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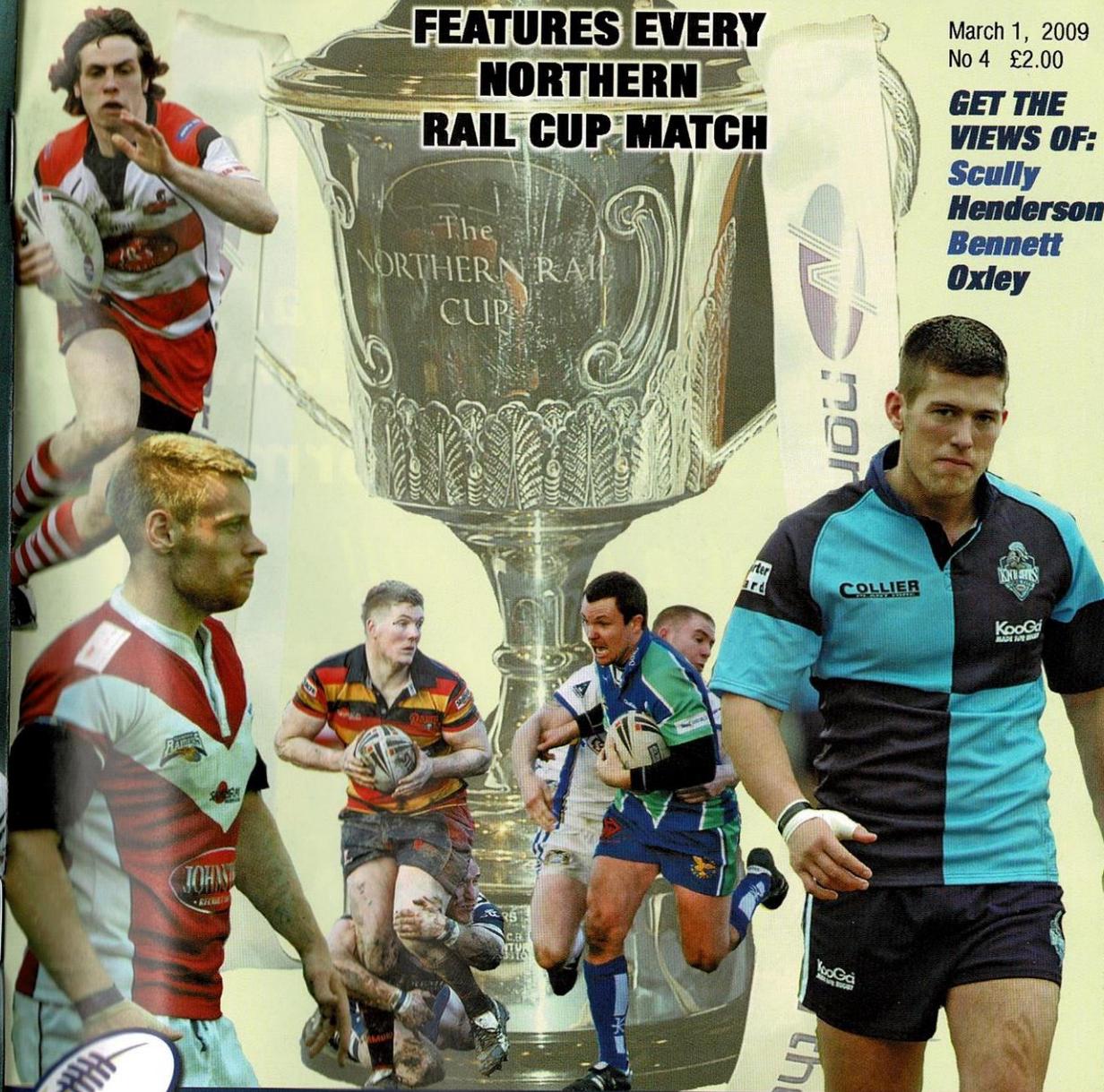
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McCormack - what now for the former Widnes coach?

Getting to know you... Ropati and Hughes take centre stage



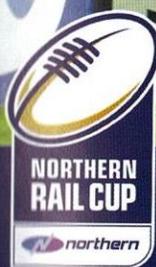
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NEXT WEEK

We profile the resurgent Rams



Race has never been this open

So who is going to win the Northern Rail Cup this year? Who is your money on? Not easy is it.

The knock-out competition has begun in great style and a host of clubs who might not have been strongly fancied have pressed their claims in the first three rounds.

Obviously there is a long way to go and the cream tends to rise to the top but for the likes of Oldham, Dewsbury, Featherstone, Keighley, Sheffield and York the dream could yet become a reality.

The clubs from the lower divisions have been the stars of the show so far with Oldham's mighty victory over the Vikings, the Knights' demolition of Whitehaven and the Rams' victory at the Chris Moyles Stadium, seeing off previously unbeaten Featherstone.

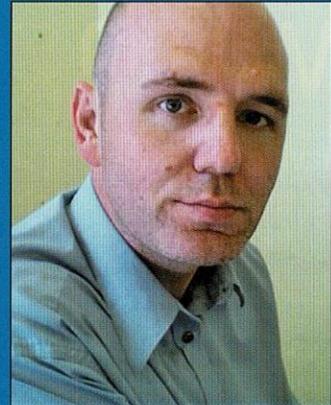
I guess the smart money would be on Halifax. Matt Calland and his team have a lot of momentum right now and with Leigh and Widnes showing signs of fragility, the men from Calderdale must be favourites.

But their could be a few quirks in the quarter-final line up and one of the so-called lesser clubs might sneak through, just like Doncaster last season.

Whatever happens there is certainly a buzz around and it has ensured a cracking start to the year. With the weather getting milder it certainly really feels like the campaign is in full swing.

I hope Game On has helped the match-day experience this season in some small way and thanks for all the positive comments.

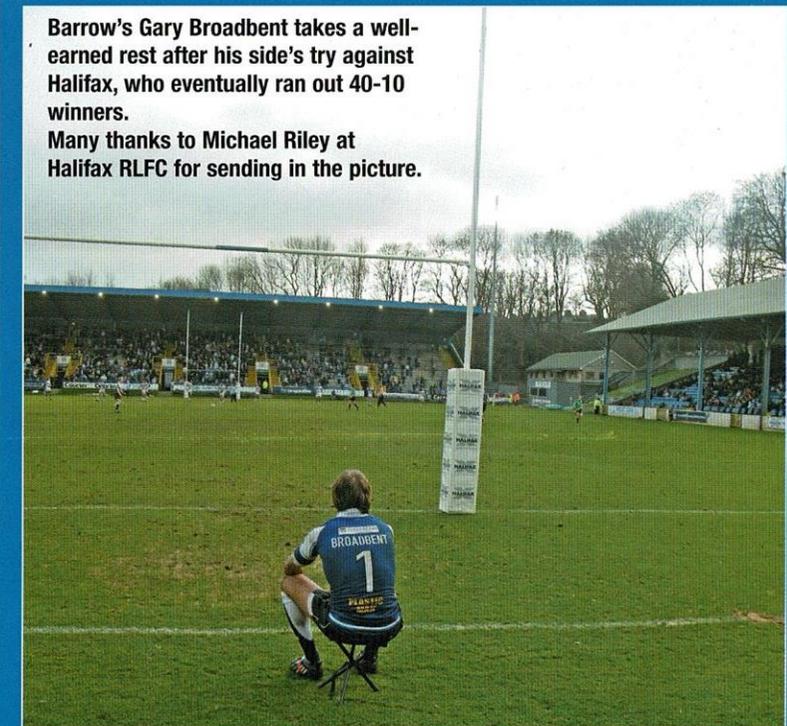
It is important you let us know what you think. Some of the changes we have already made have come as a result of supporters emailing us or ringing in. The number and email address, should you wish to have your say, is in the top left hand corner of this page.



MARK FLANAGAN, EDITOR

Barrow's Gary Broadbent takes a well-earned rest after his side's try against Halifax, who eventually ran out 40-10 winners.

Many thanks to Michael Riley at Halifax RLFC for sending in the picture.



McCormack rolls with the punches

Having enjoyed much success at Whitehaven and Widnes, it took only one game for the Vikings hierarchy to dispense with the services of Steve McCormack, who spoke to **GAME ON** in the wake of his shock departure

Steve McCormack is welcomed back to Widnes after a brief spell at Hull KR



Steve McCormack was in a philosophical mood this week after becoming the first coaching casualty of the new season.

Widnes parted company with McCormack after the Northern Rail Cup favourites opened with a surprise home defeat by Oldham two weeks ago, with chairman Steve O'Connor having hoped for more expansive rugby during pre-season given their current squad.

McCormack had steered the Vikings to the 2007 title and reached four successive National League One Grand Finals – with Whitehaven in 2004 and 2005, and Widnes in 2006 and 2007.

Yet the former Salford and Whitehaven coach harbours no hard feelings at being let go just one game into the 2009 campaign.

"I'm very disappointed," he said. "I felt we would certainly have a good season."

"But I don't think anything in professional sport shocks me. You come into this profession with your eyes wide open and you know sometimes these things happen."

"It was up to Steve O'Connor and Widnes to make that decision and I've got to abide by that."

"I've had a good relationship with Steve since he took over and we'll still continue to have that, to be honest."

"Both Widnes and myself move on, and hopefully it'll be to bigger and better things."

McCormack accepted a coaching post at Hull KR in November 2007 before swiftly returning to Widnes after O'Connor led the club out of administration.



Steve McCormack celebrates title-winning success with Whitehaven in 2005

While McCormack remains involved with Scotland after leading them at the World Cup, there are no other club roles available at present so he is taking stock before deciding where his future lies.

"It's how you react to these things and I'm not a bitter person," he said.

"I certainly don't intend to mope about because I don't think that gets you anywhere."

"I'd like to stay involved in the game, whether it be coaching or youth development, and I feel I've got a lot to offer and a lot of experience."

"I've had seven good years really, with five finals in four years, and I'm very proud of what we achieved at Widnes last year as far as getting a team together from scratch

'I've had seven good years really, with five finals in four years, and I'm very proud of what we achieved at Widnes last year'

and making the play-offs."

Widnes also made the quarter-finals of the Northern Rail Cup last year so it came as some surprise when they were beaten by Championship One opposition in their group opener this time round.

Dewsbury pulled off another upset last week as they won 28-22 at Featherstone

and McCormack is anticipating more shocks ahead as the competition goes from strength to strength.

"I've had a lot of experience at this level and I think it's getting better every year," he said.

"The standard of players, teams and coaches in the Championships has really improved."

"I don't think these so-called shocks are that much of a surprise any more because there's quite a few that have happened so far and I think that'll continue to happen."

"The likes of Oldham and Dewsbury are good sides, and whoever you are and whatever superstars you're supposed to have, there's no guarantee you're going to win."

"Widnes and Halifax have been tipped quite heavily to win it, and Leigh and Featherstone have looked good, but there's not that many that are guaranteed of qualification yet with one or two more rounds to play."

"That shows you how good the competition's been and I think we'll see some so-called big sides miss out on qualification."

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the world according to **SCULLY**

Paul Sculthorpe updates you on what he has been up to since his retirement and his views on the season ahead in his second installment for Game On

My wife gave birth to our third child last week, a beautiful baby girl called Evie so I've been keeping busy with that while trying to fit in all my rugby commitments at St Helens and with the media.

I seem to be busier now in retirement than I was with training and playing during my career!

This weekend I'll be in Leeds for the World Club Challenge, which will be a good test to see how the quality of our game compares with the Australians.

I hope Leeds win, being patriotic of course, but it will be good to see how we cope with the Australian game. It would be interesting to see how all our teams in this country compare to the Australians, so for instance a Co-operative Championship team against a lower level team over in Australia.

Let's hope for a good game which will keep up the fast paced and exciting rugby league we've seen so far this season. There is no better sport in my opinion and we've had a superb start to the season with some great spectacles for the sport and fans, whether that is the thousands of people going through the turnstiles or those watching on TV.

With the Championship kicking off in earnest in two weeks time, we are going to be building on this momentum in even more communities across the country and hopefully sustaining it throughout the season.

I think the Northern Rail Cup epitomises this spirit and fast paced edge I am talking about.

The pooling style of the competition with teams divided into regions provides exciting occasions for fans, with plenty of derby matches.

For example this weekend sees Batley and Dewsbury, and Sheffield and Halifax going head to head which are all locations steeped in rugby league tradition and I know everyone connected with those teams would love a trip to the final later in the season.

I just hope that all the hysteria around coaches this season comes to an end. I don't think it is right to examine a coach's position and command over the players so early in the season before the squads have a chance to 'get in the groove'.

All the speculation just unsettles teams, especially when the media start to make claims about how a coach has lost the support of the players, it just undermines his authority. I feel for Steve McCormack at Widnes, as he barely had a chance to catch his breath this season before he was shown the door.

There's obviously pressure to perform and the stakes are high now in the sport, however you've got to give coaches a fair go.

Even Scolari got more of a chance at Chelsea and they change managers like Wigan change sets and hand over possession at the moment! Speaking of Wigan, Brian Noble is also under a bit of pressure. It's tough for him too but he has proved it at the top level on many occasions and I think back to when he was in charge at Bradford and they came back from a poor run in 2005 to eventually win the Grand Final – a perfect example of giving someone time to get things right.

It's better to focus on matters on the pitch than things off the pitch in my opinion. I can't wait for the start of the Championship season and am enjoying playing my part to raise the profile of the game at this level to ensure that the overall standard of rugby league in this country keeps rising.

I believe 2009 has all the potential to be one hell of a season from top to bottom.

Paul is a Co-operative 'Good for Everyone Ambassador'. For more information please visit www.co-operative.coop



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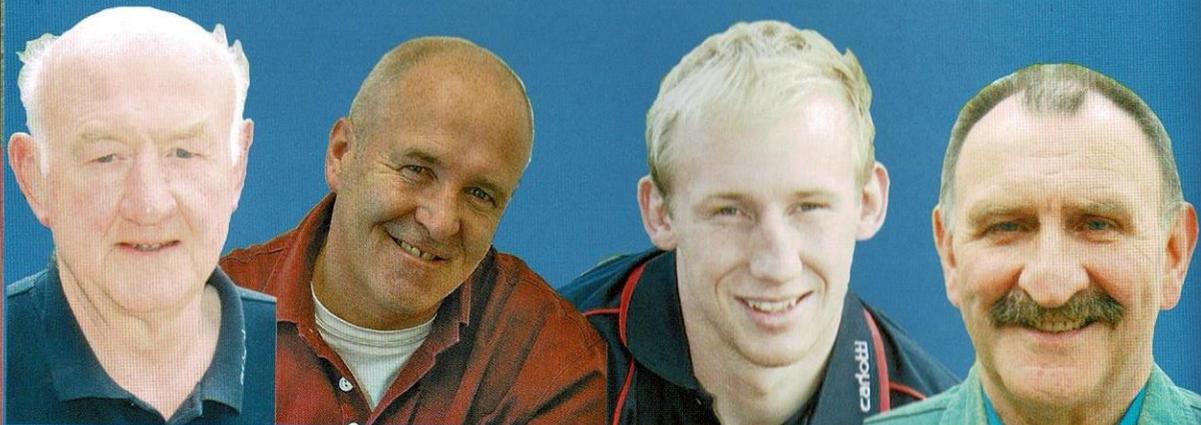
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OFFMESSAGE

With the Australian champions in town RL journalist Ben Collins saw them warm up against Quins on Sunday. Manly coach Grant Mayer is one that has rubbished our domestic leagues but Ben argues there is a lot to be said for 'our' style of play and there are guys playing in the Northern Rail Cup this weekend who can make the step up



As well as another round of Northern Rail Cup action to savour this weekend we have the World Club Challenge to look forward to, and Manly's pre-match mind games have already got tongues wagging. The Sea Eagles are aiming to prevent Leeds claiming back-to-back world titles and chief executive Grant Mayer has taken full advantage of the opportunity to put his name back in the conscience of Northern hemisphere league followers after overseeing Catalans Dragons' entry into Super League.

Mayer was quoted as branding Super League "a second-tier competition for NRL players coming to the end of their careers", which in particular caused quite a stir on Sky Sports.

Speaking to Mayer after Manly's 32-26 warm-up win at Harlequins last Sunday, he insisted he "absolutely stands by" his comments.

He felt Sky only referred to part of the full quote but no matter, it still had the desired effect, namely to stoke up the Ashes rivalry and get a few more bums on seats at Elland Road.

A predictable marketing ploy it may have been by the media-savvy Manly supremo – he even admitted it was all a bit of fun. But when you consider that the four men Manly have lost to Super League from their premiership-winning squad are Steve Menzies (35), Steve Bell (32), Mark Bryant (27) and Luke Williamson (30), you have to accept there is some substance to Mayer's argument.

In fairness, he went on to admit that maybe "second-tier" wasn't the most appropriate term to state his case. Australia have had eight different premiers over the last eight years so it is hard to argue that the NRL is not the most competitive league.

What Mayer was getting at, therefore, was that the British game is merely a different style rather than Super League necessarily being a technically inferior competition.

Take some of the Northern Rail Cup games we've already witnessed this season, for example.

Oldham held off a Widnes fightback to claim a shock 22-20 win against the favourites while Dewsbury pulled off a 28-26 upset at

Featherstone and Blackpool have also had two two-point matches.

Contrast that to last season's NRL Grand Final when Manly cruised to a 40-0 win over Melbourne Storm – some show-case event that was.

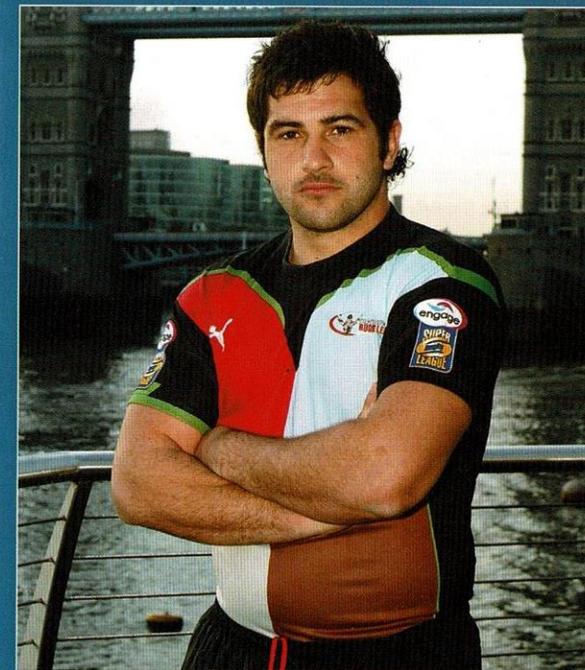
That Australian style was in evidence at the Stoop last Sunday as Manly fielded an experimental line-up in the first half, with the monotony of forwards battering the Quins line when in possession and wrestling tactics deployed when on defence.

Manly were devoid of invention and creativity, which all changed of course when the big guns were rolled out for the second half, but if that was the future of the NRL then count me out.

Pride, passion, drama and no little skill – I'll take the Northern Rail Cup every day of the week, thank you.

It is also worth considering that several of the Quins players that held their own against Manly cut their teeth in the Championships, with Mick Nanyin (Oldham/Whitehaven), Luke Gale (Doncaster) and Matt Gardner (Salford) featuring prominently in the scoring charts last season.

If the current trend continues, those uninspiring Manly squad players could well be bound for our shores in a few years' time so perhaps something can be learnt from Mayer's comments after all: give the Championships' best prospects a chance to transfer their talent to the top level.



Mick Nanyin, the ex Oldham and Whitehaven centre

Dons doing it for the ladies

DONCASTER Rugby League Club, in conjunction with Twiggys Health Spa, will be hosting another 'Ladies Day' on Sunday March 29 after the success of last year's 'Ladies Night'.

The glitz and glam of 300 ladies will help make the Keepmoat Stadium sparkle as the Dons play Leigh Centurions.



The day shall be a fantastic, fun day strictly for the ladies which will begin at 12 noon with a Champagne reception in the Lakeside Restaurant at the Dons' Keepmoat Stadium home.

This shall be followed by a three-course meal with coffee mints and a ubiquitous fashion show put on by local designer shop Posh Frocks. Then, after all the priming and pampering, the match will kick off at 3pm and all ladies attending shall have premium, reserved padded seats for the game.

After full-time, hypnotist David Bolton will entertain with his mind controlling show. The highlight of Ladies Day, which certainly proved its worth last year, is the player strip in which selected Dons players auction their playing kits straight off their backs... including shorts!

Organiser Karen Bailey said: "It gives Ladies complete control over a mainly male dominated area, with a great day out to network and a chance to enjoy a fantastic game of rugby league."

"What could possibly be a better sight to see than muscle-bound men in short shorts and tight shirts running around before our very own eyes!"

Tickets for the day are £35 each, or £350 for a table of ten (subject to vat). To get hold of yours call the Dons office on 01302 765 888 or email karenbailey@doncasterrfc.com



Rams attacked

OFFICIALS at Featherstone are investigating after stones were thrown at the Dewsbury Rams team coach as it left the Chris Moyle's Stadium on Sunday.

A group of youths, one of whom is believed to have been wearing a Featherstone shirt, hurled projectiles at the bus, prompting the coach driver to call the police and Rams boss Warren Jowitt (pictured above) to report the incident to officials at Post Office Road.

No-one was injured as one stone hit a window and broke the outer pane of glass, and enquiries at the club are ongoing.

Gibbons blow

STEVIE Gibbons, the Irishman who was injured on debut in Oldham's great win at Widnes, is likely to be out for several weeks.

Coming off the bench as replacement hooker for Phil Joseph, he enjoyed 20 impressive minutes as a mobile and lively dummy half but he was unable to resume for the second half after damaging a shoulder.

"We are not sure how long he will be



out," said chief executive Chris Hamilton. "But his injury is worse than we thought initially."

"The good news is he will not require surgery, but he has a grade-two injury bordering on a grade-three and with that sort of injury you have to err on the side of caution."

The club's medical staff will also be playing safe and 'not rushing' with Thomas Coyle (knee) and Craig Robinson (elbow).

Coyle, also injured at Widnes, has strained the medial ligaments in a knee, while Robinson suffered a painful elbow injury in the derby clash with Rochdale.

Ten-year bash

ON Thursday May 14, Sheffield Eagles celebrate their silver anniversary with a special dinner at Baldwin's Omega.

Gary Hetherington, the club's founder, will be the guest of honour and there will be a host of past players spanning the last 25 years.

Each of the tables will be allocated a year, with hopefully a player who represented Sheffield Eagles in that year hosting a table. The club are



also taking bookings for their first Golf Day of the year, to be held at Tankersley Golf Club on Monday April 27.

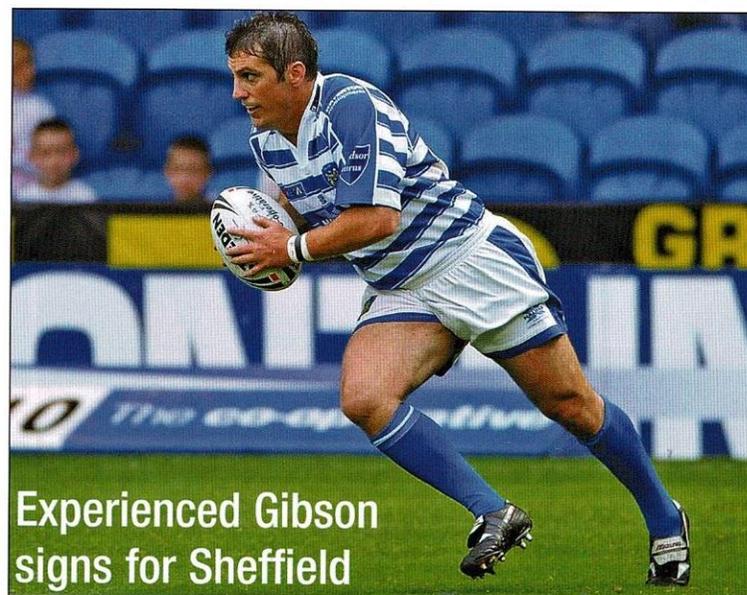
The club's other golf days are on Monday July 6 at Abbeydale Golf Club and September 14 at Bondhay Golf Club.

For further details on all these events and our other events - email simon.proctor@sheffieldeagles.com - or call the club on 0114 2610326.

SHEFFIELD are sad to announce the sudden passing of Jack London, aged 67.

Jack aged missed only two Sheffield Eagles games in 17 years both home and away. He also attended every Challenge Cup and Grand Final within this period.

The club's thoughts at this time are with Laura (his daughter) and her family.



Experienced Gibson signs for Sheffield

SHEFFIELD Eagles have signed winger or full-back Damien Gibson from Championship rivals Halifax.

"Damien (pictured above) is the type of experienced back we need," said Eagles' coach Mark Aston. "He's a good talker on the field and reacts well to situations."

Gibson, 33, has played for four clubs in the Super League in a career that started at Leeds.

He had two spells at Halifax first joining them in 1997 from the Rhinos and returning to the Shay in 2004 from Castleford who he had joined after spending the 2001 season at Salford City Reds.

Australian-born Gibson has played international rugby for Wales and was in the side that faced England in the World Cup warm-up game at the Keepmoat Stadium last October.

Leigh get Haggerty

LEIGH have signed versatile St Helens youngster Kurt Haggerty on loan.

The 20-year-old second rower, who can also play at prop, centre and even stand off, has joined the Centurions initially for a

month with the potential for a longer stay.

Coach Neil Kelly is delighted have landed the former Blackburn Royals and Pilkington Recs amateur and believes he will prove useful as the season continues to get into full swing.

"Kurt is exactly what you'd expect from a youngster at St Helens. He does the tough stuff well but he's also a quality player with good skills," he told League Weekly. "He joins us initially for a month and we'll see what happens after that."

Eadie the Don

DONCASTER have signed former Featherstone hooker Kevin Eadie on a season long deal.

"We needed some strength in depth in this area and we're delighted to have captured Kev," said coach Tony Miller, who said the 20-year-old had "come highly recommended from various sources within the game."

The Dons have also completed the loan signing of 17-year-old forward Lee Parnell - a Doncaster lad - on a month-long loan deal from Wakefield Wildcats.

Want to make sure you get every copy of Game On?

GAME ON will be produced for every regular round of Northern Rail Cup, Co-operative Championship matches, plus play-offs (up to the final) and initial stages of the Carnegie Challenge Cup. It will be on sale primarily at clubs on match day but fans can guarantee a copy by contacting Mrs Adele Latham on 01924 439498. Copies can be bought singly for £2.75 (inc p&p) or by multiples thereof. Or send a cheque made payable to NewsPost Ltd, to Game On, Edward Latham House, 1 Oates Street, Dewsbury, W Yorks, WF13 1BB.



DOWN THE LINE with
Andy Henderson



IN MODERN rugby league it's the little things that make a big difference.

And with one week remaining of the qualifying stages of the Northern Rail Cup it's amazing to see that no one club is yet 100 per cent sure of qualifying for the last eight.

In both pools there are six clubs chasing the four qualifying spots and that's got to be great for the fans. So it's fair to say those clubs who make it into the quarter-final draw are those that have made the little things count the most.

A look at this week's two qualifying pool tables reveals it's the bonus points and points differences that are making the real difference.

In Pool One both Keighley and Oldham have picked up bonus points as well as the match points, likewise just two teams outside the top four - Widnes Vikings and Blackpool Panthers. In Pool Two three of the top four Leigh, York and Featherstone are holders of bonus points.

That shows the teams who are putting in the effort, even when they've lost games, are being rewarded.

I reckon this must be the most exciting Northern Rail Cup competition yet. Just look at it - two pools with well matched teams and places in the knockout stage are still up for grabs.

Another outstanding feature of the tables this week is that both of them are showing two Co-operative Championship and two Championship One clubs in both top fours.

I've no doubt most rugby league pundits would have been saying before the start of the competition that the Championship teams would blow the Championship One clubs away.

But that's just not happened. Look at Pool One where Keighley and Oldham from

Championship One are setting the pace. While in Pool Two York and Dewsbury are also in the mix. The Knights had a stunning midweek win against Whitehaven while the Rams' 28-26 victory at Featherstone was the highlight of week three.

What a great start to the season!

Hendo



PLAYER OF THE ROUND

WEEK 3 -
selected by
Game On

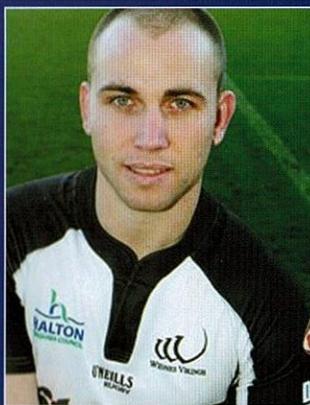
JIM GANNON - WIDNES VIKINGS

AFTER the recent upheaval Widnes needed to steady the ship against Gateshead last Saturday night, a fixture which had 'potentially tricky' written all over it.

The Vikings duly delivered for caretaker

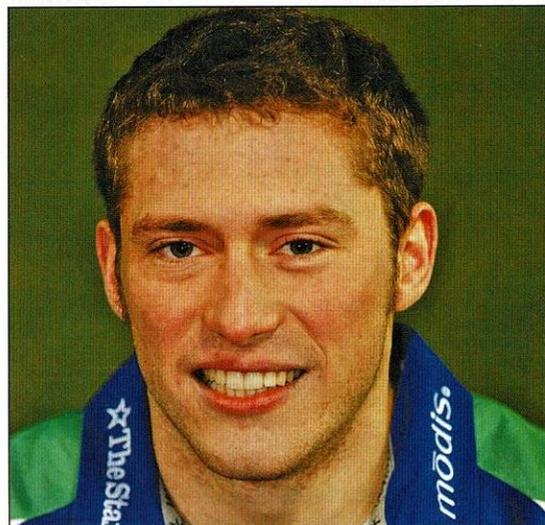
coach John Stankevitch and to the fore was the unassuming prop.

Gannon, an ever present last season, was superb in leading from the front and bagging a hat-trick of tries.



ACTIONREPLAY

Refreshed Halifax too strong for Barrow



SIX OF THE BEST... Keighley's prolific Jon Presley

HALIFAX look the team to beat in Pool One as they maintained their 100% record with a 40-10 thumping of BARROW on Sunday.

Despite the defeat Raiders coach Dave Clark described his team's performance as "encouraging" and said: "Halifax are a very good side and we've got to adapt to this level. Despite the score we played well at times and there were some good performances but plenty of things to work on."

Calland was pleased with his side's progress after returning from a week's warm weather training in Spain, adding: "The conditions suited us a lot better today, the boys have trained for eight days on the trot and I thought they did a really good job today."

"We've worked a lot on our defence and I thought we looked really strong, we won the contact nearly every time and they only scored two soft tries."

The West Yorkshire side have games in hand on the two sides above them although it is an unlikely top two headed by KEIGHLEY.

Barry Eaton's side thrashed bottom side HUNSLET 44-6, Jon Presley bagging his second hat-trick of the competition.

A delighted Cougar coach Barry Eaton said: "It was good to bounce back after a disappointing result against Blackpool last week. It was a difficult game. Hunslet played well but we were pretty ruthless at times and I thought we deserved to win. We need to get some consistency now. We have

a real tough trip to Barrow next week. We are looking for some consistency away from home, if we can go there and get the right result I will be happy."

It was the second big defeat in four days for Hunslet after they went down 54-4 at second-placed OLDHAM on Wednesday night. It was great night for Paul Highton, who captained his side on his home debut.

"To end my career at Oldham is an ambition realised, but to be named vice-captain and given special responsibilities is even better," said Highton.

Andy Ballard claimed two tries and seven goals to maintain his amazing start to the season for the Roughyeds.

But Oldham could not make it three from three on Sunday as they went down 34-22 at home to SHEFFIELD.

Eagles coach Mark Aston said: "It was always going to be hard to win here - Oldham are a good side - but defensively we were outstanding. We worked hard all last week on defence and it paid dividends."

His wasn't the only smiling face around the Eagles dressing room. Two Roughyeds old boys, Ged Corcoran and Matty Brooks, had plenty to grin about



POOL ONE

too after each had come up with first-rate performances on their old stomping ground of Boundary Park.

There was a famous first at Spotland where HORNETS RL scored a late converted try to beat BLACKPOOL 28-26.

With the clock ticking down, Liam Grundy created the space for the inspirational Raftery to crash over the line and Rochdale-born Ged Corcoran delivered the coup de grace by adding the extras.

On Saturday night WIDNES recorded their first win, seeing off GATESHEAD 40-18. The veteran Jim Gannon had a great night, bagging a hat-trick.

Meanwhile caretaker boss John Stankevitch did his potential job chances at Stobart Stadium no harm whatsoever by inspiring the Vikings to a comfortable win.

Whether Widnes draft in someone with more experience remains to be seen, but so far, so good for Stankevitch, who said: "I enjoyed the extra responsibility. But to be honest I didn't do a lot different to what I would do normally."

"The opportunity that has been given to me has allowed me to encourage the players to do more with the ball and the players have bought into it."

"It's a good job and one I could get used to definitely, but as a coach you are reliant on players and if I can get the players to buy into what I say then who knows how long it will be before the club brings in someone. But if we can continue what we showed tonight, then I might be in this position for a lot longer."

Rams rock Rovers to stay unbeaten



POOL TWO

DEWSBURY stayed on course for the Northern Rail Cup's knock-out stages with their second straight win, a superb 28-26 victory at previously unbeaten FEATHERSTONE.

The Rams followed a 50-0 win over Swinton by toppling the previously unbeaten Co-operative Championship side. Dewsbury coach Warren Jowitt was pleased with the win but felt his side "didn't play particularly well."

"It was a scrappy game and both sides spilled plenty of ball but fortunately we were the better of the two teams on the day," he said.

"We stuck to our guns and the lads showed a lot of character. We are a workmanlike team and that will get us through this year. Our good defence is getting us out of trouble."

"I thought Taron Wildey was outstanding for us. He started in the back row and moved up to front row and he was our best forward. He stayed on the field with a broken hand after getting jabs at half-time."

On Wednesday night Rovers repeated last season's home win over LEIGH in the Northern Rail Cup by grinding out a 10-6 victory in this re-arranged clash.

The Centurions often looked the sharper side but they paid dear for an 18-7 penalty count against them.

Leigh coach Neil Kelly said: "I was very frustrated with the officials. We tried to play the game properly but we had a man sent off, a man sent to the sin-bin and another man put on report."

"I can't say enough in support of my team. It was a gargantuan effort from the players who were left on the field."

Leigh got back to winning ways on Sunday but were given a fright by SWINTON, who fought back well after being 26-4 down at half-time.

Leigh hung on to win 34-26 and the Lions deserved their bonus point, their first of the competition.

YORK also saw their 100% record ended as they went down 40-28 at BATLEY.

But the Bulldogs survived another second-half scare to record their first win of their cup campaign.

Batley coach Gary Thornton and the Mount Pleasant fans could not have hoped for the tremendous start the Bulldogs produced, their side scoring 34 points in 36 minutes.

Four days earlier the Bulldogs had let a big lead slip as they lost 22-18 at home to DONCASTER.



Alex McClurg touches down for Swinton against Leigh Centurions

A dismal second-half performance left Batley's Northern Rail Cup campaign in tatters as Doncaster completed an amazing comeback to claim victory after the home side had led 18-6 on 49 minutes.

The Dons made it two wins in four, backing up with a 40-12 success at LONDON SKOLARS.

Tony Miller's side had looked a little leg weary in the opening exchanges in the capital but dominated after half-time, Mike Cody running in three tries in the second half to complete a four timer.

Miller said: "We carrying few knocks from the Batley game."

"Credit to London for their commitment, desire and heart. Mick Cody is strong and powerful and played well

defensively as well as scoring tries.

"My two outstanding players were Josh Weedon, who played at half back and loose forward, and Ryan Steen."

WHITEHAVEN were again victorious in the West Cumbrian derby over WORKINGTON but it took a late rally to see off the challenge of their bitter local rivals, eventually running out 26-12 victors.

In recent seasons these games have tended to be rather one-sided affairs, with Haven more often than not winning comfortably.

On Wednesday night Haven had a terrible night in North Yorkshire, York making it two wins from two after producing an excellent defensive display to beat Championship side 36-6 at the Huntington Stadium.



Barrow v Keighley



Sunday March 1, 2009. Kick off 2pm. CRAVEN PARK

BARROW RAIDERS

KEIGHLEY COUGARS

SPONSOR

Advance Roofing Supplies	1 Gary Broadbent
Johnston Recruitment	2 Mike Backhouse
BAE Global Combat Systems	3 Ian Bell
Premier Solutions	4 Liam Harrison
Furness Heating Components	5 James Nixon
Jimmy Redfern Associates	6 Liam Finch
The Infield Hotel	7 Liam Campbell
Saunders Transport	8 Brett McDermott
The Marine Travel Company	9 Andrew Ellis
Mike Sear	10 Lee Dutton
Estuary Electrical	11 Andrew Brocklehurst
E.P. Access	12 Martin Ostler
R.F. Miller Accountants	13 Andrew Bracek
Shaun Anderson Osteopath	14 Paul Noone
Abbey House Hotel	15 Chris Young
Larry Hunt, Cross Keys	16 Jamie Butler
Coniston Holidays	17 Scott Kaighan
Jimmy Redfern Associates	18 James Finch
Mike Hodgson	19 Chris Larkin
Paul Turner (NWEM)	20 Nicky Beach
Larry Hunt, Cross Keys	21 Joe McKenna
Optec Fibres	22 Ned Catic
BAE Global Combat Systems	23 Waisale Suka
SITA (UK) Ltd	24 Alipate Tani
E.P. Access	25 Sevania Koro
Jimmy Redfern Associates	27 Darren Holt
S & M Leisure (Kit)	28 Michael Darby
Nigel and Alison Atkinson	32 Ruairi McGoff
Alastair McGregor	35 Matt Storey

COACH: DAVE CLARK

LAST SIX RESULTS: LWLW-WL
 LAST SIX HOME: WWWLW (2008)
 TRIES: James Finch 3,
 Mike Backhouse 3
 GOALS: Paul Noone 10
 DGs: -
 MAN TO WATCH: Mike Backhouse

No. TODAY'S TEAM No.

Full back	
Right Wing	
Right Centre	
Left Centre	
Left Wing	
Stand off	
Scrum half	
Prop	
Hooker	
Prop	
2nd row	
2nd row	
Loose forward	
Interchange	

SCORERS

Tries
 Conv
 Pens
 DGs

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: R Silverwood
 Touch: B Armstrong, G Wallace
 Fourth Official: A Kirkbride

BENNETT'S BET

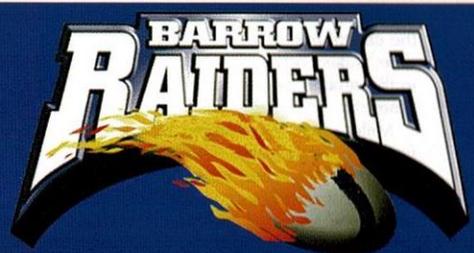
"Raiders to bounce back on home turf -
 Barrow by 8"

No. PLAYER

1 George Raynor	Frank Atkins
2 Sam Gardner	Dolphin Stairlifts
3 Dan Potter	The Clarksons
4 Oliver Pursglove	Mr & Mrs Glover
5 Gavin Duffy	J&M Fisher
6 Jon Presley	Joyce Barret Hairdressers
7 Danny Jones	Phoenix Trophies
8 Andy Shickell	Mr & Mrs Philips
9 James Feather	D & M Procter
10 Simon Bissell	Swaggs Hair Studio
11 Will Cartledge	Mr & Mrs Rothera
12 Neil Lowe	Phil Lund Motor Engineers
13 Carl Hughes	Mr & Mrs Rothera
14 Jermaine Wray	Oddities Giftware
15 Craig Brown	Mr & Mrs Bardgett
16 Brendon Rawlins	Cougar Pride Centre
17 Scott Law	J&M Fisher
18 Greg Nicholson	M Croft & T Pycroft
19 Craig Fawcett	R Weir Property Maintenance
20 Daley Williams	Rex Procter & Partners
21 Ryan Smith	Frank Atkins
22 Lee Mapals	Emily & Flynn Walker
23 James Hutchinson	
24 Luke Sutcliffe	
25 Wayne Sutcliffe	
Non-numbered: Dan Belcher, James Haythornthwaite, Tim Bibby, Tom Hall, Fresh Radio, Ben Saga, Cougar Cubs, Jack Copperwaite	

COACH: BARRY EATON

LAST SIX RESULTS: WWL-WLW
 LAST SIX AWAY: WWLLW-L
 TRIES: Jon Presley 6
 GOALS: Danny Jones 11
 DGs: -
 MAN TO WATCH: Andy Shickell



CLUBCALL

Barrow v Keighley

We stood up well against mighty Fax

IN THE Northern Rail Cup the Barrow Raiders have to face two of the favourites for the competition in Halifax and Widnes.

The defeat at The Shay last week, although very disappointing, gave both the team and myself an indication of where we need to improve our game.

On the plus side the forwards were not overawed by a pack which is probably as formidable a one as they will encounter in the Championship.

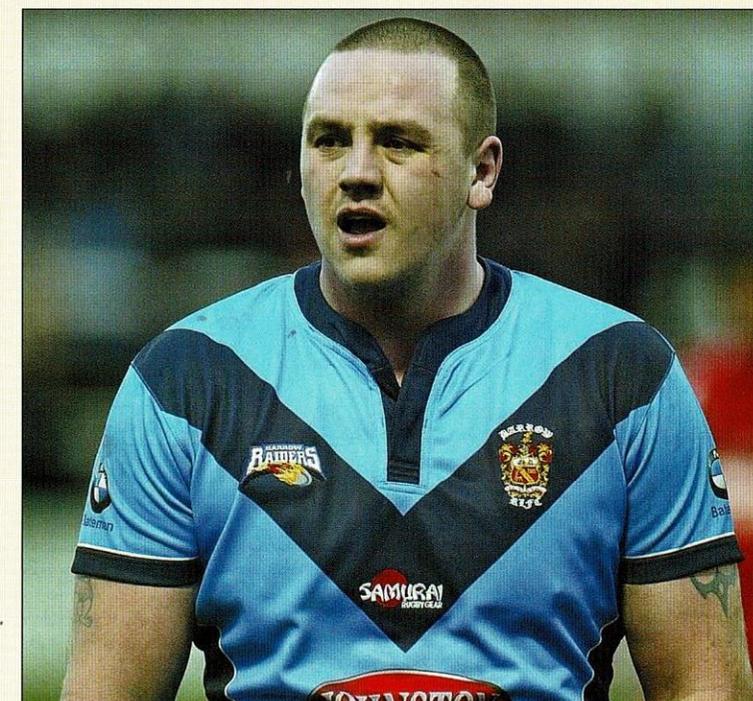
We were simply off the pace both physically and mentally. A lesson learnt out on the field hits home far more than any talking or training I can deliver.

With the attitude and desire the team has shown during the off-season I am confident they will knuckle down and up their game. The result was a wake up call which we will respond to.

One area in which it is vital we improve is the penalty count. Giving the opposition field position, possession of the ball and on occasions a numerical advantage is not smart play.

Today we face Keighley who have had a mixed start to the season having beaten Championship side Gateshead before losing to Blackpool and then inflicting a heavy defeat on Hunslet last Sunday.

Barry Eaton will have them well primed for the game and we will not



Lee Dutton is once again available for Dave Clark

be taking them lightly. A win for the Raiders will nicely set up the outstanding tie which we are playing on Wednesday against Widnes.

Winger Dave Nixon and prop Lee Dutton should be available for selection.

Dave Clark

So relieved to have overcome visa problems

By Vice-chairman
DAVID SEAR

Following battles against red tape, lost forms and other tales of woe we have finally got the necessary documentation from the UK Border Agency to enable the non-European signings to get their visas.

It has proved to be a very frustrating process. Hopefully they will be in Barrow before too long and certainly in time for the start of the league campaign.

The delay is not all bad news as the arrival of fresh players increases media focus on the club as well as the supporters having an extra incentive to come along to their debut game to see what

they have to offer.

Last Friday the club hosted the annual sponsors evening at the Abbey House Hotel.

It is an occasion when we update them, thank them and, of course, encourage them to be even more generous.

Dave Clark gave an overview of last season and outlined his aims for the coming one.

John Thomason gave a very informative insight into the community work we undertake and how we are trying to develop in that area.

At the moment it is proving a cost to us, which we can ill afford, but it is a course we must take if we are to progress and grow the club.

We simply have to take the pain for now for the dividends it will bring in the future.

The evening proved to be both an enjoyable one and, most importantly, a profitable one. Our thanks go to those volunteers who helped arrange and run it.



Blackpool v Widnes



Sunday March 1, 2009. Kick off 3pm. FYLDE RUFC

BLACKPOOL PANTHERS

WIDNES VIKINGS

Blackpool Supporters	No. PLAYER
Derek Way Roofing	1 Johnny Leather
Clover Tech of Wigan	2 Damien Munroe
Chorley Supporters	3 Tom Woodcock
Morris and Oxley	4 Mark McCully
S. Beilby and Family	5 Chris Muga
Blackpool Supporters	6 Simon Svabic
ACM Scaffolding Services	7 Chris Forster
Seabridge Freight Services	8 Peter Fairhurst
Robert Yates Design	9 John Clough
	10 John Hill
	11 Paul Alcock
	12 Kris Ratcliffe
	13 Rob Draper
Paul Wilson	14 Martin Keaveney
Clark Draper Family/	15 Mel Alker
Sheperds Inn, Lowton	16 Ian Hodson
G&M Building Contractors	17 David Llewellyn
	18 John Boland
	19 Liam McGovern
	20 Tom Wild
	21 Andy Marsh
	22 Keiron Tucker
	23 Daryll Kaye
	24 Chris Campbell
	25 Wes Lawton
	26 Craig Tunstead

No.	TODAY'S TEAM	No.
	Full back	
	Right Wing	
	Right Centre	
	Left Centre	
	Left Wing	
	Stand off	
	Scrum half	
	Prop	
	Hooker	
	Prop	
	2nd row	
	2nd row	
	Loose forward	
	Interchange	

SCORERS

- Tries
- Conv
- Pens
- DGs

No. PLAYER	SPONSOR
1 Loz Wildbore	John Mather & his many sons!
2 Dean Gaskell	Barbara Spence
3 Richard Varkullis	Widnes Supporters Club
4 Toa Kohe Love	Widnes Supporters Club
5 Danny Mills	Kath Filkin
6 Anthony Thackeray	VIQI
7 James Webster	VIQI
8 Iain Morrison	Museum Visitors
9 Mark Smith	R J Lewis
10 Jim Gannon	Widnes World
11 Lee Doran	Swavesey Newsagents, Cambridge
12 Richard Fletcher	Widnes Supporters Club
13 Lee Paterson	Robert Johnson
14 John Duffy	James Owen
15 Tim Hartley	Marcus Booth
16 Gavin Dodd	The Dennett Family
17 Ben Kavanagh	Uncle Jack
18 Matt Strong	Fraser Family
19 Michael Ostick	Halton Borough Council
20 Sam Thompson	Leam Fox
21 Scott Yates	
22 Paddy Flynn	Lesley & Reg Warner
23 Shane Grady	West Bank Bears ARLFC
24 Josh Simm	Riverside College Sports Dep
25 Anthony Mullally	Mullally's Barbers
26 Steve Bannister	North West Contracts
27 Brett Robinson	

COACH: MARTIN CROMPTON

COACH: JOHN STANKEVITCH

LAST SIX RESULTS: LLWL-WL
 LAST SIX HOME: LWDLL-W
 TRIES: Mark McCully 4
 GOALS: Johnny Leather 4
 DGs: -
 MAN TO WATCH: Mark McCully

MATCH OFFICIALS
 Referee: W Turley
 Touch: A T Smith, P Meadows
 Fourth Official: R Jones
BENNETT'S BET
 "Vikings to prove too strong for Panthers - Widnes by 18"

LAST SIX RESULTS: WWLL-LW
 LAST SIX AWAY: LDLWWL (2008)
 TRIES: Jim Gannon 3
 GOALS: Scott Yates 6
 DGs: -
 MAN TO WATCH: Mark Smith

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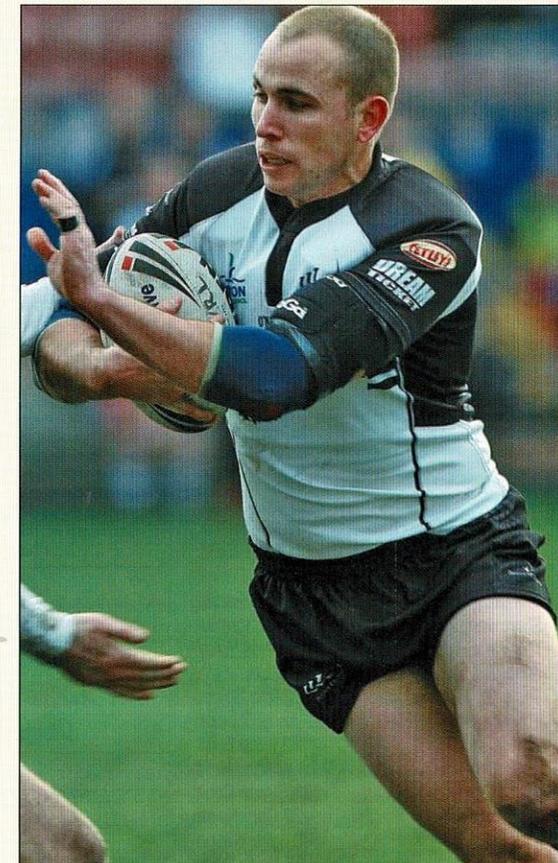
northern monkey creative media

Proudly Supporting **Panthers in the Community**

CLUBCALL

Blackpool v Widnes

We can't take things for granted



AFTER doing so well in all the pre-season games and winning the first competitive game in the Northern Rail Cup against Keighley, albeit against the odds, our expectation was to go to Rochdale and get a good result.

Unfortunately, it wasn't to be as Rochdale showed great resilience and togetherness to grind out a result that looked beyond them. To say we were gutted to lose in the last minute is an understatement. Hopefully, it will be a good learning curve for everyone within the club. The first thing is not to take anything for granted.

Anyway, looking forward to Sunday's game against Widnes, who have just parted company with head coach Steve McCormack.

Steve is a very good friend of mine who has given me lots of help and advice and I was surprised to hear the news. I hope Steve isn't out of the game for long as I believe he is a very good coach who has a lot to offer to the game.

On to Widnes, who are a great club steeped in tradition. I hold Widnes close to my heart as I was their Grand Final-winning captain, which enabled them to get into Super League for the first time.

I still believe they should have been accepted the last time but I am sure it won't be long before they are back where they belong playing with the elite.

I am looking forward to testing ourselves against a very

Vikings prop Jim Gannon arrives today on the back of a hat-trick

good team who are in the division above us. Best of luck to John in his caretaker role but, obviously, not against us!

Hope you have a fantastic day - enjoy the game.

Martin Crompton, Coach

Community initiative has taken off

As Blackpool Panthers' new full-time commercial manager, I'd like to welcome you all to today's game. I have already met many of you over the past four hectic months and look forward to getting to know everyone associated with the club.

My first job was to set up our exciting new project, Panthers In The Community, and what a success story it is turning out to be!

Launched in a blaze of publicity at the Leigh friendly, we already have huge interest from both inside and outside the club. Our mem-

bership is growing every week and the partnership scheme is now taking shape.

I hope you have all read one of the brochures and seen just how much money can be saved by becoming a member, as well as the Panthers rugby club benefits.

And there is also the small matter of helping a brilliant cause, Trinity Hospice!

So if you haven't already joined, do it today and remember, if you know anyone involved in a club or organisation that needs extra funding, tell them about our new 'Community Chest' available.

Finally, if you are interested in sponsoring a match, ball or player we only have a few left. But don't leave it too late!

David Gee

Looking good

Last Sunday we lost by two points in the final 30 seconds at Rochdale after leading 26-16 at one stage! However, that was only our first defeat since the end of the 2008 season so it's all looking good for the new campaign.

Today we welcome Widnes

who will be one of the favourites for the Northern Rail Cup and a tough match is expected.

Turning to the Carnegie Challenge Cup, we have once again been unlucky with the draw and it could not have been much tougher than travelling to Barrow but rest assured, we will give it our best shot and hopefully progress to the fourth round when a Super League club could be our next scalp!

Chairman John Chadwick



Rams v Bulldogs



Sunday March 1 2009. Kick off 3pm. TETLEY'S STADIUM

DEWSBURY RAMS

BATLEY BULLDOGS

SPONSOR	No.	PLAYER
Herbal Life	1	Tom Colleran
	2	Morgan Starkey
John Sawyer	3	Lee Lingard
Joe G Fitness	4	Craig Bower
	5	Andrew Tillotson
Sue Walford	6	Ryan Smith
	7	Gareth Greenwood
Ken & Elizabeth Crabtree	8	Jimmy Elston
Rams Study Centre	9	Mike Emmett
The Three Gs	10	Luke Haigh
Subway	11	Adam Robinson
	12	Taron Wildey
Mount Tabor Church	13	Pat Walker
	14	Ian Tonks
Peggy & Sam Hill	15	Bryn Powell
The Buzz Room	16	Austin Buchanan
Steve Johnson	17	Alex Bretherton
The West Riding	18	Chris Spurr
John Calvert	19	Liam Finn
Jack Addy/Pat Heywood	20	Rob Spicer
The Grayson Family	21	Andy Bostock
Vivien Calvert	22	Kane Epati
Peter Brooke/David Kirby	23	Keegan Hirst
Rams Cheerleaders	24	Simon Cook
	25	Gary North
	26	Jake Wilson
	27	Chris Grice
	28	Liam Crawley
Lauren & Lucy Hall	30	Chris Hall
KBSP Associates	32	Martin Woodhead
Ken & Pat Humphrey	33	James Walker
	34	Josh Tonks
Elaine & Peter Holyoake	35	Adam Hayes

No.	TODAY'S TEAM	No.
	Full back	
	Right Wing	
	Right Centre	
	Left Centre	
	Left Wing	
	Stand off	
	Scrum half	
	Prop	
	Hooker	
	Prop	
	2nd row	
	2nd row	
	Loose forward	
	Interchange	

SCORERS	
Tries	
Conv	
Pens	
DGs	

No.	PLAYER	SPONSOR
1	Ian Preece	Hopkins family
2	Ben Feehan	Mavis, Mac & Jack
3	Dale Cardoza	Wayne & Pauline Aston
4	Danny Maun	Fletcher family
5	Johnny Campbell	Laurie & Andrew Grailey
6	Mark Barlow	Batley Rock & Roll
7	Paul Mennell	Batley Nash
8	Byron Smith	Kev & Brian
9	Kris Lythe	The Benson family
10	Luke Stenclion	Leyland Paints
11	Kevin Crouthers	Brian Hooley
12	Mark Toohey	George & Mary Gomersal
13	Ash Lindsay	Study Centre
14	John Gallagher	
15	Anthony Henderson	RSM Carriers
16	John Simpson	Benson family
17	Craig Potter	Protec Security
18	Jermaine McGilvary	Gary Tingle & Lorraine Richardson
19	George Flanagan	Norman Thewliss
20	Dave Tootill	George & Alan Wainwright
21	Nathan Armitage	Kirsty, Gemma, Nix, Laura & Karen
22	Nat Browne	Stanningley U-14s & U-17s
23	Chris Buttery	Flanagan Transport
24	James Archibald	
25	Damien Reid	
26	Jamie Aitcheson	
27	Darryl Cardiss	John Miller
28	Dannry Samuels	
29	Jack Watson	Mary Hughes

COACH: WARREN JOWITT

COACH: GARY THORNTON

LAST SIX RESULTS: WLLL-WW

LAST SIX HOME: LLLWL-W

TRIES: Kane Epati 4

GOALS: Pat Walker 13

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: Pat Walker

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: M Thomason
Touch: M Craven, S Williams
Fourth Official: M Hague

BENNETT'S BET

"New-look Rams are in impressive form - Dewsbury by 12"

LAST SIX RESULTS: LLL-LLW

LAST SIX AWAY: LLLWL-L

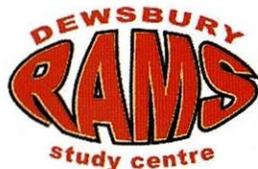
TRIES: Darryl Cardiss 3, George Flanagan 3

GOALS: George Flanagan 12

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: Mark Barlow

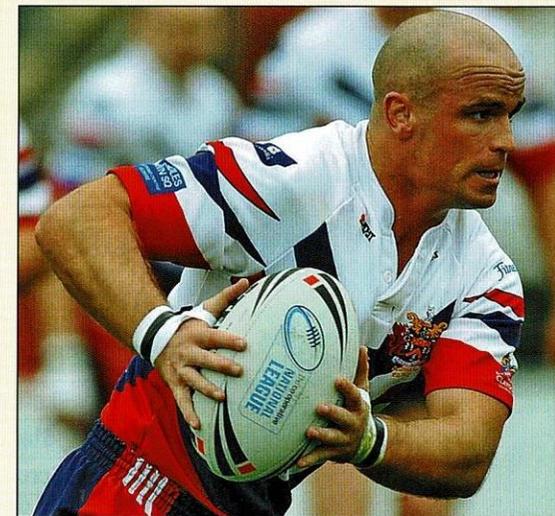
ERIC FRANCE
SCRAP METAL MERCHANTS



CLUBCALL

Dewsbury v Batley

Batley are huge danger



Darryl Cardiss has strengthened Batley's attacking options

HELLO and welcome to the Tetley's Stadium for what should be a very entertaining afternoon as both teams come off the back of good results for today's local derby which always proves to be an entertaining game.

It was great to get a result at Featherstone last week as it is always a tough place to visit. The last time we won there was in 2000.

I was pleased with the commitment and the effort of the players as they worked tirelessly for each other in defence.

However, there is a lot of room for improvement before the start of the league season. It is important we are firing on all cylinders for the Championship One season.

Batley are our local rivals and always pose a big threat. They have some quality players in their team and also a well matured Kevin Crouthers who looks destined to finish his career at prop.

The likes of Paul Mennell, George Flanagan, Danny Maun, Ash Lindsey and Mark Barlow all pose a threat so we will have to be on the ball to contain these lively players. The recently added Darryl Cardiss would provide extra quality to any team.

Unfortunately the game against Featherstone saw us pick up our fair share of injuries.

The ever impressive prop Adam Robinson sustained ankle ligament damage, Chris Spurr took a severe knock to the ribs, Taron Wildey broke his hand early doors in the game

and Austin Buchanan suffered a shoulder injury.

Hopefully they will be back on duty today but if not, we have strength in depth and the lads that turn out are more than good enough to play in the first team.

Rob Spicer has made good progress and should shortly return to the fold which should give Dewsbury a big boost, especially as he will immensely strengthen our already solid defence.

I'd particularly like to thank Janet Blakeley, Dayne Sawyer and Angela Burkinshaw who all contribute towards a professional and winning environment for the players.

Enjoy the game.

Warren Jowitt, Head Coach

Featherstone victory was huge for us

Good afternoon all and welcome to the Tetley's Stadium today for our only encounter of the season with our good friends across the valley, Batley Bulldogs.

Many Rams fans inform me they are looking at this season with renewed optimism after watching their team maintain their 100% start to the season following the 28-26 win over Featherstone.

You have to go back to the Neil Kelly title winning era of 2000 before coming across another Rams win on a ground where traditionally teams from Dewsbury have tended to struggle.

While some Featherstone fans pointed to the absence of one or two key names including Iestyn Harris, our coach Warren Jowitt was without Jimmy Elston, Rob Spicer and James Walker who are all close to returning from injury with forward Ian Tonks also missing the first two games of the season.

Warren could have a real selection headache on his plate shortly but that's just how he likes it.

While fortunes on the field have taken

Mark Sawyer, chairman

an upturn so far so events off the field have also been creating interest among the amateur game with the setting up of The Mentoring And Development (MAD) scheme.

This scheme is based on professional players becoming personally involved with junior player development at their local clubs.

The aim is to expand the thinking and stimulus of our young players in an environment that hopefully will heighten their awareness through the involvement of professional players.

This innovative scheme, set up by Shaw Cross Sharks coach James Stephenson, will see junior U-9s players at the Sharks being the first to benefit from having the Rams players helping the youngsters to improve their skills and giving them advice on how to play and adopting a healthier lifestyle.

Stephenson was taken aback by our positive response to the scheme which will also add a little extra to the weekly

training sessions that the young players attend.

It's a scheme that has the potential to really blossom and other professional clubs will be watching how this develops over the next few months.

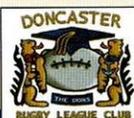
I'm extremely proud of the Community Club image that we are now portraying.

We broke the mould this season when we offered what we believe is the cheapest season ticket in the world towards the end of last year.

In these days of recession it's important clubs interact with the areas they cover and with the Rams in fierce competition with Super League neighbours Leeds, Bradford and Wakefield as well as National League Batley the signs are that rugby fans are responding to our initiatives.

A crowd of just under 1,000 saw the opening game against Swinton compared to the 804 which watched us edge towards the National League 2 title in 2005.

See you all in the Royal Suite after the game.



Dons v Swinton



Sunday March 1, 2009. Kick off 1pm. KEEPMOAT STADIUM

DONCASTER

SPONSOR	No. PLAYER
	1 -
Green Energy Solutions	2 Dean Colton
Geffery Broadhead	3 Andreas Bauer
Pipers Car Sales	4 Shaun Leaf
DISC (Dons Supporters)	5 Wayne Reittie
Active Workwear	6 Kyle Briggs
Needhams Bikes	7 Paul Handforth
APS Toolhire	8 Michael Haley
	9 Craig Cook
Jane Speakman	10 Alex Benson
Everlast Waterproofing	11 Peter Green
Everlast Waterproofing	12 Craig Lawton
Andy Booker	13 Josh Weeden
Martins Famous Fish Market	14 Scott Jones
	15 Mark Castle
	16 Nathan Freer
DISC Dons Supporters	17 Ross Divorly
RTN Motor Spares	18 Craig Holt
	19 Ryan Steen
	20 Michael Coady
	21 Garry Ellery
	22 Andy Speake
Sue Walford	23 Scott Smith
	24 Jake Bassinder
	28 Jamie Bovill
	TRIALISTS
	Albert Rounding
	Phil Crosby

COACH: TONY MILLER

Sponsored by Custom Property Developments

SWINTON LIONS

No.	TODAY'S TEAM	No.	No. PLAYER	SPONSOR
	Full back		1 Wayne English	Elizabeth Taylor (Grandma English)
	Right Wing		2 Barry Hamilton	Daniel Croston
	Right Centre		3 Dave Hull	Premier Building Ltd
	Left Centre		4 Dean Gorton	Dave Roberts
	Left Wing		5 Marlon Billy	Mike & Kath Tyldesley
	Stand off		6 Graham Holroyd	Muscle & Fitness Gym
	Scrum half		7 Richard Hawkyard	Junior Lions
	Prop		8 Paul Southern	Heartland M27 - Rob Dunford
	Hooker		9 Phil Wood	Junior Lions
	Prop		10 Bruce Johnson	Egan Contractors Ltd
	2nd row		11 Mike Wainwright	Bill Sheppard & Warren Mottram
	2nd row		12 Danny Heaton	Chris & Viv Tyldesley
	Loose forward		13 Marty Moana	Geoff Hewitt USA
	Interchange		14 Craig Ashall	In Memory of Peter Walker
			15 Gary Hulse	Lethbridge & Co
			16 Alex McLurg	John Spellman
			17 Tommy Grundy	MS Lottery Services
			18 Gareth Hayes	Ray Bowdler
			19 Neil Rigby	Burrow & Humphries
			20 Adam Bibey	PhysiO2
			21 Rob Line	In Memory of Graham Berry
			22 Darren Bamford	Moorside Autos
			23 Ben Williamson	Lethbridge & Co.
			24 Paul Crook	Premier Building Ltd
			25 Matt Ashe	Mike & Sarah Dagnan
			26 Chris Frodsham	Phil, Ann & Josh Walker
			27 Chris Tyrer	Barbara & Emma Cathcart, Sue Buckley & Joyce Shannon
			28 Dave Newton	In Memory of Frank Scanlon
			29 Carl Sneyd	Redsentinal
			30 Andy Saywell	Northline Business Consultants

SCORERS

- Tries
- Conv
- Pens
- DGs

COACH: PAUL KIDD

LAST SIX RESULTS: WWW-LWW

LAST SIX HOME: WWWWWL

TRIES: Michael Coady 4

GOALS: Andy Speake 7

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: Kyle Briggs

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: G Dolan
 Touch: M Hawkes, G Hodgson
 Fourth Official: M Beadle

BENNETT'S BET

"Last year's finalists to make it through to the next round - Doncaster by 10"

LAST SIX RESULTS: WLLL-LL

LAST SIX AWAY: LLLLL-L

TRIES: Marty Moana 1

GOALS: Carl Sneyd 3

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: Phil Wood



Backing the Dons!



CLUBCALL

Doncaster v Swinton

Commitment and effort was just great

A WARM welcome to the players, coaches and officials of Swinton for what should prove to a tough encounter.

The Lions ran a good Leigh side extremely close the previous game and were unlucky to not get a result.

Swinton will prove to be stiff opponents as they have got some quality players, none more so than my old mate Martin Moana who I'll be catching up with on match day.

On his day Martin is capable of destroying teams and his Swinton outfit look to have bounced back with a narrow loss to a classy Leigh side.

We are going into the game on the back of two wins. The effort and commitment the players showed against both Batley and London was superb. They were both very physical encounters and coupled with the quick turn around I think the boys have really pulled through with only a few casualties.

At Batley we picked up injuries to Kyle Briggs, Mick Haley and Mark Castle. This gave the opportunity for two players to debut - Kev Eadie and Lee Parnell. They both did well coming into the side after only one training session. For them to gel so quickly into our systems is testament to the two youngsters and it will be great once they get into full flight.

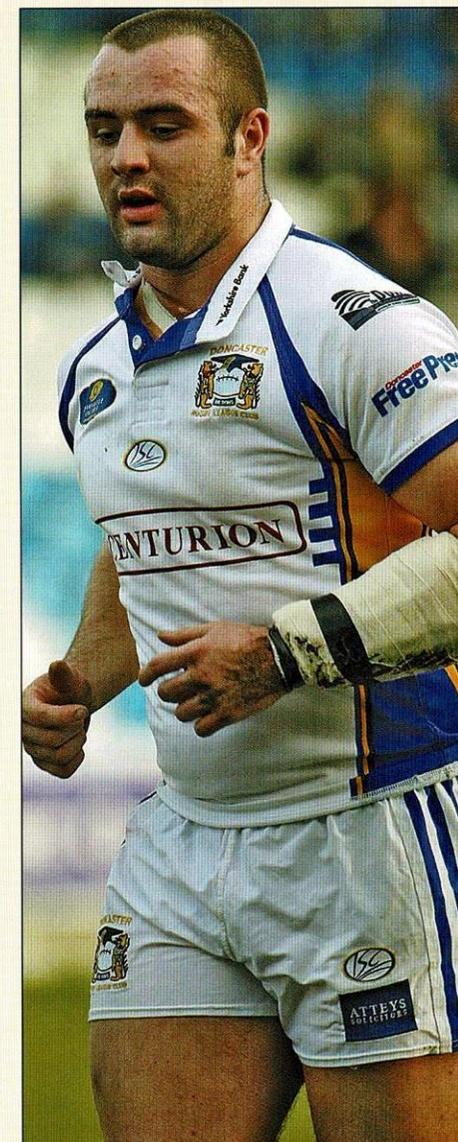
However we picked up injuries to Kevin Eadie and Shaun Leaf during the London game, so as I write these notes I am not sure who is available for the Swinton game.

Hopefully we'll get the win we're looking for which will provide us with high confidence coming out of the Northern Rail Cup and into the league and Challenge Cup competition.

Next Saturday's Challenge Cup game against Queens will be a fixture we should win but we won't be taking anything for granted as they are a good strong side that play a tough brand of rugby league.

Once again we're grateful for the continued support from the Dons faithful. Keep it up!

Tony Miller, Head Coach



Mick Haley picked up an injury against Batley

Away victories have given club a big lift

Welcome to the Keepmoat Stadium, home of the Dons. A warm welcome goes out to our visitors from Swinton.

Also to those here today from Doncaster's Prison Service who are attending the day as part of a ticket initiative done with our local prisons.

Local players from Thorne Mooreds Marauders are also attending today as part of the club's ongoing work with our local amateur clubs.

Since we've last been here the team have picked up two wins on the road

which has created a good feeling throughout the club.

Although we'll not get carried away with things, the club has come a long way in the few months since me and Karen took over.

The squad is definitely a lot stronger, with the additions of Parnell and Eadie last week.

Added to that Andreas Bauer will hopefully soon make his 2009 debut and Paul Handforth today completes his suspension.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to

Tony Miller for recruiting the quality he has brought in.

Off the field things are very active. This week the club has had a fundraising race night and Poker night.

After today's game the Dons are inviting all fans to the Reds Bar in town to watch the World Club Challenge game between Leeds and Manly.

Many of the Dons' first team players and staff will also be attending.

We look forward to seeing you there and keep up your support.

Dave Marshall, Director



No more a laughing matter

CLUB FOCUS – BLACKPOOL PANTHERS

Blackpool made great strides last season and have carried over that momentum into the start of the 2009 campaign. GAME ON spoke to the chairman about a club on the up

It may have been a while coming but Blackpool Panthers are finally being taken seriously.

Having struggled in their inaugural season in 2005, the Panthers then embarked on one of the worst runs in British sporting history.

Chairman John Chadwick admits they were becoming the laughing stock of rugby league as they endured a 46-match losing streak that stretched over 21 months.

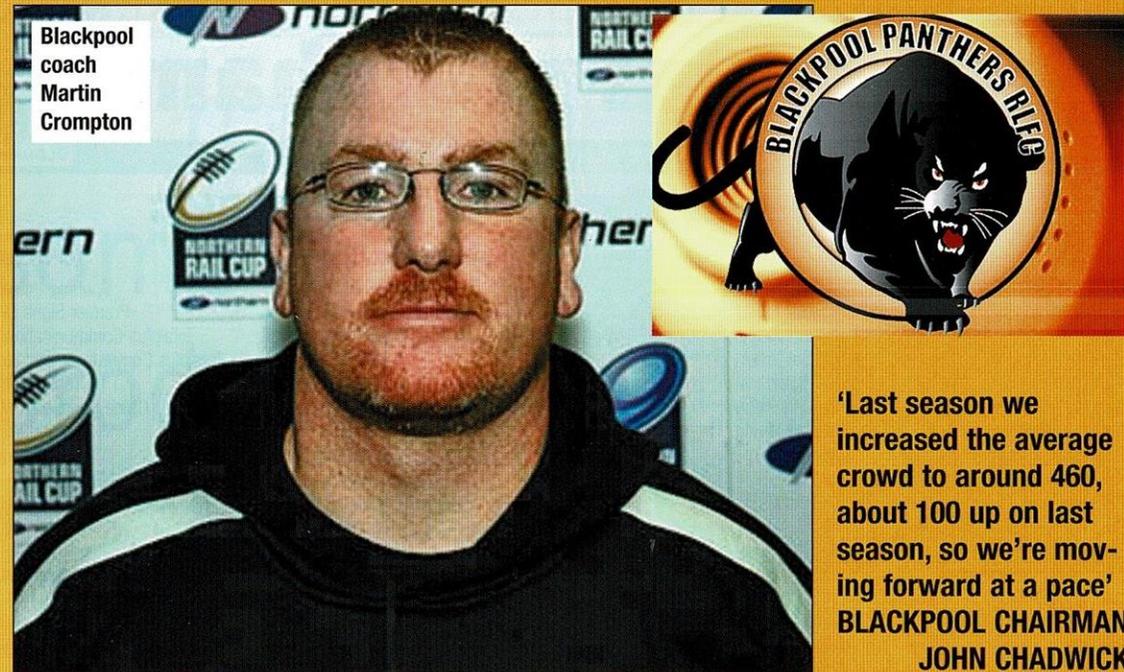
But the fledgling club have not looked back since halting that hoodoo with a 24-20 home win against Workington last April.

Under the stewardship of coach Martin Crompton they won another six games last season to not only avoid a third straight wooden spoon in National League Two but finish one place off the play-offs.

And Blackpool have carried that momentum into this year, beating their landlords Fylde RU in a cross-code challenge before claiming friendly victories against Keighley, Leigh and Featherstone.

They then beat Keighley again 16-14 two weeks ago to lay another ghost to rest having pre-

Mark McCully has scored four tries as Blackpool have made their mark in the Northern Rail Cup this season



'Last season we increased the average crowd to around 460, about 100 up on last season, so we're moving forward at a pace'
BLACKPOOL CHAIRMAN JOHN CHADWICK

viously gone 24 games without a win in the Northern Rail Cup.

The fact Blackpool are disappointed not to have followed that up with victory at Rochdale last week shows just how far the club has come in the last two years.

"When you've lost 46 games on the run you're looked upon as a bit of a joke so thank God we got that monkey off our back!" said Chadwick.

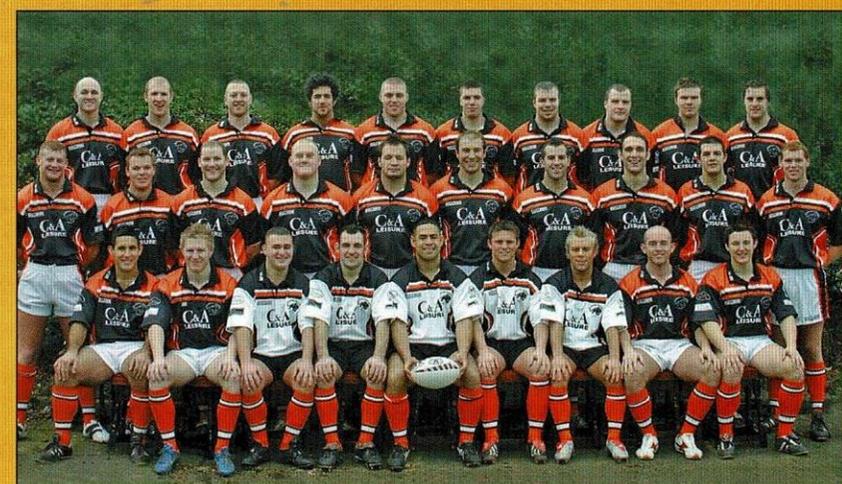
"Now we've got our first Northern Rail Cup win and we're delighted. We're now in our fifth season and we're trying to establish a semi-professional club in Blackpool again after a big gap and wins are the thing we are judged by.

"It doesn't matter how much work we do off the field, we're judged on a Sunday afternoon, so that win was absolutely vital.

"We felt we should have won at Rochdale too because we were 26-16 in front and they won it in the last minute.

"Perhaps it was a wake-up call for us, perhaps we went there too confident, but I'm sure people locally will realise how close it was when they see a score of 28-26."

That compares favourably to some of the beatings Blackpool suffered during their winless season of 2007, when not even the mid-term appointment of



THE ORIGINALS... The Blackpool Panthers squad of 2005. It's all change now

ex-GB scrum-half Andy Gregory could stop the rot.

Crompton took the reins ahead of 2008 and after overhauling the playing staff, the team made an immediate improvement.

While Crompton's management skills have had a "massive influence" in the tide turning on the west coast, the club's move from Bloomfield Road to the Woodlands Memorial Ground in 2007 has been equally important in the quest to re-establish a permanent rugby league presence on the Fylde peninsula after Blackpool Borough upped

sticks in 1987.

"It takes a while to build a club and get established but we've put a few roots down now," said Chadwick.

"It's a lovely set-up here, with good corporate facilities and now floodlights. It's as good as anything in our division and probably in the Championship.

"Last season we increased the average crowd to around 460, about 100 up on last season, so we're moving forward at a pace.

"We're looking to improve on that again this season and we've now got a Community

Development Officer, a lad called Nick Settle, who's getting out and about with the schools and the amateur clubs, so we're all giving it our best shot."

So little wonder that the Panthers have now set their sights on the Championship One play-offs – and not even a visit from the cup favourites daunts them.

"Last season was a massive improvement and we've improved the squad again so we're full of optimism for this season and we're looking forward to facing Widnes," added Chadwick.



Hunslet v Oldham



Sunday March 1, 2009. Kick off 2pm. SOUTH LEEDS STADIUM

HUNSLET HAWKS

SPONSOR	No.	PLAYER
Elliot and Ewan Boiston Green	1	Nathan Larvin
	2	Scott Childs
	3	Tom Sheldrake
Eric Simon	4	Michael Brown
	5	John Richardson
Gary Martin-Selby Road Tyres	6	Darren Robinson
	7	Stuart Young
Adie & Ron Jinks	8	Joe Helme
Paul Gray	9	Richard Chapman
Kenny Sykes	10	Ben Lawton
Phil Ogg	11	Joe Howey
South Leeds & Hunslet Cars	12	Jason Hart
Eric Simon	13	Mark McKinley
Dennis/Hannah Butterfield	14	Chris Redfean
Bob Tate	15	Andy Robinson
	16	Mark Moxon
Geoff Gray	17	Steve Brook
	18	Ayden Faal
Margaret Gibbon	19	Ben Walkin
	20	Antony Thewliss
Phil Ogg	21	Dan Cook
Paul Gray	22	Scott Watson
Margaret Gibbon	23	Jonny Wainhouse
	24	Charlie Wabo
	25	Michael Mark
Phil Ogg	26	Nico Slain
Paul Gray	27	Gareth Firm

COACH: GRAEME HALLAS

LAST SIX RESULTS: LLL-LLL

LAST SIX HOME: WWLLL-L

TRIES: Steve Brook 3

GOALS: Young, Chapman, McKinley

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: John Richardson

OLDHAM RLFC

No.	TODAY'S TEAM	No.	PLAYER	SPONSOR
	Full back	1	Paul O'Connor	Sporting Image
	Right Wing	2	Andy Ballard	Premier Signs UK
	Right Centre	3	Danny Halliwell	Totalplus Communications
	Left Centre	4	Paul Reilly	Totalplus Communications Ltd
	Left Wing	5	Lee Greenwood	Tech Doors
	Stand off	6	James Coyle	Office Supplies Now
	Scrum half	7	Thomas Coyle	Nigel Marland
	Prop	8	Paul Highton	John Barrett
	Hooker	9	Gary Sykes	Rudy Wilkes and Bev Mayall
	Prop	10	Jamie l'Anson	John and Lynda McAndrew
	2nd row	11	Dave Allen	Clayton Green Brewers Fayre
	2nd row	12	Tommy Goulden	Karen and Paul Gough
	Loose forward	13	Rob Roberts	John and Lynda McAndrew
	Interchange	14	Richard Mervill	Clayton Green Brewers Fayre
		15	Jason Boultis	Karen and Paul Gough
		16	Wayne Kerr	Cagney and Lacey
		17	Craig Robinson	Cagney and Lacey
		18	Neil Roden	Cagney and Lacey
		19	Craig Littler	Cagney and Lacey
		20	Simeon Hoyle	Cagney and Lacey
		21	Lucas Ornyango	Cagney and Lacey
		22	Phil Joseph	Maureen and Peter Woodhead
		23	Chris Baines	Maureen and Peter Woodhead
		24	Marcus St Hilaire	Totalplus Communications
		25	Luke Menzies	Totalplus Communications
		26	Luke Sutton	Totalplus Communications

SCORERS

Tries

Conv

Pens

DGs

COACH: TONY BENSON

LAST SIX RESULTS: WWL-WWL

LAST SIX AWAY: WLLLW-W

TRIES: Andy Ballard 4

GOALS: Andy Ballard 17

DGs: None

MAN TO WATCH: Andy Ballard

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: C Leatherbarrow
Touch: J Roberts, P Huck
Fourth Official: J Asquith

BENNETT'S BET

"Hawks up against it against strong Roughyeds line-up - Oldham by 26"

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CROSS GREEN,
LEEDS LS9 0SW

TEL: 0113 249 3950
FAX: 0113 235 0459

THE HAWKS - IN ASSOCIATION WITH...



Wetheralds
PAINTERS AND DECORATORS
STEPHEN EDWARDS
Contract Manager

WETHERALDS HOUSE, 68A ST. PETER STREET
HUNSLET, LEEDS, LS10 1BX
TEL: LEEDS (0113) 249995, FAX: (0113) 249993
MOBILE: 07973 338415
EMAIL: wetheralds@btinternet.com

CLUBCALL

Hunslet v Oldham

We have some great products

The new age of licensing is upon us and many clubs need to reappraise their new position within the game. Historically, Hunslet were the first to achieve promotion into the Super League in 1999 and subsequently have its entry refused.

Let down by the officials of the RFL of the day, and broken promises of the local authority, Hunslet entered into a period of gradual decline.

Ten years on and the rules are clearer and better defined. For clubs outside the Super League, the individual clubs have to re-evaluate their being.

The obsession with Super League status needs to be tempered and qualification of the new Championship status needs to be celebrated.

The worth of the Championship clubs has been recognised by blue chip companies including Northern Rail, the Co-operative Group and Sky TV.

Individual clubs need to deliver on a range of marketing, community and financial output. The Super League or bust mentality has to disappear from the rugby league landscape.

The game can be strong in the traditional heartlands of the Championship clubs.

Our rugby league clubs in rugby league areas are the very bedrock of our game.

Bigger central distributions, increased prize money and central body initiatives, such as this programme, are testimony to what can be achieved.

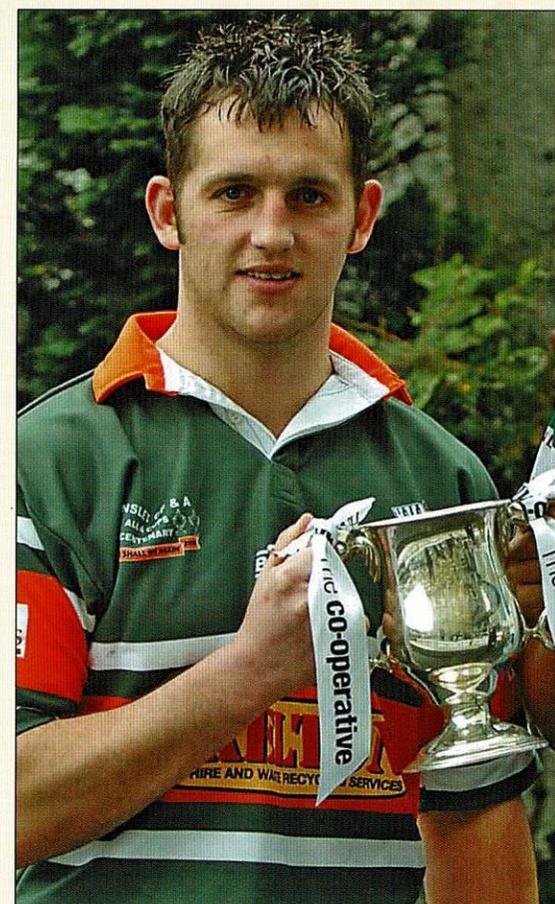
Championship football outside the premiership is great worth.

Championship rugby league can deliver a game that will stand up to competition and scrutiny.

Major sponsors believe so, and so should individual clubs. Let's play for Championship leagues and cups.

Let the pride of achievement be in who we are, rather than what we want to be.

The revised Northern Rail Cup games have seen some great competitive matches.



Hunslet believe the competitions they are involved with are worth celebrating and promoting

Championship clubs celebrate old fashioned rugby where communities are key and every supporter counts.

It is important for the game that the Championship clubs bind together and act with a unified powerful voice.

While ambitions need not diminish, clubs need to strengthen the competitions they compete in before attempting any elevation to Super League.

The Championship clubs need to establish their own super league within its own competitions.

The credibility and the future of the whole game depends, demands and expects our clubs to promote the Championship.

Charlotte Ball

New arrivals take to new away kit

New internationals Nicko Slain, Charlie Wabo and Michael Mark paid a visit to the Middleton Railway.

The PNG boys lamented the new Hunslet Hawks away shirts, a replica of the 2008 World Cup PNG kit.

CLUB NEWS

While the famous Myrtle, White and Flame remains Hunslet's traditional main kit, the Hawks will play their away games in their new PNG style shirt.

Meanwhile the team will launch their Carnegie Challenge Cup campaign against Kells at the Recreation Ground, Whitehaven next Saturday (March 7, kick-off 6pm).

Let us hope it is full steam ahead for the Hawks.



It's full steam ahead for the PNG boys

Match ball sponsors: Hanlon & Wright, AMCO & Redbrook Building Services



Eagles v Halifax



Sunday March 1, 2009. Kick off 3pm. DON VALLEY STADIUM

SHEFFIELD EAGLES

HALIFAX RLFC

SPONSOR	No.	PLAYER
AMCO	1	Jonny Woodcock
Tolent	2	Bolu Fagborun
OSI	3	Menzie Yere
Jim Hawksworth, Suzanne Atkin	4	Mike Roby
Anne Collins	5	Ashley Thackeray
Pennine Business Forms	6	Brendon Lindsay
Sheaf Telecom	7	Gavin Brown
Hanlon & Wright	8	Jack Howieson
Barnsley Industrial Training College	9	Grant Edwards
Jayne Whaling	10	Mitchell Stringer
Jack Smith	11	Alex Szostak
Hanlon & Wright	12	Ged Corcoran
Bethany, Ian & Jackie Swain	13	Dane McDonald
G4S Events	14	Andrew Boothroyd
Albion Detection Systems Ltd	16	Trevor Exton
	17	Tom Buckenham
Vice Presidents	18	Saqib Murtza
OSI	19	Kyle Wood
Walkabout Sheffield	20	Matty Brooks
AMCO	21	Aaron Groom
Village Shop, Oughtibridge	22	Ryan Hepworth
HAS Consultants Ltd	23	Tangi Ropati
Jack & Laura London	24	Matthew Whitaker
	25	James Morrow
Hancock & Todd	26	Nick Turnbull
Modis	27	Tommy Traylor
	28	Damian Gibson
	31	Sam Barlow
Jill Swire	34	Eddie Battye
Mr & Mrs Lee	35	Dan Hawksworth

COACH: MARK ASTON

LAST SIX RESULTS: LLW-WLW

LAST SIX HOME: WLWLW-W

TRIES: Matty Brooks 3

GOALS: Jonny Woodcock 15

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: Ryan Hepworth

No.	TODAY'S TEAM	No.
	Full back	
	Right Wing	
	Right Centre	
	Left Centre	
	Left Wing	
	Stand off	
	Scrum half	
	Prop	
	Hooker	
	Prop	
	2nd row	
	2nd row	
	Loose forward	
	Interchange	

SCORERS

TRIES

Conv

Pens

DGs

No.	PLAYER	SPONSOR
1	Miles Greenwood	
2	Lee Paterson	
3	Jon Goddard	Vision Express Halifax Ltd
4	Shad Royston	Chadwick Lawrence,
5	James Haley	Chadwick Lawrence
6	Dwayne Barker	
7	Ben Black	Roger & Sue Harvey
8	Matt James	
9	Sean Penkywicz	Riley & Co Accountants,
10	Dana Wilson	Matthew Walker
11	Dave Larder	Windsor Yarns
12	Paul Smith	
13	Bob Beswick	Complete Building Materials
14	Mark Gleeson	
15	Mark Roberts	
16	Said Tamghart	
17	Frank Watene	Complete Building Materials
18	Andy Bowman	
19	Mick Govin	
20	Graham Charlesworth	Chadwick Lawrence
21	Neil Cherryholme	
22	David Wrench	
23	Rob Worrcincy	Howard Posner
24	Gareth Moore	

COACH: MATT CALLAND

LAST SIX RESULTS: WLWW-WW

LAST SIX AWAY: WLLWW-W

TRIES: Sean Penkywicz 2,

Jon Goddard 2, Ben Black 2

GOALS: James Haley 6

DGs: -

MAN TO WATCH: Sean Penkywicz

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: M Dawber

Touch: C Dean, L Todd

Fourth Official: A Sweet

BENNETT'S BET

"Eagles are good at home, but Fax are firing -

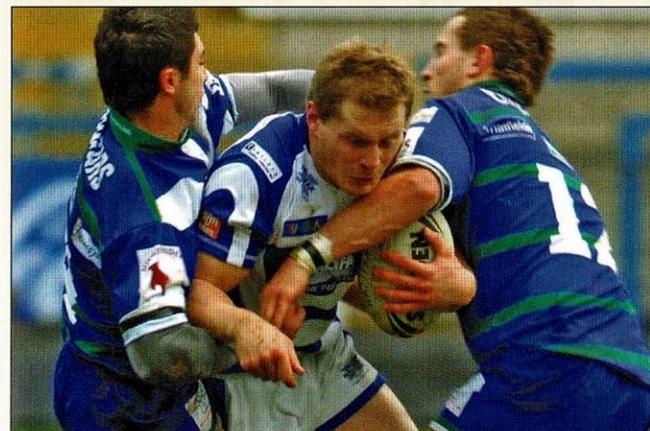
Halifax by 5"

PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE SHEFFIELD EAGLES!

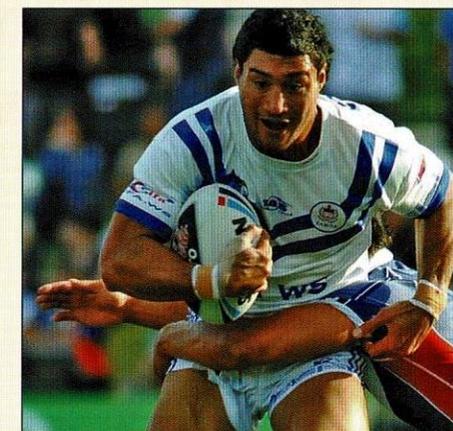


CLUBCALL

Sheffield v Halifax



The likes of Jon Goddard have helped turn Halifax into a pacy side



Tangi Ropati - Eagles fans have seen him play

Cup is just start we needed

I'm enjoying the Northern Rail Cup - well not some of the results - but it's proving just the type of competition the squad needed.

We kept to the club's policy of not playing pre-season 'friendlies' and so these early season games are key to developing the squad for the league campaign.

But don't get me wrong - we wanted to do well in the Northern Rail Cup and make the knock-out stages. Every game is there to be won.

The good thing is that each week the group games have got a little bit tougher.

We started with Hunslet

Hawks followed by the trip to Gateshead Thunder and then at Oldham Roughyeds leading to today's game against Halifax.

That's just what we needed but we also need to show the right attitude and commitment to bring out the right kind of performance.

The coaching staff has learned a lot in the three games so far. We know where some people are at and I'll be sitting down with them and talking about what they need to do and where they need to go with their game. We've had the chance to give debuts to two of the overseas signings - Menzie Yere and Tangi Ropati.

The Cup has given the coaching staff the chance to look at a large percentage of the squad - we have been moving players in and out and that can affect performances. Now the changes have to slow down and I'll be looking for a little bit more stability and to see who fits where in the jigsaw.

The side has to start to gel and show that it's the one we will be focusing on in the next few games.

We are building up towards the start of the league season and today's a game when I think we will get some clear answers.

We'll have to be on good

form against Halifax who are in just about everyone's picks for the top four for the league title.

Last season we had some great games against the 'Fax - particularly a performance when we gained revenge for an early season away defeat with a 46-22 win in May at Don Valley.

Halifax have done some interesting recruiting during the pre-season.

They play entertaining, fast football and we know that it's going to be a real test - for both teams.

Enjoy the game and give the lads a cheer.

MARK ASTON

How we've been spreading the word

SHEFFIELD Regional Rugby League Development Trust is the banner for all community work that the Sheffield Eagles Club carry out.

Over the past year or so the trust has been going through a transition period which has seen the members of staff expand, with a full-time Community Trust Manager, Adam Hughes, coming into the club.

We now have seven community coaches delivering between Sheffield, Barnsley and North Derbyshire.

Increasing the coaches and expanding the areas we cover has meant more children are being given the opportunity to learn, train and play rugby league.

The growth of the department is due

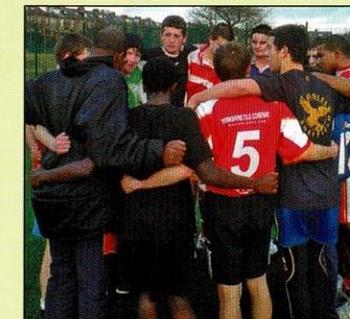
Growing Sheffield Eagles' community department

to the demand within South Yorkshire for rugby league coaching. Through this demand we have been able to get more classes in more schools than ever before.

As a result of this we are looking to create more junior amateur clubs so that the rugby league education can be continued out of school learning.

As a community development department we are continuously looking to expand and build partnerships.

If any one is interested please contact Adam Hughes (Community Trust Manager) on 0114 2610326.



Sheffield staff get involved with a sterling community project. For full details see our Spreading The Word feature see pages 40 and 41



Workington v Featherstone



Sunday March 1, 2009. Kick off 3pm. DERWENT PARK

WORKINGTON TOWN

- No. PLAYER
- 1 Jay Duffy
- 2 Neil Frazer
- 3 Andrew Beattie
- 4 Jason Mossop
- 5 Jamie Marshall
- 6 Carl Forber
- 7 Steve Roper
- 8 Ryan Benjafield
- 9 Jack Pedley
- 10 Dean Burgess
- 11 Mike Whitehead
- 12 Craig Hodgson
- 13 Mark Hobson
- 14 Brett Smith
- 15 James Robinson
- 16 Thomas Brindle
- 17 Peter Dobsob
- 18 Kris Coward
- 19 Scott Burgess
- 20 Stephen Dawes
- 21 Mark Routledge
- 22 Patrick Coupar
- 23 Martyn Wilson
- 24 Jarrad Stack
- 25 Harry Kaufman

POSITION SPONSOR	No.	TODAY'S TEAM	No.
Myers & Bowman		Full back	
Appletree Inn		Right Wing	
Jemcare		Right Centre	
To sponsor call 01900 603609		Left Centre	
To sponsor call 01900 603609		Left Wing	
Myers & Bowman		Stand off	
Myers & Bowman		Scrum half	
Ian Barnes Plumbing & Heating		Prop	
Hare & Hounds		Hooker	
Bradley Cass		Prop	
Beach Croft Sports		2nd row	
To sponsor call 01900 603609		2nd row	
To sponsor call 01900 603609		Loose forward	
The Ship Inn		Interchange	
Unblock Cumbria			
To sponsor call 01900 603609			
To sponsor call 01900 603609			

SCORERS

- Tries
- Conv
- Pens
- DGs

COACH: DAVE ROTHERAM

LAST SIX RESULTS: WLLLL-LL
 LAST SIX HOME: LLLWL-L
 TRIES: Jarrad Stack, Stephen Dawes, Jack Pedley, Neil Frazer
 GOALS: Carl Forber 3
 DGs: -
 MAN TO WATCH: Carl Forber

MATCH OFFICIALS

Referee: C Halloran
 Touch: J Downham, P Ward
 Fourth Official: C Neilson

BENNETT'S BET

"Coach Powell will expect his Rovers to bounce back in style - Featherstone by 22"

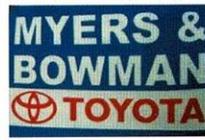
FEATHERSTONE ROVERS

- No. PLAYER
- 1 Tom Saxton
- 2 Waine Price
- 3 Ian Hardman
- 4 Andy Kirk
- 5 Jon Steele
- 6 Iestyn Harris
- 7 Andy Kain
- 8 Tony Tonks
- 9 Jack Lee
- 10 Stuart Dickens
- 11 Matt Dale
- 12 Jamie Field
- 13 Richard Blakeway
- 14 Tommy Haughey
- 15 James Houston
- 16 Joe McLocklan
- 17 Joe Hirst
- 18 Tim Spears
- 19 Sean Hesketh
- 20 Stuart Kain
- 21 Steve Dooler
- 22 Matt Handforth
- 23 Gareth Swift
- 24 John Fallon
- 25 Scott Wilson

- SPONSOR
- Peter Smith Motorcycles
- Bev Coleman
- Patrick & Gemma McNeil
- The Buccaneers Club
- Mark Hutchinson
- Maureen Tennant-King & Emily Harris
- Shindigz
- Terry King
- Charlie Robinson/Lynne Whitehouse
- Vic & Sue Johnson
- Doug & Barbara Wilford
- Blue Lagoon Bar
- Susan Parker
- Blue Lagoon Bar
- Study Rovers
- Gary Crompton
- Howard Lawton
- John Lycett
- Peter Smith Motorcycles
- Rovers Scholarship
- Hollie Bennett
- Charlie Watson
- James Evans
- Capro Contracts
- Chelsey, Charlie & Megan Large
- Lorne Mosley

COACH: DARYL POWELL

LAST SIX RESULTS: LWL-WWL
 LAST SIX AWAY: LWLLW-W
 TRIES: Andy Kaine 2, Jon Steele 2
 GOALS: Iestyn Harris 5
 DGs: -
 MAN TO WATCH: Iestyn Harris



CLUBCALL

Workington v Featherstone

Rovers return revives some special memories

A Workington Town fixture against Featherstone Rovers always stimulates memories of some high profile games, not least the club's Challenge Cup victory at Wembley and in more recent times that Premiership Final at Old Trafford, which I still maintain, but for the efforts of one Paul Newlove, would have resulted in another victory.

Rovers have made big strides recently and arrive here very much on the up.

There is also no doubt we were encouraged by a much better performance at Whitehaven last week.

No one can ever be satisfied with any defeat, especially to our local rivals, but our players went to the Recreation Ground and took the game to the opposition.

There was no doubt whatsoever that we deserved our half time lead and with

By Dave Bowden
 Workington chairman

everyone in the team playing their part, and Dave Rotheram's match plan working well, it looked very likely with an hour gone we could pinch this game.

It's that professionalism and intensity we'll need again today.

Of course we had a few knocks in that game so at the time of writing there will be some uncertainty about who will be ready again for Sunday.

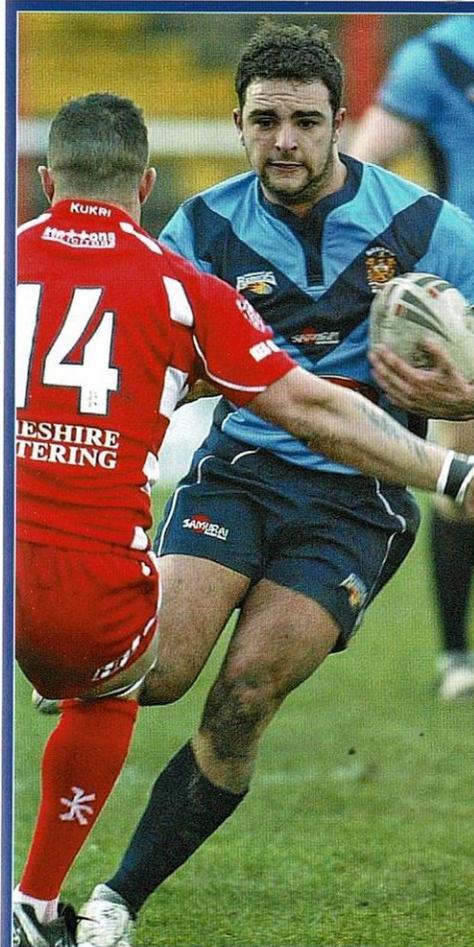
We can see already that we have some exciting young players at the club who, if we can stay relatively injury free will improve as the season continues.

The only other part is to ensure that off the pitch, despite a difficult financial climate, our supporters and sponsors stay loyal to the club.



A man with a plan - Dave Rotheram

Thanks to fans and sponsors alike for attending today's game and particularly to the fans who followed us to Whitehaven last weekend, as always it is very much appreciated.



Jack Pedley has looked good after a long lay off

Featherstone looking very formidable

WELCOME to Derwent Park for our third Northern Rail Cup group game.

Today we host Featherstone Rovers who have recruited well in the off season. Along with highly respected coach Daryl Powell, Rovers have also brought in some exciting, young players such as Ian Hardman, Tommy Saxton and Stuart Kain. Add the vast experience of Iestyn Harris and they have the makings of a very competitive squad for the Championship season.

Our last two games have been fruitless on the competition table but the performance at Whitehaven was encouraging. We held a very good team from a higher division for 70 minutes and at times we played some good attacking rugby and defended our line as if our lives depended on it.

If our displays in future can replicate the spirit shown throughout the 80 minutes at the Recre then we can move forward with confidence. The new players have settled well, Jarrad Stack, Paddy Coupar and Mark Hobson are working hard in the middle while Steven Roper is becoming more authoritative from half back. Watch out today for Jack Pedley who last week, after a seven-month lay off, showed some promising touches out of dummy half.

Looking ahead to next week we have a difficult Challenge Cup tie at home to French Champions Lezignan. They boast several World cup players so get down next Saturday and cheer us on to a win and a place in the next round.

DAVE ROTHERAM

IN P R O F I L E

TANGI ROPATI – SHEFFIELD EAGLES Squad Number: 23

BACKGROUND

NAME: Tangi Ropati

AGE: 24 (15/11/1984)

POSITION: Right Centre

HEIGHT: 6ft 1in. WEIGHT: 14st 3lbs

MARITAL STATUS: Engaged, my partner's coming over next month.

BORN: Auckland, New Zealand

AMATEUR CLUB: Marist Richmond in New Zealand

SIGNED PRO: 2006 (Brisbane Broncos)

PREVIOUS CLUBS: Brisbane Broncos, although I only played for their feeder clubs Wynnum-Manly and Easts Tigers.



FAVOURITES

CLUB SUPPORTED AS A KID: Sydney Roosters.

SOCCER TEAM: Manchester United.

OTHER SPORT: Nothing but rugby league.

HOBBIES: Cars. I'm a qualified mechanic and I'm really into turbo cars like Tokyo Drift. I've seen lots of Mercs and Peugeots over here but not any Japanese cars yet.

FOOD: KFC, but don't tell the coach!

DRINK: Powerade.

HOLIDAY: Hawaii.

MUSIC: Any sort of R&B and Hip-Hop.

FILM: The Holiday.

TV: Prison Break.

SUPERSTITIONS: My dad once told me never to cut my nails or shave on game day. The one time I tried it I broke my finger that day, which put me out of a pre-season trial match for the Broncos against Canberra Raiders, so never again!

CAREER

BEST TEAMMATE: Either Nigel Vagana or David Solomona, who I played with for Samoa at the World Cup.

BEST OPPONENT: I played for Samoa against England in the Federation Shield in 2006 and Chris Ashton and Jamie Rooney carved us open that day.

BEST PLAYER IN THE WORLD: Brent Tate – I've always been a fan of his because I play the same position and I've met him. He's a great guy on and off the field, solid in defence and great in attack too.

BEST COACH I'VE PLAYED FOR: I'll have to say my new Sheffield coach Mark Aston is my number one!

COACH I'D LIKE TO PLAY FOR: Mal Meninga.

MY STRENGTHS: Eating.

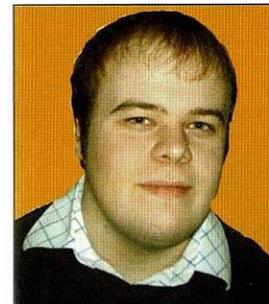
MY WEAKNESSES: Also eating!

HIGHLIGHT: Playing for Samoa against France in the World Cup.

LOWLIGHT: Breaking my collarbone in the first 10 minutes when playing for New Zealand 'A' against New South Wales in 2005.

ULTIMATE WISH: To win the Championship and help Sheffield get into Super League.

AFTER FINISHED PLAYING: Mechanic. I've already got a diploma – either that or I'll be a receptionist for my missus! She's currently studying medicine and hopefully after next year she'll be a doctor.



AHEAD OF THE GAME

PAUL BENNETT gives his slant on life in 'the greatest game'

Why one referee's so much better than two

JUST before he left for Australia, referee Ashley Klein – rather tongue in cheek – told me he'd love to return to England one day to referee a game with Steve Ganson under the new dual-referee system the NRL will be experimenting with this season.

Now if that isn't an overwhelming reason to abandon the whole idea as a hideous concept right from the go then I don't know what is. (Sorry Ash!)

But, that nightmare scenario aside, is there really anything to be achieved from adding an extra official? Other than total confusion, that is.

I know multi-referee systems work in other sports. Like plenty of people in rugby league circles and, incidentally, Ashley Klein himself, I'm a big fan of American Football and any of you that also follow that sport will know that a game of gridiron has more 'Zebras' than Chester Zoo.

But American Football is a very technical game.

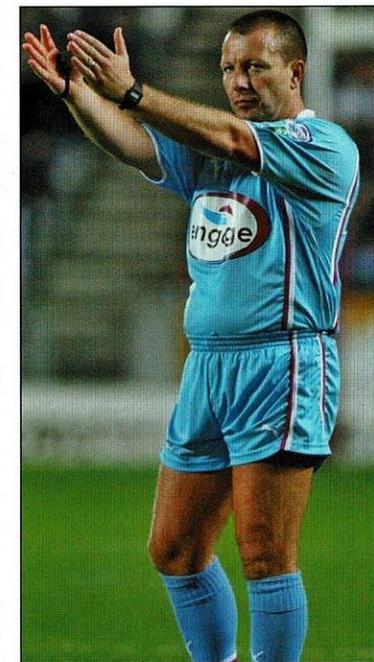
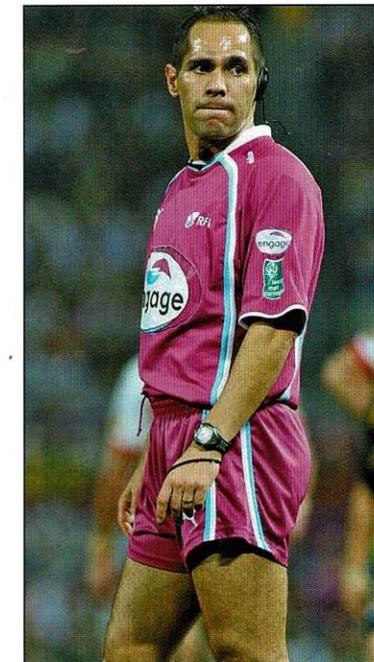
The rules are also a little more set in stone and there's generally less room for interpretation.

And because the game is already so stop-start, it doesn't really matter if the refs are blowing up every other minute for an offence.

Rugby league is quite different. Just as with football, an attractive rugby game is one that flows. The best referees are those that manage to stamp their authority and personality on the game and, once they've set out their stall, just let the players get on with their business without overly interfering.

Steve Ganson, when he's on his game, is about the best example of this.

In recent years we've heard plenty of complaints about referees giving too many penalties (although the story from the



How would they work together? Ashley Klein (left) and Steve Ganson

opening few weeks of this season seems to be less that and more about coaches being, or potentially being, sacked).

Can you imagine how many penalties will be given now we've got two refs looking for offences?

And how do two referees effectively stamp their authority and personality on a game coherently, without confusing both fans and, more crucially, the players?

Given that the Australian system sees the refs swapping roles during the game (with one watching the ruck and the other marking the 10 metres) won't consistency

of interpretation be a major problem?

I suppose, really, that's something we'll just have to discover when the NRL gets into full swing in a fortnight.

But I have to say my gut feeling is that the Australians are just tampering with our game for the sake of it.

That's if it is 'our' game anymore. Seems to be that whatever the Aussies say goes nowadays, with the NRL chiefs chopping and changing the rules with utter disregard for the international game.

I still think this one, though, is a change too far. I guess we'll see.

IN P R O F I L E

PAUL HUGHES YORK CITY KNIGHTS Squad Number: 9

BACKGROUND

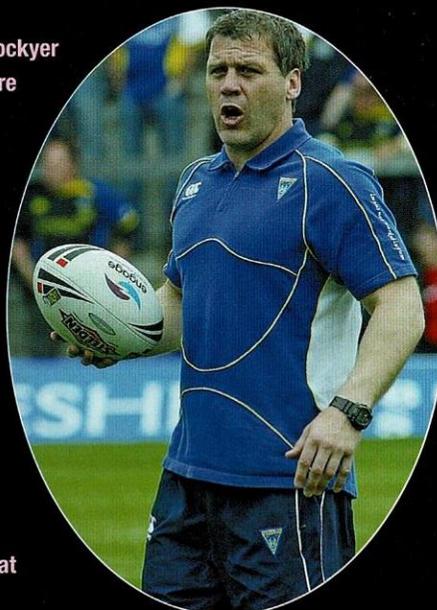
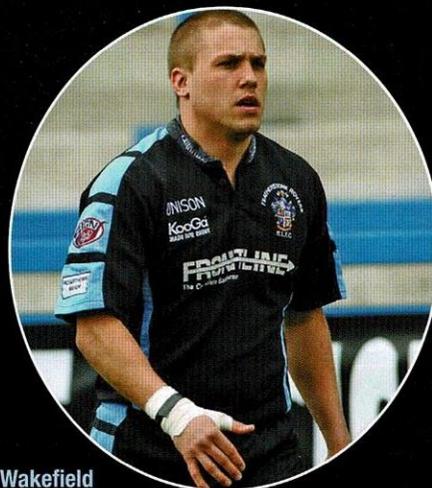
NAME: Paul Hughes
AGE: 24 (28/12/1984)
POSITION: Hooker
HEIGHT: 5ft 8in
WEIGHT: 13st 7lbs
MARITAL STATUS: Living with girlfriend
BORN: Wakefield
AMATEUR CLUB: Stanley Rangers
SIGNED PRO: I was 17 when I signed for Wakefield
PREVIOUS CLUBS: Featherstone, Wakefield, Stanley Rangers

FAVOURITES

CLUB SUPPORTED AS A KID: Wakefield Trinity Wildcats
SOCCER TEAM: Leeds United
OTHER SPORT: I would probably say football
HOBBIES: Just socialising really
Food: Indian
DRINK: Boltica Lager
HOLIDAY: Going to Ayia Napa with 'Stanley Sunday club'
MUSIC: Oasis
FILM: Taken
TV: Prison Break
SUPERSTITIONS: I don't have any

CAREER

BEST TEAMMATE: I couldn't pick one. If I have to say one I will say my brother Carl Hughes
BEST OPPONENT: Stacey Jones
BEST PLAYER IN THE WORLD: Darren Lockyer
BEST COACH I'VE PLAYED FOR: There are a few, Paul (March) and James (Ratcliffe) who I am under now and Gary Lord was a big inspiration to me. He coached me at Wakefield.
COACH I'D LIKE TO PLAY FOR: James Lowes from Warrington (pictured).
MY STRENGTHS: Communication, my talking.
MY WEAKNESSES: Temper (laughs).
HIGHLIGHT: Making my debut.
LOWLIGHT: Having to have an operation halfway through a season a couple of years ago
ULTIMATE WISH: To play for Great Britain.
AFTER FINISHED PLAYING: Just see what happens really. I don't have any plans.



ON THE MONEY!

Leigh can turn it on against unhappy travellers



Leigh's Jamie Durbin has been in prolific form

With the rugby season now in full swing, I hope some of you have started to pick some winners and noted down some trends for future matches that will hopefully increase your bank balance.

Some people ask me as a bookmaker and punter do I watch a game of rugby league in a different light when there is money on it.

I am the same as every fan. If things go for my team I take it for granted but if we don't get the rub of the green I am up in arms.

The difference between a bookmaker and a fan though, is a win for a fan is different from a win with a handicap for a bookmaker.

If with two minutes to go a team winning by eight points gets a penalty in front of the sticks, a player and a fan knows it is pointless going for two points because the opposing team need to score two tries no matter what.

But for a bookmaker (at this moment they are screaming at the television "Go for the 2") who has laid the other team on the handicap at 10, the perfect solution would be to go for the two points and that would mean a tie on the handicap and happy days.

I always remember two professional rugby league players who use to back a treble every week on the coupon between them. The bet would consist of a team on the Friday night Sky live game, a team on the Saturday night live game running onto their game on the Sunday, where they would always back their team on the handicap.

This one week both teams had won on the live games and they had a nice few quid running onto their own team, who was playing away with a +16 start on the handicap.

This meant that as long as their team stayed within 15 points, their bet would be a winner.

Totesport's expert rugby league odds compiler **MIKE OXLEY** gives fans of clubs in the Championship and Championship One a few tips on where the value lies this weekend



In the 79th minute of the match and they are getting beat by 18 points, they score in the corner and the two of them jump up and down and hug one another as though they had won the Challenge Cup final.

And all the players and spectators are looking at them and thinking we have been beaten by at least 12 points and you are celebrating. Unbeknown to them the two players were picking up more money than the winning team.

On this week's games betting opportunities seem limited so I am only going for one bet.

We will be going for a team who are hard to beat at home and that is Leigh against a team who seem to get a nose bleed if they play anywhere south of Kendal in Whitehaven.

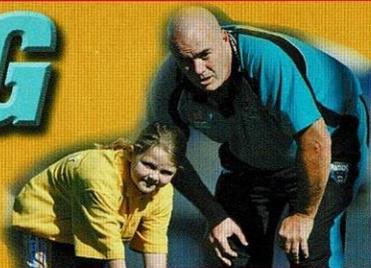
Both teams have won two games so far but the important statistic is that Whitehaven have had 36 put on them away to York and Leigh's new home ground is going to be a hard place for any team to get a result from this season.

I can see Leigh covering a handicap of around eight or less. Good luck and happy punting.

bet online
totesport.com

bet by phone
0800 221 221

SPREADING THE WORD



Eagles' vision of a true team game is inspiring

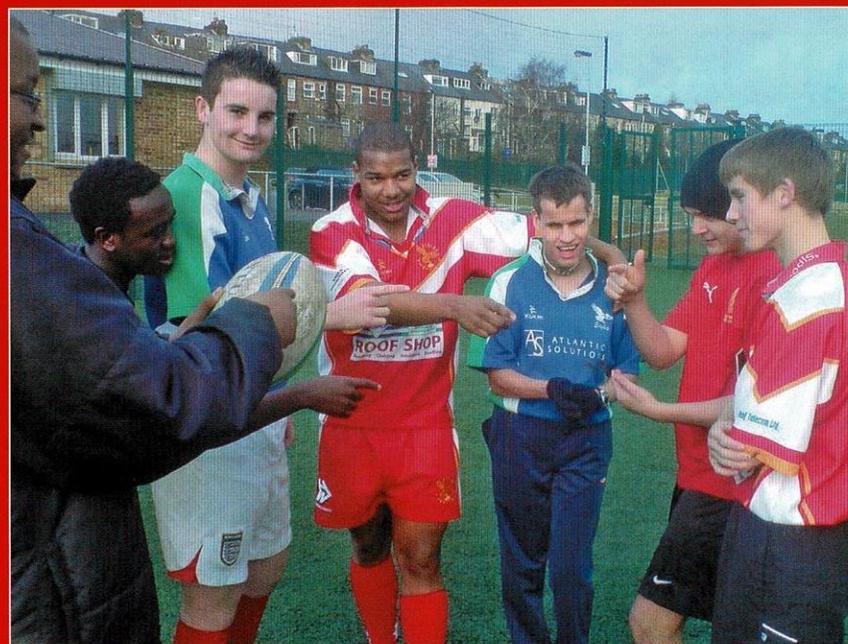
Sheffield have led the way in forging links with the community and regardless of whatever happens to the Eagles, RL will continue to be pushed at the grass-roots level in the city. GAME ON was touched by one story that shows what the club is doing

FAN POWER was the inspiration behind the formation of the new Sheffield Eagles in 2000, with a view of forming a club that would serve the community and, in time, deliver home grown talent and quality Rugby League provision in the city.

Sheffield Eagles were the first club from either code of rugby to set up a charitable trust, the Sheffield Regional Rugby League Development Trust, to ensure community development work could be carried out regardless of the fortunes of the club.

The Eagles maintain Rugby League is an inclusive sport and they aim to provide services to meet the demands of several groups through out Sheffield.

One example of the Sheffield Regional Rugby League



Ben gets involved in the training at the Youth Association open day.

Development Trust working towards the idea of Rugby League as an Inclusive sport, was at an open day for Youth Association South Yorkshire (YASY) – a group set up for young people aged 16 plus who are no longer in full-time education or have been excluded from full-time education.

At the open day we met a young man named Ben.

From talking to Ben we found out that he was a very outgoing and sporting individual.

Therefore it should have made it easy for us, a rugby club, to include Ben with one of

our many programmes.

However, there is one thing that had prevented Ben from participating in as much sport as possible and that is that Ben is visually impaired and he has a tracheotomy.

Ben has a full-time carer Stacey who assists with his day-to-day living.

Stacey works for a company called Allied Healthcare Group and also has a big input with academy training and college studies.

We ran a taster day for everyone who showed an interest in our programmes at the YASY open day.

The Eagles had 12 young individuals and Ben was one who came along to find out more about the club and learn more about Rugby League.

After a few hours Ben was able to pass and catch with our community coaches and the Eagles were all amazed by how well he was getting on, perhaps down to their own pre conceptions of what a visually impaired individual may be able to do.

Since that day Ben has been constantly involved in and around the club, he was also invited to join Eagles' Rugby League Academy, which is



Ben takes part in the huddle at an Eagles-related coaching programme

based at All Saints Sixth Form College in Sheffield, along with 14 other individuals who are continuing their rugby league education alongside studying for a BTEC National Diploma in Sport.

The academy players treated Ben as a member of their team and he trains, learns and socialises alongside the academy.

Ben attends all the academy games and is seen as part of the team. Since joining the academy and with the support of his mum Ann, the Eagles have been put in contact with a number of groups and individuals who have shown an interest in what Sheffield are doing with Ben.

One of the groups that got involved was Actionnaires, who were set up to provide the opportunity for visually impaired people under the age

of 16 to be physically active.

Even though officially Ben is too old for the group they welcomed him along and allowed him to join in the sessions.

Along with his mum Ann and carer Stacey, Ben has continued attending Actionnaires sessions and is becoming a volunteer; he is using the experience from community and academy sessions to assist in him making the transition from participant to volunteer.

Another key development that has come about from Sheffield working with Ben is that there are being attempts made to create a ball, or ball and glove system that would allow visually impaired or blind people to participate in Rugby League.

There have been prototypes sent from Steeden, the official ball manufacturer for the RFL, which have been analysed by

Ben and other groups, to assess whether the ball would be sufficient to use in training sessions or games for visually impaired people.

The really good thing that has come from the work being done is that there are many different organisations and individuals involved in the feedback from these prototypes that the end product should not be far away.

Finally all the community staff here at the Sheffield Eagles are proud to be involved in such an initiative and are fully behind spreading rugby league to people who may have thought they were excluded, and from working with Ben we have seen him become more confident and outgoing and that is fantastic to see and we hope to continue such work in the future.



'Ben attends all the academy games and is seen as part of the team'

KNOW YOUR STUFF?

AROUND THE CLUBS

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EACH OF THIS WEEKEND'S HOME CHAMPIONSHIP CLUBS?

BARROW – The Raiders' home ground shares its name with which other British rugby league side?

BLACKPOOL – With which NRL club do Blackpool share their nickname?

DEWSBURY – Rams winger Austin Buchanan formerly played for which Super League club?

DONCASTER – For which Super League club has Dons' 2008 scrum half Luke Gale signed?

GATESHEAD – In what position did Thunder finish their one and only Super League season in 1999?

HUNSLET – New signings Charlie Wabo and Michael Mark played for which country in the 2008 Rugby League World Cup?

LEIGH – Who became the first Centurions player of the season to be sent off in the 10-6 defeat to Featherstone?

SHEFFIELD – Which French side have Sheffield drawn in the third round of the Carnegie Challenge Cup?

WORKINGTON – At which two current Super League clubs has coach Dave Rotherham acted as an assistant?

YORK – Which club did Knights three-quarter Wayne McHugh played for which club in 2008?

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

DO YOU REALLY KNOW YOUR RL? HERE ARE SEVEN TOUGHIES TO TEST ALL RUGBY LEAGUE FANS

1. From which Australian club did Catalans Dragons sign Jason Ryles?
2. Which former Kangaroos star, currently a coach in the NRL, holds the record for most caps for the New South Wales State of Origin team?
3. Which current Super League club were formerly nicknamed The Dreadnoughts?
4. Neil Hudgell is the chairman of which Super League club?
5. In what year was the old Northern Ford Premiership broken up to form the National Leagues (now co-operative Championships)?
6. In what season did Blackpool Panthers replace Chorley Lynx in National League Two?
7. The late Adam Watene represented which country at international level?

ANAGRAMS

Can you rearrange the following anagrams to make the names of three co-operative Championship or Championship One full backs?

A RAG BENT BY

ROD ZOO BIRD WELL

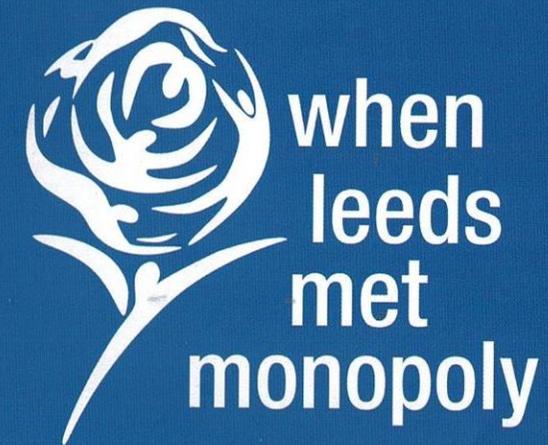
ENERGY OR RAGE

ANSWERS: 1. Gary Broadbent, 2. Loz Wildbore, 3. George Rayner
AROUND THE CLUBS: 1. Hull KR, 2. Penrith Panthers, 3. Wakefield Wildcats, 4. Hartequins RL, 5. Sixty, 6. Papua New Guinea, 7. Andy Hobson, 8. Toulouse, 9. Hartequins (then London Broncos) and St Helens, 10. Featherstone Rovers
NORTHERN RAIL CUP KNOWLEDGE: 1. St George-Illawarra Dragons, 2. Brad Fittler, 3. Wakefield Trinity Wildcats, 4. Hull KR, 5. 2003, 6. 2005, 7. Cook Islands.



MONOPOLY

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Play Monopoly with Leeds Met and you could win a fabulous holiday in St Lucia...

Leeds Metropolitan University has launched the Leeds Met Monopoly Challenge, and is attempting to break a world record in support of local and international volunteering initiatives.

Take part in this Monopoly tournament and have a chance to win a £6000 holiday for four at the Coconut Bay Resort & Spa in St Lucia!

Heats begin on 28 February 2009, and we want as many people to register as possible...

Register a team of 5 and you'll receive a limited edition Leeds Monopoly board.

Register as an individual and you'll get a limited edition

'When Leeds Met Monopoly' t-shirt.

There are hundreds of prizes to be won...
so what are you waiting for?

Visit www.leedsmet.ac.uk/monopoly to sign up now!

GET YOUR FIX...

Your guide to Northern Rail Cup and Championships for 2009

NORTHERN RAIL CUP



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10
Keighley Cougars 40, Gateshead Thunder 20

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11
Sheffield Eagles 38, Hunslet Hawks 16

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13
Widnes Vikings 20, Oldham 22

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15
Doncaster RLFC 6, Featherstone Rovers 32
Gateshead Thunder 44, Sheffield Eagles 18
Leigh Centurions 74, London Skolars 6
Whitehaven 52, Batley Bulldogs 30
Blackpool Panthers 16, Keighley Cougars 14
Dewsbury Rams 50 Swinton Lions 0
Hunslet Hawks 10, Halifax RLFC 38
Rochdale Hornets 12, Barrow Raiders 54
Workington Town 10 York City Knights 34

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18
Batley Bulldogs 18, Doncaster RLFC 22
Featherstone Rovers 10, Leigh Centurions 6
York City Knights 36, Whitehaven 6
Oldham 54, Rochdale Hornets 4

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21
Widnes Vikings 40, Gateshead Thunder 18

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22
Batley Bulldogs 40, York City Knights 28
Featherstone Rovers 26, Dewsbury Rams 28
Halifax RLFC 40, Barrow Raiders 10
Whitehaven 26, Workington Town 12
Keighley Cougars 44, Hunslet Hawks 6
London Skolars 12, Doncaster RLFC 40
Oldham 22, Sheffield Eagles 34
Rochdale Hornets 28, Blackpool Panthers 26
Swinton Lions 26, Leigh Centurions 34

SUNDAY, MARCH 1
Barrow Raiders v Keighley Cougars 14:00
Gateshead Thunder v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Whitehaven 15:00
Sheffield Eagles v Halifax RLFC 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Widnes Vikings 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Batley Bulldogs 15:00
Workington Town v Featherstone Rovers 15:00
Doncaster RLFC v Swinton Lions 13:00
Hunslet Hawks v Oldham 14:00
York City Knights v London Skolars 14:00

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4
Barrow Raiders v Widnes Vikings 19:30
Halifax RLFC v Blackpool Panthers 20:00

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11
Swinton Lions v Workington Town 19:30

SUNDAY, MARCH 15
London Skolars v Dewsbury Rams TBC

CO-OPERATIVE CHAMPIONSHIP

THURSDAY, MARCH 12
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Widnes Vikings v Toulouse Olympique 19:30

SATURDAY, MARCH 14
CHAMPIONSHIP
Barrow Raiders v Doncaster RLFC 18.30

SUNDAY, MARCH 15
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Featherstone Rovers 15:00
Sheffield Eagles v Leigh Centurions 15:00
Whitehaven v Gateshead Thunder 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Oldham v Blackpool Panthers 15:00

THURSDAY, MARCH 19
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Halifax RLFC v Widnes Vikings 19:30

SATURDAY, MARCH 21
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Sheffield Eagles 19:00

SUNDAY, MARCH 22
CHAMPIONSHIP
Featherstone Rovers v Whitehaven 15:00
Gateshead Thunder v Barrow Raiders 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Batley Bulldogs 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Workington Town v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v York City Knights 15:00
Keighley Cougars v Oldham 15:00
London Skolars v Swinton Lions 15:00

THURSDAY, MARCH 26
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Batley Bulldogs v Gateshead Thunder 19:30

SATURDAY, MARCH 28
CHAMPIONSHIP
Whitehaven v Toulouse Olympique 18:00
Barrow Raiders v Halifax RLFC 18:30
Widnes Vikings v Sheffield Eagles 18:00

SUNDAY, MARCH 29
CHAMPIONSHIP
Doncaster RLFC v Leigh Centurions 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Dewsbury Rams 15:00
Swinton Lions v Keighley Cougars 15:00
York City Knights v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v London Skolars 15:00
Oldham v Workington Town 15:00

THURSDAY, APRIL 9
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Sheffield Eagles v Doncaster RLFC TBC

FRIDAY, APRIL 10
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Batley Bulldogs 20:00
Gateshead Thunder v Featherstone Rovers 18:00
Barrow Raiders v Whitehaven 15:00
Sheffield Eagles v Doncaster RLFC 15:00
Widnes Vikings v Leigh Centurions 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Oldham 15:00
Workington Town v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Swinton Lions 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v London Skolars 15:30
Keighley Cougars v York City Knights 19:30

MONDAY, APRIL 13
CHAMPIONSHIP
Featherstone Rovers v Sheffield Eagles 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Barrow Raiders 13:00
Batley Bulldogs v Toulouse Olympique 15:00
Doncaster RLFC v Widnes Vikings 15:00
Whitehaven v Halifax RLFC 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v Workington Town 15:00
York City Knights v Rochdale Hornet 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Keighley Cougars 15:00
London Skolars v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
Oldham v Dewsbury Rams 20:00

THURSDAY, APRIL 16
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Gateshead Thunder v Sheffield Eagles 19:30

FRIDAY, APRIL 17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Batley Bulldogs 19:30

SATURDAY, APRIL 18
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Leigh Centurions 19:00

SUNDAY, APRIL 19
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Doncaster RLFC 15:00
Whitehaven v Featherstone Rovers 15:00

THURSDAY, APRIL 23
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Leigh Centurions v Featherstone Rovers 19:30

SATURDAY, APRIL 25
CHAMPIONSHIP
Barrow Raiders v Batley Bulldogs 18:30

SUNDAY, APRIL 26
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Gateshead Thunder 15:00
Doncaster RLFC v Toulouse Olympique 14:00
Sheffield Eagles v Widnes Vikings 16:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v London Skolars 15:00
Workington Town v York City Knights 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Keighley Cougars v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
Oldham v Swinton Lions 15:00

THURSDAY, APRIL 30
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Featherstone Rovers v Halifax RLFC 19:30

FRIDAY, MAY 1
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Barrow Raiders 20:00
Gateshead Thunder v Doncaster RLFC 19:30

SUNDAY, MAY 3
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Whitehaven 19:00

MONDAY, MAY 4
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Leigh Centurions 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v Dewsbury Rams 15:00
York City Knights v Keighley Cougars 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Workington Town 15:00
London Skolars v Oldham 15:00

THURSDAY, MAY 7
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Whitehaven v Widnes Vikings 15:00

FRIDAY, MAY 8
CHAMPIONSHIP
Sheffield Eagles v Featherstone Rovers 20:00

SATURDAY, MAY 9
CHAMPIONSHIP
Barrow Raiders v Gateshead Thunder 18:30

SUNDAY, MAY 10
CHAMPIONSHIP
Doncaster RLFC v Batley Bulldogs 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Halifax RLFC 15:00

THURSDAY, MAY 14
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Leigh Centurions v Widnes Vikings 19:30

SATURDAY, MAY 16
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Barrow Raiders 19:00

SUNDAY, MAY 17
CHAMPIONSHIP
Featherstone Rovers v Doncaster RLFC 15:00
Gateshead Thunder v Whitehaven 15:00
Halifax RLFC v Sheffield Eagles 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v York City Knights 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
Keighley Cougars v Swinton Lions 15:00
Workington Town v London Skolars 14:00
Oldham v Hunslet Hawks 15:00

THURSDAY, MAY 21
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Doncaster RLFC v Halifax RLFC 19:30

SATURDAY, MAY 23
CHAMPIONSHIP
Sheffield Eagles v Toulouse Olympique 18:00
Barrow Raiders v Featherstone Rovers 18:30
Widnes Vikings v Gateshead Thunder 18:00

SUNDAY, MAY 24
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Whitehaven 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v Oldham 15:00
Workington Town v Dewsbury Rams 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Keighley Cougars 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
London Skolars v York City Knights 15:00

THURSDAY, MAY 28
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Featherstone Rovers v Leigh Centurions 19:30

SATURDAY, MAY 30
CHAMPIONSHIP
Gateshead Thunder v Toulouse Olympique 18:00
Barrow Raiders v Sheffield Eagles 18:30

SUNDAY, MAY 31
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Widnes Vikings 15:00
Whitehaven v Doncaster RLFC 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
York City Knights v Dewsbury Rams 15:00
Keighley Cougars v Workington Town 15:00
London Skolars v Hunslet Hawks 15:00

SATURDAY, JUNE 6
NORTHERN RAIL CUP QUARTER-FINALS

SUNDAY, JUNE 7
NORTHERN RAIL CUP QUARTER-FINALS

THURSDAY, JUNE 11
CHAMPIONSHIP ONE (TV)
Dewsbury Rams v Keighley Cougars 19:30

SATURDAY, JUNE 13
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Featherstone Rovers 18:00
Toulouse Olympique v Batley Bulldogs 20:00

SUNDAY, JUNE 14
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Barrow Raiders 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Gateshead Thunder 15:00
Sheffield Eagles v Whitehaven 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
Workington Town v Swinton Lions 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v York City Knights 15:00

SATURDAY, JUNE 20
NORTHERN RAIL CUP SEMI-FINAL

SUNDAY, JUNE 21
NORTHERN RAIL CUP SEMI-FINAL

THURSDAY, JUNE 25
CHAMPIONSHIP ONE (TV)
York City Knights v Oldham 19:30

SATURDAY, JUNE 27
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Featherstone Rovers 20:00

SUNDAY, JUNE 28
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Barrow Raiders 15:00
Doncaster RLFC v Sheffield Eagles 15:00
Gateshead Thunder v Halifax RLFC 15:00
Whitehaven v Leigh Centurions 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Workington Town 15:00
Keighley Cougars v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
London Skolars v Dewsbury Rams 15:00

THURSDAY, JULY 2
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Barrow Raiders v Toulouse Olympique 19:30

FRIDAY, JULY 3
CHAMPIONSHIP
Sheffield Eagles v Batley Bulldogs 20:00
Halifax RLFC v Leigh Centurions 20:00

SATURDAY, JULY 4
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Doncaster RLFC 18:00

SUNDAY, JULY 5
CHAMPIONSHIP
Featherstone Rovers v Gateshead Thunder 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Workington Town v Oldham 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v York City Knights 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Swinton Lions 15:00
Keighley Cougars v London Skolars 15:00

SUNDAY, JULY 12
NORTHERN RAIL CUP FINAL (at Blackpool)

THURSDAY, JULY 16
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Whitehaven v Barrow Raiders 19:30

SATURDAY, JULY 18
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Halifax RLFC 20:00

SUNDAY, JULY 19
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Doncaster RLFC 15:00
Gateshead Thunder v Widnes Vikings 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Sheffield Eagles 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
York City Knights v Workington Town 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Dewsbury Rams 15:00
London Skolars v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
Oldham v Keighley Cougars 15:00

THURSDAY, JULY 23
CHAMPIONSHIP (TV)
Sheffield Eagles v Gateshead Thunder 19:30

FRIDAY, JULY 24
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Featherstone Rovers 20:00

SATURDAY, JULY 25
CHAMPIONSHIP
Barrow Raiders v Leigh Centurions 18:30
Toulouse Olympique v Widnes Vikings 20:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Blackpool Panthers v London Skolars 15:00

SUNDAY, JULY 26
CHAMPIONSHIP
Doncaster RLFC v Whitehaven 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Swinton Lions 15:00
Workington Town v Keighley Cougars 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Oldham 15:00

THURSDAY, JULY 30
CHAMPIONSHIP ONE (TV)
Keighley Cougars v Dewsbury Rams 19:30

FRIDAY, JULY 31
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Halifax RLFC 19:30

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1
CHAMPIONSHIP
Featherstone Rovers v Toulouse Olympique 18:00
Gateshead Thunder v Batley Bulldogs 19:00

SUNDAY, AUGUST 2
CHAMPIONSHIP
Leigh Centurions v Doncaster RLFC 15:00
Whitehaven v Sheffield Eagles 15:00
CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v York City Knights 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
London Skolars v Workington Town 15:00
Oldham v Rochdale Hornets 15:00

THURSDAY, AUGUST 6
CHAMPIONSHIP ONE (TV)
Oldham v London Skolars 19:30

SATURDAY, AUGUST 8
CHAMPIONSHIP
Toulouse Olympique v Gateshead Thunder 20:00

SUNDAY, AUGUST 9
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Whitehaven 15:00
Batley Bulldogs v Sheffield Eagles 15:00
Doncaster RLFC v Barrow Raiders 15:00
Featherstone Rovers v Widnes Vikings 15:00

FRIDAY, AUGUST 14
CHAMPIONSHIP
Sheffield Eagles v Halifax RLFC 20:00

SATURDAY, AUGUST 15
CHAMPIONSHIP
Leigh Centurions v Toulouse Olympique 18:00
Barrow Raiders v Widnes Vikings 18:30

SUNDAY, AUGUST 16
CHAMPIONSHIP
Doncaster RLFC v Featherstone Rovers 15:00
Whitehaven v Batley Bulldogs 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Keighley Cougars 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Oldham 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Workington Town 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Swinton Lions 15:00
York City Knights v London Skolars 14:00

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Whitehaven 18:00
Toulouse Olympique v Doncaster RLFC 20:00

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23
CHAMPIONSHIP
Batley Bulldogs v Halifax RLFC 15:00
Featherstone Rovers v Barrow Raiders 15:00
Gateshead Thunder v Leigh Centurions 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Swinton Lions v London Skolars 15:00
Workington Town v Blackpool Panthers 15:00
Dewsbury Rams v Rochdale Hornets 15:00
Keighley Cougars v Hunslet Hawks 15:00
Oldham v York City Knights 15:00

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28
CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
London Skolars v Keighley Cougars 18:30

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5
CHAMPIONSHIP
Halifax RLFC v Toulouse Olympique 18:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
York City Knights v Swinton Lions 18:00

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6
CHAMPIONSHIP
Doncaster RLFC v Gateshead Thunder 15:00
Featherstone Rovers v Batley Bulldogs 15:00
Leigh Centurions v Whitehaven 15:00
Sheffield Eagles v Barrow Raiders 15:00

CHAMPIONSHIP ONE
Rochdale Hornets v Workington Town 15:00
Blackpool Panthers v Dewsbury Rams 15:00
Hunslet Hawks v Oldham 15:00

FRIDAY, JULY 31
CHAMPIONSHIP
Widnes Vikings v Halifax RLFC 19:30

ALL KICK-OFFS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

WHAT A RESULT!



NORTHERN RAIL CUP 2009

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 POOL ONE

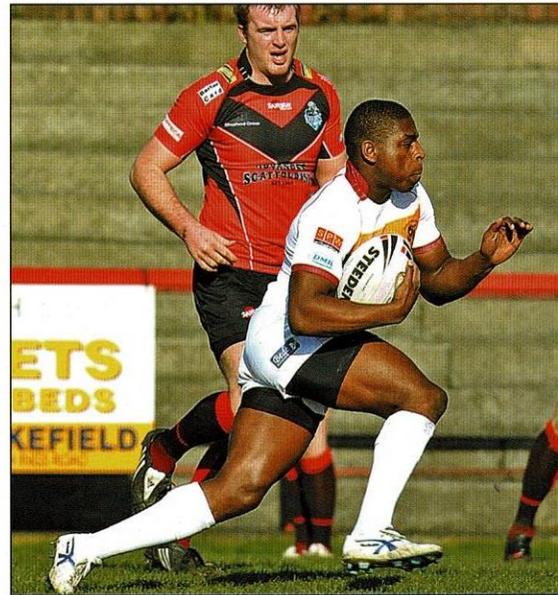
Halifax 40
Tries: Patterson, James, Goddard 2, Gleeson, Black, Royston. Goals: Haley 6.
Barrow Raiders 10
Tries: Campbell, L Finch. Goal: Noone.
Half Time: 18-0
Attendance: 1,687.

Keighley Cougars 44
Tries: Mapals 2, Duffy, Lowe, Cartledge, Pursglove, Presley 3. Goals: Jones 4.
Hunslet Hawks 6
Try: Brook. Goal: Sheldrake.
Half Time: 20-0.
Attendance: 826.

Oldham 22
Tries: O'Connor, Ballard, l'Anson 2. Goals: Ballard 3.
Sheffield Eagles 34
Tries: Edwards, Boothroyd, Woodcock, Brooks, McDonald.
Goals: Woodcock 7.
Half Time: 2-6.
Attendance: 1,173.

Hornets RL 28
Tries: Mayberry, Ainscough, Walker, Raftery, Gillam, Donoghue. Goals: Corcoran 2.
Blackpool Panthers 26
Tries: McCully 2, Munroe, Keavney, Leather. Goals: Leather 3.
Half Time: 12-6.
Attendance: 371.

POOL TWO
Batley Bulldogs 40



Jon Simpson was among the tryscorers for Batley against York

Tries: Flanagan, Simpson, Barlow 2, Gallagher, Cardiss 2. Goals: Flanagan 6.
York City Knights 28
Tries: Hughes 3, P March, Oakes. Goals: A Mitchell 4.
Half Time: 34-12.
Attendance: 788.
Featherstone Rovers 26
Tries: A Kain, Pryce, Hardman, McLocklan. Goals: Dickens 4, McLocklan.

Dewsbury Rams 28
Tries: Lingard, Bostock, Buchanan, Emmett, Epati 2. Goals: P Walker 2.
Half Time: 8-10.
Attendance: 1,470.

London Skolars 12
Tries: Bloom, Aggrey 2.
Doncaster 40
Tries: Jones, Speake, Bassinder, Cody 4.
Goals: Speake 6.

Half Time: 4-18.
Attendance: 213.

Swinton Lions 26
Tries: Wood, Moana 2, Hamilton, McClurg. Goals: Sneyd 3.
Leigh Centurions 34
Tries: Donlan, Hill, Watson, Maden, Stanton, Ridyard. Goals: Ridyard 5.
Half Time: 4-26.
Attendance: 851.

Whitehaven 26
Tries: Calvert, Mattinson, McNally, Patrick. Goals: M Jackson 2, McNally 3.
Workington 12
Tries: Pedley, Frazer. Goals: Forber 2.
Half Time: 6-12.
Attendance: 1,346.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21
POOL ONE

Widnes Vikings 40
Tries: Yates, Kohe-Love, Strong, Gannon 3, Fletcher. Goals: Yates 6.
Gateshead Thunder 18
Tries: Thorman, Sanderson, Arundel 2. Goals: Branighan.
Half Time: 18-6.
Attendance: 3,001.

WED, FEBRUARY 18
POOL ONE
Oldham 54
Tries: St Hilaire, Halliwell 2, Kerr, Ballard 2, J Coyle 2, Goulden 2. Goals: Ballard 7.
Hornets RL 4
Try: Walker.
Half Time: 22-4.
Attendance: 1,028.

POOL TWO
Batley Bulldogs 18
Tries: Flanagan 3, Buttery 2. Goals: Flanagan 3.
Doncaster 22
Tries: Cook, Divorty, Colton, Steen. Goals: Speak, Briggs 2.
Half Time: 12-6.
Attendance: 533.

Featherstone Rovers 10
Tries: Haughey, Steel. Goal: Harris.
Leigh Centurions 6
Try: Durbin. Goal: Ridyard.
Half Time: 0-6.
Attendance: 1,487.

York City Knights 36
Tries: Ratcliffe, Oakes, P March, McHugh, M Mitchell 2, Clough. Goals: Ratcliffe, Knight 3.
Whitehaven 6
Try: C Smith. Goal: McNally.
Half Time: 12-6
Attendance: 685.

STATS SERVICE



NORTHERN RAIL CUP 2009 TABLES

	POOL ONE									
	P	W	D	L	B	F	A	PD	Pts	
Keighley Cougars	3	2	0	1	1	98	42	56	7	
Oldham	3	2	0	1	1	98	58	40	7	
Halifax	2	2	0	0	0	78	20	58	6	
Sheffield Eagles	3	2	0	1	0	90	82	8	6	
Widnes Vikings	2	1	0	1	1	60	40	20	4	
B'pool Panthers	2	1	0	1	1	42	42	0	4	
Barrow Raiders	2	1	0	1	0	64	52	12	3	
Gateshead Thunder	3	1	0	2	0	82	98	-16	3	
Hornets RL	3	1	0	2	0	44	134	-90	3	
Hunslet Hawks	3	0	0	3	0	32	120	-88	0	

	POOL TWO									
	P	W	D	L	B	F	A	PD	Pts	
Leigh Centurions	3	2	0	1	1	114	42	72	7	
York City Knights	3	2	0	1	1	98	56	42	7	
Feath'stone Rovers	3	2	0	1	1	68	40	28	7	
Dewsbury Rams	2	2	0	0	0	78	26	52	6	
Whitehaven	3	2	0	1	0	84	78	6	6	
Doncaster	3	2	0	1	0	68	62	6	6	
Batley Bulldogs	3	1	0	2	1	88	112	-24	4	
Swinton Lions	2	0	0	2	1	26	84	-58	1	
Workington Town	2	0	0	2	0	22	60	-38	0	
London Skolars	2	0	0	2	0	18	114	-96	0	

3 pts for win, 2 for draw, 1 for a bonus point for losing by 12pts or less

PLAYER/CLUB	Leading points scorers			Leading try scorers		
	T	G	Tot	T	G	Tot
Jon Presley (Keighley)			50	6		6
Mark McCully (Blackpool)			36	4		4
Kane Epati (Dewsbury)			30	4		4
Jamie Durbin (Leigh)			26	4		4
Andy Ballard (Oldham)			26	4		4
George Flanagan (Batley)	3	12	36	3		3
Jonny Woodcock (Eagles)		15	30	3		3
Pat Walker (Dewsbury)		13	26	3		3
Jon Presley (Keighley)	6		24	3		3
Danny Jones (Keighley)		11	22	3		3
Ian Mort (Leigh)	1	9	22	3		3
Martin Ridyard (Leigh)	2	6	20	3		3
Gregg McNally	2	6	20	3		3
Paul Noone (Barrow)		10	20	3		3
Andy Speake (Dons)	1	7	18	3		3
Luke Branighan (G'head)	1	7	18	3		3
Adam Mitchell (York)		9	18	3		3
Mark McCully (B'pool)	4		16	3		3
Kane Epati (Dewsbury)	4		16	3		3
Jamie Durbin (Leigh)	4		16	3		3
Mike Cody (Doncaster)	4		16	3		3
John Oakes (York)			16	3		3

NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE 2008

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Salford City Reds	18	12	3	3	614	302	312	45
Celtic Crusaders	18	12	0	6	511	391	120	40
Halifax RLFC	18	11	1	6	634	514	120	38
Leigh Centurions	18	10	0	8	448	448	0	34
Whitehaven	18	10	0	8	420	399	21	32
Widnes Vikings*	18	10	2	6	453	410	43	30
Sheffield Eagles	18	8	1	9	425	530	-105	29
Featherstone R	18	6	1	11	452	515	-63	26
Batley Bulldogs	18	5	0	13	387	538	-151	23
Dewsbury Rams (R)	18	2	0	16	315	612	-297	13

*Widnes deducted nine points for going into administration

NATIONAL LEAGUE TWO 2008

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Dif	Pts
Gateshead Thunder (P)	22	19	0	3	767	415	352	59
Barrow Raiders (P)	22	16	0	6	703	375	328	52
Oldham	22	17	0	5	716	456	260	52
Doncaster (P)	22	15	0	7	672	426	246	48
Keighley Cougars	22	15	0	7	611	519	92	48
York City Knights	22	11	1	10	740	540	200	42
Rochdale Hornets	22	10	1	11	715	610	105	36
Workington Town	22	6	0	16	512	628	-116	28
Blackpool Panthers	22	7	1	14	472	828	-356	25
Swinton Lions	22	6	0	16	482	777	-295	22
London Skolars	22	4	1	17	449	823	-374	20
Hunslet Hawks	22	4	0	18	336	778	-442	17

NL TOP SCORERS 2008

TRIES (All matches)	
James Nixon (Barrow - pictured)	35
Paul White (Salford)	28
Martin Ainscough (Rochdale)	28
Luke Gale (Doncaster)	27
Richard Myler (Salford)	25

GOALS (All matches)	
Graham Holroyd (Halifax - pictured)	156
Mick Nany (Oldham)	139
Dan Russell (Gateshead)	129 (1)
Carl Sneyd (Rochdale)	110

(1) Drop goals included in total

POINTS (All matches)	
Mick Nany (Oldham)	362
Graham Holroyd (Halifax)	340
Dan Russell (Gateshead)	293
Carl Sneyd (Rochdale)	268
John Wilshere (Salford)	252
Carl Forber (Workington)	243

