

# ROUGHYED REVIEW

**2019 PROGRAMME No.6**  
**Friday, 19th April**  
**KICK-OFF 3PM**  
**£3.00**



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**OLDHAM VS HUNSLET BETFRED LEAGUE 1**

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# NEWS

## Direct from the Dug-Out with **SCOTT NAYLOR**

Hello everyone and welcome to today's Coral Challenge Cup fourth-round tie against Widnes Vikings here at Bower Fold.

To start with, I'd like to talk about our performance last week against London Scholars.

It was a very professional and mature exhibition of rugby, in my opinion.

We gave London very little opportunity to attack our line and score points due to the quality of our yardage sets and our overall set completion rate.

On the back of that, our aggressive defence and ability to control the ruck without giving penalties away, or very few, meant we had full control of field position.

These are the things we have struggled with in previous games so far this season and we have been working on them session after session in order to improve and be a better and more mature team going forward.

It was very satisfying to see such a big improvement which, to me, represented a big tun-around.

Widnes Vikings, our opponents today, are as good as it gets in the Championship division and through adversity in the past six or seven weeks they have shown their class by winning

games and getting on with the job when all around them has been in chaos.

It can't have been easy for the staff and players to focus on training and playing but they've shown their quality and mental strength by continuing to play at a high level and win consistently week after week, producing a great brand of rugby.

The challenge is a huge one for us today but one that we relish and are very excited about.

We are keen to see if we can make more history in the Challenge Cup by surprising another opposing team and progressing to the next round, as we seem to do pretty often if not exactly year by year.

Remember Hull KR away? And Halifax away?

Many thanks,  
Scott



Scott Naylor

# NEWS

## How the chairman sees it with **CHRIS HAMILTON**

Welcome back to the Vestacare Stadium for today's match against Hunslet, a match which for both clubs takes on greater significance after the last round of fixtures when both teams lost.

While the Hunslet match at Whitehaven was always a tight affair, ours at Newcastle wasn't and to lose after being 22-6 up was bitterly disappointing to say the least.

We simply cannot afford to throw away league points like that in a division in which it is clear even at this relatively early stage that nobody is going to run away with it.

Harsh as that might seem, we have to accept that, learn to deal with it and learn very quickly.

Over recent years Hunslet and ourselves have had some big clashes and today will be no exception. We need to make home advantage count, for sure.

As I mentioned earlier, the last round of results in Betfred League One have only served to underline just how competitive this division is with the top three sides all losing last time out. I don't know about you, but that's no good for me !

A big plus for us, of course, comes in the shape of Danny Langtree, who has returned to us after going to Hull FC at the end of last season.

While it was clearly disappointing for "Langers" not to have made his mark in Super League, we hope to inspire him to getting back to enjoying

his rugby again and to be blasting holes in defences, which he regularly did prior to his move.

One thing for sure, his love for this club came through in the talks I had with him before he returned and we were obviously delighted to get his signature on a contract, having faced serious competition from a number of clubs, both in the Championship and League One.

His return will give a lift to coaches, players and fans alike and let's hope we start to reap the rewards of what was a bold move by the club to get him back.

Despite having no game last weekend, the Langers signing and the RFL clubs' meeting about the possible entry of New York and Ottawa to League One certainly kept me busy during the week.

The meeting was obviously interesting as the two new clubs made a presentation to everybody and then took questions from the floor.

Both are looking to enter in 2020 and the outcome of the meeting was a broad agreement from clubs for the RFL to carry on with the due diligence process - which is obviously vital in any overseas scenario - and then to report back to clubs once that has been completed.

Work also continues apace on the various schemes and ideas that we have implemented this season to raise awareness of the club and to increase attendances and we hope that you are enjoying the increased

activity and the greater insight into everything Oldham RLFC.

Certainly, the feedback to date has been good and we welcome any ideas or suggestions you might have for us. While not promising we can do everything, we have certainly taken everything on board so far and that benefits all of us.

Today will also see members of Roary's Pride becoming player escorts and flag bearers and after the very successful launch of our junior supporters club it will be great if we see more people signing up today and, even better, if we see them all on the pitch before the match.

There will be several new "news" items appearing over the course of the next few days and weeks as Roger H buckles under the whip ! Keep your eyes posted on the website and social media platforms for some really interesting things.

We must also send a big 'get well soon' message to Anne Kearns, whom you all got to know in my absence last year and who has continued to do a fantastic job for the club since my return.

She is suffering with an eye problem at present and is feeling a bit down as a result but I know I will speak for everybody when I say we can't wait for her to be back and feeling better. She has threatened me with violence if her office plant isn't kept alive!

Last weekend also saw the fifth round of the Coral Challenge Cup and wasn't it great to see Halifax beating London Broncos and Doncaster beating Batley.

Despite many people having a downer on the cup in its current format those results still prove that the cup retains it's magic. Another well-done must also go to Thatto Heath who reached the fifth round and put up a big effort against Dewsbury from the Championship.

Wembley is still on the horizon for us this year as, following today's game, our next home match will be the first ever in the new 1895 cup against Whitehaven, who have done really well since we beat them here earlier in the season.

Back to today and nobody should underestimate the challenge that Hunslet will provide. As ever, your support can help and make a difference so the more you get behind the lads today the more Easter eggs you can eat!

Be loud and proud and hopefully help to cheer on the team to a win.

Enjoy the match,

**Christopher Hamilton**  
**Chairman**  
**Oldham Rugby League Football Club**



Chris Hamilton

# STATISTICS

## BETFRED LEAGUE 1 TABLE 2019

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA	PD	PTS
Hunslet RLFC	5	4	1	0	156	60	96	8
Whitehaven RLFC	5	4	1	0	112	88	24	8
Newcastle Thunder	6	3	3	0	216	136	80	6
Oldham RLFC	5	3	2	0	136	90	46	6
Workington Town	5	3	2	0	154	130	24	6
Doncaster RLFC	4	3	2	0	122	100	22	6
London Skolars	5	2	2	1	96	150	-54	5
Coventry Bears	4	2	3	0	96	160	-64	4
North Wales Crusaders	4	0	4	0	66	110	-44	0
West Wales Raiders	6	0	6	0	60	256	-196	0
Keighley Cougars	5	3	1	1	154	88	66	-5

## OLDHAM RLFC PLAYER STATS 2019

Squad No.	Player	Total App.	Sub	Tries	Goals	DGs	Points	Squad No.2	Player	Total App.	Sub	Tries	Goals	DGs	Points
1	Kyran Johnson	4	0	3	0	0	12	15	Adam Brook	4	0	1	12	0	28
2	Aaron Jones-Bishop	5	0	3	0	0	12	18	Ben Davies	5	5	0	0	0	0
3	Zack McComb	7	0	8	0	0	32	19	Jamie Greenwood	4	4	0	0	0	0
4	Jack Holmes	5	0	0	0	0	0	20	Matty Wilkinson	5	4	3	0	0	12
5	Richie Hawkyard	5	0	4	0	0	16	21	Lee Kershaw	5	0	4	0	0	16
6	Paul Crook	1	0	0	0	0	0	22	Danny Grimshaw	2	0	0	0	0	0
7	Dave Hewitt	6	0	2	23	0	54	23	Luke Nelmes	1	1	0	0	0	0
8	Phil Joy	6	0	3	0	0	12	24	Liam Bent	7	2	0	0	0	0
9	Gareth Owen	6	0	1	0	0	4	25	Danny Bridge	0	0	0	0	0	0
10	Scott Law	7	1	1	0	0	4	26	Anthony Bowman	5	0	2	0	0	8
11	Ben Calland	5	0	0	0	0	0	27	Harry Maders	2	0	3	0	0	12
12	Emmerson Whittel	7	0	1	0	0	4	29	Titus Gwaze	7	7	0	0	0	0
13	Jack Spencer	7	3	1	0	0	4	30	Frazer	1	1	0	0	0	0

## ‘PRIDE’ IN TALKS WITH SPONSORS ABOUT MEMBERSHIP CROSS-OVER

As ‘Pride’ goes from strength to strength in terms of numbers and recognition on the local rugby league scene, the Roughyeds management team and Rugby Oldham are in discussions about the possibilities of a membership cross-over.

The Rugby Oldham Supporters’ Trust sponsors ‘Pride’ and thus has a keen interest in how it progresses and whether it will have a positive impact on numbers of young people either developing or acquiring a keen interest in our sport.

Julie Collins (Roughyeds) and Linda Mills (Rugby Oldham) have a dialogue on this and we will bring you more information when there is something to bring.

In the meantime, you will see that Pride members are acting as escorts or flag-bearers today in another progressive initiative by the people who run it, namely Dave Murgatroyd, Roary himself and Sophie Nixon.

Anyone wishing to supervise a young person’s joining can either get a membership form from the Roughyeds office or contact Dave by phone on 07718660505 (if he’s on voicemail leave a message with all relevant details) or drop him a line to one of the following email addresses:

dmurgy@hotmail.co.uk  
OR  
photos@roughyeds.co.uk

The first Pride meeting will be held in the main room of the Vestacare Stadium social club at 9am on Saturday, May 18, the day before our home game against Coventry Bears.



Roary will be there to share the day with his pride of lion cubs, as will some of the players, to whom we will be talking about their early playing days.

Also, if plans materialise and there are no emergency calls for our local fire fighters to attend, we will have a visit from Blue Watch at the Hollins Road Fire Station just up the road.

They will bring a fire engine for us to have a look at; show us their kit and explain its component parts; and give us a short safety talk aimed at young children.

“By necessity, that has to be subject to the demands on the fire fighters on the day, but that always applies with emergency services,” said Murgy.

Alan Davies and John Etty cover across to stop Dave Bolton during the last match in Oldham's 14-win sequence.



Pictures courtesy of Oldham RL Heritage Trust

# By George Cowburn... THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

A score of 14-0 is not that of some long-forgotten match but a statistic that represents the number of consecutive victories Oldham inflicted upon Wigan during the glory days of the 1950s for the men from Watersheddings.

Starting with a 14-5 win on December 27, 1952, the wonderful run did not end until an 8-0 defeat at Watersheddings in the third round of the Challenge Cup on February 1, 1958.

It wasn't as though Wigan were in one of their rare unsuccessful periods either. In the six end-of-season league tables during the period under review they finished fifth three times and they could call on internationals such as Ernie Ashcroft, Eric Ashton, Dave Bolton, Billy Boston, Jack Cunliffe, Nat Silcock and Mick Sullivan.

Not every match was memorable, although you could argue any victory over Wigan was, but we will look at some of them.

The first on the list (modern day coaches look away now) was the third of three matches played on successive days -- Christmas Day,

Boxing Day and Saturday, December 27, 1952.

Laurie Platt, who scored two tries against Wigan, Billy Mitchell, Alan Davies, Lionel Emmitt, Frank Stirrup, Jack Keith, Les Anthony, Charlie Winslade and Bryn Goldswain played in all three - marathon men indeed.

Only 14 days later Oldham faced Wigan again, at Central Park, and recorded a 27-13 win in a fog-bound match. Oldham's first league game of the 1953-54 season saw them defeat Wigan 18-7 in front of more than 16,000 spectators at Watersheddings - a good start to any season.

On February 12, 1955 a crowd of 22,371 crammed into Watersheddings and saw the home side beat Wigan 5-2 in the first round of the Challenge Cup. The decisive try was scored by the one and only Alan Davies in a closely fought and extremely competitive match which bordered on a war of attrition.

The biggest winning margin of the series came on April 2, 1955 with a 26-0 score in Oldham's

favour. Four second-half tries sealed this comfortable win.

However, the match on November 19 that year gave Oldham their highest score in the sequence, a 48-23 triumph at Central Park. There were 12 tries scored by nine different players and only just six goals (Bernard Ganley was injured). Including goals, there were ten different scorers with full back Frank Stirrup and forwards Harry Ogden and Sid Little missing out.

Oldham squeezed past Wigan 18-16 at Central Park in the first round of the Lancashire Cup on September 1, 1956 on the start of a journey that took them to the final at Central Park where Oldham beat St Helens 10-3.

The winning try in the Wigan tie came four minutes from time when Frank Pitchford started and finished the move and Ganley kicked the winning goal.

The 25-13 victory at Central Park on October 6, 1957 was just the tonic we needed after suffering our first defeat of the season the week before at Liverpool City.

To help the struggling Merseyside club, the Oldham players all paid to get in and had their generosity repaid not quite in the way the way they would have wanted!

To put that defeat in perspective, Oldham topped the league that season, won the Championship Final, the Lancashire Cup, the Law Cup against Rochdale and walloped Australia 21-2. Liverpool finished 27th of 30 in the league with nine wins from 38 matches.

The 13th Oldham win was definitely 'lucky for some'. It was the 1957 Lancashire Cup Final played at Station Road, Swinton in front of a mammoth crowd of 42,497. The match went down in Watersheddings folklore as "Daley's Final" as Frank "Dan" Daley was played at stand-off opposite Boston, who had been playing at No 6 with considerable success on the way to the final.

Frank Pitchford on his way to a try in the 1957 Lancashire Cup Final. Note the packed terraces.



Daley tackled Billy B out of the game to such an extent that the Wigan man reverted to his normal wing position during the game and abandoned the idea of a career in the halves.

Tries by Ganley, Pitchford and Davies, plus two Ganley goals, sealed a 13-8 victory for an Oldham side playing in white tops rather than their usual red and white hoops.

The final Oldham win in the series came on February 1, 1958 when nearly 31,000 watched Roughyeds beat Wigan 9-6 at their place, the only try of the game coming from Sid Little in the second half.

All good things must come to an end and Oldham were finally beaten by Wigan 8-0 in the third round of the Challenge Cup on March 8, 1958.

What would we give for just one of those wins these days!



George Cowburn - lifelong fan with statistics at his fingertips

# DANNY BOY BACK HOME IN A MAJOR NEW DEAL

## Fans' favourite 'Langers' can't wait to put on the Oldham jersey again

Yes, he's home ! Without wishing to put pressure on the lad it's fair to say Danny Langtree's home-coming has been hugely welcomed by management, coaching staff, his fellow players and, perhaps most important of all, you the fans.

It can't possibly have escaped the notice of supporters that, while at Hull FC, 'Langers' (pictured opposite) played two or three games on dual-reg for our Betfred League 1 rivals Doncaster.

And how many had feared that 'our' Danny Boy could be playing against us when we go to The Keepmoat Stadium on June 9 and welcome Donny back here on August 18.

Well, it won't happen now that's for sure. Danny (28) is home again on a new deal to November, 2020 and, a bit older and a bit wiser, he can't wait to put on the Oldham shirt again and pick up the pieces of a Roughyeds career highlighted by 70 tries in 148 appearances.

Of those 70 tries, 21 were scored in 26 appearances in 2018 when he smashed John Hough's 17, a Roughyeds record for a forward in any one season. It had stood for 18 years.

When the jungle drums from Hull circulated news of Danny's release on the rugby league grapevine, notifying clubs and agents, Roughyeds had to move smartly and decisively to get their man.

In so doing, chairman Chris Hamilton and head coach Scott Naylor issued a statement of intent, underlining their ambition to give the rugby league community in our town a team and a club of which they can be proud.

Welcome home, Danny Langtree!



# Positives emerged from our second-half showing in the cup defeat by Vikings



Jamie Greenwood



Emmerson Whittel



Liam Bent



Ben Calland



Dave Hewitt



Richie Hawkyward



Ben Davies



Gareth Owen



Richie Hawkyward



Jack Spencer



Dave Hewitt

**OLDHAM 14  
WIDNES VIKINGS 54**



**OLDHAM  
RLFC**

**HUNSLET  
RLFC**



Kyran <b>JOHNSON</b> 01	Mick Harrop
Aaron <b>JONES-BISHOP</b> 02	Les and Eileen Davison
Zack <b>MCCOMB</b> 03	David and Val Webster
Jack <b>HOLMES</b> 04	David and Val Webster
Richie <b>HAWKYARD</b> 05	Rita Walton
Paul <b>CROOK</b> 06	Rita Walton
Dave <b>HEWITT</b> 07	Chris Noble MBE
Phil <b>JOY</b> 08	Past Players' Association
Gareth <b>OWEN</b> 09	Purpose Business and Marketing Ltd
Scott <b>LAW</b> 10	Les and Eileen Davison
Ben <b>CALLAND</b> 11	Luke, Abbie and Jessica Davies
Emmerson <b>WHITTEL</b> 12	John and Lynda McAndrew
Jack <b>SPENCER</b> 13	Graeme Lee
Adam <b>BROOK</b> 15	Sponsorship Available
Danny <b>LANGTREE</b> 15	Grant and Sheila Somerville
Ben <b>DAVIES</b> 18	Neil Gibbison
Jamie <b>GREENWOOD</b> 19	Sandra Bullock
Matty <b>WILKINSON</b> 20	John and Lynda McAndrew
Lee <b>KERSHAW</b> 21	Rugby Oldham Supporters' Trust
Danny <b>GRIMSHAW</b> 22	Neil Gibbison
Luke <b>NELMES</b> 23	John and Lynda McAndrew
Liam <b>BENT</b> 24	ORSA
Danny <b>BRIDGE</b> 25	Pam Taylor and LTS
Anthony <b>BOWMAN</b> 26	Graeme Lee
Harry <b>MADERS</b> 27	Sponsorship Available
Titus <b>GWAZE</b> 29	Anne Kearns
Scott Naylor   Head Coach	Sponsorship Available
Peter Carey   Assistant Coach	Sponsorship Available
Adam Neal   Conditioner	Sponsorship Available

Referee: J. Smith
Touch Judge 1: A. Williams
Touch Judge 2: S. Daniel
Reserve Ref: J. Butterfield
Time Keeper: K. Leyland

01 Olly <b>ASHALL-BOLT</b>
02 Ryan <b>INCE</b>
04 Anthony <b>GELLING</b>
05 Jack <b>OWENS</b>
06 Danny <b>CRAVEN</b>
07 Tom <b>GILMORE</b>
08 Jay <b>CHAPELHOW</b>
11 Harrison <b>HANSEN</b>
12 Chris <b>DEAN</b>
13 Hep <b>CAHILL</b>
15 Jordan <b>JOHNSTONE</b>
16 MacGriff <b>LEULUAI</b>
17 Sam <b>WILDE</b>
18 Ted <b>CHAPELHOW</b>
19 Brad <b>WALKER</b>
20 Owen <b>FARNWORTH</b>
21 Joe <b>LYONS</b>
22 Owen <b>BUCKLEY</b>
23 Liam <b>WALSH</b>
24 Keanan <b>BRAND</b>
25 Lloyd <b>ROBY</b>
26 Dan <b>NORMAN</b>
27 Sam <b>FREEMAN</b>
Kieron Purtill   Head Coach



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# ALL KITTED OUT FOR SCHOOLS' NW FINAL



The Year 10 boys at Saddleworth School wore one of our former team strips when they met Bridgewater High of Warrington in the North-West final. We were delighted to donate this strip to Saddleworth, who will wear it again in the National quarter-finals against a school from Barrow at Churchill Playing Fields on April 23 (2.30pm). Squad: Campbell, Taylor, Douglas, Ashton, Eckersley, Gosling, John, Taylor, Pomfrey, Etchells, Brierley, Dransfield, Hibbert, Steventon, Clark.

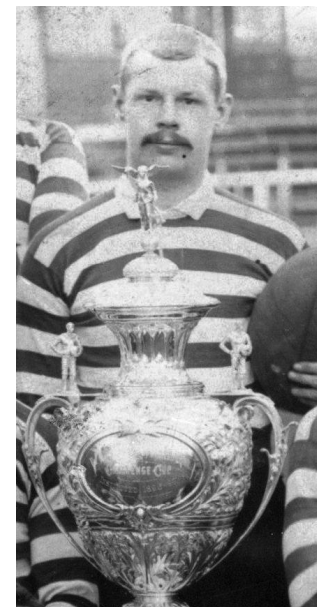
Congratulations to both teams from all at Oldham RLFC



The boys of Saddleworth School year 11 were crowned North-West champions after a 22-4 win in the final against the holders, Wade Deacon School, Widnes. Gary Melling's team now look forward to their National final against Outwood Grange from Wakefield at Post Office Road, Featherstone when they will be seeking an unprecedented North-West and National double.

## HERITAGE Staying in Touch with Our Heritage with **MICHAEL TURNER**

Steve Roper scoring for Oldham in the 2014 Grand Final. (Below)  
Oldham captain Arthur Lees with the Challenge Cup in 1899. (Right)



Oldham RL Heritage Trust is busy with its 'Pass It On' project in which one of the best collections of memorabilia in Rugby League will be delivered to Oldham Council for safe keeping and future display.

A massive operation to scan Trust documents is progressing with volunteer help which is really appreciated.

Today we welcome players, officials and supporters of Hunslet, founder members of the Rugby League and a club which loomed large in Oldham's history in Northern Union days.

Oldham's first match after the split was at Hunslet's old Parkside ground on September 14, 1895 and the home side won 16-8. There was a form reversal in the return, Oldham winning 17-4 at Watersheddings on January 18, 1896.

Three years later Oldham became the first Lancashire side to win the Challenge Cup, beating Hunslet 19-9 at Fallowfield.

In 1907-08 Hunslet won all four cups -- Yorkshire Cup, Yorkshire League, Challenge Cup and League Championship.

Oldham finished top of the league, seven points clear, but Hunslet secured the title after a top-four play-off. In the semis, Hunslet beat Broughton Rangers and Oldham saw off Wigan. The final at Salford was a 7-7 draw, but in the replay at Wakefield the Yorkshiremen prevailed 12-2.

More recently, who can forget that Championship Grand Final at Headingley in 2014 when the then Hawks claimed a dramatic 17-16 win with a golden-point drop goal six minutes into extra time.



Michael Turner

# VISITORS

## HUNSLET RLFC

Hunslet arrive at the Vestacare Stadium today as league leaders of Betfred League 1.

Four wins from five games has maintained a table topping position for the men from south Leeds with victories over Doncaster, North Wales, West Wales and Coventry Bears.

The run of good form nearly handed Hunslet a Round 4 Challenge Cup victory over Championship side Halifax. Leading 16-6 at the break the Parksiders were able to push-on in the second half to lead 20-16 with only seven minutes remaining. Halifax stayed in contention however and took the lead following a Hunslet defensive error before finishing 28-24 winners.

Winning Championship status must be forefront in the minds of coach Gary Thornton and his players and their current standing shows that they are heading in the right direction. Promotion was last attained in 2014 — at Oldham's Grand Final expense — but Hunslet bounced straight back down in 2015 and have been a League 1 side ever since. Another crack at the game's second tier is the aim of the division's likely promotion candidates and Hunslet will consider themselves worthy contenders.

Last time out Hunslet made the long trip to Whitehaven to meet another in-form side. Haven took the spoils in an evenly fought contest to join their visitors at the top of the table with eight points each.

Our visitors find themselves without two key players. Club Captain Duane Straugheir is out of action after fracturing two metacarpals in the win over Coventry whilst veteran forward Richie Moore has been forced to retire on medical grounds. Moore was part of the Hunslet side that defeated Oldham in the Championship 1 Grand Final at Headingley in 2014.

Despite the setbacks, Hunslet are still a formidable League 1 side and have danger men throughout their ranks. The aggressive Nathan Chappell features in the three-quarter line together with ex-roughyed Tom Ashton, a player whose short Oldham career was beset with injury problems.

Adam Robinson was signed from York City Knights following their successful 2018 promotion campaign and he provides experience and presence up front that will be vital in the race for a promotion spot.

Dangerous winger Dale Bloomfield will be no stranger to Oldham fans having enjoyed a spell in the famous red and white hoops. Bloomfield arrived at Hunslet from North Wales Crusaders in the close season.

Last season saw Hunslet take a maximum four points off Oldham, winning 24-16 in an early-season Vestacare Stadium encounter followed by a 16-12 victory at the South Leeds Stadium in June. In both games the Yorkshiremen were better able to close out a game leaving Oldham to contemplate what might have been.

A win for Hunslet today will consolidate their leading position and they'll run onto the field of play full of confidence from their current form and last season's results against their hosts.

Oldham will look to put right last week's second-half display in Newcastle and Hunslet will similarly want to return to winning ways. Something will have to give, we'll know what that will be at the full time hooter.

**Writes Dave Naylor.**



# SQUAD

## THREE TO WATCH

### Cain Southernwood

A product of the Wakefield Academy system, this 26 year old half-back has played more than 100 times for Batley and Whitehaven at Championship level.

Has Super League experience with Bradford and has signed a new 12 month contract to keep him at the South Leeds Stadium in 2019.



### Adam Robinson

Experienced 31 year old prop-forward who played a big part in the York City Knights promotion year in 2018.

Signed a one year contract with Hunslet and is described by coach Gary Thornton as "A big, uncompromising front-rower who will add size and power to our pack and bring fantastic experience and leadership qualities."



### Joe Sanderson

A product of Drighlington ARLFC, Sanderson signed for Leeds Rhinos in 2013 where he established himself as the first-choice half-back in the Rhinos Academy side.

Signed for Hunslet for the 2017 season and has been a regular in the side ever since. Scored 264 points in 24 appearances in 2018.



# By Ian Wilson... A RUGBY LEAGUE MISCELLANY ON MEN AND MATTERS...

Back to home league action today, after what seems a long time since we saw a thoroughly professional and very impressive performance against London Skolars.

I suspect the atmosphere today won't quite have the vibrancy of Good Friday games against Swinton in the distant past, but our recent performances certainly merit a decent turn-out this afternoon.

What a pity, though, that we haven't had the Standard Cup Final here as well today, to make it a genuinely inclusive Rugby League occasion for the town.  
I should say that I include the Newcastle game in saying our recent performances have been encouraging, to some extent at least.

Obviously, the result at Kingston Park was a great disappointment - and Scott did not mince his words afterwards, to spectators as well as, no doubt, to the players, which reflects the very healthy openness which seems to be pervading the club this year.

The reason for handing out praise as well as brickbats, though, is that we played some superb rugby for the first half hour up in the north-east, especially when you think how depleted we were, and how strong, at our level, were the opposition.

They also had a new coach to impress, not to mention Denis Betts watching on, and we were without Phil Joy as well as fellow-props Ben Davies and Luke Nelmes, and messrs Hawkyard, Grimshaw and Brook in the backs.

Joy is definitely one of those players whose value is really only truly evident when he is not there.

I thought Scott Law bossed things superbly in his first stint in the absence of Joy, but when we

had to try to reverse the momentum that Newcastle built up during the third quarter in particular, and especially when the ref, very harshly in my opinion, chose to bin Jack Spencer, that was when Joy's power down the middle would have been invaluable.

Of course, there was no excuse for the amount of possession and territory we conceded through two failed penalty kicks to touch, and a rash of high-tackle penalties we gave away through poor tackling technique.

Provided lessons are appropriately learned, though, I am sure no permanent damage to the season's prospects will have been done. And I can think of no better way to demonstrate that than a victory today against the current league leaders.



Scott Law bossed things superbly in his first stint



Jack Spencer, sin-bin decision a harsh one



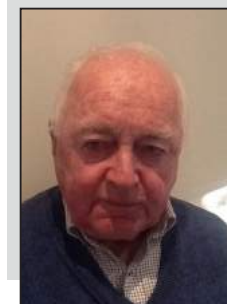
Phil Joy, his value is most evident when he is not there

Finally, to the wider RL world, there were three particularly noteworthy results on the weekend we played at Newcastle.

Skolars had a superb two-point win over Workington, which demonstrated how good our win was over the Londoners here at the Vestacare Stadium three weeks ago.

The other Cumbrians, Whitehaven, did very well to put the first dent into Hunslet's record this season.

And after Widnes's superb display at Bower Fold, what about Batley beating them, also by just two points? And who should score their first try - Michael Ward.



Ian Wilson - our man with something to say

# FIXTURES

Date	Time	Opponents	Venue	Score	Results	Attn.
<b>February</b>						
Sunday 17	3:00pm	Workington Town	Home	28 - 32	Lost	765
Sunday 24	3:00pm	Whitehaven RLFC	Home	36 - 12	Won	546
<b>March</b>						
Sunday 3	2:30pm	North Wales Crusaders	Away	16 - 14	Won	426
Sunday 10	3:00pm	Challenge Cup 3 - Haydock	Home	80 - 10	Won	508
Sunday 24	3:00pm	London Skolars	Home	34 - 4	Won	709
Sunday 31	3:00pm	Challenge Cup 4 - Widnes Vikings	Bower Fold	14 - 54	Lost	1,247
<b>April</b>						
Sunday 7	3:00pm	Newcastle Thunder	Away	22 - 28	Lost	889
Sunday 14	3:00pm	Challenge Cup 5				
Friday 19	3:00pm	Hunslet RLFC	Home			
Saturday 27	3:00pm	West Wales Raiders	Away			
<b>May</b>						
Sunday 5	3:00pm	1895 Cup 1 - Whitehaven	Home			
Sunday 12	3:00pm	Challenge Cup 6				
Sunday 19	3:00pm	Coventry Bears	Home			
Saturday 25	6:30pm	Keighley Cougars	Away			
<b>June</b>						
Sunday 2	3:00pm	Challenge Cup QF				
Wednesday 5	7:30 pm	1895 Cup 2				
Sunday 9	5:30pm	Doncaster RLFC	Away			
Sunday 16	3:00pm	Keighley Cougars	Home			
Sunday 23	3:00pm	Workington Town	Away			
Wednesday 26	7:30pm	1895 Cup QF				
Sunday 30	3:00pm	West Wales Raiders	Home			
<b>July</b>						
Sunday 7	3:00pm	Whitehaven RLFC	Away			
Sunday 14	3:00pm	North Wales Crusaders	Home			
Sunday 28	3:00pm	1895 Cup SF				
<b>August</b>						
Saturday 3	3:00pm	London Skolars	Away			
Sunday 11	3:00pm	Newcastle Thunder	Home			
Sunday 18	3:00pm	Doncaster RLFC	Home			
Saturday 24	4:00pm	Challenge Cup/1895 Cup Final				
<b>September</b>						
Sunday 1	3:00pm	Coventry Bears	Away			
Sunday 8	3:00pm	Hunslet RLFC	Away			
Sunday 15	3:00pm	Play-offs				
Sunday 22	3:00pm	Play-offs				
Sunday 29	3:00pm	Play-offs				
<b>October</b>						
Sunday 6	3:00pm	Promotional Final				

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