

ROUGHYED REVIEW

2019 PROGRAMME No.7

Sunday, 5th May

KICK-OFF 3PM

£3.00



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OLDHAM VS WHITEHAVEN 1895 CUP, FIRST ROUND

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 24, 2019

**CORAL CHALLENGE CUP FINAL,
KICK-OFF 3PM**

**1895 CUP FINAL,
KICK-OFF 5.30PM**



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Keith and Shirley Mullaney of H Mullaney and Son Ltd are proud to sponsor Scott Naylor and his assistant Peter Carey.

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

Hello everyone and welcome to today's game against Whitehaven in the first round of the 1895 Cup at the Vestacare Stadium.

So far this season Whitehaven have been the form team in Betfred League 1, losing only one game and currently sitting on top of the division with the best defensive record.

Their head coach Gary Charlton has done a great job with his team so far this season and, as a Cumbrian lad, his passion to succeed with his home-town club will be there in abundance and will last for ever.

All in all, 'Haven will provide us with one of the toughest challenges we'll face this year, home or away.

Gary's no-nonsense approach is very similar to mine and he always gets the best out of his players.

We won our previous encounter with 'Haven earlier in the season, but it was tough and but for a decision from the referee that went for us 'Haven would have been pushing for the win in the last ten minutes which shows that, no matter where they are playing, they have the determination and confidence to win.

To win today, and progress to round two, we will have to be good and mentally strong for 80 minutes, making sure we do all the small things well in the game and matching 'Haven in all departments.

It's a cup competition so we don't get a chance to come back next week for another go.

We get one go at winning so we have to take it and move on to the next round.

Many thanks for your continued support and a big thank-you to those hardy fans who travelled all the way to Llanelli last week to give us their support against West Wales Raiders. It was really appreciated by all the lads, believe me.

Many thanks,
Scott



Scott Naylor



Club captain Gareth Owen (pictured next to the trophy at the head of the left-hand line) represented Oldham RLFC when the new 1895 Cup was launched in York. Each of the 20 clubs involved – 12 from the Betfred Championship and eight from Betfred League 1 – had a player at the launch.

How the chairman sees it with CHRIS HAMILTON

Welcome back to the Vestacare Stadium.

Last Saturday was a very welcome relief to what had been a tough Easter. We let ourselves down with the Hunslet result but went part way to putting it right with a very comprehensive win at West Wales in our longest away trip of the season.

Nobody is under any illusions about the perspective of that score, but after my heart-to-heart meet-up with the players during the week they talked about giving a positive response and that's exactly what they did.

I know we have a good group of lads at the club but we just need to smarten-up a bit at key times and that isn't something the lads aren't aware of . . . I just reminded them !

On a serious note we need to make sure that our focus stays strong now for tougher tests

ahead, starting in the first round of the new 1895 Cup today with the visit of Whitehaven who, since their defeat here in the second game of the season,, haven't looked back and will, no doubt, be looking to avenge that loss.

Last week's 12-12 home draw with Newcastle took them to the top of Betfred League 1 with five wins, the draw and just the one defeat . . . here at the Vestacare.

There is never an easy game against any Cumbrian team but I repeat again, ITS ALL ABOUT US. If we do what we are capable of we will be fine and we won't need to worry. Long may that continue.

Last Saturday saw Danny Bridge make his return to playing and that, together with the return of 'Langers', won't be welcome news to the rest of the division.

Danny Langtree marked his 150th game for the club with his first try since he came back and let's hope there will be many more before the end of the season.

The usual diehards were present at West Wales and we all appreciate their loyalty and dedication to supporting the club. Thanks from all of us.

Today is an historic day for both clubs as it marks the first ever game in the new 1895 Cup. Everybody knows that the prize is the opportunity to play on the hallowed Wembley turf and for a great club like ours to have never played there, despite its history, is something everybody connected with the club would dearly love to put right.

With that in mind we ask you to play your part with loud and positive backing once again for the team. If we win we're only three games from making that come true so let's make it happen.

Enjoy the game and get behind the lads.



Christopher Hamilton,
Chairman,
Oldham Rugby League Football Club

STATISTICS

BETFRED LEAGUE 1 TABLE 2019

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA	PD	PTS
Whitehaven RLFC	7	5	1	1	157	118	39	11
Hunslet RLFC	7	5	2	0	218	130	88	10
London Skolars	7	4	2	1	168	204	-36	9
Oldham RLFC	7	4	3	0	236	134	102	8
Newcastle Thunder	7	3	3	1	228	148	80	7
Doncaster RLFC	7	3	4	0	150	138	12	6
Workington Town	7	3	4	0	198	195	3	6
North Wales Crusaders	6	2	4	0	148	128	20	4
Coventry Bears	6	2	4	0	124	190	-66	4
West Wales Raiders	8	0	8	0	76	398	-322	0
Keighley Cougars	7	5	1	1	212	132	80	-1

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	6	0	4	0	0	16	15	Adam Brook	4	0	1	12	0	28
2	Aaron Jones-Bishop	6	0	3	0	0	12	16	Danny Langtree	2	0	1	0	0	4
3	Zack McComb	9	0	12	0	0	48	18	Ben Davies	6	6	0	0	0	0
4	Jack Holmes	7	0	2	0	0	8	19	Jamie Greenwood	6	6	0	0	0	0
5	Richie Hawkyard	7	0	6	0	0	24	20	Matty Wilkinson	5	4	3	0	0	12
6	Paul Crook	2	0	1	8	0	20	21	Lee Kershaw	5	0	4	0	0	16
7	Dave Hewitt	8	0	2	29	0	66	22	Danny Grimshaw	2	0	0	0	0	0
8	Phil Joy	7	0	3	0	0	12	23	Luke Nelmes	1	1	0	0	0	0
9	Gareth Owen	8	0	1	0	0	4	24	Liam Bent	9	2	2	0	0	8
10	Scott Law	9	1	1	0	0	4	25	Danny Bridge	1	0	1	0	0	4
11	Ben Calland	5	0	0	0	0	0	26	Anthony Bowman	6	0	3	0	0	12
12	Emmerson Whittel	9	1	1	0	0	4	27	Harry Maders	3	0	5	0	0	20
13	Jack Spencer	9	4	1	0	0	4	29	Titus Gwaze	9	9	1	0	0	4

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE NEW 1895 CUP

This new competition for clubs outside Super League, the 1895 Cup, is of particular relevance to Oldham given that we were founder members of the Northern Union that year; that the new organisation's first offices were in Queen Street, Oldham; and that the new body's first secretary and leading administrator was no less a figure than the Royton-born Oldham club official Joseph Platt.

For several years, he effectively ran the Northern Union, now known as the Rugby League, from his Queen Street office, thus putting an Oldham stamp on our sport's early years that will never be erased.

Fast forward to 2019 and the 1895 Cup will be up for grabs by Betfred Championship clubs (minus Toronto Wolfpack and Toulouse Olympique) plus eight Betfred league 1 clubs, including Oldham, of course.

These eight went into the hat for round one, producing the following pairings:

Saturday, May 4: Keighley Cougars v Newcastle Thunder; Hunslet v Workington Town.

Sunday, May 5: OLDHAM v Whitehaven; Doncaster v West Wales Raiders.

Coventry Bears, London Skolars and North Wales Crusaders chose not to take part for logistical reasons.

The four first-round winners will join Sheffield Eagles, Bradford Bulls, Leigh Centurions, York City Knights, Featherstone Rovers, Halifax, Batley Bulldogs, Dewsbury Rams, Swinton Lions, Barrow Raiders, Widnes Vikings and Rochdale

Hornets in the second round on a midweek evening in early June.

The quarter-finals will also be held in midweek, with the semi-finals on Sunday, July 28 and the final at Wembley as a double-header with the Coral Challenge Cup final on Saturday, August 24 with the Challenge Cup final kicking off at 3pm and the 1895 Cup final at 5.30pm.

We are running a club trip to Wembley, given that last year's trip was voted a smash-hit by those who went on it. Full details will be announced soon so watch the club website and social media platforms for the announcements.

Playing in mid-week isn't ideal for part-time players, but sometimes you have to bite the bullet and get on with it.

Said coach Scott Naylor: "It gives clubs outside Super League a good chance to win a trophy and in any sport there's nothing better than winning silverware."



Auld Lang Syne . . . and the day we'll never forget



Pictures courtesy of Oldham RL Heritage Trust

By George Cowburn... THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

For many of the club's older supporters January 19,1997 was a dark day as Oldham played Swinton in a friendly match to mark the end of Rugby League at Watersheddings after 108 years. The result - almost incidental - was a 20-16 win for Oldham.

At the end there was a chorus of Auld Lang Syne; many fans lingered for a long last look; and that was that.

The choice of opponents for the last game was particularly appropriate as Swinton were Oldham's first opponents at Watersheddings when the ground opened on September 28, 1889.

That match ended 13-0 in Swinton's favour with the first try scored by the Lions star centre Jim Valentine. Another star centre, Billy McCutcheon, had the honour of starting that first game as Oldham kicked off.

For the occasion Oldham wore their new colours of red and white hooped jerseys for the first time. Their previous colours were amber and black.

How did the closure come about? Burdened by the demands of the Taylor Report following the Bradford City stadium fire, Oldham

were struggling to maintain Watersheddings and were also experiencing financial difficulties.

In May, 1994 the Oldham Evening Chronicle announced that Watersheddings had been sold to a joint company consisting of Oldham Council and property company Brookhouse Ltd.

The payment received would clear off the majority of the club's debts and they would use the ground for the next three seasons while a new stadium would be built. Whatever happened to that ?

It wasn't long before the demolition men moved in after the Swinton game and the end result was a new housing development with Ferguson Way (Joe Ferguson), Givvons Fold (Alex Givvons), Hutchins Lane (George Hutchins, long-time club official and GB tour manager), Jackson Mews (Ken Jackson) and Winslade Close (Charlie Winslade) all commemorating the old ground and many of the stars who had made it their sporting stage. A blue plaque was also placed on the site at a later date.

Because of its central position close to the Yorkshire border, Watersheddings was chosen for several representative matches in its early days.



Farewell to Watersheddings . . . Among those in this picture taken before the last match are commercial manager Ray Hill (far left), club captain Martin Crompton, local referee Alan Burke (far right).

The first ever Lancashire v Yorkshire match was played on the ground on December 7,1895 - one of ten county matches played at the 'Sheddings. (Oldham had five players in the Lancashire team for that first game, Sam Lees, Jack Hurst, Arthur Lees ,Harry Varley and Emanuel Bonser).

Four Challenge Cup semi finals were also played at Watersheddings plus one final on May 1,1915 when the Huddersfield "team of all talents" defeated St Helens 37-3 before a crowd of 8,000.

Poor weather, a strike by the St Helens players which was only settled shortly before the match and the wartime economic situation all contributed to the poor turnout. One Lancashire Cup final (Swinton 5, Wigan 2) and one Championship final (Swinton 11, Featherstone Rovers 0) were also held at Watersheddings, as were two international matches between England and Wales in 1912 and 1940, the second of which was held up for 20 minutes when the air raid sirens sounded.

The year 1912 also saw the ground's record attendance of 28,000 when the all-conquering Huddersfield side suffered a rare defeat.

As many as 86 Standard Cup finals (including three replays) graced the stadium with Heyside the first winners and Saddleworth Rangers the last winners at the old ground.

Oldham arrived at Watersheddings by way of two previous grounds -

Sugar Meadow on Gartside St, Glodwick and Hollin Hall in Clarksfield, which was shared with Oldham Cricket Club.

The cricketers moved to Watersheddings in June, 1889 and the rugby club joined them in September when the famous Victorian Pavilion served both clubs whose pitches were side by side.

In 1911 the rugby club became joint tenants of the land before buying the leasehold outright for £4,375 in 1922 when the cricket club was in financial difficulties. They moved away in 1932 and a Greyhound Stadium was built on the former cricket pitch, opening in June,1933.

Also in the 1930s baseball was played at Watersheddings. The first league match for the Oldham Greyhounds took place in May, 1935 in a successful first season as the Greyhounds topped the league. Declining interest and the Second World war saw the end of the American interloper.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were perhaps the best years for the ground as 1958 saw the construction of the Watersheddings St stand, giving cover on all four sides of the ground which was uncommon in the league at that time.

Floodlights were installed in 1965 (with improved lights following in 1985) and a social club was built on the car park in 1967.

From then on we witnessed a gradual decline as old age, a lack of maintenance and new sports grounds regulations took their toll until that fateful day in 1997.



George Cowburn - lifelong fan with statistics at his fingertips

‘PRIDE’ ALL SET FOR MAY 18 KICK OFF



The first meeting for Roary's Pride members will be held in the Vestacare Stadium social club on Saturday, May 18, starting at 9am.

Dave, Sophie and Roary, of course, will meet and greet children for a group chat before some of the players talk to them about their early playing days and how they came to sign for Oldham.

At 9.45am, emergency duties permitting, the fire service will turn up with an engine, give a short talk on safety and show 'Pride' members the equipment on the engine and how it works.

They can't come if there's a call-out, so Roary has his fingers crossed on behalf of all members of his pride.

Said Dave: "As this will be the first meeting I want the children to feel comfortable and get to know each other."

Numbers are growing all the time and if anyone wants to join at the first meeting on May 18 that can be arranged.

Apologies for the delay in the circulation of certificates, but they are available today. Also, anyone who didn't get a signed picture of Roary in their bag can collect them today.

Anyone with other suggestions should contact Dave Murgatroyd on 07718660505.



Bridge back with pledge to make up for lost time

AFTER NINE MONTHS OUT OF ACTION DANNY MAKES A FLYING START AGAINST THE RAIDERS

After nine months out of the game he loves, Danny Bridge was chuffed to bits to be back in action in Oldham's second-row at West Wales Raiders last Saturday even though it meant an early-morning wake-up call, an 8am start from the Vestacare Stadium and a 250-mile coach ride to Llanelli.

In his first game of the season it took him only 16 minutes to register his first try when he chased a chip into the Raiders' in-goal area and got the touchdown.

Bridge (pictured left) went on to do the full 80 minutes in gale-force winds and he was still going as strongly at the end as he was at the start, providing a gem of a pass in the tackle to give Jack Holmes a walk-in for our 14th and final try five minutes before the hooter.

"It's always good to get the first one out of the way, but especially so this one," he said.

"It's good to get this long-haul game ticked off as well so in that respect it killed two birds with one stone.

"It was good to be back and now I can look forward to the rest of the season in the hope that I can make up for lost time and repay the faith of my fellow players, the club and all the fans who stuck by me at a difficult time."

Picture parade from our **72-8** win at West Wales Raiders



Paul Crook



Richie Hawkyard



Jack Spencer



Danny Langtree



Gareth Owen



Frazer Morris



Kyran Johnson



Danny Bridge



Dave Hewitt



Titus Gwaze



Harry Maders

**WEST WALES RAIDERS 8
OLDHAM 72**

Kyran JOHNSON 01	Mick Harrop	01 Sam FORRERSTER
Aaron JONES-BISHOP 02	Les and Eileen Davison	02 Jordan BURNS
Zack MCCOMB 03	David and Val Webster	03 Chris TAYLOR
Jack HOLMES 04	David and Val Webster	04 Jessy Joe PARKER
Richie HAWKYARD 05	Rita Walton	05 Dave THOMPSON
Paul CROOK 06	Rita Walton	06 Dion AIYE
Dave HEWITT 07	Chris Noble MBE	07 Callum PHILLIPS
Phil JOY 08	Past Players' Association	08 Marc SHACKLEY
Gareth OWEN 09	Purpose Business and Marketing Ltd	09 James NEWTON
Scott LAW 10	Les and Eileen Davison	10 Kris COWARD
Ben CALLAND 11	Luke, Abbie and Jessica Davies	11 Brett PHILLIPS
Emmerson WHITTEL 12	John and Lynda McAndrew	12 Jake MOORE
Jack SPENCER 13	Graeme Lee	13 Tom WILKINSON
Adam BROOK 15	John Davies	14 Sam DOWSETT
Danny LANGTREE 16	Grant and Sheila Somerville	15 Connor HOLLIDAY
Ben DAVIES 18	Neil Gibbison	16 Lewis BROWN
Jamie GREENWOOD 19	Sandra Bullock	17 Matthew WHILE
Matty WILKINSON 20	John and Lynda McAndrew	18 Jordan THOMSON
Lee KERSHAW 21	Rugby Oldham Supporters' Trust	19 Andrew BULMAN
Danny GRIMSHAW 22	Neil Gibbison	20 Scott MCAVOY
Luke NELMES 23	John and Lynda McAndrew	21 Jake BRADLEY
Liam BENT 24	ORSA	22 Ruairi MCGOFF
Danny BRIDGE 25	Pam Taylor and LTS	23 Jason MOSSOP
Anthony BOWMAN 26	Graeme Lee	
Harry MADERS 27	Pam Taylor	
Titus GWAZE 29	Purpose Business and Marketing Ltd	
Scott Naylor Head Coach	Keith and Shirley Mullaney	Head Coach Gary Charlton
Peter Carey Assistant Coach	Keith and Shirley Mullaney	Asst Coach Jonty Gorley
Adam Neal Conditioner	Purpose Business and Marketing Ltd	Asst Coach Scott McAvoy

Referee: J. Roberts

Touch Judge 1: A. Cameron

Touch Judge 2: T. Jones

Reserve Referee: J. Collier



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OLD BOYS' REUNION AT THE HUNSLET GAME



Our old boys were out in force at the Hunslet game when we had visits from several ex-players of different eras. Pictured above are team mates from not too long ago in (left to right) full-back Richard Lepori, winger Adam Clay and stand-off Lewis Palfrey, who captained the side to promotion in 2015. What a great year that was!

Also here to see a great game – for the impartial observer at least ! – was a Roughyeds legend in John Hough, the first player to sign for Oldham when it was re-formed in 1997. He was a brilliant hooker for us for a decade or so and then went into coaching, leading our reserves side to a Grand Final triumph before emigrating to Australia. He is pictured below (centre) with his dad Dave and his son Joe.

Aidie Belle and Wally Gibson were here last year and already this season we've had John Fieldhouse and Darren Abram among the Vestacare crowd.



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

Boundary Park 2008 . . .
Tommy Goulden drives the ball in
during a Northern Rail Cup tie.



(Left) Watersheddings 1953 . . .
Bill McAlone and Walter
Nicholson bring down Terry O'Grady

We have had a few cup clashes with Whitehaven over the years but we hit fresh ground running today with a visit by the Cumbrians in the new 1895 Cup.

a BBC2 Floodlit Trophy tie in 1976, but they didn't meet in the Challenge Cup until 1999 when, after wins over Eccles and Dewsbury, Oldham lost 18-2 at Whitehaven.

We first met in a knock-out competition in the Lancashire Cup on September 5, 1953. Haven edged it 13-12 at their place but Oldham won the second leg 45-6 at Watersheddings two days later in front of more than 10,000 fans. Bernard Ganley kicked 12 goals.

They also won a friendly (18-4) for the SEAT Trophy in December, 2003. Four years later Oldham triumphed 16-6 in the Northern Rail Cup at Boundary Park.

On November 14, 1971 Oldham lost 5-0 at the Recreation Ground in round one of the John Player Trophy. On my first trip to Whitehaven the coach broke down. We got there two minutes late but too late, would you believe, to see the only try.

There was a better outcome for Roughyeds when they won 21-3 at the same venue in



Michael Turner

WHITEHAVEN



We welcome Whitehaven to the Vestacare Stadium this afternoon for their second visit of the season, this time in round 1 of the new 1895 cup.

In Round 2 of Betfred League 1, on their first visit here, the men from the Recreation Ground fought-out a tough battle with Oldham before going down by 36 points to 12. At key stages during that game Haven found themselves on the wrong side of refereeing decisions which, had they gone in their favour, could have influenced the final result. It only goes to demonstrate the fine margins that exist in our sport.

Since the loss in Oldham, Haven's fortunes have improved and they find themselves atop the 2019 league table. Wins against promotion hopefuls Doncaster, Hunslet and near rivals Workington Town pushed them towards top spot, a ranking they achieved last weekend after a 12-12 draw against big spending Newcastle Thunder. It took a converted Thunder try on 78 minutes to deny Haven maximum points.

Allowing Thunder to come back at them late-on was the second such occurrence this season. Rochdale Hornets were the visitors in round four of the Coral Challenge Cup and were able to pull a 22-21 win out of the bag with two tries in the last four minutes.

Haven will be keen to shut out Oldham today if they find themselves in a winning position. Coincidentally so will the Roughyeds in view of their recent habit of fading late in tight games.

Coach Gary Charlton and his assistant Jonty Gorley have achieved a remarkable job in elevating their side to the summit of League 1 but they will want to urge their players to keep their feet on the ground.

Quoted in the local Cumbrian newspaper, The Times and Star, Coach Charlton said: "There's a lot of rugby to be played before we can even think about finishing top. It's nice to be up there but we would have been happier with a win on Sunday.

"That just showed how tight it can be in this league. We weren't quite ourselves against Newcastle, not quite up there with what we showed against Town and Hunslet. That just emphasised how you have

to be so consistent throughout a season. When you reach a standard, you have to maintain that constantly and not dip."

Of the early season loss to Oldham and today's encounter, Charlton went on: "We had no complaints on that occasion, the best team won but I expect to see an improvement when we go back there. We have shown improved form but need to be consistent and there was just a bit of a blip on Sunday against Newcastle".

Off the field of play, Whitehaven have announced an ambitious £6million project to renovate their home stadium. The Railway End of the ground will see a new building — The Hub — which will include the capacity to host events for up to 700 people, hydrotherapy pools for rehabilitation and spaces for community groups.

The playing surface will be replaced with a new 4G pitch and the ground will see new stands and improved spectator facilities.

Last weekend, Director Mark Stamper gave a passionate presentation at the Recreation Ground stadium to a packed room of supporters. He issued a call to arms for local people and businesses to get behind the project and achieve the dream of a modernised ground.

Director Andrew Canavan also revealed that the club hopes to relaunch a reserves team next season and said conversations had already begun about potential targets for that side, targeting the best young talent available.

First things first though and this afternoon we should enjoy a tough encounter between two of League 1's top sides. The ultimate prize in the 1895 cup competition is a Wembley appearance and today's winners will find themselves only three games away from playing under the famous arch. The pressures of a tight league can be temporarily put to one side and the two sides can go at each other hammer and tongue. I can't wait.

Writes Dave Naylor.

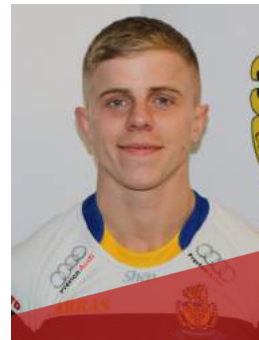
SQUAD THREE TO WATCH

Callum Phillips

Whitehaven born half-back or hooker who started his career at community club Seaton Rangers. He was named Gillette National Youth League player of the year in 2010.

In 2012 he signed a professional contract with Workington Town where he remained until the 2018 season when he moved to his home-town club.

Phillips played for England Community Lions under-18s as an amateur but made his full international debut against Wales in the 2014 European Cup.



Dave Thompson

23 year old winger who began his professional career in the famous Wigan Warriors Academy system before moving on to Warrington Wolves where he played reserve grade rugby league. Spent a period of time at Hull Kingston Rovers before moving on to Leigh Centurions during their spell in Super League during 2017.

In March 2017 Thompson became eligible to play for Whitehaven under dual registration. He scored 5 tries in 17 appearances and his performances earned him a permanent contract at the start of the 2018 season.

2018 saw him score 13 tries in 27 appearances and this year he's crossed the whitewash on four occasions in six games.



Marc Shackley

Whitehaven Captain and pack leader Shackley is on a lengthy 5 year contract with Haven, keeping him at the Recreation Ground until the end of the 2022 season.

Arrived from Workington Town in time for the 2017 season having played over 150 times for Haven's arch rivals.

A former Egremont amateur, Shackley enjoys playing in the close knit group of the Whitehaven setup and sees promotion as a season's goal for his side.



By Ian Wilson...

A RUGBY LEAGUE MISCELLANY ON MEN AND MATTERS...

Phil Clarke gets a fair amount of criticism for some of the statistics-based points he tries to make at times in his role as a Sky pundit. As it happens, I generally find him worth listening to.

One of his regular analytical points that I do think is interesting relates to how teams perform during different phases of the 80 minutes play we watch each match.

He tends to look at the points scored and points conceded by sides during each successive period of play, and sometimes clear patterns emerge.

Oldham, of course, are no exception, and it is instructive to look at our starts, middles, and endings.

If we confine ourselves to the 2019 season so far, we had really positive starts against Skolars and in the league match v Whitehaven - two tries to nil up in the first quarter in each case - and we went on to record two convincing and reasonably comfortable victories.

Of course, we were soon 3-0 up in tries at Newcastle, so that shows that starts aren't everything. Yet against Workington we were 0-12 down after just six minutes, at Wrexham we still hadn't troubled the scorer as the third quarter came towards its end, and against Hunslet, we were again two tries down early, this time in just eight minutes.

Why does the difference occur, one wonders. Of course, the opposition has something to do with it, but I cannot help but believe that the collective attitude is the crucial element.

I am sure it is unintentional, too, but I recall commenting to Roger H after a few minutes

of the Whitehaven game in February that I felt sure we would go on to win it.

The focus of the whole side looked to be so much more determined and committed right from the kick-off than against Workington the previous week for some reason - and I am sure that every coach would love to have the key as to why that might have been; if they could bottle it, wow!

Turning to the final sections of games - the vital one, on lots of occasions - there has been much wailing and gnashing of teeth here at Oldham about our failings in that aspect of matches in recent weeks.

Not much more needs to be said - except that if we are to achieve our promotion ambition this season, for example, we simply have to revolutionise our performance during the final section of games compared with what we have achieved over the past season and a half.

Again, the \$64,000 question is . . . how do we do that ? In that regard, perhaps two examples stand out, to me.

One, historically, is Roy Keane under Ferguson at Manchester United. They won no fewer than 17 trophies with him as boss on the field - and how often did his leadership drive them to score winning goals in so-called 'Fergie-time'?

My second example, at our level, is Adam Robinson a fortnight ago; it looked from the sidelines that, like Keane, he simply wouldn't let his players not go on to win, when the chips were down in that heart-breaking - for us - final 14 minutes against Hunslet.



ZACK McCOMB --- his two second-half tries against Hunslet should have sealed a win, but it wasn't to be. In each of our three league defeats this season we've conceded late tries. Why? That's the \$64,000 question.

So we have to have our on-field leaders step forward. But the good news is surely Wrexham. Our comeback to win there was quite incredible, just to show that we have it within us.

Let's see what happens from now on.



Ian Wilson - our man
with something to say

FIXTURES

Date	Time	Opponents	Venue	Score	Results	Attn.
February						
Sunday 17	3:00pm	Workington Town	Home	28 - 32	Lost	765
Sunday 24	3:00pm	Whitehaven RLFC	Home	36 - 12	Won	546
March						
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
April						
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	28 - 36	Lost	652
Saturday 27	3:00pm	West Wales Raiders	Away	72 - 8	Won	197
May						
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			
June						
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			
July						
Sunday 7	3:00pm	Whitehaven RLFC	Away			
Sunday 14	3:00pm	North Wales Crusaders	Home			
Sunday 28	3:00pm	1895 Cup SF				
August						
Saturday 3	3:00pm	London Skolars	Away			
Sunday 11	3:00pm	Newcastle Thunder	Home			
Sunday 18	3:00pm	Doncaster RLFC	Home			
Saturday 24	3:00/ 5:30pm	Challenge Cup/1895 Cup Final				
September						
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				
October						
Sunday 6	3:00pm	Promotional Final				

233%

growth in online
and print audience
since our launch
in September 2017,
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Source: Launch audience Sept 2017 v Weekly print readers
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Adults Standing: £14

Adults Seated: £16

Concessions Standing: £12

Concessions Seated: £14

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SUNDAY, MAY 19

KICK-OFF 3PM

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OLDHAM RLFC

VERSUS

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