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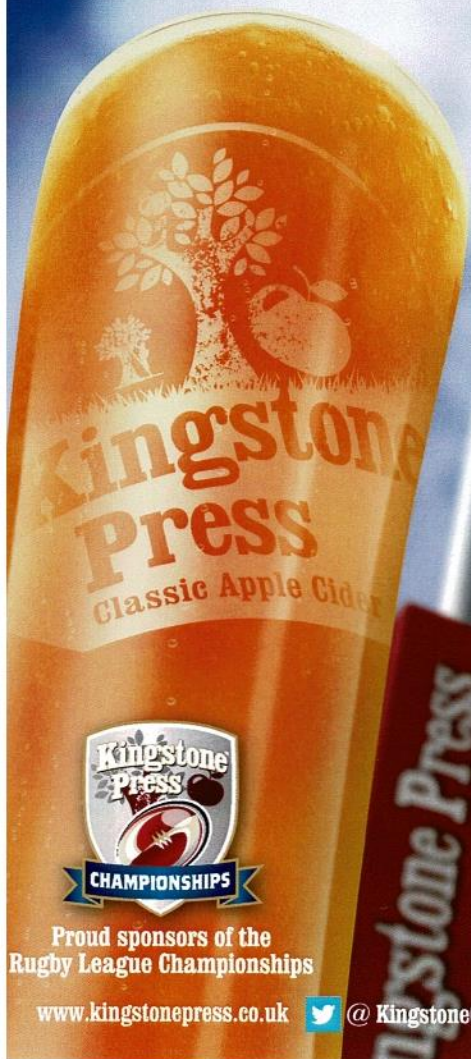
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X --- O X O
NOBBY'S NOTES
O X --- O X

Hello and welcome to today's game at the Whitebank Stadium against South Wales Scorpions.

We have already played the Scorpions twice this season and both games have turned out to be extremely tough and gone down to the wire. The Scorpions have some very good players and will be well coached by Dave Clark. Having Wigan RLFC as your dual reg team must be a huge advantage when you see how many younger players Shaun Wayne is willing to use on a weekly basis in Super League against some of the best players in the world. It's going to be a tough game today and only a 100% from the Oldham players will be acceptable to get the result we are looking for.

As before it's seemed an age since we were playing in front of our home crowd at Whitebank. Our two previous games have been long journeys at Gateshead Thunder and Oxford and both have challenged us in different ways.

Last week's game at Oxford was very intense from start to finish, probably due to the obvious connection with ex Oldham players and ex Oldham coach Tony Benson. The penalty count was high from Oxford and discipline unfortunately wasn't on show but our lads kept their heads (excuse the pun) and played some quality rugby to win the game. Dale Bloomfield had his best game so far this season and came up with some

quality plays in offence and defence which had a huge effect on the result. I also have to mention Phil Joy, who seemed to become a target for the Oxford players, but took it in his stride and showed his toughness as well as quality. After the defeat at home by Oxford it was really pleasing to see how our squad of players handled the pressure of the game to beat Oxford and carry on the winning run.

The Gateshead game was a different challenge altogether. Professionalism is always the key to playing teams that are not performing too well in the league and sometimes a drop in performance can occur when you are expecting a win instead of earning a win. Fortunately the Oldham players

apply themselves to every training session and every game at the highest level and the Gateshead game was no exception. The lads started the game very well and scored some quality tries to end up with a half time score of 32 - 6.

The second half was very stop start but the players managed to score another three tries to win the game 44 - 12 and notch up another win.

I hope the game today is enjoyable to watch and the crowd turn out in the Oldham sunshine, two words that very rarely get used together. We hope to see you for our next crucial game at home against North Wales Crusaders on the 28th July. All the best.

Scott Naylor
(Nobby)



Behind Closed Doors with...



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Who are your heroes or people you look up to?

George Best I was lucky to see him play

If you could invite 2 people to dinner dead or alive who would they be?

Both my grandad's I never knew my mum's dad as he died when I was only a few weeks old and my dad's dad could tell you a good story

If your house was to be hit by an earthquake what would be the first thing you'd save?

My wife and children. You can never replace the people you love

What's your funniest moment at the club so far?

I remember a coach falling over the drinks rack and hitting the light switch putting the dressing room into darkness then falling over them again to switch the lights back on

Which TV programme would you never miss?

Top Gear

What was the last book you read?

Build Muscle without weights by David Nordmark

What's your favourite type of music?

I like most music but I'm big fan of Ian Drury

Who's the biggest pain in training?

Me

Finally.....Tell me a secret.

That would be telling (Coward!! Editor)

CHRIS' COMMENTS

Well here we are five games to go and a win today sees us go to the top of Championship One albeit that North Wales will have games in hand.

The recent results have seen us improve our position in the league with us being able to maintain form whilst others around us have slipped back particularly in the last couple of weeks when results have not necessarily been those expected.

Our own form has been good however and although we are not as fluent as we would like to be sometimes there are different factors why that happens but despite this we have still played well enough to gain good results away from home in difficult circumstances for different reasons.

Last week was a case in point - a long journey down to Oxford, sweltering heat and plenty of people lining up against us with a point to prove and having beaten us earlier in the season. From a personal point of view however it was never in doubt. I think one of our undoubted strengths this season has been our levels of fitness and in heat like that we were always going to be a force to be reckoned with and that was the case.

As Scott had mentioned in the build up to the game we are a very different side now to that which lost

two of the opening three league matches and there is no doubt that the lads have a belief - but certainly not an arrogance - that will take some stopping.

That belief is tempered though with the knowledge that if we turn up on any given day and are not prepared mentally or physically then we will struggle no matter who the opposition is.

Today is a classic example of that, with a win taking us to the top of the table, we have a huge incentive to win but we are only too well aware of how hard our match was down in Neath recently and despite South Wales having lost two matches at home since, that makes them dangerous opposition as they will no doubt be looking to put things right today.

Over the last few seasons we have had some tough battles with South Wales and we are prepared for that again but if we want to achieve our goals this season we have to be up for that challenge and ready to overcome it.

Let's hope more Oldham fans are here today to watch the game as we really do need people to get behind the team. The support we have had at every away game so far this season has been outstanding with the lads regularly commenting on it.

Get behind the lads and be loud and proud.



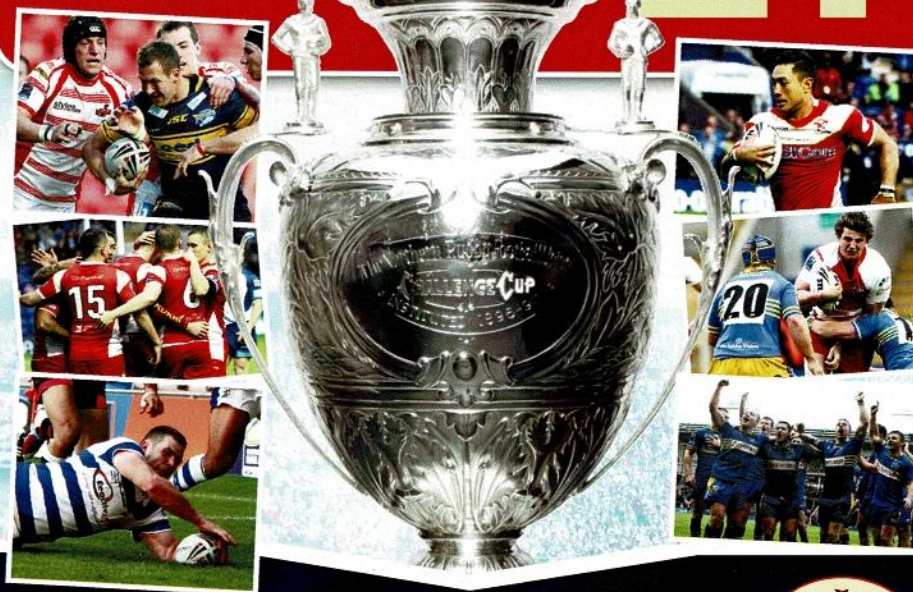
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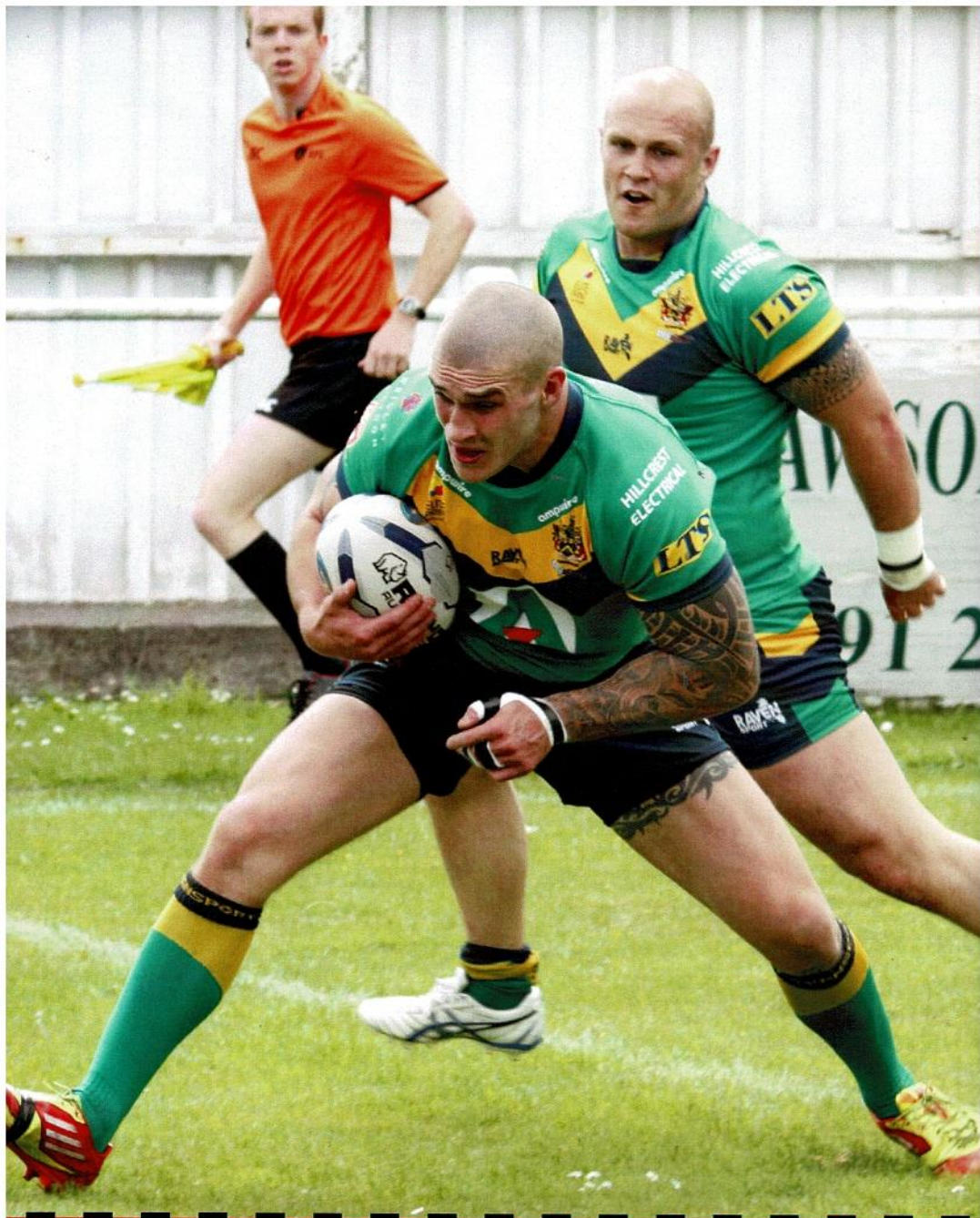
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No. 21 - DAVE COOKSON

AUTOGRAPH

Behind Closed Doors with... **DAVE COOKSON**



Who are your heroes or people you look up to?

The Rock (Dwayne Johnson)

Do you play any other sports and if so do you excel in them?

The other sport I excel in is competitive eating! I am currently unbeaten by any challenge put before me and yes I can eat two full chickens in 16 min, there IS video evidence!

What is the highlight of your career so far?

Representing GB twice.

If you could invite 2 people to dinner dead or alive who would they be?

The mother and the Mrs, got to keep them sweet so jobs get done.

If your house was to be hit by an earthquake what would be the first thing you'd save?

My man chair!

Who's the funniest of your team-mates and why?

Hobbo, he is a funny guy.

Which TV programme would you never miss?

The moonshiners on Discovery Channel.

What was the last book you read?

Electrical installation for dummies.

What's your favourite type of music?

Anything with a dirty beat.

How do you relax after a match?

Bubble bath, Beer and a chicken Saagwala.

Finally.....Tell me a secret.

I can wiggle my ears simultaneously or individually ;)

ORSA SQUAD STRENGTHENER HELPS BRING IN TWO NEW PROPS ON LOAN

TWO prop forwards whom we have brought in on loan, Nathan Mason and Matthew Haggarty, may be making their home debuts in today's game against South Wales Scorpions.

The club would like to place on record its appreciation of the support of ORSA (Oldham Roughyeds' Supporters' Association) for helping to fund these two signings through the association's Squad Strengthener scheme.

"We were delighted to help, that's what Squad Strengthener is for," commented ORSA chairman, Nigel Marland.

Said Oldham RLFC chairman Chris Hamilton: "This isn't the first time Squad Strengthener has come to our assistance in bringing in new players. Our grateful thanks to all concerned."

NATHAN MASON: Highly-rated by Huddersfield Giants, the 19-year-old Oldham-born front-rower, formerly a junior at Waterhead, is here on a month's loan and has already played in two away games at Gateshead and Oxford.

He comes highly recommended by the Giants' head coach Paul Anderson, who played in the same star-spangled Bradford Bulls side as Oldham boss Scott Naylor between 1999 and 2003.

They were team mates on many big occasions, including three Challenge Cup finals at Twickenham, Murrayfield and the Millennium Stadium.

"We've kept in touch ever since," said Scott. "We often chat about players. Nathan was one of the young players we have spoken about in the past."

Nathan played at Waterhead from the age of 10 to 16 when he signed for the Giants. After three years there, he has recently signed a first-team contract and has become a full-time professional.

Said Mason: "I've been playing for the under-19s at Huddersfield, but I can't wait for this new challenge, especially in my home town. It excites me."



Nathan Mason

MATTHEW HAGGARTY: A Leigh lad and a product of Leigh Miners, 22-year-old Matthew turned pro at the age of 17 when he signed for Salford, where he was coached by Lee 'Spanner' Spencer at under-18s and under-20s and by Scott Naylor in the reserves.

Like Nathan, he has come initially on a one-month loan agreement with Barrow Raiders, whom he joined for the start of this season after originally leaving Salford to spend about 18 months at Whitehaven, where he played in the same 'Haven team as Lewis Palfrey.

In his early days as a pro at Salford he grew up alongside the likes of Richard Lepori, Jon Ford, Adam Files and Mark Hobson, so he saw plenty of familiar faces when he first turned up at Whitebank.

He had his first game for Roughyeds in our 22-4 win at Oxford last Sunday, coming off the bench with Nathan Mason to replace the starting props Phil Joy and Michael Ward.

"With Scott and 'Spanner' in charge and with so many of my former mates in the team it was very much like old times," said Matthew. "I really enjoyed it and I'm eagerly looking forward to helping the club achieve its promotion goal over the next few weeks."



Matthew Haggarty

Exiled Roughyed

IT has been fascinating on our travels this season to arrive at far-flung outposts, some of them new this year, and find exiled Oldhamers, who have been delighted to see Roughyeds in action in their respective parts of the country.

At our games in Gloucestershire, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire we have been supported by so-called 'locals' with broad Lancashire accents, many of them sporting Oldham colours, writes ROGER HALSTEAD.

To all those people, too numerous to name, the club was delighted to see you and, for a short while at least, to take a few steps down Memory Lane.

Past players, too, have taken the opportunity to drop in and take a look at the present-day Oldham side. When we played at Hemel Stags it was good to meet up again with David Parker, captain of the 1964 Challenge Cup semi-final side, who has lived for years only half an hour's drive from the Hemel ground.

More recently, I arrived at the South Shields FC ground for our game against Gateshead Thunder and was told there was somebody in the bar who wanted to see me.



Guess who? Hugh Waddell, that great Oldham prop of the late 1980s, who played 54 games for Roughyeds after signing as an unknown from Blackpool Borough and ending up starring for Great Britain in a glorious Test win against the Aussies in Sydney. He went on to play for Leeds but, as he assured me when we had our latest little chat the other week, he never wanted to leave Watersheddings.

All he ever asked for, he said, was to be placed on the same financial footing as certain other players in the team of that time --- a request, he said, which was declined before he was told he was being shipped out to Leeds.

Hugh's rise to stardom made a stunning story. Originally a Union forward from Burton-on-Trent, he went to Blackpool on holiday, happened to see Blackpool Borough adverts outside Borough Park, walked in and asked for trial and was taken on.

If memory serves correct, he had a blinder for Blackpool in a cup tie against Oldham, who promptly made overtures to start the ball rolling for his signature.

Once at Watersheddings he went from strength to strength and was picked for the 1988 Great Britain tour Down Under. He didn't make the Test side for the first two Tests, which ended in Aussie victories, but for the third Test on July 9 at Sydney Football Stadium he got his big chance at blind-side prop in a front row which also featured Kevin Ward of Castleford and Paul Hulme of Widnes.

Britain hadn't won a Test for years, but they won this one alright 26-12, and Hughie had a blinder, watched from

the stands by a large party of Oldham schoolboys, led by Iain MacCorquodale, Eric Fitzsimons and the late Fred Laughton, and also including yours truly. A young Mike Ford was also in the touring party but didn't play in any of the Tests.

We roared every time Hughie got the ball and we celebrated an astonishing GB victory, which Robert Gate summed up thus in his book: 'The Struggle for the Ashes':

"It was the day Britain kicked Ashes football back into life. British fans in the stadium and millions viewing the telecast back in Britain could scarcely believe their eyes as the Lions gave a performance bordering on the miraculous."

Memories of that smashing day on the other side of the world came flooding back when we met again in South Shields

Hugh lives in Carlisle now and he sends his best wishes to all supporters of the Roughyeds, whom he hopes to meet up with again, perhaps next year.



Great Britain 1988 Lions (Hugh Waddell; Third row from bottom, second from left)

Lee Spencer, our assistant coach, is urging the town to get behind the Roughyeds' young players in their final push for promotion.

Average age of 14 of the 17 players who won at Oxford on Sunday was 21 and Spencer believes that, despite their youth, they are good enough to go all the way.

There are two routes to promotion --- by finishing top of Championship One or by winning a play-off featuring the five clubs finishing second to sixth inclusive.

Currently second, six points clear of third-placed Hemel, Oldham will hit top spot for the first time if they beat South Wales Scorpions at Whitebank today to make it nine wins from their last 11 league outings.

Spencer, or 'Spanner' as he is known in rugby league, is head coach Scott Naylor's No 2 and a man who has spent years working for the RFL on youth development programmes at elite level.

He said: "It's within our grasp to take this club forward to the next division in our first year here.

"Within the perimeters of our brief as coaches we have completely changed the culture of the club on the playing side.

"That isn't a criticism of previous coaching regimes here, but a statement of fact to show we are doing things in a totally different way.

"Both Scott (Naylor) and I believe fervently in a youth policy and we see it as the path to follow in our drive to push for promotion and, if successful, to consolidate in the Championship next year."

Both Naylor and Spencer are under contract for another year.

Over the years Spencer has worked with leading RFL coaches in elite player development, among them Dave Elliott, Steve Crooks, Alan Hunte, Mike Rush, Chris Chapman, Stuart Barrow and Stuart Wilkinson.

He added: "The first team and the under-20s train together and we regularly have up to 50 players in



action at Oasis Academy on Hollins Road.

"We've already got three under-20s, Aaron Hall, Sam Singleton and Danny Rasool training with the senior squad and that will benefit them enormously next year.

"We are building for the future, but money is tight and we could do so much more if we had more Oldham people coming through the turnstiles to support an Oldham team which they can be proud of.

"The town is steeped in rugby league, but that isn't reflected in Whitebank attendances even though we have a realistic chance of pushing for promotion and the boys are proud to be wearing the Oldham jersey.

"We probably have the youngest squad in the division, but we are going well because the players believe in us and we believe in them.

"We truly believe we are on the verge of something big, and I think the stay-away supporters would see that if they came to look for themselves."

He said all clubs were struggling financially in the current climate and added: "Our chairman, Chris Hamilton, is running a tight ship regarding finance, but the club needs more income if it is to progress at the rate we would all like to see.

"I'm not holding out a begging bowl; I'm merely flying the flag for a team of young, fit, talented athletes who have done us proud already this year and who rightly deserve the town's backing as they stretch out to attain their season-long goals on the last few laps."

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Behind Closed Doors with...

MICHAEL WARD



No. 19 - MICHAEL WARD

AUTOGRAPH

Who are your heroes or people you look up to?

Mr Hill, my primary school teacher. The time and effort he put into helping me succeed in sport and education is one of the reasons I became a teacher. He does a great amount of charity work and is an excellent role model.

Do you play any other sports and if so do you excel in them?

I have played for Lancashire rugby union from U15s-U20s and tried my hand at water polo, though that was more for recreation.

What is the highlight of your career so far?

Playing against Hull FC in the Challenge Cup at the KC Stadium

If you could invite 2 people to dinner dead or alive who would they be?

Mohammed Ali and Dara O'Briain

If your house was to be hit by an earthquake what would be the first thing you'd save?

My head guard, gum shield and boots... And whatever is left in the fridge

Who's the funniest of your team-mates and why?

They're all a great bunch, but I'd have to say Phil Joy for his razor like wit.

Which TV programme would you never miss?

Phych

What was the last book you read?

Jo Boaler: Elephant in the classroom

What's your favourite type of music?

Anything from the 60's 70's and 80's

How do you relax after a match?

Chinese food and a film

Finally.....Tell me a secret.

I used to be a lifeguard



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(In memory of Nigel Newton)		The Green Army	1 Square
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OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB U20s FIXTURES & RESULTS

MARCH

U20	Friday 1st	Leigh Centurions	A	L 28 - 14
U20	Saturday 9th	Rochdale Hornets	A	L 26 - 12
U20	Saturday 23rd	South Wales	H	Postponed

APRIL

U20	Friday 5th	Rochdale Hornets	H	W 46 - 22
U20	Thursday 11th	Keighley	A	L 48 - 18
U20	Friday 26th	Featherstone	H	L 6 - 52

MAY

U20	Friday 3rd	Halifax	H	W 35 - 18
U20	Sunday 12th	Hemel	A	W 0 - 48
U20	Friday 17th	York	H	L 24 - 36

JUNE

U20	Thursday 6th	Rochdale	A	W 46 - 20
U20	Saturday 22nd	Hemel	H	Postponed

JULY

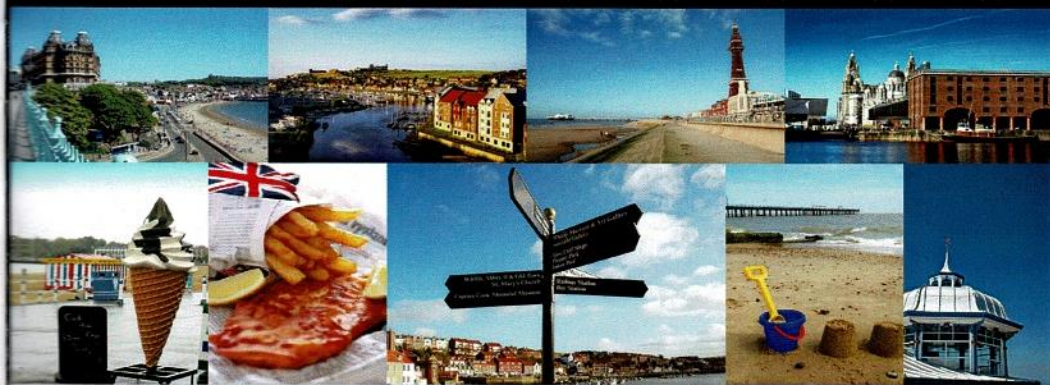
U20	Friday 12th	Salford	H	7:30pm
U20	Thursday 25th	York	A	8:00pm

AUGUST

U20	Friday 16th	York	H	8:00pm
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Southport	Monday 22 nd July	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.15pm
Whitby	Wednesday 24 th July	£16 pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
York	Monday 29 th July	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.00pm
Whitby	Wednesday 31 st July	£16 pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
Blackpool	Monday 5 th August	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.15pm
Llandudno	Friday 9 th August	£15 pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.45pm
Harrods	Monday 12 th August	£25pp	Departing 5.30am Back approx 9.30pm
Whitby	Wednesday 7 th & 14 th August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
Southport	Friday 16 th August	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.15pm
Liverpool	Monday 19 th August	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.10pm
Whitby	Wednesday 21 st August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
Bridlington	Monday 26 th August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.15pm
Stratford	Wednesday 28 th August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.00pm

Call in to book your places now or ring us on
0161 622 2130

* Please note these trips do not have a Chronicle course

PHIL'S NOTES

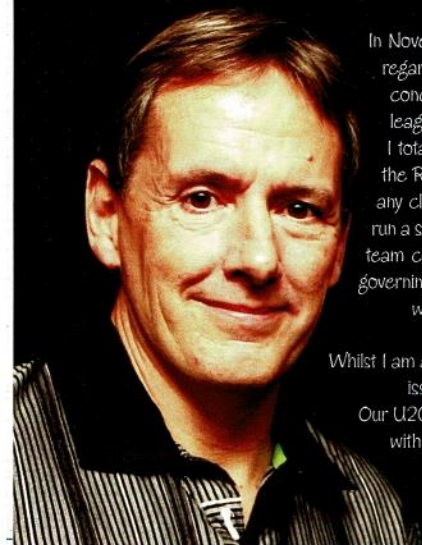
At the time of you reading these programme notes, we SHOULD have played Salford on Friday night which will have given us our first game in 7 weeks. This gap is totally unacceptable and how the fixture list has been compiled does not help our cause in producing an environment where players can become engaged in a meaningful and regular competition. While I do have some sympathy for the R.F.L. with some clubs electing to play more games than others, the far easier solution would be for our governing body to implement rather than merely give recommendations to how competitions should be delivered.

In November last year, Chris (Hamilton) and I attended a meeting at the RFL HQ in Leeds regarding structure at second team level. The RFL had carried out a strategic report which concluded that to guarantee player pathway below first team level the formation of an U23 league and the continuation of the U20 league at Super League level was the way forward. I totally agree with these findings but to recommend and not implement, the fault lies with the RFL to make these essential steps to safeguard our future. There is no financial gain for any club electing to run a second team or indeed any financial penalties for NOT electing to run a second team. Out of the 23 clubs below SL only 10 teams agreed to compete in a second team competition - that is over 50% who chose to go against the recommendation of our governing body (Sheffield Eagles and Featherstone Rovers compete in the S L U19's academy with Fev even in the U23's as well - to their credit without any additional funding).

Whilst I am a big believer in a democratic vote it would be good for the RFL to take the lead on this issue which would take away self interest from clubs for the good of the game.

Our U20's is run on a shoestring. We do not have the resources or incentives other clubs have within our 10 team league but we still can manage to put out a competitive side, week after week, so it does beg the question - if Oldham can do it why can't others.

Best wishes, Phil





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OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB FIXTURES & RESULTS

FEBRUARY				
SS	Sunday 10th	SALFORD SELECT	H	W 34 - 22
LC	Sunday 17th	LAW CUP	A	W 20 - 22
MARCH				
NRC	Sunday 3rd	NW CRUSADERS	A	L 48 - 12
NRC	Sunday 10th	ROCHDALE	H	W 26 - 10
NRC	Sunday 17th	GATESHEAD	H	W 34 - 16
NRC	Sunday 24th	SOUTH WALES	A	W 12 - 24
C1	Friday 29th	ROCHDALE	H	L 18 - 28
APRIL				
CC	Sunday 7th	HUNSLET CHALLENGE CUP ROUND 3	A	L 36 - 10
C1	Sunday 14th	GLOUCESTER	A	W 0 - 36
CC	Sunday 21st	CHALLENGE CUP ROUND 4		
C1	Sunday 28th	OXFORD	H	L 16 - 18
MAY				
C1	Sunday 5th	BYE		
C1	Sunday 12th	HEMEL	A	W 12 - 30
CC	Sunday 12th	CHALLENGE CUP ROUND 5		
NRC	Sunday 19th	NORTHERN RAIL CUP PLAY OFFS		
C1	Sunday 26th	GATESHEAD	H	W 54 - 16
JUNE				
C1	Sunday 2nd	LONDON	H	W 30 - 22
C1	Sunday 9th	NW CRUSADERS	A	L 22 - 20
C1	Sunday 16th	SOUTH WALES	A	W 32 - 36
NRC	Sunday 19th	NORTHERN RAIL CUP QUARTER FINALS		
C1	Sunday 23rd	HEMEL	A	W 26 - 18
C1	Sunday 30th	GATESHEAD	A	W 12 - 44
NRC	Sunday 30th	NORTHERN RAIL CUP SEMI FINALS		
JULY				
C1	Sunday 7th	OXFORD	A	W 4 - 22
CC	Sunday 14th	CHALLENGE CUP QUARTER FINAL		
C1	Sunday 14th	SOUTH WALES	H	3:00pm
NRC	Saturday 20th	NORTHERN RAIL CUP FINAL		
C1	Sunday 28th	NW CRUSADERS	H	3:00pm
AUGUST				
C1	Sunday 4th	LONDON	A	3:00pm
CC	Sunday 4th	CHALLENGE CUP SEMI FINALS		
C1	Sunday 11th	GLOUCESTER	H	3:00pm
C1	Thursday 15th	ROCHDALE	A	7:30pm
CC	Saturday 24th	CHALLENGE CUP FINAL		
SEPTEMBER				
C1	Sunday 1st	BYE		
C1	TBC	CHAMPIONSHIPS PLAY OFFS (Sunday 8th / 15th / 22nd)		
C1	Sunday 29th	CHAMPIONSHIPS GRAND FINAL		
OCTOBER				
SL	Saturday 5th	SUPER LEAGUE GRAND FINAL		