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Oldham RLFC v Blackpool Panthers

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MOST APPEARANCES: John Hough, 228 - Jan 1998 - Sep 2006

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: Nick Johnson, 25 - 2004

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: Neil Roden 77 - 2000-2004; 2007-?

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 Lytch, 4 - Jan 30th 2001 at Boundary Park

James Bunyan v Featherstone Rovers, 4 - Apr 12th 2004 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 Derwent 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

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

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Harry Ogden 1940-56

Alan Davies 1950-62

Frank Stirrup 1950-62

Bernard Ganley 1950-61

Sid Little OBE 1951-59

John Etty 1954-59

Derek Turner 1955-59

Kevin Taylor 1962-77

Mike Elliott 1962-79

Bob Irving 1964-74

Martin Murphy 1966-82

Terry Flanagan 1979-89

Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

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

with Chris Hamilton



There has been a lot of talk, understandably, about the issue of salary caps and the breaking of it by clubs recently and given the importance of the matter it is only right that you know the stance of our club.

For too long in rugby league rules have been there to be broken and so it seems with the salary cap. But what is the alternative?

To answer this you need to look at the reasons for bringing it in initially which were to help protect clubs from themselves so that they couldn't spend all of their money trying to buy success for instance. The salary cap was also put in place to try and provide a more level playing field so that there was a finite level of spending available which still gave some variance to assist those clubs with bigger incomes.

In terms of assisting clubs by trying to prevent them from overspending and therefore not going bust you could reasonably argue that this has not worked as this season alone both Doncaster and Swinton have gone into various forms of insolvency and Rochdale Hornets have financial problems. With clubs having to submit six monthly returns you may be inclined to think that warning signals should be clear enough to prevent such things but life is never straight forward is it?

The recent transgressions by Super League clubs also demonstrate that no matter what the cap is the bigger clubs still cant stay under it with Wigan being over £222k over!

A difficult situation indeed and not one that i envy

the RFL, as the body charged with monitoring the cap, of. However, what is the alternative to a salary cap as not having one could surely be claimed to be foolish?

Turning to todays game and we make the next step on the ladder we hope will lead to promotion and although we are aware of Blackpool's current losing run we know only too well from last year that results are not always a true indication of how well a team is playing and as usual we will need to be on the ball to collect three points.

With this being another of our key home games we need to keep our current winning run going - hopefully - until the end of the season.

We showed a lot of determination to win the game at York last week - how many times have we been on the end of last minute scores like that?- and hopefully we can keep that kind of spirit within the team.

Your support again at York was vocal and we look forward to more of the same again today.

Enjoy the game.

Chris

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deaks's coach approach

with Steve Deakin



We today welcome Blackpool to Boundary Park, and in so doing welcome also one of the icons of our sport in Andy Gregory, who has been in charge of the Panthers for the past few weeks.

Most people in rugby league will know all about Andy's achievements as a brilliant scrum-half for Wigan and Great Britain, but just in case any of you need to know more you only have to look at his fabulous playing record which Nigel Marland outlines in his feature on Blackpool elsewhere in this match-day magazine.

Even in his first few weeks at the club, Andy's influence has already seen the team post improved scores and performances. And he will certainly have the Panthers motivated, not only today but for the rest of the season, in a bid to take a scalp or two.

We have already discovered to our cost this year that to fall into the trap of taking any type of opposition lightly can lead to embarrassing results so we need to be at our best today to make sure we come up with the right performance and the right result.

We produced good performances against Hunslet in our last game here at Boundary Park and then at York City Knights last Sunday and it is important that we keep that momentum going with another good show today.

We showed loads of character at York to score three tries to two and to come from behind three times before we squeezed home with that last-gasp drop goal. Seriously, I never thought we were going to lose. It was always tight, I know, but they never had us by the throat even though they had a penalty count of 11-3 in their favour.

In those circumstances a lot of our defensive work was absolutely outstanding and we got our rewards with those tries by James Coyle, Lucas Onyango and Drew Houston, a conversion by Gareth Langley and, of course, the match-winning drop goal by 'Two Bobs' (Rob Roberts).

If we are to enter the play-offs and give ourselves the best chance

of doing well in those play-offs we need to be playing well and getting good results consistently over the next few weeks of the regular league campaign.

To this end the board of directors further demonstrated their intentions to do all in their power to guide the club to promotion when they signed Ian Gordon and Rob Roberts, whose last-minute drop goal at York last week was a big factor in our win.

We welcome Rob and Ian to the club and if they happen to be in the side today I know you will give them both a huge Roughyeds welcome for what would be their home debuts. Ian didn't play at York. 'Two Bobs' did, but as I say if they are in the 17 today they will both be playing at Boundary Park for the first time in Oldham colours. Our performance at Huntington Stadium was full of character and commitment and it needed to be because York City Knights are a very good side indeed.

They had won each of their three previous games, including victory over Barrow, and they went into our game full of confidence and on a high.

This division is extremely competitive and in the course of the next few weeks we are going to need all the playing resources we can muster.

To that end, hopefully today we will have recovered some players who have been unavailable for a few weeks and that will increase competition for places which in turn should improve performances, both individually and collectively.

At the time of writing we have a fit and available squad of 22 or 23 and we possibly need another one, or even two, players before registrations close on August 17 to fully insure ourselves against all eventualities thereafter.

Once again, I thought the vocal support at York given to our players before, during and after the game played a massive part in helping us to obtain the victory. That vocal support really does count, believe me. I would like you all to continue your magnificent efforts in this regard not just today against Blackpool, but at each game during the rest of the season.

I know we have had one or two blips over the course of the year but in the main OUR team has produced some outstanding football both offensively and defensively, and with a little bit of luck and lots of hard work we can collectively help each other to achieve our objectives.

Enjoy the game,
DEAKS.



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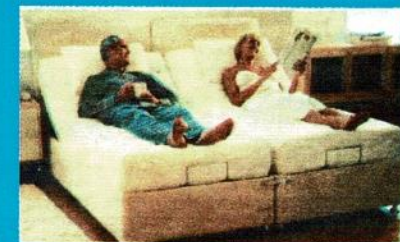
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(all you need to know about local rugby league at grass-roots level)

SPOTLIGHT ON THE UNDER-13s

Seven boys from the town-team under-13s squad have been chosen to attend regional camp at Rossall School, Fleetwood and our congratulations go out to Ryan Bradbury, Nathan Hughes, Kyle Mayall, Josh Ogden, Ewan Reddyoff, Jarrod Ward and Danny Yates.

Full squad: Jordan Arundale, Ryan Bradbury, Kendal Davies, Jack Ford, Nathan Hughes, Josh Johnson, Andrew Joy, Richard Joy, Oliver Kerr, Kyle Mayall, Nathan Mason, Josh Ogden, Bradley Quinlan, Matthew Ralph, Ewan Reddyoff, Jake Shoel, Chris Taylor, Jack Tindall, Jarrod Ward, Aaron Webb, Ben Whitehead, Liam Wilcock, Danny Yates.

The under-13s won three of their five games, scoring an aggregate total of 108 points and conceding 82.

Ben Whitehead kicked 12 goals in total --- five in one match -- and 21 tries were shared out as follows: Reddyoff 4, Mayall 3, Ogden 2, Yates 2, Ward 2, Taylor 2, Mason 2 and one each for Ford, Tindall, Johnson and Shoel.

OLDHAM 14 KIRKLEES 10

Kirklees led 6-0 at half-time and it would have been more but for a superb, try-saving tackle by Mayall.

It needed something special to click Oldham into gear and Reddyoff provided it with a terrific sidestep and then a race to score from half way. Whitehead goaled.

Poor Oldham defence enabled Kirklees to go back in front with an unconverted try out wide, but the local lads went better as the game progressed and were rewarded with a try for Mayall to level at 10-10.

It was the impetus Oldham needed to finish the job and they did so with a great team try by Jack Ford, who scored in the corner to clinch the win.

OLDHAM 16 WIGAN/LEIGH 20

Despite enjoying most of the possession and playing the better rugby, Oldham went down to a narrow defeat.

Wigan led 10-0 at half time and then added a third try, but Oldham responded well. Quick hands sent in Josh Ogden at the corner and then Ewan Reddyoff added another try, this one converted by Whitehead to reduce the deficit to 14-10.

In a thriller Danny Yates scored next and Whitehead goaled to nose Oldham into the lead at 16-14.

Unfortunately, a Wigan kick was poorly defended and they scored a converted try to snatch the victory, although Oldham could be proud of their efforts against a bigger set of lads.

OLDHAM 38 LANCASHIRE 12

Two tries by Reddyoff and a goal from Whitehead gave Oldham an early 10-0 lead before Lancashire struck strongly down the middle to register two converted tries for a 12-10 lead.

After that, though, it was all Oldham for whom Yates, Taylor and Tindall scored tries before half time and Whitehead added two more goals for a 26-12 interval lead.

The try by Yates was a cracker. He broke up the blind side and raced half the length of the pitch to score.

Lancashire threatened only once in the second half, and on that occasion a great tackle by Taylor kept them out.

Then two tries in the last five minutes by Jarrod Ward, both improved beautifully off the touchline by Whitehead, completed the scoring.

Josh Johnson and Ryan Bradbury worked hard in the forwards with good backing from everyone else.

OLDHAM 22 COPELAND 18

In difficult conditions, Oldham defied a strong crosswind and bigger opponents to pull off a creditable victory.

The local lads led 10-4 at half-time with tries by Mason and Taylor (this a length-of-the-field interception try) and a goal by Whitehead. Further tries by Ogden and Shoel, the latter thanks to a great offload by Davies, gave Oldham an 18-10 lead.

However, poor defending at a tap penalty enabled the Cumbrians to close the gap to four points, 18-14, before Johnson crashed over to seal the win despite a late try for Copeland.

Reddyoff and Yates, at half-back, distributed well, while the forwards coped admirably with the loss of Bradbury through injury only five minutes into the game.

OLDHAM 18 HALTON 22

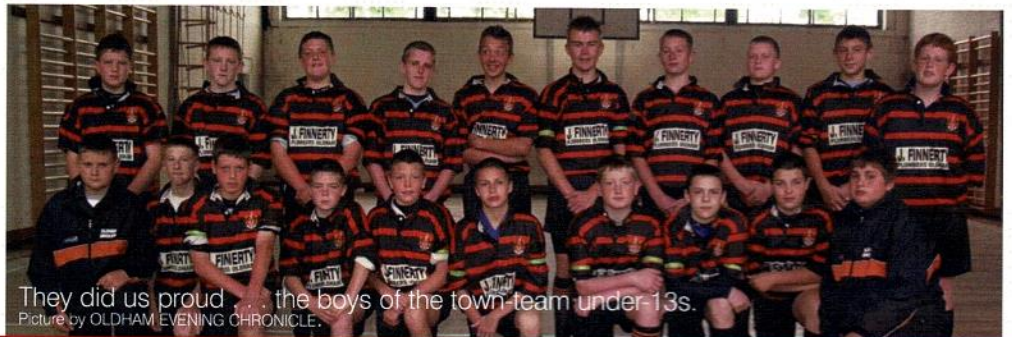
Early nerves gave Halton two tries before Oldham hit back with a Mayall try, improved by Whitehead.

Then an excellent kick by Yates set up a try for Mason which Whitehead converted for a 12-8 half-time lead.

Halton had the wind in the second half and Oldham didn't help themselves. They made handling errors, gave penalties away and marked up poorly defensively, all this allowing Halton to score two converted tries to lead 20-12.

Oldham finished well with Mayall crashing over for Whitehead to goal, but it all came too late and Halton held on to win.

Debutants Ogden, Taylor, Ward and Wilcock all showed up well for Oldham.



They did us proud ... the boys of the town-team under-13s.
Picture by OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE.

(OUR SERVICE AREA FEATURE NEXT TIME WILL LOOK AT THE UNDER-14s)

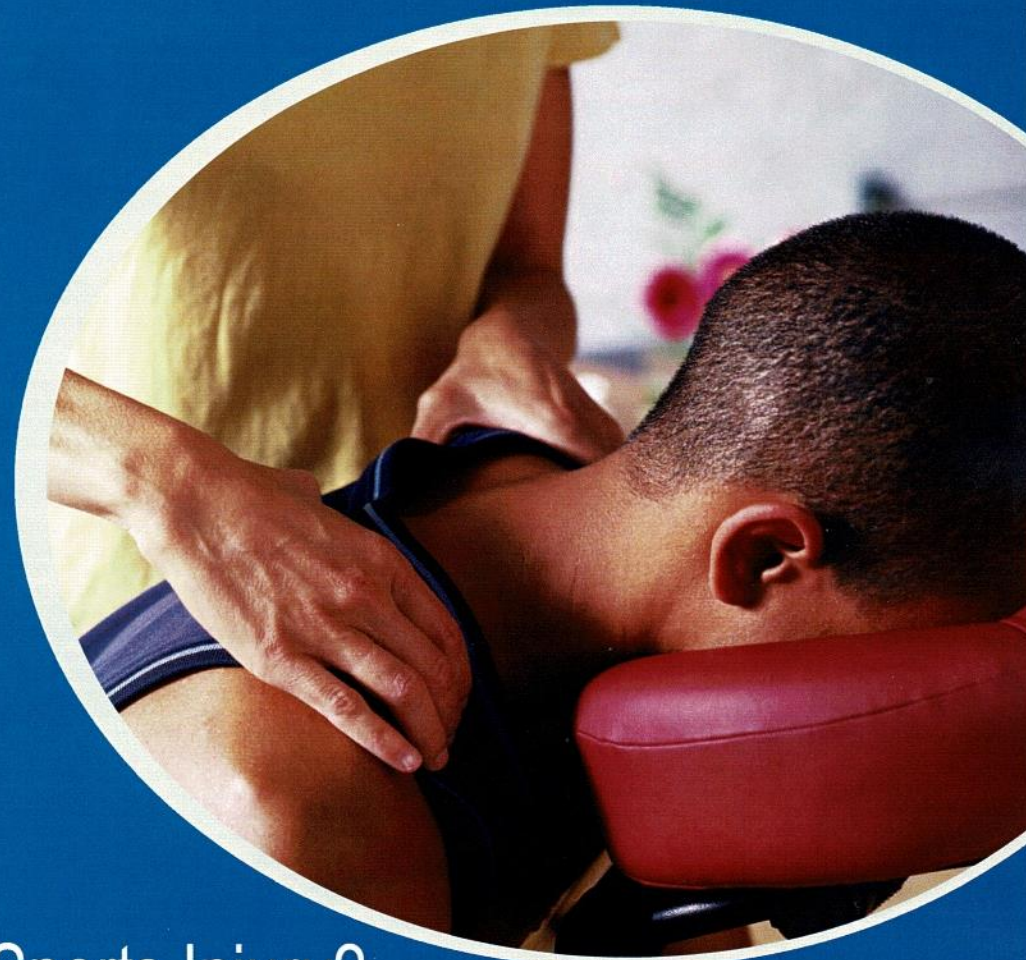
with Geoff Cooke

cooke-ability!

My article for the last home match programme did not appear because the Editor thought it wise not to allow comment on the Super League salary cap situation in advance of Wigan's hearing before an independent tribunal.

As a former Editor of this programme myself I fully understand that the Oldham club cannot make itself liable to legal action by overstepping the mark. Nevertheless there has been widespread condemnation - and rightly so - of differing 'interpretations' of the Salary Cap rules by Super League clubs which have made the competition a laughing stock. This has opened the way to possible legal action by Castleford who now feel aggrieved at their relegation last season under the circumstances that prevailed. That one club can overspend by almost a quarter of a million pounds and then try to find ways round that overspend is mind boggling. It was with some pleasure, therefore, that I heard last Sunday's Carnegie Challenge Cup Semi-Final result with Catalan Dragons defeating Wigan by 37 points to 24. Pre-match publicity suggested that St. Helens v. Wigan was the 'dream' final for the first one back at Wembley. Not in my book! The appearance of Catalan Dragons is the true dream ticket for the benefit of the game as a whole. The Rugby League Challenge Cup Final is one of the 'Crown Jewel' TV events protected for free-to-air viewing. The appearance for the first time in a final of a French side will be an enormous shot in the arm for the game in France and will add much needed colour to the game. It will be proof positive that Rugby League is a truly international game with a profile to match Rugby Union's Heineken Cup and not one played almost exclusively along the M62 corridor. The pre-match publicity will have to reflect the European reach of the game and cannot but add to the lustre of Rugby League as a game with far-reaching potential.

Meanwhile, the revenue that might have been gained by Wigan cannot be put into next year's salary cap projections. It needs to be remembered that the Salary Cap was introduced to protect the clubs from themselves as well as to try to ensure a more level playing field. People in Wigan would do well to remember that Wigan R.L.F.C. exists today courtesy of Tesco who bailed the club out after it got into difficulties sustaining its long years of dominance by paying wages it could not afford. Tesco even allowed Wigan to stay on at Central Park for two years after they purchased the site until the JJB Stadium was completed. Perhaps its time for a reality check in Wigan as Super League competition gets ever tougher. In Australia there have been six different Grand Final winners in the last six years because the competition is so much more even thanks to a well policed salary cap. Oh! for the days of twenty years ago when Halifax could win at Wembley (1987) or win the Championship (1985). For the health of the game overall it's time the likes of Salford, Wakefield, Warrington, Hull or Castleford could once again pick up the major honours. So let's start with a Catalan Dragons victory at Wembley on August 25th.



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by ROGER HALSTEAD

BORN IN SCOTLAND, BUT PROUD TO BE A YORKSHIREMAN!

Simeon was 'hooked' on Oldham from day one after playing at Wembley as a boy and then serving Keighley and Halifax

THE Scottish town of Leith is well-known for many reasons. It's on the beautiful and famous Firth of Forth; it has one of the biggest cantilever road bridges in the world; it's the port for Edinburgh; and the Royal Yacht Britannia is berthed permanently in the port's Ocean Terminal, attracting thousands of visitors each year.

Born in this historic former fishing village, most of whose residents support the local soccer team, Hibernian, were Eduardo Paolozzi, pop artist and sculptor; pro snooker player Chris Small; John Hunter, second governor of New South Wales; the Scottish naturalist Robert Jameson; John Gladstone MP; Ross Ollerhead, star of the video of Elton John's hit 'Tiny Dancer'... and rugby league player Simeon Hoyle.

The Roughyeds hooker, born on September 18, 1979, spent the first five years of his life up there and if his Yorkshire-born parents, Tom and Vicky, had not taken the decision to move back to their native heath Simeon might have been tossing the caber or salmon fishing in Scottish rivers right now instead of putting his head into the front-row of rugby league scrums.

"Mum and dad had a caravan site in Leith," explained Simeon, "but dad was always interested in rugby of both codes. He had always watched Halifax and he played rugby union himself to a good standard. He's played in Australia and New Zealand.

"Once the family bid farewell to Scotland and moved back down here it was only a matter of time before I got involved with rugby league." From the age of five Simeon was a regular on the terraces at Thrum Hall and by the time he was nine he was lacing up his boots at his local amateur club, Siddal. Bagpipes, kilts, Hibs were but a distant memory. He was a Yorkshire lad now -- and proud of it.

A big lad for his age --- "Everyone else grew, but I stopped," he would explain --- Simeon started as a full-back and then was moved to second-row and prop. In his early days the position of hooker wasn't on the agenda, but by the time he was 16 and proudly representing Yorkshire at that age group he was wearing the No 9 that was to stay with him for the remainder of his career hitherto.

One of the proudest days of his life came a couple of years later when he captained Yorkshire under-18s --- and there was another red-letter day when he climbed on board the aircraft with the BARLA under-21s side which flew to the USA for two State matches and one Test match in and around Philadelphia. Others in that tour party were Bryn Powell, now at Dewsbury, and Phil Hasty, of Rochdale Hornets.

There had been a sign of things to come when Simeon was still at junior school. Only a couple of years after first dragging on a rugby jersey, he was named in the second-row in the Halifax under-11s side which played Runcorn Boys at Wembley in a curtain-raiser to the 1991 Challenge Cup final between Wigan and Saints.

He recalls the whole experience as a "great thrill" but he doesn't have specific memories of the big day out in the capital, although he does remember that he was on the winning side. Though he didn't know it at the time it wouldn't be the last time he was to wear the famous blue and white hoops of Fax.

Fast forward nine years or so and Simeon, now working in his dad's flooring business as a resin screeder ('Don't ask me what that is --- it's far too complicated to explain' I was told) was on a job at The Shay, putting in a new floor for Halifax Town FC, when he came to the rescue of the town's rugby league club.

"I knew Mick Scott from Siddal," said Simeon, "and when he came across me at The Shay he asked me if I would play a game for Halifax 'A' because they were short of a hooker for that particular match.

"Gary Moorby was head coach at Halifax at the time and I must have done okay because when Gary moved to Keighley he contacted me and asked me to go over. I signed for the Cougars and spent three years there."

Simeon was to become a stalwart of the Cougars side that, in his second year there, reached the second division grand final. In a team that beat Sheffield to win promotion he had colleagues in Paul Ashton, Richard Mervill and Ian Sinfield. And it was one of many career stand-out days for the young hooker, who carried off the man-of-the-match award.

His form was such that, at the end of that year, he was picked for the second division representative side that played and beat New Zealand 'A' at Cougar Park --- and that was the forerunner of his huge decision to move Down Under for a spell with a team coached by former Halifax and Wigan star Gavin Clinch in the Illawarra competition.

First, Simeon spent his third season with Keighley --- not a memorable one because it ended with relegation back to division two and perhaps speeded his decision to seek something new on the other side of the world.

He headed for the Collegians side in the Illawarra comp and it was there that he was to come head to head with his his old Keighley team mate Richard Mervill, who was by this time playing for Dapto, alongside another man now well known to

Roughyeds fans, Drew Houston.

"I loved every minute of my time in Australia," said Simeon. "On the field we won the grand final that year and off it I did a load of back-packing around the country. On the way home I spent a couple of months going around Thailand --- and that was a fantastic experience."

Even as he experienced the sights and sounds of South-East Asia, Simeon knew he was heading for a new chapter in his rugby league career with the club he had supported as a boy, Halifax.

Before he left Australia he had taken a call from Fax football manager Paul Dixon and his capture by Fax was rubber-stamped before he set off for home.

He spent half that season, 2006, under the stewardship of Anthony Farrell and the remainder under the command of Martin Hall. At the end of that season he was ready to move on --- and that's where Oldham came in.

Said Simeon: "I knew Deaks (Roughyeds coach Steve Deakin) from when he was at Sheffield because I had played a couple of game there for their 'A' team earlier in my career. I think it might have been Ashy (Paul Ashton) who gave Deaks the tip that I was available .

"Hunslet were also interested, but once I had spoken to Deaks and also to Chris Hamilton I had no hesitation in joining the Roughyeds. I think I was actually the first of the new players to sign up for 2007.

"And I've got to say it was the right decision. I am really enjoying the season. We have a good team, a great set of lads and a club that is moving forward. We've had our not-so-good moments --- like Keighley away --- but we are up there challenging. We have everything to play for in terms of getting promotion. It's down to us. At the end of the day it isn't what the other teams do: it's all about what we do.

"I played a little bit at loose-forward in Australia and I enjoyed the change. But hooker is my favourite position --- my only position, to be honest.

"Highlights of the season so far? The win at Celtic Crusaders has to rank highly, but I thought the win up at Workington was even better. They had a big set of forwards and they didn't take prisoners, believe me. I was aching for days after that match, and so was everyone else. It was a real bruiser.

"The next few weeks, as we head to the business end of the season, are going to be crucial and hectic.

"But I think we have everything in place to see us through. The club is moving in the right direction and everyone is looking forward to the future. Deaks is a very knowledgeable coach and the club is doing all it can to give us a fighting chance.

"The signing of 'Two Bobs' (Rob Roberts) shows the club means business. He will be a great signing for us. He has been there and he has done it. He is vastly experienced and that experience will come in handy in the next few weeks."

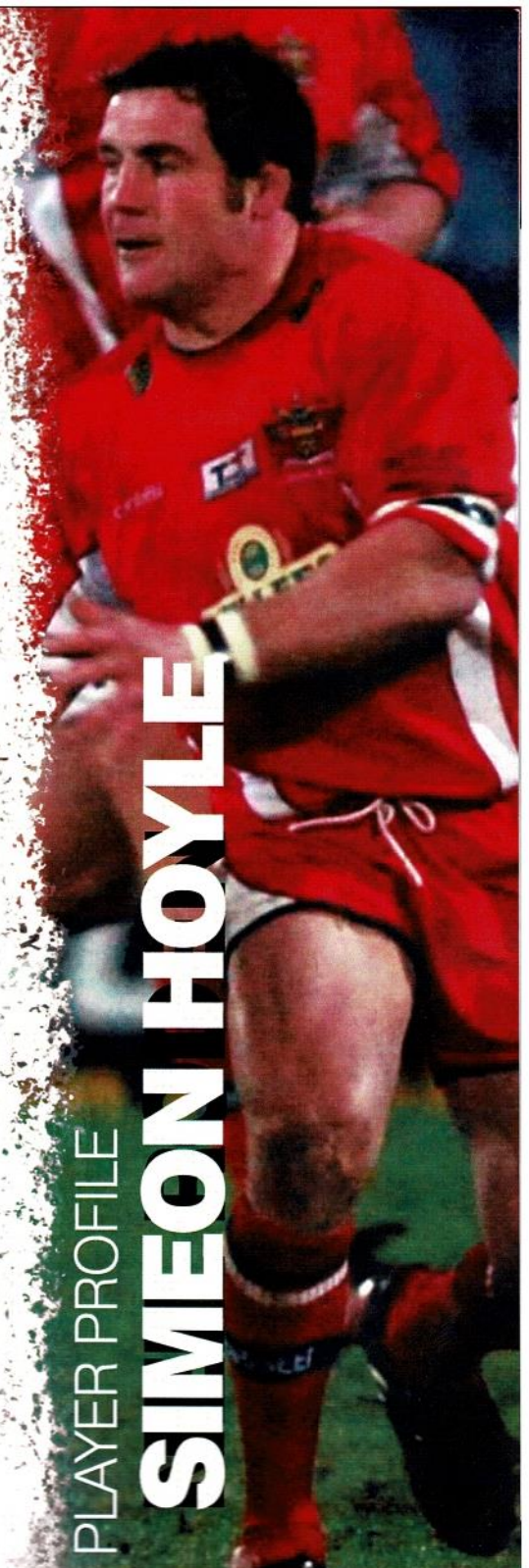
On the domestic front, Simeon has a girl friend, Michelle, and a little boy, Connor, aged two. He lives in Halifax and works for his dad in the family business, alongside his younger brother William. He also has an older sister, Natalie.

Simeon has come a long way since toddler days on the banks of the Forth --- and at the age of 27 he has many more high roads and low roads to take before his rugby days are over. He is hoping, as we all are, that at some point in the future he will look back on 2007 as the year he helped Roughyeds to promotion.

Go for it, Simeon. We're all rooting for you!

PLAYER PROFILE

SIMEON HOYLE



AROUND & ABOUT

by Brian Walker

with The Heritage Trust

ALL GOLDS, JUST A NAME?

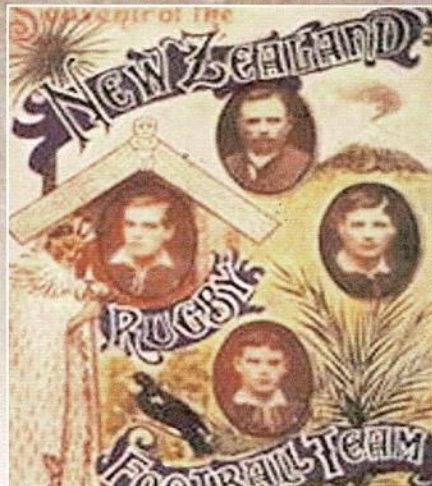
It's been well publicised within the rugby league trade press - but, so far, not too well outside of it - that this autumn, as well as playing a three match test series, the touring Kiwis will play another representative game - The Gillette Fusion Centenary International. In celebration of the first ever rugby league tour to this country, the game, Northern Union* vs. All Golds - will be played at the Halliwell Jones on Saturday the 20th of October.

Just twelve years after the birth of rugby league here in England Albert Baskerville's 26 man squad of rugby union renegades since dubbed All Golds - won a three match test series to confirm that international rugby league and with it the tours that we all grew to love - had well and truly arrived.

I've written a number of articles for this programme surrounding the 1907 New Zealand side - Albert Baskerville, Dally Messenger, Bumper Wright, Lance Todd and Oldham legend George W. Smith (the G. W. Smith medal, currently in the stewardship of scrum-half Stacey Jones, will again be awarded for the man of the series) but never having buttoned down the exact reason why this assembly of rugby pioneers should be known as All Golds perhaps accepting too readily that this had been a caustic title imposed on a group of rugby union professionals by the NZRU. Eminent Australian rugby league author and journalist Sean Fagan has recently written an excellent article for his website www.rl1908.com covering this very subject. It reads:

The New Zealand Rugby League has announced that it will be conducting an "All Golds re-enactment tour" to Great Britain in October and November 2007.

Marking the centenary anniversary of the first international (touring) rugby league team, it will hopefully serve as a great tribute to the pioneers who left New Zealand in the winter of 1907.



But were they really called the "All Golds"?

The team wore conventional black New Zealand jerseys, socks and shorts - not a sliver of gold in sight!

Rugby league writers/journalists have been referring to the 1907 team as the "All Golds" since at least the 1960s. It was not however the most commonly used name over the past century, with many describing the team as "professional All Blacks", "(Albert) Baskerville's team", and mostly "New Zealand rugby league team".

Since the early 1980s though, the "All Golds" name has come into more frequent use as the years have rolled-by. In an age where it is common for all 'events' to be shortened into an instantly recognisable tag, it is not surprising that "All Golds" should now be the most used description. It is immediately recognised as referring to the 1907 team.

Interestingly, amidst the Super League war, we saw plans to form an "All Golds" team of ARL-aligned New Zealand players to take on the Kangaroos - like many concepts at that time, it

never came to fruition.

The name "All Golds" is now thought to have originated in a New Zealand newspaper in May/June of 1907 (see panel), amidst editorial arguments over whether it was honourable for the proposed "professional All Blacks" team to be paid.

"All Golds" was an insult against the players, criticising the arrangement where they would each share in the financial rewards of the tour. Clearly, "All Golds" was a play on the amateur "All Blacks" name.

The first documented use in Australia was in a headline in the Sydney Morning Herald (August 7), just before Baskerville's team arrived. Interestingly, those same Herald articles, also had a tag for those who supported the amateur rugby union - they were called the "Lily Whites" (who were clean, pure, and repelled the evils of professionalism).

Is it fair that we continue to call Baskerville and his team mates "All Golds", when it was used to demean them?

Apart from in the Herald (in less than a handful of news items over the space of a month), "All Golds" was never used by the press. It was not used in match reports, and never appeared in the English or Welsh newspapers during the tour. Nor did it appear in letters from the public to newspapers about the team.

There were no reports of how Baskerville or the other players felt about the "All Golds" name. However, they continually objected to being labelled as "outright professionals", and as men hell-bent on securing money from the sport of rugby. In reality, they were no more 'greedy' than Australian cricketers, who formed similar arrangements for their Ashes tours of England.

The terms of the team's contract required each man to contribute £50 to finance the tour - at its conclusion the profits (if there were any) would be equally divided. To find £50 would not have been easy for the working-class men who took part - it equated to about half-a-year's wages. This mandatory upfront investment would have ruled out those who were simply looking for easy money from playing football.

To hand over £50 was a big risk, especially as no one had ever before mounted a rugby tour of the Northern Union (English rugby league) clubs. It could easily have turned sour at any stage of the tour (compare it to the financial failure of the Kangaroos 12 months later). In the end, the New Zealanders earned a return of four or five times their original outlay. Many of them later turned out with English clubs, gaining very lucrative contracts.

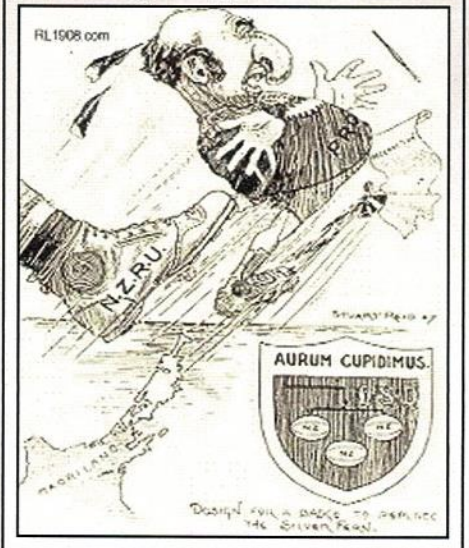
It is a reasonable argument to say that the "All Golds" name has transcended its original use as an insult against the team, and could now well be considered to be some sort of badge-of-honour. Ultimately, it is for the NZRL to decide how Albert Baskerville and his team should be honoured. Is "All Golds" an appropriate official title?

Sean Fagan

A satirical cartoon from 1907, seemingly from a New Zealand newspaper/journal, that is the original source of the 'All Golds' tag. It clearly depicts the NZRU stance against Baskerville's team. The cartoonist (Stuart Field) has added 'PRO' to the player's 'All Black' jersey. The comment at the bottom says: "Design for a badge to replace the silver fern". Within the badge is '£50' and an actuarial chart. 'Aurum Cupidimus' is Latin, and means a 'lover/seeker of gold (money)'. Based upon the cartoon, the reference of the professional 'All Blacks' as 'All Golds' is readily apparent.

The Sydney Morning Herald has previously been credited with coming up with the 'All Golds' name - but it is now almost certain that it came from (or in conjunction with) the above cartoon. The Herald did not produce satirical cartoons, and the (artist's) style is not typical of that found in other contemporary Sydney newspapers.

The player appears to have just signed the letter-of-intent to join Baskerville's team (the tour contract was not signed until the team reached Sydney), which would place the timing in June/July of 1907 - well before the 'All Golds' tag first appeared in the Herald.



*The Rugby Football League was formally known as the Northern Union

Visit Sean Fagan's brilliant website
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Sean Mellor, our Community Development Manager, keeps you up to date

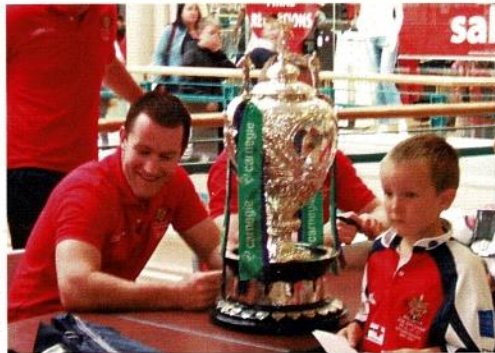
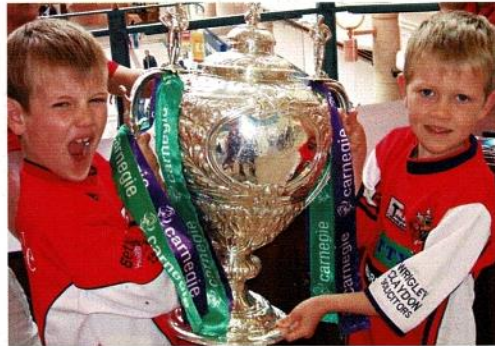
THE CUP THAT CHEERS AT SPINDLES

To celebrate the return of the Roughyeds to Boundary Park the next day, Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre

was the venue for a very successful "Meeting and Signing" session on Saturday 21st July. The presence of the Roughyed stars and Red'Ed proved very popular and their "Drawing Power" was further enhanced by the last minute guest appearance of a very impressive, much handled piece of silverware-the Challenge Cup.

The original trophy proved a real "Hit" as fans of Rugby League, sport in general, Latics and even Antiques Roadshow clamoured for photographs with the priceless old relic. (That's the Cup, not Red 'Ed!) Among the many winning nameplates attached to the Cup's sturdy stand it was great to seek out those for 1925 and 1927, when Oldham were the victors.

A number of magical Harry Potter Parent & Child tickets, allowing free entry to the Hunslet Hawks game, were distributed to people purchasing the last episode of Harry Potter adventures from Waterstones and WH Smiths. Many of those tickets were returned and the Spindles' management were delighted with the turnout, so this successful appearance may prove to be the first of many!



Catching 'em young! The under-7s of St Anne's and Fitton Hill-Hathershaw proudly display their talents on Boundary Park in a curtain-raiser to the Oldham-Hunslet game.

IF you need transport to Wembley for the Carnegie Challenge Cup final on Saturday, August 25 you can travel with Roughyeds. Price (travel only) £35. Book on 0161 628 3677.

New Roughyeds merchandise will be on sale outside Boundary Park today and at each remaining home game.

The Swinton home game has been rearranged for Wednesday, September 5 (kick-off 7.45pm).

Anyone planning on travelling with Roughyeds to the Gateshead away game on August 19 should ring the club (628 3677) as soon as possible



The heavens opened when Roughyeds players took on the Army in a training session at Noddy's Field.

Fans braved the thunderstorm to huddle under umbrellas, one of them provided by Super League referee Ian Smith, who handled the non-contact game. It was all part of a meet-the-people exercise by the 2nd battalion Duke of Lancaster Regiment, whose soldiers had recently returned from Iraq. A Channel M camera man and a photographer from the Chronicle, Darren Robinson, were in attendance.

After the training session, soldiers shared a potato-hash supper in the social club with the Roughyeds players before they returned to Catterick and, on behalf of the Regiment, Warrant Officer Class One Tim White presented Roughyeds with a regimental plaque. Steve Deakin replied on behalf of the Roughyeds.

Our picture shows (left to right): Ian Hodson; Kingsman Lee Bramham, who comes from Oldham; Sgt Paul Healey, from the Oldham Army Careers office; and Adam Hughes.

with Ian Wilson

roughyeds' roar!

Is anyone joining me in crying a few tears for poor old Wigan? After all, it was not their fault that the Catalans Dragons happened to score a few more points than them in last Sunday's Challenge Cup semi-final - and the excuses offered by some of their fans made it quite clear what reasoned and reasonable people the pie-eaters really are. Amongst those I heard were : "there shouldn't be a b----- French team in the cup anyway" ; "they are nothing but a bunch of Aussie mercenaries" ; and "the ref was Ganson - that says it all".

And then there was the completely ridiculous penalising of the club four points in the Super League table. Surely everyone knows that a club like Wigan, of all clubs, wouldn't think of trying to evade the rules of the competition. And why wasn't it obvious to everyone that their nice players in 2006 wouldn't have expected to be paid for playing when they knew the club had a minor cash flow problem on their hands. The fact that, unusually, the cash flow problem was that they found themselves with too much cash rather than too little makes it even more unfair on the heroic club's management that they were found guilty as charged.

One wonders how the case re Aussie mercenaries stands up, given the number of overseas players - even if several of them would probably struggle to get picked by Steve Deakin in the current Oldham side - in Brian Noble's Wigan team! But then sheer logic has never been a characteristic of Wigan supporters, in my experience. Most neutrals, too, did not seem to feel that the ref had anything to do with the result at the Halliwell Jones last Sunday.

But what about the doubts about having a French side in the competition ? Indeed, those who argue that there shouldn't be one in Super

League at all are getting more vocal again, I have recently noticed. They tend to say something about heartland clubs being more deserving ; or about spectators not being able to afford the trip to the south of France ; or about lack of French supporters travelling to away grounds. I can see some logic in at least the last two arguments, too - though I personally feel that the case in favour is overwhelmingly more powerful. The chances of a genuinely European flavour to the competition - what about Dublin, Toulouse and Barcelona in the future? - and of an internationally competitive French side are just too alluring, in my opinion. So, even ignoring my personal feelings about Wigan [!], what a fantastic result for the game as a whole was the win by Mick Potter's side. The prospect of encountering a few thousand Catalan supporters along Wembley Way is a fantastic one.

Remember what I said the other week about quality sides tending to win the tight games? Maybe the last minute drop goal at York will prove to be the crunch turning point of our whole season!

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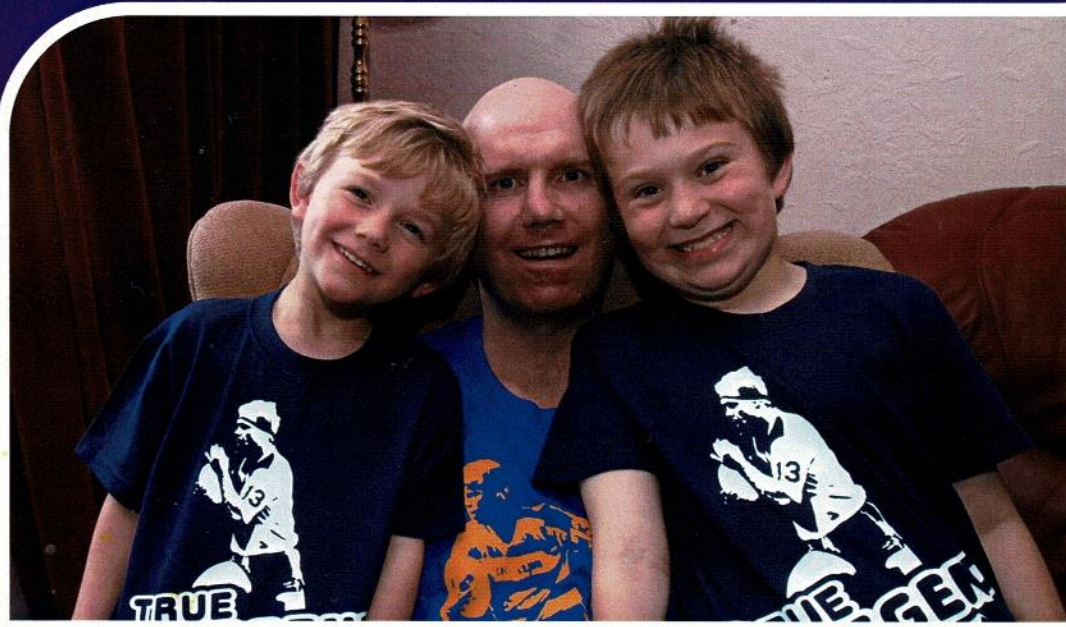
When Leeds Met launched the Carnegie Great Student Run 2007, leading the way was former Widnes, Wigan and GB star Joe Lydon. Joe declared his intention to run the 5km race to raise money for the Mike Gregory Trust Fund. Mike is one of rugby league's most popular, respected and courageous stars who captained Warrington and his country with such distinction.

The Mike Gregory Trust Fund was formed by friends and supporters from the rugby league community who knew

of Mike's battle against Motor Neurone Disease and felt compelled to do something to help.

It is Mike and his family's intention that the trust's funds will be used to cover his ongoing medical expenses and help raise awareness about the effects of Borreliosis/Lymes Disease.

Through the Carnegie Great Student Run and the Carnegie Challenge Cup, Leeds Met Carnegie provides a unique opportunity for the whole of the rugby league community to participate and support the Mike Gregory Trust Fund.



Entry forms and the Mike Gregory Trust Fund sponsorship forms are available from Leeds Met at www.leedsmet.ac.uk/greatstudentrun or by calling 0113 283 8686

For more information on the Mike Gregory Trust please visit www.mikegregorytrust.co.uk



leeds met carnegie

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the bootroom

THE MEN WHO CARRY ROUGHYEDS' HOPES AND AMBITIONS INTO 2007.

BAINES, Chris (back-row): A young forward who also did enough for coach Steve Deakin last year, while on loan from Warrington, to win a contract for the latter part of 2006 and then for 2007. Toured New Zealand with Great Britain Young Lions in 2003. Product of Chorley Panthers and Wigan St Pats.

BROOKS, Matty (half-back/hooker): Hull-born Matty served his apprenticeship at Bradford Bulls before transferring to Hull KR last season. Had a spell on loan at York City Knights earlier this year. Later joined Roughyeds on a month's loan, now extended to the end of the season. Versatility makes him equally at home at scrum-half, stand-off or hooker -- a real all-rounder.

BOULTS, Jason (prop): One of many new boys in the Roughyeds squad for 2007, 23-year-old Jason arrived on the recommendation of two of his former Halifax team mates, Jamie Bloem and Alan Hadcroft. Spent four years as a young pro with Bradford and then had two seasons at The Shay, missing only a handful of games.

COYLE, James (half-back): Signed from Wigan in early July. Highly-rated Academy international who spent the 2006 season on loan at Widnes. Fast, with good hands and a clever kicking game, he has Super League experience, but now wants part-time rugby to pursue a career with BNFL. Toured Down Under with NW Counties under-16s in 2001. Son of Bernard Coyle, a former Wigan scrum-half.

COSTIN, Geno (prop or back-row): A 22-year-old Aussie, Geno first established himself in the Queensland Cup with Wynnum-Manly, but last year played in the same comp for Logan Souths. A rugby workaholic, he puts in overtime on defence and, in possession, always runs strong and straight.

CRABTREE, Andy (hooker): Won Great Britain academy honours in his Wigan Warriors days. Came from Swinton this year. A tidy footballer with good hands and game awareness, he can also play loose-forward. Alert and alive at dummy half.

GOREY, Andy (winger): A scrum-half in his Royton Tigers days, Andy became a good full-back in the former Roughyeds academy side. It was as a winger, however, that he finished 2006 as the club's top try scorer with ten -- no mean feat in a losing side.

GORDON, Ian (full-back/half-back): Signed on loan from Batley Bulldogs to the end of the season. A Great Britain Students' International, 21-year-old Ian recently qualified from Leeds University with a law degree. Reared in the Leeds Rhinos scholarship and academy set-up, he had four years at Headingley, followed by a one-season stay at Rochdale Hornets in 2006. Joined Batley for 2007, but now looking to enhance his career prospects at Oldham. Signed as full-back and goalkicker.

HADCROFT, Alan (centre): A robust middle back, 29-year-old Alan signed from Halifax for the 2006 season, but his campaign was marred by a series of shoulder injuries, notably at Barrow and Whitehaven. Future as a player in some doubt, but highly regarded as coach Steve Deakin's acting No 2.

HODSON, Ian (back-row): Initially rejected new

offer for 2007 due to work commitments, but the Roughyeds door remained open and he re-signed in March after playing the odd game or two for Tyldesley RU Club. One of the club's better performers in 2006, he always gave maximum input, even when asked to play at stand-off.

HOUGH, John (hooker): First player to sign for the 'new' Roughyeds club. Still here nearly ten years later -- that's loyalty with a capital L. Joined Warrington from Waterhead as a boy, but carved himself a niche in the annals of the new Oldham club when he signed as a free agent on December 2, 1997. Has played more than 230 games.

HOUSTON, Drew (second-row or centre): Once a youngster linked with Melbourne Storm, Drew had two seasons in the Queensland Cup with Storm feeder club Brisbane North before heading south to join Dapto whom he helped to become champions of the Illawarra competition last year.

HOYLE, Simeon (hooker): Formerly with Keighley and Halifax, Simeon is a hooker of the old school -- tough in defence yet able to make things happen from dummy half. Helped Keighley to win promotion in 2003 in the same team as Paul Ashton, Richard Merrill and Ian Sinfield.

LANGLEY, Gareth (winger): Pacy, and a good finisher, 'Gaz' joined Roughyeds this year after five years at St Helens. He was Saints academy player of the year in 2005 and runner-up in 2006. Played at Salford as a teenager before joining his hometown club at Knowsley Road.

LITTLER, Craig (centre): Another Saints old boy, Craig was Langley's centre for four years at Knowsley Road. A year younger, he had the chance of another year with St Helens academy, but opted to sign for Roughyeds and continue his centre-wing partnership with Langley.

MERRILL, Richard (prop): Formerly with Halifax and Keighley, Richard joined Roughyeds for 2007 after playing Down Under in the same Dapto side as Drew Houston. Suffered a broken hand in one of his early games for Roughyeds, but goes into Co-Operative NL2 action in a good seam of form.

ONYANGO, Lucas (winger): A real flyer, aged 25, Lucas grew up in rugby union in his native Kenya. Has played for Sale Sharks, Manchester and Leigh in Union, and also Widnes Vikings in League. Did well at Vikings before damaging a knee. Over that now and keen to make the most of his chance at Oldham.

ROBERTS, Rob (back-row/prop): Joined Roughyeds in late July and landed a match-winning drop goal at York in a 15-14 victory on his debut. Played Super League with Hull, Halifax and Huddersfield and also represented several other clubs in National League, including Keighley and Leigh. Aged 28, he has vast experience with all the skills. Known as 'Two Bobs', he worked with Oldham coach Steve Deakin when both were at Huddersfield.

RODEN, Neil (half-back): Neil rejoined Roughyeds from Leigh for 2007 after leaving the club initially to go to Batley in 2004. In his first stint here he scored 290 points (68 tries and 18 drop goals) in 142 games over four and

a half seasons. Has overtaken Mark Sibson as the 'new' club's leading all-time try scorer.

SANDERSON, Lee (halfback, hooker): Signed in March after a difficult period with Barrow. Roughyeds paid an undisclosed transfer fee for the Leigh lad, whose uncle, Ian, was an accomplished Oldham hooker in Watersheddings days. Lee has previously played for Leigh, London Broncos, Rochdale and Barrow.

SINFIELD, Ian (back-row): Another experienced forward who has returned to his hometown club for a second stint. Brother of Leeds captain, Kevin Sinfield, Ian played in the first ever Roughyeds game at Rochdale on New Year's Day, 1998. Had four years here, then moved on to Rochdale, Keighley and Swinton.

SMITH, Kris (back-row or centre): Kris, aged 28, has been on the books of four Super League clubs, namely Leeds, Salford, London and Halifax. A product of the Eccles amateur club, he was snapped up by Leeds while still a teenager. Joined Roughyeds after four seasons at Swinton.

TAMGHART, Said (utility): A French international, Said has represented his country at every level, including full Test matches against Australia and New Zealand. Came under Steve Deakin's influence when both were at UTC, better known now as Perpignan-based Catalans Dragons.

TONKS, Tony (prop): Roughyeds have high hopes of the 22-year-old Yorkshireman, signed from Bradford Bulls just prior to the start of the Co-Operative NL2 season. One year at Wakefield academy, then six at Bulls as a full-time pro, including last season on loan at Doncaster.

WILKINSON, Alex (centre, wing): Played his early rugby with Royton Tigers and toured with GB schoolboys to Australia in 1999 and with England academy to New Zealand and Australia in 2001. While a young pro at Bradford Bulls, he had loan spells with London Broncos, Huddersfield and Hull before going part-time with Roughyeds to continue his studies.

WINGFIELD, Lee (second-row): Played for GB at amateur level in Russia, France and Australia, but desperately unlucky with injuries since he turned pro for Roughyeds on a two-year deal covering 2006 and 2007. In top form early this year, but then broke a hand before suffering a serious knee injury against Swinton on his first game back.

HUGHES, Adam (centre): The massively experienced 29-year-old boasts over 150 Super League appearances during spells with Leeds, Wakefield, Halifax, Widnes and Leigh. A powerful, pacy centre who knows where the try line is, he signed for Oldham in preference to several other clubs.

ROBINSON, Adam (second row): A tough and uncompromising player who relishes his defensive duties, the 20-year-old Yorkshireman turned down Featherstone in order to sign for the Roughyeds from Doncaster. Formerly of the Stanley Rangers amateur club, he started his professional career at Wakefield.

BLACKPOOL LOOK TO A LEGEND TO HELP THEM TURN THE TIDE

by NIGEL MARLAND

EX-TEST ACE GREGORY PLANS TO PUT PANTHERS ON GOLDEN MILE

Until a few weeks ago we would have been welcoming another ex Roughyed, Simon Knox to Boundary Park, as Coach of the Panthers. But Simon who played briefly for the Roughyeds in the 2003/4 season became the victim of the Panther's poor season – winless so far

It is interesting to note however that the Panthers have 5 bonus points, which indicates the closeness of some of their losses. Simon has been replaced by Rugby League legend Andy Gregory who has been appointed until the end of the season by Panthers Chairman and ex Bears chairman, John Chadwick. Andy brings to the Panthers a wealth of experience rarely bettered in modern Rugby League. His list of achievements are listed below. He also has experience coaching in the top level at Salford in the Super League.

Andy Gregory's achievements

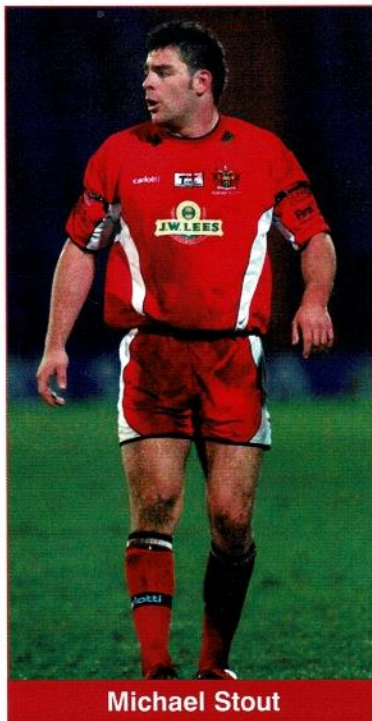
- 6 PREMIERSHIP FINALS
- 4 REGAL TROPHIES
- 2 WORLD CUP CHALLENGE WINNING MEDALS
- WORLD NINE'S WINNERS
- COACH OF GREAT BRITAIN WORLD NINES
- PANASONIC CUP FINAL IN AUSTRALIA MAN OF THE MATCH
- VOTED BY ROTHMANS YEARBOOK 6 YEARS CONSECUTIVE BEST SCRUM HALF IN ENGLAND
- 1988 VOTED BY WORLD RUGBY BEST SCRUM HALF IN THE WORLD
- RECENTLY VOTED IN THE WIGAN RUGBY LEAGUE DREAM TEAM
- 9 WEMBLEY APPEARANCES, NEVER LOSING
- PLAYED IN 6 AUSTRALIAN SERIES
- 32 GREAT BRITAIN CAPS
- 3 AUSTRALIAN TOURS



ANDY GREGORY



Chris Maye



Michael Stout

Blackpool are confident that Andy can use his experience and enthusiasm to motivate both the current squad and new additions and are hopeful that Andy's many contacts in the game will enable some new players to be recruited to enable their position in the league table to be improved. Only last week he secured the signing of experienced front rower Warren Stevens who left Leigh earlier in the season and has been pursued by NL 1 clubs. Versatile utility player David Barton, who they want to play at halfback, has also joined the Panthers. The Roughyeds connection is continued with Chris Maye who joined Swinton after leaving Oldham two seasons ago and joined the Panthers at the start of this season. Mike Stout joined the Panthers on a month's loan from the Roughyeds early in the season and this has now been extended to the end of the season

Oldham RLFC Appearances and Scorers, 2007

players statistics

[up to and including July 29]

NAME	PLAYED	TRIES	GOALS	POINTS
P Ashton	11	3	27	66
C Baines	19	2		8
J Boult	21			
M Brooks	6			
G Costin	17	5		20
J Coyle2	4	2		8
A Crabtree	20	1		4
A Gorey	8	1		4
I Hodson	13	4		16
J Hough	2			
D Houston	21	3		12
S Hoyle	20	1		4
A Hughes	10	13		52
G Langley	23	9	27	90
C Littler	20	5		20
R Mervill	20	1		4
P O'Connor	14	4		16
M Ogden	5	1	10	24
S Oldham	1			
L Onyango	14	11		44
R RobertS	1		1DG	1
A Robinson	10	3		12
N Roden	23	9	2dg	38
W Rogers	10			
L Sanderson	8	1	20	44
I Sinfield	19	2		8
K Smith	10	5		20
M Stout	4	1		4
S Tamghart	18	2		8
T Tonks	11	2		8
A Wilkinson	21	12		48
L Wingfield	4	1		4

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NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



Structurally speaking

The proposed franchise system is going to impact on the National Leagues in several ways - but one of them will be the make-up of the two competitions outside the top flight.

One of the plans for 2009 onwards is to have 14 Super League teams - which in all likelihood is going to mean losing two out of NL1.

That would cut the competition down to just eight teams, so changes are going to have to be made.

It is my opinion that NL1 needs to be 12 teams whatever the scenario is.

The current system is okay, but having a top six play-off and two relegated out of just ten teams leave little margin for error.

It's entirely conceivable that just a point or so could separate a team that's in the top six from one that is relegated - and the controversial bonus point system could have a massive part to play.

On that basis, it would make much more sense to have 12 teams - and the major plus is that the quality certainly seems to be there in NL2 at present.

Featherstone Rovers and Celtic Crusaders put on a superb show for the television cameras recently, and the likes of Barrow, York, Oldham and Workington will all believe that they have the potential to become NL1 clubs - maybe even as early as next year.

That would obviously leave NL2 short of numbers, but bearing in mind the points made above, it would make much more sense to have 12 teams in NL1 and ten in NL2.

There are plenty out clubs currently outside the

professional game with ambitions to make the step up - with the progressive Bramley just one example.

The long-term aim should be to have two competitions of 12, but at first, it may be that just two new clubs are needed.

It was mentioned by one National League coach that he had heard plans of returning to one big division outside the top flight, in the style of the old Northern Ford Premiership.

To me, that would be a massive step backwards.

The current system provides excitement for so many clubs that it would be foolish to turn our backs on it.

At present, there is only Blackpool Panthers out of the 22 National League clubs that doesn't still have something to play for - a superb situation to be in.

If everyone was in one division again, probably only the top ten teams or so (presuming that there would be a top eight play-offs) would still have their seasons alive at present.

Having two divisions, and automatic promotion and relegation between the two, provides plenty of drama and excitement for fans - which for me, is what sport is all about.

It is my opinion that it will be a huge shame to lose that between NL1 and Super League - and a near disaster to drop it in the National Leagues.

Whatever happens, there are certainly some massive decisions that lie ahead - decisions that need to be made quickly, before the start of next season, so everyone knows where they stand.

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(Roll call of members -- fancy joining them?)

John McAndrew	Moorside Electrical Contractors (Neil Haughton)	Cyril Farnworth
Saddleworth Sports	Valerie Wynn	John Heap
FR Elsworth	Brian Tranter	Mick Slicker
Eddie Luckraft	Thomas Joyce	Terry Flanagan
David Webster	Mick Harrop	Dave McGealy
JFS Mortgage Services (John Smith)	Terry Bailey	Noise Killer Acoustics (Steve Bithell)
J Aubrey	John Barrie Gallagher	B Giddens
Chris Broadbent	Terry Kelly	Jack Buckley
Dorothy M Johnston	Cheshire Telecom Ltd (Sean Lynch)	Ultan McGovern (Oldham Electrical Supplies)
Mortgage Solutions (Dave Bassett)	Robert Nixon	Mark Antony Kitchens (Mark Harrington)
Lansdowne Trading Services (Chris Stanley)	Derek King	Martin Hunter
Clifford Bardsley	Frank Taylor	David Macauley (Chartered Surveyors)
David Whitehead	Colin Pyke	David Foden
David Lord	I and C Kershaw	Matthew Chambers
Janet Yewdale	Personal Tyres and Exhausts (Pete Beswick)	Oldham Advertiser
Nigel Marland	Sawvas Eleftheriou	Paul Robinson
Christopher Hamilton	Total Plus Communications	Mick Kilgannon
Jeffrey Bates	Total Plus Communications	Ray Broadbent
Iain Ashworth	Clarice Stevens	Iain Taylor
Roger Halstead	Sue and Mike Kivlin	Joseph Lawrence Perrins
Steve Deakin	William Hannen	Costin Electrical Services Ltd (Phil Costin)
Nick Henry	The Bs	Hans Bateson
Interior Door Systems (Joe Collins)	Promotional Print (Eric Bradley)	John Kettleton
James Rochford	Tracey Bradley	Keith Egerton
Noel Brady	Michael Bradshaw	Karen Marrie
Gareth Owen	Shirley Mullaney	Bill Quinn
Roy Wood	Keith Mullaney	Suzanne Kettleton
Denise Buckley	John Barrett	
	Raymond Sankey	

JOHN McAndrew played rugby of both codes in his younger days - he's 64 now - but never with No 1 on his back.

But he's No 1 among Five Alive members all right (the first supporter to sign up for the £5-a-week lottery and fundraiser) and his magical number (FA/001) came up trumps in the last monthly draw when it netted him the first prize of £500.

Employed by the Post Office for 43 years, John is retired now, but he helps out the Roughyeds as lottery coordinator, working not on Five Alive but on its sister lottery, the £1-a-week Club Cash scheme.

He started watching Oldham in the early 1950s as a penny-rush spectator at Watersheddings and in the late 50s, as a prop at Ashton-under-Lyne RU Club, he had 'A' team trials at Watersheddings. He was on the team sheet as 'A N Other' - in those days he would have been banned from union for daring to play rugby league.

It happened that an Oldham scout worked at Shaw Town Hall and that's where John took his first job - in the rates office - when he left school.

The scout invited him to Watersheddings. "I was a prop in union, but in my trials at Oldham they always played me at scrum-half," he recalled. "Needless to say, nothing came of it, but at least I got in to watch a few first-team games free because they gave me a ticket during the weeks I was there

on trial."

Not long afterwards the entire Ashton-under-Lyne team was banned because they had played rugby league in a pre-season competition.

So it was that John had two years playing league at St Mary's, under Bernard Flanagan, before he switched back to union with De La Salle Old Boys until he started up the Manchester Post Office RU side and ran it for 35 years.

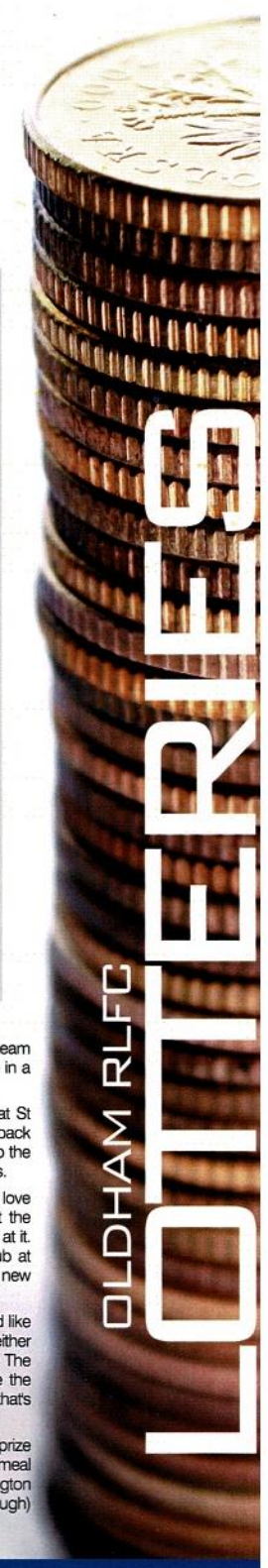
Throughout those 35 years, though, he never lost his love of Oldham Rugby and when, in retirement, he got the chance to become involved with the club he jumped at it. Last season was a struggle for anyone with the club at heart, but like most fans John can now see a bright, new future for the club opening up before him.

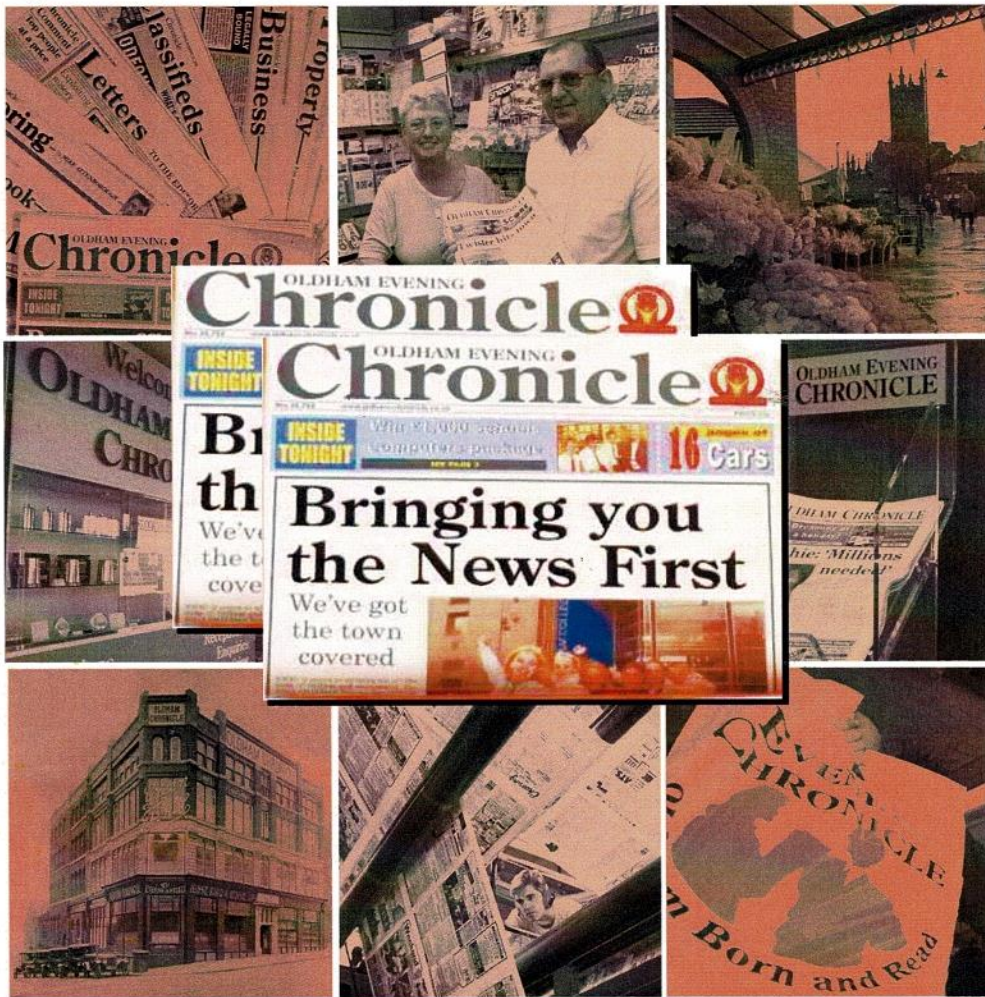
"Things are definitely looking up," he said, "but I would like to take this opportunity to urge all fans who are not in either of the lotteries to give serious consideration to joining. The more successful are the lotteries, the better chance the board will have of driving the club forward, and that's something we all want to see."

Oldham Electrical Supplies (FA/067) won the second prize - two places in the hospitality suite, with pre-match meal and all the trimmings, for next week's Oldham v Workington game - while Totalplus communications (Paul Gough) took the third prize, a £25 voucher for the club shop.

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journalistic license

by Matthew Chambers

CELTIC Crusaders' win at Featherstone Rovers has really set the cat among the pigeons in Co-operative National League Two.

In the lead up to the game, few expected it to be such a cruise for John Dixon's side. But the men from Bridgend (via Australia in many cases) certainly served a notice of intent in ripping apart a team previously unbeaten at home. Some of the tries scored by the Crusaders in their 32-12 win were breathtaking. Rovers were made to look very ordinary indeed, in front of a superb, yet quietened crowd of 2,993, not to mention a nationwide television audience.

Jace van Dijk's orchestrations were very much the cause of Fev's discomfort but the away team proved, if they needed to, that they possess significant talent right across the pitch.

With Rovers failing to even pick up a bonus point in defeat, it means that both Barrow and Celtic Crusaders can claim the title by winning their remaining games. Of course, that is far easier said than done, but it at least serves to illustrate the importance of the National Leagues' new consolation prize.

The Roughyeds will also need to win every one of their remaining fixtures to stand a theoretical chance of automatic promotion. However, it appears that a play-off place for the second promotion spot is a more likely outcome.

Who would Oldham prefer to play in a play-off final? With the division's three top contenders

— Barrow, Celtic and Featherstone — all having shown signs of their qualities against the Roughyeds this year it is tough to make such a hypothetical choice.

Strange as it may appear on the surface of it, Featherstone would be the team many supporters would plump for. Oldham may have lost twice against the Post Office Road side this season but there were mitigating factors at play on both occasions.

The opening-day 23-12 defeat featured a team that is inferior to the one Steve Deakin can now call upon. Since that day a total of eight new players have been added to the squad and while four of those men were in the side which lost 24-18 away from home, that loss was largely down to Tony Tonks' sending off.

A lot can and will happen between now and the season's end. And as Steve Deakin warned this week, being distracted by talk of finals day glory can be very dangerous indeed.

Blackpool, only beaten 32-22 at home by play-off chasing Hunslet last weekend, are an improving side in the hands of Andy Gregory and the Roughyeds can't afford to treat them lightly.

Matthew

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players association up and running



MEMORIES are made of this... ex-players on parade at Boundary Park. Standing (left to right): Bernard Walker, Frank Stirrup, Bob Pugsley, Lou Laverty, John O'Brien, Dave Walker, Kevin Taylor, Jack Doughty, Brian Lord, John Donovan, Lyn Morgan, Adrian Alexander, Jim McCormack, Des McKeown, Kevin Flanagan, Mick Worrall, Terry Ramshaw. Kneeling: Geoff Munro, Terry Gorman, John Blair, Eddie Barton, Trevor Simms, Johnnie Patterson, Tommy Leyland, Martin Murphy. Picture: OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE.

The Oldham Past Players' Association was given a splendid launch at Boundary Park on Sunday, July 22, when 25 former favourites (pictured) attended the Oldham v Hunslet game as guests of the club.

In addition to those who made it, Colin Hawkyard was due to attend, but rang from Worcester on the Sunday morning to say he had been called down there on business (something to do with the floods).

Vinnie Nestor and Jimmy Reynolds also had to cry off late due to unexpected and important family commitments.

Joe Collins, driving force behind getting the association up and running, was also absent due to holidays.

While most of those attending were locally based, John Donovan, Johnnie Patterson and Terry Ramshaw came from Yorkshire; Terry Gorman, Bob Pugsley and Frank Stirrup came from Leigh; Jim McCormack travelled from Wigan; Trevor Simms from St Helens.

They all assembled in the Roughyeds social club from 1pm before being taken by bus to Boundary Park where they were introduced individually to the Roughyeds chairman Bill Quinn in the vice-presidents' bar.

Bill, a former amateur boxer on the Manchester circuit, had a long chat with Jack Doughty, a leading figure in pro boxing circles in this area.

At half-time each of the former players was introduced on to the pitch in alphabetical order by the man on the mike, Sean Mellor. One of the biggest cheers of the afternoon was reserved for 82-year-old Frank Stirrup, club captain in the great days of the 1950s.

After the game they were taken back to the social club where they enjoyed a buffet provided by the Roughyeds and a barrel of ale, courtesy of John Willie Lees.

Later they moved into the concert room where Roger Halstead, the former Oldham Chronicle rugby league reporter for more than 40 years and now, in retirement, a volunteer worker for the club, said a few words and formally welcomed them to the social club.

Of the 25 players present, he had reported on all of them with the exception of Jack Doughty, Lou Laverty, Des McKeown, John O'Brien, Bob Pugsley and Frank Stirrup.

They were all given a rousing reception by the fans before Roger paid a brief tribute to the work of Joe Collins in getting the association up and running. Joe was absent on holiday, but it was largely he, said Roger, who had done the initial spadework to lay down the new association's foundations.

Many of the 25 present ---- the data base now stands in total at nearly 60 ---- said they had thoroughly enjoyed the day and hoped to see the association go from strength to strength in the future.

The next meeting of the association is in the social club on Tuesday, August 7 at 7pm and ALL former players will be welcomed, irrespective of whether or not they have joined the association so far.

SQUAD BUILDING GATHERS MOMENTUM

Since the publication of the last match-day magazine, the Roughyeds squad building has continued on three fronts:

MATTY BROOKS, here on loan from Hull KR, has had his loan period extended to the end of the season.

ROB ROBERTS, who was not tied to a club, has signed for us to the end of the season to give us more experience up front in the pack.

IAN GORDON comes on loan from Batley Bulldogs to the end of the season, having had previous experience at Leeds Rhinos.

Matty has already established himself in the team; Rob, better known throughout the game as 'Two Bobs' made his debut at York and scored a fantastic, last-minute drop goal to win the match; and Ian stands by for his first game in Oldham colours, probably in today's encounter with Blackpool Panthers.

These latest signings underpin the board's commitment to take the club upwards and onwards, the short-term target remaining, as it has since the season kicked off, promotion to NL1.

2007 fixtures

DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
31/01/07	Warrington Wolves	Friendly	Home	7.45pm	42-6	W	789
11/02/07	Rochdale Hornets	NRC	Home	3.00pm	8-24	L	1,145
18/02/07	Swinton Lions	NRC	Home	3.00pm	18-28	L	1,017
25/02/07	Dewsbury Rams	NRC	Away	3.00pm	22-32	L	819
04/03/07	Rochdale Hornets	NRC	Away	3.00pm	6-16	L	816
10/03/07	East Hull	CCC 3	Away	2.00pm	26-10	W	214
18/03/07	Dewsbury Rams	NRC	Home	3.00pm	8-32	L	622
25/03/07	Swinton Lions	NRC	Away	3.00pm	42-18	W	555
01/04/07	Keighley Cougars	CCC4	Away	3.00pm	26-16	W	1039
04/04/07	Featherstone Rovers	NL2	Home	7.45pm	12-23	L	1,162
09/04/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Away	3.30pm	NEW DATE BELOW		
15/04/07	Blackpool Panthers	NL2	Away	3.00pm	40-20	W	501
29/04/07	Keighley Cougars	NL2	Home	3.00pm	32-20	W	847
04/05/07	Celtic Crusaders	NL2	Away	7.35pm	34-26	W	3441
13/05/07	Harlequins	CCC5	Home	12.30pm	6-66	L	559
20/05/07	Barrow Raiders	NL2	Home	3.00pm	50-18	W	848
26/05/07	London Skolars	NL2	Away	3.00pm	34-6	W	636
03/06/07	Workington Town	NL2	Away	3.00pm	27-18	W	1,231
10/06/07	York City Knights	NL2	Home	3.00pm	21-10	W	1,024
17/06/07	Featherstone Rovers	NL2	Away	3.00pm	18-24	L	1,587
24/06/07	Keighley Cougars	NL2	Away	3.00pm	18-26	L	969
01/07/07	Gateshead Thunder	NL2	Home	3.00pm	36-12	W	847
08/07/07	Swinton Lions	NL2	Away	3.00pm	10-17	L	956
15/07/07	Barrow Raiders	NL2	Away	3.00pm	34-26	L	1,348
22/07/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Home	3.00pm	52-22	W	1,024
29/07/07	York City Knights	NL2	Away	3.00pm	15-14	w	1,064
05/08/07	Blackpool Panthers	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
12/08/07	Workington Town	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
19/08/07	Gateshead Thunder	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
22/08/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Away	7.30pm			
02/09/07	Celtic Crusaders	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
05/09/07	Swinton Lions	NL2	Home	7.45pm			
09/09/07	London Skolars	NL2	Home	3.00pm			

Play offs will take place on Sundays, September 16, 23 and 30 with the Grand Final on Sunday 7th October.
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NRC – Northern Rail Cup
NL2 – National League Division 2
CCC – Carnegie Challenge Cup

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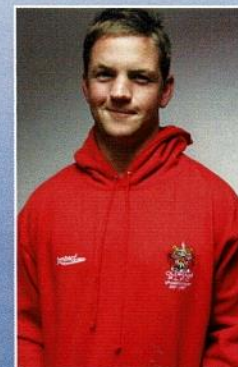
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