

Islamic centre planned

PLANS have been submitted to Oldham Council to provide an Islamic Community Centre, in Cranbrook Street, Oldham.

Other planning applications received by the council include permission for offices on the ground floor of 8 Ashcroft Court, Peter Street, Oldham, to be converted into medical consultancy rooms.

W G Leisure, of Nottinghamshire, wants to open an amusement centre at 18 to 20 Curzon Street, Oldham, and there are plans to provide hot-food take-away facilities at 70 George Street, Oldham.

The Birch Hall Hotel, Rhodes Hill, Lees, wants to build a sports field and bowling green in its grounds, and Mr I Uddin, of Springhead, is seeking permission to convert premises at 86 High Street/1 Stamford Street, Lees, into a hot-food take-away business.

Motor-cycle fire in block of flats

Fire-fighters were called to a block of flats in Kranj Way, St Mary's, Oldham, to move a blazing motor-cycle which was blocking the stairwell.

The machine was severely damaged in the fire, which occurred at about 1 am on Saturday.

House damaged

A chip-pan fire caused smoke damage at a house in Abbeyhills Road, Oldham, on Saturday night.

NEW ZEALAND TRIBUTE TO RUGBY LEAGUE PIONEER

Sporting legend's stamp of honour



A SPORTING legend... George W Smith

FLEET-FOOTED Aucklander George W Smith was one of the most versatile and most influential sportsmen the world has seen.

As a young man, George began his sporting exploits by running away from home and finding employment as an apprentice jockey.

While his brother, Fred, picked up the horse which would make him one of New Zealand's greatest trainers, George was busy riding winners.

His greatest moment in the saddle came when he partnered Impulse to victory in the prestigious New Zealand Cup in 1894, with a weight of only 7st 9lb.

But, as his frame steadily grew, George tried his hand at other sports — putting his phenomenal speed to good use at football and athletics.

In an interview, he once said: "When I was in the stables I became interested in running. I seemed to make astonishing progress..."

That was an understatement. Dubbed "The Greyhound", George blazed his way to 21 amateur track championships at home and abroad.

He was New Zealand champion at 100 yards five times, at 120 yards hurdles four times and at 440 yards hurdles five times.

In fact, he was never to be beaten in the quarter-mile hurdles — setting an unofficial world record of 58.5 sec in 1904.

By then he had visited England for the first time, to compete solely in the 120 yards hurdles at the 1902 English Championships at White City.

He won, and was already the unmatched idol of New Zealand sport when his athletics career began to run parallel to his love of Rugby Union.

His talent at wing or centre was soon spotted, and George made history again, as one of the original All Blacks, who toured England in 1905.

Forebear

But on the tour, George's sporting eye was caught more by the 13-man game of the break-away Northern Union — the forbear of Rugby League.

And he liked what he saw.

Back home, he quickly teamed up with keen sportsman and entrepreneur, Albert Baskerville, to form New Zealand's first Rugby League side.

Using the respect he commanded in sporting circles, George persuaded many of the All Blacks to join the new team on a 1907 tour of England.

Dubbed the All Golds because of their semi-professional status, each player paid £50 out of his own pocket to guarantee the tour's success.

It was money well spent. The tour made a profit, and on the way home the All Golds spread the Rugby League net even further, with matches in Australia.

As a thank-you for his efforts to help to organise the 13-man game Down Under, George — an international with 39 caps — was banished from Rugby Union.

The 34-year-old decided to return to England. He signed for Oldham Rugby League Club, enjoying eight years of success at wing three-quarter.

Settling in the town

G W SMITH — a sporting legend who made Oldham his home — has been honoured in a new set of stamps issued in his native New Zealand. He is being thanked for his pioneering contribution to Rugby League, but STEVE LAWS found his whole sporting life fit for the pages of "Boy's Own".



HONOURED... George (left) partners Albert Baskerville on the New Zealand stamp

with his New Zealand sweetheart, George had three children. His surviving daughter, Edna Stansfield (83), still lives in Royton.

She said: "My father told me the story many times of how he signed for Oldham. It was after a game and he was still sitting in the bath."

Such enthusiasm continued to grace the Rugby League grounds of Lancashire and Yorkshire, until George broke a leg in a match against Rochdale Hornets.

A bad fracture and medical complications meant that George, then aged 42, spent the next nine months languishing in and out of hospital.

The injury ended George's career, but it was a greater tragedy which led the sporting hero to spend the rest of his life in Oldham.

Edna said: "My mother liked the town, but she preferred New Zealand. She wanted to return home and, after his injury, my father agreed."

"Our bags were packed and our passages booked to return in 1920, but my mother was taken ill only days before we were due to leave."

"It was all so quick. She died before the week was out, and we had to cancel the journey and bury her at Greenacres Cemetery."

"But, in the end, father was happy in Oldham. He got on very well with the people, and he liked his beer, which was good in the town in those days."

George found employment with Platt's, and was later invited back to Watersheddings, where he

coached Oldham sides for many years.

A sports fanatic to the end, George died in 1954, aged 80, at his home in Lee Street, Oldham.

Edna said: "He never lost his love for sport, any sport. He even had a spell as steward and groundsman for Moorside Cricket Club."

"Despite his ban, father always followed both rugby codes. He travelled to meet the All Blacks whenever they came to Britain."

"It is true to say that he preferred to play Rugby League, but I think that was mainly because he got paid for it."

G W Smith is one illustrious name among many considered for the Hall of Fame included in the plans for Oldham Rugby League Club's new stadium.

Honoured

But before then, his memory has been honoured on the current New Zealand \$1.50 stamp — issued to celebrate 100 years of Rugby League.

Edna said: "I have been corresponding with an author in New Zealand about my father, and I spotted the stamp on one of his letters."

"I was really shocked at the time, but very proud. The author included copies inside the letter, and I am going to get them framed."

"Father would have loved the idea. He would have thought that having his picture on a New Zealand stamp the greatest honour in the world."

NEW MAIL COLLECTIONS FOR OLDHAM

Oldham residents and businesses are benefiting from a new postal collections system introduced by Royal Mail.

As part of Royal Mail's commitment to continue improving the service offered to customers, the collection service has been boosted in the area.

Oldham customers can now post later in the day than ever before. The final collection time at many boxes in the OL1, 2, 3, 4, 8 and 9 postcode areas has been extended.

As an added bonus, the last collection at more than 50 selected boxes is now between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m., while a collection at 8.15 p.m. is available at the Hamilton Street sorting office box. Where appropriate, each box displays information about the nearest box with a later collection time as well as the nearest offering a Sunday collection.

Collections are also being made more frequently throughout the day, Monday to Friday, so that post enters Royal Mail's highly automated system with the maximum speed.

Last but not least, Royal Mail is giving postboxes a thorough clean-up and smart new coat of paint.

Bob Knight, Royal Mail's Customer Services Manager for the area, is convinced that the revamped system will mean vast improvements for local people.

He said: "Independent research has shown that our customers need collections to be made more often and they need the opportunity to post later in the day. By collecting more frequently throughout the day and offering later collections we are meeting those needs."

"Businesses will find that important orders, documents and correspondence completed late in the day will no longer miss the last post."

"Oldham is at the forefront of these improvements which are to be rolled out across the OL postcode area," he added.



Postal worker Craig Lomas collecting mail from the box outside Hamilton Street sorting office

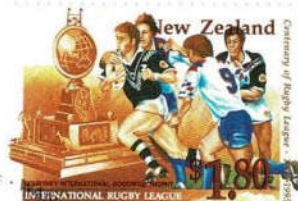
1



NEW ZEALAND
Centenary of
Rugby League
1895-1995

GREAT BRITAIN
Centenary of
Rugby League
1895-1995

1



British Philatelic Bureau,
20 Brandon Street,
Edinburgh, EH3 5TT



Centenary of Rugby League 1895-1995

In 1895, a meeting took place at the George Hotel, Huddersfield, Yorkshire. The outcome of this meeting was the formation of the Northern Union, later to become The Rugby Football League: a new game was born, Rugby League as we now know it today.

Rugby League has grown from a small nucleus of twenty-two Northern clubs to a ten nation international fraternity. The first ever international test match took place between Great Britain and New Zealand in 1908 at Headingley, Leeds: Great Britain won the match, New Zealand won the series 2-1.

It is appropriate that, in this centenary year, the Rugby League World Cup is being held in Britain. It will be the largest international gathering in the history of the professional game.

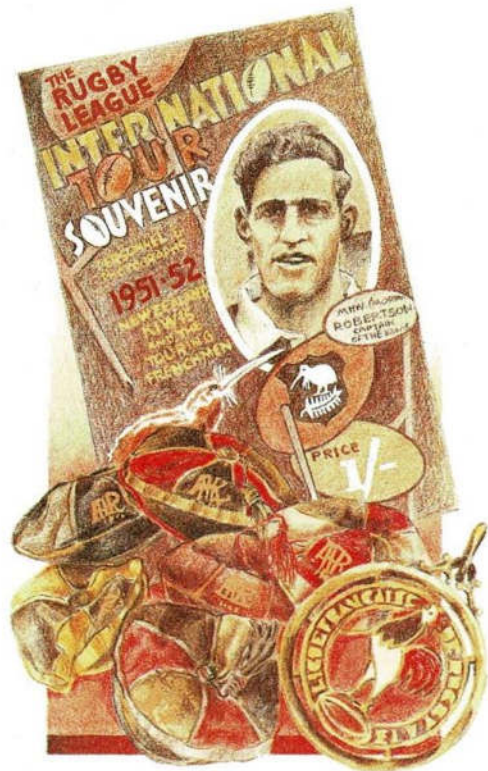


Royal Mail

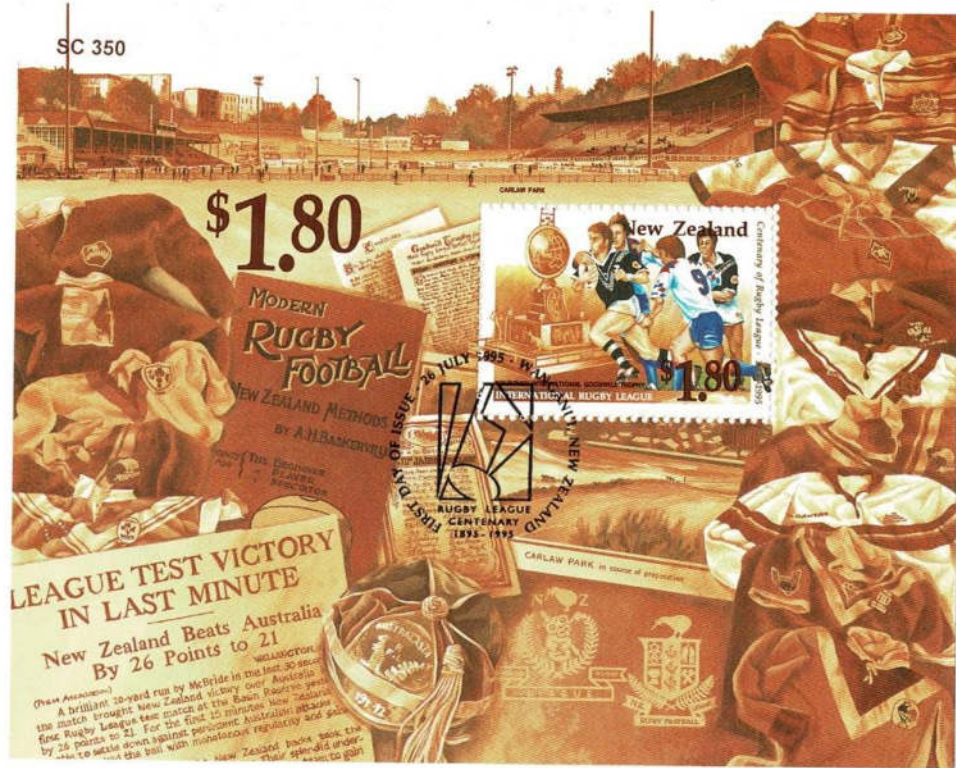
New Zealand Post



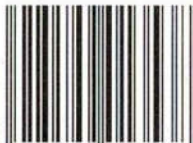
The House of Questa



SC 350



New Zealand Post · First Day Cover · Centenary of Rugby League · 1895-1995



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1995 CENTENARY OF RUGBY LEAGUE

In 1895, a group of dissident rugby clubs met at the George Hotel, Huddersfield, Yorkshire after a series of disputes with the England Rugby Union over "broken time" payments and rule changes.

The Northern Union, later to become The Rugby Football League, was formed at this meeting and a new game was born; Rugby League as we know it today.

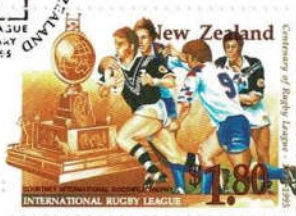
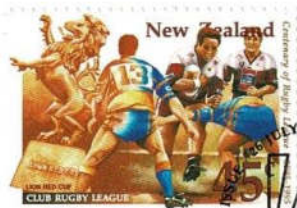
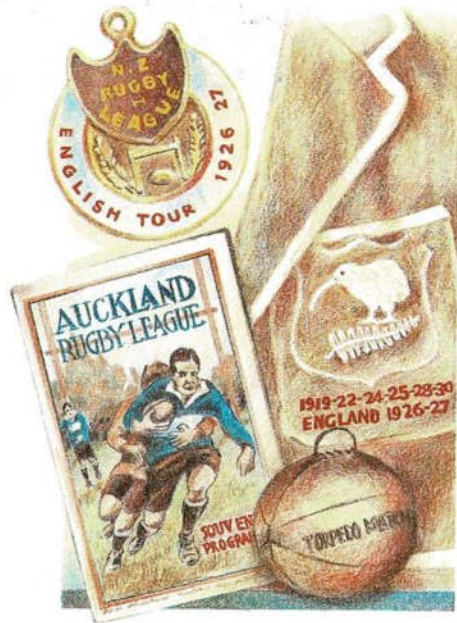
100 years later, the game is played throughout New Zealand.

The miniature sheet design incorporates a view of Carlaw Park, the old "home" of Rugby League in New Zealand, together with other League memorabilia.

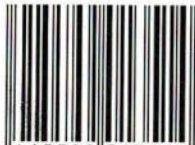
Miniature sheet and first day cover designed by Heather Arnold, Auckland, New Zealand.

New Zealand Post





New Zealand Post • First Day Cover • Centenary of Rugby League • 1895-1995



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100 years later, the game is played throughout New Zealand.

The stamps depict the various levels at which the game is played from Mini League, played by children aged 7 to 9, through to the International Rugby League. The founders of the game in New Zealand are depicted on the \$1.50 stamp.

Stamps and first day cover designed by Heather Arnold, Auckland, New Zealand.

100 Years of RUGBY LEAGUE

It was on 29 August 1895 that 22 rugby union clubs in England's industrial north held a meeting in Huddersfield and voted to quit the [English] Rugby Football Union (RFU) and form their own organisation. Their dissatisfaction stemmed from the RFU's refusal to allow players to be compensated financially for taking time off work to play rugby. The rest is history...an action-packed century of it.

Rugby league in New Zealand grew out of the original All Black tour of Britain in 1905-6. Some of the touring New Zealanders watched league, which by that time had also made its departure from many of the rules of union, and were impressed with the new game.

The 'All Golds'

One of these All Blacks, a fleet-footed winger named George Smith, returned home and quickly teamed up with keen young sportsman and budding entrepreneur Albert Baskerville, to form New Zealand's first rugby league side.

Including many former All Blacks and dubbed the 'All Golds' because of its semi-professionalism, the team embarked on a tour of Britain in 1907 without having played a single game in New Zealand.

The tour was a success. The test series against Great Britain was won 2-1, and on the way home the All Golds also captured two of three tests against Australia. On their return, the All Golds made up most of the two teams that squared off in what was the first league match ever held in this country. It took place in Wellington on 13 June 1908 before a crowd of around 7,000.

Rugby League Explosion

Rugby league's development was gradual in New Zealand over the first half of the twentieth century. Since the 1960s however, it has made undoubted inroads into rugby union's dominance. Television helped generate interest in the fast-paced, bruising game. Test matches involving the national team - the 'Kiwis' - started to draw large audiences in living rooms all over the country.

The popularity wave gathered force in the late 1980s when Australia's tough Winfield Cup competition and State of Origin series became regular TV fare in this country. Then, in this the centenary year, the Auckland Warriors began playing in the Winfield Cup competition.

A sellout crowd of 30,000 watched the Warriors make their explosive debut against the Brisbane Broncos. Although they are based in Auckland, the Warriors attract national attention.

All the hype and excitement at the high performance end of the sport is supported by a solid foundation. A domestic national club competition was launched in 1994, and growth at junior levels is constant.

The celebrations marking rugby league's centenary will climax in October 1995 with a 10 nation World Cup tournament in England and Wales.

New Zealand Post is saying 'Happy Hundreth' to the sport with a special issue of rugby league stamps. This set reflects the history, dynamism and widespread popularity of the sport that was created around the mines and mills of north England 100 years ago.

Club Rugby League 45 cent Stamp

Over the years, the New Zealand Rugby League tried various formats for its domestic competition, but none achieved lasting success. That all changed in 1994 with the arrival of the Lion Red Cup National Club competition. This 12 team Competition gave New Zealand a rugby league showcase to compare with Australia's Winfield Cup and Britain's First Division Championship. The inaugural teams were Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Canterbury, Christchurch, Counties-Manukau, Hawkes Bay, Hutt Valley, North Harbour, Taranaki, Waikato, Waitakere and Wellington. At the conclusion of that first season, the championship honours went to North Harbour.



Mini League \$1.00 Stamp



Mini League was created in response to the growing popularity of league among primary school children. This version of the game enables seven to nine year olds to develop at their own pace. Mini League is also part of the Hillary Commission's KiwiSport programme which aims at attracting greater numbers to sport by heavily emphasising the 'fun' aspect. Mod League, a step up from Mini League, is designed for 10-12 year olds.

Early Rugby League \$1.50 Stamp

Rugby league's earliest pioneers, George Smith (left) and Albert Baskerville, are honoured on this stamp. Together, the pair were instrumental in organising New Zealand's first league team, the All Golds, for the ground-breaking tour of Britain and Australia in 1907. Their involvement is also a story of sacrifice. Smith, a 1905 All Black, received a lifetime ban from rugby union for changing codes, while Baskerville tragically died of pneumonia in Australia on the homeward leg of the tour.



International Rugby League \$1.80 Stamp

This stamp depicts New Zealand's national side, the Kiwis, in action against Great Britain. Also featured is the symbol of international league supremacy, the Courtney Goodwill Trophy. This impressive award was presented to the sport in 1936 by keen Christchurch supporter Roy Courtney. His aim was for league to have its own World Cup and for goodwill to be fostered among the test-playing nations. The Cup, in New Zealand hands between 1960 and 1965, is now on permanent display in Sydney.

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Trans Tasman 45 cent Booklet Stamp

The rugby league matches that arouse the most interest and passion in New Zealand are without doubt the Tests played against Australia. The rivalry between the Kiwis and the Kangaroos, as the Australian National side is called, goes back to 1908. Since then there have been many fierce clashes. The Australians, current World Cup holders, have by far the best record in these encounters. But there have been enough upset victories by inspired Kiwi teams over the years to make every one of these games an eagerly anticipated event.



This booklet has only been produced in a single 'Hangsell' format. Strips of five 'standard' booklets will not be available. The booklet is guillotined top and bottom rather than perforated, due to the booklet production process. Standing order customers should note that all standing orders for 'standard' booklets will now be supplied as 'hangsell' booklets.

Miniature Sheet

The miniature sheet, incorporating the \$1.80 stamp, salutes rugby league's centenary with a fascinating montage of the sport's memorabilia. Jersey's, an old tasselled cap, photographs, old newspaper reports and programmes are all featured in this 'museum piece'. Also featured prominently is a view of Carlaw Park in Auckland, historically and affectionately regarded as the home of rugby league in New Zealand.

First Day Covers



100 Years of Rugby League



Rugby League Presentation Stamp Pack

This colourful, informative presentation pack brings together all the elements that comprise the stamp release commemorating rugby league's centenary. A must for all collectors.



Native Bird Stamps Presentation Pack

Every country is famous for some aspect of its wildlife. In New Zealand, that honour goes to our birds. The bird stamps - all 12 of them - that you've come to know so well over the past few years are all brought together in this beautiful presentation pack. A great overseas gift idea.



America's Cup Maximum Cards

This set of three maximum cards has been released to mark the sporting success that has gripped the nation - Team New Zealand's winning of the America's Cup in San Diego. Each card features 'Black Magic' in action on the water and includes \$1 international postcard rate. Spread the word about New Zealand's yachting heroics overseas!



Please note the finished products may differ slightly from those illustrated

COLLECTORS NOTES

DATE OF ISSUE: 26 July 1995

Stamps, First Day Cover and Miniature Sheet designed by Heather Arnold, Auckland.

NUMBER OF STAMPS: Five (including booklet stamp)

DENOMINATIONS AND DESIGNS: 45c Club Rugby League, \$1.00 Mini League, \$1.50 Early Rugby League, \$1.80 International Rugby League, 45c Booklet stamp Trans-Tasman. Miniature Sheet incorporates \$1.80 International Rugby League stamp.

PRINTER AND PROCESS:

Sheet Stamps and Miniature Sheet: Joh Enschedé of the Netherlands, by lithography.

Booklet Stamps: Southern Colour Print of Dunedin, by lithography.

STAMP SIZE AND FORMAT:

Sheet Stamps: 39.15 mm x 28 mm (horizontal)

Booklet Stamps: 30 mm x 25 mm (horizontal)

PERFORATION GAUGE:

Sheet Stamps: 14.25 x 13.75

Booklet Stamps: 12 x 12

PAPER TYPE:

Sheet Stamps: Unwatermarked phosphorus coated paper.

Booklet Stamps: Harrison phosphor coated paper.

NUMBER OF STAMPS PER SHEET: 100

NUMBER OF STAMPS PER BOOKLET: 10

Cost of unaddressed first day cover with stamps \$5.45

Cost of unaddressed first day cover with miniature sheet \$2.05

FIRST DAY COVERS

Can be purchased from Post Shops, Philatelic Sales Centres and the Philatelic Bureau, Private Bag 3001, Wanganui from 26 July 1995 until 31 August 1995. Mail Orders from the Philatelic Bureau close on the 31 August 1995.

SPECIAL BLOCKS

Sheet Stamps: Plate/imprint, positional or value blocks may be obtained by purchasing at least six stamps.

Booklet Stamps: These stamps are not available in sheet form. No plate/imprint, positional, value and barcode blocks are available for this booklet.

PERIOD OF SALE

Unless stocks are exhausted earlier these stamps will remain on sale at Post Shops until 31 August 1995 and at Philatelic Sales Centres and the Philatelic Bureau, Private Bag 3001, Wanganui, until 25 July 1996.

Franchise Post Shops may vary from this period of sale.

GUARANTEE

Dear Customer

If you are not completely satisfied with your purchase return it to us within 14 days of receiving it. You can ask us to replace it or give you a refund. No questions asked!



Basil Umuroa



New Zealand Post

