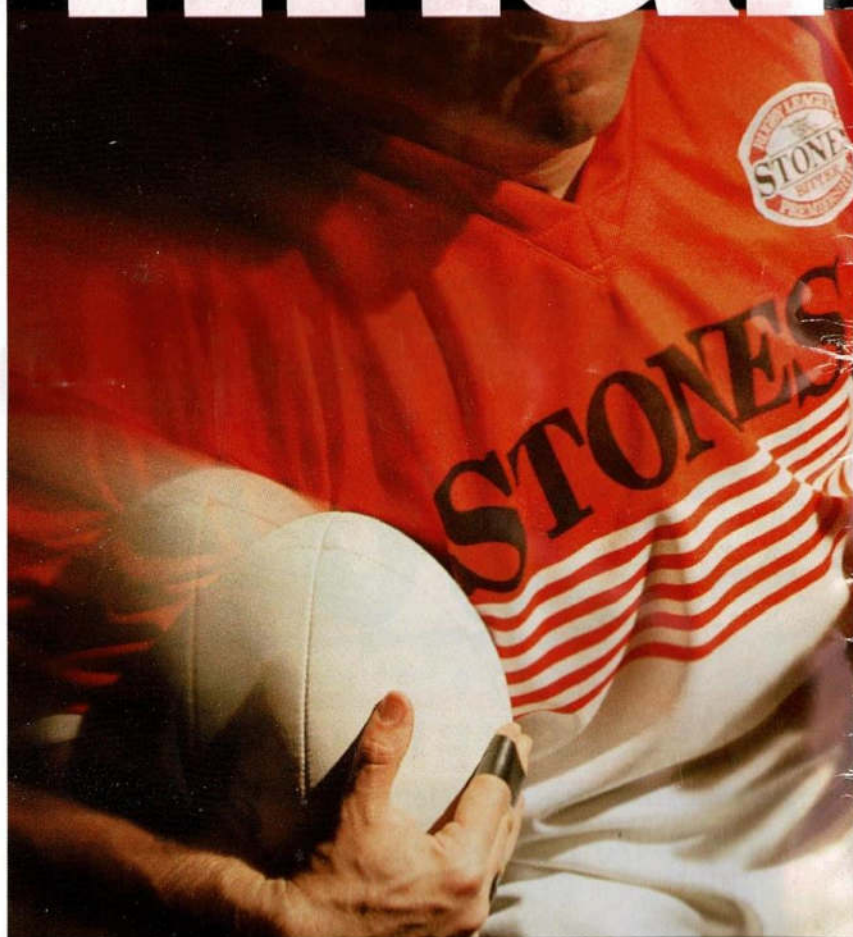


STONES BITTER

divisional premiership final



**Sheffield Eagles
v
Oldham
K.O. 1.30 p.m.**

**Old Trafford Sunday May 17
1992**

Official Programme £2.00

STONES BITTER

premiership final



**Wigan
v
St Helens
K.O. 3.30 p.m.**

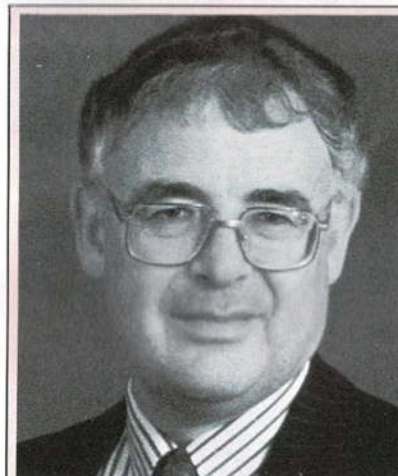
**Old Trafford Sunday May 17
1992**

RUGBY LEAGUE EXPRESS

READ ALL ABOUT IT



MEMO



WELCOME

From Dr. Tony Portno, Chief Executive, Bass Brewers

Welcome to the sixth Stones Bitter Premiership Final day, the traditional double-header which is firmly established in the sporting calendar as the spectacular climax of the Rugby League season.

We are confident we shall see a packed stadium once again, comprising tens of thousands of Rugby League fans from across the country attracted to Old Trafford in anticipation of an afternoon of fine sport. They should not be disappointed by a programme which promises exciting mid-match entertainment to complement two high-quality games.

The importance of the Stones Bitter Premiership Finals is reflected in the record prize-money on offer today. The Premiership winners will carry off a cheque for £17,500 with £7,000 for the runners-up, while the Divisional Premiership is worth £9,500 and £3,750 for the winners and runners-up respectively.

The 1992-93 Championship and Premiership season will be the seventh under the Stones banner and the first year of our third sponsorship contract with the Rugby Football League which culminates in the Centenary year of the game in 1995-96.

We have worked closely with Rugby League officials, the Council, clubs and supporters in helping to achieve the common aim of raising the profile and popularity of the sport and look forward to strengthening and developing further this partnership. Today's event demonstrates the success we have already gained.

Best wishes from Bass Brewers to everyone involved in Rugby League and good luck to this year's Premiership finalists.

STONES BITTER SPONSORSHIP

Bass Brewers are currently investing a Rugby League record sponsorship of more the £2 million in the Stones Bitter Championship and Premiership over the next five years.

This season's agreed fee of £275,000 will be followed by a new four-year deal for £1.8 million - double Rugby League's previous record sponsorship. The final year of the newly-signed contract coincides with the Rugby Football League's Centenary in 1995-96, Bass Brewers celebrating the landmark with a double payment of the annual fee.

This 1991-92 Stones Bitter campaign has been marked by the introduction for the first time of three divisions and is the sixth season of Bass sponsorship of the Championship and Premiership.

In addition to the £275,000 for this season, the new four-year package features payment of £300,000 in 1992-93, £335,000 in 1993-94, £365,000 in 1994-95 and £400,000 in 1995-96, plus the centenary premium of a further £400,000.

Paul Hughes, Trade Marketing Director, Bass Brewers, said: "Stones Bitter has developed a happy and profitable partnership with the Rugby League over the last five seasons. The latest sponsorship, the biggest in the history of Rugby League, demonstrates our wholehearted commitment to the enthusiasm for the sport. We are delighted to be participating in the centenary of the Rugby Football League and look forward to joining in the celebrations."

Rodney Walker, the League's Director of Public Affairs, said: "The Board of Directors are already planning the League's Centenary in 1995 and we are delighted that Bass, as loyal and imaginative sponsors, are committing a record sponsorship contract to help mark the historic occasion. Our intention is to launch Centenary charity trusts for the development of the game at both domestic and international level."

STONES BITTER THIRD DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY

Pictured right, is the first-ever Rugby League Third Division Championship Trophy. It was presented to Huddersfield the inaugural Stones Bitter Third Division Champions at the end of last month, the 18" high silver trophy being donated to the League by Batley RLFC.

The Gallant Youths themselves received the trophy from the late John Winner, who died at the end of last year at the age of 90, having been a fan of Batley since childhood.

Mr Winner was the founder member of the Batley Rugby League Supporters Club in 1926 and acted as treasurer for nearly 35 years, being the club's representative at the Yorkshire Federation of Supporters Clubs and a Life Vice-President of both organisations. He was also a Life Member

of both Batley RLFC and Batley Supporters Club.

As part of Stones Bitter's £275,000 sponsorship of the Championship and Premiership, the new Third Division Championship Trophy will be accompanied by a Stones Bitter prize cheque for £10,500.



STONES BITTER PRIZES 1991-92

Stones Bitter Championship 45,000
Runners-up 17,000

Second Division Championship 22,000
Runners-up 8,500

Third Division Championship 10,500
Runners-up 4,250

Stones Bitter Premiership 17,500
Runners-up 7,000

Divisional Premiership 9,500
Runners-up 3,750

TOTAL PRIZE MONEY 145,000

CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND 130,000

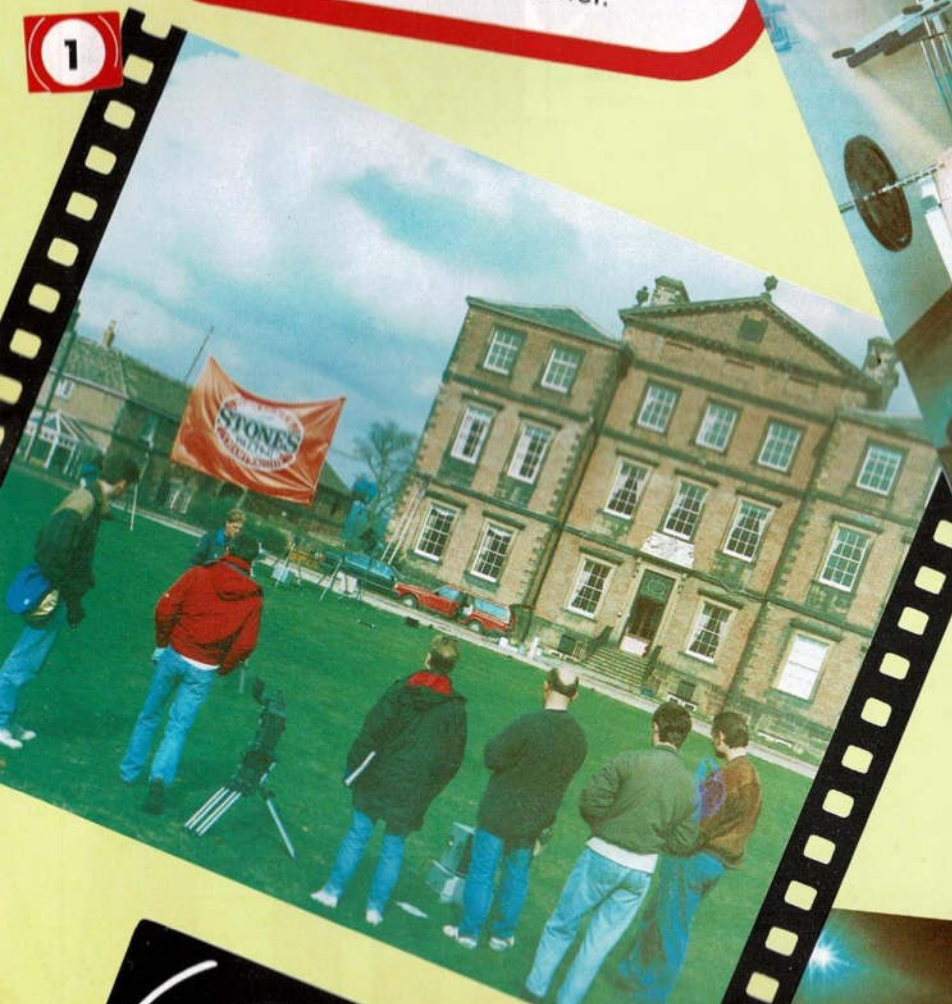
GRAND TOTAL£275,000



MEMO

ON SET

This afternoon's Stones Bitter Premiership double header has been the subject of Rugby League's first tailor-made television advertisement on the ITV network. This special pictorial feature chronicles the four days of filming by YPL for the 30-second promotional feature... commissioned by Stones Bitter.



1



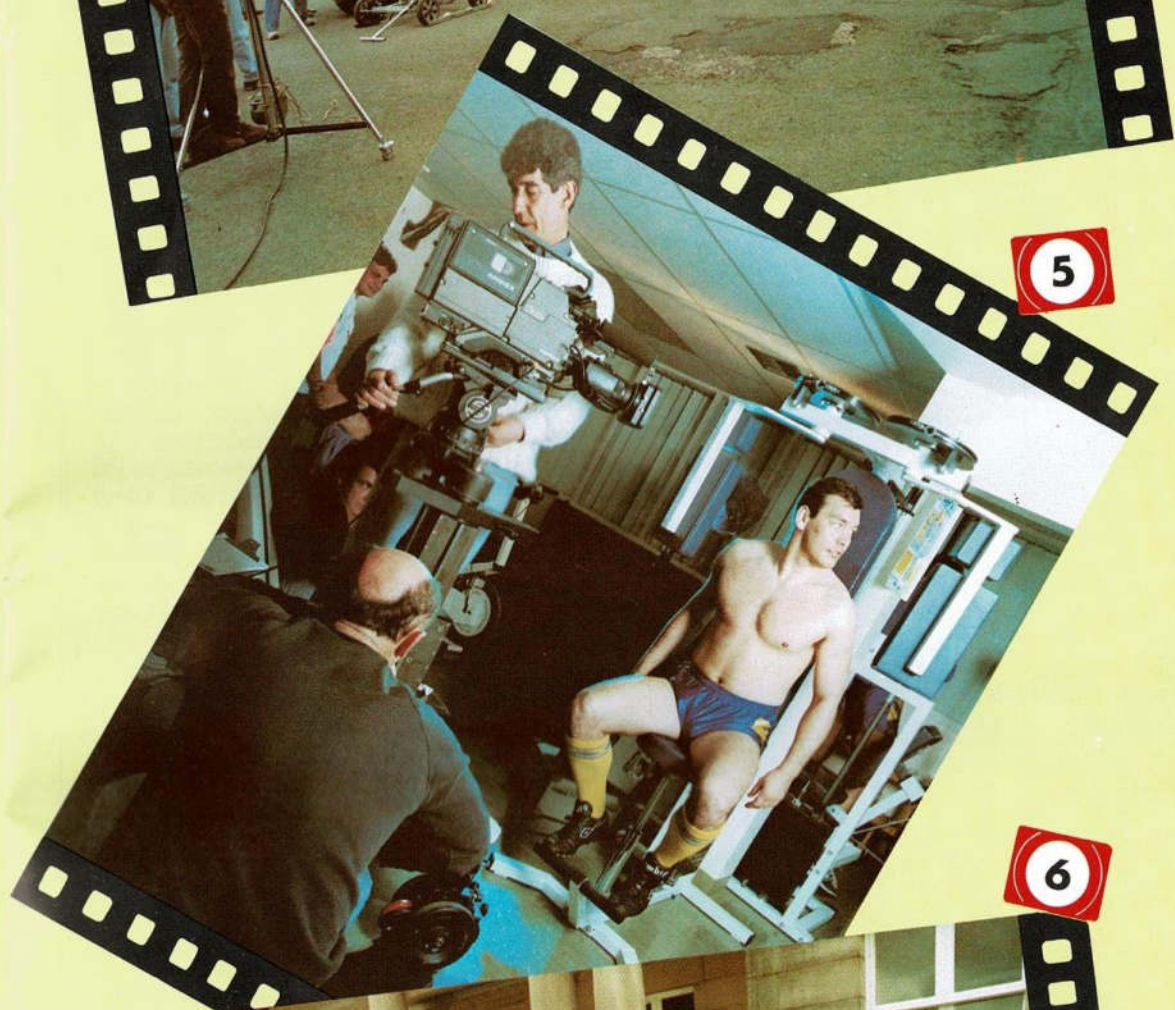
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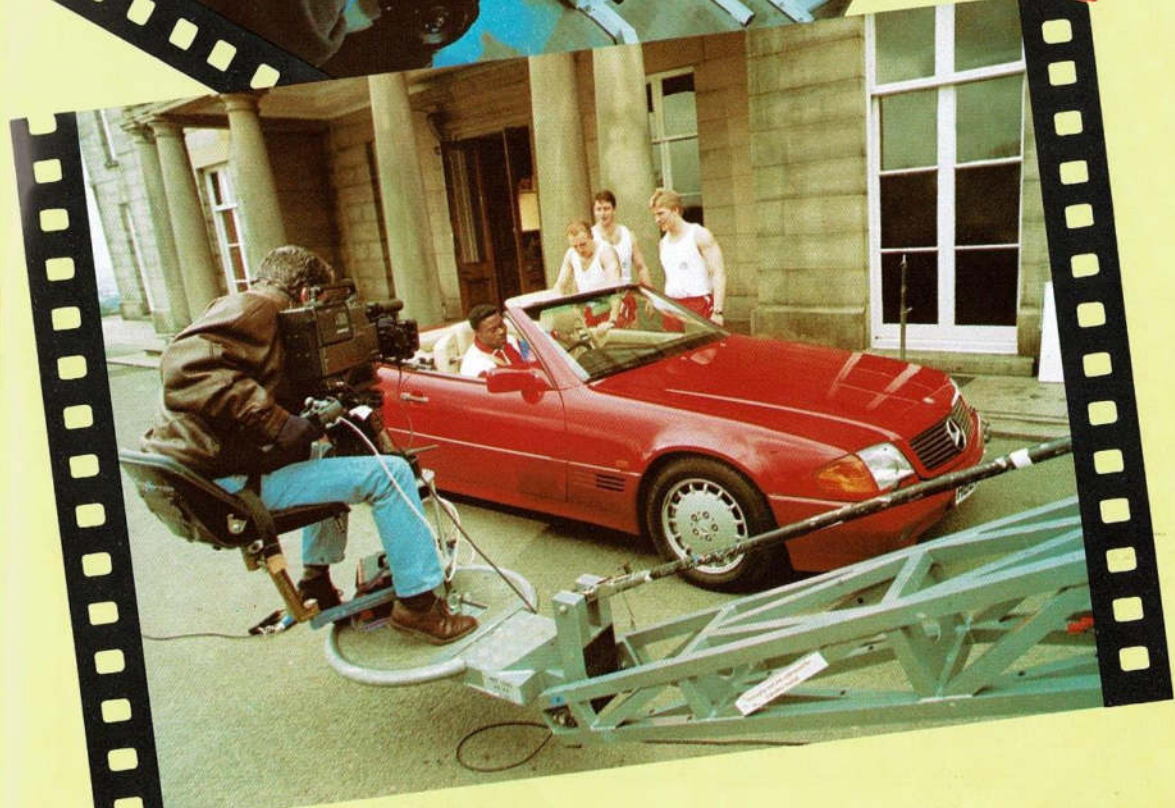
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4



5



6



Flying the flag...
setting up the final shot at YPL's headquarters at Tong Hall between Leeds and Bradford.

1

Taking the strain...
Leeds vice-captain Garry Schofield puts on weight for the camera!

2

Cameras, lights...
filming at night - training by Widnes.

3

Chariots Offiah...
plus roadrunning Wigan team mates, from the left, Shaun Edwards, Joe Lydon and Denis Betts.

4

Gym'll fix it...
for Leeds hooker Colin Maskill.

5

Wigan's driving force...
or, left to right, Martin Offiah, Shaun Edwards, Joe Lydon and Denis Betts.

6





3-D VISION

Rugby League history was made this season with the introduction of a third division in the Stones Bitter Championship. IAN PROCTOR chronicles Rugby League's 3-D vision...

An historic first season of Third Division football was always going to prove one of the most intriguing facets of the 1991-92 Stones Bitter campaign with quality football on offer, the competitive nature of the title and promotion race sustained interest right to the death.

The advent of Third Division football gave genuine meaning to a high percentage of matches involving the lower clubs and there was a mood of real optimism at grounds where despondency had reigned for years. The newly-structured three-tier set-up was designed to offer realistic targets for all clubs and this was seen in exciting matches which had a bearing on the championship, promotion, and top-eight Divisional Premiership play-off placings.

Doncaster, strugglers for much of their 40-year existence, began the season as title favourites. But it was soon apparent that Dave Sampson's squad lacked the staying qualities for a season-long battle. They began like potential champions – amassing 88 points in an opening-day defeat of Nottingham City and remaining unbeaten in all but one of their opening seven matches. But six defeats around Christmas left fans and directors utterly disillusioned. Sampson paid the ultimate price – the sack – and veterans Dane

O'Hara, Graham Idle, plus twins Keith and Kevin Rayne moved to pastures new. New coach Geoff Morris vowed to pursue a youth policy and the Dons restored much pride in the second half of the season, finishing sixth and causing a big Silk Cut Challenge Cup shock with their home defeat of Swinton to become the first-ever Third Division side to eliminate a First Division outfit.

Few fancied Huddersfield as potential champions even though they began by becoming the first side to defeat newcomers Scarborough Pirates, at the McCain Stadium. The Fartowners then lost an absorbing home clash by a point to brave, battling Batley before a crowd of more than 2,000 on a balmy September evening. Huddersfield's directors reacted swiftly and angrily, sacking joint coaches Mick Blacker and Francis Jarvis, inviting Alex Murphy – who had recently parted company with Leigh – to view their John Smiths Yorkshire Cup tie against Second Division Ryedale-York. The Fartowners trailed 10-0 at one stage, but a typical half-time blast from Murphy put them to rights and they progressed 28-10.



Ex-St. Helens and Great Britain packman Roy Haggerty, in action for Barrow.

No-one seriously expected *Alexander the Great* to take his first Yorkshire-based coaching appointment with fallen giants Huddersfield. But the more he thought about the idea, the more it appealed. And what was to prove a crucial away win at Bramley helped Murphy to make up his mind, recruiting former Great Britain loose forward Terry Flanagan as his assistant. Huddersfield swept to their first major honour in 17 years, losing just one

of their last 19 league matches. Crowds trebled, optimism at Fartown is currently at its highest level for years and Murphy and Flanagan have deservedly reaped the credit for unexpected success.

Just as Huddersfield turned to a former international coach in Murphy, who was in charge of England's 1975 World Championship bid, Bramley also utilised the vast experience and knowledge of former Great Britain manager Maurice Bamford. Starting the season in tandem with Roy Dickinson, the wily Bamford skilfully put together an impressive side at little cost, producing Bramley's most consistent league season since winning promotion to the First Division under Peter Fox 15 years ago. The marketmen went on to achieve promotion despite several cruel injury blows, not least the early-season setback to broken leg victim Keith Harker, who had begun the campaign with nine tries in a dozen matches. Player-coach Dickinson also came to the end of a long, distinguished career and Bamford was grateful for the influx of Kiwis Markish Langi and Sonny Whakarau.

Additionally, his pre-season signings from Hunslet, Paddy Lyons and Andy Marson, came up trumps; Norman Francis, Craig Whitehead, Ian Potter and Tony Burke were added to the squad as promotion became imminent; and there was the blossoming of local signings Kevin Bell, Dean Creasser and Ronnie Sharp. Bamford was equally impressed by the record-breaking performances of veteran scrum half Steve Carroll, who was the only player to score in every match, and the inspirational captaincy of Gary Brentley.

Hheavy Woollen neighbours Batley and Dewsbury shared Mount Pleasant for the first time and, for much of an exciting season, they also shared the dream of dual promotion to the Second Division. But, in the final analysis, they lacked the depth of squad and overall consistency to stay in the frame.

David Ward did a superb job with limited resources at Batley, getting a great response from Aussie Glen Tomlinson, evergreen Jeff Grayshon and centre

Shaun Wilkinson. When he was allowed to strengthen his squad towards the end of a long, hard campaign, Batley finished with seven successive victories to suggest real promotion potential in 1992-93.

Norman Smith, Ward's former coaching assistant at Leeds, joined forces with shrewd Jack Addy to put together, arguably, the most attractive combination in the Third Division. Only Huddersfield scored more points than a Dewsbury side which was always prepared to throw the ball about, and their promotion bid was especially praiseworthy in view of the lack of a home base. Two pre-season signings from Leeds, ex-Great Britain Under-21 international Paul Delaney and prop Paul Worthy, proved quality additions and when Kenyan Eddie Rombo made an identical move, it gave Dewsbury the finest wing pairing in the lower division, with Dennis Bailey on the other flank.

They were not afraid to utilise their pace, either, although hard-grafting forwards Neil Kelly, Glen Coughlan and Glen Bell deserve their share of praise. Dewsbury's undoubted ability was emphasised in one of the Cup upsets of the season – a magnificent 14-2 defeat of a Leigh side which will be in the First Division next season.



Highfield's Chris Moulds in action against Dewsbury.

Hunslet lost just one of their opening 12 league matches and led the table at the turn of the year, a tribute to the enduring enthusiasm and ability of coach Paul Daley. But they were unable to last the pace and a heavy home defeat by Huddersfield proved the turning point of their season. The Elland Roaders won just three of their remaining nine games to finish eighth. David Brook, Alan Daniel, James Lowes and Australian find Paul Carr all impressed the faithful Hunslet supporters.

Barrow were the only team likely to break the West Yorkshire monopoly at the top of Division Three. A First Division club just two years ago, the Shipbuilders made a slow start before emerging as a side capable of beating the best in the league. They managed victories over three of the top four clubs – only Bramley completed the double over them – but were unable to put themselves into serious promotion contention. Ex-Great Britain forward Roy Haggerty did a good job, prodigals David Cairns, Gary Kendall and Tony Kay enjoyed second spells at Craven Park, and Neil Shaw, winner of a record three Silk Cut Awards, continued his development as one of the most promising footballers outside the First Division.

Keighley replaced coach Tony Fisher with Peter Roe after a disappointing start to their season. Nevertheless, the Cougars proved to be a thorn in the side of several promotion contenders – defeating Dewsbury, taking three points off Batley and Doncaster, and thrashing Hunslet. But they paid the price for an erratic start which brought just two wins in their opening seven matches. Roe created an attractive side, with wingers John Wasyliv and John Walker becoming instant Lawkholme favourites and ex-Widnes favourite Andy Eyres scoring several eye-catching long-distance tries. As ever, versatile Keith Dixon was a model of consistency.



Chorley Borough loyal servant Mike Smith, their 1991-92 leading points scorer

Newcomers Scarborough Pirates began impressively, gaining four successive wins after that opening day loss to Huddersfield, but it was very much a trial and error period as Len Casey sought the right balance. The former Test

captain was harshly sacked on New Year's Eve, at a time when the Pirates were still in the promotion frame. Ex-Wakefield Trinity coach Trevor Bailey succeeded Casey, and the Pirates plummeted down the table, managing only two wins in their last 13 league games. Former Lions tour winger Garry Clark was a big favourite, his former Hull K.R. colleague Ray Stead played in every game except the last, and Gary Pearce became the club's first international when selected for Wales.

The highlight of Whitehaven's disappointing season was the return of former Great Britain centre Vince Gribbin, who, with 10 tries in his last three games and five against hapless Nottingham City, rewrote the club record books by surpassing Bill Smith's 35-year old try tally of 29.

Highfield had their moments, not least in two titanic Challenge Cup ties with Second Division London Crusaders, and free-scoring winger Simon Ashcroft and hard-running Australian back-rower Simon Chappell attracted the attention of more than one opposing coach.

Chorley Borough, Trafford Borough and Nottingham City were left floundering at the foot of the table, conceding more than 3,000 points between them. Defeated by amateurs Leigh East in the Regal Trophy, Chorley showed significant signs of improvement under John Taylor in the latter stages of the campaign. Trafford ambitiously introduced four Russians to the game and are looking forward to the move back to Blackpool, after leaving Moss Lane in March and completing their home fixtures at Huddersfield's Fartown ground. Nottingham City became only the third side to complete an entire league season without a victory, emulating Liverpool City in 1906-07 and Runcorn in 1989-90. Their losing run now stands at 36 matches and even the addition of one of the game's true stalwarts, Graham Idle, could not shore up a defence which leaked a record 1,323 league points.



3-D VISION

6

3-D VISION

7



FORUM

Next Wednesday Garry Schofield, the Leeds and Great Britain star heads Down Under on a Lions tour for a record fourth time. His talents have been recognised worldwide, including the 1991 Stones Bitter Man of Steel title, and besides being a superb practitioner of the Rugby League arts he has been a top class ambassador for the code. Today he puts forward his views on his career, the British game, the British Coal Test scene and the forthcoming tour to Australasia in the latest 1991-92 face-to-face interview with Sunday Mirror columnist JOHN HUXLEY.

Q: Have tours Down Under become any more difficult since you first went?

A: I was lucky enough to be selected to tour in 1984 in my first season as a professional and since then each trip has become more difficult. That's because not only have the opposing sides improved constantly but the competitive spirit within the British game has climbed too. Then there has always been that desire to recover the Ashes from the Australians for the first time since 1970 and that has put pressure on us too.

We've made rapid strides since the Australians hammered us in 1982 and we suffered our worst-ever tour in 1984 when we lost six of the seven Test matches played. I know that we haven't won the Ashes for 22 years but I believe that we have the best chance of breaking that sequence with the 1992 British Lions.

Don't forget, too, that although that 1984 tour was such a disaster for Great Britain some of the players who cut their international teeth on that trip – myself, Ellery Hanley, Andy Gregory and Joe Lydon – are still in the squad today and provide the basis of the Great Britain team.

Q: What kind of preparation have you made for this British Coal tour?

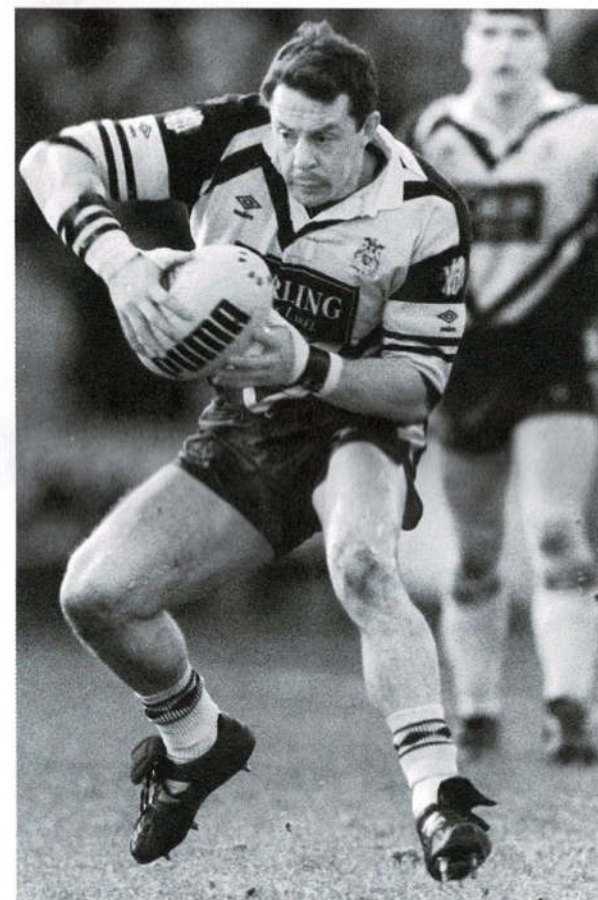
A: Restricted so far because many of the players have been so involved with the end-of-season games. We haven't really had time to get through much more than a few squad meetings, mostly dealing with

the business of the tour such as injections, visas, photos and suit measuring.

Gradually as clubs have finished their season's commitments those players and coach Malcolm Reilly have put in some preliminary work. But for most of us once the season ends completely it will be a case of 120 per cent concentration and building on the national team spirit.

The most important factor in any tour is building that *esprit de corps*. You have to pull together and it's no use players breaking up into five or six little groups of like mind. Everybody has to stick together so that when the going gets tough you have something to draw upon.

We all have just one goal... bringing back the Ashes. I don't see why we can't do just that.



Record-breaking tourist Garry Schofield.

Q: How do you rate the 1992 Lions squad?

A: This is the strongest set I've toured with. It has great balance with the blend of youth and experience. There's 32 players selected because Malcolm knows



FORUM

that this is going to be a tough trip and some of the lads realise that they are not going as first choice Test players so that we have a good enough side to cope with the midweek fixtures against some of the best club sides in Australia.

You've got to have a big pack and crafty half backs to take on the Australians and this touring side possesses just those vital elements. We have the size, pace outwide and craft to have a real chance of achieving our ambition.

Q: Do you believe that the Australians are beatable?

A: We proved our point in that third Test of 1988 and then by running them so close in the 1990 British Coal series in this country. With a little better fortune and control we could and should have shared the last series and, given the improvement to our game over the last few years, I really believe that this is a big chance for Britain.

We have been put in the right frame of mind for the trip by the Australian coach Bobby Fulton, who has said that the 1992 Lions have no chance because we have too vigorous a tour planned. I believe we have the squad capable of going to Australia and winning the Ashes. At the same time, I don't think that we will go round Australia undefeated but I don't think the British public would mind that in the least as long as we bring back the Ashes. It is a demanding tour schedule but the only way we have of showing how the British game has picked up is by playing the Winfield Cup sides.

Q: You've been an international class player for a long

time. What have been the highlights so far?

A: There have been two. In 1984 I scored a try against the Australians in the second Test at Brisbane and it was named as the *Try of the Decade* by the Rothmans Rugby League Yearbook. And then in 1985 I scored a record-equalling four tries against New Zealand.

But I also have a personal ambition to remain an international player for 10 years and I've got 18 months left to achieve that landmark. I can assure you that I'll be working hard to make sure that happens.

Q: What are your thoughts on the 1991-92 season with Leeds?

A: It is definitely a case of what might have been for us at Headingley. It has not been the easiest of season. At Christmas we topped the Stones Bitter Championship table and were runners-up in the Regal Trophy, enjoying national television. But in real terms the business end of the British season comes after Christmas and it all went wrong for Leeds.

We weren't helped by the injury to Ellery Hanley and then I too had my injury problems. It spoiled the side's rhythm. We also have a new manager in Doug Laughton and we fully realise that some of the good things in life don't just happen overnight and we still have some work to do at Bass Headingley. But I'm sure that despite the inconsistent season we are on the right lines. The 1992-93 campaign will be my sixth season at Leeds and I've got big hopes for the future, particularly that Stones Bitter Championship title.

THE GAME'S PREMIER WEEKLY



**RUGBY
LEAGUER**
All For The Good of The Game

OUT EVERY THURSDAY!



Room for the Great Britain Rugby League Team. (Or fifty ordinary sized people.)



OFFICIAL TEAM COACH TO THE GREAT BRITAIN RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM.
For details of Wallace Arnold holidays and coach hire, contact Wallace Arnold Tours Ltd.,
Gelder Road, Leeds LS12 6DH. Tel: (0532) 636456.



DATA

PREMIERSHIP ROLL OF HONOUR

Year	Winners	Runners-up	Venue	Attendance	Receipts
1975	Leeds	26 St. Helens	11 Wigan	14,531	£7,595
1976	St. Helens	15 Salford	2 Swinton	18,082	£13,138
1977	St. Helens	32 Warrington	20 Swinton	11,178	£11,626
1978	Bradford N.	17 Widnes	8 Swinton	16,813	£18,677
1979	Leeds	24 Bradford N.	2 Huddersfield	19,486	£21,291
1980	Widnes	19 Bradford N.	5 Swinton	10,215	£13,665
1981	Hull K.R.	11 Hull	7 Leeds	29,448	£47,529
1982	Widnes	23 Hull	8 Leeds	12,100	£23,749
1983	Widnes	22 Hull	10 Leeds	17,813	£34,145
1984	Hull K.R.	18 Castleford	10 Leeds	12,515	£31,769
1985	St. Helens	36 Hull K.R.	16 Elland Rd, Leeds	15,518	£46,950
1986	Warrington	38 Halifax	10 Elland Rd, Leeds	13,683	£50,879
1987	Wigan	8 Warrington	0 O. Trafford, Man'r.	38,756	£165,166
1988	Widnes	38 St. Helens	14 O. Trafford, Man'r.	35,252	£202,616
1989	Widnes	18 Hull	10 O. Trafford, Man'r.	40,194	£264,242
1990	Widnes	28 Bradford N.	6 O. Trafford, Man'r.	40,796	£273,877
1991	Hull	14 Widnes	4 O. Trafford, Man'r.	42,043	£384,300

THE HARRY SUNDERLAND TROPHY

The trophy, in memory of the famous Queenslander, a former Australian Tour Manager, broadcaster and journalist, is presented to the Man of the Match in the end of season Championship or Premiership Final.
The award is donated and judged by the Rugby League Writers' Association and is sponsored by Stones Bitter.

Roll of Honour

Year	Winner	Team	Position
1965	Terry Fogerty	Halifax	Second Row
1966	Albert Halsall	St. Helens	Prop
1967	Ray Owen	Wakefield T.	Scrum half
1968	Gary Cooper	Wakefield T.	Full back
1969	Bev Risman	Leeds	Full back
1970	Frank Myler	St. Helens	Stand off
1971	Bill Ashurst	Wigan	Second row
1972	Terry Clawson	Leeds	Prop
1973	Mick Stephenson	Dewsbury	Hooker
1974	Barry Philbin	Warrington	Loose forward
1975	Mel Mason	Leeds	Stand off
1976	George Nicholls	St. Helens	Second row
1977	Geoff Pimblett	St. Helens	Full back
1978	Bob Haigh	Bradford N.	Loose forward
1979	Kevin Dick	Leeds	Stand off
1980	Mal Aspey	Widnes	Centre
1981	Len Casey	Hull K.R.	Second row
1982	Mick Burke	Widnes	Full back
1983	Tony Myler	Widnes	Stand off
1984	John Dorahy	Hull K.R.	Stand off
1985	Harry Pinner	St. Helens	Loose forward
1986	Les Boyd	Warrington	Prop
1987	Joe Lydon	Wigan	Winger
1988	David Hulme	Widnes	Scrum half
1989	Alan Tait	Widnes	Full back
1990	Alan Tait	Widnes	Full back
1991	Greg Mackay	Hull	Scrum half

PREMIERSHIP RECORDS

ALL ROUNDS TEAM

Highest score: Hull K.R. 54 v. Leeds 0 1984
(Also widest margin)
Biggest attendance:
42,043 Hull v. Widnes Final at Old Trafford 1991

INDIVIDUAL

Most goals:
9 by Andy Gregory (Widnes) v. Leeds Round 1 1982
9 by Frano Botica (Wigan) v. Widnes Round 1 1992
Most points:
22 (7g, 2t) by John Dorahy (Hull K.R.) v. Leeds Round 1 1982
22 (9g, 1t) by Frano Botica (Wigan) v. Widnes Round 1 1992
Most tries:
4 by David Hall (Hull K.R.) v. Castleford Round 1 1983
4 by Phil Ford (Wigan) v. Hull Round 1 1985
4 by Ellery Hanley (Wigan) v. Hull K.R. Round 1 1986

PREMIERSHIP FINAL

TEAM

Most appearances: 8 by Widnes
Most wins: 6 by Widnes
Highest score:
Warrington 38 v. Halifax 10 (widest margin) 1986
Widnes 38 v. St. Helens 14 1988
Biggest attendance: 42,043 Hull v. Widnes
(at Old Trafford, Manchester) 1991

INDIVIDUAL

Most tries: No player has scored three or more
Most goals: 8 by Kevin Dick (Leeds) v. Bradford N. 1979
Most points:
17 (7g, 1t) by Geoff Pimblett (St. Helens) v. Warrington ... 1997

SECOND DIVISION PREMIERSHIP ROLL OF HONOUR

Year	Winners	Runners-up	Venue
1987	Swinton	27 Hunslet	10 O. Trafford, Man'r
1988	Oldham	28 Featherstone R.	26 O. Trafford, Man'r
1989	Sheffield E.	43 Swinton	18 O. Trafford, Man'r
1990	Oldham	30 Hull K.R.	29 O. Trafford, Man'r
1991	Salford	27 Halifax	20 O. Trafford, Man'r

THE TOM BERGIN TROPHY

The trophy, in honour of the President of the Rugby League Writers' Association and former Editor of the *Salford City Reporter*, is presented to the Man of the Match in the end of season Second Division Premiership Final. The award is donated and judged by the Association and sponsored by Stones Bitter.

Roll of Honour

Year	Winner	Team	Position
1987	Gary Ainsworth	Swinton	Hooker
1988	Des Foy	Oldham	Centre
1989	Mark Aston	Sheffield E.	Stand off
1990	Mike Ford	Oldham	Scrum half
1991	Steve Kerry	Salford	Scrum half



DATA

THERE'S ONLY STONES SPORT



B R E W E D F O R
R E F R E S H M E N T A N D T A S T E



FEAT

Nothing changes...

Wigan were being crowned as Champions back in 1950 while sending a record number of British Lions Down Under. The difference was Wigan won the top-four play-off without the tourists, as recalled by **RAYMOND FLETCHER**, of the **YORKSHIRE POST**...

The original selection of 13 Wigan players for this summer's British Coal Tour Down Under easily beat the previous record eight supplied by them in 1950,

but could even today's Central Park strength in depth match that of 42 years ago?

Then the 26-man tour squad set off by sea nearly a month before the last match of the season and even without their tourists Wigan still won the championship with a remarkable 20-2 defeat of a star studded Huddersfield side in the play-off final.

Wigan never lost a match after the tourists departed. They beat Widnes 33-2 in the final league match to finish at the top with 31 wins and a draw in 36 matches.

Although none of their players were selected to tour, Huddersfield were the reigning champions and had three great Australian backs in Johnny Hunter, Pat Devery and Lionel Cooper.

Only two months earlier they had beaten a near full strength Wigan 27-8 at Fartown.

Most of the 65,065 crowd at Manchester City's Maine Road must have expected a similar result in the final, but Wigan confirmed their extraordinary reserves of power to win easily.

Then, as now, they were led by a New Zealander – the great Cecil Mountford at stand off – and had his goalkicking fellow



1950... Wigan coach Jim Sullivan stands proudly in the middle of the Central Park tourists, from left to right: Ryan, Hilton, Gee, Bradshaw, Egan, Cunliffe and Ashcroft. Ratcliffe took the total to a record eight when drafted in to replace the injured Les Williams, of Hunslet.

Wigan then drew 5-5 with Halifax at home in the play-off before winning the replay 18-2.

Outstanding achievements, but it was Wigan's defeat of Huddersfield which is regarded as one of the most remarkable in any major final.

country-man on the wing, Brian Nordgren. Ted Ward and Billy Hudson were former Test players, while Nat Silcock, Frank Barton and Billy Blan were later to play for Great Britain.

But Ward and Silcock had played fewer than six matches that season before replacing tourists, as had George Roughley and John Alty.

The chosen octet of British Lions were Ernie Ashcroft, Tommy Bradshaw, Jack Cunliffe, Joe Egan, Ken Gee, Jack Hilton, Gordon Ratcliffe and Martin Ryan.



1992... Wigan's record-breaking 13 British Lions celebrate their selection announcement last month. Left to right: Lydon, Edwards, Hampson, Gregory, Cowie, Platt, McGinty, Skerrett, Betts, Offiah and Clarke. Kneeling Dermott and Lucas.



FEAT



APPEAL

The third Student Rugby League World Cup will take place in Australia from August 14-29. This 1992 World Cup promises to be a great occasion with 12 teams taking part including Papua New Guinea, Pacific Islands, Russia, Canada, U.S.A. and South Africa.

There will be four teams competing from the British Isles, with England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales all now well established as successful international teams working within the Student Rugby League. Naturally, a great deal of planning is required and an SRL

World Cup Committee has been formed to plan the strategy and to organise the preparation and itinerary for the British teams.

The cost of the venture will be £40,000 - £50,000 per team, a total of up to £200,000. The players themselves will be making a major contribution to the expense but there will remain a considerable amount of money still required to cover the costs. A number of sponsors have already expressed interest and support is already guaranteed from Smurfit U.K. Ltd., U.K. Corrugated Ltd. and Umbro. Application for assistance has also been made to the Foundation for Sport and the Arts. If you would like to support the SRL World Cup please contribute to any of the following fund-raising schemes:

Patronage - For a contribution of £100 or more a Patron will receive: Invitation to all major SRL events for Season 1992-93; Invitation to Patrons Function; Souvenir Tie; Tournament Brochure; Acknowledgement; Report and Results of Student World Cup 1992.

Friend - For a contribution of £20 or more a Friend will receive: Information on all SRL Events and Programme for 1992-93; 1992 World Cup Report; Souvenir Tie; Tournament Brochure; Acknowledgement.

Donations - To make a contribution, simply send a donation to the SRL World Cup Fund, minimum £5.

Lottery - 25p per ticket

£1.00 per book

1st Prize - Two return tickets to Sydney, Australia, with British Airways.

2nd Prize - Weekend at Wembley 1993

Numerous other prizes of tickets to matches and RL Souvenirs, memorabilia.

If you would like to become a Patron, Friend or give a donation, place contact:

Bev Risman,
Associate Director SRL,
11 Ravenswood Avenue,
Crowthorne,
Berkshire RG11 6AX.
Tel: 0865 722077 (Office)
0344 780493 (Home).



FAREWELL

The Stones Bitter Championship will not be quite the same next season. The only man to have been ever-present throughout 19 consecutive seasons of First Division football will be missing.

The term *model professional* hardly does justice to the remarkable service that John Joyner has given to Rugby League and Castleford in particular. He joined the club 20 years ago and has given remarkable service.

When the Rugby League chose to introduce two-division football, in 1973 a decade after abandoning the system, the inaugural Division One match took place on 17 August between Castleford and Wakefield Trinity. John Joyner wore the number four jersey for the home side but could not prevent Wakefield from gaining a 21-14 victory, current Castleford assistant coach, Mick Morgan, scoring two of Trinity's tries.

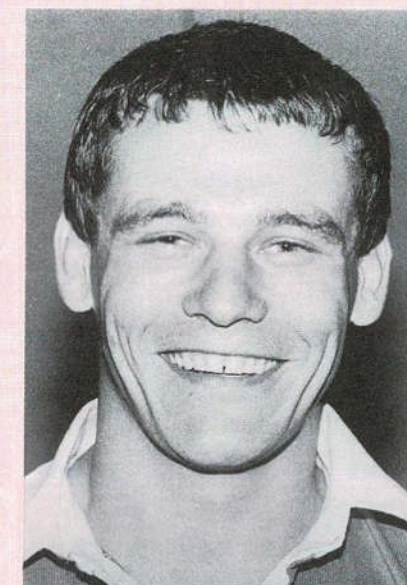
It was remarkable, then, that Joyner should still be in the thick of the action as the curtain came down on the 1991-92 First Division season, in a match against Hull at the Boulevard. His substitute appearance maintained an incredible unbroken stint of top flight football.

Joyner made his debut on the left wing against Bramley in an 18-0 home victory in 1971 and scored the first of 185 tries for Castleford from centre in a home defeat of Hull in December 1972. At the start of the following season, he claimed a share in Castleford's tries-in-a-match record by running in five in an 88-5 John Player Trophy first round defeat of Cumbrian amateurs Millom. Never a prolific scorer - his seasonal best was 16 in 1978-79 - Joyner

has been more of a creator, countless players benefitting from his silky skills.

Domestic honours did not start to come his way until Malcolm Reilly, who regards Joyner as one of the most complete players he has ever seen, returned from Sydney Club Manley to be player-coach at Wheldon Road. In next to no time, Reilly moulded a side to compare with the best in Castleford's history and they swept to three knockout trophies in a matter of months in 1977. They also finished third in the First Division, a placing Castleford have never bettered.

In December 1976 they went to Leigh and won a bruising BBC2 Floodlit Trophy final and, the following month, overcame brave Second Division Blackpool Borough in the John Player Trophy final at Salford, Joyner scoring a try in the 25-15 victory.



Durable John Joyner.

It was only a matter of time before representative honours came the way of one of the game's rising stars and he made an impressive, try scoring debut in Yorkshire's 12-12 draw with Cumbria at Whitehaven in September 1976. The following October, Reilly skippered Cas to their first-ever Yorkshire Cup victory, a 17-7 defeat of arch-rivals Featherstone, and further recognition came with Joyner's inclusion in the Great Britain Under-24 sides which defeated France at Hull and Tonneins.

Joyner first grabbed the national headlines with an outstanding debut for Great Britain in their defeat of Australia at Bradford, in November 1978. He was the youngster in Peter Fox's *Dad's Army* side which stunned the Kangaroos. Those present at the first Test to be staged on a Sunday in England will not forget his ice-cool overhead pass which sent Stuart Wright in for his second try, ensuring a series-levelling victory.

Australia clinched the series the following week, but Joyner did enough to secure a place in the 1979 Lions touring party to Australia. He scored six tries in 14 appearances, emerging as one of the few Lions to return home with his reputation

enhanced. Had the international transfer ban not been in operation, it is probable that his loyalty to Castleford would have been tested and he would certainly have fulfilled an ambition to play club football in Sydney.

Joyner was to make two further Lions tours, in 1984 and, as a replacement, in 1988, joining the elite band of players to figure in three trips to the Southern Hemisphere. With 16 Test appearances he is Castleford's most-capped international.

Joyner never neglected his duties at Wheldon Road and his consistency became a byword in the game. Gradually he moved in-field, from centre to stand off, and on to loose-forward, where he was able to exert a greater influence on matches. His standards never dropped.

Assuming the role of captain, he was the key figure when leading Castleford to their second Yorkshire Cup triumph, scoring a vital try and keeping Ellery Hanley quiet, in a 10-5 defeat of Bradford Northern in 1981. Wembley continued to elude Joyner and Castleford as Hull denied them three times in four years at the semi-final stage. But in 1986 he scored a vintage, priceless try in the quarter-final defeat of Wigan at Central Park, before going on to coolly lead his men to an unexpected 15-14 final victory over Hull K.R.

Joyner's next target was the club record appearance tally of 431, set by another legendary centre, Arthur Atkinson, and he set a new figure in 1986. In totalling more than 600 appearances for Castleford, he joined the great one-club servants in history, men like Wigan's Jim Sullivan, Joe Ferguson of Oldham, Ken Gee of Wigan, Swinton's Ken Gowers, Harry Wilkinson of Wakefield Trinity and Geoff Gunney of Hunslet. In these days of freedom of contract, service of that ilk may never be seen again.

His Test career over, Joyner nevertheless was a vital cog in the Yorkshire sides which monopolised the Rodstock War of the Roses series. His only regret was an inability to help the Wheldon Roaders to their first-ever championship this season. John Joyner leaves the stage acknowledged as the finest servant in Castleford's history. He will undoubtedly be missed as a player, although it seems likely that he be involved in the future in a coaching capacity.

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FAREWELL

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ROUGHYEDS

Oldham may have narrowly missed out on promotion back to the Stones Bitter Championship, after being relegated last season, but they come to Old Trafford as the current form team of Division Two following an impressive spell which has brought just one defeat – and that by a point – in their last 13 matches.

Six league defeats in 10 matches, between November and January, cost Oldham any chance of an instant return to the top flight, yet, after a winning 10 consecutive matches, Peter Tunks' men went into their final league game of the season – at home to Leigh on Easter Monday – needing a 39-point victory to achieve what seemed impossible. They were unable to deny Kevin Ashcroft's men, going down by the odd point in 29, but a third visit to Old Trafford in five seasons represents a better finale to the season than seemed likley in February.

Oldham defeated Third Division Dewsbury 36-18 in their first-round Stones Bitter Divisional tie, and then overcame London Crusaders by 22-14 in last week's Watersheddings semi-final to put them on course for a repeat of the successes at Old Trafford in 1988, defeating Featherstone 28-26 and, after one of the come-backs of all-time, denying Hull K.R. 30-29 two years ago.

The measure of Tunks' achievement in steering Oldham to Old Trafford can be gauged from a remarkable turnover in playing personnel since that stirring defeat of Hull K.R. in 1990. The team that did Tony Barrow proud on that occasion has been broken up this season, with Barrow himself signing winger Richard Irving for Swinton; Paul Lord and Paul Round joined Wakefield Trinity; Mike Ford is with Castleford; Leo Casey joined Featherstone Rovers; Andy Ruane and Brett Clark are with neighbouring Rochdale Hornets; John Fieldhouse is at Halifax and Charlie McAlister opposes Oldham with

Division Two champions
Sheffield Eagles this
afternoon.

Tunks, a former Australian Test prop and skipper of the Canterbury-Bankstown club which won the 1988 Grand Final, has certainly stamped his own identity on the Oldham set-up and can feel highly satisfied that his men have turned the season around since the turn of the year. A gutsy home Silk Cut Challenge Cup defeat at the hands of Warrington, proved a turning point of Oldham's season. They never looked back after that, and finished the season in third place, four points adrift of Leigh, five behind champions Sheffield.

Full-back Duncan Platt returns to Old Trafford this afternoon for a third time in five years having gained winners' medals in First and Second Division Premiership finals. Younger brother of Wigan Test prop Andy Platt, who will be playing in the main event this afternoon, Duncan helped Widnes to the First Division title in 1987-88 and kicked a goal in their 38-14 defeat of St Helens in the Premiership final that season. In 1990, he kicked a goal in Oldham's defeat of Hull K.R. in the Second Division Premiership final.

Ex-Swinton winger Scott Ranson is another with past experience of the Old Trafford occasion, scoring a try for the Lions in their 1989 defeat by Sheffield Eagles in the Division Two final. A recent signing, with Richard Irving, Tony Barrow and Simon Longstaff going to Swinton, Ranson opened his Oldham try account in the 23-10 win at Carlisle, followed with four in a home defeat of relegated Workington Town and has scored in both Premiership victories over Dewsbury and London Crusaders.

Iva Ropati faces his former colleagues for the first time since leaving Sheffield Eagles after breaking their club try scoring record. He totalled 30 tries in 27 appearances, including a best effort of four in a home defeat of London. The New Zealander, formerly with Featherstone, was involved in the deal which took McAlister to Sheffield.

Utility back Vince Nicklin has done a tremendous job for Tunks this season after arriving in England in a round-about way. Born in New Zealand, he moved to Darwin whilst a youngster, played for St George and Easts before joining Limoux in the South of France. He has scored eight tries and slotted in all over at a time when injuries hit the Roughyeds hard in mid-season. Nicklin has appeared a full back, centre, wing, stand off, scrum half and loose forward.

Sean Tyrer joined Oldham after finding it impossible to break into first team football at Wigan. He managed just 10 full appearances in almost four seasons after joining the champions from Leigh Miners and readily agreed to join Oldham for the chance of regular football. His steady goalkicking has been a key element in the club's end-of-season run of success, also scoring seven tries.

GB Under-21 International Tommy Martyn is one of the survivors from the club's 1990 Premiership final defeat of Hull K.R., scoring a decisive try after coming off the sub's bench. He kicked a goal on his third Under-21 appearance, as substitute, in GB's 34-2 defeat of France at Albi in March and was a hero of last week's semi-final defeat of London, scoring a try and two drop-goals in the 22-14 verdict.

Richard Russell appeared for Wigan in the first Old Trafford Premiership finals in 1987, coming off the bench as a replacement for match-winner Joe Lydon in the 8-0 defeat of

Warrington. Two years ago the former Under-21 international winger was at loose forward as Oldham defeated Hull K.R. in the Division Two final and this versatile footballer has played hooker, loose forward and stand off this season.

Half back partner Neil Flanagan is the exciting young captain of Oldham, signed in the summer after gaining BARLA Youth honours for Great Britain. A player who only made his first-team debut in the Lancashire Cup win at Swinton in September, Flanagan has been outstanding at scrum half, scoring four tries and two-drop goals for Oldham.

Prop Ian Sherratt appears in his third Division Two Premiership final this afternoon, his second in succession, having starred in Oldham's 1988 defeat of Featherstone, and been substitute in Salford's 27-20 defeat of Halifax 12 months ago. The former Bradford forward is in his second spell at Watersheddings, having returned to the club in November.

Fellow prop Tim Street is a former GB Under-21 international, arriving at Oldham after spells with Wigan, Leigh and Swinton. He gained his Under-21 cap in 1989 and helped Leigh to the Second Division championship that season. Street joined Oldham in the close-season, with Neil Clawson and John Fairbank going to Station Road in part-exchange.

Like Flanagan, Richard Pachnuik has proved one of the finds of the season for Oldham, establishing himself as one of the outstanding young hookers in the game. He has scored 12 tries and seven goals in an impressive debut season, temporarily switching to loose forward to allow busy Ian Bates a spell in the hooker's role.

Wigan St Patricks second row product Chris Joynt is regarded very highly at Water-sheddings and several First Division clubs have shown an admiration for the youngster who made a substitute's debut for GB's Under-21 side against PNG at Headingley last October. A try scorer when the Under-21s defeated France 58-2 at Halifax, the 11-try Joynt gained his third junior international cap at Albi in March.

New Zealander back-rower Shane Tupaea has complemented Joynt in the second-row, enjoying this third spell in English football after starring for Mansfield Marksmen in 1986-87 and, along with brother Ashley, in 1987-88.

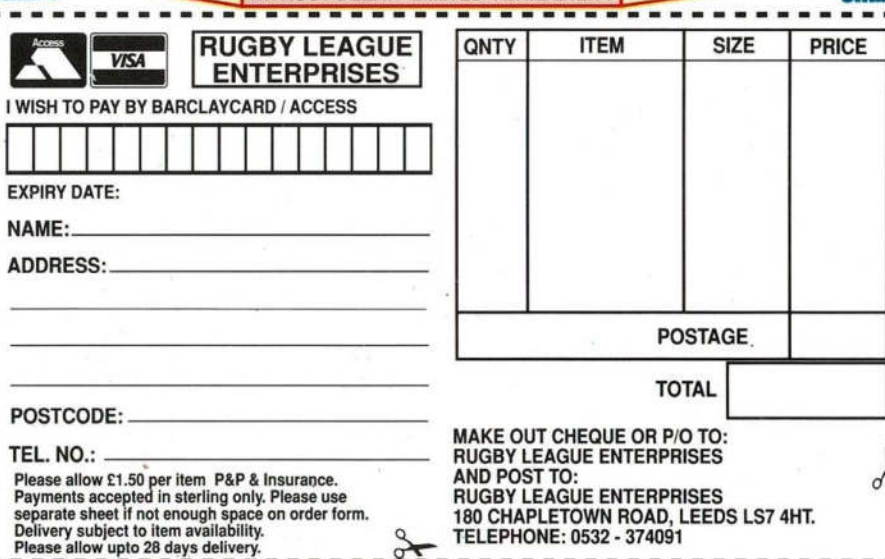
Former Salford, Wigan and Wakefield Trinity utility back Ged Byrne has made the switch to loose forward in recent weeks, after joining Oldham in the mid-season swap-deal which took Paul Lord and Paul Round to Belle Vue. Former Widnes forward Keith Newton is another survivor from the 1990 victory at Old Trafford, appearing as substitute for Leo Casey.



ROUGHYEDS

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EAGLES

Sheffield Eagles are making their second Old Trafford appearance in four years, having regained top flight status at the first attempt. Relegated a year ago after two seasons in the Stones Bitter Championship, the Eagles have completed their most successful season by winning the Second Division title, a point ahead of Leigh.

The Eagles have achieved success in style, winning 21 and drawing one of their 28 league matches and conceding defeat at their plush Don Valley headquarters just twice in league football. Additionally, they amassed 816 points in the process, at an average of almost 30 per game, a figure bettered only by Division Three champions Huddersfield.

It was perhaps, fitting that the Eagles should win their first-ever championship in the eight-team Stones Bitter Second Division, because the new format was the brainchild of their manager Gary Hetherington. After a stuttering start which saw Sheffield draw their opening match with Oldham and lose at Carlisle, they always seemed on course for a speedy return to the First Division.

Many felt the Eagles were unlucky to be relegated 12 months ago, particularly as they won at Widnes, drew at Wigan and annihilated Hull K.R. 62-16. They faced up to their new challenge with typical optimism, despite the loss of key players Sam Panapa to Wigan and Sonny Nickle to St Helens, and 13 wins from their last 15 matches, after the turn of the year, saw Sheffield climb back.

Hetherington's men come to Old Trafford seeking their second Stones Bitter Divisional Premiership triumph in four seasons. They captivated the Old Trafford audience with their style and conviction in 1989, comprehensively defeating Swinton 43-18. Daryl Powell crossing for a hat-trick of tries to take his club record to 28, and another future Test star, Mark Aston, amassing 19 points from a try, seven goals and a drop-goal to take the Man of the Match award.

Powell and Aston have again been key figures in Sheffield's promotion-winning campaign. Fourteen-cap Powell is the only Second Division player included in the Lions tour party this summer and has alternated effectively between his Test berth of centre, stand off and loose forward positions. His 10 tries for the Eagles include a hat-trick in the 44-18 away win at Oldham, while his polished stand off performance for Great Britain, against France at Hull, drew praise from all quarters.

Plagued by a niggling injury which forced him to miss five matches prior to the turn of the year, Aston has emerged as the finest goalkicker in Division Two and his opportunism saw him land a club record-equalling 12 goals in the 72-14 Premiership first-round defeat of Jaded Keighley and six in the semi-final against Batley.

Five other members of the 1989 Premiership-winning side have played their part in Sheffield's second promotion success. But it seems that at least two of them will miss out on this afternoon's Old Trafford finale.

Long-serving utility back Mark Gamson joined the club at its formation in the summer of 1984, and has proved an admirable servant, appearing in every back role and even operating at hooker and loose forward this term. Full back in the 1989 Premiership defeat of Swinton, the former Leeds Colt enjoyed an end-of-season try burst, with one in the championship-clinching defeat of Ryedale-York and two in the Premiership slaughter of Keighley, to take his tally to six.

Winger-turned-forward Andy Young is another survivor from the 1988-89 promotion-winning team. He was the scorer of six tries in 16 full appearances from second-row until February. Another to be plagued by injury is luckless half back David Close, a loyal and valued servant since the club's Owlerton days and a goalkicker of some repute. Close had some success on loan to Doncaster last season, but has been absent with a recurring knee problem since before Christmas.

Two forwards set for their second Old Trafford appearance are front rowers Paul Broadbent and Mick Cook, both of whom were tryscorers in the 43-18 defeat of Swinton three years ago. Former Lock Lane product Broadbent has developed into one of the most consistent forwards in the game, scoring nine tries - including seven in the last eight games - and missing just one match this season. Leeds-based Cook has a workrate which few hookers can match and the Eagles management feel he is unlucky not to have gained representative honours.

Two ex-GB internationals, Keith Mumby and Hugh Waddell, are further Eagles players with previous experience of the Old Trafford double header. Former Test full back Mumby, a member of the Bradford side which contested three successive Premiership finals in 1978, 1979 and 1980, appeared at loose forward for Northern in the 1990 final against Widnes. Waddell faces his former club after starring in Oldham's Division Two Premiership success over Featherstone, in 1988, having helped them to the Division Two title that season. Mumby was a Lions tourist in 1979 and 1984, and ex-Blackpool Borough and Leeds man Waddell a member of the 1988 Lions party.

Another former GB International, ex-Castleford winger David Plange, has proved a big favourite with the Don Valley fans this season, and his 24 touchdowns include hat-tricks in away victories at London and

Whitehaven and two in last week's semi-final defeat of Batley. He made his solitary, try scoring Test appearance in Britain's defeat of France at Leeds in 1988, having been a member of the Castleford side which won at Wembley two years earlier.

Former Hull and GB Under-21 international Richard Price appeared at centre for the Airlie Birds against Widnes in the 1989 Premiership final at Old Trafford, losing 10-18. Price has scored 17 tries for the Eagles this term, surpassing his personal best of 13 for Hull in that 1988-89 season.

New Zealand centre Charlie McAlister is seeking his third Stones Bitter Divisional Premiership winners' medal in five seasons, having kicked four goals from left-centre in Oldham's defeat of Featherstone in 1988 and appeared in the second row in their thrilling defeat of Hull K.R. in 1990. McAlister joined the Eagles in an exchange deal which took another Kiwi, Iva Ropati, to Oldham. He has taken his try-scoring mantle by running in 10 tries in the last five Eagles matches, including a Premiership hat-trick against Keighley and two in the semi-final against Batley.

Sheffield's success is founded on their ability to sign exciting young players and develop them through their Alliance and Academy nursery. In this respect, GB Under-21 internationals David Mycoe and Richard Picksley typify the spirit at Sheffield. Fifteen-try Mycoe, snatched from under the noses of hometown Wakefield Trinity, and pacy, 10-try winger Picksley were both members of the Under-21 side which trounced France 56-2 at Halifax in March. Another name for the future is Academy international half back Ryan Sheridan, who became an Eagles debutant at 16 in their early-season win at Workington.

In the forwards, the club expect big things from ex-Dodworth ARL back-rower Dale Laughton and former East Leeds junior Ian Hughes. Both players have made significant strides during the course of a long, hard season in the Second Division. Former Huddersfield utility man Anthony Farrell back in Eagles' colours after an injury-plagued season. The former GB Under-21 international, remains the club record signing and has made an impressive move from the backs to the back-row of the pack in the past two seasons.

Sheffield have always recruited well from overseas and this season has no exception. While Ropati was re-writing the club's record books with his blistering pace out wide, Hetherington was equally pleased with the contributions from fellow New Zealanders Des Maea and Tony Tuimavave. When they returned home, he moved swiftly to add ex-Kiwi Test prop Adrian Shelford to their register.

Recently, with an eye on their First Division future, Sheffield signed the highly rated Australian loose forward Paul Carr from Hunslet, having earlier taken ex-GB Under 21 international Tim Lumb on loan from the Elland Roaders.



EAGLES



RESULTS

STONES BITTER PREMIERSHIP

FIRST ROUND

Castleford	28	Wakefield T.	18
St. Helens	52	Halifax	6
Warrington	18	Leeds	18
Wigan	42	Widnes	16

REPLAY

Leeds	22	Warrington	8
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SEMI-FINALS

St. Helens	30	Castleford	14
Wigan	74	Leeds	6

STONES BITTER DIVISIONAL PREMIERSHIP

FIRST ROUND

Batley	46	Barrow	0
Bramley	18	Keighley C.	18
Dewsbury	24	Doncaster	6
Huddersfield	13	Hunslet	6

REPLAY

Keighley C.	26	Bramley	23
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SECOND ROUND

Leigh	6	Batley	15
London C.	14	Huddersfield	4
Oldham	36	Dewsbury	18
Sheffield E.	72	Keighley C.	14

SEMI-FINALS

Oldham	22	London C.	14
Sheffield E.	36	Batley	22

Sheffield E.

Purple Jersey
Coach: GARY HETHERINGTON

DAVID MYCOE	1
RICHARD PICKSLEY	2
DARYL POWELL	3
CHARLIE MCALISTER	4
DAVID PLANGE	5
RICHARD PRICE	6
MARK ASTON	7
PAUL BROADBENT	8
MICK COOK Capt.	9
HUGH WADDELL	10
DALE LAUGHTON	11
IAN HUGHES	12
ANTHONY FARRELL	13
TIM LUMB	14
KEITH MUMBY	15



TOM BERGIN TROPHY
This afternoon's adjudged Man of the Match, chosen by the Press, will receive the Tom Bergin trophy and prize money, sponsored by Stones Bitter.



Referee: STUART CUMMINGS, Widnes
Touch Judges:

JIM LLOYD, Warrington (red flag) IAN MUIR, Wakefield (yellow flag)

Oldham

Red and White Jersey
Coach: PETER TUNKS

DUNCAN PLATT	1
SCOTT RANSON	2
IVA ROPATI	3
VINCE NICKLIN	4
SEAN TYRER	5
GED BYRNE	6
TOMMY MARTYN	7
TIM STREET	8
RICHARD PACHNUIK	9
IAN SHERRATT	10
SHANE TUPAEA	11
CHRIS JOYNT	12
RICHARD RUSSELL, Capt.	13
STEVE WARBURTON	14
KEITH NEWTON	15

LINE-UP

Wigan

Cherry and White Jersey
Coach: JOHN MONIE

STEVE HAMPSON	1
JOE LYDON	2
DEAN BELL, Capt.	3
GENE MILES	4
MARTIN OFFIAH	5
FRANO BOTICA	6
SHAUN EDWARDS	7
NEIL COWIE	8
MARTIN DERMOTT	9
ANDY PLATT	10
DENIS BETTS	11
BILLY MCGINTY	12
PHIL CLARKE	13
DAVID MYERS	14
SAM PANAPA	15



HARRY SUNDERLAND TROPHY
This afternoon's adjudged Man of the Match, chosen by the Press, will receive the Harry Sunderland trophy and prize money, sponsored by Stones Bitter.

Referee: JOHN HOLDSWORTH, Kippax
Touch Judges:

JIM BEACH, Whitehaven (red flag) TONY RANDERSON, Hull (yellow flag)

LINE-UP

St. Helens

Blue and White Jersey
Coach: MIKE MCCLENNAN

PHIL VEIVERS	1
ALAN HUNTE	2
GARY CONNOLLY	3
PAUL LOUGHLIN	4
ANTHONY SULLIVAN	5
JONATHAN GRIFFITHS	6
PAUL BISHOP	7
JONATHAN NEIL	8
BERNARD DWYER	9
KEVIN WARD	10
SONNY NICKLE	11
GEORGE MANN	12
SHANE COPPER, Capt.	13
MIKE RILEY	14
PAUL GROVES	15



CHARTS

TOP TEN TRY SCORERS

1. Shaun Edwards (Wigan)	40
2. John Devereux (Widnes)	35
3. Iva Ropati (Oldham)	33
Greg Austin (Halifax)	33
5. Vince Gribbin (Whitehaven)	31
Graham Steadman (Castleford)	31
7. Paul Newlove (Featherstone R.)	28
David Myers (Wigan)	28
Martin Offiah (Wigan)	28
10. Mark Preston (Halifax)	27

TOP TEN GOAL SCORERS (Including drop goals)

1. Frano Botica (Wigan)	151
2. Steve Carroll (Bramley)	138
3. Deryck Fox (Featherstone R.)	115
4. Lee Crooks (Castleford)	113
5. David Hobbs (Bradford N.)	110
6. Chris Vasey (Dewsbury)	109
7. Paul Eastwood (Hull)	108
8. Steve Parrish (Batley)	106
9. Jonathan Davies (Widnes)	99
Mark Aston (Sheffield E.)	99

Frano Botica, the 1991-92 top goal scorer, will receive £10 a goal from Stones Bitter.

TOP FIVE POINT SCORERS

	Tries	Goals	Drop Goals	Points
1. Frano Botica (Wigan)	11	149	2	344
2. Steve Carroll (Bramley)	5	130	8	288
3. Paul Eastwood (Hull)	15	108	0	276
4. Jonathan Davies (Widnes)	16	97	2	260
5. Steve Parrish (Batley)	10	104	2	250

Wigan crashed a host of new Stones Bitter Premiership records last Sunday as follows:

Highest score: Wigan 74 v. Leeds 6 (also widest margin)
Most tries: 10 by Martin Offiah

Most points: 40 (10t) by Martin Offiah
Most goals (equal): 9 by Frano Botica

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SAINTS

PHIL VEIVERS

One of only two survivors from Saint's 1985 Premiership-winning side, scoring a try from full back in the 36-16 defeat of Hull K.R. at Elland Road. Set for his eighth major final... his fourth against Wigan. Joined St Helens from Brisbane Souths in 1984 and has amassed more than 200 appearances at full back, centre, stand off and loose forward. The scorer of 13 tries this season, appearing at stand off in Saint's Lancashire Cup final success against Rochdale last October.

ALAN HUNTE

One of four Saints players included in the Great Britain touring party to Australasia, being drafted into the 32-man playing squad as a replacement for Jonathan Davies. Formerly with hometown Wakefield Trinity, playing on amateur forms in 1989, gained BARLA Youth international honours before representing Great Britain twice at Under-21 level. Enjoyed an outstanding season, scoring 25 tries including cup-tie hat-tricks against Trafford (Lancashire Cup), Bradford (Regal Trophy) and Halifax (Premiership). Made a try-scoring debut for Great Britain in the defeat of France at Hull in March.

GARY CONNOLLY

One of the success stories of the season, switching from full back to centre with great effect, and being nominated as the Stones Bitter Young Player of the Year. Earned a Great Britain debut as substitute in the World Cup Test against PNG at Wigan, and was at centre in Tests against France at Perpignan and Hull. A try scorer in the Under-21 defeat of PNG in October, scoring a further try in the Under-21 defeat of France at Albi. In the Lions touring party to Australasia, scorer of 24 tries this season. Set for his fourth major final, having lost to Wigan at Wembley in 1989 and 1991.

TEA ROPATI

A 1986 Kiwi tourist to Australia and a 1989 tourist to Europe, the former Otahuhu utility back has come of age for St Helens this season. Scorer of 17 tries, including five in the opening five matches, in a side which won the Lancashire Cup and finished second in the Stones Bitter Championship. Brother Iva appears for Oldham in

this afternoon's Division Two final, and elder brother Joe was a member of the Warrington side beaten in the 1987 Premiership final by Wigan.

PAUL LOUGHLIN

Kicked three goals from full back in Saints' last Premiership final against Widnes at Old Trafford in 1988. Back to his best after missing six months with a broken arm, scoring five tries and 33 goals in seven matches since his comeback, including a try and seven goals in the home semi-final defeat of Castleford. Selected for a second Lions tour down under, having been a success in 1988, topping the points list with 90. Set for his sixth major final for the club he joined from the Colts set-up in 1983. Thirteen caps for Great Britain.

ANTHONY SULLIVAN

A club record signing from Hull K.R. last summer and scorer of 14 tries this season, including a Lancashire Cup hat-trick against Trafford Borough and one in the semi-final defeat of Wigan. Scored two tries on his debut for Wales against PNG and also on his Great Britain debut against the Kumuls at Wigan. Appearing in a second Old Trafford Premiership final after playing for the Robins in their Division Two final defeat by Oldham in 1990.

JONATHAN GRIFFITHS

On stand-by for the Lions tour Down Under after a season in which he scored for Wales against PNG and also enjoyed a try-scoring debut in Great Britain's 30-12 defeat of France in Perpignan. Former Welsh RU international, signed in 1989 from Llanelli, appeared in his first major final against Wigan at Wembley in 1991. His eight tries this season include one in Saints' Boxing Day defeat by Wigan.

PAUL BISHOP

Looking for a second Stones Bitter Premiership winners' medal from his third final, having scored a try and five goals from stand off for Warrington in their 1986 defeat of Halifax at Elland Road, and appeared at scrum half against Wigan in the inaugural Old Trafford Premiership final in 1987. An inspirational figure for Saints this season, scoring a try and two goals in their Lancashire Cup final defeat of Rochdale, and dropping a goal in the semi-final defeat of Wigan. Kicked two goals against Wigan in last season's Wembley final clash and scored a try in the Good Friday league clash at Knowsley Road.

KEVIN WARD

Making a second Premiership final appearance, after starring for Castleford in their 1984 defeat by Hull K.R. at Headingley. The Test forward was a try scorer against his former club in last week's semi-final and is set for the 10th major final of an outstanding career which includes a 1988 Lions tour, 16 caps for Great Britain, Wembley success with Castleford in 1986 and a 1987 Grand Final victory with Manly. Became one of the few players to earn Yorkshire and Lancashire Cup winners medals when starring in Saints' defeat of Rochdale Hornets in October. Made his last appearance for Great Britain at Old Trafford in the Second Test against Australia in 1990.

PAUL GROVES

One of four survivors from Saints' 1988 Premiership final appearance against Widnes at Old Trafford. Previously with Salford, gaining GB Colts and Under-21 honours before making his Lancashire and Great Britain debut within weeks of joining St Helens in October 1987. Toured Australasia in 1988, making eight appearances and scoring one try. Has represented Saints in five major finals, including 1989 and 1991 Wembley clashes with Wigan.

GEORGE MANN

The New Zealand Test forward has again been a model of consistency during the course of a season in which he has appeared in every pack

position for St Helens. Joined the club from Mangere East in 1989, having played in Australia for the Newcastle Knights, going on to represent the Kiwis in France, and is set for his third major final. Opposed Wigan at Wembley in 1991 and the scorer of two tries as Saints defeated Rochdale Hornets in this season's Lancashire Cup final at Warrington.

SONNY NICKLE

Former Hunslet and Sheffield Eagles forward, proving an inspired capture for St Helens last summer. Missed much of the early part of the season through injury but an impressive figure since Christmas, earning selection for the Lions tour to Australasia, having played just once for Great Britain at Under-21 level in 1990. Appeared for Sheffield in their Division Two Premiership final victory over Swinton at Old Trafford in 1989. Five tries this season, including two in the Premiership first-round victory over Halifax.

BERNARD DWYER

Substitute when Saints last appeared in the Premiership final, the former GB Colts international was unlucky to miss out on a Test debut in March, a hamstring injury forcing his withdrawal from the squad to face France at the Boulevard. A versatile forward, facing Wigan in 1989 and 1991 Wembley finals, scoring a try in the Lancashire Cup semi-final defeat of Wigan in October. Also a useful goalkicker, landing 12 in Saints' early-season defeat of Trafford Borough.

PAUL FORBER

The long-serving back rower was substitute when Saints last won the Premiership trophy with a 36-16 defeat of Hull K.R. at Elland Road in 1985, also appearing at second row in their 1988 Old Trafford defeat at the hands of Widnes. Gained Lancashire honours in 1985, and maintained a reputation as one of the game's most forceful runners, developing the knack of landing vital drop-goals. Scored a try and a drop-goal in Saints' 28-16 Lancashire Cup semi-final defeat of Wigan in October.

MIKE RILEY

The former Colts winger has proved one of the finds of the season for St Helens, making a try scoring debut against Castleford in September, following with another try in the Lancashire Cup semi-final success over Wigan and gaining a winners medal in only his fourth full appearance. Injury denied him an Under-21 international debut against PNG, but appeared in two internationals against France at Halifax, at centre, and Albi, wing, in March.

SHANE COOPER

Former New Zealand international, gaining 12 caps at stand off, scrum half and loose forward. Toured with the 1985 Kiwis and appeared in the 1988 World Cup final against Australia. Saints' captain, appearing in his fifth major final, having led the club to success in the 1988 John Player Trophy and the 1991 Lancashire Cup. Scorer of 13 tries and a drop-goal this season, just one touchdown short of his personal best tally of 14 in 1988-89.



SAINTS



RIVERSIDERS

Wigan having visited Wembley for the fifth consecutive season only a fortnight ago, today's BIG MATCH programme replaces the Riversiders, profiles with an appreciation by SIMON BARNES of THE TIMES which attempts to put their achievements into perspective...

Well, Wigan won the cup again. Of course they did. They always do. They have already won the league. Of course they have. That makes it five cups in a row and three successive double season. Wigan are magnificent. Magnificent is their job.

Their success is inevitable and, equally inevitably, people keep suggesting that Wigan's dominance is "bad for the game". I wonder what they mean by this. It is a pattern that repeats itself again and again in sport: an exceptional team or individual achieves a position of extraordinary dominance, and people at once imagine this is somehow counter-productive.

I would like to present a list of teams and individuals whose success has seemed inevitable and whose dominance has been considered Bad For The Game: Bjorn Borg; West Indies cricket team; Steve Davis; McLaren Formula One team; Ayrton Senna; Liverpool Football Club; Martina Navratilova; Ed Moses; San Francisco 49ers; Lucinder Green; Yorkshire County Cricket Club; Desert Orchid; Dennis Conner; Vincent O'Brien; Mike Tyson; Wales rugby union team.

These days, all of these know defeat. Many of them have tasted humiliation;

some have drained this bitter cup to the lees. They don't know how to lose, people once said, but they learnt, they learnt. They always do.

It is obvious that no individual can dominate a sport forever. The greatest players of all time often look super-human, immune to the knocks and groin strains of outrageous fortune. But in the end, Time gets them. Even in the less strenuous sports, Time gets them. It seems that mental strength is a non-renewable resource. Steve Davis is older and wiser and therefore more vulnerable.

A team can live longer than an individual athlete. Like a vampire, it can be nourished by constant draughts of new blood. Wise management, thoughtful planning, the right blend of people; such an organisation can go on for year after year. Such a team looks immortal, immune to the ravages of Time.

For example, Wigan lined up at Wembley with only five players who were present on the first cup final of the present run. Even more significant, they survived the passing of the majestic Ellery Hanley at his peak the finest rugby player in the world. He has gone to Leeds. Wigan have gone to Wembley. As usual.

Money is part of it. That is natural in a professional sport. Wigan were able to spend all but half a million on Martin Offiah, who can make a serious claim to be the leading rugby player in Britain.

But no team, however rich, is immortal. Time affects teams just as it affects individuals. The loss of a significant player can change things, as in San Francisco. The insidious aging of a core of great players can be another, as in the West Indies. A change of management – managers and chairmen and directors age too – and a change of emphasis can start a decline, as in Liverpool. Or sometimes the opposition can simply get a great deal better, throwing a decade of long-term planning for victory into chaos. You ask Ron Dennis at McLaren about that.

Success in sport may look inevitable. In reality, it is a precarious matter, even for the best. Failure and defeat is written into every sport; that is the only inevitable thing about it.

Wigan's day will pass as all days must pass. There is absolutely no point in whether or not their excellence is Bad For The Game. "What do they mean, Steve Davis is bad for the game?" Barry Hearn, Davis's manager, asked. Don't they realise they are witnessing the creation of a legend?"

"What are we supposed to do – lose occasionally to make it interesting?" Dennis said. Do not complain about excellence. Wigan's or anybody else's. Revel in it while you can. Not even in Wigan can they fail to hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near.

A final thought; Wigan v England at rugby union. Who would you bet on?

Television personality and DAILY TELEGRAPH columnist MICHAEL PARKINSON adds his personal tribute...

What we witnessed in Wigan beating Castleford was not simply the best team in rugby league winning yet another trophy, but the best club side in all of professional sport.

If the definition of a great team involves a unique blend of invincibility and glamour, a combination of organisation and imagination, then it is difficult to imagine another outfit so completely qualified as Wigan.

At club level in soccer we have to think back to the golden days of Best, Charlton and Law; in cricket the Surrey side of the Fifties under Surridge would make the grade, as would the Yorkshire team when Close, Illingworth, Trueman were running things.

But none of them, great as they were, so completely dominated their game as Wigan do. There is an inexorable quality about the club's progress to Wembley and the winning of the trophy that, at the present time, cannot be denied.

They fashion their own rhythms and tempos within a game. It is like watching a great boxer at work. There are times when Wigan put their backs to the ropes and bob and weave. Then, unexpectedly and often in devastating fashion, there comes the counter-attack. Sometimes they maul the opposition, comming in toe to toe, slugging it out.

Martin Offiah looks like what he is. Even in repose he resembles a coiled spring. In full flight he challenges the spectator to adequately describe what he sees. He doesn't run – not in the accepted sense like you and me – he doesn't bolt, career, dart, gallop, scamper, scurry, speed or leg it. What he does is more exciting and graceful than that. We will have to invent a new verb: to offiah, which means to achieve maximum acceleration with the minimum of fuss and optimum style.

It is almost a cliché to observe that Wembley was a pleasant place to be for the rugby league cup final; that not for the first time, walking away from the ground, mingling happily with fans from both teams, I was reminded that soccer used to be like this before the yobbos took over.

Why should rugby league be so different? Well, both the Prime Minister and Mr David Mellor were at Wembley. What they saw, both as sports lovers and politicians, will have given them much to think about.

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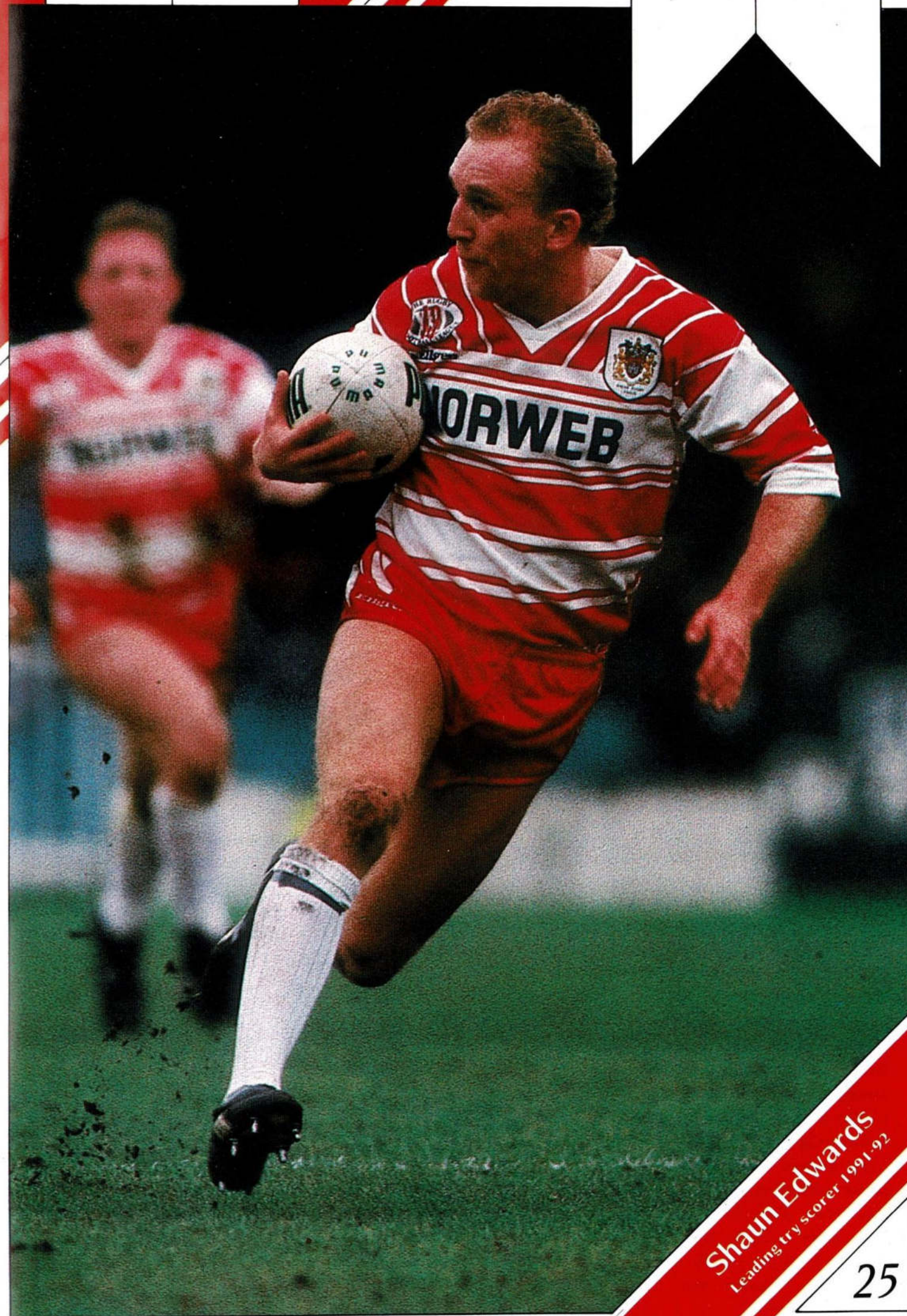
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Shaun Edwards
Leading try scorer 1991-92



IN TOUCH

with **RAYMOND FLETCHER**,
of the Yorkshire Post.

RECORD MEDAL HAUL

Shaun Edwards broke a long-standing club record by collecting his 18th winners' medal when Wigan took the Stones Bitter Championship last month.

But he still has some way to go to match John Atkinson's 25 winners' medals for Leeds between 1967 and 1980.

Atkinson was the only player to play right through the glorious Leeds era of the Sixties and Seventies until the comparative decline of the last decade.

Leeds were league leaders five times and reached a remarkable 21 finals during Atkinson's career, winning all but four and he missed playing in only one – the 1976 Yorkshire Cup decider.

His treasure trove of winning medals consists of three Challenge Cups, two Championships, two Premierships, one John Player, seven Yorkshire Cups, one Floodlit Trophy, five League Leaders and four

Yorkshire League championships. Some of the competitions are no longer in existence, while others did not start until Atkinson's career was well under way.

The Yorkshire League was run in conjunction with the full championship when clubs played only against those from the same county plus a few inter-county matches.

It was regarded as a major trophy and one of the famous *All Four Cups* which clubs aimed to win in one season, a feat achieved only three times – by Hunslet (1907-8), Huddersfield (1914-15) and Swinton (1927-28).



Top medal winner John Atkinson on Great Britain duty

The League Leaders' Trophy went to the club finishing at the top of the old one League when a top 16 play-off decided the championship.

The Floodlit Trophy was a BBC2 TV knockout competition shown live on Tuesday nights from 1965 to 1979.

Many more medals are likely to follow for Edwards as he is only 25 and has amassed his collection in only seven years.

He had picked up his first losers' medal in 1984 when at 17½ he became the youngest player to appear at Wembley.

Edward's half-back partner, Andy Gregory, also has 18 winners' medals but they have been won over 11 years including spells at Widnes and Warrington.

Players with the great Huddersfield *Team of all the Talents* would probably have broken all medal-winning records but for the First World War robbing them of five seasons. Even then, Doug Clarke collected 18.

SCORE-A-MATCH

Steve Carroll of Bramley this season joined the band of players who have scored in every club match in a season.

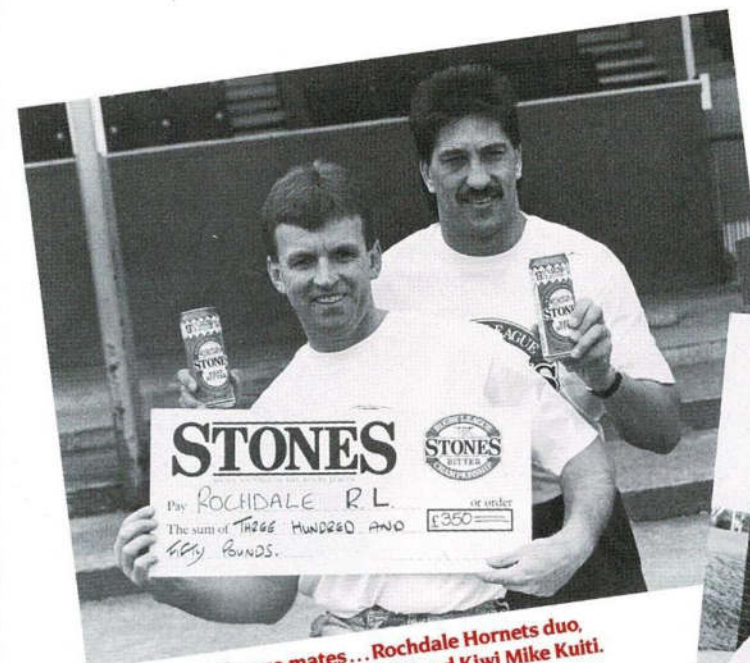
The scrum half played in 33 matches and totalled a club record 288 points from five tries and 138 goals – also a record – including eight drop goals.

Carroll broke the Bramley points-in-a-season record in their penultimate match with the first of three goals in an 18-18 Stones Bitter Divisional Premiership home draw against Keighley. His total of 288 points beat the 276 by scrum half George Langfield, who scored 10 tries and 123 goals for Bramley in 1956-57.

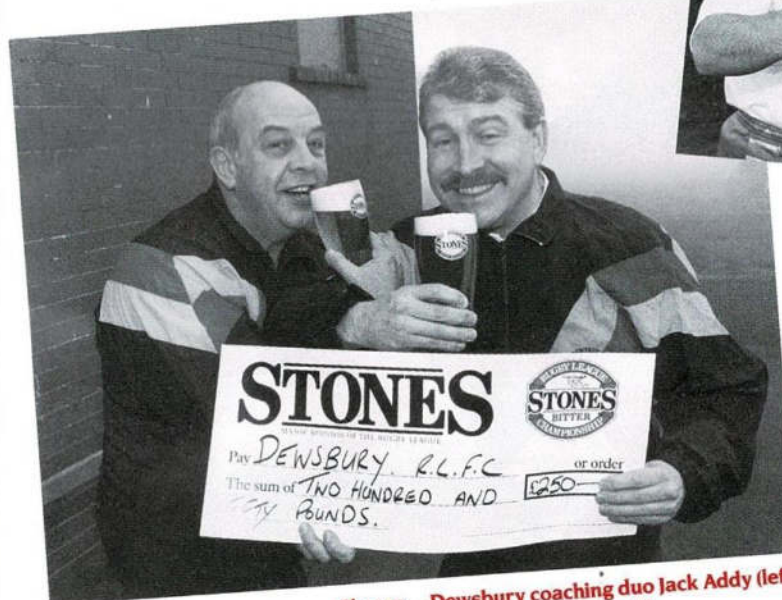
The score-a-match record has now been achieved 15 times with David Watkins (Salford) and Mick Parrish (Hunslet and Oldham) having done it twice.



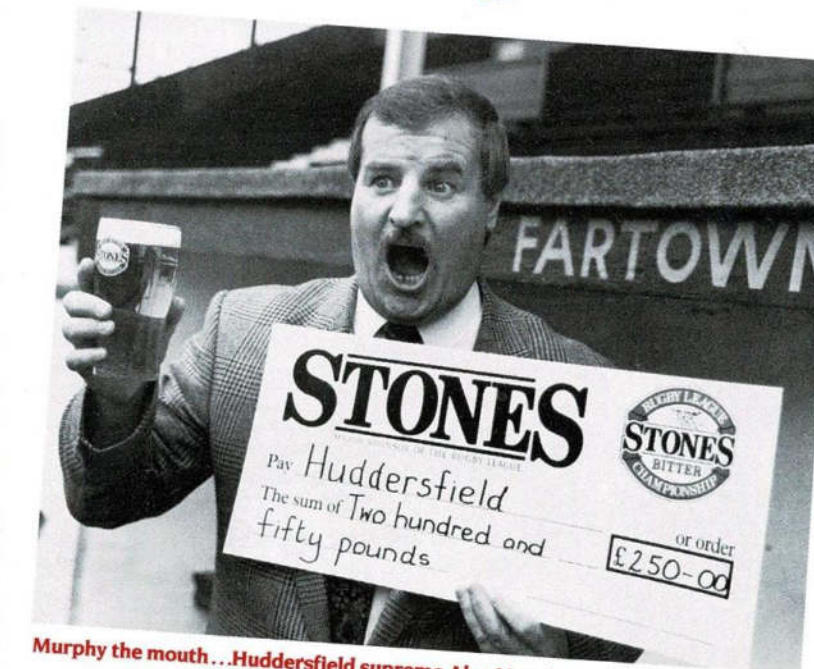
IN TOUCH



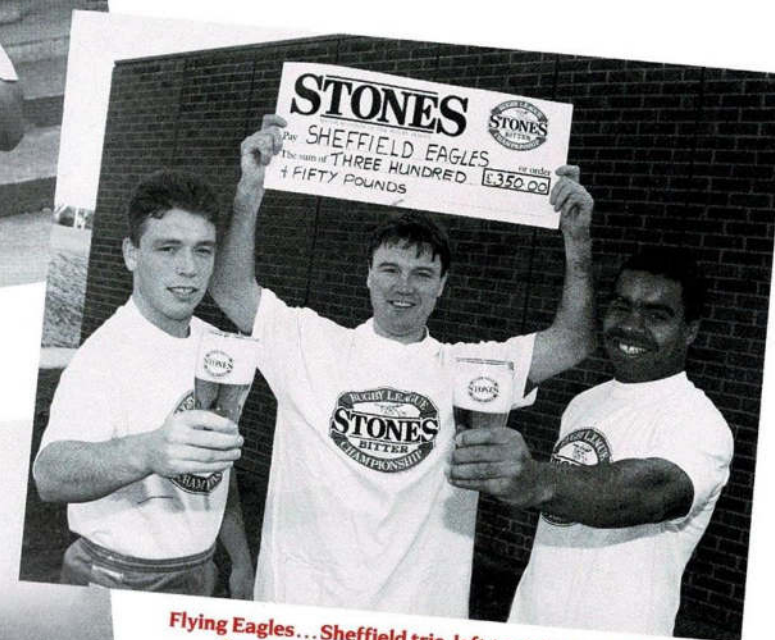
Cheque-mates... Rochdale Hornets duo, coach Stan Gittins (left) and Kiwi Mike Kuiti.



Cheers... Dewsbury coaching duo Jack Addy (left) and Norman Smith.



Murphy the mouth... Huddersfield supremo Alex Murphy.



Flying Eagles... Sheffield trio, left to right, Mark Aston, Coach Gary Hetherington and David Plange.

TEAMS OF THE MONTH AWARDS 1991-92 ROLL OF HONOUR

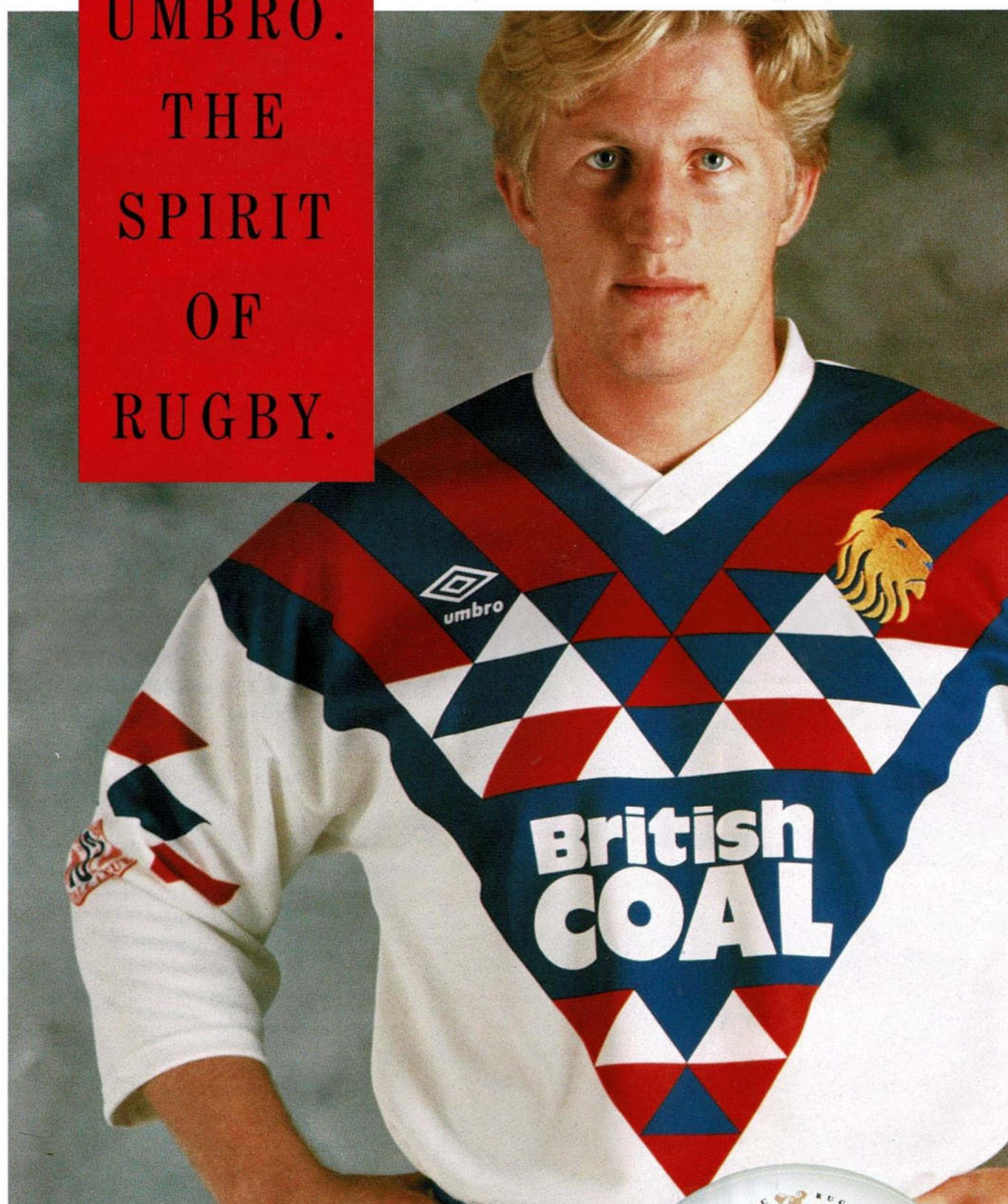
	FIRST DIVISION £500 per month	SECOND DIVISION £350 per month	THIRD DIVISION £250 per month
Aug/Sept.	St. Helens	Rochdale H.	Batley
October	Widnes	Sheffield E.	Dewsbury
November	Salford	Sheffield E.	Huddersfield
December	Leeds	Leigh	Bramley
January	Wigan	Sheffield E.	Dewsbury
February	Wigan	Oldham	Barrow
March	Wigan	Rochdale H.	Bramley

- The April/May Awards will be announced on 20th May.
- As will the Stones Bitter Team of the Year, to receive a cheque for £1,500 and a framed citation.



TEAMS OF THE MONTH

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RECORDS

DIVISIONAL TOP SCORERS 1991-92

John Devereux of Widnes finished as top scorer of Division One tries with 31 in 21 league matches.

The former Wales rugby union international clinched the top spot after switching from wing to centre for Widnes's last four matches and touching down in each for a total of eight.

Only three other players scored 20 or more Division One tries including Halifax's left wing partnership of centre Greg Austin, who was second with 27, and fourth-placed Mark Preston on 23.

Wigan stand-off Shaun Edwards finished third with 25 tries although he leads in all matches with another 13 in Cup ties.

Ellery Hanley holds the record for most Division One tries in a season with 44 for Wigan in 1986-87.

AT A GLANCE...

Stones Bitter Championship

Tries: JOHN DEVEREUX (Widnes).....31
Goals: FRANO BOTICA (Wigan).....86
Points: FRANO BOTICA (Wigan).....199
(7t, 85g, 1 dg)

Second Division

Tries: IVA ROPATI
(Sheffield & Oldham).....31
Goals: JOHN WOODS (Leigh).....74
Points: JOHN WOODS (Leigh).....178
(8t, 72g, 2dg)

Third Division

Tries: VINCE GRIBBIN (Whitehaven) 31
Goals: STEVE CARROLL (Bramley) ...113
Points: STEVE CARROLL (Bramley) ..238
(4t, 109g, 4dg)

STONES BITTER PREMIERSHIP RECORDS

Frano Botica of Wigan equalled two Stones Bitter Premiership records with his nine goals and 22 points in the 42-16 first round home defeat of Widnes.

First Division top try scorer John Devereux.

The winger's goals equalled the nine by Andy Gregory for Widnes in the 39-11 first round home defeat of Leeds in 1982.

John Dorahy of Hull KR set the points record with seven goals and two tries in the 54-0 first round defeat of Leeds in 1984.



RECORDS



TOUR

The 20th party of Rugby League British Lions – the biggest at 32-strong – embark on a 17-match, nine-week tour Down-Under on Wednesday. Live and exclusive coverage of the three British Coal Tests in Australia, plus the two with New Zealand, will be screened in BSkyB, as well as the five tour fixtures against Sydney Premiership club sides.

BRITISH COAL TOUR

Date	Opposition	Venue
PAPUA NEW GUINEA		
Sunday 24 May	Highland Zone	Goroka
Wednesday 27 May	Islands Zone	Rabaul
Sunday 31 May	PAPUA NEW GUINEA (TEST)	Port Moresby
AUSTRALIA		
Tuesday 2 June	Queensland Residents	Townsville
Saturday 6 June	Canberra	Canberra
Monday 8 June	Illawarra	Wollongong
Friday 12 June	AUSTRALIA (1st TEST)	Sydney Football Stadium
Tuesday 16 June	NSW Country	Parkes
Friday 19 June	Parramatta	Parramatta Stadium
Tuesday 23 June	Newcastle	Newcastle
Friday 26 June	AUSTRALIA (2nd TEST)	Princes Park, Melbourne
Tuesday 30 June	Gold Coast	Tweed Heads
Friday 3 July	AUSTRALIA (3rd TEST)	Lang Park, Brisbane
NEW ZEALAND		
Wednesday 8 July	Auckland	Carlaw Park
Sunday 12 July	NEW ZEALAND (1st TEST)	Palmerston North
Wednesday 15 July	Canterbury	Christchurch
Sunday 19 July	NEW ZEALAND (2nd TEST)	Auckland

1992 BRITISH LIONS

Backs		Tours	GB	England/ Wales	U-21s
CONNOLLY, Gary	St Helens	–	2+1	–	4
DEVEREUX, John	Widnes	1990	1	2 Wales	–
EASTWOOD, Paul	Hull	1990	8	–	–
EDWARDS, Shaun	Wigan	1988	18+3	–	4

Backs		Tours	GB	England/ Wales	U-21s
ELLIS, Kevin	Warrington	–	+1	2 Wales	–
GREGORY, Andy	Wigan	1984,88	24+1	–	–
GOULDING, Bobby	Leeds	1990	6	–	5
HALLAS, Graeme	Hull KR	–	–	–	1+2
HAMPSON, Steve	Wigan	–	10+1	–	–
HUNTE, Alan	St Helens	–	1	–	2
LOUGHLIN, Paul	St Helens	1988	12+1	–	2
LYDON, Joe	Wigan	1984,90	22+2	–	–
NEWLOVE, Paul	Featherstone R	–	3+1	–	8
OFFIAH, Martin	Wigan	1988,90	20	–	–
POWELL, Daryl	Sheffield E.	1990	11+3	–	–
SCHOFIELD, Garry	Leeds (Vice Captain)	1984,88, 90	32	–	2
STEADMAN, Graham	Castleford	1990	2+1	–	–
Forwards					
BETTS, Denis	Wigan	1990	12+1	–	4
CLARKE, Phil	Wigan	1990	+1	–	5
COWIE, Neil	Wigan	–	–	–	–
CROOKS, Lee	Castleford	1984,88	14+2	–	2
DERMOTT, Martin	Wigan	1990	4	–	5
FAIRBANK, Karl	Bradford N	1988,90	5+4	–	–
HANLEY, Ellery	Leeds (Captain)	1984,88	33+1	1 England	–
HOLLIDAY, Les	Widnes	–	3	–	–
JACKSON, Lee	Hull	1990	9	–	–
JACKSON, Michael	Wakefield T	–	2	–	+1
LUCAS, Ian	Wigan	1990	1	–	4
McGINTY, Billy	Wigan	–	–	–	–
NICKLE, Sonny	St Helens	–	–	–	1
PLATT, Andy	Wigan	1988	13+4	–	–
SKERRETT, Kelvin	Wigan	1990	9	–	–



Ellery Hanley MBE, skippering a second British Lions party.



ALEX

Alex Murphy launched his coaching career in November 1966 as player-coach at Leigh. Nearly 30 years the Hall of Fame living legend is still collecting silverware, as chronicled by PAUL WILSON, of THE OBSERVER...

Ellery Hanley is too old to go on tour. Garry Schofield should be captain. Coaches with clipboards should be banned, as should anyone who sits impassively in the stand and communicates with the bench through a walkie-talkie (half the time you end up talking to taxi drivers, anyway). And all the Australians can go home.

For someone supposed to be extinct, a dinosaur well out of his era, Alex Murphy went down a treat at a recent Rugby League forum in Swinton. These days the mischievous smile behind the trademark 'tash is more engaging than ever. These days, as he, his public and his various *betes noires* all know, Murphy can no longer be dismissed as yesterday's man.

Take his fifty-third birthday celebrations last month. An open-top bus had been arranged to transport Rugby League's most enduring legend and his latest charges to a civic reception at Huddersfield Town Hall. Lighting up the sky were Standard Fireworks, one of the town's largest employers, whose managing director, John Woodhead, promised pyrotechnics commensurate with Huddersfield's momentous achievements in going up as Third Division champions.

Huddersfield claim their first honour for 17 years and the supporters have seen enough to be convinced. Huddersfield have not just succeeded this season, they have done so in entertaining style. Woodhead says he hasn't enjoyed cheering the Claret and Golds so much since the days when he went along in short trousers. Clearly there is mileage in the old magic yet.

Murphy the magician kept audiences spellbound on the other side of the Pennines

for the two decades of his peerless playing career, but though his elevation to coaching initially promised to be just as dazzling, the Eighties saw a succession of Lancashire clubs grow wise to his tricks. When even Leigh dumped him last year, in a surprise reversal of normal custom and practice, the game seemed to be up. Friends advised him to retire, or do a *Tommy Docherty* and concentrate on his after-dinner speeches, newspaper columns and wonderful talent for controversy.

Huddersfield, who planned to trade on the reputation of one of the game's greats to help revive their flagging fortunes, appeared a backward step. Those who wished to remember the dashing Murphy at the top of his game rather than at the bottom of the league told him so, but characteristically he went his own way.

"I did think about retiring. I was hurt by the business at Leigh, but as soon as Huddersfield approached me I was interested", Murphy said. "I'd just rather be in the game than out of it, I suppose. I've had my ups and downs in Rugby League, but I don't think I can leave it alone. And who's to say I've been wasting my time? I'm proud of what we've achieved. The same lads who were down in the dumps a year ago are on their way into the Second Division. I feel appreciated again, and for once I can turn my back without people sticking knives in it."



Well practised jubilation Murphy-style.

Off he goes, as quotable as the day in 1975 when he caused a furore on Australian TV by saying he wouldn't trust an opposing coach to train his greyhounds. He will always be popular with the game's press, some of whom harbour a secret desire to see him in charge of Great Britain. He might very well set the game back 20 years, but the journey would be a colourful one.

When Joe Bramley, the Huddersfield chairman, said there was never a dull day working with Murphy, he was only the latest in a long line of club officials to make the observation. There is a difference this time, however. Huddersfield are not rich, and hired Murphy on modest wages, so they were in no position to protest when, as usual, he appointed a capable assistant, Terry Flanagan, to take training sessions, and told the club he wanted a manager's role. Most clubs employing Murphy have expected him to justify the expense in a tracksuit, but Huddersfield gave him free rein.

They have not been disappointed. Murphy plunged into a hectic social round, visiting schools, businesses and clubs in an effort to raise sponsorship and awareness. Youngsters showed an interest. Older spectators gradually began to return on Sundays, in greater

numbers as results on the field improved. Murphy was even able to find a couple of new directors for the board, and is now heading the hunt for a major sponsor for next season. "Somebody must want to be associated with an ambitious club."

Bramley cannot find praise high enough. "Alex has picked up a club that wasn't going anywhere. The players, crowd and commercial side are all buzzing, and we get more attention than half the First Division." Greg Shuttleworth, the club's Australian captain, confirmed Flanagan is a coach of the highest quality, but paid tribute to Murphy's special contribution.

"He has presence, he commands respect," he said. "When he walks into the dressing-room you can hear a pin drop. He might not always make sense, but when he speaks you listen."

Who would have thought, of the two Lancastrians taking up coaching appointments in Yorkshire this season, that it would be Murphy riding to the town hall in the open-top bus?

"Do you think Doug Laughton spends his Tuesdays like this? Murphy once asked the secretary, Dave Parker, as they shared a roadside bacon sandwich between calls. "I had to laugh," Parker said. "It eats him up that Laughton is on two grand a week at Leeds. There's no doubt who's getting the best value. And I bet it's a long time since Laughton was kept in the clubhouse until midnight after a game. Most Sundays Alex can't move for folk wanting to shake his hand and buy him a drink."

ALEX THE GREAT Coaching Roll of Honour

LEIGH:

Championship Trophy
Challenge Cup
Lancashire Cup (2)+R.U.
BBC2 Floodlit Trophy + R.U.

WARRINGTON:

Challenge Cup + R.U.
John Player Trophy (2)
League Leaders Trophy
Club Merit Trophy
Capt. Morgan Trophy
Premiership Trophy R.U.
BBC2 Floodlit Trophy R.U.

WIGAN:

John Player Trophy
Challenge Cup R.U.

ST. HELENS:

John Player Trophy
Challenge Cup R.U. (2)
Premiership Trophy R.U.

HUDDERSFIELD:

Third Division Championship Trophy

REPRESENTATIVE:

England and Lancashire
R.U.:
Runners-up



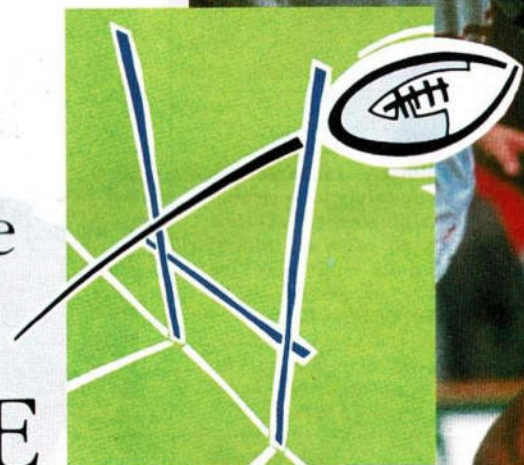
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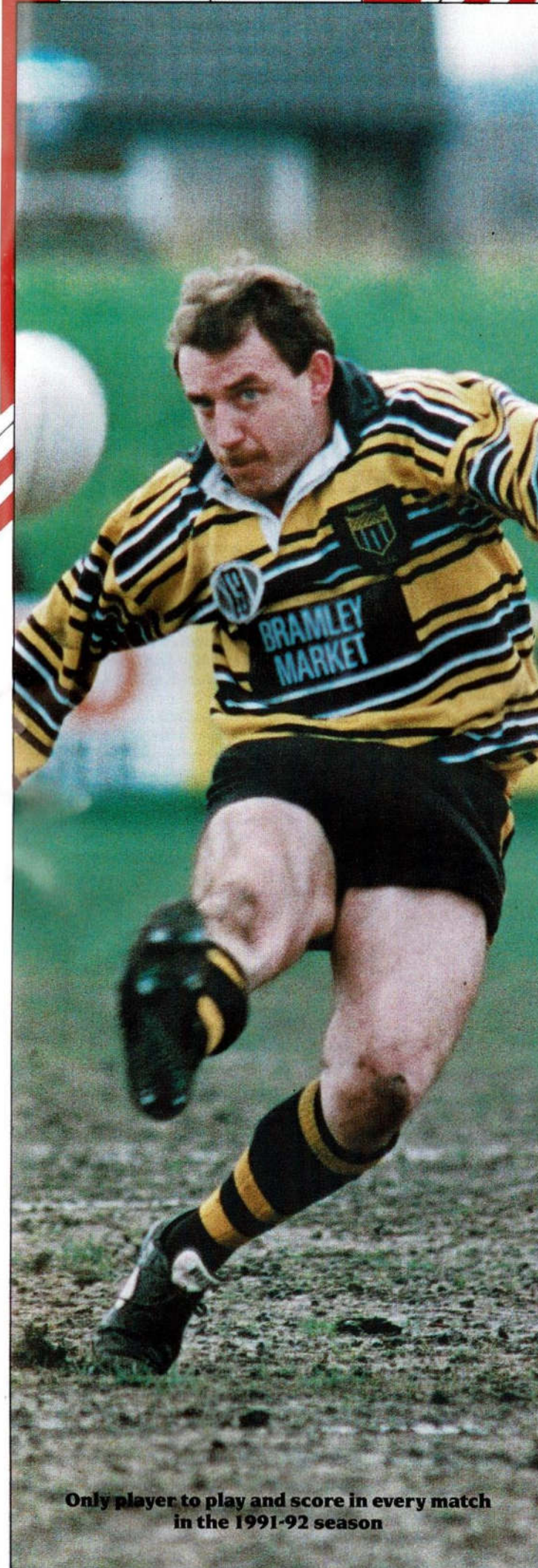
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TRIBUTE

As the 1992 British Rugby League Lions prepare to leave for Australasia, it seems a fitting time to reflect upon the loss of a great double Lion of yesteryear – **JACK WILKINSON**, Born 16 August 1930, passing away in his native Halifax on 17 March this year. Rugby League historian **ROBERT GATE** pays this tribute...



A 1963 Wembley lap of honour for Jack Wilkinson, with Keith Holliday (centre) and Derek Turner (right).

Jack Wilkinson was one of those prop forwards who roused strong emotions in followers of the game in the 1950s and 60s. If he was in your team, he could do no wrong. If he was on the opposing side, he could do nothing but wrong. In an era of hard forward play Jack Wilkinson earned the reputation of being one of the hardest of forwards.

Yet like many of his kind, Jack was the most affable and friendly of men off the field, always willing to pass the time of day talking rugby with supporters and admirers. His love of rugby extended beyond his playing days for he had an abiding passion for the history and traditions of the game and was an avid collector of Rugby League memorabilia.

In his later years Jack became prominent in the British Rugby League Lions Association and from 1988 had been its Chairman, only the sixth holder of that office since its inception in 1945. He thus followed proudly in the footsteps of such notable League icons as James Lomas, Harry Sunderland, Hector Rawson, Harry Beverley and Ernest Ward.

Wilkie had been rugby-mad since boyhood. He played for his school, Battinson Road, for Halifax Supporters and for Siddal. He had trials for Hunslet but was delighted when his home town team Halifax stepped in and signed him for £300. He made his first team debut less than two months after his 18th birthday when Halifax went down 4-36 at Warrington on 11 October 1948. His position then was loose forward and it was ironic that the present incumbent was Alan Prescott, who would shortly move to fame and fortune at St. Helens. Both would ultimately become legends but as props rather than loose forwards.

Over the next four years first team opportunities were few and far between as Jack learnt his trade in the reserves and did his National Service in the RAF Regiment, during

the course of which he played Rugby Union for Bath until they discovered he was a League player! By 1953 Jack established himself in the Halifax pack which was evolving into one of the most celebrated in the game's history, containing titans such as John Thorley, Alvin Ackerley, Albert Fearnley, Derrick Schofield, John Henderson, Des Clarkson, Les Pearce and Ken Traill. Wilkie was in fine company as Halifax became regular finalists in the game's major competitions.

Jack played, and scored, in his first final in 1953 when St. Helens defeated Halifax 24-14 at Maine Road in the Championship Final. He would lose two other Championship Finals on the same ground in 1954 and 1956. In both, Halifax scored more tries than their opponents yet lost by a solitary point – 7-8 to Warrington and 9-10 to Hull. Halifax had no better luck in Challenge Cup Finals, going down to Warrington in 1954 after a replay and to St. Helens in 1956. His consolation came in Yorkshire Cup victories over Hull in 1954 and 1955 and in four Yorkshire League Championship winners' medals in 1952-53, 1953-54, 1955-56 and 1957-58).

The selectors had noted his abilities and in 1954 he was a member of the 10th British Lions and made his Test debut at blind side prop in the first Test at Sydney, his fellow prop being Prescott. The tour was certainly eventful for Jack – his first Ashes Test; and two Tests in New Zealand; not to mention participation in the infamous abandoned game against New South Wales at the SCG; and a month's ban by the New Zealand RL for his dismissal in the last tour game against Auckland, a ban which was lifted when he returned as an older and wiser Lion in 1962!

By the time he left Halifax in 1959 Jack had played in six Tests, five of them against New Zealand, two internationals for England and four times for Yorkshire, all Roses matches. He was 29 and had built an awesome reputation. Energetic, agile, always super-fit, durable, heavy in the tackle and active on attack. Jack Wilkinson has based his rugby philosophy on physically and mentally dominating opponents. Many were surprised when Wakefield Trinity forked out £4,500 for his transfer. Many critics felt he was past it.

Certainly he was not as quick as before, but he scrummaged as well as any prop in the game, few forwards could match him in the heat of battle and became a cornerstone of the classic Wakefield Trinity team of the 1959-63 period. Trinity's pack was perhaps not quite as fearsome as Halifax's, although with the likes of Rocky Turner, Don Vines, Albert Firth, Brian Briggs, Les Chamberlain, Milan Kosanovic and Geoff Oakes as members, no liberties were



Jack Wilkinson scores one of his 42 career tries, for Great Britain against New Zealand in the second Test at Odsal, Bradford, in November 1955.

ever taken with it. The Trinity backs were superb behind Wilkie and his henchmen, however. Neil Fox, Alan Skene, Gerry Round, Fred Smith, Ken Hirst, Gert Coetzer, Harold Poynton, Keith Holliday, Col Greenwood and Ian Brooke has class in abundance and Jack's collection of silverware grew rapidly in his 4½ years at Belle Vue.

At the end of his first season as a Trinitarian, Jack appeared at Wembley and at the third time of asking earned a Challenge Cup winners' medal as Wakefield annihilated Hull 38-5. Moreover, there were to be further

Wembley winners' medals in 1962 against Huddersfield and in 1963 against Wigan. In the latter match Jack made history by becoming the first Rugby League player to appear in five Wembley Cup finals. His luck in Championship Finals, however, remained unchanged as Trinity lost to Wigan in 1960 and Huddersfield in 1962 in dramatic games at Odsal. There were Yorkshire Cup Winners' medals in 1960 and 1961 and Yorkshire League Championships in 1959-60 and 1961-62 to add to his laurels.

Remarkably, Jack silenced the sceptics by

continuing to earn the game's highest representative honours. In 1959 he was drafted into the Great Britain second row for the Ashes deciding Test at Wigan which Britain won 18-12; played twice against the French in 1960; and was an ever-present in Great Britain's World Cup-winning side in the same year. Whilst with Trinity he won a further six Yorkshire caps and in 1962 played his 13th and final Test for Great Britain – at Auckland against New Zealand – as a member of Eric Ashton's Lions.

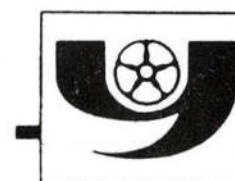
Jack played his last game for Wakefield against Hunslet in a Challenge Cup-tie on 12 February 1964, aged 33, but was still not finished. At the beginning of the 1964-65 season he was appointed captain-coach of the resurrected Bradford Northern club and played on until January 1965.

Jack and his wife, June, ran public houses in the Halifax area for 22 years after Jack's retirement from the game. He will be sorely missed by all in the sport... a great forward, a formidable opponent, a staunch team mate and a thoroughly nice man.

CAREER RECORD 1948-1965

	GAMES	TRIES
Halifax	252	22
Wakefield Trinity	151	10
Bradford Northern	11+1 sub	—
Tests	13	4
England	2	—
Great Britain (non-Test)	1	—
Yorkshire	10	—
Representative	6	1
1954 Tour (excluding Tests)	15	5
1962 Tour (excluding Tests)	13	—
CAREER TOTALS	474+1 sub	42

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TRIBUTE



Cheque-mates... Billy McGinty (left) and Shaun Edwards salute Wigan's Stones Bitter triumph.



STONES BITTER CHAMPIONSHIP 1991-92

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
WIGAN.....	26	22	0	4	645	307	44
ST. HELENS.....	26	17	2	7	550	388	36
CASTLEFORD.....	26	15	2	9	558	365	32
WARRINGTON.....	26	15	0	11	507	431	30
LEEDS.....	26	14	1	11	515	406	29
WAKEFIELD T.....	26	13	1	12	400	435	27
HALIFAX.....	26	12	0	14	618	566	24
WIDNES.....	26	12	0	14	511	477	24

STONES BITTER PREMIERSHIP

HULL K.R.....	26	12	0	14	379	466	24
SALFORD.....	26	11	0	15	480	507	22
BRADFORD N.....	26	11	0	15	476	513	22
HULL.....	26	11	0	15	468	526	22

RELEGATED

FEATHERSTONE R.	26	11	0	15	449	570	22
SWINTON.....	26	3	0	23	254	853	6



Habit forming... Wigan celebrate the first-ever hat-trick of Championship Trophy hauls, coach John Monie being entrusted with the £45,000 Stones Bitter prize cheque.

SECOND DIVISION 1991-92

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
SHEFFIELD.....	28	21	1	6	816	396	43
LEIGH.....	28	21	0	7	617	401	42

PROMOTED

OLDHAM.....	28	18	2	8	558	421	38
LONDON C.....	28	14	0	14	428	483	28

DIVISIONAL PREMIERSHIP

ROCHDALE.....	28	12	2	14	619	489	26
CARLISLE.....	28	12	1	15	490	466	25

RELEGATED

RYEDALE YORK.....	28	5	2	21	338	749	12
WORKINGTON.....	28	4	2	22	310	771	10



The Eagles soar... to the heights of the Stones Bitter Second Division title celebrated by, left to right, Paul Broadbent, Skipper Daryl Powell and vice-captain Mark Aston.



Medallion Men... Huddersfield show off their Stones Bitter Prizes.



Joy on the Fartown bench for Huddersfield management duo Alex Murphy (right) and Terry Flanagan, celebrating Fartown's first piece of silverware for 17 years.



Bowled over... Stones Bitter Second Division victors Sheffield Eagles at their Don Valley home.

The prize guys... for the first time in Rugby League's 97-year history, three championship titles were in contention. A Stones Bitter cheque for a record £45,000 went to Wigan, £22,000 to Sheffield Eagles and £10,500 to Huddersfield... the 1991-92 table-toppers.

THIRD DIVISION 1991-92

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
HUDDERSFIELD.....	26	23	0	3	869	257	46
BRAMLEY.....	26	21	0	5	675	258	42

PROMOTED

DEWSBURY.....	26	19	1	6	794	279	39
BATLEY.....	26	18	2	6	641	279	38
BARROW.....	26	17	1	8	663	355	35
DONCASTER.....	26	15	2	9	567	362	32
KEIGHLEY C.....	26	15	2	9	587	420	32
HUNSLET.....	26	16	0	10	654	553	32

DIVISIONAL PREMIERSHIP

SCARBR. PIRATES	26	10	0	16	483	499	20
WHITEHAVEN.....	26	9	0	17	510	595	18
HIGHFIELD.....	26	9	0	17	406	646	18
CHORLEY B.....	26	4	0	22	290	842	8
TRAFFORD B.....	26	2	0	24	306	941	4
NOTTINGHAM C.	26	0	0	26	164	1323	0



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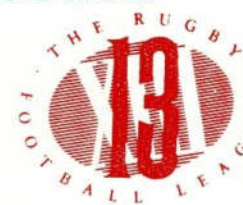
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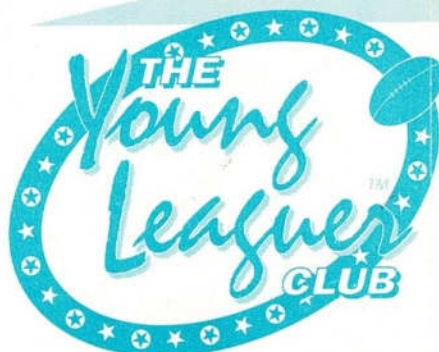
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