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Welcome to the players, officials and supporters of Oldham RLFC. As with last week's opponents Gateshead, Oldham are one of the clubs we play three times in the League with one game at home and two away.

Next season is likely to see a similar imbalance in Championship 1 fixtures with some sides being played twice and others only once.

Some supporters may have picked up the news earlier this week that Keighley Cougars player-coach Paul March had signed to play on loan at Hemel to cover our half back crisis. Paul had been suspended from attending any stadium where Keighley were playing and the RFL ruled that included playing for another club such as Hemel.

The new hanging baskets, climbing clematis and garden beds are a tribute to employees of Bourne Leisure - parent company of Haven Holidays - who did a terrific job at Pennine Way on Friday. Watch for more improvements.

Last, but not least, a special mention of Hemel resident Dave Hazell who is celebrating his 75th birthday today at Pennine Way. Dave was a a very useful second rower with Keighley - before they became the Cougars. One of his playing highlights was to play for the Army alongside former GB rugby league captain Clive Sullivan which led him to become a live-long Hull FC fan . From all his family -'Happy Birthday'.

Along with Dave I'm sure we will all enjoy today's game.

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Hemel Stags

Squads

Ref: D Merrick, TJ: R Dolan TJ: T Mather Res: J Jaundrell MC: D.Moss

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16	Amigos Gym	GUY ALDAM	KENNY HUGHES
17		JIMMY MORGAN	DANNY WHITMORE
18		ASH FYSON	ALEX DAVIDSON
19		MALAKHI LLOYD-JONES	MICHAEL WARD
20		ESSAD AL-ZUBAIDI	GEORGE TYSON
21		BEN KAVANAGH	DAVID COOKSON
22		ELLIS GORDON	LIAM THOMPSON
23		EDDIE MBARAGA	
24		MATT HAYLOCK	
25	Gary & Zemina Calder	JAMES HOWITT	

HEAD COACH - TROY PERKINS

HEAD COACH - SCOTT NAYLOR

Play off Rugby League



07/09/14 31/08/14 17/08/14

Gloucestershire All Golds

I

D

K.O.

. 3.00pm

Oxford RLFC

D

K.0.

. 3.00pm

Oldham RLFC

03/08/14

10/08/14

13/07/14 06/07/14 29/06/14 15/06/14 08/06/14 01/06/14 25/04/14 11/04/14 04/05/14

Gloucestershire All Golds

London Skolars

K.O. K.0.

3.00pm

. 3.00pm

York City Knights

Hunslet Hawks

K.O.

3.00pm

South Wales Scorpions

Gateshead Thunder

D I D D I D I I I \triangleright D I D D I D

K.O.

3.00pm

Hunslet Hawks



09/03/14

South Wales Scorpions

38-12

Ljazouli, Al-Zabaidi, Coleman, Thorburn, Barbera, Hill,

Swindells

Swindells, Small, Al-Zubaidi, Hill

(C. Cup 3)

Oldham RLFC

D I

20-20

0-28

Hunslet Hawks

02/03/14

06/04/14 30/03/14 23/03/14 16/03/14

Doncaster RLFC (C. Cup 4)

348

193 200 213 508 450

Swindells, Small, Brown, Cameron, Hill, Pratchett, Hudson,

Swindells, Barbera, M'Baraga, Small

Al-Zubaidi, Ingarfield, Hill

Ljazouli, Ingarfield, Brown

Brown, Simons

Swindells

Small (2), Barbera (3),

, Brown

South Wales Scorpions

Gateshead Thunder

Gloucestershire All Golds

London Skolars

York City Knights

14-22 21-20 24-27 18-68 34-16 37-24

457

126 284

Gateshead Thunder

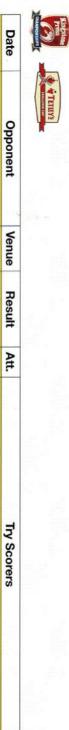
22-26

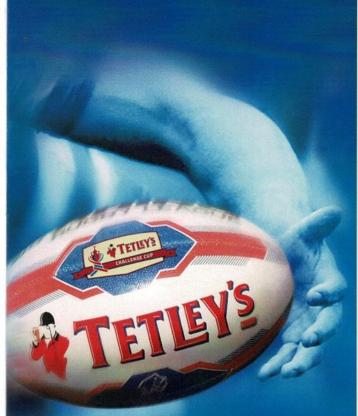
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Small, M'Baraga, Ljazouli, Cameron Swindells, M'Baraga (2), Hill, Brown

Oxford RLFC

Oldham RLFC







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Rugby League News Update

Ian Henshaw's view on this week's RL News

QUEST

The RFL has become the first national governing body to pass Sport England's leading national quality scheme, Quest.

Quest is the most highly regarded improvement programme within the sports and leisure industry and its rigorous assessments challenge the very best sport and leisure organisations in the UK, including county sports partnerships, local authorities, leisure trusts and, now, a major national governing body of sport.

In order to achieve Quest accreditation, the RFL Community Department conducted a self-assessment exercise and underwent a one-day external assessment, covering eight core modules including both partner and staff focus groups.

RFL Director of Participation and Strategic Partnerships David Gent said: "This is a fantastic achievement and a real team effort. Quest is much more than a tick-box exercise, it is an ongoing programme to improve the services we provide, and a great way to demonstrate our achievements.

"Quest helps us to assess our strengths, value and impact. Just as importantly, working with the external assessor has enabled us to identify areas where we can improve based on best practice in the sector. In this respect, Quest is invaluable."

Quest Operations Director Caroline Constantine said: "Quest is all about improvement and recognising all that is good about quality sports development.

"By meeting Quest's high standards, the RFL has shown its commitment to delivering excellent services as a high-performing organisation that wants to challenge itself to do better.

"In these challenging times, it is more important than ever that national governing bodies and others involved in sports development across the country can demonstrate their huge value, and the Quest process helps them do just that."

SOUTH PACIFIC EXPANSION

It's just not Championship 1 that is taking high standard rugby league to new places. In the South Pacific, rugby league playing nations are joining Australian domestic competitions.

This season the PNG Hunters are playing in the Qld Cup – the premier competition in Qld below NRL. The Hunters are having a spectacular season winning most of the matches at their temporary home ground at Kokopa in New Britain. Next season they will re-locate to the national capital Port Moresby, playing in a purpose-built new stadium.

Following on this success, Fiji has applied to join the NSW Cup next season, the corresponding competition in NSW, playing home games at the ANZ Stadium in Suva. Already, the NZ Warriors have a team in that competition.

This trend to give the South Pacific nations chances to play in a high level domestic competition can only help to make the sport even stronger in the Southern Hemisphere.



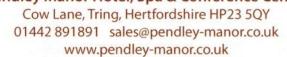






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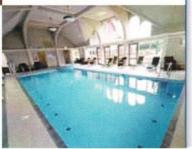
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Pos	Team	P	W	L	D	PTS
1	Hunslet Hawks	10	8	9	0	25
2	York City Knights	9	7	2	0	23
3	Oldham	9	7	1	1	23
4	Hemel Stags	9	4	4	1	17
5	Oxford	9	4	5	0	13
6	Gloucestershire All Golds	9	4	5	0	12
7	Gateshead Thunder	9	4	5	0	11
8	London Skolars	9	2	7	0	10
9	South Wales Scorpions	7	0	9	0	1

Top 10 Try Scorers 2014									
Name	Tries	Goals	D/Goals	Total					
Swindells, BJ	6	28	-117	74					
Small, Aaron	6			24					
Barbara, Mitch	5	1		20					
Hill, James	5			20					
Brown, Michael	5			20					
M'Baraga	4			16					
Al-Zebeidi, Essad	4			12					
Lijzouli, Dan	3			12					
Young, Ben		4		8					
Ingafield, Alex	2			8					
Cameron, James	2			8					
Coleman, Jy-Mel	1		2	6					
Pratchett,	1	253 224		4					
Hudson, Lee	1		4	4					
Thorburn Ben	1			4					

Hemel Stags 11

Our Visitors

Oldham RLFC, one of the traditional heartland clubs with a rich history in the game, narrowly missed out on promotion last season, and after finishing the regular season in second place lost the divisional play-off final to Rochdale Hornets 18-32.

This time around Scott Naylor's men arrive at Pennine Way in good form following victory over Joe Mbu's London Skolars last weekend, a brace of tries from the inform Mo Agoro and Josh Crowley being augmented by further scores from David Cookson, John Ford, Nathan Mason and Dale Bloomfield which ensured a resounding 46-16 success.

The victory maintained the Roughyeds' pursuit of the division's top two and Naylor's

side are now just two points behind leaders, Hunslet Hawks with a game in hand having suffered just one league defeat all season, a 12-38 Good Friday reversal at the table topping South Leeds outfit.

Oldham RLFC's promotion charge has been built on an excellent home record at Whitebank where they remain unbeaten. The well supported Lancashire club began their home campaign with a thrilling 20-20 draw against Hemel Stags, a late James Hill score for the visitors ensuring a sharing of four competition points, but thereafter Gateshead Thunder were dispatched 52-16 and further wins have been recorded versus Oxford RLFC (48-28), and York City Knights (31-30), the latter being settled by a late Lewis Palfrey try after the Roughyeds had earlier squandered a 27-0 lead.

The season had started in appallingly wet and cold conditions in Maesteg against South Wales Scorpions, and with the visitors leading 18-4 referee, Mr. Gill decided to abandon the game after 72 minutes with players complaining of hypothermia-like symptoms. The RFL later decided the result should stand and a fortnight later tries from Michael Ward, Edwin Okanga-Ajwang, and Brett Robinson ensured an 18-16 in London against the Skolars. More recently a try double from Ford and further tries from Crowley, Bloomfield, Michael Ward and Agoro ensured a 30-22 win at the University of Gloucestershire All Golds.

Oldham's leading try scorer is talented left winger, Bloomfield with nine while on the other wing the lively Agoro has now scored in each of his last five appearances.

Perhaps testimony to the strength of the visitors' squad is the fact they have recently been able to leave out club captain, Palfrey in favour of on loan Rochdale Hornets half back, Steve Roper.



Championship 1 Round-Up

With new leaders York City Knights having a weekend off Hunslet Hawks had an opportunity to return to the summit and the South Leeds club outfit obliged, running out 32-12 victors against Oxford RLFC.

The southerners led 12-10 at half time, courtesy of tries from Tommy Connick and Yannic Parker, but a powerful second half performance from the hosts ensured a return to winning ways after the surprising heavy loss to York City Knights a week earlier; try doubles from Jimmy Watson, Danny Maun, and solo efforts from Luke Stenchion and Jermaine Akaidere clinching victory for Barry Eaton's men.

Today's visitors Oldham RLFC also maintained the pressure at the top with a 46-16 victory over southern opposition in the form of London Skolars. The Lancashire club remain third and hold the only unbeaten home record in the division, and this game was never really in doubt despite a bright start from the Londoners in which Judd Greenlagh opened the scoring. A brace from Mo Agoro and further efforts from Josh Crowley and David Cookson had Scott Naylor's men ahead at the break despite a riposte from the visitors' James Kelly. Further second half tries from John Ford, Nathan Mason, Crowley and Dale Bloomfield sealed the rout, rendering Patelisio Pelo's strike mere consolation.

Improving University of Gloucestershire All Golds registered their second successive away triumph, just edging out a determined South Wales Scorpions outfit (38-36). Craig Cook and Jack Francis both recorded try doubles and further scores from Phil Cowburn, Aidan Jenkins, Ben White ensured the win for Steve McCormack's team despite the best efforts of bottom placed Scorpions who responded with six tries of their own through Chris Vitalini, Greg Wilde (2), Jordan Sheridan and Connor Farrer (2). The Maestag club remain winless but at least had consolation of picking up a second bonus point of the season.

At Pennine Way, Hemel Stags just failed to complete a come from behind victory against Gatehead Thunder losing 22-26. The north east side fielded two new recruits in Louis Sheriff and Lee Mapals and the former scored in a close first half as did visiting captain and the division's leading try scorer, Jason Payne. The hosts remained in touch through Aaron Small and Eddie M'Baraga and only trailed by six at the break following Omari Caro's touchdown late in the half. Ex-Super League man, Jamie Rooney gave a man of the match display and a one on one ball steal and 60 metre dash to the line from Mapals ensured victory for Stanley Gene's side despite a late rally from the Stags who scored through Dan Ljazouli and a superb James Cameron effort.

This weekend's other fixtures

London Skolars v South wales Scorpions (Saturday)

Oxford RLFC v Gateshead Thunder (Sunday)

University of Gloucestershire All Golds v York City Knights (Sunday)

Troy's Talk

Read what our Head Coach has to say about today's game and the season so far

Today we welcome Oldham Roughyeds to Pennine Way in what is an important game for both teams. Oldham sit one place above us on the table and they are looking to catch the top two teams York and Hunslet and we are looking at maintaining our position in the top four. The next three games are crucial for us as we play the three top teams. We have spoken about the importance of picking up a couple of wins against these teams.

There are some famous rugby league clubs in Championship One and alongside Oldham there are York and Hunslet that have established themselves at the top of the competition table and with an impressive playing squad, supporters and off the field set up that clubs like us aspire to be in the future. Oldham are a quality team where they rely on good goforward from their big pack. The challenge for our forwards is to match them up front and lay a platform for our backs. They also have a couple of players on loan from Super League clubs that have added some depth to their squad. They come into the game off the back of a good win over London Skolars last weekend.

Last weekend's defeat to Gateshead was tough to take. We came into the game full of confidence and we came up a bit short against a very good team. I thought two of their players were the difference between the two teams. Jamie Rooney's kicking game was exceptional and he directed the team around the field well and Louis Sherriff was a handful with his kick returns and broken field running. Both have plenty of Super League experience and that showed and we can learn a lot from those players.

We were on the back foot for a lot of the game and we had to defend for long periods but I thought our defence was pretty good and we worked hard especially our goal line defence. In saying that we only lost the game by two points so if we can execute our plays a bit better and finish off our try scoring chances better we will win the tight games.

One of the encouraging things to come out of last weekend's game was the young players such as Ben Kavanagh, Ryan Chester, Malakhi Lloyd-Jones and our French recruit Romain Navarrete. They had only played seven Championship One games between them and they all made positives contributions when they came off the bench.

Enjoy the game

