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BEARS



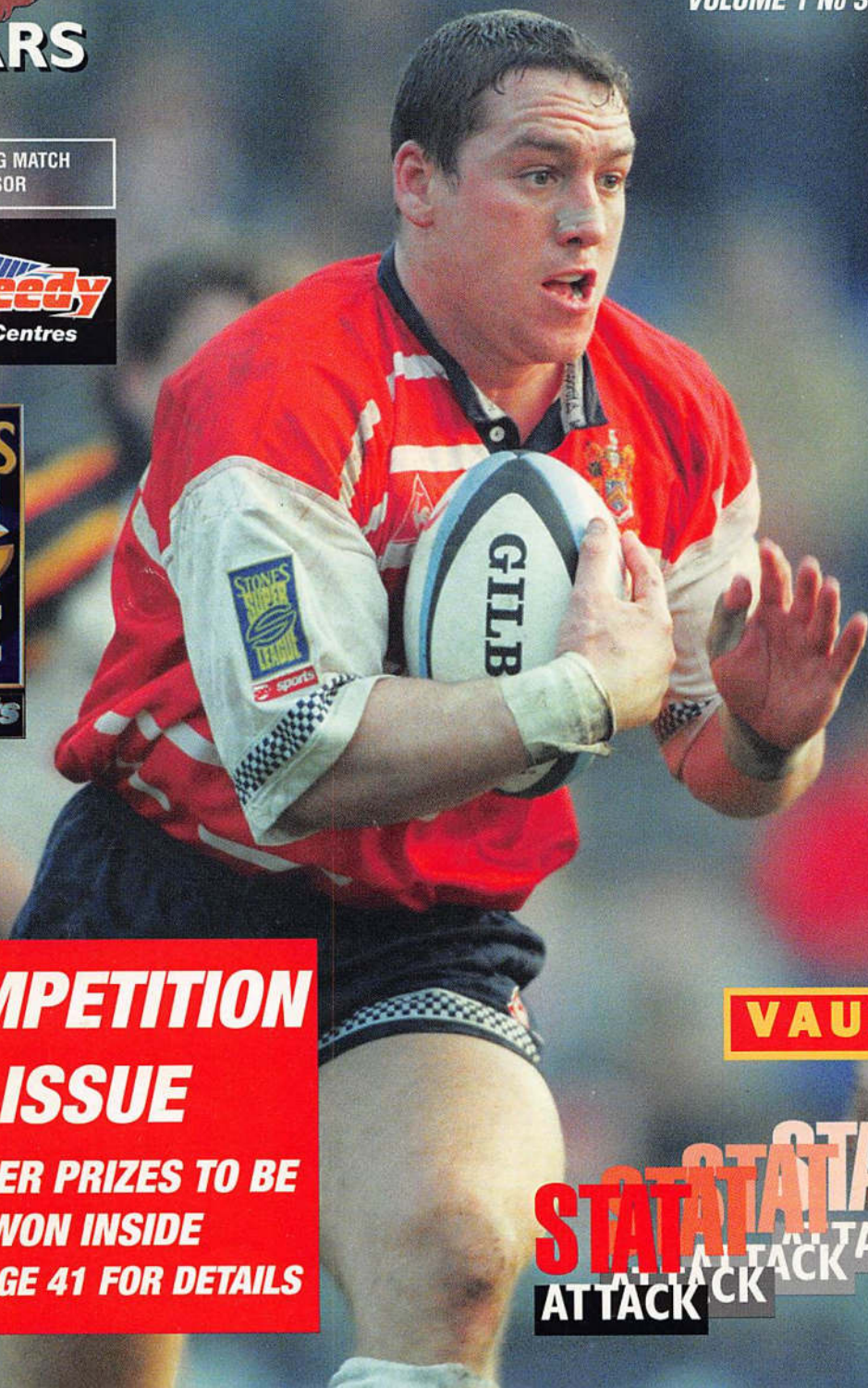
Sunday 13th April 1997 K.O. 6.35pm

SUPERMAG

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HONOURS

RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP WINNERS

1909-10, 1910-11, 1956-57 Runners Up

1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22, 1954-55

FIRST DIVISION CHAMPIONS

1904-05

LANCASHIRE LEAGUE CHAMPIONS

1897-98, 1900-01, 1907-08, 1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57,
1957-58

RUGBY LEAGUE CHALLENGE CUP WINNERS

1899, 1925, 1927 Runners Up 1907, 1912, 1924, 1926

LANCASHIRE CUP WINNERS

1907, 1910, 1913, 1919, 1924, 1933, 1956, 1957, 1958
Runners Up 1908, 1911, 1918, 1921, 1954, 1966, 1968,
1986, 1989

SECOND DIVISION CHAMPIONS

1963-64, 1981-82, 1987-88

SECOND DIVISION PREMIERSHIP WINNERS

1988, 1990 Runners Up, 1992

CLUB RECORDS

RECORD VICTORY

63-0 v Goole, March 18th 1899 (Challenge Cup Rd 1)

67-6 v Liverpool City, April 4th 1959 (League)

RECORD SCORE

70-10 v Bramley, Feb 12th 1995 (Challenge Cup Rd 4)

67-6 v Liverpool City, April 4th 1959 (League)

RECORD ATTENDANCE

All Time 28,000 v Huddersfield, 4th Feb 1912

Last 20 years 11,254 v Bradford Bulls, 9th March 1997

INDIVIDUAL RECORDS

TRIES IN A SEASON

Reg Farrar 49 1921-22

TRIES IN A CAREER

Alan Davies 174 1950-61

TRIES IN A MATCH

James Miller 7 v Barry, Oct 31st 1908

GOALS IN A SEASON

Bernard Ganley 200 1957-58

GOALS IN A CAREER

Bernard Ganley 1,358 1950-61

GOALS IN A MATCH

Bernard Ganley 14 v Liverpool City, April 4th 1959

POINTS IN A SEASON

Bernard Ganley 412 1957-58

POINTS IN A CAREER

Bernard Ganley 2,761 1950-61

POINTS IN A MATCH

Abe Johnson 30 v Widnes (12 goals, 2 tries), April 9th
1928

MOST APPEARANCES

Joe Ferguson 628 Sept 1899 - April 1923

MOST CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES

Joe Lawton 134 Sept 1897 - Nov 1902

all the above records are relevant to Oldham first class fixtures only

A Message FROM THE CHAIRMAN

JIM QUINN

There won't be many French accents in the Paris St Germain dressing room this evening, but if Brett Goldspink, Matt Munro, Nathan Turner or Luke Goodwin manage to sneak in there to do some eavesdropping on Peter Mullholland's team talk they won't have a great deal of difficulty in knowing what's going on.

In fact, they might easily think they are back home in Australia, such is the extent of the influence from Down Under on the Paris team of 1997.

It is an interesting development and the Paris management will have had to overcome enormous problems when you consider the logistics of bringing so many players across the world, finding them accommodation, helping them to overcome the language barrier and bringing them to England for ever away game.

We go to Paris once a year. They come to England 11 times a year, but I'm sure the Aussies will enjoy the experience of living and working in one of the most exciting and most cultural cities in the world.

Peter Mulholland, their new coach, has had loads of experience of the big-time in Australia, both with Western Suburbs and Perth Western Reds. One thing is for sure; he won't need introducing to Brett Goldspink and Luke



Goodwin.

Peter's side suffered a heavy home defeat by St Helens last weekend, but they won't be the only side to feel the power and speed of the Saints.

Indeed, Paris were unlucky to lose narrowly at Salford in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup and they will still be cursing their bad luck after that 17-16 defeat on the same ground in Super League despite playing with 12 men for more than an hour.

With such a huge Aussie influence, Paris will be a side to be reckoned with this year. They will be tougher and more resilient and we will have to be at our best tonight if we are to open our Super League account with our first win.

We also welcome, for the first time this season, the folk from Sky. A big welcome to stevo and Eddie and the rest of the Sky team. Let's hope we can put on a show for viewers across the world.

It is interesting to note that, last year, we were in the top four or five clubs on viewing

figures. Bradford, Leeds and Wigan were above us and we were joint fourth with Castleford.

We were a viewing club, all right, and the figures confirmed by belief that thousands of local rugby enthusiasts watched us on Sky, either at home or in their local pub or club, whenever the cameras came to town. It is important for the game as whole, as well as the

participating teams, that we put on a show this evening for broadcast across the nation and around the world.

We wish Peter Mullholland and his French team all the very best for the season, but I know Peter will understand where we come from when we say that our good wishes do not extend to what happens at Boundary Park this evening. May the better team win!!! and may that team be Oldham. We need it.



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TALKING POINT

ANDY GOODWAY

All sport is about self belief and in a team sport this extends to belief in those around you. At this moment in time the Bears players could be forgiven for lacking in both these crucial areas. I have repeatedly said over the opening few weeks of the season that Super League is a distance race and not a sprint. Picking from a full squad is a luxury I have not had so far this season. Although few coaches have been able to pick from full strength squads with injury rife throughout the League. I felt that the return of two more defence oriented players in the mould of Matt Munro and Jason Temu over the next few weeks will really steady the ship.

We have recorded every imaginable opening to a match this far and yet cannot perform for the full eighty minutes. Against Salford on Good Friday we didn't even think about playing until we were 22 points behind. Against London and Warrington we made excellent starts, yet were unable to maintain the required intensity. I cannot emphasis enough that the platform for successful attack has got to be defence. Once a win is registered in Super League 97, I feel it will be the beginning of a dramatic hike

up the table. In our current position it would not be pertinent to make specific predictions, however come August I am certain that Oldham Bears will still be a Super League side.



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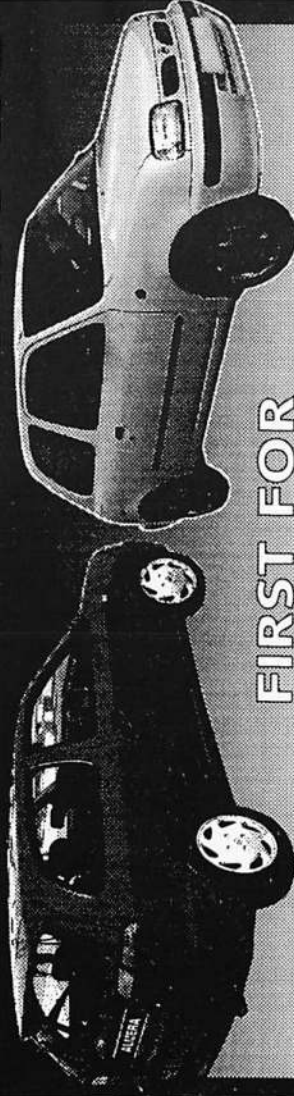
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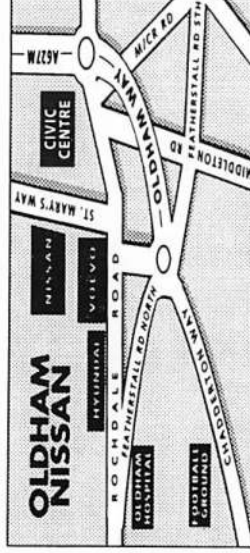
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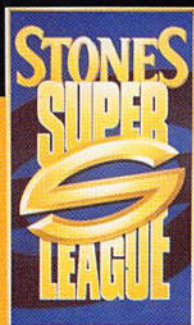
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DON YATES

Don Yates looks back to a match from Yesteryear.

As the Super League revolution grew closer during the early spring of 1996, there were doubts expressed about the ability of Paris to hold their own, both on and off the pitch, in the new intense competition. Little news had come from the French capital about player recruitment, the famous Parc des Princess stadium was not available to stage matches and the various French club sides had all fared badly when they appeared in the Regal Trophy competition. Surely the Paris St Germain side would flounder then face relegation before disappearing altogether. Another failed experiment. But when the fixture list for the inaugural season was published, Paris St Germain were given to honour of staging the very first Super League match, Sheffield Eagles were to be the visitors with the match being staged at the smart and well appointed Stade Charlety, home of French athletics.

Despite the pessimism, the French authorities publicized the match superbly and so a crowd of 17,873 were present when the following two teams were paraded onto the pitch. Paris St Germain; Laurent Lucchese, Mikhail Piskunov, Freddy Banquet, Pierre Chamorin, Arnaud Cervello, Todd Brown, Patrick Entat, Gregory Kacala, Patrick Torreilles, Jason Sands, Darren Adams, Didier Cabestany &

Jacques Pech, Substitutes; Ian Turner, Vea Bloomfield, Regis Pastre & Fabien Devechi. Sheffield Eagles; Waisale Sovatabua, Joe Dakuitoga, Lynton Stott, Jean Mare Garcia, Matt Crowther, Ryan Sheridan, Dean Lawford, Paul Broadbent, Johnny Lawless, Danny McAllister, Andy Hay, Paul Carr & Mick Cook, Substitutes, Keith Senior, Mark Aston, Anthony Farrell & Dale Laughton. The build up to the big kick off had been excellent but could PSG match on the pitch what everyone had enjoyed off it? Ninety minutes later, the answer to that question was an emphatic yes.

The reaction from the crowd to the tackling in the early minutes of the match indicated that a good percentage of those present were rugby union followers. By the end of the evening a good percentage must have been converted to the real code of rugby. It was an excellent advertisement for the game with plenty of free flowing rugby and ferocious tackling. PSG took the lead after ten minutes when Freddy Banquet scored an unconverted try. Sheffield his back to score a couple of tries in a five minute spell on the half hour. At that stage Sheffield led 10-4 and we began to wonder whether PSG would crumble. Mikhail Piskunov had different ideas and his try and subsequent conversion immediately before half-time left the sides level, 10-

10, at the interval. Ten minutes after the break Darren Adams put PSG in front much to delight of the crowd. However, the French lead lasted less than a minute and in another five minute spell the Eagles crossed for another brace of tries. Back came the French with skipper Pierre Chamorin once more edging PSG in front and then came a length of the field try from Arnaud Cervello. There was no stopping the French now and a further try from Cervello put the issue beyond doubt. Kevin Senior scored a late consolation try for the Eagles but PSG were home and dry at 30-24. What a night and what a fantastic start to Super League.

Paris did avoid relegation and, although that opening attendance was never bettered, they averaged over 8,000 spectators during the season. Only Bradford, Leeds, St Helens and Wigan had better attendance figures. This second Super League season should see Paris that much stronger both on and off the field so we welcome them to Boundary Park this evening for what should be another tough and exciting encounter.



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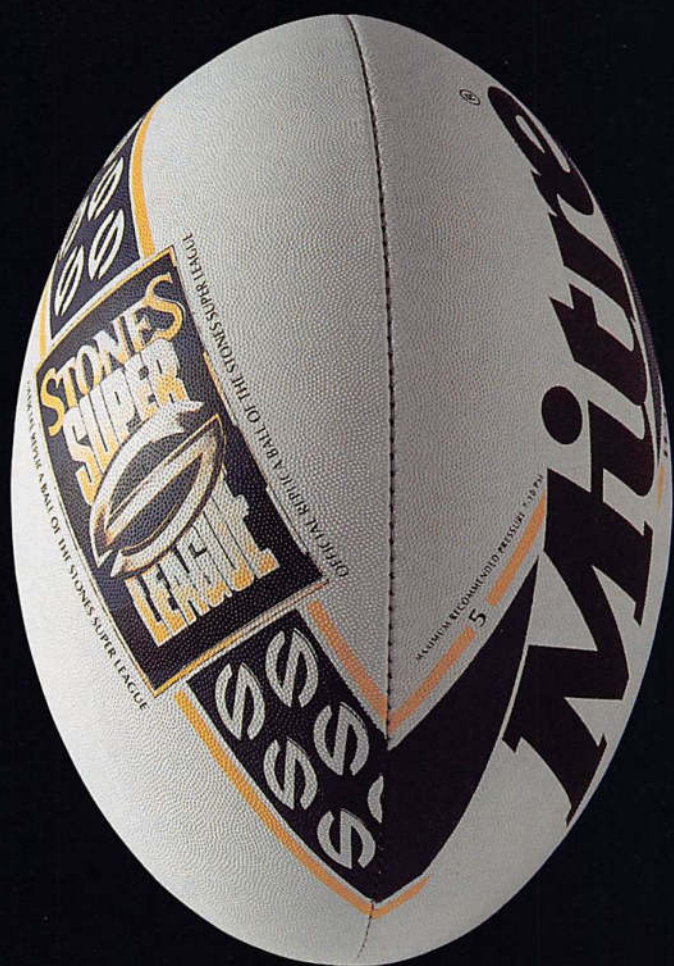
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ON THIS DAY...

DON YATES

Don Yates recalls this day in history.

It was on this day in 1955, Wednesday 13th April, that the French Services took on their British counterparts at Headingley, Leeds. The crowd of 3,453 saw France take a 7-2 interval lead with a try from loose-forward Jean Rouqueirol and a couple of goals from full-back Manuel Perez. The British hit back after the break to win 15-7 with tries from Phil Jackson (Barrow), Brian Howard (St Helens) and Les Brookfield (Hull KR) whilst Warrington's Laurie Giffedder landed three goals.

It was on 13th April 1995 that Australian press reports indicated that the Perth Western Red's coach Peter Mulholland was under investigation because of an alleged involvement with the Super League. At that time the Australian Rugby League versus Super League battle was in full flow. Since then the Western Reds have switched to Super League under the name Perth Reds whilst Mulholland is now chief coach with tonight's visitors to Boundary Park, Paris St

Germain.

Good Friday fell on 13th April in 1990 and on that day the traditional Standard Cup Final featured old rivals Saddleworth Rangers and St Annes. Rangers took the trophy back to Shaw Hall Road after a 13-8 victory in what proved to be a thrilling encounter.

Exactly twelve months ago, on Saturday 13th April 1996, Paris St Germain registered their biggest win of the inaugural Super League season when they defeated Workington Town

34-12 at the Stade Charlety. Skipper Pierre Chamorin crossed for a hatrick of tries in that match.

On the very same evening Oldham's Irish International Tony Nuttall made his debut as the Roughyeds beat Leeds 25-16. He had joined Oldham from Newsome Magpies (Huddersfield) the previous November. Another player who made his debut on this day was the Wigan full-back Ray Ashby whose first match was a 33-11 league

victory at Hunslet on 13th April 1964.

Ashby had been signed earlier in the year from Liverpool City. He had won Great Britain recognition the previous month and represented his country again the following season but the highlight of his career came in 1965 when he won the Lance Todd Trophy as Wigan beat Hunslet at Wembley. It was Saturday, 13th April 1901 that Oldham met Batley in the Northern Union Cup semi-final at Fartown, Huddersfield. A crowd of 16,000 saw the Batley stand-off Joe Oakland score the only try of the match with the Gallant Youths won 9-2.

Another Heavy Woollen victory occurred on 13th April 1907 when Dewsbury ran in 16 tries as they demolished Liverpool City 60-0. Eight of those tries were scored by winger Dai Thomas who crossed for a club record total of 40 touchdowns during that 1906-07 season.



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SUPER LEAGUE DOWN UNDER

David Hadfield the Independent Rugby League correspondent reports

There's nothing unusual in seeing the Brisbane Broncos on top of the heap in Australia. What is new – to British eyes, at any rate – is the identity of many of the players who have put them there. After six rounds of Australian Super League, the Broncos are clear at the top, with their 42–16 win over the North Queensland Cowboys in front of a record 30,000 plus crowd in Townsville last weekend maintaining their perfect record.

There is still a healthy leavening of players who are household names here as well as in Australia; stalwarts like Alan Langer, Kevin Walters and Glenn Lazarus – who has been hinting that he would fancy a season or two in England when his Brisbane contract expires later this year.

Steve Renouf, not long ago generally acknowledged as the best centre in the world, is also back to something approaching his most potent form, as illustrated by his two tries against the Cowboys.

But much of the damage this season has been done by the new wave of Broncos; players like the brilliant young full-back Darren Lockyer, winger Michael Devere, the oddly-spelt but highly-rated centre Conie Carroll and prop Shane Wemeke.

Throw in the club's big-name signings for '97 – Gordon Tallis and Anthony Mundine – and it does not take much working out why the Broncos are running as strong favourites for the inaugural Super League title. Penrith may still have something to say about that. They remain Brisbane's closest chasers after

beating the Hunter Mariners 36–24.

The Panthers did not have this one all their own way and it took a vintage performance from their local hero Greg Alexander – who returned to his old club this year – to steer them to victory.

Cronulla beat Perth 20–6, with former London Bronco Chris McKenna among their try scorers. The match marked the return to fitness of one of Australian Super League's rare Poms, the Western Reds' former Wigan centre Barrie-Jon Mather.

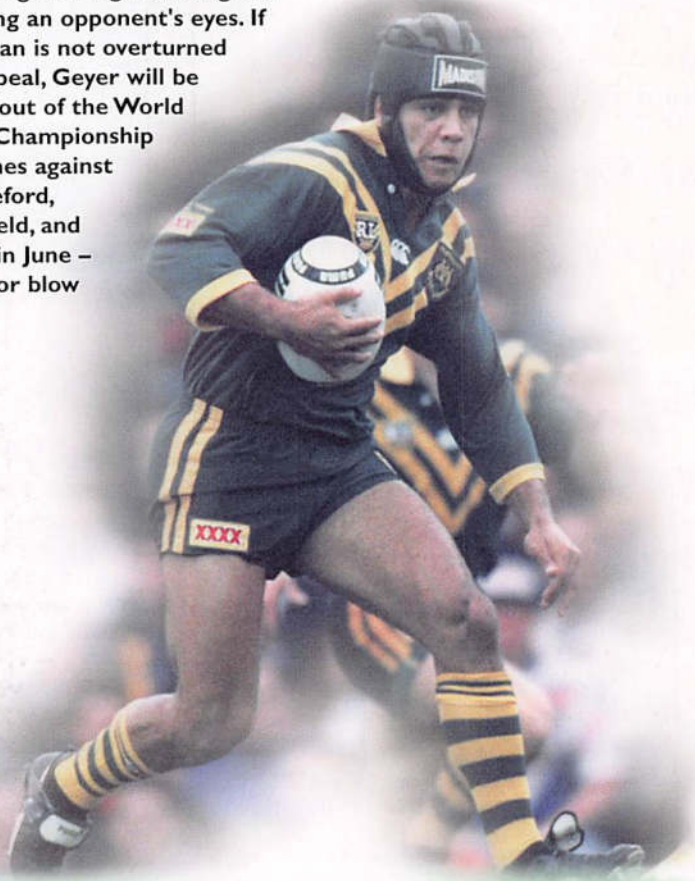
The bad news in Western Australia, however, is that ex-Sheffield Eagle Mark Geyer has copped a ten match suspension on charges of high tackling and gouging an opponent's eyes. If that ban is not overturned on appeal, Geyer will be ruled out of the World Club Championship matches against Castleford, Sheffield, and Paris in June – a major blow

to Perth's hopes.

Canterbury are running fourth, thanks to a 34–22 win over Adelaide. Former Manly forward Solomon Haumono crossed twice for the Bulldogs, with Papua New Guinea back-row Bruce Mamando matching him for the Rams.

In what might have been billed as the mournful match-up between misery men Monie and Meninga, Little John's Auckland Warriors beat Big Mal's Canberra Raiders 31–24.

It was the second win in two outings for the Warriors, but if I were St Helens I would be starting to worry about just how and when Canberra will try to prise Shaun McRae away.



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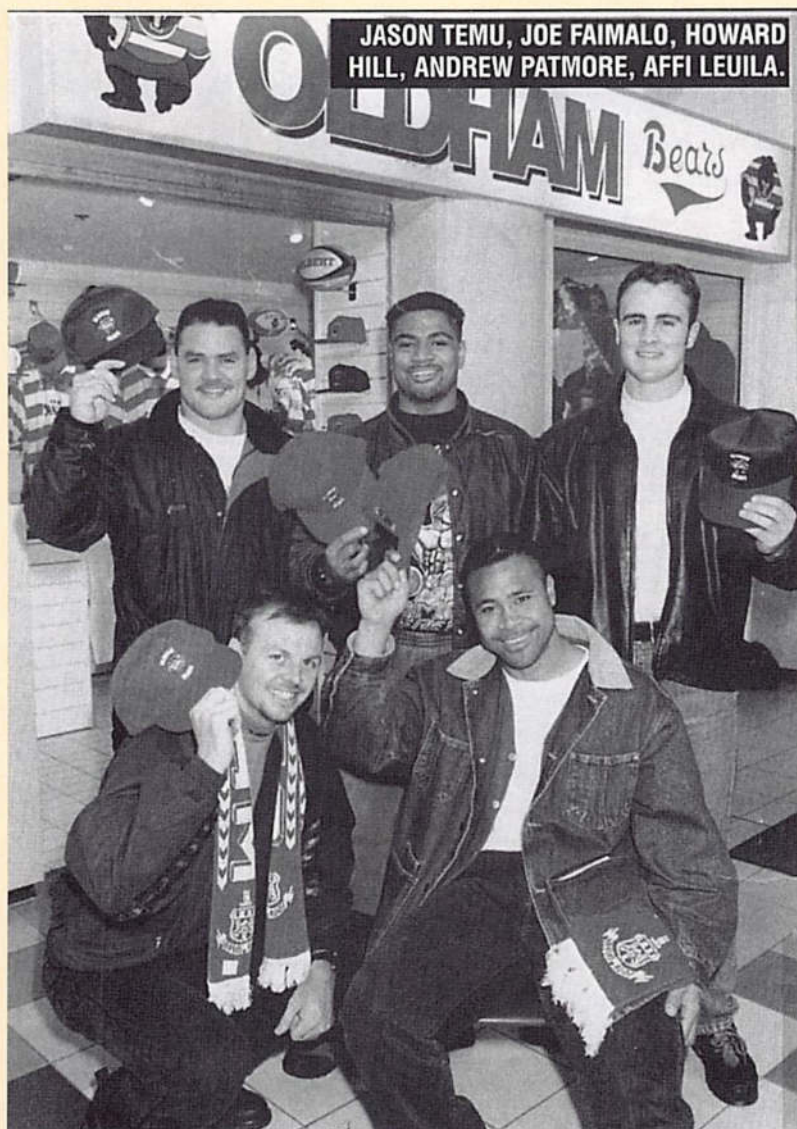
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HERE AND THERE

DON YATES

A week tomorrow, Monday 21st April, the National Conference League are to hold a meeting to thrash out a fixture formula for next season. Currently the league is split into three divisions, each of 12 clubs, and these clubs also contest their respective county cups, the National Amateur Cup and the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. The season, therefore, consists of 22 league matches and between three and 16 cup-ties. This does not include the likes of the Standard Cup but with this formula most clubs would expect to be involved in around 30 matches, an ideal number for a nine month season. Nevertheless the gaps in the league programme caused by cup competitions led to the withdrawal of Hemel Hempstead from the Conference a few years ago. This season local club St Annes have suffered from a disjointed fixture list following their early elimination from all three cup competitions. Next season, therefore, moves are afoot to withdraw Conference clubs from the county and National Cup competitions. Replacing those cup dates would be additional league matches caused by an

increase in the size of divisions from 12 to 14. That would give a season comprising of 26 league matches. The programme could then be made up of Silk Cut Challenge Cup-ties and a possible League Cup competition which would cover six rounds including the final. Under this formula, clubs would be guaranteed 28 matches and would again be expected to be involved in around 30 matches. The leading players would also be involved in the Inter-league Cup competition and the County Championship, both of which are proposed to be staged at weekends next season. There will be no shortage of clubs applying to fill the six vacancies caused by the expansion of the divisions because 16 clubs have applied to join the Conference next season. Those applicants will have to be vetted very carefully because the Conference League is very demanding competition. However, the applicants include several capable outfits who should be able to cope with the demands of Conference League Rugby. Thatto Heath, Siddal, Stanningley, Walnut Warriors, East Hull, and Keighley Albion are amongst the list of

applicants and they will be the front runners in the race to join the prestigious Conference League. Meanwhile, the Premier Division of this Season's Conference League is reaching a thrilling climax. St Annes are still very much in contention for the Championship and yesterday they entertained West Hull in a crucial match.

Next Saturday Dudley Hill visit Higginshaw Road and, seven days later, Saints wind up their home league Programme when they entertain Lock Lane. Although Saints should win their two remaining home matches, they face a difficult trip to Woolston Rovers, another of the title contenders. Wigan St Partricks are beginning to emerge as Championship favourites although they still have six matches to play including vital trips to both Woolston Rovers and West Hull. They also have to visit Saddleworth Rangers although the date for that match has yet to be decided.

It is all very interesting so why not give the Conference League ago. Saints' two home games kick off at 2.30pm and I am sure that you will enjoy the action over at Higginshaw Road.

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STAT ATTACK

Raymond Fletcher, Co-author of the Rothmans Rugby League Yearbook

SMITH ON COURSE FOR TRY CENTURY

Tony Smith has still to score for Wigan Warriors after leaving Castleford Tigers only four short of a career century of touchdowns. The international half-back scored 90 tries for the Tigers plus six

in representative matches from a total of 209 appearances. Once Smith gets settled in at Wigan the tries are bound to start totting up again. He scores at a steady rather than spectacular rate and managed only one hat-trick for Castleford, when he snatched all four in a 25-18 defeat of Doncaster two years ago.

A former Wheldale amateur, Smith made his senior debut as a 19-year-old substitute on 27 September 1989 in a Yorkshire Cup-tie home defeat of Hull Kingston Rovers. A brilliant support player in either half-back position, he played for

England in the 1995 World Cup and toured with the British Lions last year. Castleford received a club record £150,000 when they transferred him to Wigan a few weeks ago.

Tony Smith



TONY SMITH'S RECORD

	App.	Tries
Castleford		
1989-90	4+2	2
1990-91	8+2	4
1991-92	29+8	12
1992-93	36	24
1993-94	23+7	6
1994-95	36	22
1995-96	18+1	9+2t Eng.
1996	18+1	10
1997	1+1	1
Wigan W.		
1997	3	0
Totals		
Castleford	173+22	90
Wigan	3	0
Gt Britain	0+2	0
England	3+2	2
Britain U21	1	0
Tour 1996	3	4 Not inc 0+2 Test app.
Grand totals	183+26	96

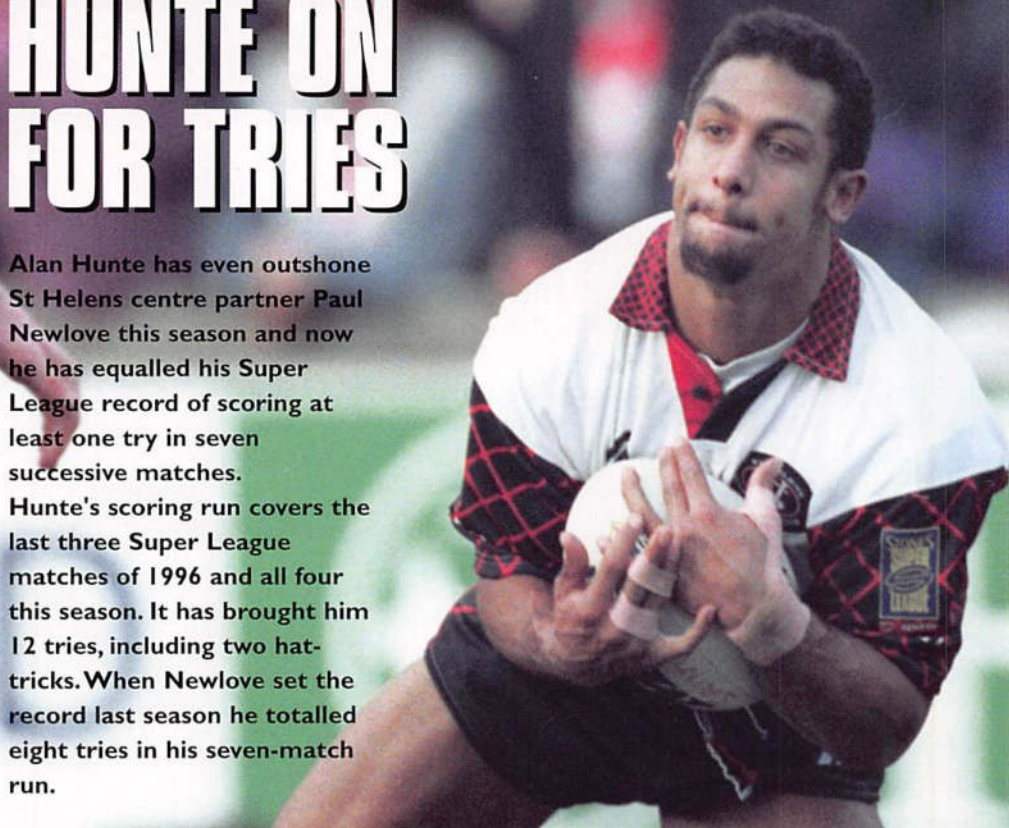
QUIZ

- Who was involved in the first £100,000 transfer?
- Who was Coach of the Year in 1994?
- Add the first names to Super League players: Graham, Arnold, Dean, Paul.
- Who is Bradford Bulls' No. 25?
- Name the next player in the sequence: Newlove, Robinson, Bentley, Paul.
- With which club did Alan Hunte make his first senior appearance?
- Which two 1987 Great Britain backs have appeared in Super League this year?
- Which current Super League player has kicked over 1,000 goals in all matches?
- Which forward played in all seven of Wigan's seven successive title years?
- What year did Andy Platt first play for Britain?

HUNTE ON FOR TRIES

Alan Hunte has even outshone St Helens centre partner Paul Newlove this season and now he has equalled his Super League record of scoring at least one try in seven successive matches.

Hunte's scoring run covers the last three Super League matches of 1996 and all four this season. It has brought him 12 tries, including two hat-tricks. When Newlove set the record last season he totalled eight tries in his seven-match run.



THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

Brian McDermott's suspension halted the Bradford Bulls prop's ever present Super League record. And now there are only seven players who have been in the starting line-up for every round since Super League was launched just over

a year ago.

The magnificent seven are: Robbie Paul and James Lowes (Bradford Bulls); Karle Hammond and Keiron Cunningham (St Helens); Terry O'Connor, Mick Cassidy and Andrew Farrell (Wigan).

POINTS

Steve McNamara (Bradford B.)	47
Mark Aston (Sheffield Eagles)	46
Francis Maloney (Oldham B.)	36
Steve Blakeley (Salford Reds)	35
Jon Roper (Warrington W.)	34
John Schuster (Halifax Blue Sox)	29
Alan Hunte (St Helens)	28
Andrew Farrell (Wigan W.)	27
Nigel Vagana (Warrington W.)	24

SUPER LEAGUE LEADING SCORERS

TRIES

Alan Hunte (St Helens)	7
Nigel Vagana (Warrington)	6
Robbie Paul (Bradford B.)	5
Richard Henare (Warrington)	5
Danny Arnold (St Helens)	4
Phil Bergman (Paris S.G.)	4
Martin Offiah (London B.)	4

GOALS (Inc. drop goals)

Steve McNamara (Brad. B.)	20
Mark Aston (Sheffield E.)	19
Steve Blakeley (Salford R.)	16
John Schuster (Halifax B.S.)	15
Jon Roper (Warrington W.)	15
Andrew Farrell (Wigan W.)	14
Francis Maloney (Oldham B.)	14
Lee Briers (St Helens)	11
Terry Matterson (London B.)	10

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1	Joe Lydon from Widnes to Wigan in 1986
2	John Joyner (Castleford)
3	Nathan, Danny, Craig, Henry or Robbie
4	James Lowes
5	Arnold completes last season's top five Super League try-scorers
6	Wakefield Trinity
7	Mark Forster and Shaun Edwards
8	Lee Crooks
9	Martin Dermott
10	1985

JUNIOR BEARS

Hello again Junior Bears, Buster here .

Lets extend a warm welcome to the players and officiate of Paris St. Germain and any supporters who have travelled over from France to support their team.

Come On Come On Come On
come on come on
OLDHAM

We also extend a Boundary Park welcome to the Sky Team of Eddie and Stevo, lets hope we put a good game on for the cameras and pull our first win of this Super League Season out of the hat. Did you all like the drums? They really got the crowd going didn't they, especially you Junior Bears, I saw you all jumping up and down to the beat. I shall be watching out for you all again, so

REMEMBER to wave at me. I'm off to look at your banner's and chose the winner who will be announced at our next meeing.

Buster Bear.

Junior Bears Mascot for today is: Antony Sweeney.



Antony is 7 years old and attends Mayfield Primary School in Derker. His favourite hobby is Rugby and he plays in the Scrum Half Position.

Birthday this Month
2nd Joseph Greenwood

Mark Buckley
Liam Faulkner
6th Liam Bebbinton
7th Aaron Faulkner
Jordan Taylor-Probert
9th Rachel Brooksbank
Rebecca Wolfenden
Peter Timmins
David Hulbert

Answers to eezy teezy's

- a) Hull KR & Hunslet
- b) Martin Crompton
- c) Tommy Martyn and Chris Joynnt

This weeks teaser is

- a) Which Oldham Bears player has a birthday on 17 April?

Answers on a postcard please to
Junior Bears

Po Box 117

Oldham OL2 6FB (to reach us no later than 27th April)

First correct entry pulled from the hat receives a prize!!!!

Winner announced at next Junior Bears meeting.



RUGBY LEAGUE PROGRAMME NOTES

MALCOLM LORD

What a tremendous atmosphere at Wilderspool last week, and what a great result for Warrington Wolves, without a win to their names and without a coach John Dorahey, having resigned, things could not have been at a lower ebb, and yet - well when the going test tough! The magic formula which turns an apparently disjointed unit without confidence into a side capable of turning over the mighty Wigan Warriors? Well, you take a coach with same dedication, determination, honesty and loyalty he displayed as a player and you ally these qualities to possibly the best motivator this great sport has ever known.

Paul Cullen is the coach and a man who knows no other way of dealing with things that to hit them straight

on, just as he did as a player. I liked his as a player and I wish him well as a coach. He will need it to, if watching him on the touchline is anything to go by. His hair will go grey, he will age quicker and he may well risk all kinds of medical complaints, and you know what, he will probably enjoy every second. The Motivator, who else Alex Murphy, I do not know of anyone else who could have done it, and I would dearly love to know just what was said in the dressing room. Whatever it was it worked! And I look at people like Eller Hanley, Martin Offiah, and Shaun Edwards all of whom are exceptional in their own way, and I think to myself how long will it be before this man gets his recognition. Be it O.B.E or M.B.E,

whatever, surely he has earned it over the years.

One thing is for sure I cannot except that because during his career he has trodden on too many toes and upset people in high positions it will never happen. Yes he is brash, yes he is outspoken, and true he would probably never survive in the political world of administration, but he has got certain qualities that cannot be bought or taught and the one I like him for most. He loves the game, morning noon and night and if ever we get to a point where qualities like speaking your mind stop you getting recognition you deserve and have earned. It is time we should all jack it in.

Malcolm Lord, BBC G.M.R. Talk.

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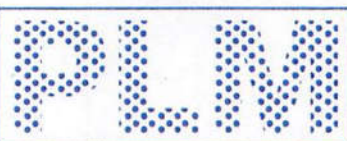


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SPICE GIRLS, THE H-W ORD AND CROSS DRESSERS

By Christopher Irvine,
Rugby League Correspondent,
The Times

It is funny how quickly fads fade. Who knows, in twelve months, the Spice Girls and Buzz Lightyear might be as passe as Blur and Ninja Turtles? A year ago, talk about a hybrid code was at fever pitch, and Maurice Lindsay and Tony Hallett were conducting their famous love-in after the second Wigan-Bath cross code challenge match at Twickenham, in which a merger of Rugby League and Rugby Union was spoken of as virtually inevitable.

Nowadays, you won't catch anyone in either game whispering the H-word. Why have a hybrid when both sports have proved to themselves and others over the past few months that they can improve upon their own distinct products? Summer rugby and the whilst principle of Super League have made Rugby League stronger, quicker and more popular. In Rugby Union, professionalism has improved fitness and skills levels, while the Super 12 tournament in the southern hemisphere has led the way in demonstrating that, far from being surplus to requirements, the flank forwards can be enormously influential contributors.

The two sports have never looked better. Importantly, they have never been more different. For all the talk of them being

merged, why should Rupert Murdoch bankroll an untested hybrid, when he has already got two established, highly popular sports for the same price? A year ago, too, Lindsay and Hallett were talking about the cross-code challenges being the first of many. Truthfully, would anyone like to endure those two utterly one-sided contests again? Were the rigmarole of the favourite tap-room argument to be played out a second time, it would be St Helens and Leicester who found themselves in vogue. The reason is partly due to them having fallen in love with the other's sport. Bath took delivery of Jason Robinson and Henry Paul, with mixed rewards, and the West Country club has struggled to come to terms with professionalism. When their prize assets returned, Wigan found that Va'aiga Tuigamala was off form and the rest were knackered.

Unless there are any more deals on the lines of that between London Broncos and Bedford and the two Leeds clubs, Martin Offiah and Paul Sterling will be the only genuine dual-code players. The case of Rugby League players trying their hand at Rugby Union are apparently now over, and with the League season extending into autumn, there are unlikely to be any

more temporary cross overs to Union – only permanent ones. Rugby League, took numerous plaudits for the selections of Scott Gibbs, Scott Quinnell, David Young, Allan Bateman, Alan Tait and John Bentley in the British Isles squad bound for South Africa next month. They were Union players stepping back into their code of origin. Not all the original League players making the transition have been a success – Graeme Hallas and Mike Forshaw have not exactly been regulars for Saracens, nor Greg Austin at Leicester – but at Bedford, they cannot sing the praises of Steve McCurrie highly enough, nor Sale the adaptation of another former Widnes player, Darren Wright.

McCurrie knew, however, that he had to hitch his wagon to one code, and it is league at Sheffield Eagles. McCurrie is an out-and-out League hooker. In Union he has been operating at centre, inside Offiah, and even scrum half! Interestingly, Abi Ekoku, the former London and Halifax back, has become the first player, after making a "permanent" switch to Union, with Blackheath, to hop back into his old career, this time for Bradford Bulls.

There were offers from Union flying about for Iestyn Harris, long before the £350,000 deal

clinched last week by Leeds Rhinos, but Harris knew that it was League he wanted to stick with, and when Gary Hetherington was asked at the Press conference whether there might be any sharing of Harris with Leeds Rugby Union club, the Leeds chief executive said that would not occur. Harris, he said, would be in need of a good rest by November. Overall, cross-dressing has proved to be a generally fraught business. Players are making the choice one way or the other. There is a greater understanding now across the League-Union divide, for sure, but nothing illustrated more clearly than the Wigan-Bath matches the fundamental differences of the two sports.



Martin Offiah,
one of the few
genuine dual
code players

ACADEMY NEWS

BRIAN GARTLAND

Due to the Easter Holidays our Academy side struggled for a team for their fixture with Leigh and finished up losing 36 points to 20 points. We got off to a bad start when our centre Gareth Chadwick had to leave the field after 20 minutes with a broken forearm. This is a tragedy for it is the same arm he broke last season. Our commiserations go out to Gareth, who we are expecting great things from this year.

Getting back to our game v Leigh, the lads played really well in the first half and with a scoreline of 12 points to 10 against us, I thought we had done

well with the team we had out. In the second half we got off to a great start with first Miles Mitten scoring after good work by Simon Suabic, our stand off. Then from the kick of Jason Brassington, who although suffering from a damaged thumb, was forced to play, scored a tremendous try and we were leading 20 points to 12 and I thought heading for our first win. It was not to be we fell to a couple of sucker punches and finished up on the wrong end of a 16 point defeat.

Dale Aldred, our loose forward from Leigh was outstanding and with Mark Powell and Simon Svabic.

B. GARTLAND

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Book now for the Halifax Blue Sox game, 27th April 1997 - £35 per person. Contact Dorothy Martin

COMMERCIAL BREAK

DOROTHY MARTIN

Hello Oldham!

Yes I'm a stranger in town, a foreigner, a Scot! Having just recently taken over the Commercial Department, I must say now, you have made the most welcome. You are no doubt aware that the commercial side of Rugby League is very important. We need this revenue to keep the club moving forward. So far I have had an excellent response from all the businesses I have approached, there are of course many more out there

I must endeavor to contact...my feet just haven't touched the ground since the day I arrived.

Now hosting our matches at Boundary Park, we are fortunate in that we can offer first class facilities for our pre-match hospitality. Yes the champagne (well a good sparkling wine!) flows on matchdays, and I must thank all the companies and individuals who have sponsored our matches so far.

The icing in the cake for me is that everyone really seems out to have a great time,

very positive and again you have all made me feel most welcome.

So thanks again for all your support so far, let's help make this our best season yet!!

And why not make business a pleasure!

Dorothy Martin
Commercial Manager

Pre-match hospitality is still available for Oldham Bears vs Leeds Rhinos. Give me a ring for more information.

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

in association with the

DAILY MIRROR

The second Semi Final of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup tie between Leeds and Bradford, our Puma Little League Team Oldham Bear Cubs, played in the curtain raiser. Although they were beaten by a stronger team the boys, had a very enjoyable day out and after the match each player was presented with a Puma Match Ball, a nice memento to take home. Although they got beaten, I am sure it is a day the boys will always remember. The Oldham Development

Association has been reformed and anyone interested in helping out should contact our Secretary Carol Kelly on 0161 6246812.

The Oldham Schools Cup Competitions are taking place at this stage of the season and hopefully there will be some exciting finals ahead. Our under 10's had a great win at Castleford last Wednesday and Kevin Sinfield excelled again with a hat trick of tries. well done boys.

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The COOPERATIVE BANK

The Co-operative Bank p.l.c., 1 Balloon Street, P.O. Box 101, Manchester M60 4EP.

Oestyn Harris' display on his debut for Leeds left spectators and TV viewers convinced that the Rhinos had

captured one of the most exciting talents in rugby league – a talent well worth a club record £350,000. fee.

And yet the fee, less than a third of the original asking price of £1,350,000, did not place the Welsh Wizard at the head of the World Record Transfers – a list currently led by St Helens' Paul Newlove whose cash plus player exchange deal from Bradford in November 1995 reached a staggering £500,000.

The 20 years old Harris, with at least ten seasons of top class action ahead of him, is one of those gifted players for whom clubs like Wigan, St Helens, Leeds or Bradford are often prepared to break

from Wilderspool.

Why should this be, when a century of transfers in rugby league teaches us that reason tends to go out of the window when a rare talent becomes available on the transfer market?

Since the days of Bramley's Jim Lomas' record £100,000 move to Salford in 1901, through Joe Lydon's £100 world record fee from Widnes to Wigan in 1985/86, to Newlove's half million pounds fee, record sums of money have changed hands at regular intervals.

But Harris' move, and the departure from Wheldon Road to Central Park of Castleford's international halfback, Tony Smith, for only £150,000 surely heralds an era of realism in rugby league. Unlike in Union where ageing 33 years old Frenchmen and South

holders of world record transfer payouts for back stars Stan McCormick, Mick Sullivan, and Paul Newlove, and never a club to shirk a big deal, pointed to the restrictions of their current business plans when they backed off any agreement with Warrington for their half back star.

Wigan, feeling the pinch before their 12 million pounds Tesco deal, were forced to release their once world record transfer holder, Martin Offish, (£440,00 from Widnes in January 1992) and recoup a few bob from Bedford Rugby Union club and the London Broncos for him.

Yes, as clubs employ Chief Executives, Business Managers, and Finance Controllers the days when a local butcher, banker, or baker on the board signed

NOT A PENNY

Ray French, *BBC Rugby League Correspondent*

the Bank. On this occasion however, Saints, after months of deliberation failed to stay the course while Wigan only nibbled at a deal in the final few days of Harris' departure

Africans move home for upwards of £250,000 each and, in soccer, where Italian and Brazilian clubs command millions for their stars. St Helens, three times the

the town's next sporting hero and threw caution to the winds, have gone. And, following the recent Bosman decision in the European Courts, whereby a soccer

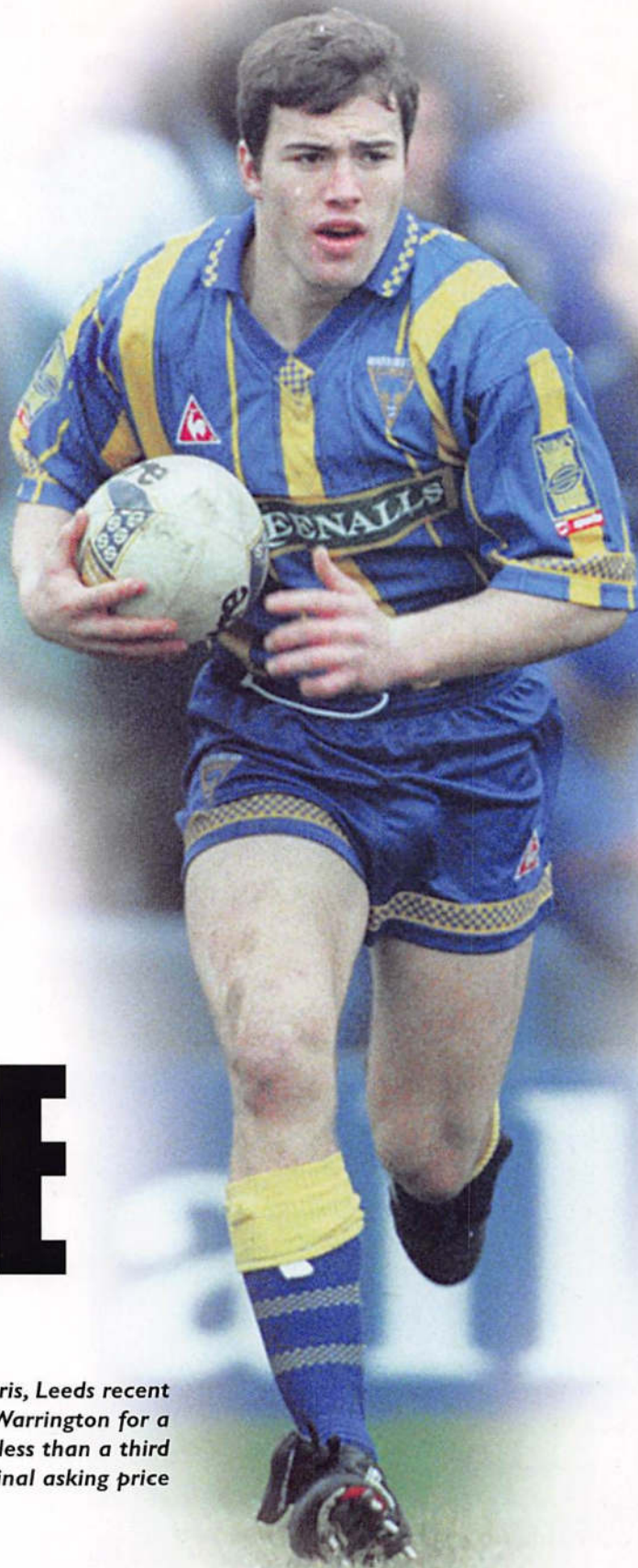
player may have the right to move wherever he wants without a fee at the end of his contract, fear of a similar ruling now prohibits extravagance in the 13 a side code.

So, have we seen the last of the world record transfer fees and the interest they arouse for the fans? Did Wigan's acceptance of a massive £750,000 for Va'aiga Tuigamala from Newcastle Rugby Union and their multi millionaire backer, Sir John Hall, indicate that chairman Jack Robinson believes he would never, in future, be able to realise such cash in League?

I think so. That is, until along comes an Ellery Hanley, a Mick Sullivan, a Billy Batten, or a Martin Offiah and we all again beg the question – "Just where are they getting the money from?"

MORE

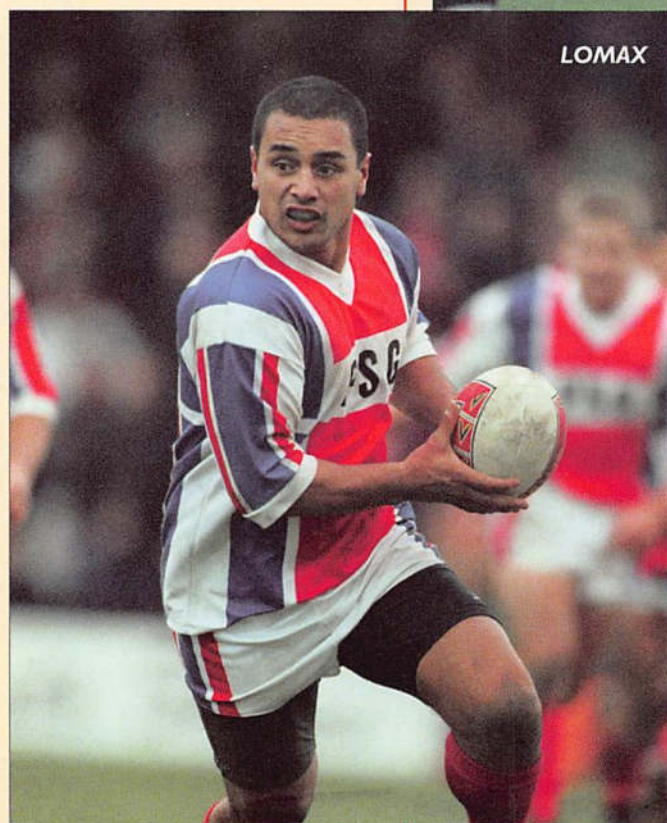
Iestyn Harris, Leeds recent acquisition from Warrington for a mere £350,000 – less than a third of the original asking price



For the second consecutive season, Oldham's match against Paris St. Germain here at Boundary Park has an evening kick-off for the benefit of the Sky Tv cameras. Oldham have met PSG twice previously, both Super League encounters, and the Roughyeds have yet to lose. Once again the Parisiens have made an encouraging start to the season. They pulled off their biggest ever win at Batley in the Challenge Cup, 38-4, and if their current form continues they look likely to extend their biggest home win which was the 34-12 victory over Workington Town last April. PSG's biggest defeat was the 76-8 walloping at Wigan last season whilst their biggest home defeat was Castleford's 54-22 win at the Stade Charlety last June.



EVANS



LOMAX

RESULTS OF PREVIOUS F

1934 - 35	Oldham 26
1937 - 38	League XII 32
1956 - 57	GB Amateurs 2
1965 - 66	GB U-24s 12
1979 - 80	GB Colts 31
1981 - 82	Oldham 11
1983 - 84	GB U24s 48
	BARLA 8
1991 - 92	BARLA 16
1993 - 94	BARLA Presidents U18s 0

LAST SEASON'S SUPER

1996	Paris St Germain 24
	Oldham 24

Y SPEAKING

YATES



DETAILS OF THE PARIS ST GERMAIN'S LAST VISIT TO OLDHAM

Friday 28th June 1966

Super League

At Boundary Park

OLDHAM 28 PARIS ST GERMAIN 6

Half time 10 - 6 Attendance 2,548

Oldham tries: Adrian Belle, Martin Crompton & John Clarke & Joe Faimalo (2)

PSG try: Vincent Wulf

Goals: Francis Maloney (2)

Oldham: JIMMY COWANS, ADRIAN BELLE, ANDY PATMORE, PAUL TOPPING, ROB MYLER, FRANCIS MALONEY, MARTIN CROMPTON, IAN GILDART, JOHN CLARKE, JASON TEMU, GARY LORD, MATT MUNRO, DAVID BRADBURY.

Substitutes: HOWARD HILL, JOE FAIMALO, PAUL CROOK, REECE GUY

PGS: LAURENT LUCCHESI, PASCAL BOMATIC, ERIC VERGNIOL, DION BIRD, FREDDY BANQUET, TODD BROWN, PATRICK ENTAT, PHIL SHEAD, VINCENT WULF, JASON SANDS, JULES PARRY, JACQUES PECH, PIERRE CHAMORIN

Substitutes: GEORGE WILSON, VEA BLOOMFIELD, DANNY SMITH AND JOHN BOSLEM

NCH VISITS TO OLDHAM

Villeneuve 25

Cote Basque 5

France Amateurs 8

France U-24s 5

France Colts 2

France 15

France U-24s 1

France 'B' 21

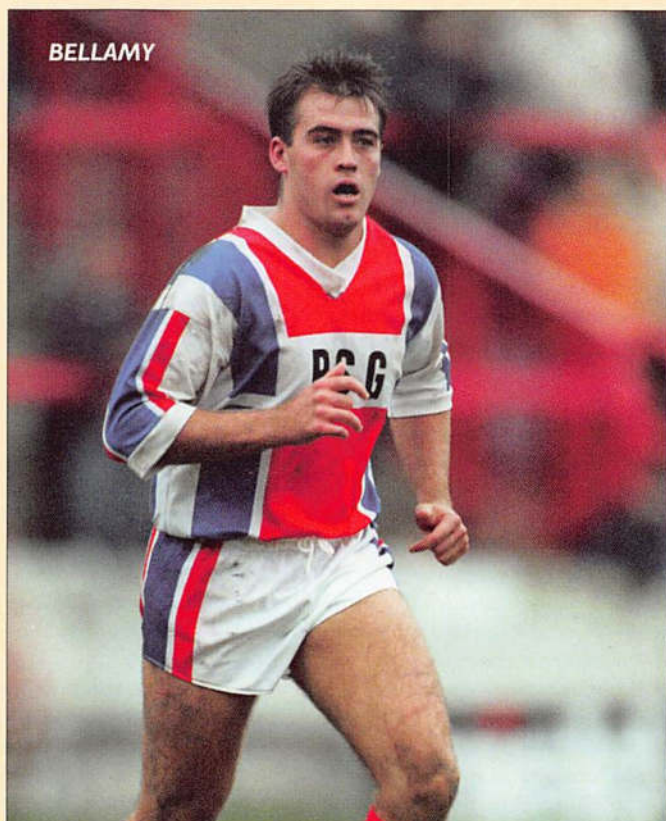
France 'B' 52

France U18s 44

LEAGUE SCORELINES

Oldham 24

Paris St Germain 6



The Royal Shakespeare Company would never consider performing Othello in a ramshackle building down a

backstreet in Stratford.

The thespians, quite rightly want a grandiose stage on the banks of the River Avon to do justice to the playwright's works.

The theatre-goers also expect a fitting arena for a special night out. So too Rugby League.

Enthusiasts know we have the

least, on the edge of town and supporters can now look forward to enjoying the comforts of a regal stadium with parking for 8,000 cars.

Every fan – and player – will be thankful Watersheddings has finally gone under the demolition hammer.

It was no picnic watching the Bears at Oldham's old home where the barometer seemed rarely to creep above freezing – and that was in August.

The difference between Watersheddings and Boundary Park is like comparing a wooden hut to the Taj Mahal.

Paris St Germain play in the 25,000 capacity Charlety Stadium and there are no complaints either with Sheffield Eagles Don Valley Stadium.

Super League champions St Helens have ambitious plans to redevelop Knowsley Road and newly-promoted Salford Reds, who already have one of the neatest grounds in the League, are proposing a new stand down the side of the pitch alongside Weaste Lane.

Halifax Blue Sox expect to be in their new Shay home before too long and London Broncos switch to the Stoop Memorial Ground was an astute move.

A STADIUM BY ANY OTHER NAME!

David Burke reflects on the state of League stadiums and those being demolished and sees improve standards for the Rugby League supporter

finest sport in the world but sadly we have not had the stadiums to match.

Now there are grounds for optimism – literally!

It would have been a Midsummer Night's Dream for many Rugby League clubs several years ago anticipating the prospect of playing in space-age stadiums. Fortunately those that resembled ash-trays with lights now belong in the dark ages.

Just ask anybody who has visited the magnificent McAlpine Stadium whether they prefer watching Rugby League at Huddersfield's new complex of draughty old Fartown.

Wigan Warriors have now, controversially but correctly, opted to sell Central Park and build a new stadium in the town. The traditionalists have opposed the decision but nostalgia is a thing of the past!

Wigan look set to move in with Bolton Wanderers, temporarily at



Twickenham one of the foremost rugby stadiums to be completed in recent years. Rugby league supporters first visit to Twickenham was the Bath v Wigan clash in 1996.

I recall as a player with Rochdale Hornets at Ice Station Zebra in the early 70's it wasn't slices of fresh oranges that were passed round the dressing room at half time – it was a bottle of Harvey's Bristol Cream!

Now Oldham have moved in with soccer neighbours Oldham Athletic at the vastly superior Boundary Park.

The Bears are still hoping a new council-backed ground will be built in the town but it won't be disastrous if they stay permanently at their new base.

The Stoop, in the shadow of the state-of-the-art Twickenham showpiece, has a new grandstand and can accommodate 10,000 in comfort.

Headingley has long been the flagship for Rugby League grounds and Leeds still boasts superb facilities.

Resurgent Bradford want to redevelop Odsal and thankfully Rugby League clubs are now moving with the time.

Exciting days are ahead – on and off the field!



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The Bear Facts Super League '97

Rd	Date	Team	Venue	Time	Score	Att
1	Sun 16th March	Leeds Rhinos	A	3pm	L 22-32	11,516
2	Fri 21st March	Bradford Bulls	H	7.30	L 30-18	5461
3	Fri 28th March	Salford Reds	(A)	3pm	L 35-26	5295
4	Tues 1st April	London Broncos	(H)	7.30pm	L 32-22	3556
5	Sun 6th April	Warrington Wolves	(A)	3pm	L 28-18	5370
6	Sun 13th April	Paris St Germain (BSKYB)	(H)	6.35pm		
7	Sun 20th April	Wigan Warriors	(A)	3pm		
8	Sun 27th April	Halifax Blue Sox	(H)	3pm		
9	Sun 11th May	Sheffield Eagles	(A)	3.15pm		
10	Sun 18th May	Leeds Rhinos	(H)	3pm		
11	Fri 23rd May	Bradford Bulls	(A)	7.30pm		
12	Mon 26th May	Salford Reds	(H)	3pm		
13	Fri 30th May	Castleford	(H)	3pm		
14	Sun 29th June	St Helens	(H)	3pm		
15	Wed 2nd July	London Broncos	(A)	7.30pm		
16	Sun 6th July	Sheffield Eagles	(H)	3pm		
17	Sun 13th July	Castleford Tigers	(A)	3.30pm		
18	Sat 19th July	Queensland Cowboys	(H)			
19	Sat 26th July	Adelaide Rams	(H)			
20	Sun 10th Aug	St Helens	(A)	6pm		
21	Sun 17th Aug	Halifax Blue Sox	(H)	3pm		
22	Fri 22nd Aug	Wigan Warriors	(H)	7.30pm		
23	Mon 25th Aug	Paris St Germain	(A)			
24	Sun 31st Aug	Warrington Wolves	(H)	3pm		

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OLDHAM BEARS RLFC SUPER LEAGUE SQUAD



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Paul Atcheson



Number 2
Scott Ranson



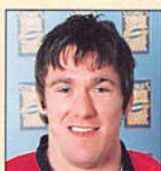
Number 3
Darren Abram



Number 4
Paul Topping



Number 5
Rob Myler



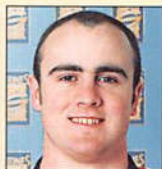
Number 6
Francis Maloney



Number 7
Martin Croft



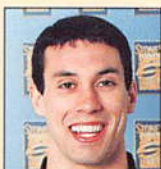
Number 15
Paul Davidson



Number 16
Howard Hill



Number 17
Paul Crook



Number 18
Mike Neal



Number 19
Chris McKinney



Number 20
Afi Leuila



Number 21
Jim Cowie

Paul Atcheson	1	T
Scott Ranson	2	
Darren Abram	3	T
Paul Topping	4	
Rob Myler	5	
Francis Maloney	6	T 3G
Martin Crompton	7	T IG 3G
Ian Gildart	8	
John Clarke	9	T
Jason Temu	10	
Gary Lord	11	T
Joe Faimalo	12	T
David Bradbury	13	T
Matt Munro	14	
Paul Davidson	15	
Howard Hill	16	T
Paul Crook	17	
Mike Neal	18	
Chris McKinney	19	
Afi Leuila	20	
Jim Cowan	21	
Vince Fawcett	22	
Brett Goldspink	23	
Nathan Turner	24	
Paul Deacon	25	
Luke Goodwin	26	
David Stephenson	27	

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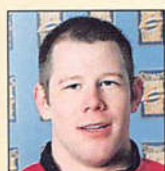
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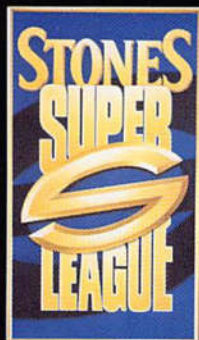


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STONES COMMENTARY

IN ASSOCIATION WITH STONES BITTER



Dave Woods of Radio 5 Speaks Out . . .

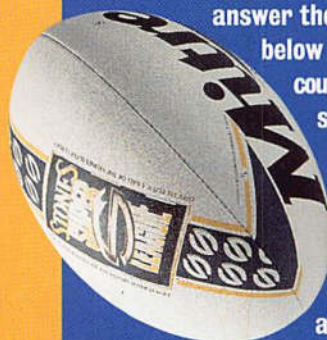
The new season has got off to a flyer, and it's no surprise that everybody's tips for the top, Bradford and St Helens, have set the early pace.

But the most encouraging aspect of the new season is the form and potential of other clubs. Wigan maybe down, but they are far from out. Halifax Blue Sox, Leeds, Salford, London, Paris and Warrington have all proved they can deliver a knockout blow to any side. One or two of them may even go all the way in the title race.

The pre-season prediction that this could be one of the most open campaigns for some time looks like coming true.

the Great Stones Giveaway

Stones Bitter have teamed up with Mitre to offer readers the chance to win an autographed Stones Super League replica ball from a team of your choice. All you have to do is answer the simple question below and complete the coupon provided or send the answer with your name and address on a postcard to the promotional address. There are 5 rugby balls to be won.



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Answer:

Name:

Address:

Daytime Tel:

PLAYER PROFILE

DAVID BRADBURY



NAME:	DAVID BRADBURY
DATE OF BIRTH:	16 - 3 - 72
BIRTHPLACE:	FARNWORTH
HEIGHT:	6'
WEIGHT:	16st 2lbs
NICKNAME AT CLUB:	BRAD
OCCUPATION:	PROFESSIONAL RUGBY LEAGUE PLAYER
HOME:	ATHERTON
CAR:	ESCORT
MARRIED:	YES
CHILDREN:	SOON

WHAT WAS YOUR AMBITION AS A CHILD: TO PLAY RL AS A PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLER

WHO WAS YOUR BOYHOOD HERO: KENNY DALGLISH

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST THRILL IN RUGBY? TOUR OF NEWZEALAND IN 1996

WHICH PRESENT DAY PLAYER DO YOU ADMIRE THE MOST? DENIS BETTS

WHAT IS THE BEST PART OF YOUR JOB? LIE-INS - NOT HAVING TO GET UP EARLY

IF YOU WON THE LOTTERY, WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THAT YOU WOULD BUY? VERY EXPENSIVE CAR

WHAT IS YOUR BEST QUALITY? RELAXED NATURE

WHAT IS YOUR WORST QUALITY? RELAXED NATURE

WHAT OTHER SPORT AND HOBBIES DO YOU HAVE? FOOTBALL AND GOLF

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST PHOBIA? NONE

WHICH FAMOUS PERSON WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO MEET? RICHARD BRANSON

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION? WIFE

DO YOU HAVE AN UNUSUAL FOOD THAT IMPROVES YOUR GAME? PIZZA

FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMME? ONLY FOOLS AND HORSES

FAVOURITE POP STAR? GEORGE MICHAEL

FAVOURITE FOOD? STEAK

FAVOURITE DRINK? DIET COKE

ALLIANCE NEWS

PADDY KIRWIN

After a really promising start to the season with the Cup run to the Semi Final stage, the Alliance team have crashed to two consecutive league defeats. As last season the form of the second team is very much dependent on what is happening with the 1st team injuries to players at both levels led to the selection of a side to play Salford which included 7 players under 17 years of age in the 17.

Playing up the hill the youngsters did well to come in at half time trailing only 10-4, however a another injury to full back Jimmy Cowans further weakened the side. During the second half tries by Aidie Meade, Mark Powell and impressive David Stephenson, returning after an enforced break of two years brought us back to 24- 18 with 5 minutes remaining. With our regular goal kicker Paul Deacon in the side the failure to convert easy goal kick was critical. Also the lack of depth on the bench meant that we had nobody to

produce the impact needed to win the game. As the youngsters tired Salford scored two very late tries to give a score line that did not reflect the team's efforts. It is worrying and unfair to the young players to introduce so many of them into the Alliance together so early in the season. They do have talent, I was particularly impressed with Simon Svabic, Dale Aldred, and Mark Powell, but they need to be introduced in one and two's to play alongside more experienced players. Against Warrington last week the fixture was hastily switched from Salybridge to Wilderspool, however the team was strengthened by the inclusion of Gary Burns, Luke Goodwin and Afi Leuila, Although Warrington's Alliance side has a 100% record so far this season. I was bitterly disappointed with our display. We made too many simple errors against a side that after twenty minutes of the first half looked ready to cave in.

We trailed 18-10 at half time with tries from Gary Burns and Julian Mike and a conversion from Luke Goodwin. A string of 3 penalties against us minutes from half time lead to Warrington scoring at a critical time and Luke Goodwin being sin binned for dissent.

Down to twelve men at the start of the 2nd half we worked hard to contain Warrington without ever really threatening their line. The Substitute of David Stephenson for 1st team duties, opened the floodgates with Warrington, scoring 3 quick converted tries during which Afi Leuila picked up a loose ball to score a fine individual tries from the half way line.

During the last 10 minutes we came back into the game with Simon Suabic scoring, following good work by Steve Wilde and Luke Goodwin. This however was soon cancelled out by a try by Warrington to give a disappointing final score of 38-22

ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

1997

MARCH

THURSDAY 13th	LEEDS RHINOS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 20th	BRADFORD BULLS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 27th	SALFORD REDS	(H) 7.30pm

APRIL

THURSDAY 3rd	WARRINGTON WOLVES	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 10th	HULL	(A) 8.00pm
THURSDAY 17th	WIGAN WARRIORS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 24th	HALIFAX BLUE SOX	A) 7.30pm

MAY

THURSDAY 8th	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	(H) 7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 14th	LEEDS RHINOS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 22nd	BRADFORD BULLS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 29th	CASTLEFORD TIGERS	(A) 7.30pm

JUNE

THURSDAY 5th	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	(H) 7.30pm
FRIDAY 20th	SALFORD REDS	(A) 8.00pm
THURSDAY 26th	St HELENS	(A) 7.30pm

JULY

THURSDAY 3rd	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	(A)
THURSDAY 10th	CASTLEFORD TIGERS	(H) 7.30pm
FRIDAY 18th	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 31st	HULL	(H) 8.00pm

AUGUST

THURSDAY 7th	St HELENS	(H) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 14th	HALIFAX BLUE SOX	(H) 7.30pm
WEDNESDAY 20th	WIGAN WARRIORS	(A) 7.30pm
THURSDAY 28th	WARRINGTON WOLVES	(A) 7.30pm

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ATTENTION!! ATTENTION!! ATTENTION

On Page 2 of this programme (inside front cover, top left corner) is an Oldham Bear.

Look closely – does he have a pink nose?

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N

othing excites a crowd like a winger. Breathtaking speed, allied to a swerve, a

sidestep or a hand off, before a flamboyant dive over the try line, inches inside the corner flag is guaranteed to bring the crowds in the grandstands to their feet.

Practitioners of yesteryear

– Albert

Rosenfield,

Brian

Bevan,

Billy

*Jason
Robinson*

Boston, Tom Van Vollenhoven, and Eric Harris performed the feat fifty, sixty, seventy, and even eighty times per season. They hugged the touchlines, tormented the opposition and wrote the headlines in the morning papers.

So why, at time of writing, is there not a single Super League winger in the top Ten

of try scorers in
cup and

the blistering pace and swerve that once served him so well on the touchlines. But Super League's leading winging scorer, St Helens Welsh ace Anthony Sullivan at the moment has to be content with 9 touchdowns despite revealing the best form of his career.

Do the statistics reveal a dearth of top talent in the No 2 and 5 jerseys? (I know we have squad numbers but once a traditionalist always a traditionalist!) I'm afraid they do, for apart from Sullivan, Martin Offiah, Jason Robinson and perhaps Castleford's Chris Smith and Bradford Bulls' Jon Scales we have few who can attain the top ten list of tryscorers at the end of a season.

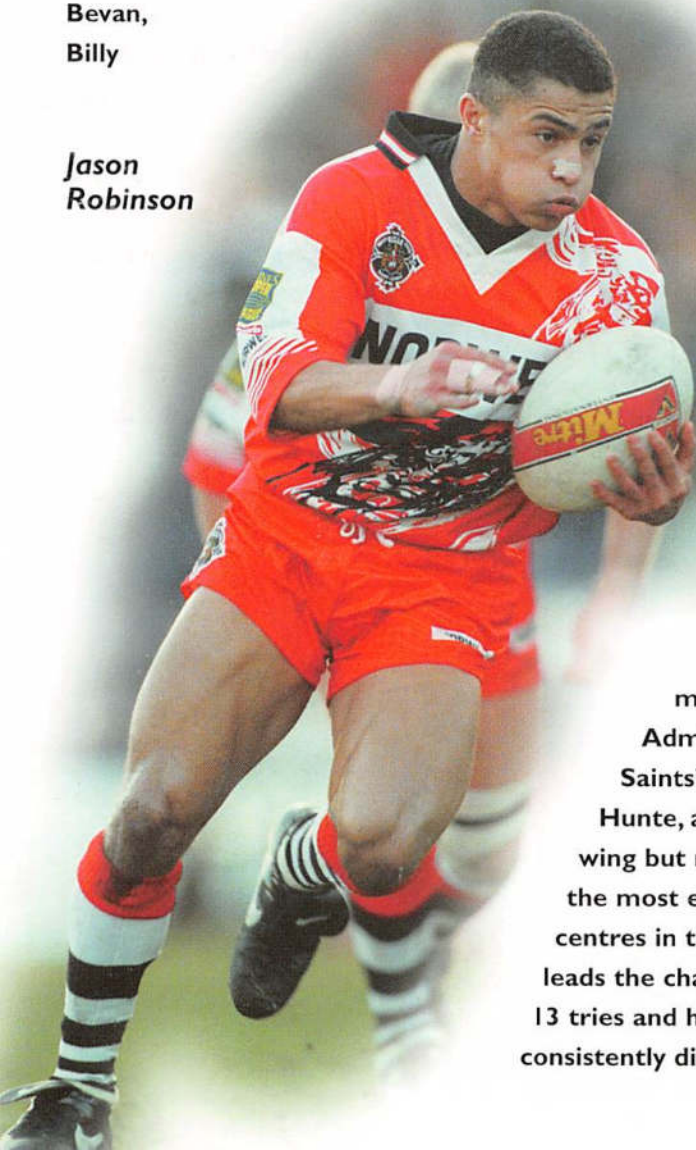
And yet, is not the style of play of many of our teams and the demands of power play in Super League not conducive to the scoring of many tries on the wings? Certainly the speed of the forwards, and especially backrowers like Andy Farrell, Chris Joynt, and Steve McNamara is such that even

league
matches?

Admittedly
Saints' Alan

Hunte, a former wing but now one of the most exciting centres in the game, leads the charts with 13 tries and has consistently displayed

THE
Ray French, BBC Ru





Steve
McNamara

the best of wings can be tracked to the cornerflag and cut down in full flight. Centre play too, is now so direct and strong that giants like Paul Newlove, Graeme Bradley and last season, Va'aiga Tuigamala can power through and score before even releasing the ball to their wing partners.

Such, however, is the strike power of a classy wing and the matchwinning ability when all seems lost that, whatever the styles of play and the positional emphasis on the field, they will always be in demand.

No wonder wing flyers Stan McCormick, Mick Sullivan, Ike Southward and Martin Offiah – prolific scorers all – commanded record transfer fees when they changed clubs. Their like today may be a rare specimen in Super League but they are as valuable as their predecessors, for they can still win a match on their own with one thrilling dash down the touchline.

PAGE ATTACK

y League Correspondent

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'Oldham Born...



...and Read'



OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

ROGER HALSTEAD

ARE the Bears heading for relegation? If you've discussed that once you must have discussed it a dozen times this season at home, at work, in the pub or with the guy who sits next to you in the Boundary Park Stands.

For what it's worth - and I'm not going to sit on the fence (now that's a change, editor) - I will state here and now that the Bears will again be looking forward to Super League in 1998 come the end of August.

Tonight's game against Paris is of immense importance, but Andy Goodway was spot on when he stated after the defeat at Warrington last Sunday that there was no need to panic.

Returning from Wilderspool and listening on the car radio to GMR it was interesting to hear Kevin Ashcroft advancing the view that the Oldham board needed to dig deep and find the money to reinforce Goodway's squad.

Perhaps Kevin wasn't aware that most of the Bears problems this season have stemmed from an injury list as long as your arm.

And there was no let-up in the jinx that seems to have descended on the club when Francis Maloney had to quit with the game at Warrington only ten minutes old.

He now joins a casualty list which includes Vince Fawcett, Rob Myler, Matt Munro,

David Bradbury, Paul Topping, David Jones, Jason Temu and Nathan Turner.

No amount of plotting, planning and signing can take into account an early-season injury list of such massive proportions.

The Bears have lost five games on the trot because they have been shot to pieces and, like any losing team, other problems then present themselves, like a lack of confidence and self-belief.

In turn, this causes players to look over their shoulders and examine the contribution of colleagues, coaching staff, club officials and club

organisation.

But there have been many good signs ... like the superb form of Paul Atcheson, the consistency of half backs Maloney and Martin Crompton, the sharpness on attack at Salford of two-try Darren Abram and the sound performances of props Ian Gildart and Brett Goldspink. Goldspink is included in the Open Rugby form team for March, while Maloney is ranked third behind Tommy Martyn and Henry Paul, such has been the Yorkshireman's impact in a fine partnership with Crompton. It has been all the more

commendable because the two half backs have been battling hard in a losing team.

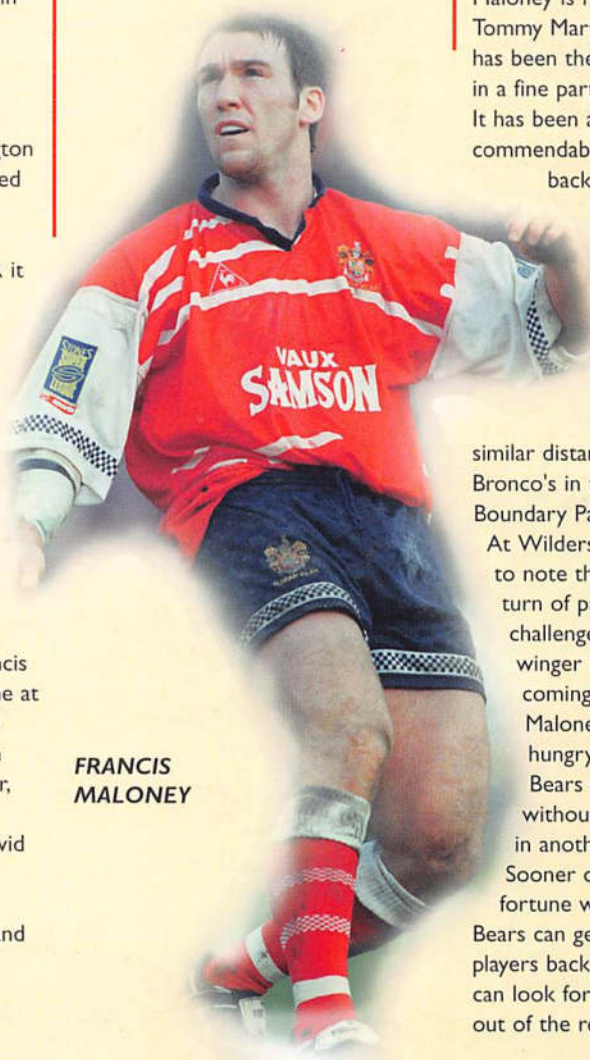
It was typical of the club's luck that Maloney should go down injured when in the act of scoring a try from inside his own half. He went a

similar distance for a try against the Bronco's in the last home game at Boundary Park.

At Wilderspool it was interesting to note that he produced a fine turn of pace to hold off a challenge from Warrington winger Mark Forster, who was coming in from his right.

Maloney has looked sharp and hungry this season, but the Bears will now have to do without him for a match or two in another major blow.

Sooner or later the pendulum of fortune will change and once the Bears can get most of their injured players back on the field, I think we can look forward to a steady climb out of the relegation danger zone.



**FRANCIS
MALONEY**

OLDHAM BEARS v

SUNDAY 13th APRIL



SCRUMS

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

PENALTIES

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

OLDHAM BEARS

		Team	T	G	DG
1	Paul Atcheson	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Scott Ranson	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Darren Abram	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Rob Myler	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Francis Maloney	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Martin Crompton	☐	☐	☐	☐
8	Ian Gildart	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	John Clarke	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Gary Lord	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Joe Faimalo	☐	☐	☐	☐
13	David Bradbury	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Matt Munro	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	Paul Davidson	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Afi Leuila	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	Vince Fawcett	☐	☐	☐	☐
23	Brett Goldspink	☐	☐	☐	☐
26	Luke Goodwin	☐	☐	☐	☐



PARIS ST GERMAIN

1997 KICK-OFF 6.35pm



PARIS ST GERMAIN

		Team	T	G	DG
1	Deon Bird	☐	☐	☐	☐
22	Paul Evans	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Jasmie Olejnik	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Jason Keough	☐	☐	☐	☐
26	Nicholas Hyde	☐	☐	☐	☐
6	Jeremy Robinson	☐	☐	☐	☐
7	Jason Martin	☐	☐	☐	☐
21	Jason Sands	☐	☐	☐	☐
9	David O'Donnell	☐	☐	☐	☐
11	Wayne Sing	☐	☐	☐	☐
14	Tony Bellamy	☐	☐	☐	☐
18	Anthony Hancock	☐	☐	☐	☐
15	James Durkin	☐	☐	☐	☐
12	Pierre Chamorin	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Fabien Devecchi	☐	☐	☐	☐
20	Jason Eade	☐	☐	☐	☐
27	Adam Peters	☐	☐	☐	☐

SCRUMS

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

PENALTIES

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24

THE FULL PARIS SQUAD

1	Deon Bird
3	Jamie Olejnik
4	Jason Keough
5	Fabien Devecchi
6	Jeremy Robinson
7	Jason Martin
8	Joe Taylor
9	David O'Donnell
10	Tony Priddle
11	Wayne Sing
13	David Lomax
14	Troy Bellamy
15	James Durkin
16	Craig Menkins
18	Anthony Hancock
20	Jason Eade
21	Jason Sands
22	Paul Evans
23	Phil Bergman
26	Nicholas Hyde
27	Adam Peters
28	Anthony Wall
12	Pierre Chamorin

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