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	G	T	P
DUNCAN PLATT			
TONY ANDERSON			
JOHN HENDERSON			
DES FOY			
RICHARD IRVINE			
BRETT CLARK			
MIKE FORD			
AUSTIN DONEGAN			
ANDY RUANE			
JOHN FIELDHOUSE			
CHARLIE McALISTER			
PAUL ROUND			
RICHARD RUSSELL			
JOHN COGGER			
KEITH ATKINSON			

PROGRESSIVE SCORE

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Club Founded — 1902 and reformed 1908.
Elected to NR FL June 1921

Representative Players:

Great Britain — T. Askin, J. Bridges,
T. Clawson, M. Dixon, C. Dooler, S. Evans,
Deryck Fox, Don Fox, D. Hobbs, G. Jordan,
A. Morgan, S. Nash, P. Newlove, P. Smith,
J. Thompson

Great Britain U21's — Deryck Fox, P. Lyman,
C. Bibb, P. Newlove, Smales.

Great Britain U24's — K. Bell, S. Evans,
D. Fennell, V. Farrar, M. Gibbins, J. Gilbert,
D. Hobbs, T. Ramshaw, P. Smith, V. Thomas,
J. Thompson, L. Tonks.

England — J. Bridges, M. Dixon, S. Evans,
V. Farrar, J. Hirst, A. Morgan, J. Mullaney,
P. Smith, R. Stone, J. Thompson, A. Wood.

Wales — P. Banner, H. Box.

John Jepson Memorial Trophy 1989-90 —
Deryck Fox.

RL Cup Winners 1967, 1973, 1983

Runners Up 1952, 1974

RL Championship Winners 1977

Runners Up 1928, 1976

RL Championship 2nd Div Winners 1980

Runners Up 1987/8

2nd Div Premiership Runners Up 1987/88

Arrowfast Try Scoring Trophy Winners 1980

Yorkshire Cup Winners 1940, 1959

Runners Up 1928, 1963, 1966, 1970, 1976,

1977, 1989

Yorkshire League Runners Up 1928, 1962

YSC Cup Winners 1946, 1974

Runners Up 1955, 1960

YSC Shield Winners 1946, 1962, 1972

Tourists — Deryck Fox, Chris Bibb, Ian Smales

Ground Records

RL Cup Attendance 17,531 v St. Helens 1959

Receipts £12,287 v Widnes 1981

Yorkshire Cup Attendance 10,700 v Leeds 1959

Receipts £8,681 v Hull 1980

League Attendance 14,990 v Wakefield Trinity 1962

'THE ROVER'

latest news from P.O. Rd...

TODAY'S GAME

For this afternoon's Stones Bitter Championship game we are pleased to welcome to Post Office Road, the players, officials and supporters of Oldham RLFC. Gaining promotion to Div. 1 this season, the Oldham side, like so many before them, have found difficulty in adjusting to life in the top bracket and are situated perilously close to the relegation zone at the present time. As so often happens when the players aren't performing, someone has to answer for it and in this instance the Oldham coach, Tony Barrow was relieved of his duties to be replaced temporarily by ex-GB international forward, John Fieldhouse, who got off to the perfect start last Sunday by defeating Wakefield Trinity at the Watersheddings. That victory, will, of course, have gone a long way towards restoring the confidence of the players and also keeps their hopes of survival well and truly alive.

After two successive defeats, Rovers will be hoping to return to winning ways this afternoon to bolster their top four aspirations. Clearly their task will not be an easy one against a side playing for their division one lives but as we witnessed during Rovers recent league run of five consecutive wins Peter Fox's side are capable of playing some very fine rugby indeed.

It is expected that the Rovers side will be a little stronger than the one that took the field at Wilderspool last Sunday with several players returning from injury, including Clarry Iti, Gary Rose and Andy Fisher. Paul Newlove, however, will still be missing from the line up as he, like Oldham's Tommy Martin, will be on duty for the GB U21s in France.

With everything to play for this afternoon's game is sure to provide us with another fine spectacle of top class rugby league football.

BRENDON TUUTA

Sadly today's game is due to mark the farewell appearance of Kiwi international forward Brendon Tuuta who, under international rules, is required to return to his Australian club side, Western Suburbs by the 1st February. Brendon is one of the finest overseas players ever to grace the blue and white of Featherstone Rovers and lengthy negotiations have been going on behind the scenes in an attempt to secure his services for next season. Listen very carefully for an exciting pre-match tannoy announcement regarding Brendon's possible future association with Rovers.

HALF YEARLY MEETING

Would Rovers' members please note that the half yearly meeting will take place in the Club-house tomorrow evening at 7.30 p.m. Admission to the meeting is strictly on production of your current season ticket.

SUPPORTERS NOTES — Featherstone Branch — Wakefield 255203 (6 to 9pm Monday to Thursday)
Pontefract Branch — 704234 Knottingley Branch — 82155

Ray French amongst others have suggested rule changes for a kick 50 or 60 yards that finds touch. While I agree, wingers and fullbacks letting the ball find touch looks bad, giving head and ball to the kickers team is ludicrous. Rugby Leagues worst aspect the scrum would double if not treble.

Why should a team struggle in its own 25 for four or five tackles when the first play the ball can be kicked down field to your opponents 25 and start your six tackles from there. More scrums, means slower play, the ball out of play more and Rugby League would become like Union, kicking from end to end. Of course Ray French would come up with the revolutionary new idea to cut down the scrums by introducing the LINEOUT!

My idea would be that if a player kicks the ball from his own half and finds touch in the oppositions 25 then why not have the same ruling for the scrum but give the team only five tackles or possibly even three. Finding touch outside the 25 or kicking from outside your own half wouldn't count for the new rule.

Before you all laugh it off as daft, think of the advantages. Wingers can't jog down the touch-line as though they're warming up for training. Fullbacks have to read the game more to position themselves properly. Teams would have to pressure the kicker more on the 4th or 5th tackle which would create gaps to exploit with a quick pass or sidestep. A good touchfinding kick, giving the opposition less tackles to clear their lines would reward the kickers with his team keeping the pressure on.

I don't believe in bogey teams but St Helens seem to bring the worst out of Rovers. As a supporter you know when Rovers travel to Wigan or Widnes its a case of how many Rovers can keep the score down to. Every other team you feel Rovers have a chance of the points. Saints should have been dead and buried at half time but Rovers were a different side in the second half. No team scores 28 points and loses, especially at home.

Warrington match was a non event. After 10 minutes Rovers weren't going to win. Although not at our best, Rovers were never allowed to play by a referee whose judgement of the advantage was non-existent. Countless times Warrington knocked-on only for Rovers not to pick up clearly. Decision. Scrum Warrington feed. What happened to the first offence rule?

Malcolm Reilly's appointment as GB coach for another three years must be great news for Rovers players now they know they have no chance of playing for GB. After the squad was named and even without Andy Gregory, Deryck Fox doesn't get selected. Somebody last week asked me to make comment in these notes, but what can I say that hasn't already been said. I'll just say Rovers fans know what D.F. is capable of and appreciate that he does it for us and not against us. We all know you're the No. 1 scrum half. Only Malcolm Reilly knows why, but my theory why Foxy isn't selected is because Reilly can't spell Deryck, heck he probably can't even spell Fox!

CONTINUED ON CENTRE PAGE.....

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FOXY

Straight talking from the ROVERS BOSS...



THE CHANCE OF A TOP-FOUR PLACE HAS GONE BEGGING WITH TWO SUCCESSIVE DEFEATS. HOW DISAPPOINTING HAS THAT BEEN?

Personally, I'm very disappointed. After the Saints game I was devastated - and I hope the players are, too. We wasted a golden opportunity to consolidate a place in the top-four with that home setback against St. Helens - and I don't think I can ever recall a defeat which left me so upset. We had the game won at half-time... St. Helens didn't want to know, and were all set to stay in the dressing rooms. Our players should have been lifted by their very reluctance to come out, instead Rovers allowed them all the room in the world to play their fancy, free-flowing football. That defeat was an enormous disappointment to me - and I don't think the players realise quite what they allowed to happen. It was unforgivable to allow a place in the top-four to go begging in that manner.

AND AT WARRINGTON LAST WEEK?

That was a different story, entirely. It was a good performance by us, and our pack matched theirs. Rovers were in the hunt throughout, despite being on the wrong end of a very heavy penalty count from Mr. Connolly. I was encouraged by the commitment and we showed that the Regal Trophy winners are not the super-team many think they are. Warrington play the basics well - and nothing more.

OLDHAM CAME TO POST OFFICE ROAD WITH THEIR TAILS UP, AFTER LAST WEEK'S 26-22 HOME DEFEAT OF WAKEFIELD. DOES THAT WORRY YOU?

Not in the least. I don't think we need fear Oldham at all. Rovers have already beaten them at their ground, and I think we are more than capable of getting back to winning ways against them, this afternoon. That's not to say that we'll under-estimate Oldham - we can't afford to under-estimate any team. A look through the history books will show that almost every club which changes their coach gets some sort of positive reaction from the players, initially. But, often, it is impossible to sustain that charge they get from having a new man at the helm. John Fieldhouse did a good job last week, and he used the emotion of the previous week to work to his advantage. The trick, now, is to maintain that.

UNFORTUNATELY, LEO CASEY WILL BE UNABLE TO FACE HIS FORMER COLLEAGUES THIS AFTERNOON. WHEN IS HE DUE BACK?

Leo's been in hospital during the past week and had an operation on his leg and a manipulation of his back. It will keep him out of action for, possibly, six weeks, maybe less. But the lad is simply relieved that his problem has been diagnosed and, hopefully, rectified. When he returns we will see the real Leo Casey - and that's his main concern. Leo hasn't had anything like the credit he deserves for playing for so long with such a painful injury, but I'm pleased with the way he has performed under such duress and discomfort. Believe me, we have an outstanding young forward in the making and Leo will come back twice the player.

BUT AS THE DOOR CLOSES FOR ONE PLAYER, IT OPENS FOR ANOTHER, AND GARY PRICE IS HAPPILY BACK IN FIRST TEAM COLOURS MUCH EARLIER THAN EXPECTED?

Gary has had a tough time of it over the past twelve months and I was delighted to recall him to first-team action so soon. In fact, Gary was brought back earlier than he probably wanted, to help us out of an injury crisis. He had only played one comeback game for the Alliance team, so it was a tremendous (unselfish) effort for him to back up with the game at Wilderspool on the Sunday. To have been out of action since September, and come back with such an effort was a great achievement. We look forward to seeing Gary regaining his best form as his general match fitness improves in the weeks ahead.

A FEW PLAYERS HAVE LEFT POST OFFICE ROAD ON LOAN PRIOR TO THE CLOSURE OF THE CUP REGISTER LAST MONDAY, HAVEN'T THEY?

Yes. I allowed winger Barry Drummond and utility man Paul Hughes to go to Dewsbury on loan, and prop Gary Hall has joined Bramley on a similar loan deal. Jack Addy asked for Barry and Paul, they weren't getting first-team football, so it seemed only sensible and fair to everyone, to allow them to play elsewhere. Paul got into the try-scoring act on his debut, but Dewsbury lost at Doncaster last Sunday. Gary Hall has impressed Bramley with his form for their Alliance team, and we agreed to extend the loan period.

BUT NO NEW SIGNINGS FOR ROVERS, IN TIME FOR THE CUP?

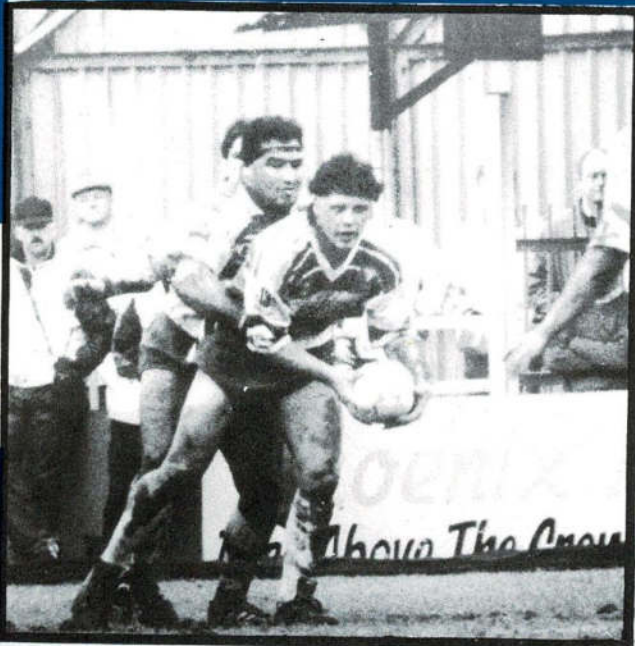
No, but as I've said earlier - we're happy with the players we have at our disposal. The Cup task at Hull is a daunting one, but not at all impossible. Their forward pack has to be tamed - if we can do that then Featherstone have the back division to win the game. It will be the tie of the round, there's no doubt about that, and we'll be travelling there with every confidence. But - and I must stress this to the players - that's in the future. Let's get some league points under our belts, first.

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FEATHERSTONE



Owen Simpson scores in the corner for Rovers during the recent home game against St Helens.



Fellow Kiwi, Duane Mann, gets to grips with Brendon Tuuta, during last weeks game at Warrington.



A typical burst by Rovers' Ian Smales leaves the St Helens defence flat-footed.



IN ACTION

IN TOWN TODAY



OLDHAM

Oldham visit Post Office Road for the first time since September 1988, this afternoon. They are looking to avenge that 18-20 defeat by Rovers at Watersheddings, at the start of the month.

After marking their return to the First Division with a tremendous 32-22 defeat of Leeds, in September and winning four of their first seven league matches, the 'Roughyeds' have found the going tough. Eight defeats in nine league matches – plus an embarrassing Regal Trophy defeat at Batley – cost former Warrington boss Tony Barrow his job a fortnight ago.

Stepping into the player-coach breach, last Sunday, was much-travelled former GB forward John Fieldhouse. The former Warrington, Widnes and St Helens backrower got off to a flying start as Oldham gained only their second league victory in 10 matches, with a stirring 26-22 defeat of Wakefield Trinity. It was their finest performance for a long while, including a comeback after being 0-10 down early in the game.

Back in the First Division after finishing third in the promotion race, going on to win the Old Trafford Premiership Final for the second time in three seasons with one of the most amazing comebacks ever seen in a major Final, Oldham can ill afford to continue the yo-yo existence which has been their fate since relegation in 1986-87.

Barrow, though, was an unlucky victim of their lack of success. After all, he was runner-up to John Monie in the 1990 Coach of the Year nomination, after a season in which Oldham came so close to winning the Lancashire Cup and reaching Wembley for the first time in their history.

After a first-round Lancashire Cup defeat by Salford, Oldham started this season's league campaign with a 32-22 defeat of Leeds, but lost 12-17 at Wakefield – the start of an away sequence which has yielded just one victory.

They maintained their long unbeaten home record with a 28-22 defeat of Castleford, and then took Widnes close before conceding a 16-24 defeat at Naughton Park. Hull K.R. then became the first team to defeat Oldham at Watersheddings for 18 months – avenging their 29-30 Premiership Final defeat last May.

Oldham's only away win was the 24-14 triumph over Sheffield, at Don Valley, and that was followed by a dour 4-2 home success over the then-struggling Warrington side. But that was to be Oldham's last league win before Christmas.

They lost four consecutive matches – Wigan (15-38), Bradford (16-18), Castleford (10-28) and Widnes (18-24) – before avenging a Lancashire Cup defeat by Second Division leaders Salford. Their 26-6 Regal Trophy earned a second-round visit to Batley, where Keith Rayne's try hat-trick humbled them.

A 4-31 defeat at Hull preceded the Boxing Day defeat of Rochdale (18-13), but then came the three defeats which cost Barrow so dearly – a 12-28 defeat at Leeds, the 18-20 home setback against Rovers and, the final straw, a comprehensive 14-42 defeat at Craven Park, against Hull K.R.

This afternoon's Oldham line-up is certain to a number of players brought to the club in the summer as Barrow signed such seasoned professionals as Derek Pyke, Ronnie Duane, Austin Donegan, Tony Anderson and Norman Francis.

Full-back Duncan Platt was a member of the Widnes side which eclipsed St Helens 38-14 in the 1988 Premiership Final and landed a goal as the Chemics completed a Championship/Premiership 'double'. Platt kicked 126 goals for Oldham in his most consistent season to date, in 1989-90.

Winger Richard Irving was an influential member of the promotion-winning squad throughout 1989-90. The ex-Moldgreen winger scored 17 tries, including one in the Lancashire Cup Final, Oldham's solitary effort in the Cup semi-final defeat at the hands of Warrington, their only try in a 9-6 victory over Hull K.R. at Craven Park and one against the Robins at Old Trafford.

Ex-Leigh centre John Henderson recovered from an early-season injury to score 17 tries, including one in the Premiership victory over Hull K.R. His touchdown against Wakefield was his first of the season, last Sunday. Winger Paul Lord weighed in with 29 touchdowns last term, to finish top try scorer in Oldham's fifth promotion-winning season since the re-introduction of two division football in 1973.

New Zealander Charlie McAlister remains one of the most popular players to play for Oldham. Having scored 8 tries and 16 goals last term, he has made a successful transition from centre to second row. Another 'survivor', although he has appeared only twice this time, is ex-GB centre Des Foy, who returned to the club following a brief spell with Newcastle in Australia.

Michael Ford is a mainstay of the side, playing a role similar to that of Deryck Fox, and he continues to look one of the best scrum-halves in the business. He benefitted from the experience of touring Australasia with the 1988 Lions.

Former St Helens and GB U21 international back-rower Paul Round, a makeshift full-back or winger two years ago, is back in his more familiar second-row position, where he gained U21 honours in 1984. And his strong-running style has brought him 10 tries this season.

Play-anywhere former Wigan star Richard Russell, has played at hooker and loose-forward after being an outstanding utility back whilst at Central Park and a former GB Colts and U21 player.

Former GB front and back-row forward Fieldhouse arrived at Watersheddings via spells with Warrington, Widnes and St Helens and includes 1987 and 1989 Wembley Finals among four major finals. He had a great game in the 26-22 defeat of Trinity and his career has brought him seven GB caps.

17-try Australian Brett Clark reproduced the form, for Oldham, that made him such a shrewd St Helens capture from Western Suburbs and he has added a further 7 tries this season including three in the last four games.

One of three contenders for the Second Division Player of the Year award which he won whilst with Runcorn Highfield three years ago, with dynamic Australian loose-forward John Coggar. His 24 tries last season were vital, but he has scored just once this time – last week's match-winner against Trinity.

John Fairbank came to Oldham in a 1988 deal which took Test front-rower Hugh Waddell to Leeds, while hooker Andy Kuane arrived at Oldham after spells with Widnes and Rochdale, and has been outstanding of late.

Absent this afternoon, though, is one of the finest centre prospects in the country – Tommy Martyn who is in Limoux with the GB U21 party. Oldham hope for the return of injured prop Derek Pyke soon and have such as ex GB centre Ronnie Duane and versatile Keith Atkinson in a large squad.

The Roughyeds looked doomed a fortnight ago but it's amazing what a good victory can do. Oldham will come to Post Office Road scenting another two points and believing they climb away from the danger area. Time will tell.

YORKSHIRE TIMBER

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Down Memory Lane

(Rovers have, very slightly, the upper hand on visitors Oldham in First Division clashes here at Post Office Road. Of the previous 10 clashes, stretching back to the inaugural 1973-74 season, Rovers have gained six victories and a draw. Oldham have to go back to the 1984-85 season for their last league triumph here. We take a look at three previous clashes, incorporating a home win, an away Oldham success and a drawn encounter.)

1988-89:

FEATHERSTONE 18 OLDHAM 14

The quicksilver finishing abilities of stand-off Graham Steadman gave newly-promoted Featherstone a revenge victory over Oldham in their second home game back in the First Division on 11 September 1988. The two sides had clashed in a thrilling Second Division Premiership Final at Old Trafford, the previous May, when Eric Fitzsimons' men gained a last-gasp 28-26 victory. This time, Steadman held the key to victory and his two tries gave Featherstone a second successive victory, following a tremendous 30-15 defeat of Hull K.R. at Craven Park, despite an Oldham try from prop. Leo Casey. Teams :-

FEATHERSTONE: Bibb (try), Quinn (3 gls), Lyman, Banks, Marsh, Steadman (2 trs), Fox, Grayshon, Bell, Bastian, Harrison, Hughes, Smith. Subs: Crossley, Siddall.
OLDHAM: Burke, Round, Foy, McAllister (gl), Meadows, Patterson, Ford, Clawson, Ruane, Casey (try), Flanagan, Hawkyard, Taylor (try). Subs: Atkinson (2 gls), Fairbank.

1985-86:

FEATHERSTONE 14 OLDHAM 14

Two tries from brilliant Australian back-rower Mal Graham earned Oldham a point from a fiercely contested First Division encounter at Post Office Road on 6 October 1985. Husesein M'Barki also crossed for the visitors and only the fact that ex-Rovers star David Hobbs had an off-day with the boot cost Oldham a second successive victory, following a 12-54 humiliation at Hull. In contrast, Featherstone were indebted to drop goals from evergreens Keith Bell and Steve Quinn for a share of the spoils in a game which saw a debut try from Aussie Rod Pethybridge and the debuts of Kiwis Mark Roiall and Paddy Burgoyne. The line-ups were :-

FEATHERSTONE: Pethybridge (try), Waites, Quinn (2 gls, dg), Gilbert, Hopkins, Banks, Fox, Burgoyne, Spurr, Clawson, Clarkson, Bell (dg), Lyman (try). Subs: N. Barker, Roiall.
OLDHAM: Edwards, M'Barki (try), Foy, Warnecke, M. Taylor, Ashton, Kirwan, Jones, Sanderson, Morgan, Graham (2 trs), Hobbs (goal), Flanagan.

1983-84:

FEATHERSTONE 16 OLDHAM 24

Cup holders Featherstone were destroyed by an outstanding Oldham pack in which ex-Post Office Road favourite Nick Morgan and youthful GB internationals Andy Goodway and Terry Flanagan were outstanding. Goodway raced through for a brace of tries and Flanagan also touched down as Allan Agar's men went down to their fourth successive defeat at the start of the season. Substitute Deryck Fox made his home debut and the teams for the 11 September 1983 clash were :-
FEATHERSTONE: N. Barker, Chapman, Quinn (2 gls), Gilbert, Bardgett, Johnson, Pickerill, Siddall (try), Spurr (try), G. Ward, Hobbs (try), Slatter, Hudson. Subs: Fox, Bell.
OLDHAM: Littler, Vigo, Parrish, Foy, Taylor, Willis, Ashton, Morgan, McCurrie, Goodway (2 tries), Platt (4 goals), Lowndes (try), Flanagan (try). Subs: Kirwan, Chadwick.

What the Papers DIDN'T Say.....

A review of recent games by DONALD HUNT

The euphoria of the victories at Christmas and the New Year vanished like a gambler's lucky streak at the outcome of the St. Helens match. No one wanted to take the ultimate decision whether the match should be played or not, which resulted in about 50 people walking about the pitch making non-committal noises and getting nowhere. Finally the decision to play was dragged out, promptly followed by statements that it was unplayable, these same people had been sitting on the fence before!

It's history now that we saw one of the finest displays of attacking football in the first half in which five tries were scored. A prolonged wait after half-time until eventually the St. Helens side took the field over six minutes late. What happened after that can only be described by that much over used word "unbelievable". Whether the players got cold waiting or complacent over their lead we shall never know, but it is a fact that winning pay and two league points were there for the asking and chucked away.

The match at Wilderspool was quite a different matter. For the first time this season injuries got the upper hand. Up to now we have been pretty lucky and got away with the odd one or two. However last Sunday we were caught with a handful. Paul Newlove (bronchitis), Gary Rose and Clarri Iri (leg injuries). Leo Casey has had an operation and will probably be out until the end of February. Andy Fisher has a broken finger. This meant positional changes and drafting in reserve players amongst whom was Gary Price. Gary made a return to rugby after his long lay-off with a broken arm, on Friday night with the Alliance team. It was intended to bring him back gradually to match fitness, but he had to be pressed into service much sooner than had been expected. However he did very well and got through all right.

Warrington were on a "high" after just having won the Regal Trophy, and intended putting on a good performance in front of their home crowd. Their tackling was keen and hard as was to be expected from their good defensive record this season. With the team changes forced upon them Rovers put in a spirited performance once they had settled down. Brendon Tuuta in another all out display had the home crowd baying for his blood. This worried Brendon not one iota, in fact it was right up his street and he turned in a wonderful performance. What a find the man has turned out to be. The game neared completion before Rovers could find a way through the Warrington defence and then it was Owen Simpson, who scored in the corner in classic style, leaving Des Drummond for dead. A great kick from near the touch line by Deryck Fox, added to his two first half penalties.

Meanwhile the Alliance side had visited St. Helens. Starting badly they were 10-2 at half-time, but fought back well in the second half to earn a 24-24 draw. During the second half a St. Helens player broke through from the half-way line and a certain try was almost checked by Spencer Longstaff. He flew after his man and caught him on the line, only to crash into the posts at full speed. He was taken off on a stretcher and received immediate attention by the St. Helens doctor. I know it is mandatory now to have a doctor in attendance at these matches, but it was very comforting to see the care and thoroughness of his diagnosis. It will also be a comfort to all wives and parents of players that skilled advice is readily at hand. Happily on this occasion severe bruising was the extent of the damage, which could have been very serious. The Club wrote to St. Helens to express their thanks.

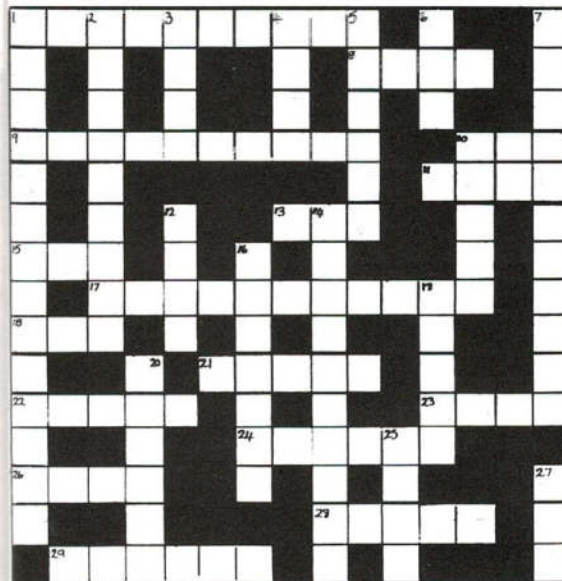
The home Alliance match versus Warrington proved very disappointing. The Wires had several first team players back after injury, whilst we fielded a much weakened side because of first team calls. Although drawing at half-time their big pack proved too strong for us in the end.

The Wales-England R.U. international must have been the sporting "bore" of the year. I know of one party of ten that went to the match and one member of the party slept almost throughout!

The English must have been the first victorious team that didn't want to talk about their victory. Perhaps they were too embarrassed about the way it was achieved!

THE YOUNG ROVER

by Chris Westwood



ACROSS:

1. Wire
8. Finished, nearly a Rover.
9. Part of a ship. Sometimes what forwards are called.
10. Ban.
11. Up and under.
13. Smalesy.
15. Hull K.R. Hooker.
17. Oldham Kicker.
19. I across winger or lousy singer and comedian.
21. Hull No. 7.
22. Fev winger first name.
23. What Leeds and Wigan are.
24. Almost.
26. Alexander, Penrith half back.
- 28 & 29. Fev tough tackling forward.

DOWN:

1. 2 downs ground.
2. They play at 1 down!
3. Henjak.
4. Front row or small band.
5. Francis, Tebbit etc.
6. Front rowers number.
7. The new Seasiders.
10. Does Ian Bragger do it?
12. Tattersfield men.
14. Puts in an —, turns out.
- 16 & 18. Fev's in form centre.
20. Bronco's number 7.
25. Paul and Gary perhaps, are they Posh?
27. Fev's ex Oldham player.

ANSWERS ON CENTRE PAGE.



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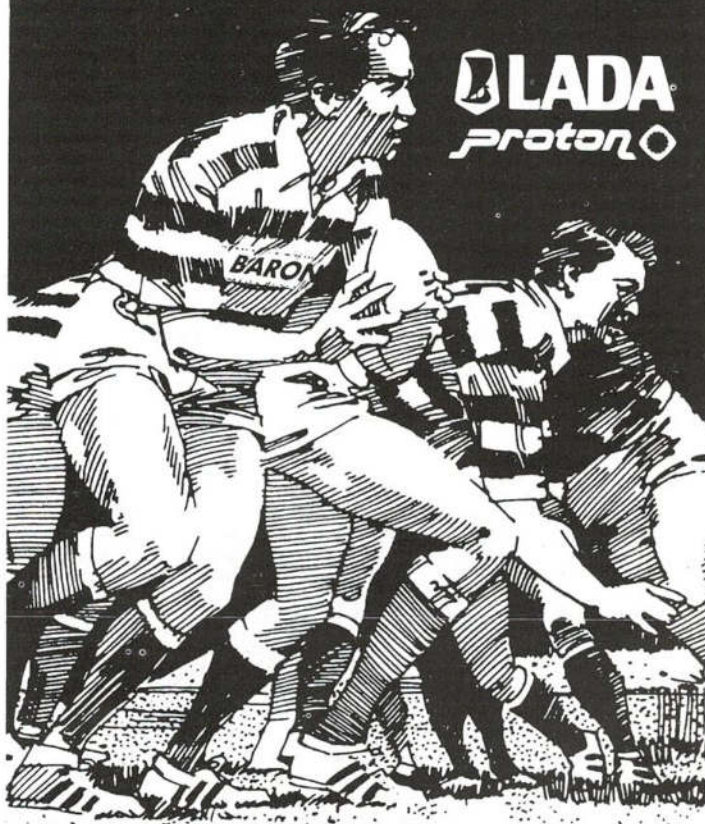
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Dear Sir,
*Wally Lewis
can't come.....*
by Ian Clayton

ELEGANCE, CHEESE AND PICALLILI....

I popped into Rugby League Headquarters in Chapeltown the other day for a chat with David Oxley. I had to decline his offer of Grilled Rainbow Trout in the boardroom for lunch, as I'd just had a Cheese and Picallili sandwich in Leeds Market. (Joke! Joke!). I did go into the boardroom though, it's just been done out in beautifully finished Yew wood and it's an absolute credit to the game and its followers, you should see it.

The reason for this hobnobbing was due to a visit from Germany to Featherstone by one Christoph Biermann, a journalist. He is writing a major article for "Die Zeit" newspaper on Rugby League, which will hopefully introduce the game to Germany. Of course he chose to base the piece on Featherstone, because we know more about it than anybody else.

We discussed his first impressions and this is what he reckons. "Ich Haette nicht gedacht, dass das spiel so elegant sein koennte. In den besten momenten begeistert es sogar so hartgesottene Fussballfans wie mich."

Which roughly translated means - "I enjoyed the grilled trout David, but the cheese and picallili sandwiches on Leeds Market are out of this world."

Actually it reads - "I wouldn't have thought that the game could be so elegant. In its best moments it can also excite a die-hard soccer supporter like me."

I didn't even know the game was elegant. But on the subject of elegance I have to say that the house the Rugby League bought next door to H.Q. and did up is extremely elegant. I remember rumours suggesting that it was to become a dodgy sauna and massage parlour, bearing in mind its location, but I saw no evidence of it. Anyhow they seem to be making plenty of money out of tracksuits and videos, without resorting to "Personal Services".

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REFLECTIONS

A season by season analysis of the last twenty years at Post Office Road.

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS – A HISTORY IN FIGURES

PART TWELVE – 1978-79 SEASON

FIRST DIVISION RESULTS

	HOME	AWAY
BARROW	Lost 7-11	Lost 18-19
BRADFORD NORTHERN	Lost 7-18	Won 15-11
CASTLEFORD	Lost 10-14	Lost 7-20
HUDDERSFIELD	Won 41-17	Lost 19-20
HULL K.R.	Lost 11-13	Lost 6-36
LEEDS	Lost 17-28	Lost 9-26
LEIGH	Won 37-21	Lost 10-12
ROCHDALE HORNETS	Won 50-10	Lost 5-33
SALFORD	Won 20-8	Lost 10-24
ST HELENS	Lost 11-22	Lost 16-25
WAKEFIELD TRINITY	Won 38-3	Lost 8-16
WARRINGTON	Won 16-3	Lost 10-17
WIDNES	Lost 23-27	Lost 9-25
WIGAN	Drew 13-13	Lost 14-23
WORKINGTON TOWN	Won 27-5	Lost 7-29

YORKSHIRE CUP – (1) Huddersfield (H) 23-8. (2) Hull (H) 8-20.

JOHN PLAYER TROPHY – (1) Whitehaven (A) 9-3 (2) Warrington (H) 0-7.

CHALLENGE CUP – (1) Wakefield Trinity (A) 7-10.

TRY SCORERS – K. Kellett 19, Evans 16, Box 10, Morgan 7, Coventry 7, P. Smith 6, Bell 6, Gilbert 5, R. Tuffs 4, Handscombe 3, Raybould 3, Fennell 3, Quinn 2, Tingle 2, D. Hobbs 2, S. Barker 2, Townend 1, Jarvis 1, Marsden 1, Bence 1, Dyas 1, Westwood 1.

GOAL SCORERS – D. Hobbs 78, Quinn 30, Box 9.

DROP GOAL SCORERS – Bell 5.

MOST TRIES IN A MATCH – 3 – H. Box -v- Huddersfield (H)
3 – K. Kellett -v- Workington (H)
3 – S. Evans -v- Bradford (A)
3 – S. Evans -v- Rochdale H. (H)
3 – P. Coventry -v- Wakefield T. (H)

MOST GOALS IN A MATCH – 10 – D. Hobbs -v- Rochdale (H).

REPRESENTATIVE HONOURS – P. Smith (Yorkshire and Under 24s), H. Box (Wales), S. Evans (1979 Lions Tour, GB, England and Under 24s), D. Fennell (Under 24s).

REFLECTIONS

A season by season analysis of the last twenty years at Post Office Road.

DIVISION ONE LEAGUE TABLE

	P	W	D	L	FOR	AGST	PTS.
1. Hull K.R.	30	23	—	7	616	344	46
2. Warrington	30	22	—	8	521	340	44
3. Widnes	30	21	2	7	480	322	44
4. Leeds	30	19	1	10	555	370	39
5. St. Helens	30	16	2	12	485	379	34
6. Wigan	30	16	1	13	484	411	33
7. Castleford	30	16	1	13	498	469	33
8. Bradford Northern	30	16	—	14	523	416	32
9. Workington Town	30	13	3	14	378	345	29
10. Wakefield Trinity	30	13	1	16	382	456	27
11. Leigh	30	13	1	16	406	535	27
12. Salford	30	11	2	17	389	435	26
13. Barrow	30	9	2	19	368	536	20
14. FEATHERSTONE	30	8	1	21	501	549	17
15. Rochdale Hornets	30	8	—	22	297	565	16
16. Huddersfield	30	7	1	22	314	725	15

ANALYSIS

A disastrous season for Rovers, who lost their First Division status for the first time. Yet they proved to be one of the most free-scoring units in the First Division, with their 501 points surpassing the effort of 3rd placed Widnes – their leaky defence (conceding 549 points) was the let-down.

After losing to Second Division Hull in the quarter-finals of the Yorkshire Cup, four successive defeats at the start of the league season put them in trouble. There were a further 11 league games without victory, up to and after Christmas, leaving coach Tommy Smales – the successor to Terry Clawson in November – with a near-hopeless task.

Improvement came too late – four victories in their last five matches only moving them to third from bottom of the table – and the loyal Post Office Road fans faced the prospect of watching Second Division Football in 1979-80.

Knockout football brought little respite, with Hull's Yorkshire Cup victory at Post Office Road being followed by another home setback in the John Player Trophy, after an away win at Whitehaven. In the Challenge Cup, Rovers' ill luck again showed itself, with a late Keith Smith try giving Wakefield a slender first round success at Belle Vue. Trinity went on to contest the Wembley Final.

Despite relegation Rovers' players were in demand with the representative selectors, as Peter Smith, Dale Fennell and Steve Evans were all included in the GB Under 24 team which opposed the 1978 Kangaroos at Craven Park.

Evans went on to emerge as one of the brightest young prospects in the country, and earned reward as Featherstone's only inclusion in the 1979 Lions touring party to Australasia.

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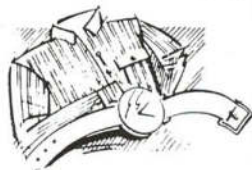
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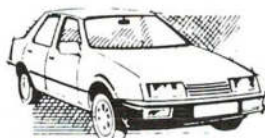
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BIG LEAGUE REVIEW

Latest news from Division One of the Stones Bitter Championship

There are just three matches in a decimated First Division programme, this afternoon, with five Silk Cut Challenge Cup preliminaries and the France-Great Britain Test in Perpignan disrupting the league programme.

Table-topping Hull, after two stirring home defeats of Bradford and Leeds, have now suffered the cancellation of their two key remaining matches – the game at Wigan going the same way as their recently-postponed match at Naughton Park.

With none of the leading First Division clubs in action, neighbouring Hull K.R. get the chance to close the gap on those above them, although they have severe injury problems arising from a 2-30 defeat at Castleford last Sunday.

Injuries hampered Hull K.R.'s bid to improve a top-four bid, at Castleford last Sunday, and they are likely to be without Wayne Parker, Andy Thompson, James Goulding and Bryan Niebling. The Robins will need to be at their strongest and best, if they are to avenge their worst defeat of the season (10-42) at St. Helens in September.

The Knowsley Road men may have turned the corner, with three successive wins including that astonishing 36-28 victory at Post Office Road – only their second away league success of the season.

The Saints, with Kiwis George Mann, Tea Ropati and skipper Shane Cooper in good form, and big-kicking Paul Loughlin back in their side, will fancy their chances of putting further pressure on the sides in the top-four by emulating Wakefield and Wigan, as the only sides to win at Craven Park this season.

St. Helens side showed the two sides of their Jekyll and Hyde nature in victory at Post Office Road a fortnight ago. If Saints play to their potential, they can move towards the top four – there is no doubting the fact that they have the talent to challenge the best, on their day.

The developing situation at the foot of the table comes under the spotlight this afternoon, as Rovers entertain Oldham, and Wakefield Trinity are at home to reviving Castleford.

BSB have again chosen wisely, with the Wakefield-Castleford derby at Belle Vue being their 6.30 p.m. broadcast. Trinity, now under intense pressure, are seeking to avenge three defeats by Castleford this season – the Yorkshire Cup Final (8-11), a Regal Trophy tie (4-20) and an away league encounter (12-42). Current form suggests Trinity face a daunting task this afternoon – Cas' have bounced back from their Regal Trophy quarter-final defeat by Rochdale to win four of their last five league games (excluding the midweek meeting with Hornets). Trinity lost a ten-point lead and two precious league points in last Sunday's defeat at Watersheddings. They have now failed to win any of their last six matches, stopping the rot only with a 12-12 home draw with Warrington, ten days ago.

Castleford have edged to the fringe of the title race, but Darryl Van de Velde knows that his side must lay the Belle Vue league hoodoo, to stay in touch with the leaders. And they will have to do so without in-form full-back St. John Ellis, a member of the GB squad. Trinity will also lack one of their ever-presents, Under-21 starlet Gary Price.

Featherstone entertain Oldham in a fixture which will directly concern Wakefield. After their marvellous victory last Sunday, John Fieldhouse and his men will aim to further improve a situation which was becoming increasingly hopeless during a spell of eight defeats in nine league matches.

Rovers have lost their last two games, after a successful Christmas spell which included that controversial 20-18 victory at Oldham, when Paul Newlove and Owen Simpson scored two tries each. Deryck Fox and his men will expect to take the points against an Oldham side which has won only once (at Sheffield) in eight away league matches this season – but it will not be easy against a side on a high after last week. Mike Ford, Paul Round, Brett Clark and much-improved full-back Duncan Platt are the Oldham danger men, but it is unlikely that their former Roughyeds colleague Leo Casey will be fit to oppose them.

Great Britain's elite make their annual trip to France – facing awkward internationals at Under 21 and full level – and this afternoon sees the start of the road to the twin towers of Wembley.

- CONTINUED -

Malcolm Reilly's experienced squad should be strong enough to take vital World Cup points from Perpignan, although they will be well aware of the fact that they drew their last World Cup encounter in France (10-10) at Avignon in 1986. And, of course, France won the last clash between the countries, at Headingley, last April. But the French national team of nine months ago has been decimated by retirements, withdrawals and injuries, and they have at least three new caps in a side skippered by the Hull scrum-half Patrick Entat. Perpignan has long been a British bogey ground – it will be a surprise, though, if Hanley and his men do not repeat last year's (8-4) win.

With Hanley in superb form, Britain should get 1991 off to a good start. France, after a First Test humiliation at the hands of Australia, recovered lost pride in the Second Test. Even so, it is difficult to see them upsetting Reilly's experienced side, which contains just one new cap – Widnes back-rower Les Holliday emulating father Bill, skipper of the GB side back in 1967.

At Under 21 level, Great Britain completed a home and away double last season, but French standards have improved considerably in the past four years. The Young Lions will lean heavily on the experience of Lions tourists Goulding, skipper Clarke and Price – and should repeat the 22-0 victory they gained in Villeneuve a year ago.

It is unfortunate that the start of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup should take place on a weekend when they will get less publicity than ever. Most of the national League writers will be out of the country, and the impact of the preliminary round must be questioned. Additionally, the most appealing preliminary tie – Sheffield v. Hull – is postponed because of the league leaders' contribution to the international squads.

The weekend provides a highlight of the season for a trio of amateur clubs – Leigh East (at home to Regal Finalists Bradford), Hensingham at home to Dewsbury, and Castleford-based Cutsyke, who travel to face Salford at the Willows. The incentive is there for the Cumbrians, Hensingham, with a possible first-round visit to face Leeds at Headingley . . . if they can dispose of Jack Addy's 16th-placed Second Division Dewsbury side.

The men from Crown Flatt have lost their last two league matches, so confidence will be shaky, and they did not have matters all their own way when they defeated Dudley Hill (24-18) in the preliminary round of the Regal Trophy in November.

Yorkshire amateurs Cutsyke face a daunting task against the runaway Second Division leaders. Salford are unbeaten in 16 league matches this season, and Kevin Tamati will take no chances as they bid to ensure a home first-round tie against Batley. The 'Reds' met amateur opposition at the first-round stage, last season, defeating Leeds-based Bisons, 56-6. Salford should repeat that kind of victory.

Leigh East have performed miracles in securing a top-four placing in the BARLA National Amateur League's First Division this season, after a mere 13 years in business, and their players will relish the opportunity to pit themselves against a Bradford side which has gone off the boil.

Northern have lost four of their last five matches . . . but they should have few problems denying the amateurs a dream first-round tie against their professional neighbours Leigh. The men from Odsal will have to be wary of half-backs Steve Grimshaw and John Gunning, though, and consolation for the BARLA Lancashire Cup winners is likely to come from the expected near-5,000 attendance at Hilton Park.

There is an intriguing Cumbrian derby at Gilford Park, where Carlisle face Workington for the right to entertain Hull K.R. in the first round. A fortnight ago, Town would have been clear favourites against the early-season Division Two front-runners, but Cameron Bell's side bounced back with an emphatic 30-4 win at Keighley last Sunday, to suggest they have recaptured the form which made them so formidable in September and October.

Carlisle conceded surprise Christmas defeats to Barrow and Whitehaven, but emphatically defeated the men from Derwent Park, 38-18, in the first round of the Lancashire Cup in August. Ray Ashton's men have improved since then, though, and go to Carlisle having lost only two of their last 10 league matches. It should be very tight.

The fifth preliminary tie looks to be a formality for Regal Trophy holders Warrington, who entertain once-proud Huddersfield, even if Barry Seabourne's side contains some useful players in their back division – Wally Gibson, Stuart Cocker, Ian Thomas and Lee St. Hilaire. The Fartowners also have a former Wembley hero in ex-Leeds man Kevin Dick, who starred in the 1977 Final.

Last year's beaten Wembley Finalists are in superb form, though – unbeaten in their last six matches. The 'Wires' should guarantee a first-round visit to face Ryedale York.

90~91 MATCH ANALYSIS

T - Try G - Goal
 * - Starman
 Number after Sub's name - Player substituted

Date	Team	Venue	K.O. Time	Result F-A	ATT.	POS.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1990																					
AUGUST																					
<i>Sun 26 County Cup Competition (1)</i>																					
W				36-4	2496		BIBB (2T+3G)	BUTT (T)	NEWLOVE (2T)	MANNING	HUGHES	SHARP (T)	FOX (T & G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	ROSE *	BURTON	PRICE	BANKS (3)	FISHER (12)
SEPTEMBER																					
<i>Sun 2 County Cup Competition (2)</i>																					
L				22-31	4359		BIBB	BUTT	NEWLOVE (T)	MANNING (2T)	BANKS (T)	SMALES	FOX (G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY (T)	ROSE	PRICE	TUUTA	SHARP (11)	BURTON
<i>HULL K.R.</i>																					
Sun 9	HULL K.R.	H	3.30pm	D	14-14	4275	8	BIBB (T)	BUTT	MANNING	NEWLOVE	BANKS	SMALES	FOX (3G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	BURTON	PRICE	TUUTA (T)	SHARP
Sun 16	WIDNES	A	3.00pm	L	14-41	6566	10	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING*	NEWLOVE	BANKS (T)	SMALES (T)	FOX (3G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	BURTON	PRICE	TUUTA	SHARP (11)
Sun 23	BRADFORD N.	H	3.30pm	L	24-26	4898	12	BIBB	BUTT	SMALES	NEWLOVE	MANNING (T)	SHARP	FOX (T+2G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK (T)	CASEY (T)	ROSE	BURTON	PEARSON (6)	GIBBON
Sun 30	CASTLEFORD	A	3.30pm	L	19-24	7637	13	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	NEWLOVE	HUGHES	SHARP	FOX (T+DG)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	ROSE	BURTON	PEARSON (8)	FISHER (12)
OCTOBER																					
Sun 7	SHEFFIELD E.	H	3.30pm	W	25-22	3963	12	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	NEWLOVE (2T)	BANKS	PEARSON* (8G)	FOX	BURTON	CLARK	CASEY	FISHER	SMALES	TUUTA	SHARP (12) (DG)
Sun 14	LEEDS	A	3.00pm	W	18-16	11937	10	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	NEWLOVE	BANKS (T)	PEARSON* (3G)	FOX (T)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	BURTON*	ROSE	SMALES	TUUTA (T)	CASEY (8)
Sun 21	ROCHDALE H.	H	3.30pm	W	38-8	3983	4	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	SMALES (3T)		PEARSON	FOX (3G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK (T)	CASEY	BURTON	ROSE	TUUTA (T)	FISHER (12)
NOVEMBER																					
Sun 4	HULL K.R.	A	3.00pm	L	14-24	5000	8	BIBB	MANNING	SMALES (T)	NEWLOVE P	NEWLOVE S	PEARSON (G)	FOX	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY (15)	BURTON	ROSE (T)	TUUTA	SHARP (5)
Sun 11	CASTLEFORD	H	3.30pm	L	6-22	5768	11	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING *	NEWLOVE	SIMPSON	PEARSON (G)	FOX	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	BURTON	SMALES	TUUTA	ROSE (4)
Sat 17	WIGAN	A	2.45pm	L	4-24	7609	11	BIBB	PEARSON	MANNING *	BUTT	SIMPSON	PEARSON (G)	FOX	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	ROSE	BURTON	FISHER (12)	SHARP (13)
Sun 26	HULL	H	3.30pm	W	14-4	4877		BIBB	BUTT (T)	MANNING	NEWLOVE	SIMPSON	SHARP	FOX	GRAYSHON	CLARK	ROSE	TUUTA*	SMALES	FISHER	PEARSON (4) (T+3G)
DECEMBER																					
Sun 2	Regal Trophy (1) BARROW	A		W	54-16	1500	10	BANKS (2T)	PEARSON (T+7G)	MANNING* (T)	BUTT (2T)	SIMPSON	SHARP (T)	FOX (T)	ITI (2) (2T)	GIBBON	CASEY	ROSE	SMALES	TUUTA	FISHER (13)
Tue 11	Regal Trophy (2ST HELENS)H			L	16-33	3343	11	BIBB (T)	PEARSON (T+2G)	MANNING	BUTT	SIMPSON	SHARP	FOX	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	ROSE (8)	SMALES (T)	TUUTA	FISHER (9)
Wed 26	WAKEFIELD T.	H	11.30	W	14-8	5530	9	BIBB	BUTT (T)	MANNING	NEWLOVE (T)	SIMPSON (T)	SMALES	FOX (G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK *	CASEY	ROSE (12)	ITI	TUUTA	SHARP (11)
Sun 30	WAKEFIELD T	A	3.30	W	16-8	5500	7	BIBB	BUTT (2T)	MANNING	NEWLOVE	SIMPSON	SMALES (T)	FOX (2G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	ROSE	ITI	TUUTA	FISHER (8)
1991																					
JANUARY																					
Sun 6	OLDHAM	A	3.00pm	W	20-18	4753	8	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	NEWLOVE (2T)	SIMPSON (2T)	SMALES	FOX (2G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	CASEY	ROSE	BURTON	TUUTA	FISHER (8)
Sun 13	ST. HELENS	H	3.30pm	L	28-36	4879	4	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING (T)	NEWLOVE (T)	SIMPSON (T)	SMALES	FOX (3G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK (T)	ROSE	BURTON (9)	ITI (T)	TUUTA	SHARP (10)
Sun 20	WARRINGTON	A	3.00pm	L	10-16	5348	7	BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	NEWLOVE	SIMPSON (T)	SMALES (T)	FOX (3G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK (2T)	ROSE	BURTON	ITI	TUUTA	SHARP (11)
Sun 27	OLDHAM	H	3.30pm	L				BIBB	BUTT	MANNING	BANKS	SIMPSON (T)	SHARP	FOX (3G)	GRAYSHON	CLARK	BURTON	PRICE	SMALES	TUUTA *	GIBBON (11)
FEBRUARY																					
Sun 3	SHEFFIELD E.	A	3.15pm																		
Sun 10	Silk Cut Challenge Cup (1)																				
Sun 17	WIGAN	H	6.30pm																		
Sun 24	Silk Cut Challenge Cup (2)																				
MARCH																					
Sun 3	HULL	A	3.15pm																		
Sun 10	WARRINGTON	H	3.30pm																		
Sun 17	ST HELENS	A	3.00pm																		
Sun 24	WIDNES	H	3.30pm																		
APRIL																					
Sun 7	LEEDS	H	3.30pm																		
Sun 14	BRADFORD N.	A	3.00pm																		

'THE ROVER'

The Yorkshire Federation Queen night is on 1st March so we need a young lady to be the Rovers Queen. We appealed earlier for entries but so far you're all shy! If anybody has a daughter niece or mate who follows Rovers leave their name and phone number at the Club Shop and we'll be in touch. The only rule is they have to be 16 or over by the 1st March.

Rovers visit the new Don Valley Stadium next week to take on Sheffield. Buses cost £2.50 adults, £2 juniors and leave the ground at 2pm. Bookings can be made this afternoon at the Supporters hut, or ring the above numbers at the times stated. Any other time will not reserve your seat. Maureen Williams has nothing to do with bookings so don't ask her to book you on the buses as again this won't reserve your seat. The times aren't there for fun, please stick to them.

We welcome Oldham supporters this afternoon who will be hoping they are not watching 2nd Div. rugby again next season. Defeat today will put another nail in the coffin.

When Rovers visited Oldham a ring was found and handed to a steward. There was no announcement at half time so if anybody lost one contact Oldham Rugby Club.

Finally its goodbye to Brendon Tuuta after today. There has been no better import in the league. Rovers fans wish you well and hope you'll be back next season.



ACROSS - 1. Warrington, 8. Over, 9. Engine Room, 10. Bar, 11. Bomb, 13. Ian, 15. Hoe, 17. Duncan Platt, 19. Des, 21. Entat, 22. Ikram, 23. Rich, 24. Nearly, 26. Greg, 28 & 29. Chris Burton.
 DOWN - 1. Watersheddings, 2. Roughyeds, 3. Ivan, 4. Trio, 5. Norman, 6. Ten, 7. Scarborough, 10. Boast, 12. Dons, 14. Appearance, 16 & 18. Terry Manning, 20. Langer, 25. Lord, 27. Leo.

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PROFILE

Ian Proctor talks to the games personalities

GARY PRICE

Four months of pent-up frustration ended for Rovers back-row forward Gary Price, last Sunday, when he was drafted into an injury-ravaged pack to face Warrington.

But the first-team recall came earlier than the former York and Leeds forward had anticipated. And it left him physically exhausted, following two games in three days, after a 16-match absence.

Nonetheless, Gary is delighted to be back and relieved that he came through his comeback unscathed. A 'Mal Meninga-type' arm pad seems to have done the trick for a player who broke his arm against Sheffield last January and suffered a tragic recurrence in the defeat at Widnes in September.

"The first-team recall came earlier than I'd expected", says Gary, "but Peter (Fox) was desperate for forwards last week and I was more than happy to help out."

"The initial plan was for me to play forty minutes in the Alliance side, on the Friday, and the full eighty at Wilderspool. In fact, the reverse occurred and I think that was for the best."

"During the Alliance game, I was conscious of the fact that I was trying to protect my arm. The pace of the game at that level is slower and you can pick your moments. My arm was on my mind throughout."

"So, in some respects, I 'nursed' my way through the first comeback game. I knew there was no question of that happening at Warrington because at First Division level there's no time to think."

"There's been no reaction to the injury and Dave Sharp did a great job in putting together the padding which protected it. Now, my aim is to get back to full match fitness as quickly as possible and get some football under my belt."

Price's August 1989 transfer from Leeds to Post Office Road was a dream move for one player who had become one of the 'forgotten men' of the game. Unfortunately, Lady Luck has turned her back on one of the game's honest forwards. Price certainly deserves an injury-free run.

"Life had turned sour for me at Leeds, after Peter Fox left", says Gary. "On reflection I'd have preferred to leave when he did because there were very few first-team chances for me after that. Perhaps I wasted some good years playing A team football at Headingley."

"Leeds is a big club, with everything going for them. But they lack the team spirit and atmosphere which makes Featherstone such a great club to play for. I'm much happier here, amongst a great set of lads. And the best coach in the business, of course!"

Price's injury problems of the past year have underlined the fact that he chose the right club in a bid to resurrect a career which hit the heights during eight highly consistent seasons in the amber and black of York.



At Wiggington Road, Gary was regarded as the 'Mr. Consistency' of the Wasps' pack. A player who always played above his weight and scored a lot of tries (26 in 189 appearances, with two goals and a drop goal for good measure), he came under the influence of one of the all-time great British second-row forwards in Phil Lowe.

"Phil was a very good coach to play for", reflects Gary, "and he passed on plenty of useful hints for a young second-rower such as myself. Like Featherstone, we had a good team spirit, and with an opportunist like Graham Steadman playing outside a hard-working pack we caused our share of surprises."

The biggest surprise came in the 1983-84 season when the Minster Men marched to the semi-finals of the Challenge Cup, narrowly losing to mighty Wigan (8-14) at a waterlogged Elland Road.

For Price, a try-scorer in opening round away defeats of Rochdale and Wakefield, the semi-final setback was the biggest of his career — even if a quarter-final defeat of hometown Castleford ranks as the highspot of a career of more than 250 first-team appearances.

It was Peter Fox who gave Gary a first representative honour, drafting him into the Yorkshire side to face, and defeat, Lancashire in the second War of the Roses battle at Headingley, in 1986. Underlining the admiration he had for Price's under-rated high workrate, Fox then paid £40,000 to take him to Headingley. Sadly, Fox and Leeds parted company less than three months later, and Price was left high and dry.

"My aim now is to re-establish myself in the Rovers team and I know that's going to be no easy task. Watching from the sidelines, these past few months has allowed me to see the development of one of the best packs in the game."

"I know Trevor Clark and Jeff Grayshon from my time at Leeds, and Jeff's still a great forward to come off — he puts you through gaps no one else could create. I'm relishing the prospect of playing in this pack — if I can get in!"

"And playing at Alliance level, last week, I had the opportunity to see the kind of promising youngsters coming through the ranks. There are some top prospects at Post Office Road."

"At least I'm back for the 'business end' of the season, this time. Last year, after playing in my first major Final (in the Yorkshire Cup) I was left on the sidelines as Rovers fought to stave off relegation. That was very frustrating because I was itching to help."

"The players have been marvellous, keeping me involved during my absence and I can't thank them enough. And being out injured has re-emphasised what the game means to me. It's been my life since I was 11 and I just don't know what I'll do when its time to quit. Hopefully, that's a long way in the distance."

"We all believe that Rovers have a team capable of enjoying a good cup run and the difficult visit to Hull or Sheffield doesn't frighten us. If we play to our potential, we can go all the way to Wembley."

That would be a fitting reward for a player who has remained cheerful during a long and lonely battle against adversity. He is over the first psychological hurdle... **GARY PRICE IS BACK.**

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WIGAN

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17th Feb. 1991
Kick Off 6.30 pm

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts.
Hull	15	9	3	0	248	68	3	0	3	77	98	24
Widnes	14	6	0	1	193	80	4	0	3	96	110	20
Wigan	14	4	1	1	132	69	5	0	3	216	126	19
Leeds	16	6	0	2	258	102	3	0	5	143	164	18
Castleford	15	7	0	1	193	109	2	0	5	111	189	18
Hull K.R.	17	6	1	2	174	144	2	1	5	116	213	18
Featherstone	17	4	1	3	163	142	4	0	5	141	183	17
St Helens	15	6	0	2	233	148	2	0	5	116	139	16
Bradford	16	5	0	2	145	123	3	0	6	130	180	16
Warrington	17	5	0	4	156	100	2	1	5	104	124	15
Wakefield	13	4	0	2	109	68	2	0	5	98	174	12
Oldham	17	5	0	4	185	171	1	0	7	107	222	12
Sheffield	16	3	0	5	140	180	1	2	5	127	215	10
Rochdale	15	1	0	5	105	154	0	0	9	88	309	2

RESULTS CHART

AWAY TEAM	Bradford	Castleford	Featherstone	Hull	Hull K.R.	Leeds	Oldham	Rochdale	St. Helens	Sheffield	Wakefield	Warrington	Widnes	Wigan	
HOME TEAM															
Bradford						26-10	12-21		23-16	18-16			25-16	10-14	31-30
Castleford	9-0		24-19			30-2		28-10				42-12	22-18	20-10	18-38
Featherstone	24-26	6-22		14-6	14-14			38-8	28-36	25-22	14-8				
Hull	34-6	22-6				34-14	31-4		20-14	34-6		17-8	32-6	24-4	
Hull K.R.	12-4		24-14	20-8			42-14			16-16	12-18	20-14	22-20	6-36	
Leeds	26-8	41-16	16-18	22-24			28-12	64-4	23-4	38-16					
Oldham	16-18	28-22	18-20		25-28	32-22		18-13			26-22	4-2	18-24		
Rochdale	19-12		12-26	18-30	18-32				18-30	20-24					
St. Helens	24-20	16-29			42-10	22-16		44-14		34-17	36-14			15-28	
Sheffield	16-36						14-24	30-16	18-8		34-6	18-20		4-46	
Wakefield			8-16	22-6		6-24	17-12	42-6				12-12	6-16	14-12	
Warrington		30-12	16-10	2-3	30-12	10-22		26-9		30-8	10-18		2-6		
Widnes		46-4	41-14		28-8	26-8	24-16		14-8						14-22
Wigan			24-4			22-16	38-15	24-2		18-18		6-14			

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PRIDE & GLORY.

THE 1969 YORKSHIRE CUP FINAL

After winning the Rugby League Challenge Cup at Wembley in 1967, Featherstone found it hard to build on such a momentous success, in subsequent seasons.

Laurie Gant's men suffered a disappointing season in 1967-68, completing their league season outside the top-sixteen, but finished a creditable seventh a year later. The nucleus of the Wembley side remained as they looked for further success. Their next serious bid for major honours came at the start of the 1969-70 season, when the Yorkshire Cup commenced much earlier than usual, at the beginning of August.

Rovers battled through to their sixth County Cup Final with a team containing no less than six survivors from the Wembley success - Gary Jordan, Mick Smith, Les Tonks, Arnold Morgan, Jim Thompson and Tommy Smales - and others were only ruled out through injury. The first-round commenced on 10 August, with Rovers drawn to visit neighbouring Doncaster at Tattersfield. The Dons, having enjoyed one of their finest seasons in 1968-69 (winning 11 of 34 league matches) were hardly the push-overs of previous seasons. Indeed, later in the 1969-70 season they would battle their way through to a Challenge Cup quarter-final replay with St. Helens. Rovers trailed 13-5 at the interval and it was 18-5, and seemingly all over, within five minutes of the re-start as the Dons scored a converted try. Featherstone had to mount a second-half comeback to rank with the best in their history before scraping through, by 20-18. Young scrum-half prodigy Steve Nash dropped the winning goal, almost on time, to spare their blushes and earn a home second round tie. Cyril Kellett scored a try and three goals and further tries came from promising young centre John Newlove, Mick Smith and Arnold Morgan, an unstoppable forward close to the line. The goalkicking of David Towle (Six from six) had the Rovers fans on tenterhooks throughout.

Round two favoured Rovers with a home draw, against Huddersfield, and they made few mistakes on this occasion, scoring four tries in a comprehensive 24-7 victory. Winger Dave Williams crossed twice, and Nash and Alan Rhodes grabbed the others. Deadshot Cyril Kellett hit the mark with six goalkick attempts and Rovers were through to the semi-finals... paired with a star-studded Hull K.R. side containing such as Roger Millward, Alan Burwell, Peter Flanagan, Phil Lowe and former Post Office Road favourite, Terry Clawson.

Rovers had defeated the 'Robins' by 16-5 in the Championship Play-Offs, barely four months previously, and were seeking revenge for the previous County Cup clash between the two clubs - the 1966 Final, won by Hull Kingston, 25-12. The men from Humberside had also won the tournament in 1967, and were seeking a third Yorkshire Cup win inside four seasons.

The 'semi' was a thrilling cup-tie, played in a tense atmosphere and with the result in doubt right until the final blow of referee Eric Lawrinson's whistle. In the end, the irony came in the fact that Featherstone's former Hull K.R. full-back Cyril Kellett out-kicked former Rovers goalkicker Clawson. Kellett landed four goals, Steve Nash again landed a priceless drop-goal (worth two points), and Featherstone, despite the visitors' Geoff Wrigglesworth scoring the only try of the game, won the day by 10-9. It had been a herculean effort from a side lacking injured forwards Tonks, Dixon, Harris and Lyons.

The Yorkshire Cup Final against Hull was a repeat of the 1959 clash in which Featherstone took the trophy for the only time in peace-time football. Again, it took place at Headingley, before a crowd of 11,089 and it proved to be one of the best County Cup Finals of the 60's.

Featherstone's mighty pack took the first-half honours, laying the platform for Cyril Kellett to kick them into a half-time lead of 4-2. They only had to maintain their effort to bring the trophy back to Post Office Road for the third time. But it was not to be. Hull, with their loose-forward Joe Brown inspired, and Test front-rower Mick Harrison also leading by example, began to gain the upper hand. And, as the forwards took command, so their speedy backs won the contest.

Clive Sullivan scored a classy try - and also 'lost' one in the act of crossing - while another unsung hero, prop Jim Macklin dummied and feinted his way over. A monumental drop-goal from man of the match Brown effectively sealed Featherstone's fate, although Nash managed to weave his way over for a consolation try.

History had failed to repeat itself - Hull avenged their defeat of ten years previously, with a 12-9 verdict. Once again, Featherstone Rovers had been cast in the role of major final 'bridesmaids'.

HULL: Owbridge; Sullivan (try); Gemmell; Maloney (2 goals); A. Macklin; Hancock;

Davidson; Harrison; McGlone; J. Macklin; Kirchin; Forster; Brown.

FEATHERSTONE: C. Kellett (3 goals); Newlove; Jordan; Smith; Hartley;

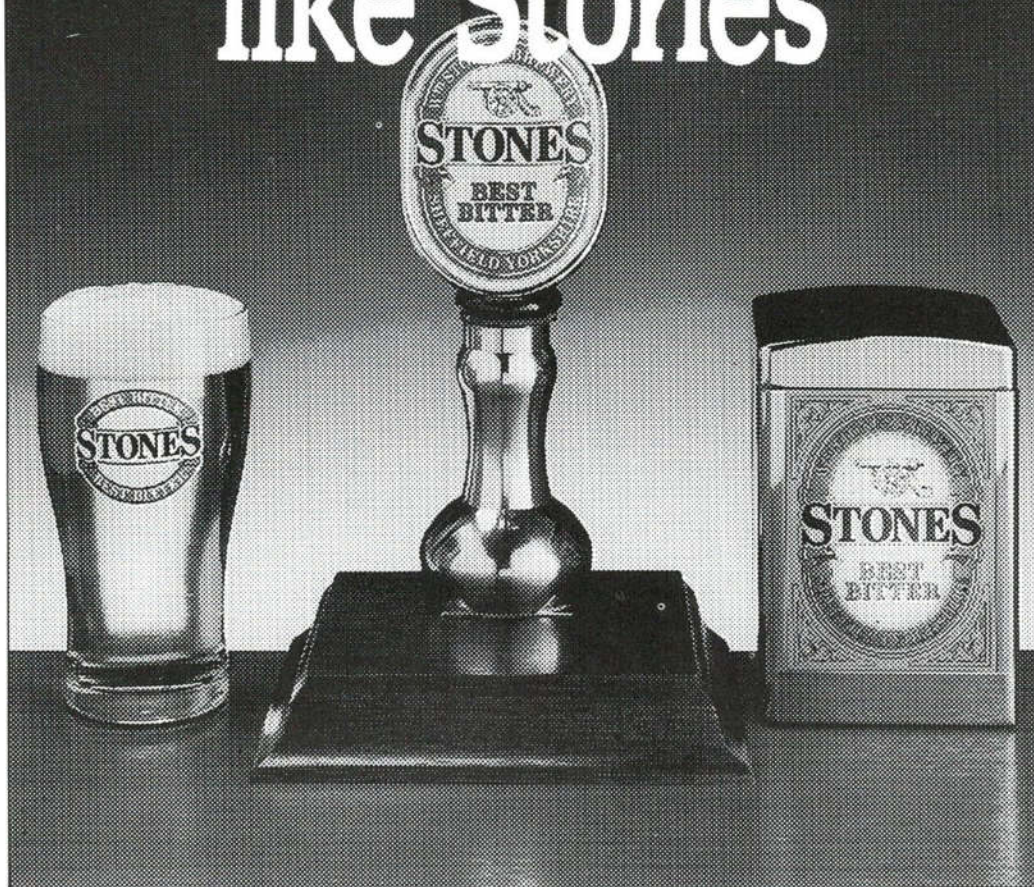
D. Kellett; Nash; Tonks; Farrar; Lyons; Morgan; Thompson; Smales.

SUB: Hudson (for Hartley).

Referee: R. Thomas (Oldham). ATT: 11,089

A nostalgic look back at Rovers glory days.

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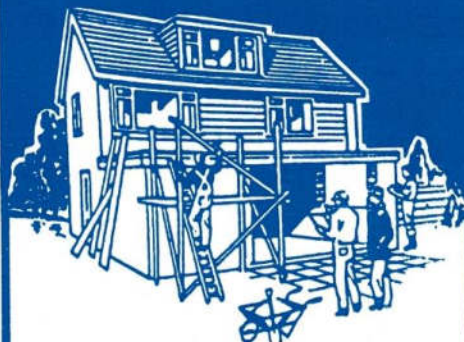
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FLASHBACK

A regular review of a programme from the past

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS -v- OLDHAM
Dateline - Sunday January 6th 1985

First Division

by Peter Wroe

Oldham were the first visitors to Post Office Road in the new year, and at the time were in 4th position in the league table on equal points with St Helens. Keith Gouldings 'team talk' page picked up on this by saying "Oldham are always a tough nut to crack and will certainly provide formidable opposition in order to maintain their push for the championship. They are having a successful season in Division One, having led the table in the early stages". Rovers were also in good league form having won six of the last seven games, and Keith went on to say "The players efforts has worked wonders for confidence and team spirit and proved Featherstone Rovers can match the best in the game". Keith also reported that "the trialist winger who scored the winning try at Workington was 23 year old Brian Waites who the club had now signed on, and we wish him a successful career in the blue and white jersey."

The club news page was under the heading "Rovers Round Up". It reported firstly that "Rovers would have to be at their best to beat Frank Myler's men and progress to the top-four. A serious ankle fracture has ruled out fine forward prospect Alan Dakin for the rest of the season, but Steve Quinn, and Bob Spurr and Nigel Barker should all be fit for today's game." The club thanked Featherstone carpets and Upholstery Centre and Phil Cookson of the Railway Hotel for providing the presents and premises for the Childrens Christmas Party. There was also thanks from Keith Bell to all his helpers in his benefit season. Despite the miners strike over £5,000 was raised.

There was an article in the programme called 'Cup Clashes' which looked at a famous cup tie involving the day's visitors. It went on: "Despite contesting seven finals Oldham have never appeared at Wembley. They appeared in four consecutive finals prior to the Wembley era, and have been unlucky in three semi-finals since. Perhaps their most unfortunate Cup year was 1964, after drawing 5-5 with Hull KR they led 17-14 in extra-time of the replay when bad light stopped play. They lost the third game 12-2".

In "Colliers Corner" Ian Clayton was looking at the merits of promoting and relegating four clubs. He was all for two up and two down with the 3rd and 4th bottom in Div. 1 playing off against the 3rd and 4th in Div. 2. His argument was that the team finishing fourth in Div. 2 not being strong enough for the top flight. His case was strengthened by the fact that in the last ten seasons only once had the team finishing fourth not gone straight back down. Ian also wrote the article "Down Memory Lane" he was looking at Rovers early days. He was at the 1908-09 season in which Rovers had reformed after two seasons without a team. The re-start took place on Boxing Day 1908 when Rovers defeated Hunslet Albion 14-8 in a friendly.

Two other regular features were "Featherstone Forum" with David Hobbs previewing the other First Division fixtures of the day, and Daily Mail writer Brian Batty's column called "Off the Record" in which he looked at different topics and items concerning the current state of the game.

One disturbing item was "Chairmans comments" in which Bob Ashby was condemning the disgraceful and sickening events which took place in the town after the Boxing Day game against Hull when drunken thugs attacked Hull supporters with elderly men being knocked unconscious as well as suffering broken limbs. He said "The club and especially the players do not want to be associated with the people responsible, and the club will urge the police to take the strongest action possible against people committing future acts of violence at the ground."

There was a full page review on the Oldham team which contained the likes of Mick Morgan, Andy Goodway, Ray Ashton, Green Vigo and Alan McCurrie. It was Oldham who consolidated their top four spot winning this game 13-6. Rovers team and scorers being :- Quinn (3 goals), Waites, Banks, Gilbert, Hopkins, Slater, Fox, Siddall, Staniforth, Gibbins, Hobbs, Bell, Lyman, Sub used: Clawson.



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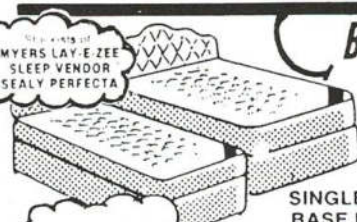
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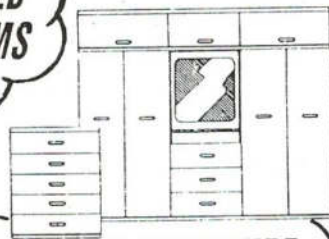
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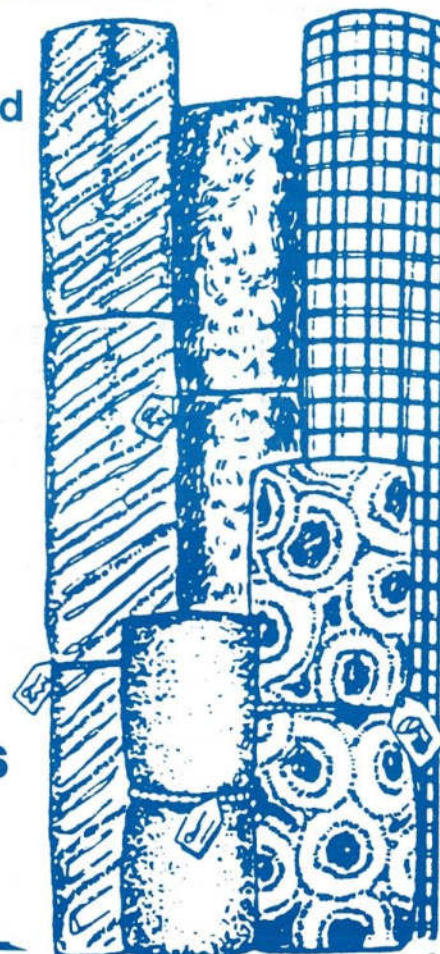
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Alliance & Under 19's Report

Our youth side are improving with every game. The same evening as the first team played at Rochdale the Colts played Oldham at the Watersheddings and came away with a very creditable 16-16 draw after trailing 16-6 at half time.

Our first half points coming after a Stuart McCone break with Richard Agar backing him up to side step the full back to score, Richard converted his own try. The second half started with Martin Pearson scoring from 15 yards out. Agar again converted. Then quick passing across the line put Paul Rubery in at the corner flag. Agar's conversion was only inches wide.

Martin Pearson was voted man of the match.

One nice story at the presentation of the man of the match tie, Martin after accepting his award promptly presented it to Paul Bonson who had an outstanding match - his tackling was exceptional making 45 tackles.

The Youth Cup replay with Middleton finally took place last Sunday when the lads ran out easy 30-3 winners and will now play Normanton at home in the semi-final. Playing against a strong wind they led 4-3 at half-time the try scored by Paul Rubery after good work from Agar. It was all one way during the second with first Bonson scoring, then Rubery scored his second after a fine Wayne Simpson break. Robert Dickinson beat five men on a 35 yard run to score then in injury time Stuart McCone scored. Richard Agar converted all four tries (two of them from the touchline) plus one penalty. Outstanding were Wayne Simpson, Paul Bonson and Richard Agar.

Next British Coal match is Wednesday 6th February when we entertain bogey team St Helens a win against the Saints should put us into second place and leave our final match at Wigan as the title decider.

Our Alliance side travelled to St Helens and for once managed a last minute draw thanks to David Bugg touchdown unfortunately Tim Sharps conversion was just inches wide. We trailed 10-2 at half time with our only points coming from a Tim Sharp penalty. Lee Whiteley scored after the Saints full back fumbled the ball over his own line. Saints came back to lead by 18-8. Then Spencer Longstaffe put an inch perfect up and under to the line and Lee Whiteley was there to touchdown, Sharp converted. Saints scored another try which was converted to lead 24-14. With five minutes to go Wayne Pearse kicked thro and won the chase to score. Sharp converted to set up the thrilling finale, when Glen Booth and Craig Palmer combined to put David Bugg over. This was a remarkable comeback when you consider John Jepson (neck), Spencer Longstaffe (back and side) injured when he hit an upright trying to stop Saints from scoring, Shaun Newlove (knee) Mike Smith (cut leg) David Bugg (leg) and Paul Bonson (shoulder) were all carrying injuries.

Tim Sharp was man of the match while Mark Gibbons and Paul Bonson got through an enormous amount of tackling.

This draw ultimately cost us dearly for last Friday we entertained a very strong Warrington outfit minus six of the lads and lost 24-10 after putting up an excellent show in dreadful conditions. We were only trailing 16-10 with minutes to go with the 'Wires' getting a penalty then scoring a converted try on time. The scores were level at 10 each at half time. Our points coming from an Alan Banks try which was set up by David Bugg's bloackbusting 25 yard run. Steve Minter carried it on to Gary Price and John Jepson who put Banks over. Martin Pearson converted and also kicked a couple of penalties. There was a time when playing down hill after half time was seen as an advantage but as with the first team against St Helens the Alliance side failed to score during thesecond half.

Gary Price played his first game since his arm injury and came through without any problems. Martin Pearson won the man of match award while Tim Sharp and Craig Palmer who played out of position at hooker both topped the tackle count.

We have two very attractive home fixtures coming up next Friday against league leaders Hull kick off 7.30. Then the following Friday we entertain Halifax who are second in the league also 7.30. The Alliance Cup has been drawn and Rovers have been drawn away to our No. 1 bogey team York.

BRITISH COAL NATIONAL YOUTH COMPETITION FIXTURES - SEASON 1990/91 PREMIER DIVISION

Date	Opponents	Venue	K.O.	Results
Sept. 12th Wed.	HALIFAX	A	7.30	Won 23-6
Oct. 10th Wed.	HALTON	A		Postponed
Nov. 7th Wed.	HULL EAST	H	8.00	Lost 12-22
Dec. 5th Wed.	HULL WEST	H	7.30	Won 16-8
Jan. 9th Wed.	OLDHAM	A	7.30	Draw 16-16
Feb. 6th Wed.	ST. HELENS	H	7.30	
Mar. 13th Wed.	WIGAN	A	7.30	

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APPEARANCES & POINTS SCORERS

Name	SEASON 1990-1991						TOTAL SENIOR RECORD					
	Apps	Subs	Trs	Gls	Dgs	Pts.	Apps	Subs	Trs	Gls	Dgs	Pts.
Alan Banks	7	1	5	—	—	20	217	16	46	—	—	182
Chris Bibb	20	—	4	3	—	22	136	4	58	6	—	244
David Bugg	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Chris Burton	16	1	—	—	—	—	58	3	1	—	—	4
Ikram Butt	20	—	7	—	—	28	20	—	7	—	—	28
Leo Casey	16	1	2	—	—	8	16	1	2	—	—	8
Trevor Clark	20	—	5	—	—	20	82	3	22	—	—	88
Andy Fisher	3	11	1	—	—	4	18	27	13	—	—	52
Deryck Fox	21	—	5	27	1	75	260	1	70	190	46	704
Mark Gibbon	1	1	—	—	—	—	1	4	—	—	—	—
Jeff Grayshon	19	1	1	—	—	4	88	2	2	—	—	8
Paul Hughes	3	—	—	—	—	—	67	10	19	—	—	76
Clarry Iti	5	4	3	—	—	12	5	4	3	—	—	12
Terry Manning	21	—	6	—	—	24	46	—	17	—	—	68
Paul Newlove	16	—	9	—	—	36	76	—	45	9	—	198
Shaun Newlove	1	—	—	—	—	—	3	2	—	—	—	—
Martin Pearson	8	3	4	34	—	84	9	6	4	34	—	84
Gary Price	5	—	—	—	—	—	23	1	2	—	—	8
Gary Rose	15	3	1	—	—	4	30	4	5	—	—	20
Tim Sharp	7	9	2	—	1	9	27	12	6	—	1	25
Owen Simpson	11	—	7	—	—	28	11	—	7	—	—	28
Ian Smales	20	—	10	—	—	40	80	9	34	9	—	154
Brendon Tuuta	18	1	3	—	—	12	18	1	3	—	—	12

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OCEANS APART

Ian Proctor reflects on the impact or otherwise made by past overseas players in England.

Oldham's precarious First Division existence, as in several previous seasons is likely to involve a fight-to-the-finish battle to avoid another swift return back to the Second Division.

Not for the first time, they will be looking for inspiration from their quota of overseas signings – the Aussie trio of John Cogger, ex-Halifax back Tony Anderson and Brett Clark, plus popular Maori Charlie McAllister.

This quartet played a significant part in helping Oldham gain promotion and win the Second Division Premiership trophy last season. Cogger, signed from Runcorn where he was adjudged Second Division Player of the Year in 1987, was their second-highest try-scorer with 24, while Pacy Brett Clark weighed in with another 17. Anderson signed towards the end of the season broke an ankle in only his third appearance, in defeat at Workington.

Cogger's first try of this season came in Oldham's storming defeat of Wakefield, last Sunday. It may prove a significant turning point in their season. Clark (an ever-present in 20 cup and league matches) has been a model of consistency alongside Mike Ford. Anderson, too, is showing welcome signs of recapturing the form which made him such a crowd-pleaser at Thrum Hall.

Oldham's overseas recruits have sampled mixed fortunes at Watersheddings during the past eight years, with some of the biggest names of the 80s wearing their famous colours, and one or two 'unknowns' winning over some of the most loyal fans in the country.

Their first overseas recruits, in 1983, were New Zealanders – full-back Nicky Wright and back-rower Craig Coyle. However, Wright, a goal-kicking hero of the Kiwis' shock 1983 defeat of Australia in Brisbane, only played 8 games, while second-rower Coyle totalled just six.

The following season saw Oldham look to Australia, and they captured two of the most constant players in the Winfield Cup – Parramatta utility man Paul Taylor and his Eels' colleague, Queensland State of Origin forward/tourist Chris Phelan. Taylor was the bigger success of the two, scoring 10 tries in 23 appearances, including two in a 13-6 defeat of Featherstone at Post Office Road.

Frank Myler's quartet of Australian imports proved a huge success in 1985-86. They very nearly took the club to their first Wembley Final.

Play-anywhere Wests man Gary Warnecke (14 tries in 32 appearances), hard-running, inspirational former Hunslet forward Mal Graham (21 tries in 27) and brothers David (12 tries in 15) and 16 year old Glen Liddiard (4 in 21) were all instrumental in a stirring Cup run which ended with heart-break semi-final defeat by Castleford.

Giant Western Suburbs prop Bruce 'Bruiser' Clark, versatile Balmain back Gary Bridge and young Cronulla loose-forward Stuart Raper (son of the great Johnny), all played their parts in helping Oldham reach the 1986 Lancashire Cup Final.

Bridge scored their try in a 6-27 defeat by Wigan – but Oldham slid inexorably towards relegation when they departed for home. Tragically, Bridge – a try-scorer when they defeated Rovers 20-16 at Maine Road – suffered an injury which effectively curtailed his career.

Gary Warnecke was back, though not with the same degree of success, in 1987-88, assisting the club's promotion bid, and, in the company of under-rated, prolific stand-off Peter Walsh, and winger Brian McCarthy, helped Oldham achieve their objective. Walsh was a try-scorer when Oldham pipped Rovers 28-26 in the Old Trafford Premiership decider.

For the unsuccessful bid to stave off relegation, in 1988-89, Oldham again invested heavily, bringing the Canberra duo Chris O'Sullivan and Ashley Gilbert to Watersheddings, re-signing Paul Taylor, and adding the dynamic Cogger from lowly Runcorn. The investments back-fired, although O'Sullivan wizardry is now being seen to good effect at Warrington.

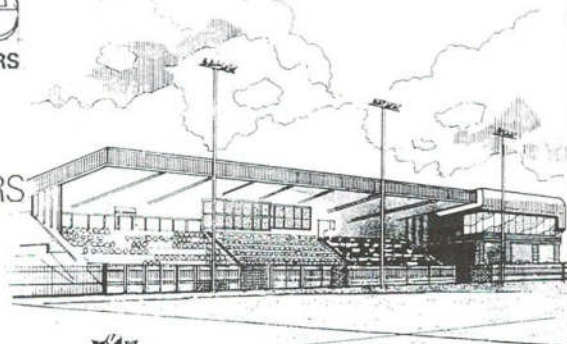
There has been more stability, and a sense of continuity, about the way Oldham have recruited from foreign fields in recent seasons. McAllister joined them in 1988 and remains a regular member of the side, and Cogger and Clarke have proved good, long-term signings. If they can help Oldham stave off a third relegation in five seasons, they will have proved successful.

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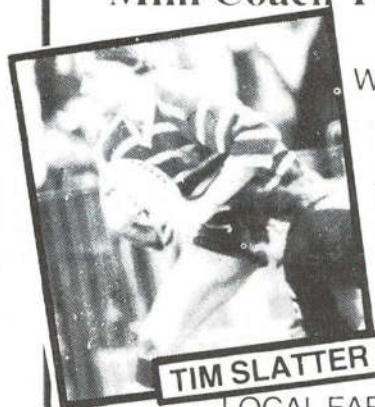
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