

# TODAY'S SQUADS

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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. Unfortunately it is our last home league game of the season. It's hard to believe that as a bunch of people we have been together since November 13th and playing since early February. They say time flies when you enjoy yourself and this is certainly the case with this bunch of players and staff.

The season so far has been outstanding and the way the players have applied themselves in training and in games is nothing short of amazing. The problem with sport is you are only as good as your last game and it will all be for nothing if we don't finish with a victory today against Gloucester and next Thursday against Rochdale at Spotland.

Our last two games against North Wales Crusaders and London Scholars were two of the hardest we have played this season. The game against Wales was a great day for the club in a lot of different ways. Firstly the performance from the lads was great to watch against the team that many people tipped for automatic promotion. The best part of the day was to see the crowd when we came through the tunnel for the start of the game. I firmly believe that the size of the crowd had a huge effect on the players and helped them

massively to defend the way they did in the second half to win the game comfortably. It was great to see over a thousand Roughyed fans watching their local team; hopefully it's the start of things to come.

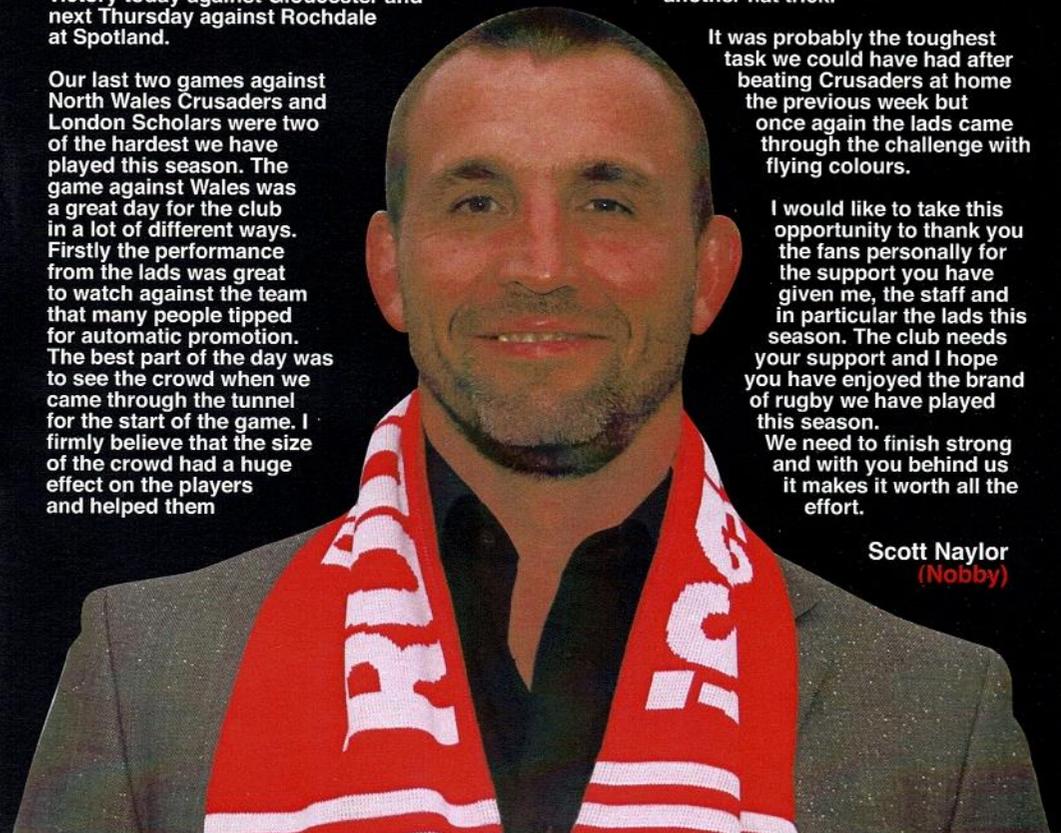
The game against London Skolars was a different challenge altogether. The journey is always the biggest factor and can mentally and physically affect you during the game. I think this showed in our performance resulting in dips in quality during both halves which allowed London to score 24 points against us, but when the lads were switched on they were unstoppable and scored some excellent tries resulting in Richard Lepori getting another hat trick.

It was probably the toughest task we could have had after beating Crusaders at home the previous week but once again the lads came through the challenge with flying colours.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you the fans personally for the support you have given me, the staff and in particular the lads this season. The club needs your support and I hope you have enjoyed the brand of rugby we have played this season.

We need to finish strong and with you behind us it makes it worth all the effort.

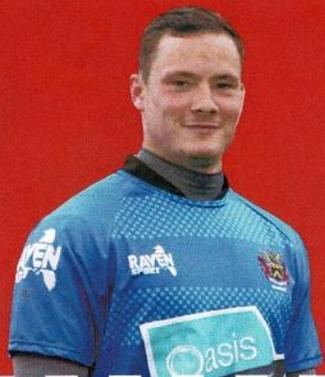
Scott Naylor  
(Nobby)



Behind Closed Doors with...

# Craig Thomas

Conditioner



Who are your heroes or people you look up to?

**My mum**

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

**Mohammed Ali and Joe Frazier**

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

**My Family**

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

**Shouting "Bar up Salford" during a reserve game against Salford Reds...  
The shame!**

Which TV programme would you never miss?

**The Big Bang Theory**

What was the last book you read?

**The Da Vinci Code by Dan Brown**

What's your favourite type of music?

**R'n'B, Hip Hop, House... Anything but heavy metal!**

Who's the biggest pain in training?

**SAM GEE... but he soon turns it around**

Finally.....Tell me a secret.

**Secrets are secret for a reason :) (Another yellow belly - Editor)**

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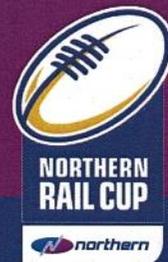
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for the Northern Rail Cup.



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# CHRIS' COMMENTS

Welcome to Whitebank for the final home game of the regular season.

As we play this match there is still a massive prize at stake for whoever wins the league title and from our perspective we are certainly happy to be very much in the mix and fighting to try and gain that success.

We had another tough trip to the capital last week but once again came away with the three points, although Scott was not entirely happy with some aspects of the performance.

That in itself shows the standards that have been set and everybody from coaching staff to players and support staff can take great credit from the performances to date this season.

Rugby league is a tough uncompromising sport but there can be no doubt whatsoever that we have the right sort of mentality and desire throughout the club to make sure we improve and continually get better and with that will hopefully come success on the field.

Today will provide a different kind of test for us and it's important that we maintain that focus against a Gloucester team that has shown gradual improvement over the season and particularly the last few weeks.



**Christopher Hamilton**  
Chairman

We will be creating a little bit of history today in this fixture as it will be the first ever meeting between the two clubs in Oldham.

After today we back up pretty quickly to play our first ever game in front of the Premier Sports TV cameras next Thursday in a local derby at Rochdale. We all know from experience what a difficult game that will be but we have earned the right to show to a bigger audience what this team is capable of and to show the magnificent support we will have at that game which will be the envy of many a club.

People travelled in numbers down to London last week and as ever really got behind the team.

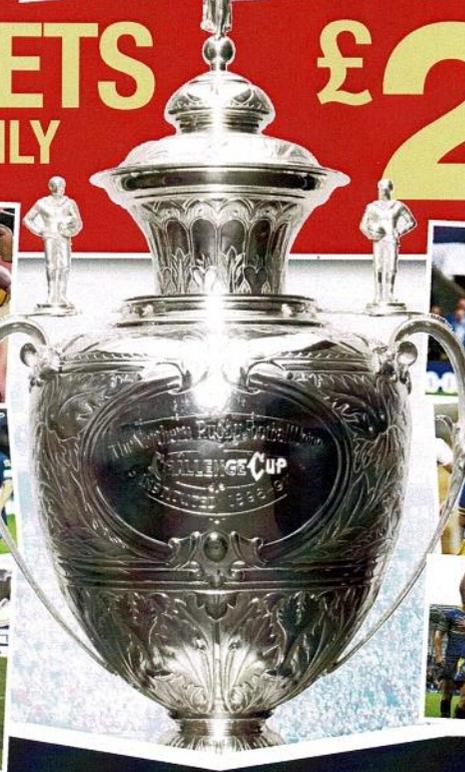
We know by now that your support makes a difference and please be loud and proud again today.

If we can win the next two fixtures - which is no given - the anomalies of the fixture format mean we may be watching other results for a period of nearly two and a half weeks but we can only control what we can control and whatever happens we will be ready to go!

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TOM WHITEHEAD

AUTOGRAPH

# Behind Closed Doors with... **TOM WHITEHEAD**



Who are your heroes or people you look up to?  
**Muhammed Ali / Ricky Hatton**

Do you play any other sports and if so do you excel in them?  
**Just the odd game of football with my mates**

What is the highlight of your career so far?  
**Meeting Mike Hughes? :)**

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

**My best mates, Yatsey and Carrot**

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

**My tub of protein**

Who's the funniest of your team-mates and why?  
**Phil Joy :)**

Which TV programme would you never miss?  
**Boots And All**

What was the last book you read?  
**Don't have time to read, too busy in the gym.**

What's your favourite type of music?  
**Anything from Deep House to Frank Sinatra**

How do you relax after a match?  
**Bath and film (invite female around)**

Finally.....Tell me a secret.  
**Dale Bloomfield is still a virgin ;) (At last a lad with guts - Editor)**

## Early memories of an All Golds' season-ticket holder

Hi Roger

It was a pleasure to meet you at Cheltenham. I grew up with your match reports in the Chronicle. I am from Oldham and my brother and his wife still live in the Clarksfield area.

My parents were keen spectators at Watersheddings in the late 1950s. My father's interest in the game started when he joined the St John Ambulance Brigade as a teenager. After his initial training, he acted as first aid cover during matches at Watersheddings, and became a fan.

My mother would often tell me stories of the "glory years" when Oldham won the Championship, tales of John Etty and Bernard Ganley. She said it was easy to spot Bernard on the field... he was the one in clean kit, because he was so hard to tackle.

I had the honour of meeting John Etty at the last match at Watersheddings, shortly after his autobiography was published. My parents stopped going to watch Oldham when I was born. I hope it was chance that my arrival coincided with the end of that successful era.

We moved to the south-west in 1991, with work, and so I haven't had the chance to see Oldham "in the flesh" much. The last time I saw them (prior to the All Golds' match at Cheltenham in April) was when they played Sydney Rabbitohs at Boundary Park many years ago. I still keep up to date with what is happening at the club, as my brother keeps cuttings from the Chronicle for me.

I was the first chairman of Cheltenham Warriors RLFC (now called Gloucestershire Warriors), and my partner Stephen was secretary, match-day manager and any other role that couldn't be filled by anyone else. We were also involved in the Rugby League Conference representative team, the Lionhearts.

Cheltenham Warriors played in the inaugural season of the Rugby League Conference in 1998. Our first season was at the Prince of Wales Stadium (now home to the All Golds), but the club re-located to a village between Cheltenham and Gloucester (hence the change of name). We were fortunate enough to receive the Rugby League Conference Club of the Year Award in our first season.

Gloucestershire Warriors are still going, although we stood down several years ago, and have no direct involvement with the game beyond spectating. We have season tickets for the All Golds. Several of the All Golds' players started out with Gloucestershire Warriors, so I feel we have played a small part in the development of the club.

I will be following the Roughyeds' season with interest, and hope that they will be successful in achieving promotion this year.

Kind regards

Ruth H Sigley

# Big day for the Cowburns

By Roger Halstead

AS a boy growing up in Royton, Phil Cowburn used to day-dream of the day he would play full-back for Oldham Rugby League Club.

He was a Roughyeds' ball boy, an active member of the Junior Roughyeds and club mascot for the day when a team then coached by Mike Ford took on Widnes Vikings at Spotland in the 2001 Northern Ford Premiership grand final for the right to go up to Super League.

He was Roughyeds' mad... but on an April day earlier this year in Cheltenham, and now a 22-year-old student of sports development, the same Phil Cowburn lined up at full-back for the University of Gloucestershire All Golds against the team he and his father George still support.

Roughyeds made their history-making first visit to the West Country and returned north with a 36-0 win under their belts, which provided us with our first league win of this hugely successful season.

Phil played full-back in a game he will probably never forget and, all things being equal, he will probably be in his customary full-back role again when the All Golds run out for the first time at Whitebank in the return match today.

Since we last played them they have strengthened their squad and, as a result, have picked up two wins plus three bonus points.

Among more recent recruits are Danny Nicklas, a half-back who has been on trial at Hull KR; Nev Morrison, a centre from Sheffield Eagles; Chris Vitalini, a prop with Italy international honours from South Wales Scorpions; and hooker or half-back Steve Parry, also from South Wales Scorpions.

They provide the All Golds with infinitely more experience and nous than they had the last time we played them and I think we can be absolutely sure that, although this is a top v bottom contest here today, the All Golds will be no pushovers. We saw last week how closely Gateshead Thunder got to North Wales Crusaders, and a club like the All Golds is bound to look at that result in the North-East and take great encouragement from it.

Anyway, I digress. Back to the Cowburns.

"Funny how life turns out," said Phil, who was playing rugby union when he was invited to join Brad Hepi's All Golds for their entry into Kingstone Press Championship One.

Back home in Thornham, George has meticulously recorded teams and match details of Oldham and their opponents in every game they have played since the 'new' club's first-ever outing in a Law Cup win at Rochdale on New Year's Day, 1998.

Said George, who has supported Oldham for 50 years and even now rarely misses a game at Whitebank: "Phil's dream was always to play for Oldham, and to play against them a second time, but for the first time in his home town, will still make it a very special day for him.

"Phil still comes with me to watch Roughyeds when he is at home, but I'll have to divide up my time a bit now and watch the All Golds as well."

Phil, who has also played for Rochdale RU Club, was in the All Golds side that won at Gateshead Thunder in the Northern Rail Cup and in the team that beat Hull amateurs Skirlaugh in the Tetley's Challenge Cup. He has more or less cemented his place in the team at full-back over the course of the season.

He said: "I'm looking forward to the game today and if Wardie (Michael Ward) is playing for Oldham that will be something else. I've known him since I was eight or nine. We were school pals in Royton, first at St Aidan's and then at Our Lady's.

"Our club is very professionally run and we have terrific training facilities as well as a top coach in Brad Hepi."

All Golds have recently strengthened their links with partner club Leeds Rhinos. Under-16s coach Josh Pettifer spent time at Headingley last week and took a few tips back to Gloucestershire with him.



IT'S all happening right now for Oldham's young full-back **Richard Lepori**.

A hat-trick performance on his international debut for Italy against Germany was followed, eight days later, by another three-try haul in the Roughyeds' 44-24 win at London Skolars.

Now, he has been named as Premier Sports' Championship One player of the week and has been hailed by his club coach Scott Naylor as "explosive".

Said the Oldham boss: "Once he gets through the defensive line and has only the full-back to beat you get a try eight times out of ten.

"I've known him a long time -- I worked with him when he was a lad at Salford -- and he's in a rich vein of form.

"He scored three nice tries at Skolars. They were made by the work of our pack, but they needed finishing and that's what Richard does best."

Next challenge for 21-year-old Lepori comes in Sunday's clash with Gloucester All Golds at Whitebank, Oldham's last home game in the regular season which they must win to keep their title hopes alive.

Lepori is joined in the team of the week by his Oldham colleagues Josh Crowley and Phil Joy at centre and prop respectively.

## CHRIS HAMILTON

### Tribute to Scott and his team



SCOTT Naylor and his young squad have done a "truly remarkable" job this season in stamping their authority on Championship One.

That's the view of Roughyeds' chairman Chris Hamilton, who says he has total confidence in his table-topping side's ability to finish the job and win promotion.

Having denied title rivals North Wales Crusaders a bonus point in a 28-10 win at Whitebank last time we played here, Naylor's boys are now the only team in the division to have picked up at least one point from every league game they have played.

They boast a five-point lead at the top and although Crusaders have two games in hand Oldham are strongly fancied to win one of the promotion spots, either automatically as league winners or via a five-club play-off.

Fans turned out in force to watch the clash of the top two, an attendance of 1,209 more than doubling the season's average.

Said Chris: "Results on the field are no fluke. A year ago we changed things around in several areas in an attempt to create a different ethos. Regardless of what happens in the next few weeks that has clearly been achieved."

Pointing out that Scott was in his first head coach's job; that his assistant Lee Spencer was also working at this level for the first time; that the squad was young and comparatively inexperienced; and that up to a dozen players were in senior rugby for the first time, the chairman said he couldn't praise them enough.

He went on: "Several factors are involved --- the quality of the coaches and their conditioner, Mike Hughes; the superb training facilities we use at Oasis Academy Oldham; and our careful selection of players when we were building the squad.

"We looked for more than ability, we wanted the right kind of people also. We wanted young players who were keen to work hard in a tough environment, knowing that it would improve them as players.

"There were always going to be some who fell by the wayside, but throughout it all there was a collective determination within the squad to improve and develop.

"We now have a group who are so together, so focused and have so much belief in themselves and what the coaches are doing that you can't put a price on it.

"The players knew they could beat North Wales if they played to their strengths, and that's exactly what they did.

"They deserved the backing of such a good crowd, which included lots of new fans thanks to our work in the local community in partnership with Regenda.

"We hope they will come back for more, knowing they will be guaranteed 100 per cent effort, commitment and pride in the jersey.

"If we had told people at the start of the season that we would be where we are now with three games left, they would have laughed.

"The challenge for us now is to win three games which will each be like a cup tie.

"It will be tough, but the dressing room is full of level-headed people who know what they have to do to make it happen."

**(SINCE THOSE NOTES WERE PENNED BY THE CHAIRMAN, ROUGHYEDS HAVE TRAVELLED TO LONDON CRUSADERS WHERE THEY WON 44-24)**



We seem to be making a habit at home matches of enjoying the privilege of entertaining young visitors from overseas.

At the South Wales game on July 14 we had Stigge Vivungi and his 14-year-old son Jacob all the way from Sweden and two weeks later, when North Wales Crusaders were here, long-time supporters Richard and Ann Newby brought along their grandson Yianni, who lives in Greece.

As man-of-the-match sponsors and contributors to ORSA's Squad Strengthener fund they were part of that day's hospitality suite group and by all accounts eight-year-old Yianni (Greek for John) really enjoyed the game although he is a soccer-mad youngster, as are most young boys in Greece.

Said Ann: "It was the first time he had watched a rugby game, not even on television, and he felt there was a lot of 'fighting' in it. But I pointed out to him how disciplined the players were in relation to footballers, and how their relationship with the referee was so much better, and he certainly agreed with that.

**"All in all he had a really good day, but then we all did. Who wouldn't at a game like that?"**

Roughyeds assistant coach Lee Spencer has done a sponsored three-day, 168-mile bike ride from Morecambe to Bridlington.

He has decided that some of the money he has raised will be donated to ORSA.

He is expected to hand the supporters' association, around £300.

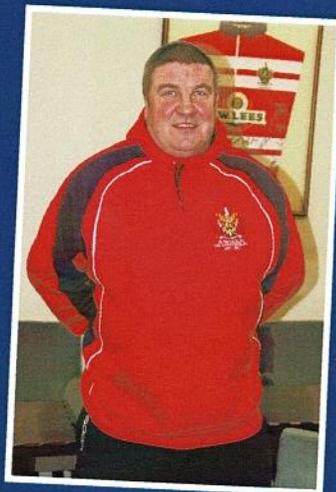
Said ORSA chairman Nigel Marland: "How many coaches would do something like that to help the club they work for? Brilliant Spanner, thank-you very much indeed, that's on top of the £50 you donated to us when you won the Golden Gamble recently. Also a big thanks on behalf of ORSA for the great work you and Scott have done throughout the season."

**"I'm pretty sure I can speak for all fans when I say that."**

ORSA are running a Quiz Night on Wednesday 28 August 8.00pm in the Lyceum Theatre Bar Lounge. (Basement entrance on corner of Clegg St and Union St Oldham.)

Free parking on Sainsbury Car Park opposite. Jackpot prize of £80. Refreshments available. Teams or individuals welcome

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Behind Closed Doors with...

# NEIL RODEN



No. 7 - NEIL RODEN

AUTOGRAPH

Who are your heroes or people you look up to?

Being a Wiganer ad growing up watching the great Wigan teams, Andy Gregory and Shaun Edwards were great heroes of mine

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

I struggle just training at the minute never mind any other sports!

What is the highlight of your career so far?

Getting to the Grand Final 2001 unfortunately it was a game too far but was a great year

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

George Best and Eric Cantona, two United legends

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

Family, wife and daughter

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

Lippy (Richard Lepori) great lad comes out with some great one liners

Which TV programme would you never miss?

Dexter!

What was the last book you read?

Paul Scholes autobiography

What's your favourite type of music?

Anything

How do you relax after a match?

Few beers and takeaway with the family

Finally.....Tell me a secret.

Got plenty and it's staying that way. (Not another! You disappoint me Rats. (Editor)



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		Michael Joy	1 Square

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Peter Patterson	1 Square	Jennifer Travis	2 Squares
Sylvia Patterson	2 Square	Mike Travis	2 Squares
Pepe & Pam	5 Squares	Rebecca Tugwell	1 Square
Colin Pike	2 Squares	David Webster	10 Squares
Andy Pogson	1 Square	Andrew Whitworth	1 Square
Jasmine Pogson	1 Square	Gagsy Wood	1 Square
Zoe Pogson	1 Square	James Wood	1 Square
Chris Rackham	1 Square	Evie Grace Wood	1 Square
David Ratcliffe	1 Square	Alison Wood	1 Square
Reptacular Reptiles	5 Squares	Maureen Woodhead	1 Square
Spanish Roughyeds	1 Square	Peter Woodhead	1 Square
Lorraine Rowbottom	1 Square	Jimmy Wood	1 Square
Peter Royales	1 Square	Ron Wood	2 Squares
N. G Scholes	4 Squares	Paul, Tracy & Family	1 Square
Gordon Sedgewick	2 Squares	Raffle	1 Square
Tracey Shaw	1 Square	The Green Army	1 Square

(In memory of Nigel Newton)

# 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	L 18 - 52
U20	Saturday 20th	Hemel	H	Postponed
U20	Thursday 25th	York	A	L 56 - 0

## AUGUST

U20	Friday 16th	York	H	8:00pm
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# PHIL'S NOTES

The shell shock of our defeat at York, was hard to take. Undoubtedly the inclusion of a number of first teamers in their side did make a huge difference but, we should, and could, have competed far better than we did, irrespective of who the opposition had in their ranks. The break in our regular season fixture list has given us the opportunity to give the full squad a week off and be ready to go into our final game of the scheduled season refreshed and eager to make amends against York (Fri 16th August, 8pm kick off) on our our patch.

We were recently contacted by Phil Fitton, General Manager of the newly formed Manchester Rangers, based in Belle Vue, with a view to accommodating them with a friendly game at Whitebank, which took place last Tuesday. This club has stated their long term ambitions with the appointment of former Roughyeds Coach, Steve Molloy, who is keen to forge links with our club to enable his open age team to play against a more intense opposition. We hope that this can be a long term association which can only benefit both clubs.

Best wishes,  
Phil

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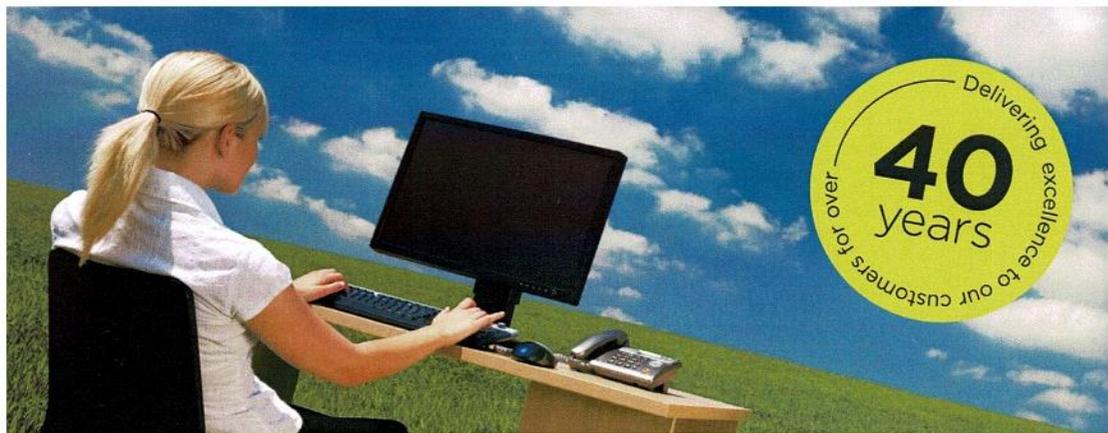


Scarborough	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June	£15 pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.30pm
Lincoln	Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> July	£16 pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 6pm
Southport	Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.15pm
Whitby	Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> July	£16 pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
York	Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> July	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.00pm
Whitby	Wednesday 31 <sup>st</sup> July	£16 pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
Blackpool	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> August	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.15pm
Llandudno	Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> August	£15 pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.45pm
Harrods	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> August	£25pp	Departing 5.30am Back approx 9.30pm
Whitby	Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> & 14 <sup>th</sup> August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
Southport	Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> August	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.15pm
Liverpool	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> August	£15pp	Departing 9.00am Back approx 6.10pm
Whitby	Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.30pm
Bridlington	Monday 26 <sup>th</sup> August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.15pm
Stratford	Wednesday 28 <sup>th</sup> August	£16pp	Departing 8.30am Back approx 7.00pm

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\* Please note these trips do not have a Chronicle courier



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## OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB FIXTURES & RESULTS

		<b>FEBRUARY</b>	
SS	Sunday 10th	<b>SALFORD SELECT</b>	H W 34 - 22
LC	Sunday 17th	LAW CUP	A W 20 - 22
		<b>MARCH</b>	
NRC	Sunday 3rd	NW CRUSADERS	A L 48 - 12
NRC	Sunday 10th	<b>ROCHDALE</b>	H W 26 - 10
NRC	Sunday 17th	<b>GATESHEAD</b>	H W 34 - 16
NRC	Sunday 24th	SOUTH WALES	A W 12 - 24
C1	Friday 29th	<b>ROCHDALE</b>	H L 18 - 28
		<b>APRIL</b>	
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	<b>OXFORD</b>	H L 16 - 18
		<b>MAY</b>	
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	<b>GATESHEAD</b>	H W 54 - 16
		<b>JUNE</b>	
C1	Sunday 2nd	<b>LONDON</b>	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	<b>HEMEL</b>	A W 26 - 18
C1	Sunday 30th	GATESHEAD	A W 12 - 44
NRC	Sunday 30th	NORTHERN RAIL CUP SEMI FINALS	
		<b>JULY</b>	
C1	Sunday 7th	OXFORD	A W 4 - 22
CC	Sunday 14th	CHALLENGE CUP QUARTER FINAL	
C1	Sunday 14th	<b>SOUTH WALES</b>	H W 50 - 22
NRC	Saturday 20th	NORTHERN RAIL CUP FINAL	
C1	Sunday 28th	<b>NW CRUSADERS</b>	H 3:00pm
		<b>AUGUST</b>	
C1	Sunday 4th	LONDON	A W 24 - 44
CC	Sunday 4th	CHALLENGE CUP SEMI FINALS	
C1	Sunday 11th	<b>GLOUCESTER</b>	H 3:00pm
C1	Thursday 15th	ROCHDALE	A 7:30pm
CC	Saturday 24th	CHALLENGE CUP FINAL	
		<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	
C1	Sunday 1st	BYE	
C1	TBC	CHAMPIONSHIPS PLAY OFFS (Sunday 8th / 15th / 22nd)	
C1	Sunday 29th	CHAMPIONSHIPS GRAND FINAL	
		<b>OCTOBER</b>	
SL	Saturday 5th	SUPER LEAGUE GRAND FINAL	