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Scrum	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20
Penalties	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20

Referee: Mr. B. SIMPSON
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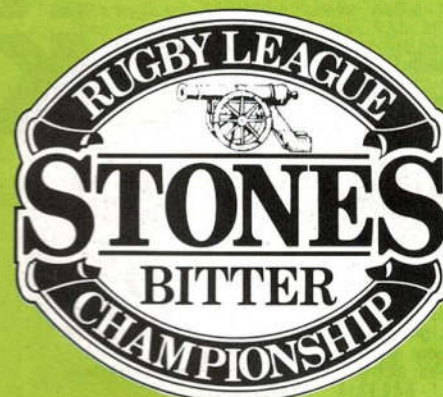
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HULL F.C.
v
OLDHAM

SUNDAY, 18th DECEMBER, 1988

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CLUB HONOURS

Rugby League Championship: 1920, 1921, 1936, 1956, 1958, 1983.

(Runners-up): 1957, 1982, 1984.

Rugby League Second Division Championship: 1977, 1979.

Rugby League Challenge Cup: 1914, 1982.

(Runners-up): 1908, 1909, 1910, 1922, 1923, 1959, 1960, 1980, 1983, 1985.

John Player Trophy: 1982. (Runners-up): 1976, 1985.

B.B.C. 2 Floodlit Trophy: 1979.

Slalom Lager Premiership: (Runners-up): 1981, 1982, 1983.

Yorkshire League Championship: 1919, 1923, 1927, 1936.

(Runners-up): 1914, 1920, 1921, 1935, 1941, 1954, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1960.

Yorkshire County Challenge Cup: 1923, 1969, 1982, 1983, 1984.

(Runners-up): 1912, 1914, 1920, 1927, 1938, 1946, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1959, 1967, 1986.

Alliance League Champions: 1985/86. Alliance Challenge Cup: 1987.

CLUB RECORDS

Highest win: 86-0 v Elland (Northern Union Challenge Cup 1st Round) April 1st, 1899.

Highest defeat: 2-64 v St. Helens, February 17th, 1988.

Highest attendance: 28,798 v Leeds (R.L. Challenge Cup Round 3) March 7th, 1936.

Points in career: 1,776, Joe Oliver, 1928-1938.

Points in season: 369, Sammy Lloyd, 1978-1979.

Tries in career: 250, Clive Sullivan, M.B.E. 1961-1974 and 1981-82.

Tries in season: 52, Jack Harrison, V.C., 1914-1915.

Tries in season: Post War: 37 Garry Schofield 1983-1984.

Goals in career: 674, John Maloney, 1965-1971 and 1972-1973.

Goals in season: 170, Sammy Lloyd, 1978-1979.

Points in match: 36, Jim Kennedy v Keighley, January 29th, 1921.

Tries in match: 7, Clive Sullivan, M.B.E. v Doncaster, April 15th, 1968.

Goals in match: 14, Jim Kennedy v Rochdale Hornets, April 7th, 1921.

14, Sammy Lloyd v Oldham, September 10th, 1978.

Appearances in career: 503, Ned Rogers, 1906-1925.

Consecutive club games in which Tries were scored:

8, Mick Crane, December 1975 to February 1976.

8, James Leuluai, Aug. to Sept., 1983

Consecutive club games in which Goals were scored: 36, John Maloney, February to December, 1967.

Consecutive club appearances: 101, Freddie Miller, April 1934 to Sept. 1936.

101, M. G. Short, Oct. 1927 to Nov. 1929.

Record receipts: (Cuptie) £20,578, v Halifax, 14th March, 1982. (State Express Quarter Final Tie).

Record receipts: (League) £21,700, v Hull K.R., 8th April, 1983.

(All time League game record to 26/12/85.)

Record receipts: (other match) £29,058, v Australia, 16th November, 1982.

MAN-OF-THE-MATCH AWARD



Chris Moses, Managing Director of CHRIS MOSES BUILDING CONTRACTORS LTD., sponsors of the match against St. Helens, presents Gary Pearce with his Man-of-the-Match award.

(Photographs by courtesy of Tony Groizard and John Harrison)



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Brian Smith Talking

HULL F.C. v OLDHAM

Stones Bitter Championship

Sunday, 18th December, 1988

Kick off 3.15 p.m.

Hull F.C.'s most important match of the season — that's how I see today's fixture with Oldham who we welcome to the Boulevard.

Like us, Oldham have won their last two league games with important wins over Halifax and Warrington. They seemed to have gained a burst of enthusiasm, as most clubs do, with the appointment of a new coach.

In tapes of their recent wins I have noticed how their big name Aussies Taylor and O'Sullivan race up in defence effectively stopping the wide attack of their opposites. This is a challenge for us as it is either very effective or causes big problems for them if we play smart enough or if the referee judges them to be repeatedly offside.

But Oldham also have a vigorous forward pack and their clash with the black and white six should be a great one. Whilst I feel the game has changed enough for the old adage of "forwards win big games" to be untrue, it certainly helps if they can get on top.

With this being our last match before Xmas may I wish all Hull F.C., supporters a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Your support for both the team and myself has been much appreciated I now know just how much that "Old Faithful" means to black and white players and fans — perhaps we should let Oldham know today!

Enjoy the match.



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PHOTO GALLERY



HULL v ST. HELENS

Left—Gary Pearce goes for the drop goal.



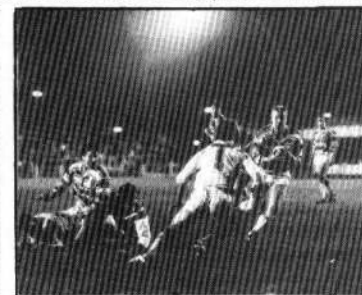
Right—Paul Fletcher probes the St. Helens defense



Left—Lee Jackson prepares for another try saving tackle

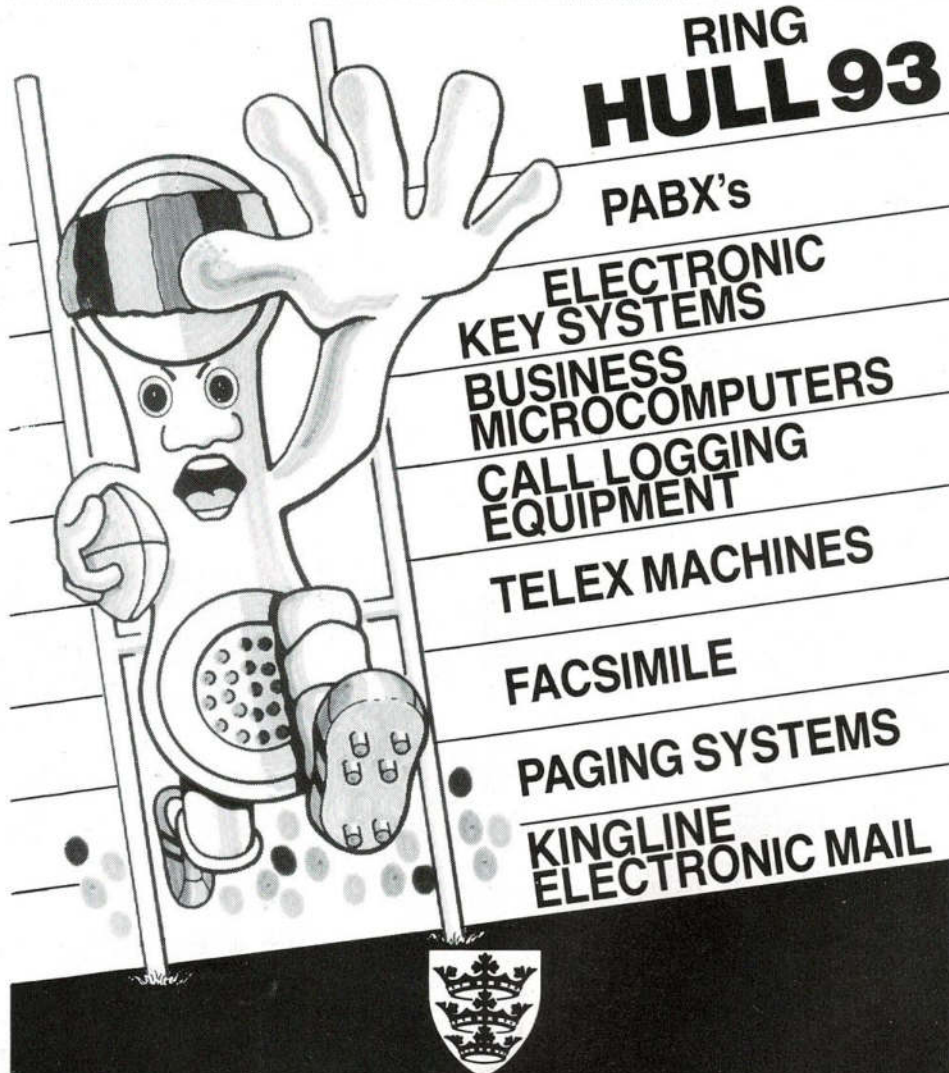


Right—Andy Dannatt and David Boyle close in on the St. Helens attack



Sequence Photos — Showing Craig Coleman being tackled and slipping the ball to Paul Welham who brushes off the full back to score under the posts

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Focus on the Roughyeds

There can not have been two more contented individuals in Rugby league after last Sunday then Oldham's Tony Barrow and Duncan Platt. Barrow quit as coach of Warrington a month ago and almost immediately was offered the Oldham manager's vacancy made available by the dismissal of Eric Fitzsimmons. Last Sunday he saw his new club lift themselves off the foot of the league table with an outstanding defeat of the Wires, and it was Barrow's first major signing full-back Platt who was the star of the show. The £35,000 capture from Widnes took the man-of-the-match award on his home debut, slicing open the Wire defence for an early try and then adding four goals. Just four days before the game Barrow had made another shrewd acquisition to their ranks with the £15,000 signing of Castleford's Gary Hyde who ended an 11 year spell at Wheldon Road.

Oldham came back into the First Division this season having become the first club to complete a Second Division double. They carried off the title in style, finishing three points ahead of Featherstone Rovers with only four defeats in 28 fixtures. The Roughyeds were the division's top points scorers, an average of nearly 28 points a game with the second best defensive record behind third placed Wakefield Trinity. The climax of the programme came on the penultimate weekend of a thrilling title chase. Oldham travelled to Trinity where defeat for the Lancastrians would set up their joint leadership with one match each left to play. The Roughyeds secured a 23-22 success to clinch the title and £10,000 Stones Bitter prize money. The Premiership Final meeting with Featherstone at Old Trafford was just as memorable as Oldham built up a seemingly unassailable lead, saw the Colliers come back in dramatic style before Des Foy secured the double with a late touchdown.

Oldham have experienced plenty of ups-and-downs during the two division era. They were in the First Division on re-formation in 1973, being relegated in that first campaign from 13th position. They came up again 12 months later from third spot, only to go down again two years later in bottom position. They spent three seasons in the lower grade until promotion in 1980, relegation following a year later. Up they came again in 1982, this time as champions, enjoying five campaigns in higher grade company until relegation two seasons ago from 13th position, four clubs being downgraded to create the new look 14 strong Stones Bitter Championship.

Last season Oldham made an early season impact with a superb run in the John Player Special trophy, reaching the semi-finals having taken Bradford Northern and Warrington en route. In the Central Park semi-final, Oldham matched St Helens until the later stages. This famous club have received silverware on 18 occasions including the Challenge Cup three times and the Lancashire Cup nine times. Their last appearance in a final excepting the Premiership affair last May, was in the County Cup in 1986, going down to Wigan.

Last summer the Roughyeds provided two Great Britain tourists in scrum half Mike Ford and prop forward Hugh Waddell. Ford, formerly with Wigan and Leigh, moved to hometown Oldham last season in a £45,000 deal, having received four Great Britain U21 caps. The popular Waddell has since moved onto pastures new joining the wealthy Headingley ranks where he has formed a powerful prop partnership with our own former favourite Lee Crooks.

The Australian influence at the Watersheddings was evident last season with the recruitment of skipper Mal Graham for a second stint, Gary Warnecke and Peter Walsh. This time around Chris O'Sullivan and Paul Taylor have arrived from Down Under to supplement a squad built from shrewd moves into the transfer market. One of the most popular signings last season was Maorie centre Charlie McAlister from Bingley Rugby Union Club where he was guesting. Another effective investment was full-back Mick Burke, capped 15 times for Great Britain and once for England, being a tourist in 1984. The former Widnes star is one of only four men to be awarded both the Lance Todd Trophy and the Harry Sutherland Trophy. Another experienced campaigner who enjoyed a benefit last season is Terry Flanagan, a clever ball-handling forward and a 1984 Great Britain Tourist. Other new arrivals this season include John Henderson, a prolific scoring threequarter who for many seasons at Leigh formed a deadly partnership with John Woods. John Fairbank came to the Watersheddings as part of the Waddell deal and has settled into the blind side prop position. Last season Oldham paid a club record £70,000 fee for St. Helens talented second row forward Paul Round and later in the campaign Kevin Meadows, a speedy wingman made the same move. Andy Ruane spent several seasons contesting for a first team place at Naughton Park before deciding to take up Oldham's offer. So Tony Barrow has a useful squad at his disposal and having guided his side to successive wins over Halifax and Warrington will be seeking to complete a hat-trick this afternoon.



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Season 1987-88

Hull's score appears first

VENUE	RESULT	ATTENDANCE	Points	Paul Fletcher	Paul Eastwood	David Moon	Richard Price	Tim Wilby	Dane O'Hara	Gary Pearce	Neil Henry	Phil Windley	Craig Coleman	Alan Tomlinson	Shaun Patrick	Lee Jackson	Andy Dannatt	Paddy Kahn	David Boyle	Jon Sharp	Gary Dvorcy	Wayne Proctor	Steve Crooks	Paul Wellham	Rob Nolan	Neil Puckering
Aug 28 Castleford	H 8-18	6,562	12	0	1	2	14	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	15							
Sept 4 Widnes	A 6-38	5,434	14	0	1	2	4	6	3	5	14	7	10	9	8	11	13	15	12							
Sept 11 Wakefield T.	H 10-16	6,117	14	0	1	2	3	6	4	5	14	7	8	9	11	12	13	15	10							
Sept 18 Hunslet (J.S.Y.C. Rd 1)	H 53-0	3,130	-	-	1	2	3	6	4	5	14	7	9	8	12	11	13	15	10							
Sept 25 Warrington	A 14-20	4,500	14	0	1	2	3	6	4	5	14	7	9	8	12	11	13	15	10							
Sept 28 Featherstone (J.S.Y.C. Rd 2)	H 18-0	4,311	-	-	1	2	3	6	4	5	14	7	15	9	8	12	13	10	11	14						
Oct 2 Leeds	H 14-12	7,081	14	2	1	2	3	6	4	5	14	7	10	9	8	12	13	11	15							
Oct 5 Leeds (J.S.Y.C. S/F)	A 8-12	10,374	-	-	1	2	3	6	4	5	14	7	10	9	12	13	8	11	14	15						
Oct 9 Bradford N.	A 20-32	3,574	14	2	1	2	14	3	4	5	6	7	10	9	12	13	8	11	15							
Oct 16 St. Helens	A 20-9	7,800	13	4	1	2	3	4	12	5	6	14	7	9	8	13	10	11	15							
Nov 6 Halifax	A 14-6	7,340	10	6	1	2	3	4	12	5	6	14	7	9	8	15	13	10	11							
Nov 13 Batley (J.P.S.T. Rd 1)	H 26-10	4,059	-	-	2	3	4	14	5	6	1	7	9	8	10	11	13	15	12							
Nov 20 Featherstone R.	H 4-14	4,984	12	6	14	2	3	4	5	6	1	7	9	8	12	15	13	10	11							
Nov 27 St. Helens (J.P.S.T. Rd 2)	A 13-16	5,832	-	-	1	2	3	4	12	5	6	14	7	9	8	10	13	15	11							
Dec 4 Leeds	A 13-6	9,457	10	8	1	2	3	4	12	5	6	14	7	9	8	10	11	13	15							
Dec 13 St. Helens	H 21-12	4,907	8	10	1	2	3	4	12	5	6	14	7	9	8	10	11	13	15							
Dec 18 Oldham	H																									
Jan 2 Hull K.R.	A																									
Jan 8 Bradford N.	H																									
Jan 15 Wakefield T.	A																									
Jan 22 Widnes	H																									
Jan 29 Silk Cut Challenge Cup (1)	A																									
Feb 5 Salford	A																									
Feb 12 Silk Cut Challenge Cup (2)	A																									
Feb 19 Oldham	A																									
Feb 26 Halifax	H																									
Mar 5 Castleford	A																									
Mar 12 Warrington	H																									
Mar 24 Hull K.R.	H																									
Mar 27 Featherstone R.	A																									
Apr 16 Salford	H																									

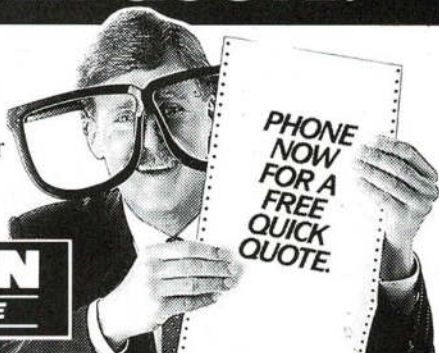


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Down Memory Lane



(Newspaper report on match played
Sunday, 19th December, 1982)

SAD HULL SLUMP TO SHOCK DEFEAT

HULL F.C. 2 OLDHAM 8

Hull ended a miserable week, one of their worst for a long time, when they suffered a shock defeat at home to Oldham.

Beaten in midweek by Bradford in the John Player Trophy, Hull needed to win not only to restore confidence but to take over the leadership of the First Division.

On both counts Hull failed miserably and they also were unable to provide team manager Arthur Bunting with the silver wedding present he wanted.

In atrocious conditions, Hull floundered badly, failing to adapt to the conditions and providing very little excitement for the 5,385 crowd—the lowest for several years—who had braved the elements.

Hull squandered far too much possession, which proved their undoing as Oldham took full advantage.

Despite keen displays by Crane and Proctor, Hull's only reward was a 45th minute penalty by Prendiville.

Hull fell behind in the 11th minute, when McEwan and Caffery linked for Vigo to crash in at the corner.

The killer punch was inflicted five minutes from time by McCurrie, who supported Hogan, who score near the posts and leave Worrall with an easy goal.

Oldham's Parrish saw his record run of scoring in his last 57 games disappointingly ended when injury ruled him out of the match.

Hull F.C.—Kemble, O'Hara, Evans, Day, Prendiville, Topliss, Dean (Harkin 40), Sutton, Duke, Rose, Norton, Proctor, Crane (Suddaby 75).

Oldham—Taylor, Vigo, Caffery, Hawkyard, Dobbs, McEwan, Aston, Hogan, McCurrie, Goodway, Jones, Worrall, Flanagan. Subs: Platt, Coombes.

(Newspaper report on match played Saturday, 28th November, 1982)

AUSSIE REFEREE SALUTES NORTON

OLDHAM 6 HULL F.C. 22

AUSTRALIA'S Top referee Greg Hartley joined in the salute to Steve Norton as he masterminded Hull's march to their second John Player final.

Loose-forward Norton predictably collected the man-of-the-match award, inspiring the 22-6 semi-final defeat of Second Division Oldham at Headingley.

"Norton was superb. He is the type of player who comes along only once in 20 years or so," said Hartley, who handles next Sunday's Britain-France Test.

"It was an entertaining tie, Hull had the greater power but Oldham impressed me for a side from the lower division."

Oldham's determined contribution was not reflected in the score. Hull skipper Charlie Stone admitted: "They had us scared when they cut our lead to 7-6."

"But Steve was fantastic once again and when James Leuluai warmed up he showed his class.

He is a slow starter like the team at the moment but give Oldham credit for defending strongly."

When Mick Parrish crashed in for Oldham's second try he just failed with a touchline goalkick that would have put his side ahead. But Hull then made the most of their opponents' handling lapses.

Stand-off Terry Day hurled his way over from a slick Norton break and then Leuluai exposed some suspect tackling to score before latching on to a Day pass to claim a glorious 50 yard second try.

Scrum-half Tony Dean had darted in for the first Hull try but loose forward Terry Flanagan kept Oldham ticking over and Bob Mordell and Parrish worked a neat try for Ashley McEwan.

"I was happy enough with our display, although the result does not do us justice," said Oldham coach Frank Myler. "Our priority now is promotion and this tie will benefit our Players."

BRIAN BATTY

(Newspaper report on match played Sunday, 5th February, 1984)

STARLETS PROVIDE KILLER PUNCHES

HULL F.C. 20 OLDHAM 8

HULL'S young and impressive starlets do not intend to relinquish the League title without a fight, and in winning their sixth successive League match they hoisted the Humbersiders into third place with a well-earned win over Oldham.

Hull nipped above Bradford on points difference as they sent Oldham packing across the Pennines to their sixth defeat in seven matches.

Hull clinched victory in a two-minute spell in the first half when they scored ten points and it was teenagers Divorty and Schofield who provided the Killer punches.

Divorty, who worked hard and caused countless problems, nipped onto a kick through by Ah Kuoi, who was making his first appearance since November.

Minutes later, Schofield showed why he is the League's top try-scorer when he shot over for his 20th touchdown after stand-off Evans had superbly dummied past Oldham's half-back partnership of Bishop and Birkby.

Hull never looked back after that and their forwards did an excellent job with prop Edmonds continuing his fine run of form.

Alongside, Patrick worked hard in the loose while another teenager, second row forward Dannatt, a surprise inclusion in the Great Britain training squad, produced telling runs.

Hull's defence, in which Kemble was a king-pin, frustrated Oldham's attack to such an extent that in the second half both Sinclair and Goodway — the man Hull bid £50,000 for earlier in the season — were sent to the sin-bin.

Sinclair, along with Bishop, tried hard to lift Oldham, who were desperate to end a bad run and pull themselves together after losing coach Peter Smethurst in midweek.

Bishop's efforts were rewarded in the last minute with a try, but that was the only time they threatened to break Hull's defence and it was left to marksman Parrish to score their other points.

Hull F.C.—Kemble, Solal, Schofield, Leuluai, O'Hara, Evans (Topliss 68), Ah Kuoi, Tindall, Patrick, Edmonds, Dannett, Crooks, Divorty.

Oldham—Littler, Taylor, Parrish, Foy, Hornby, Birkby, Bishop, Jones, McCurrie, Goodway, Sinclair, Worrall (Lowndes 25) (Willis 52), Flanagan.

(Newspaper report on match played Sunday, 21st September, 1980)

SKERRETT TURNS TIDE FOR PATCHY HULL

HULL F.C. 16 OLDHAM 11

HULL F.C. stretched their winning sequence to three matches against Oldham at the Boulevard yesterday, but they had to work desperately hard to overcome a gallant challenge from the First Division newcomers, writes **RICHARD TINGLE**.

At times Hull looked brilliant, but they never fulfilled their promise — and, once again, they gave the opposition a head start.

They trailed 7-2 after just 10 minutes and this time there was no dazzling revival.

They gave away a lot of possession, often failed to capitalise on situations and then, in the closing half of the game, when they appeared to have Oldham on the run, lost the opportunity of turning their advantage into points by again giving away too many penalties.

SKERRETT SHINES

It was Hull's extra power, experience and skill in the forwards which eventually carried them through, because their backs rarely got the opportunity to make headway.

The key figure was prop Trevor Skerrett, who repaid another huge chunk of his world record £40,000 transfer fee.

He was the one man who consistently penetrated the Oldham defence and it was his new-found understanding with scrum-half Clive Pickerill which turned the tide.

(Newspaper report on match played Sunday, 24th April, 1983)

HULL GET A REAL SCARE

HULL F.C. 24 OLDHAM 21

HULL had to call on their League of Nations to help them out of a spot yesterday.

Oldham, the only side to win a League match at the Boulevard all season, were looking good at 9-2 after half an hour.

Then New Zealander Gary Kemble ghosted in behind Steve Norton to score.

The champions were still trailing at half-time in this hell-for-leather Premiership thriller, and had to rely on try-saving stops from Steve Evans and Kevin Harkin.

But prop Phil Edmonds, who reappeared at half time after being led off with a head cut after five minutes, carried three men over the line with him to set up a purple patch for Hull.

The international rescue was complete when French winger Patrick Solal passed the ball round the back of his head to put Harkin in.

Ten minutes later Lee Crooks charged through and his sixth goal made it 24-11.

Hull roared on by a 13,000 crowd, looked able to run riot, but Frank Myler's men mounted a dramatic fightback.

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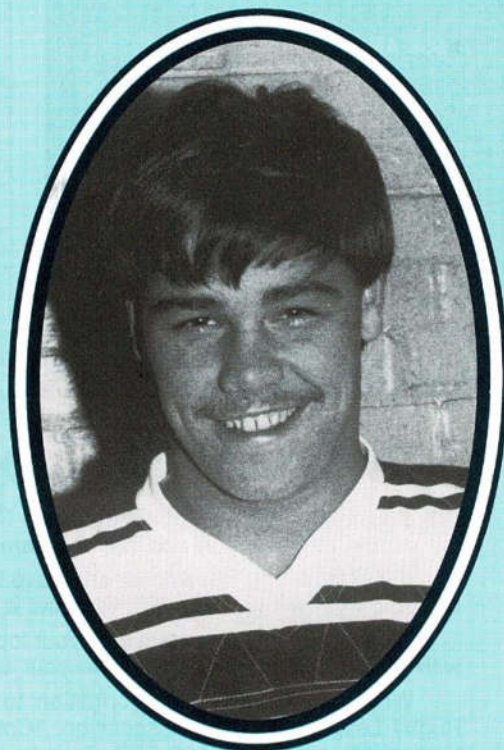
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PAUL EASTWOOD
in the Spotlight

Player Profile Interview by Tony Groizard

When Paul runs out to play for Hull F.C., he knows that quite a number of supporters in the crowd are his family and friends as he is a local boy.

His ambition is to go to Wembley with the black and whites—and win the Cup there. He remembers the disappointment of that one point cup semi final replay defeat last season. He's looking to use his strength in the opposition 25, where he is such a dangerous attacker, and his goal kicking responsibilities, to realize that ambition.

Until the age of 17 Paul did not play rugby, although he was a keen home and away supporter of the Airlie Birds. Active in many sports he played soccer for Wolfreton School and was a schoolboy county cricket player. He was persuaded to play rugby union, at off half, when he entered the sixth form.

From that moment he has been a dedicated rugby player, joining Hullensians (Colts) and reaching their first team status — all before the age of 18!

Immediately after the Hull v Featherstone final at Wembley, Paul was invited by Arthur Bunting to try the League code and after a spell in the Colts he made a very successful winning 'A' team debut at Halifax — and scored a hat trick of tries for good measure! He is full of praise for Dave Elliot and his assistants for their help at this time. His first game for Hull F.C., was at Oldham away, another winning debut, and Paul recalls so many of the team at that time being top class international players. He was brought along and helped by greats such as Fred Ah Kuoi and Steve Norton, and his next game was also a "big" one — Wigan, at the Boulevard — another victory.

(continued overleaf)

AUTOGRAPH

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RICHARD TINGLE

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Player Profile (cont.)

Paul works for B.S.S. industrial heating, and is given encouragement and co-operation by them; he knows the standards of the game are now much higher, and therefore the training has to be that much harder in line with the severe demands of division one rugby.

He appreciates the articulate and professional methods of coach Brian Smith and feels the team are ready to consolidate their recent improvement.

The odd game of golf and modern music such as Luther Vandross, Alexander O'Neal are Paul's main relaxations.

Paul's proudest moments came in the under 21 Great Britain v France internationals, where he scored two tries in both the home and away matches.



Right — Another try for Paul



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Today's Referee

BRIAN SIMPSON
(Croft, Cheshire)

Date of Birth: 23/6/1944

* Grade One: 1985-86

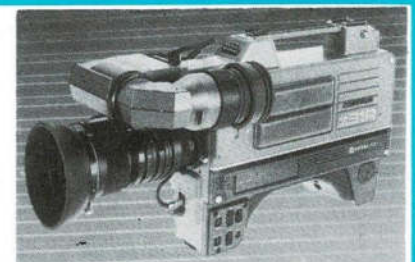


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Club Comment and News

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NEW YEAR: Closed Monday, 2nd January, 1989.

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Leeds	12	4	0	3	139	105	4	0	1	114	70	16
Widnes	9	4	0	0	144	18	3	0	2	114	79	14
Salford	12	6	0	1	165	120	1	0	4	98	150	14
St. Helens	11	3	1	1	106	78	4	0	2	93	111	13
Wigan	10	3	0	2	128	90	2	0	3	90	104	10
Warrington	10	3	0	1	96	91	2	0	4	84	90	10
Hull F.C.	11	2	0	3	57	72	3	0	3	87	111	10
Featherstone R.	11	3	0	3	119	155	2	0	3	86	143	10
Bradford N.	10	2	0	2	101	76	2	0	4	139	140	8
Hull K.R.	11	3	0	2	111	104	1	0	5	72	156	8
Oldham	12	2	0	3	102	86	1	1	5	125	162	7
Wakefield T.	11	2	1	4	103	141	1	0	3	60	112	7
Halifax	11	2	0	4	78	96	1	0	4	39	80	6

NEXT HOME MATCHES

STONES BITTER CHAMPIONSHIP

HULL F.C. v BRADFORD NORTHERN

SUNDAY, 8th JANUARY, 1989

Kick off 3.15 p.m.

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HULL F.C. v HULL K.R.

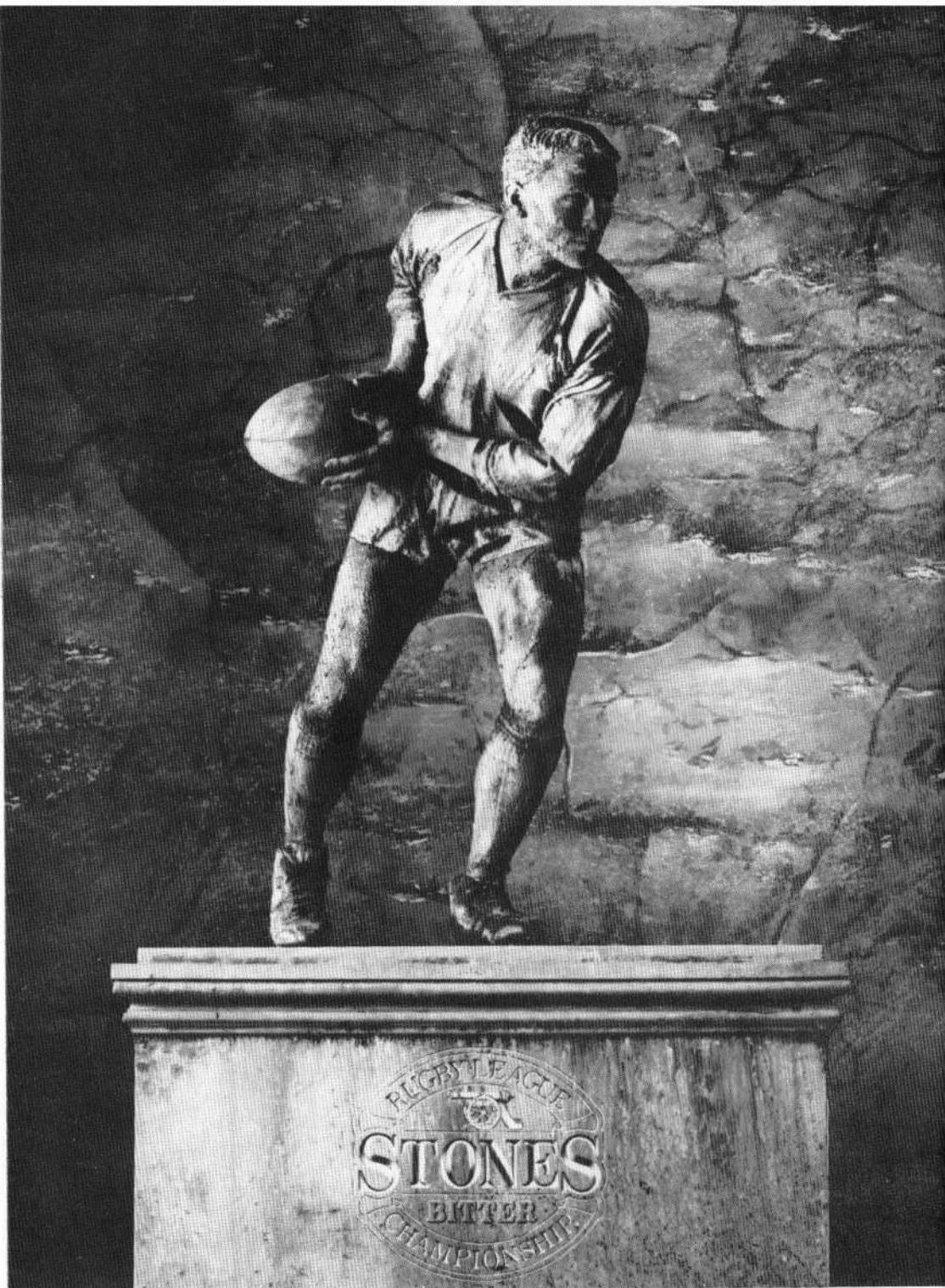
FRIDAY, 30th DECEMBER, 1988

Kick off 7.30 p.m.

CHANGE OF FIXTURES

Hull 'A' v Hunslet 'A' at the Boulevard, Friday, 27/1/89, k.o. 7.30 p.m.

Hunslet 'A' v Hull 'A', at Hunslet, Friday, 17/2/89, k.o. 7.30 p.m.



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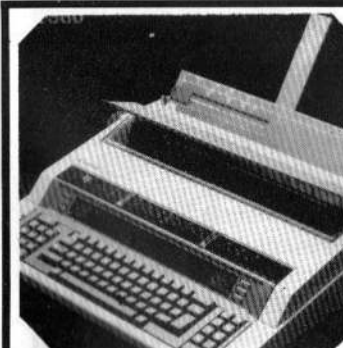
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SHOOTING STARS . . .

Whitestar have it right

During the past ten seasons Hull Colts have enjoyed a remarkable run of success, winning more silverware than any other colts side, and more importantly producing a steady flow of talent for the club.

The value of this talent being highlighted last weekend when no fewer than seventeen ex-colts represented the club at either 'A' team or first team level, and this number could have been increased if Alan Tomlinson, Richard Kerman and Shaun Patrick were not injured.

At the end of last season Hull Colts had completed the hat trick as they won the League Championship, the Premiership and the Challenge Cup, whilst the players were rewarded as twelve turned professional, all this being tempered by the news that the colts league would be disbanded, to be replaced by BARLA county leagues.

The present chairman of the club encouraged the colts staff to continue, and form a nursery side to enter the new league, agreeing to call the side Hull Whitestar, and what a wise decision this has proved to be.

Already at the club were six professionals who were still eligible for under 19 rugby, as well as Jason Eastwood, Nicky Mann, Lance Cator, Mark Hazell, Richard Branton and Mike Shields who were left over from last seasons squad, so hopes were high of another very successful season, with the remainder of the current squad being made up of seventeen year olds who would gain experience in preparation for next season.

Before a league game had been played the plans for this season were blown sky high, as the experienced Mike Shields picked up a serious knee injury, and it became obvious that the professionals would be needed for 'A' team and first team football, thus putting pressure on the youngsters, and restricting the selection options open to the Whitestar staff.

At first everyone thought the youngsters would struggle against older, more experienced players, but the reverse has happened as they have risen to the challenge, reaching the Yorkshire Cup semi-final, and moving to joint league leaders, losing only one league game to date.

The side failed to reach the cup final when they were defeated by an older East Park Juniors side in the semi's, who scored two late tries after being held up to three quarter time, as East Parks two professionals finally put paid to the gallant youngsters. In the league they have only lost one game against Wheldale (ex. Castleford Colts), who kicked a late penalty to win by the narrowest of margins. The players were not to blame for this defeat, as the Whitestar staff take full responsibility, because they made too many changes to a winning side as they tried to give a number of players their debut's together.

The club captain Lance Cator has led his side with pride, inspiring the youngsters around him, and after captaining Yorkshire and scoring two tries against Lancashire its hard to understand why he has not been included in the Great Britain training squad.

Its now becoming obvious that Whitestar are growing in confidence, and the youngsters will mature this season, staying together to form a side for next season, capable of winning the National Cup, as well as keeping Hull F.C., happy as another crop of talented players will be pressing for their chance in 'A' team rugby.

At full back Chris Magerison has made the position his own by putting together a string of impressive performances, whilst wingers Richard Gotts and Rob Barrett are very fast elusive runners with a big future.

In Darfen Oglesby Whitestar have possibly the best goalkicking centre in the Yorkshire League, whilst co-centre Tony Watson shows plenty of promise with his strong aggressive style.

One of the most pleasing points is the return to form of Craig Mathews who can form an excellent half back partnership with Paul Hunter.

At prop ex. schoolboy international John Thorpe and Mark Youngs are taking the league by storm and look stars of the future, but Dale West keeps them on their toes, as any loss in form will result in him coming into the side.

In the second row Rob D'arcy, Richard Kirk, Paul Walker and new signing Steve Hall are fighting for the two spots, with the latter also looking as if he has a big future in the game.

The play maker in the side is Mark Laws who has the potential to become a professional player, providing he continues his improved form of late.

As they continue to build for next season the Whitestar staff have persuaded talented half back Ricky Gladstone to return to the club, and another ex-schoolboy international Garry Pullen has been tempted back into the game.

To complete the plans for the future Carl Wiles and Garry Neilson are training with Whitestar and could be possible signings in the near future.

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