for missed tackles by individual Oldham players. In general, though, the level of motivation seemed to be much greater. We were all driving so much more powerfully, right from the kick-off, and tackling in numbers as though we really meant it. I still feel we tend to give the opposition's ball players too much time, but there was so much more character about the whole display.

Why? Only those close to the players really know. But whatever it was, let's hope it has been carefully preserved, ready to be brought out every Sunday and of course the on the odd Saturday!



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in yer face

with Geoff Coone

Greece winning the Euro 2004 soccer tournament should serve as a tonic to everyone with ambitions of sporting success.

Why? Because they proved that discipline, organization, solid defence, selfless application to the task in hand and an ability to put away chances when they arise can turn an apparently ordinary team into a team of winners. Of course it is no coincidence that the Greeks are coached by a German because if the Germans know one thing it is how to win. Yes, the current German soccer team is abysmal but two years ago an equally abysmal side reached the World Cup Final. Compare that to England's atrocious record despite us having a far more talented group of players and you can see what I mean.

And what has all that to do with Oldham Rugby I sense you asking? Well, to me, the same lessons apply in any team sport. And last week's match at Doncaster was a perfect example. From 21-0 down Oldham showed incredible commitment and passion to eventually lead 30-29 with less than ten minutes to go. But the team did not know how to win when the chips were down. On far too many occasions in the recent past when the scores have been close Oldham have been on the losing side. I recall how in 1979-80 Bradford Northern, as they then were, won the First Division Championship in a season when many of their matches finished with a points difference of less than six. But, almost invariably when that happened Bradford finished on the winning side. And that was because they knew how to win.

So, what is it, this knowing how to win? It starts with self-belief, a belief so strong it borders on arrogance. I was once lucky enough to manage a soccer team that won 31 out of 33 fixtures in a season and the worst thing the opposition could do was to score first. It was like an insult to the team's pride. Instead of losing maybe 2-1 a team that had the nerve to score first was likely to finish up conceding 5 or 6. That is self-belief.

A second key ingredient is trust. In a good team every player trusts every other player to do his job. No-one can do the work of two players however hard he tries. You have to know the guy next to you can do the business under extreme pressure. Just watch the way an international centre-half in soccer wins the ball and then gives it to his midfield men to advance the play. The centre-half's job is to win it and control the play in the defensive half of the pitch: the midfield man's job is to spark the attack and set up the forwards. Don't blame Emile Heskey for committing a foul on the edge of his box: He shouldn't even be there!

And that brings me to another key element: Heskey wouldn't be there if the team had a strategy. Strategy - or gameplan if you like - means that when such and such a situation arises each player knows what he is expected to do and where he is expected to be. So, when an Oldham second-row forward makes a break with ten metres of space on his outside he has a right to expect either or both of a centre or wingman to be there to take a potentially try scoring pass. Although this failure from the Doncaster match represents a misreading of the situation it is surprising how often such minor incidents can turn a game.

I could go on but let me conclude by saying that if Oldham want to reach the Grand Final - and it's not beyond the realms of possibility - a lot of the above points will have to be addressed. Here's hoping they will be.

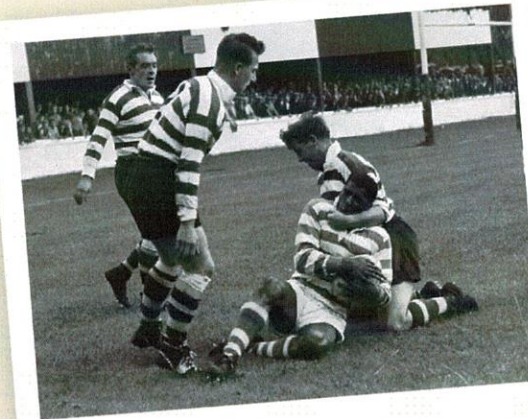


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FROM THE PEN OF

MICHAEL TURNER

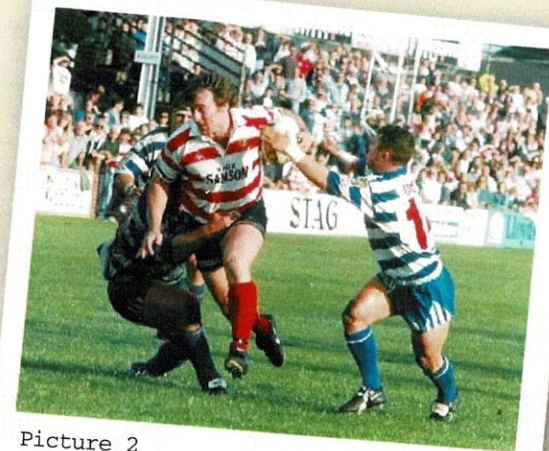
Roughyeds v Halifax



Picture 1

Photo 1. The first image goes back to September 8th 1959 and the match at Watersheddings when Oldham won 21 - 17. Des McKeown is shown bringing down 'Fax winger Johnny Freeman with Vince Nestor and Bernard Ganley in attendance.

The match played in front of a crowd of 12,003 was remarkable for the fact that Oldham's victory was secured by a solitary try from Nestor and no less than nine goals from the kicking maestro, Ganley.



Picture 2

Photo 2. The second image features the match at Thrum Hall on June 23rd 1996. Oldham won another close encounter 20 - 14. The Roughyeds points came from two tries for David Bradbury and one each for Martin Crompton and Jon Clarke. Paul Topping kicked one goal as did Francis Maloney who is shown in the photo taking on the Halifax defence. The attendance was 4,591.

In The News

Well exactly half way through the league season and as I said three weeks ago things couldn't be closer. Featherstone, Doncaster and Halifax are the only teams to have won their last two games and there are hints of revivals at Halifax and Rochdale now that Bobbie Goulding is back on the field.

Featherstone really are to be congratulated as they had two of the most difficult games against Whitehaven and Batley and are now up there in joint 4th place with Oldham and Batley. There is no doubt Oldham must be rueing defensive lapses as it has not just cost us valuable points but made our points difference by far the worst of the top six clubs.

Looking at tomorrow's games the situation at the top could be even closer tomorrow night and I give you a scenario where there could only be two points between the top six clubs. Batley should defeat Keighley; I'm taking us to win a close game today; Featherstone could topple Leigh at home the way they are playing; Hull KR are a much better team at home and I predict they will inflict their third defeat on Doncaster and Whitehaven to beat the Hornets. That would give the following table on Sunday night:

Leigh	14
Whitehaven	14
Doncaster	14
Batley	12
Featherstone	12
Oldham	12
Hull KR	10
Halifax	6
Rochdale	4
Keighley	2

Now how close is that? It will be interesting to see how things have changed when I next produce this column on 1 August when we finally arrive back home to Boundary Park. What a season this is turning out to be?

NM



TEXT YOUR MAN OF THE MATCH

Oldham RLFC is the first club in the National Leagues to set up a text messaging service for fans.

Fans can vote for their **MAN OF THE MATCH** and **WIN A VIP DAY OUT AT THEIR CLUB & £50 CASH.**

Just TEXT mom (space) Oldham (space) and the player's number to 89303

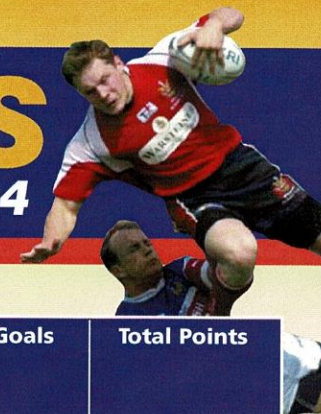
E.G. mom Oldham 9 (For Oldham fans)
or mom Halifax 7 (For Halifax fans)

You can vote up to midnight on the day of the game and the winner will be announced on the following Wednesday. (Winner chosen at random by computer from all entrants who chose most popular player)

The service will be used on an ongoing basis for further competitions and debates. Oldham RLFC will benefit financially from every text. Text costs £1.50 each.

STATISTICS

Player stats for season 2004



Player	Appearances (Including Subs) [Max. 22] (inc Law Cup)	Tries	Drop Goals	Goals	Total Points
Jon Goddard	21	8	-	-	32
Will Cowell	16	8	-	-	32
Iain Marsh	10	9	-	-	36
Gareth Barber	19	3	-	18	48
Nick Johnson	22	19	-	-	76
Simon Svabic	20	2	-	25	58
Ian Watson	20	4	3	2	22
Paul Southern	15	2	-	-	8
John Hough	9	-	-	-	0
Dane Morgan	21	8	-	-	32
Lee Doran	22	3	-	-	12
Martin Elswood	17	2	-	-	4
Craig Farrimond	5	1	-	-	4
Gavin Dodd	20	10	-	-	40
Gavin Johnson	4	-	-	-	0
Adam Sharples	5	-	-	-	0
Neil Roden	14	12	-	-	44
Martin McLoughlin	21	-	-	-	0
Steve Molloy	18	-	-	-	0
Lee Marsh	19	11	-	14	72
Keith Brennan	19	4	2	-	20
James Bunyan	14	7	-	-	28
James Lomax	2	-	-	-	0
Pat Rich	12	2	-	42	96
Phil Farrell	9	3	-	-	12
Danny Nany	1	-	-	-	0
Adam Clayton	1	-	-	-	0
Chris Brett	1	-	-	-	0

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Joe Ferguson

1899 to 1923

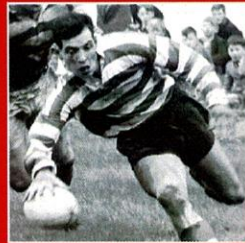
Arguably the greatest ever Oldham player, Joe made a record 627 appearances for the club. But for the First World War his appearances may have crept up to 700, a fantastic record



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.

From the club's first game in 1895 to its most successful post-war season in 1956-57 to the present Oldham Roughyeds, the Chronicle has been on the touchline!

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WALKERBOUT

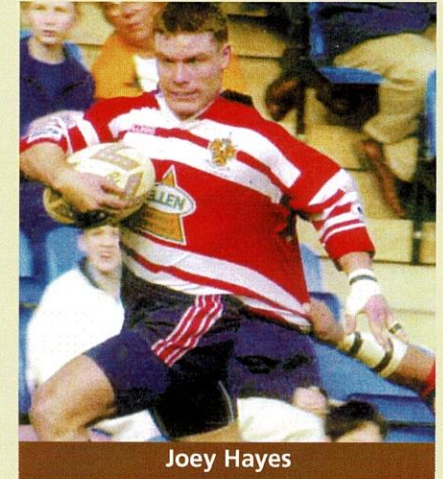
With Brian Walker

ONE CAP WONDERS!

It was an article that appeared in the spring issue of *Rugby League Review* that turned my attention to a list of those players that had, since the war, appeared in just one match for Great Britain and in particular to those players who, at one time or another had also represented the Oldham club.

The magazine's editor Harry Edgar rightly pointed out, that our title **One Cap Wonders** is in itself a misnomer because the RL didn't award a cap until a player had made two international appearances and for just a single appearance the player had to make do with just a blazer badge! But what stuck in my craw was that a player, whether from Oldham or any other club, could be selected to play for Great Britain against Australia, put his body on the line in front of a 75,000 Wembley crowd and unless selected a second time would never be presented with his Great Britain cap. On the other hand a player could make two appearances from the subs bench against a weak French side and pick up a cap. Where's the fairness?

Anyway, the answer to the question set in the Oldham v Whitehaven match programme asking what former Watersheddings players Rowland Phillips (1996), Paul Groves (1987), Cliff Hill (1966), David Hill (1971), Frank Foster (1967), Frank Dyson (1959), Charlie Bott (1966), Keith Holden (1963), Len McIntyre (1963), Johnny Ray (1965), Les Thomas (1947) and Charlie Winslade (1959) all had in common was that they all represented Great Britain once and were never awarded a cap. Add to the list the names of three more ex Roughyeds, winger Joey Hayes (1996), gritty packman Danny Gardiner (1965) and a forward who signed for Oldham but never once played a match in an Oldham shirt; Gary Price (1991) and you have a team plus two reserves who all fall into the same category. Phillips and Hayes would have been awarded tour caps for being members of the 1996 tour squad but these would have been presented regardless of them being selected for the test matches.



Joey Hayes

Here then, are 15 ex Oldham players who have all played for Great Britain but who don't have a single Lion's cap between them.

The list is extended dramatically if you also include England and Wales representation, former Watersheddings favourite and Oldham Hall of Fame member Martin Murphy, for instance, never received a cap for his one and only England appearance back in 1975.

It's about time the RL not only changed this unfair rule but also ensured that those players who have been affected, or indeed their descendents are now presented with their well-earned caps. Some of the most famous names in recent rugby league history are involved; the Drake brothers, Stan Owen, Rob Valentine, Don Close, Eddie Cunningham, Bob Eccles, Roy Francis, Bobby Greenhough, Barry Seabourn, Glynn Shaw etc but it's never too late!

First out of the hat with the winning answer to the question posed in the Oldham V Whitehaven match day programme is former Oldham half back Johnny Blair who will be presented with a copy of the excellent recent publication *The Glory Of Their Times*. The book, featuring former Oldham player Alex Givvons (who was awarded a Welsh international cap) is now available from the Oldham Evening Chronicle shop at £15-99.

TODAY'S OPPONENTS HALIFAX

BRAD ATTWOOD

Eighteen year old for whom a bright future is predicted. Made his Super League debut in 2003 after an impressive spell in the Junior Academy team. Queensbury based although a product of the prolific Ovenden club in Halifax, Brad went on tour to Australia with the Combined English Schools side in 2001.

DANNY ARNOLD

Started an eventful career at St Helens where he won championship honours. Later moved to Huddersfield and Oldham before tasting success at this level with Salford last year.

DAVID BATES

Started his career with Castleford and came to the Shay via a loan spell at Warrington from the Tigers plus a stint with Gateshead. Burly prop who never takes a backward step and who has a glamorous job outside the game - his security firm provide cover for many TV stars including the cast of "Emmerdale". Also works on the club's Community Programme.

JAMIE BLOEM

Back after a year away from the Shay playing with Huddersfield, combined his early season Rugby League with playing for the successful Halifax RUFC side which meant playing in two games most weekends. Signed in May 1998 from Widnes after previous spells with Castleford, Oldham and Doncaster.

JAMES BUNYAN

Formerly with Huddersfield, Doncaster and Rochdale, 'Bunny' joined Halifax in July as part of a player swap which took Jon Roper to Oldham. Leeds based direct and tough centre or second row forward who was admired as a junior.

PHIL CANTILLON

Holds the world record for tries in a season by a forward with the 47 he notched with Widnes in their 2001 promotion season. Scored for them at the Shay last season whilst operating on the wing! His signing from the Vikings was a major coup of the close season. The Wigan born hooker has also played for his hometown club, Keighley, Leeds and Whitehaven.

JAYMES CHAPMAN

Jaymes can lay claim to being the longest serving player at the club having been signed by Tony Anderson from Siddal as a 14 year old. He was a centre in those days but has graduated into a fluent prop or second row forward. A member of the GB Academy squad in 2002 he made his first team debut at Widnes in the final game of that season.

GED CORCORAN

Eldiest of two footballing brothers from Rochdale who forced their way into the first team in 2003. Signed as a junior from Royton Tigers in 1999 and captained both of the club's Academy teams en route to first grade. Prop or second row.

WAYNE CORCORAN

Younger brother of Ged. Made his Super League debut at Wigan last August after showing superb form in the club's under 18's team. Captained them to Grand Final success in 2002. Toured Australia with the North West Counties YRL in the summer of 2001. Kicks with his left foot in broken play but lands goals with his right boot!

PAUL DAVIDSON

Immediately recognisable character who is the player that opposition fans love to hate. Scored for Emerging England in 1998 and has also played for Widnes, Oldham, St Helens, London and Rochdale in his time. Represented his native Cumbria last autumn.

OLIVER FAIRBANK

Recent recruit from nearby Elland where he had impressed in their BARLA Yorkshire Cup success. First of a new generation of players from one of the most famous rugby dynasties in the country. Pacy, strong winger who had a short spell with Keighley a couple of years ago without signing as a professional.

ANTHONY FARRELL

Now Player-Coach, 'Faz' was tempted out of retirement by his old mate Paul Dixon after thinking about it over the winter. His last Super League game was ironically at the Shay for Widnes and he then impressed for Wales in the autumn. Huddersfield based "Faz" was previously with his hometown side, Sheffield and Leeds where he gained challenge cup honours and a grand final runner-up medal.

SCOTT GRIX

Scott, the elder brother of Simon, is another player in his second spell at the Shay. Formerly with the Siddal club he signed in 2001 and captained the club's under 21 side last season before leaving in mid campaign for Doncaster. He returned to the Shay after being released by the Dragons and made his first team debut in the challenge cup defeat in Limoux.

SIMON GRIX

A bright future has been predicted for Simon who has already gained representative honours for England Schools, Yorkshire Academy and the Great Britain under 17's side and is the only NL player in the squad for this year's junior Academy tour to Australia and New Zealand.

ALAN HADCRIFT

Had spent all his professional career with hometown Leigh (apart from a one year spell with Wests in Australia before moving to the Shay in the close season). Solid, combative centre with a wealth of experience. Scored his first try for the club in the challenge cup game versus Oulton.

DANNY JONES

Teenage half-back who made his first team debut in the final Super League game of last season against Widnes. Neat hands and a good kicking game saw him signed from Ovenden and he has been a key of the club's Academy sides ever since.

SCOTT LAW

Has made a meteoric rise to fame after his form in pre-season friendlies impressed Tony Anderson so much that he was elevated to a first team slot. Made his debut versus Oulton Raiders in the Challenge Cup and scored his first senior try for the club in the victory at Hunslet.

CHRIS MORLEY

Another vastly experienced campaigner brought in during the close season. International second row with Wales who has played Super League for St Helens and Warrington plus National League football with Leigh and latterly last season with Oldham.

MARK MOXON

Nuggety scrum half who spent last season with Doncaster after starting his career with hometown club Huddersfield. At his best when organising things in the middle of the field.

CHRIS NORMAN

Former Ovenden junior player who has been with the club for five years despite just celebrating his 21st birthday. Made his Super League debut at the start of last season and never looked back. Can play any back position with equal facility.

RIKKI SHERIFFE

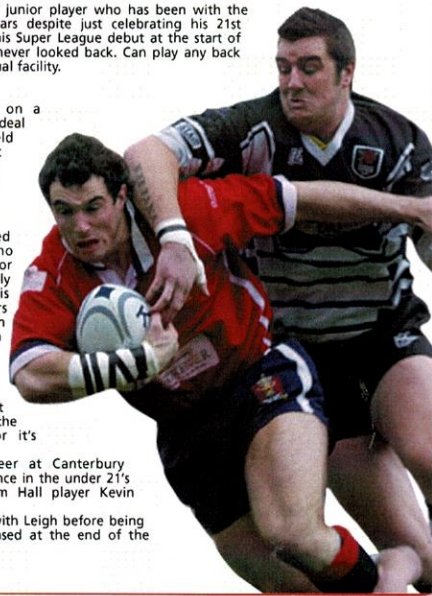
Is at the Shay on a season long loan deal with Huddersfield which saw Stuart Donlan move in the opposite direction.

RICHARD SMITH

Much travelled threequarter who first signed for Halifax in July 1992. Made his debut two years later but then moved to North Sydney.

PAT WEISNER

Sole Australian on the books at the moment at the club famous for it's imports. Started his career at Canterbury under the guidance in the under 21's of former Thrum Hall player Kevin Moore. Spent last year with Leigh before being surprisingly released at the end of the season.



PLAYER PROFILE

PHIL FARRELL

HOW time flies! A glance at the records shows that Phil Farrell, the Roughyeds' Captain Courageous, is in his FIFTH season with the club . . . and it seems like only yesterday that he and his mate Neil Roden turned up one night at Castleton Gabriels to be introduced as new loan signings from Wigan.

That was in the Spring of the year 2000. It didn't take them long to hit Mike Ford's first team, Faz making his debut just a few weeks after his 20th birthday and Rats (Roden) a day or two before he reached that personal milestone.

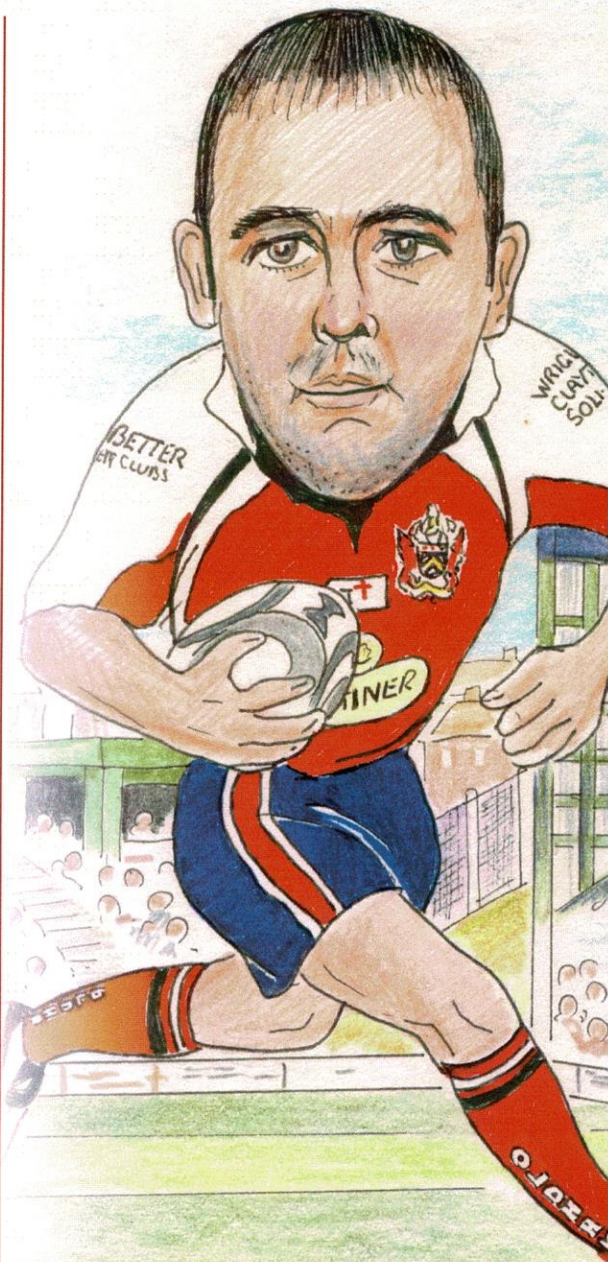
It was hardly a debut to remember for either of them. They were substitutes in a 61-26 mauling at Featherstone. For the record, the Roughyeds lined up like this: Sibson; Hayes, A Gibbons, Rich, Barrow; D Gibbons, Ford; Casey, Hough, Clegg, Holland, McMenemy, Campbell. Subs: Guest, Doran, Roden, Farrell.

Roden was to have two more bench jobs before he began to edge out the boss from the No 7 shirt, but Farrell had No 11 on his back in the next match against Sheffield Eagles and that shirt was to become glued to him for a long time to come.

It was the start of a run of 67 appearances in a row for Farrell, taking in the remaining 21 games of season 2000, the entire 34 matches in 2001 and the first 12 matches of 2002 before he was injured at Sheffield in a 25-6 win on March 15 of that year.

So ended a phenomenal run of consistency by Farrell, who had played the odd game at loose-forward, but most of them in the second-row where his work rate, dedication and professionalism had become a corner stone of a team and a club that was passing through a transitional period.

Ford had departed three months earlier to join the Irish RU, Mark Knight had been in charge briefly in a caretaker capacity and John Harbin was boss, but only for a matter of months before he left to join Oldham Athletic.



PHIL FARRELL CONT..

Faz was to play only one of the next 11 matches before he re-emerged at Batley as a substitute. One match later, at Hunslet, and Harbin was on his way to be replaced as player-coach by Steve Molloy.

Throughout all the changes of that difficult season some things were as steadfast as ever at dressing room level and none more so than the continuing commitment of players like the Gibbons brothers, Hough, Clegg, Guest, Brennan, Norton, Roden and Farrell.

A new crop was starting to come through, too . . . young hopefuls such as Gavin Dodd, John Goddard, Lee Doran, Gareth Barber, Will Cowell and Gavin Johnson.

When the old guard finally began to drift away at the end of the 2002 season, player-coach Molloy had no hesitation in making Farrell his new club captain, in succession to David Gibbons, and also handing him the No 13 jersey.

It was the start of a new chapter in the life and times of Farrell and the Roughyeds.

Faz is an inspirational leader -- not a flashy player and, in the opinion of many shrewd judges, better suited to second-row than loose-forward. His work ethic is first class, his pedigree is second to none and when the going gets tough there is no better guy to have by your side than Phil Farrell.

That's what makes him a fine captain. He has much of his elder brother in him and he leads the side with quiet, controlled authority.

His calm exterior conceals a steely determination to do his best at all times in the profession he lives, eats and sleeps.

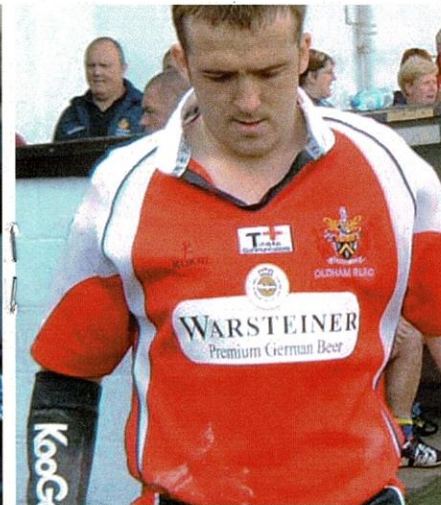
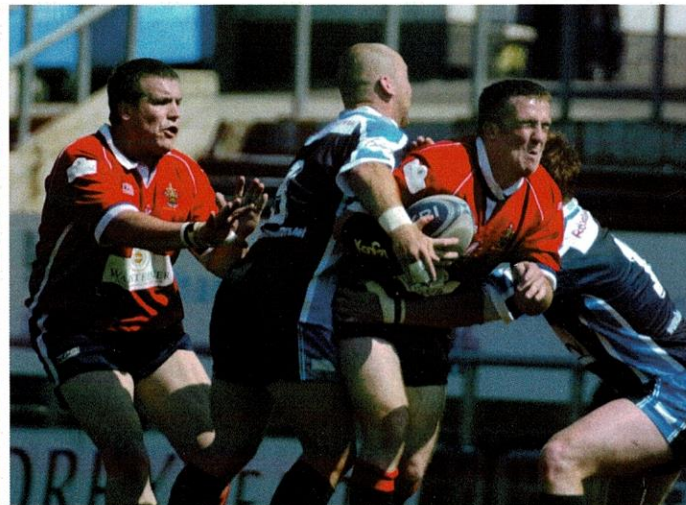
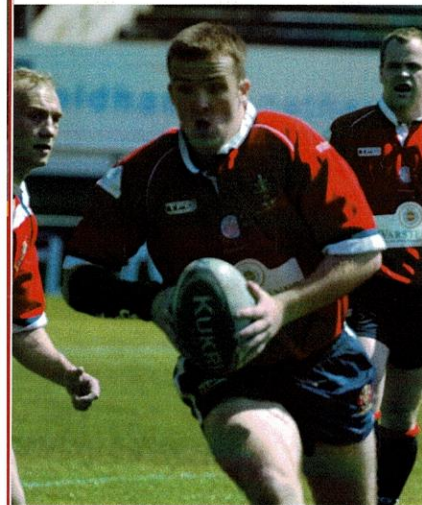
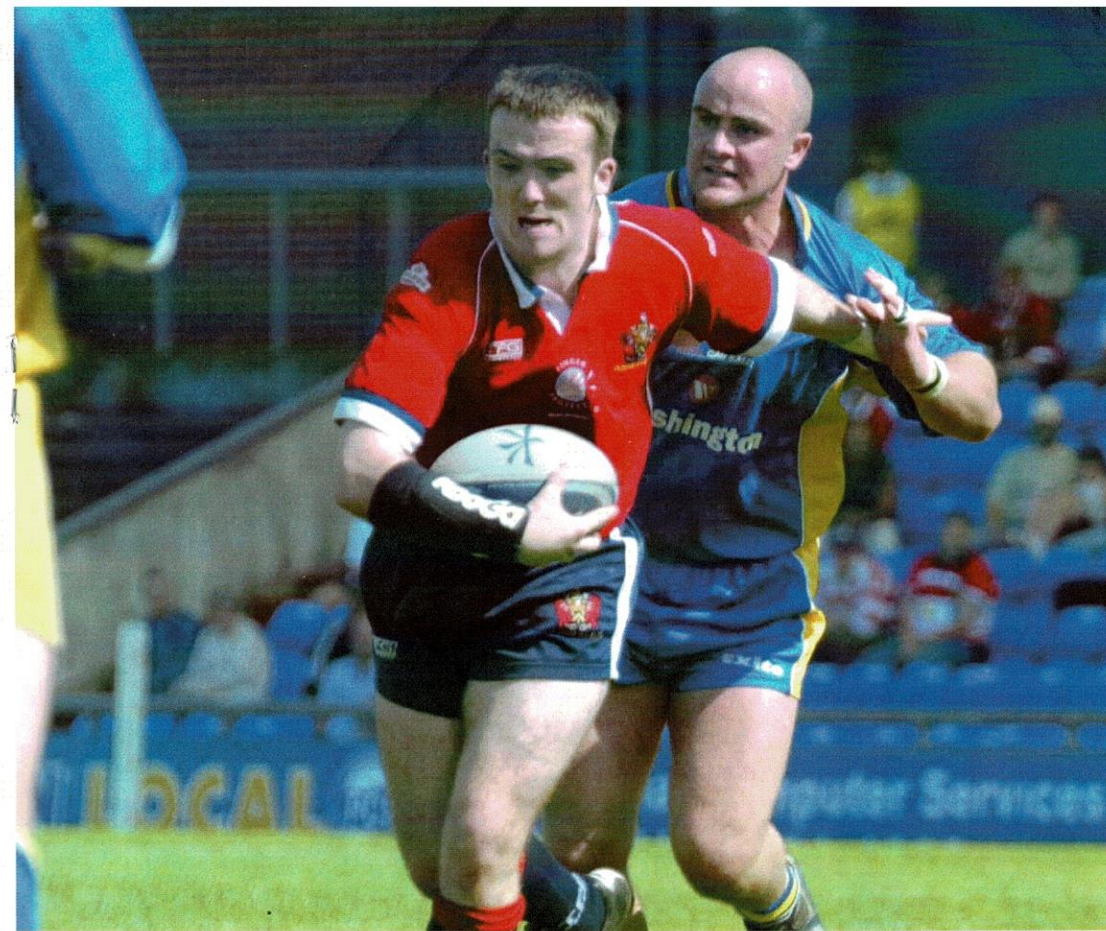
Over the years Faz has given the Roughyeds sterling service. Long may it continue.

In total, he has made 110 first-team appearances for the club and has scored 29 tries.

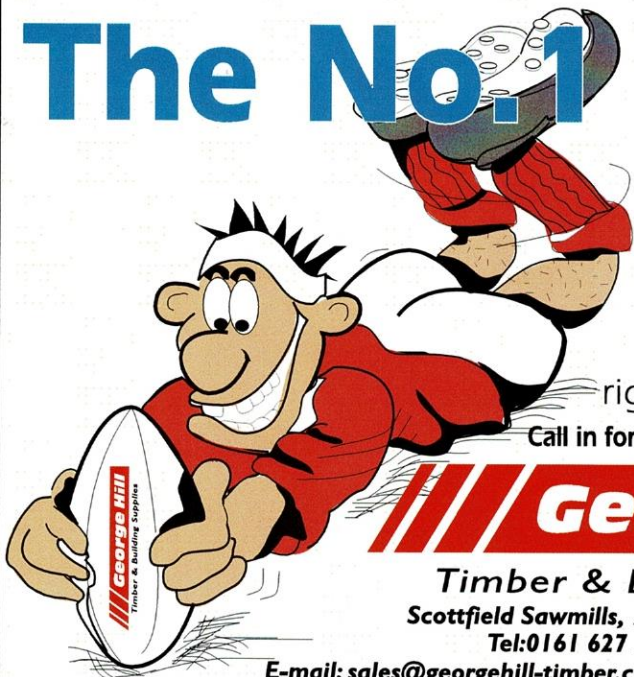
Incidentally, he wasn't a loan player for long. Within a few weeks of coming to Oldham on a temporary basis, he and Roden were bought from Wigan outright for an undisclosed fee.

Few transfer fees are paid these days, but in the case of Farrell and Roden was there ever any Roughyeds money better spent?

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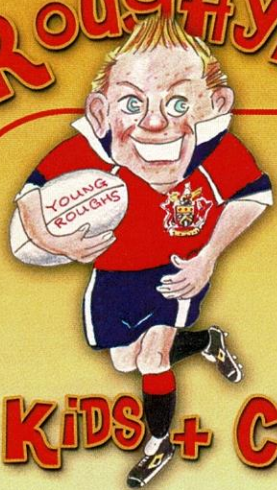


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KIDS + Co

Hi KIDS

Welcome once again to Victory Park to what will hopefully be our last home game played on foreign soil.

Only a week to go and most of you will be finishing school for the long summer holidays (poor mums). Hope you all have a nice break, and for those of you going away have a great holiday.

"Redhead the Roughyed" will be doing a sponsored bike ride soon to raise funds for a new head and for the BREAKTHROUGH breast cancer charity, so if any of you parents want to sponsor him please contact Carole or myself as soon as possible.

Today's mascot is four years old Rebecca Trelfa whose favourite player is skipper Phil Farrell. Rebecca does not go to school yet but is at nursery when she is not too busy watching rugby and playing with her dolls.

Thanks once again to our sponsors Saddleworth Sports, Cartridge World, Oldham, ASDA, Chadderton, The Oldham Advertiser, F R Elswood Ltd and A1 Upholstery. Their support is very much appreciated.

Good luck to Steve and the lads,

See you soon

Janet & Carole

TODAYS MASCOT

Rebecca Trelfa

Age: 4

Hobbies: Watching rugby and playing with her dolls.

Favourite Player: Phil Farrell

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Home is where the heart is, as the saying goes, and for Oldham Rugby the heart must go wherever the 'home' is. So, once again here we are in Chorley. However Sunday 1 August will take us back home to Oldham and to celebrate the occasion we shall be holding an after match **BARBECUE** at our Social Club on Alfred Street. So please come and join us after the Hull K R match and enjoy yourselves. The players will be there and the **BARBECUE** will be held whatever the weather.

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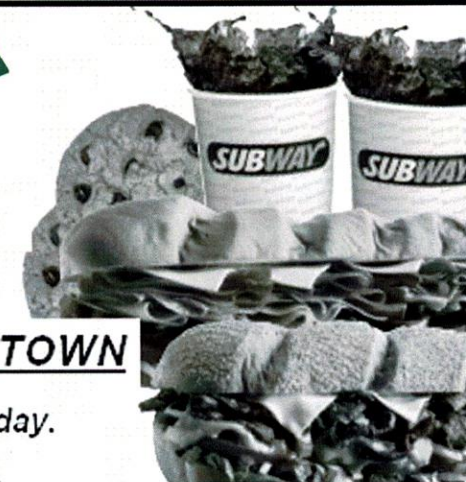
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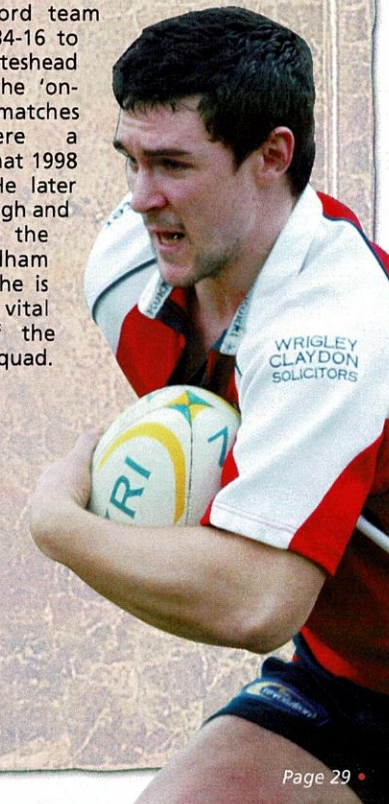
DON YATES LOOKS BACK TO JULY 10TH YESTERYEAR

International rugby league reached its nadir on Saturday 10th July 1954 when Great Britain met New South Wales at the Sydney Cricket Ground. The match took place seven days before the third and deciding test between the Kangaroos and the Lions. The tourists, with a number of injury problems, selected only three players who appeared the following week in the test match. There were several puzzling selections. Tiny hooker Tommy Harris (Hull) was at prop and second-row forward Geoff Gunney (Hunslet) was at full-back. The two biggest surprises involved burly, tough forwards Brian Briggs (Huddersfield) and Jack Wilkinson of Halifax. They played on the wings! Australian critics have always maintained that the British team was selected with the sole purpose of causing injury to the Australian test players included in the New South Wales line-up. In those days the game was much more vicious than it is today. A high tackle was one that missed and most matches involved at least one 'set to'. This match was more brutal than most with several ugly incidents and punches thrown in virtually every tackle. Midway through the second half Warrington stand-off Ray Price was sent off for verbal abuse of a touch judge. An amazing decision considering the mayhem which was going on elsewhere. In the 67th minute Hunslet scrum-half Alf Burnell clashed with the New South Wales winger Noel Pridding. The incident sparked off a mass brawl. Rival centres Harry Wells, a class boxer, and St.Helens hard-man Duggie Greenall were involved in a frightening battle reminiscent of the bare knuckle fights of olden days. Referee Aub Oxford was unable to restore order and so abandoned the match. At the time New South Wales led 17-6. The disciplinary committee, which met to sit in judgement of the match, decided to suspend Ray Price for five matches. They also issued severe cautions to Alf Burnell, loose-forward Ken Traill (Bradford Northern) and Harry Wells but no further action was taken. In protest, Aub Oxford never refereed another match.

Thirty-four years previously, on Saturday 10th July 1920, Great Britain defeated Australia 23-

13 in the third test at the Royal Agricultural Showgrounds, Sydney. The Kangaroos had won the first two tests and were determined to complete a whitewash over the Lions. Oldham forward Herman Hilton was included in the British pack and had different ideas. He scored an early try to put Britain 6-0 in front and then, after Australia had recovered to lead 10-6, scored a second try which instigated the revival which led to the British victory. The manager of that 1920 Touring Team was Halifax official Sid Foster.

Friday 10th July 1998 was a significant date in the career of current Oldham stand-off Simon Svabic. The former Leigh Rangers junior turned professional with the original Oldham club but never made a first team appearance. Svabic moved to Salford on the demise of the Bears and it was exactly six years ago today that he made his debut in senior rugby. He was stand-off in the Salford team which lost 34-16 to Leeds at Gateshead in one of the 'on-the-road' matches which were a feature of that 1998 campaign. He later moved to Leigh and then joined the current Oldham club where he is now a vital member of the Roughyeds squad.



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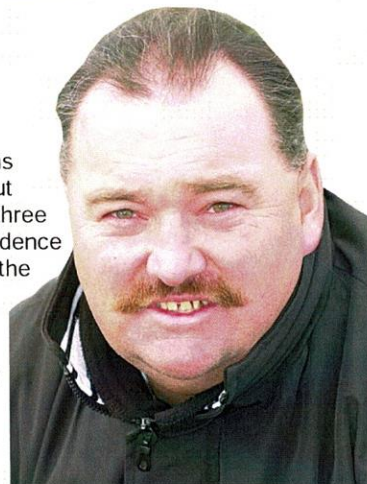
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LEAGUE WEEKLY

Danny Lockwood, publisher

WE'LL have to change the name of these blokes who pick teams and blame referees. Instead of calling them 'coaches', how about 'buses'? As in, "crikey, you wait all that time for a bus and then three come at once." Or, every coach in the game gets a vote of confidence or pledges eternal devotion to his club, and before you know it, the streets are full of P45s. The situation with Shaun McRae isn't typical, in that the genial Hull FC boss has given great service and is moving on to further his own career ambitions. He's one Aussie who will depart these shores with many a friend and fan across the Rugby League world. Good luck at South Sydney Shaun. You sure know how to pick a tough job.



Shaun McRae - enjoying the ride on the coaching merry-go-round

But this time last season, you'd have been mentioning the Super League prospects of McRae's men from the KC in the same breath as Kelly's Vikings or Steadman's Tigers. I don't think the bookies were running sheets on 'next coach for the chop' in the middle of last summer, but I doubt you'd have seen those two young English coaches' names high up the list, and certainly not McRae's. Nor Daryl Powell's at Leeds, come to that. No, Shane McNally might have got a few bob lumped on his back, as the Wildcats scratched their way through another season of underachievement, with only the cushion of a fully deflated Halifax to give them comfort. Even the first worrying signs of the London Broncos running out of puff might have attracted a market for Tony Rea, but Nic Cartwright appears to have full faith in his long(ish) serving coach. It's a big gamble by the Broncos though - betting that Cas really won't float the boat right side up before journey's end. And look how a bit of patience in McNally has paid off! Maybe there's a lesson in that...

It's ironic that the KC crew had edged past both the Bulls and Saints on points difference into second place, just hours before McRae's decision was made public, though in John Kear Hull have as safe a pair of hands at the helm as you could want. But wouldn't it be sweetly ironic if the boards of Castleford and Widnes, in their respective wisdoms, decided to appoint two of the brightest up and coming British coaches to their top jobs? You know who I mean - Neil Kelly for The Jungle and Graham Steadman in at the Halton Stadium. Just because both failed to find the magic touch this season doesn't mean either isn't the quality performer we pundits thought a mere 12 months ago.

A top player is exactly that in pretty much any environment. Put Paul Sculthorpe in the Leeds team, Lesley Vainikolo in a Wigan shirt, and the product would be the same. But coaching is so much more complex. From being a good judge of horseflesh, to possessing the recipe skills of a top chef and being hugely lucky to boot - and that's without getting to the rugby coaching - it's a tough mix to perfect. And even then, after a while the same dishes get a bit stale on the palate. I've witnessed many excellent coaches who had a shelf life of two to three years per club. Then their 'tricks' wore off and it was time to move on. Kelly and Steadman won't be out of the game for long. And I'd put my money on them getting the job done, wherever it might be.

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NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



REFEREES' BOSS ANSWERS THE CRITICS

MARTYN SADLER, the editor of 'Rugby Leaguer & League Express', reveals that RFL referees' boss Stuart Cummings is happy to respond to criticism of his match officials.

If there is one job in Rugby League that is harder than refereeing, it is probably being the Rugby Football League's Match Officials Director.

Stuart Cummings is the man in the hot seat, having retired as a referee himself a couple of years ago after a distinguished career with the whistle.

He now sits in his office at Red Hall, and is charged with maintaining or even improving the performances of the men in the middle.

It isn't an easy job, not so much because the referees he controls aren't any good, but because most Rugby League supporters are hyper-critical, yet only see the 'mistakes' referees make in relation to the impact they have on their own team.

Growing up as a young Wakefield supporter I was assured by my father that referees didn't give Wakefield a fair go, and I suspect there were other fathers supporting every other team in the game telling their kids that referees were just as unfair to their clubs.

That's why Stuart will probably never convince us that he's doing a good job.

Stuart recently volunteered to answer a series of questions from Rugby League supporters who are members of our online forum on the Totalrl.com website.

He agreed to field questions for an hour, but ended up spending more than two hours at his computer terminal, eventually fielding 107 questions from members of the forum.

Every response was interesting, and naturally Stuart supported his officials, but it's interesting to reflect on a selection of his replies.

For example, when asked to compare refereeing standards in this country and in Australia, Stuart's response was: "Our referees are as good,

if not better than in Australia. They (in Australia) don't have to focus as much on the play the ball and the ten metres due to the players' acceptance of what they can and cannot do! Many of the Australians who have come over and refereed in our competition have struggled."

One member asked Stuart to "explain the rule in relation to players from the attacking team who over-run the ball coming back and standing at one side of the play the ball, thus interfering with the defending team's ability to tackle the halfback."

Stuart's response was: "We have noticed this too! We call them sleepers. They are sometimes there accidentally, but they are mainly there to cause obstruction. They will be dealt with."

So coaches beware!

On a lighter note, Stuart was asked by one member about Sky TV's Steve, and whether "you believe his incessant rambling helps or hinders the game's coverage, and indeed the game itself."

Stuart's response revealed his diplomatic streak.

"Steve is employed as a summariser for Sky. He is very good at what he does. He expresses his opinion as he entitled to do, and I do get on very well with him."

And, when pressed by one member to comment directly about Wigan coach Denis Betts' outburst after the Warriors' recent game at Hull, when Denis claimed his side were "cheated" out of victory by the video referee, Stuart revealed: "Denis phoned me and apologised yesterday morning!"

If you want to see all Stuart's responses, go onto the totalrl.com website, click on 'Forums', and then go into the 'Guest Room'.

A full report of today's game will appear in the 'Rugby Leaguer & League Express' on Monday.

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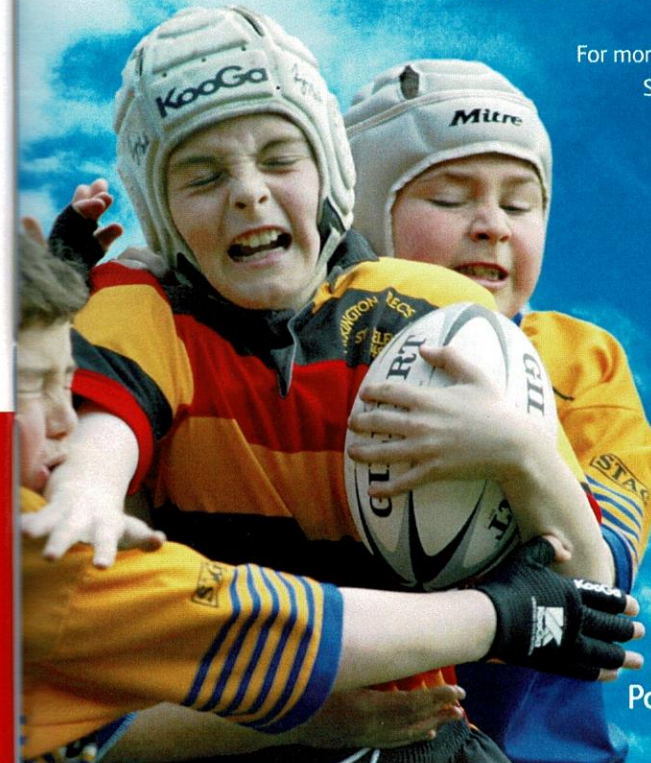
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Fixtures

DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
01/02/04	Chorley Lynx	AT Cup	Home	15.00	64-14	W	1096
06/02/04	Castleford Panthers	Powergen CC	Home	19.30	16-8	W	1003
15/02/04	Leigh Centurions	AT Cup	Away	15.00	51-32	L	2316
22/02/04	Swinton Lions	AT Cup	Away	15.00	18-30	W	783
29/02/04	Sharlston Rovers	Powergen CC	Home	19.45	24-4	W	1301
07/03/04	Leigh Centurions	AT Cup	Home	15.00	10-54	L	1805
14/03/04	Warrington Wolves	Powergen CC	Home	15.00	10-44	L	2859
21/03/04	Chorley Lynx	AT Cup	Away	15.00	10-40	W	370
28/03/04	Powergen CC	Powergen CC	Quarter Finals				
28/03/04	Rochdale Hornets	AT Cup	Home	18.00	56-12	W	1214
04/04/04	Swinton Lions	AT Cup	Home	15.00	42-15	W	983
09/04/04	Rochdale Hornets	AT Cup	Away	15.00	12-48	W	1305
12/04/04	Featherstone Rovers	NL 1	Home	15.00	50-24	W	1320
18/04/04	Powergen CC	Powergen CC	Semi Final 1				
18/04/04	Halifax	NL1	Away	15.00	6-25	W	1807
25/04/04	Powergen CC	Powergen CC	CC Semi Final 2				
25/04/04	Doncaster	AT Cup	Away	15.00	32-28	L	835
02/05/04	Leigh Centurions	NL 1	Home	15.00	20-60	L	2104
09/05/04	Hull Kingston Rovers	NL1	Away	15.00	29-22	L	2121
15/05/04	Powergen CC Final	Powergen CC					
23/05/04	Rochdale Hornets	NL 1	Home	15.00	26-24	W	1243
30/05/04	Batley Bulldogs	NL 1	Home	15.00	20-44	L	1541
06/06/04	AT Cup Quarter Finals	AT Cup					
13/06/04	Keighley Cougars	NL1	Away	15.00	28-33	W	1153
20/06/04	Whitehaven	NL 1	Home	15.00	31-24	W	751
27/06/04	AT Cup Semi Finals	AT Cup					
04/07/04	Doncaster Dragons	NL1	Away	15.00	31-30	L	996
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. Play-offs	NL1					

Key

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

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