

Monday 26th May 1997 K.O. 6pm

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ATTACK





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CLUB INFORMATION

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Bear House, 52 Union Street,
Oldham OL1 1DJ

0161 624 4865 (3 lines) General Office

0891 44 00 70 Bears Hotline

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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

Salford must be highly delighted with the early impact they have made on Super League after winning promotion from the first division.

Their defeat of Wigan at The Willows was a great morale-booster for them and they have gone on to surprise one or two sides despite their defeat by Castleford at Wheldon Road last weekend.

It's a long, hard season, of course, and Salford will know that as well as anyone, but whatever happens over the course of the next three months or so they have already done enough to indicate that they will establish themselves solidly in Super League at the first attempt.

On this their first visit to Boundary Park, we welcome the men from the Willows as we seek to avenge our defeat on their ground earlier in the season.



The fact that we are kicking off in the evening on this Bank Holiday Monday is due merely to the fact that a substantial number of our supporters wrote to let us know they were working during the day.

It is impossible to please everyone all the time, but we did recognise that the Bank Holiday was not held by everyone

in town and we took the view that if we kicked off in the daytime a vast majority of our supporters would be unable to attend. This is important not merely from the financial point of view but because crowd-attendance figures are always closely scrutinised by Super League officials, who will eventually start to ask questions of clubs which cannot pull in good support.

They will argue that if the support is not there a club will be unable to generate the funds to support a Super League outfit.

I would like to urge you, therefore, to try and make a special effort to attend our next home game against Castleford Tigers here at Boundary Park on Friday. Not only will this be a typical "four pointer" in our efforts to move up the Super League table, but it will be our last home match for a month and our last game before we set off for Australia and our history-making World Club Championship games. If you are a regular attender I am sure you will have enjoyed our last two home games against Halifax Blue Sox and Leeds Rhinos, while those who travelled to Sheffield Eagles were rewarded with a win and an excellent display of attacking rugby in the first half.

I must say the fans are providing the team with more vocal support these days than at any time in my years as chairman of the club.

The players got a standing ovation at the Don Valley Stadium and a similar display of support at the end of the Leeds game here at Boundary Park and I can tell you that the players appreciate it more than you will ever know.

This was particularly evident at Sheffield where the players remarked afterwards that they felt they had more support than the home side, such was the extent of the vocal backing from the Bears fans who had made the trip to south Yorkshire.

We are now involved in the busiest part of the season. Having played at Bradford on Friday, we meet Castleford next Friday in our third game in eight days - and then we are off to Australia for our games against North Queensland Cowboys and Adelaide Rams.

It will be tough, but we are still in this together; fans, players, coaches and directors. If we all pull together for the good of the club I'm sure we will come through with flying colours.

Jim Quinn

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DOWN MEMORY LANE

DON YATES

Salford's winning start to the Super League season, coming after back to back First Division successes, left many knowledgeable critics wondering whether the Red Devils could repeat the successes of their golden era between 1933 and 1939. During those years Salford won the Lancashire Championship twice, the Lancashire Cup three times, the Challenge Cup once and the League Championship on three occasions. Under the guidance of coach Lance Todd, Salford certainly ruled the roost and they did so by playing a brand of attractive, attacking rugby which had fans flocking to the Willows. During the 1938-39 season Salford lost just seven league matches as they ended their league campaign on top of the table. Under the old 'top four' Championship play-off, they were then called upon to entertain Huddersfield in the semi-final. The Part owners had enjoyed a tremendous finish to their league programme, losing just one of their closing 18 matches. That defeat was at home to Castleford 19-0. However, Huddersfield were no match for Salford who won through to the final 15-0. The same afternoon Castleford reached the final with a 21-4 home win over Halifax. Seven days later Halifax and Salford met at Wembley where Halifax lifted the Challenge Cup with a clear cut 20-3 victory. Earlier in the season Salford had lost against Wigan in the Lancashire Cup Final. Would the Championship Final bring a heart breaking hattrick of cup final defeats for the Red Devils? A crowd of 69,504 - at the time a World record - turned up at Maine Road, Manchester to watch the

following two teams do battle; Castleford: George Lewis; Bernard Cunniffe, Jim Robinson, Jim Croston, Reg Lloyd; Tommy Hardy, Les Adams; Bill Stead, Harold Haley, Tommy Taylor; John Horan, Ted Sadler & Fred Brindle.

Salford: Sammy Miller; Barney Hudson, Albert Gear, Gus Risman, Alan Edwards; Tom Kenny, Billy Watkins; Dai Davies, Bert Day, Joe Bradbury, Paddy Dalton, Harold Thomas & Jack Feetham.

Although Salford began the match as slight favourites, doubts were cast about their confidence following the previous week's Wembley defeat. Those doubts grew when Les Adams set up a try for experienced loose-forward Fred Brindle. Shortly afterwards Salford equalised when

Billy Watkins put half-back partner Tom Kenny over but Jim Robinson then restored the Castleford lead with another touchdown. A penalty from Gus Risman completed the first half scoring, Castleford turning round 6-5 in front. The second half provided plenty of excitement but both sides defended magnificently and it looked as if Castleford would hang on for their first ever Championship success. However, that was not to be. With just eight

minutes remaining a kick from Albert Gear was gathered by Alan Edwards and he was over wide out. Risman's conversion attempt failed but Salford led 8-6 and they held out during those tense, closing few minutes to clinch their third title in seven years. It had been a momentous confrontation but one which Salford just about deserved to win. The following September an even bigger confrontation disrupted, not only Salford's winning run, but the lives of millions of people. It would be 35 years before Salford once again won the title. Now, twenty-one years after their last Championship, Reds' supporters reckon that the time is ripe for further Salford success.

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ACADEMY NEWS

BRIAN GARTLAND

As I write these notes, we are looking forward to playing Batley away tonight (Monday). Hopefully we will get back to winning ways after our draw with Sheffield last week. The boys have trained hard all week and are really looking forward to tonight's game. We are still on the lookout for players for our Academy side and anybody who fancies a game should come down to training at Oldham Rugby Union Club on Mondays and Wednesdays at

6pm. Mark Davenport one of our young players had been a footballer all through school and has had trials for Bury and another soccer club. But Mark was asked to play for the local Oldham College Rugby team where I spotted him playing and invited him along to our Academy team and he has really come on and proving to be a good prop forward is who could go all the way to the top. Well done Mark

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Book now for the Castleford Tigers game, 30th May 1997 - £35 per person. Contact Jacquie Clayton

THE BEAR FACTS

ABE KERR

The Bears Den

Although the crowds are not at the level that we want to achieve, there are some encouraging signs emanating from Boundary Park. The atmosphere generated at home games is electric. This is due in no small measure to the fantastic matches which have occurred at the stadium. Unfortunately the results have gone more often against us but the entertainment has been constantly good. Keep coming to continue this positive trend and make Boundary Park a fortress!!

Community Pre-Match

I am increasingly looking to introduce more and more community based activities as pre-match and half time entertainment. The Sprint involving under 8's from five local amateur clubs is a prime example of this. Those 'Love em or hate em' drums are local, as are 'Brazilian' a calypso style band which will

be entertaining you over the coming weeks.



PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

DON YATES

Although this afternoon Salford will be paying their first visit to Boundary Park, they have met Oldham on 91 occasions at Watersheddings, their first ever visit to Oldham coming in December 1896 when they lost 11-3. In fact, Salford lost on their five visits to Oldham before securing a 0-0 draw in January 1902 and then winning here 2-0 the following season. Those 91 visits to Oldham have resulted in 56 victories for Oldham, 26 Salford successes and nine draws. Salford's biggest victory at Watersheddings came in April 1977 when they beat Oldham 37-8 with winger Keith Fielding crossing for four tries. On two occasions Salford have lost at Oldham by a margin of 37 points. In November 1960 they lost a league match 37-0 and in

March 1991 were knocked out of the Challenge Cup 40-3. Salford's biggest victory over Oldham at the Willows came in March 1933 when they won 44-0. Surprisingly, the two sides had drawn 3-3 at Watersheddings just seven days previously. Oldham's best win at Salford was a 50-4 victory in November 1962 when full-back Geoff Sims, later to join Salford, scored a try and ten goals. Altogether these clubs have met on 187 previous occasions, Oldham winning 97 times, Salford 76 times and 14 matches have been drawn. During season 1953-54 both league matches between these clubs were drawn, 2-2 at Watersheddings and 11-11 at the Willows.

Cliff Eccles



Details of Salford's last visit to Oldham

Good Friday 14th April 1995



First Division Championship
At Watersheddings

Oldham 28 Salford 16



Half-time 6-10; Attendance 3,965

Oldham tries Mike Neal (2), Wally Gibson, David Stephenson, Gary Lord
goals Paul Topping (4)

Salford tries Jonathan Quigley, Sam Panapa
goals Steve Blakeley (4)

Oldham: Wally Gibson, Scott Ranson, Mike Neal, Darren Abram, David Jones, Paul Topping, Martin Crompton, Chris Parr, David Stephenson, Jason Temu, Gary Lord, Joe Faimalo, Mike Kuiti

Substitutes: Steve Gartland, David Bradbury

Salford: Rob Myler, Tex Evans, Scott Naylor, Scott Martin, Phil Ford, Steve Blakeley, Mark Lee, David Young, Jonathan Quigley, Paul Southern, Paul Forber, Cliff Eccles, Sam Panapa

Substitutes: Craig Randall, Ian Blease

Results of

Oldham v Salford

matches during the past ten seasons.
(all league matches except were stated)

1988-89	Oldham 2 Salford 18 (Lancashire Cup)
	Salford 28 Oldham 20
	Oldham 23 Salford 22
1989-90	Salford 7 Oldham 18 (Challenge Cup)
1990-91	Salford 27 Oldham 24 (Lancashire Cup)
	Oldham 26 Salford 6 (Regal Trophy)
	Oldham 40 Salford 3 (Challenge Cup)
1991-92	did not meet
1992-93	did not meet
1993-94	Oldham 8 Salford 20 Salford 23 Oldham 26
1994-95	Salford 12 Oldham 16 Oldham 28 Salford 16
1995-96	did not meet
1996	did not meet
1997	Salford 35 Oldham 26

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The prize includes two tickets to the World Club Championship final on October 18, and £500 spending money. Normal Times Newspapers Ltd competition rules apply, available on request. The winner will be notified by post.

*No purchase necessary. You can still enter the draw by sending your name and address on a postcard to: Rugby Competition, TNL Competitions Dept, 1, Virginia Street, London E1 9BD. Entries must be received by first post Monday August 18th, 1997.

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It would help us if you answered these questions:

Which one of the following age groups do you fall into? (Please tick box)

☐ 15-24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35-44 ☐ 45-54 ☐ 55-64 ☐ 65+

Which national daily newspaper(s) do you buy regularly (4-6 copies) each week?

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If you would prefer not to receive information and offers from organisations carefully selected by TNL, please tick ☐

AUSTRALIAN SUPER LEAGUE ROUND UP

From Dave Hadfield, the Independent's Rugby League Correspondent

For anybody who missed it – and full marks to Sky for giving so many of us the chance to see it – the news is that the passion and intensity is back in big-time Australian football.

The deciding match of the first Tri-Series competition was a classic – at least the equal of anything that State of Origin has produced over the last 15 years – with New South Wales finally winning 23-22 in the third period of extra time.

It was not just one of the best matches between the states; at 105 minutes it was easily the longest and hardly a minute of it was dull.

NSW led early through a try – the first of his three – from former Australian full-back Brett Mullins, playing on the wing to

great effect. Tonie Carroll and Steve Renouf put the home side ahead at Brisbane's ANZ Stadium, but Mullins restored the Blues lead after half time. That second half was a breathless, fluctuating affair, with the lead changing hands three times before Matt Ryan's try gave NSW a 22-16 lead. But when Queensland's hugely experienced winger Michael Hancock went over with 10 minutes to go, the match went into two additional ten minute periods of extra time – much to the surprise of the commentators and some players, who believed it would be decided on a toss of a coin or

awarded to NSW because they had beaten

Queensland in a previous match.

Either of those courses of action, would have denied a 35,507 crowd –

considered a touch disappointing – one of the most compelling spectacles that the game has

produced for ages.

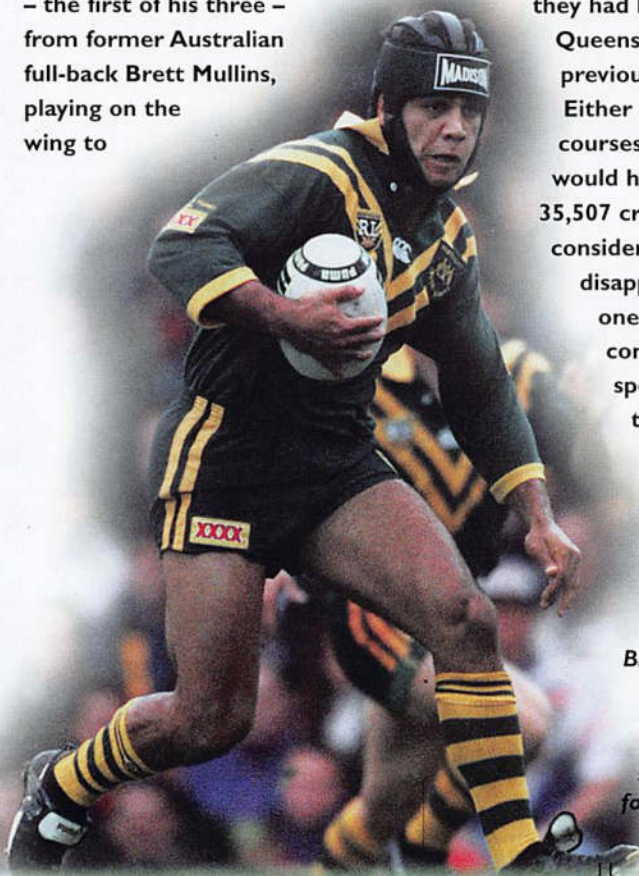
With players literally dropping from exhaustion, both sides tried to manoeuvre for the winning score, with Queensland going the closest during the initial 20 minutes of overtime.

Their failure to get the breakthrough took the match into sudden death, and both teams missed with field goals before the Hunter Mariners' Noel Goldthorpe – drafted in at scrum half in place of the injured Ricky Stuart – lined up his drop kick and sent it spiralling just inside the right hand upright. One of the epic struggles in the long confrontation between the two states was over.

The information for British consumption, with the World Club Championships getting closer by the day, was that the ferocious competitiveness that has sometimes seemed to be lacking at club level this season can be summoned up when representative football comes round.

It will also be noted that players like Brisbane's Renouf and Canberra's Mullins – both struggling for form and fitness at times this season – are back to their potent best. There is an obvious warning there for British clubs.

In the only club match played last weekend, Penrith's decline continued when they were beaten 30-6 by the Hunter Mariners, for whom young centre Craig Wise scored a hat-trick in only his second game.



Brisbane's Steve Renouf – back to his potent best after struggling with form and fitness this season



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Rugby League is fast becoming a sport for the Anorak, who gets his or her fix each week in stats for busts, hit-ups, line breaks, offloads, average metres made, return metres, clean breaks, top tackle counts and, of course, Steve's favourite – the powerplay, a lift from Ice Hockey by Sky. However, there is one figure guaranteed to bring the Statto out in all of us. An indecent obsession with crowd figures affects Rugby

club's pre-match entertainment and facilities. So for all you Anoraks, the following table should make interesting and comforting, or discomfiting reading. At the halfway stage of the league season, eight Super League clubs are up and four down on their average gates for last season. So far so good. The picture is generally encouraging, but let's not get carried away. Bradford are a phenomenon, granted, but the mass conversion

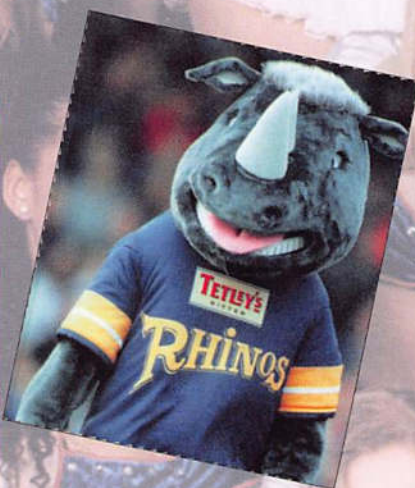
of the best supported sides in St Helens and Bradford. Saints suffered the backlash of losing at Bradford with a pitifully low crowd of just 7000 for the London game last week. London at the Stoop are not quite getting the numbers they did last year at the faraway Valley. As hard as the likes of Halifax and Warrington are fighting to win a new audience, converts outnumber the deserters by only a few hundred. Salford have done

ANORAKS and

By Chris Irvine, Rugby League Correspondent, *The Times*

League far more so than many sports. As eagerly as we rush to look up a score, we anxiously peruse the attendance. It denotes a team's standing and its popularity. These days it is also a measure of the success or otherwise of a

principle does not extend further than Odsal. The marketing men are fighting hard for a slice of the so-called leisure market. In several cases, they are still trying to make up for those who deserted the sport in the switch to summer. With every respect to Ronnie and Rita Rhino, the numbers back at Headingley – and the average Leeds attendance is still slightly less than it was in the dreadful centenary season – perhaps has more to do with success on the field. The Wigan figure is still 40% below the 14,000 average maintained in their heyday and already this season they've been visited by two



well, but the test of their popularity comes after a couple of defeats. Dwindling numbers at Castleford and Sheffield reflect their position in the table, while free tickets continue to falsely inflate the Paris figure. And now summer holidays





are upon us, when loyalties are tested by better weather and the barbecue season.

STATTOS

Perhaps it's me, but sunshine and not even a thousand pom-pom girls could brighten up Wheldon Road. Yet it is now, with no Euro 96 or Olympics to muddy the picture, that the appeal of Ronnie, St Bernard et al must come into their own. Furry animals and fireworks, notwithstanding, nothing beats success for attracting people in numbers. What we have seen is a demographic shift of the basic 50,000-75,000 active support, and not a revolutionary upsurge in actual numbers. Now for the positive spin, no matter that this revolves almost entirely around the Bulls. Remarkably, they have also disproved some of the

above theory by their popular appeal. Thrum Hall, hidebound by a ground limit of 7500, could have been sold out more than twice for Tuesday's visit by Bradford. Wherever Bradford go, supporters travel in numbers. Club accountants must welcome them with open arms. They have helped create the best attendances so far at Oldham and Castleford and will no doubt achieve a few more before the season is out. Bradford's

boost those averages, bring welcome money into club coffers and confirm the mantra of Super League (Europe) that the Super League is "moving up, moving on." Alternatively, we could stop looking over our shoulders about attendances which, compared with Rugby Union are in rude health, and worry more about getting it right for existing customers, new and old.

(background pic - London Broncos 39 Cheerleaders)



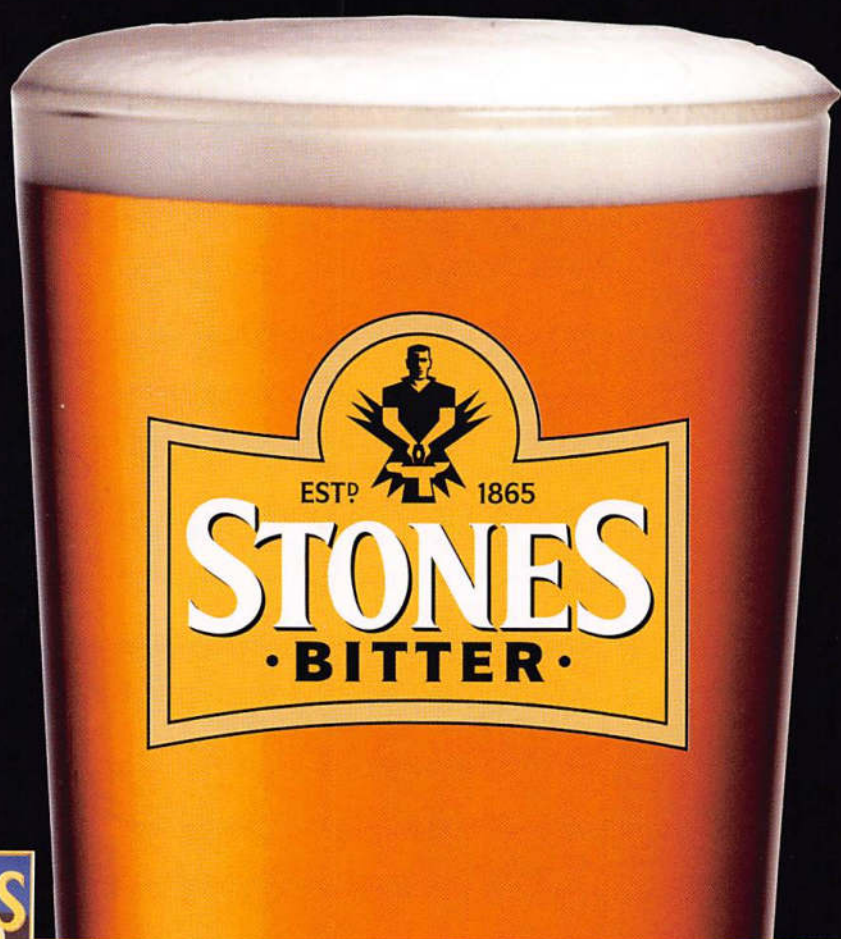
boast at being the best supported rugby club of either code in the northern hemisphere is a true one. The forthcoming world club championship is the opportunity to substantially

AVERAGE SUPER LEAGUE GATES

	1997	1996	+/-
Bradford	15,426	10,346	+5080
Leeds	11,368	8,581	+2787
Wigan	10,842	10,168	+ 674
St Helens	10,031	10,221	- 190
Paris	8897	8026	+ 871
Halifax	5868	5083	+ 785
Warrington	5659	5157	+ 502
London	5438	5699	- 261
Salford	5242	3495	+1747
Oldham	4271	3629	+ 642
Sheffield	4222	4613	- 391
Castleford	4406	5012	- 606

(for matches up to May 18th)

TOP OF THE LEAGUE



TASTE THE ACTION

JUNIOR BEARS



Bears, Buster here...

These notes have been written just after I have come home from the Leeds match, what a result, the only thing I can say is that we hope not to see Mr Presley back here too soon...Ronnie the Rhino was a good sport, but he's not King of the League yet...

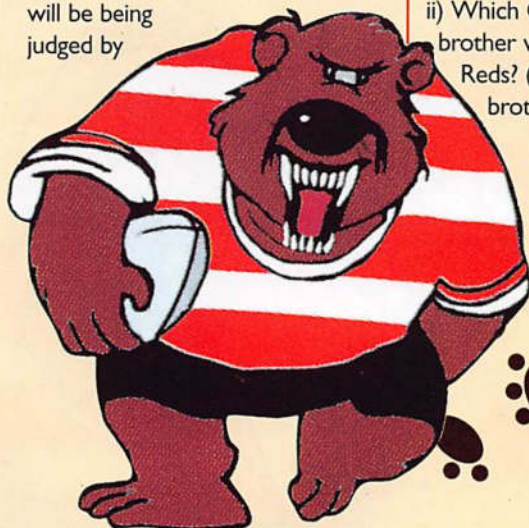
That's enough of my political thoughts.

Let's turn to today's match against Salford Reds. We welcome to Boundary Park their players, officials and supporters and extend a big Junior Bears Hello to our friend Ray Hill.

Hi there Ray...nice to see you.

The vocal support when we were last here was tremendous, you all seem to like those drums, we are really trying to turn Boundary Park into our very own 'Bears Den'.

Closing date for the reporting competition was last Wednesday and any entries we have received will be being judged by



Roger Halstead, keep a look out to see who has won...the winner will be notified as soon as the result is known.

Don't forget that you can still use the Junior Bear post office box with any suggestions or comments you may have about the Junior Bears or any news you want to share with us on this page just send your letter etc to

Junior Bears
P.O.Box 117
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OL2 6FB

Did you manage to find the answer to our send in programme teaser; the first correct entry drawn out will receive their prize at the next Junior Bears meeting.

This week we just have a programme teaser for you to do at home. No entries to be sent in.

- i) What Super League team plays at 'The Stoop'?
- ii) Which Oldham player has a brother who plays for Salford Reds? (try and name both brothers).



Welcome to our Mascot for the Day who is **Maria Holmes**. Maria is seven years old and she attends Watersheddings Primary School.

Her favourite player is Scott Ranson.

Maria's hobby is Rugby League and she plays the game at home with 'her dad'...

The Junior Bears would also like to officially welcome our new 'coach' Bob Lindner, and look forward to him attending one of our meetings soon. Let's wish him all the best for the rest of the season and beyond....

Junior Bear Birthdays!!

26th Michael Rowlinson
27th Daryll Standring
29th Stacy Doran
30th Ben Schofield

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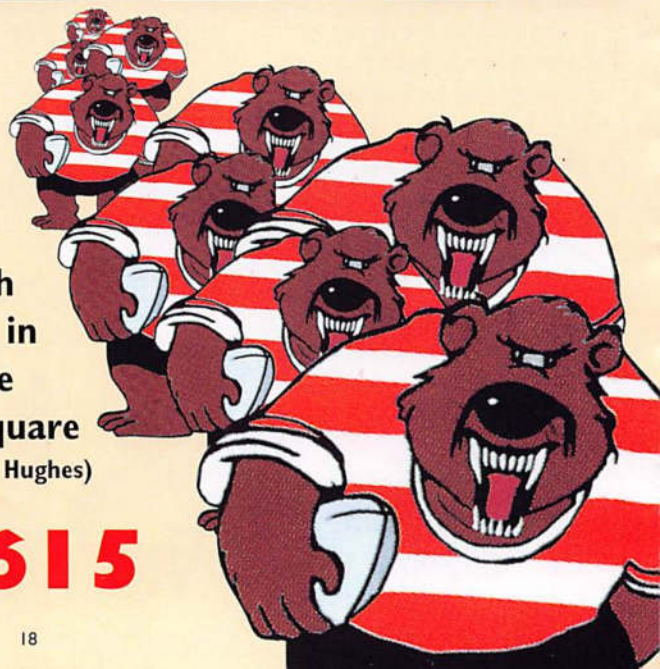
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HERE AND THERE

DON YATES

Next Friday night Castleford visit Boundary Park for a crucial Super League match which should attract the attention of most local rugby enthusiasts. However, more than a few Oldham followers will be watching an amateur match eighty miles away over on Humberside. The reason for that is the inclusion of Higginshaw loose-forward Peter Ferris in the BARLA Great Britain open age squad for their match against France 'B' at the Boulevard, Hull. Ferris is one of only five Lancashire representatives in the squad which includes nine players from the Humberside area.

This annual encounter usually provides BARLA with a stern test against a France side which invariably includes players with full test experience. Last season BARLA gave an excellent account of themselves in the heat of Toulouse before eventually losing 30-6.

Saddleworth's Emmerson Jackman and Chris Wright from St Annes played that evening so it is hoped that Ferris continues the Oldham representation. It has been a satisfactory season for our two National Conference League sides, St Annes and Saddleworth Rangers, although I suspect that the coaching staff at both clubs will disagree. Saddleworth ended the season in 12th position, or fourth from bottom if you wish to be cruel. Nevertheless, I consider it satisfactory considering the intensity of competition in the Conference and the fact that Rangers are steadily rebuilding a squad which broke up after dominating the amateur game during the early to middle 1990's. Rangers won the Standard Cup for a record time last Easter and will be hoping for a better season nationally next year when several of their young players will have matured. It has been an unbelievable season for St

Annes who end the campaign in fifth spot. Two of the big clubs above them, Woolston Rovers and Wigan St Patricks, were beaten both home and away. A remarkable achievement for a club who were enjoying their first season in the Premier Division. It is no exaggeration to state that, with a little more consistency, Saints would have won the title. The club also suffered a major blow when they lost their clubhouse at Christmas when it was burned down. Work to rebuild the club is now well underway and it is hoped that by mid August the club will be up and running. Before next season, Saints will have to find a new coach duo. Last season's coaches, Mark Lord and Mick Swift, have stepped down after five very successful years. We wish them well in the future and hope that if they do get fixed up with other clubs, they are with clubs in the area.

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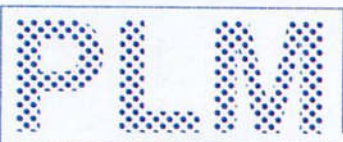
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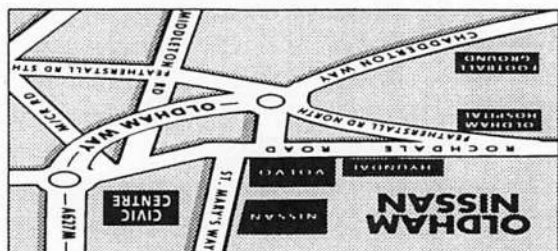
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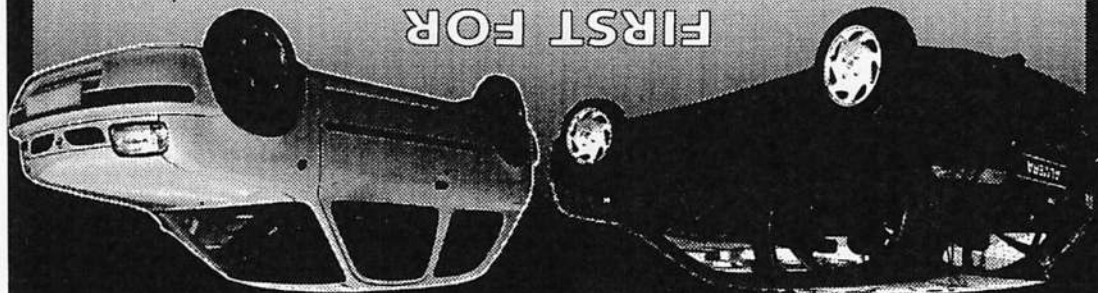
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DEVELOPMENT NEWS

in association with the

DAILY MIRROR

Our Mini League competition got under way last Wednesday and was really well attended and hopefully there will be a lot more this Wednesday. If you have any youngsters U/8's or U/9's who are interested in playing please bring them along to Hathershaw Sports Centre on Wednesday evening at 6pm. The U/16's Schools Cup Final was played last week Saddleworth School taking the trophy after St Augustines had got off to a great start scoring two quick tries. Saddleworth gradually got on top and

were well led by Hough and Druggitt. For St Augustines Dean and Hallwood worked really hard. Congratulations must go to referee Phil Bradbury, it's a thankless task the man in the middle but Phil does a great job for me in the schools, well done Phil. Last but by no mean least greater Manchester Youth Games trials are being held on Thursday evening at Hathershaw Sports Centre at 6pm. If you are interested please go along and have a go.

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At 9.00pm on a Sunday evening Bradford Bulls' James Lowes and St Helens' Tommy Martyn, bruised and battered, dragged their weary bodies in the direction of the dressing rooms after an awesome clash between the games two leading teams.

At 5.30am on Monday morning they shuffled forward in the queue at the Air France check-in desk at Manchester Airport, all set to represent Ireland against France in Paris twenty-four hours later.

International planning? Rather international madness!

No wonder Saints' coach Shaun McRae, a firm advocate of international rugby, is calling for Rugby League to copy soccer's actions when their Premier League programme is interrupted by a midweek match against Mexico, France or Brazil.

"We should copy the Football Association who postpone their Premier League fixtures when they play an international match in midweek. We should arrange a blank weekend for Super League if we must play internationals in mid-season. Players need time to recover from knocks and injuries. We should play Ireland, Scotland and Wales matches at the end of a season.

Lindsay, and his international partners must be to stimulate international competition and lay down a structure for it, at least for the next five years. If Rugby Union, Soccer and Cricket can plan ahead then why not Rugby League?

Without genuine international competition no sport today, with the exception of soccer, will be able to command the attention of the national media. And without full bloodied competition between nations, League, exciting and spectacular as it is, will never command attention worldwide.

Over the past eighteen months we have seen an Oceania Cup tournament, designed to help boost Pacific Island nations, collapse through sheer incompetence on the part of the organisers. We have seen British Lions tourists brought home from a tour of New Zealand in an attempt to save funds while now, grant aid is cut off from Morocco, one of the emerging League nations.

Wales, European champions just two years ago, no longer exist and the World Cup deeds of Iestyn Harris, Jonathan Davies, Scott Gibbs, Kieron Cunningham and Co. are but a distant memory to supporters of the 13-a-side code in the

nation elected as a full member of the International Board less than twelve months ago? We need to know.

The International Board



Saints' coach, Shaun McRae advocates taking a leaf out of soccer's book and cancelling Rugby League matches before a midweek international

members must realise that without meaningful international competition the sport will wither and eventually collapse on itself.

A Five Nations Championship

PLANNING OR MADN

Ray French, *BBC Rugby League Correspondent*

I am all for international competition but we really do need to plan and prepare for an international programme."

Too true, Shaun! And when the game's International Board meets on Thursday June 5th in Paris the first priority of the Board's chairman Maurice

Valleys.

Are Russia and America, both huge successes in the Emerging Nations Cup of 1995, still playing their part in League? Who knows, for little has been heard of them since their departure from our shores? What is happening in South Africa, a

involving England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and a revamped Wales must be included on the calendar.

Western Samoa – imagine the impact made by the likes of Apollo Perelini, John Schuster, Vila Matoutia, Mike Umaga, and Fata Sini – must be encouraged

to undertake a tour of Britain or Australia. Emerging nations, America, Russia, and South Africa must be offered meaningful competition. The arrival of Super League's Australian squad to play three Tests in November is a step in

the right direction but are we aware that the proposed World Cup in Australia is now less than fifteen months away and we don't, as yet, know the nations who will compete. Yes, there is much work to be done by the International

Board. But, above all, they must first devise a serious programme of events to take us past the year 2000 or risk being overtaken at international level by other sports.

SS?

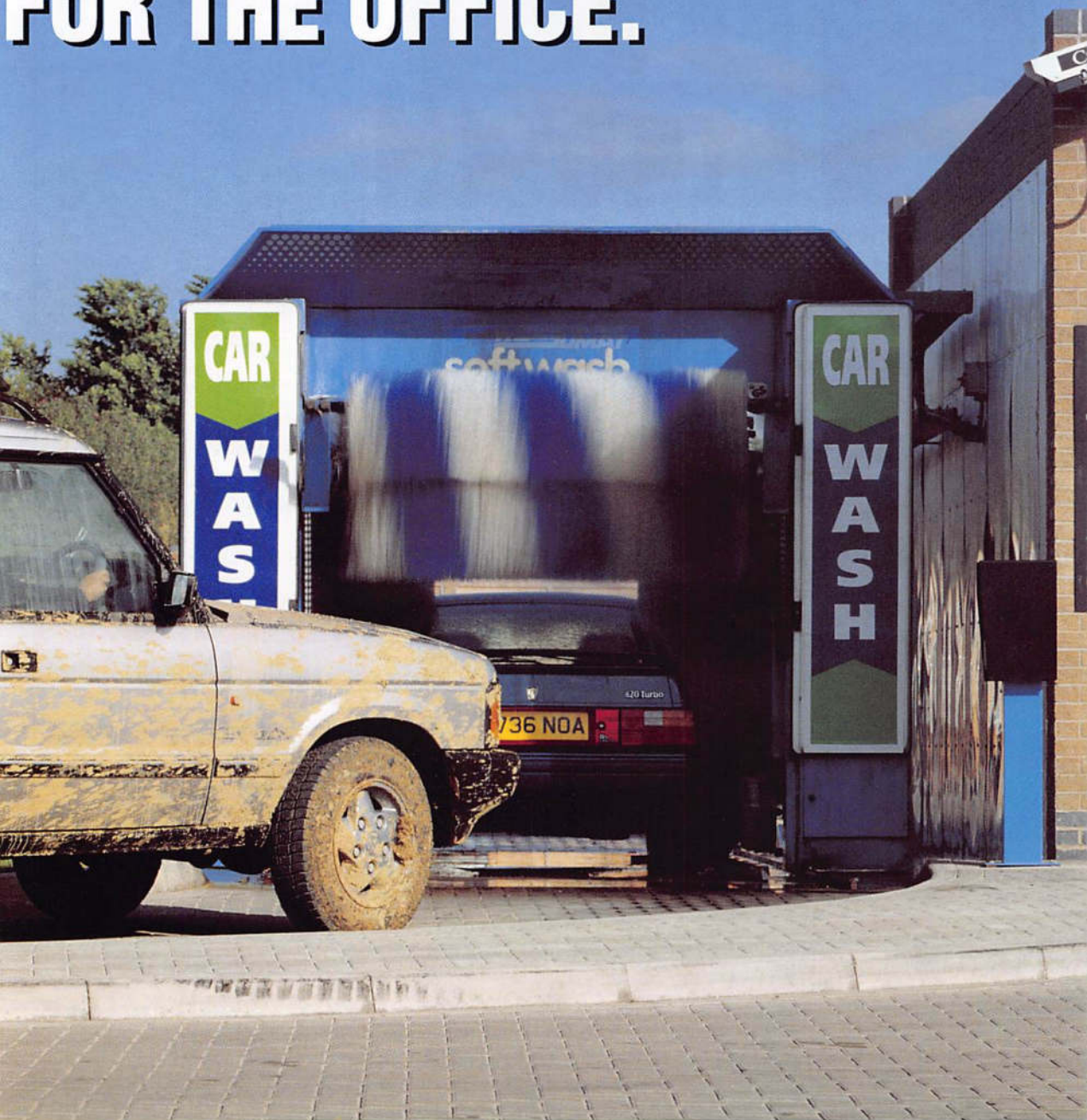
James Lowes (Bradford Bulls, left) and Tommy Martyn (St Helens) – just 24 hours after a awesome clash were representing Ireland against France in Paris

AFTER A TOUGH GAME YOU'RE READY

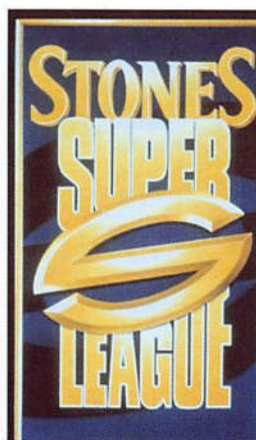


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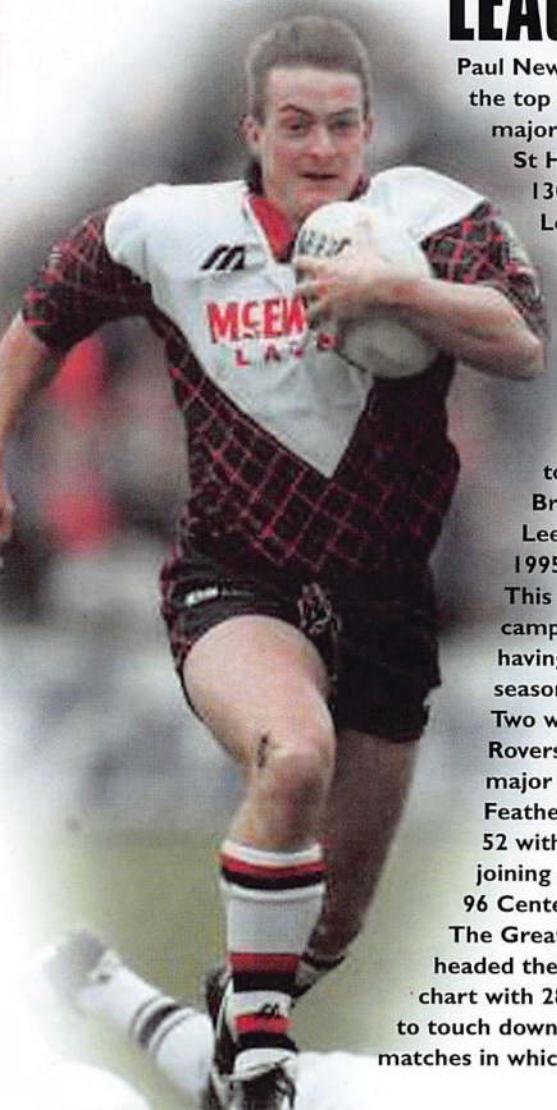
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STAT ATTACK

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

NEWLOVE ENTERS TOP TEN LEAGUE LIST



Paul Newlove has broken into the top ten list of all-time major league try scorers. The St Helens centre's total of 130 tries in Stone Super League and the old Division One matches moves him into 10th place to the exclusion of Des Drummond. But Newlove has a long way to go to catch Ellery Hanley's top total of 279 with Bradford, Wigan and Leeds between 1978 and 1995.

This is Newlove's ninth campaign in the top division, having played the 1992-93 season in the old Division Two with Featherstone Rovers. But he totalled 48 major league tries with Featherstone, before adding 52 with Bradford and 35 since joining Saints during the 1995-96 Centenary Championship.

The Great Britain Test star headed the first Super League try chart with 28 last year after failing to touch down in only two of the 20 matches in which he played.

NEWLOVE'S MAJOR LEAGUE TRY TOTALS

	Tries
FEATHERSTONE	
1988-89	13
1989-90	11
1990-91	9
1991-92	15
BRADFORD	
1993-94	23
1994-95	23
1995-96	6
ST HELENS	
1995-96	2
1996	28
1997	5
TOTALS	
Featherstone	48
Bradford	52
St Helens	35
GRAND TOTAL	135

QUIZ

1. Bradford's No. 28?
2. Castleford tries in a season record holder?
3. Fereti's surname?
4. Leeds' top try scorer in 1996?
5. London's Scotland international in 1996?
6. Kicked record 1,365 goals for Oldham?
7. Paris St Germain hooker?
8. St Helens forward from Swinton?
9. Last Salford Test player selected for Britain?
10. Sheffield Eagles' first coach?

BULLS RUNNING FOR RECORD

Bradford Bulls are one short of equalling the Stone Super League record of 12 successive victories. The Bulls' run of eleven victories began in their last Super League match of 1996. Their last League defeat was 26-27 at home to Halifax Blue Sox on 18th August. St Helens set the Super League record of 12 successive wins at the start of last season, which is also the best opening run in Super League. Bradford are also chasing the latter record having won all 10 matches this season.

SUPER SIX STILL GOING

There are now only half-a-dozen players who have been in the starting line up in every round of the Stones Super League since it was launched in 1996. They are James Lowes (Bradford Bulls); Karle Hammond and Keiron Cunningham (St Helens); Terry O'Connor, Mick Cassidy and Andrew Farrell (Wigan). Each has played in 32 successive Super League matches for their club.



Bradford Bulls are one short of equalling the Super League record of 12 successive victories

SUPER LEAGUE LEADING SCORERS

up to and including 18th May

TRIES		GOALS (inc drop goals)	
Nigel Vagana (Warrington)	12	Steve McNamara (Bradford)	47
Paul Sterling (Leeds)	10	Andrew Farrell (Wigan)	36
Alan Hunte (St Helens)	9	Bobbie Goulding (St Helens)	35
Karle Hammond (St Helens)	8	Mark Aston (Sheffield)	34
Robbie Paul (Bradford)	7	Steve Blakeley (Salford)	28
Richard Henare (Warrington)	7	Iestyn Harris (Leeds)	26
Jamie Olejnik (Paris)	7	Martin Pearson (Halifax)	25
Francis Cummins (Leeds)	7	Terry Matterson (London)	23
Tommy Martyn (St Helens)	7	Francis Maloney (Oldham)	22
Martin Moana (Halifax)	7	Lee Briers (Warrington)	22
Phil Bergman (Paris)	7		
Martin Pearson (Halifax)	7		

POINTS

Steve McNamara (Bradford B.)	113
Andrew Farrell (Wigan)	79
Martin Pearson (Halifax BS)	78
Bobbie Goulding (St Helens)	77
Mark Aston (Sheffield Eagles)	76
Steve Blakeley (Salford Reds)	67
Iestyn Harris (Leeds)	67
Terry Matterson (London B.)	58
Francis Maloney (Oldham B.)	54
Leed Briers (Warrington)	51

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

1. Stuart Spruce
2. St John Ellis
3. Tullagi
4. Graham Holroyd - 13
5. Darren Shaw
6. Bernard Ganley
7. David O'Donnell
8. Ian Pickavance
9. Peter Williams - 1989
10. Alan Rhodes

STONES

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



White turns Gold in April

London Broncos' Josh White has literally turned to gold having clinched April's Stones Gold Award.

Josh, 26, formerly of Australian rugby league team Illawarra stamped his authority on the Stones Super League notching up four tries in excellent performances against Salford Reds, Oldham Bears, Leeds Rhinos and league leaders Bradford Bulls.

Other contenders acclaimed for their performances in April included Wigan's Andy Farrell and Graham Bradley from Bradford. The panel, made up from experts from all areas of

the game, agreed White could play a key role for the Broncos in the World Club Challenge games.

Speak to the sponsor... Your chance to have your say...

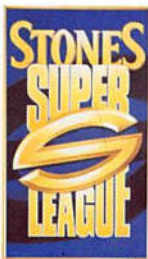
Stones Bitter is giving you, the readers, the chance to pose those burning questions you've always wanted to ask. During the season you get the opportunity to quiz Greg McCallum and Sky Sports superstars Eddie and Steve.

Asking the question couldn't be easier, all you have to do is send your question along with your name and address on a postcard to: The Stones Super League, Burning Questions, PO Box 56, Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5UU.

Furthermore, by taking part you'll also get the chance to win some great prizes all entrants will be entered in a free draw for a Stones Super League T-shirt (there are 10 to be won). For the person who poses the best question there are a pair of Stones Super League match tickets to be won to the match of their choice.

To kick off, we're inviting your questions to Richard Thompson, Sponsorship Manager of Bass Brewers, his replies to a selection of questions will be printed in the club programmes from the 2nd of June. What do you want to ask about the Stones sponsorship of rugby league?

We look forward to hearing from you!



COMMENTARY

A WAY FORWARD

by Joe Lydon,

Technical Director
The Rugby Football League

The importance of international competition has not been lost within Rugby League and that is why we are keen to maintain a level of competition below that of full Super League Test status.

Over the last two years the standard of rugby produced in the Super League has improved dramatically and that ensured that some of the developing nations as well as the lesser equipped such as France would have little to look forward to but a series of severe beatings if they entered that arena.

This would neither aid the game in such countries nor allow recent recruits to the international scene such as Ireland or Scotland any incentive to grow and develop.

The Emerging Nations World Cup in 1995 proved that there is a need and desire for such competition and, if the game is to reach its full potential in Europe, then we have to nurture the delicate state of French Rugby League.

If you then add the need for Academy Under 19 International Rugby into the equation, it becomes even more important

to have Non-Test Internationals because it is through that route that the sport eventually hopes to bring Wales back into the fold... (although this time on a more lasting basis) as well as ensuring that other developing nations can enjoy worthwhile competition at the appropriate level.

There is only one way to find out if a player, or coach for that matter, can survive the transition from the comfortable and familiar cocoon of club rugby into the demanding world of the representative game, and that is to test him at a higher level.

Also if a potential player in a developing nation has the goal to represent and be capped for his country it may well swing his decision to take up, or stay with the game of Rugby League.

For anyone who thought that there were people within the League who didn't care about the international game, take it from me you couldn't be more wrong. I do however concede that we will still have a long way to go to overcome the somewhat selfish attitudes of many who believe the way forward is with quantity instead of quality.

No matter how high we aim or how confident we are in the abilities of our players and coaches, our international sides will never develop or compete at the highest level if they aren't given the time and support to prepare.



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We are offering readers the chance to win a case of Stones Bitter. All you have to do is answer the question below and complete the coupon provided or send the answer with your name and address on a postcard to the promotional address. There is one case of Stones Bitter to be won. Entrants must be aged 18 years or over.

Which lucky player was awarded the Stones Gold Award trophy for his outstanding performances in March?



Send your entry to: The Stones Super League / Stones Bitter competition, PO Box 56 Horsforth, Leeds LS18 5UU, to arrive no later than 02.06.97. Winners will be informed by 09.06.97. To obtain the name of the winner please send an SAE to the promotional address.

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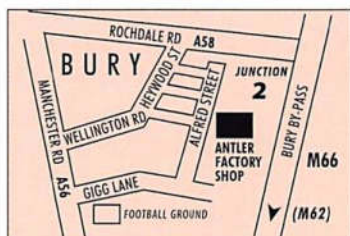
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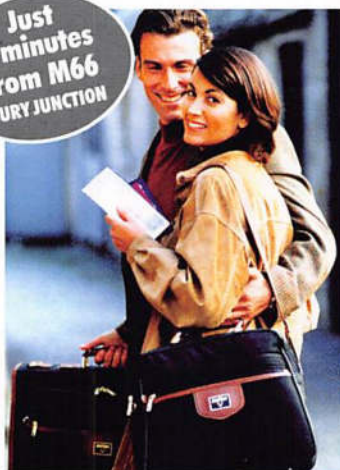
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ALLIANCE NEWS

PADDY KIRWIN

The Alliance team at Leeds last Wednesday made their best start of the season. Within the first ten minutes they had raced into a 10-0 lead. The first try came from Stephen Wilde, who had stepped in at right centre to replace the injured Australian Nathan Turner. The second try was scored by Aidie Meade, the left centre popping up on the right hand side to support the break by Paul Deacon after good approach play by Gary Burns, Johnny Clarke and Craig Barker.

Playing with a strange looking pack which included Johnny Clarke a hooker at prop and Jimmy Cowans a full back in the second row the early lead gave the lads a lot of confidence and throughout the first half we produced some excellent rugby. We did however concede too many penalties to give Leeds free rides out of their own half. During the next twenty minutes Leeds scored two

times on the back of penalties conceded when we had made four tackles in the Leeds half to bring the score to 10-8

Running strongly onto a long ball from Gary Burns, Stephen Wilde took advantage of a decoy inside run from Joe McNicholas to burst between the Leeds centre and winger and scored in the corner giving us a 14-8 advantage. Leeds hit back well though and scored just before half time to level the score at 14-14.

On a hot humid night, lack of match fitness for several of the players returning from injury showed as they trooped off at half time. With young inexperienced substitutes I decided to get as much out of the 13 players that started as possible before making changes. We started the 2nd half as we had in the first with Paul Deacon making a terrific break from the half way line, drawing the full back to give the supporting Stephen Wilde a run

to the line for a well deserved hat trick, Paul Deacon converted. The fatigue then began to set in with Jimmy Cowans, Paul Norman and Danny Guest all being replaced in quick succession. Leeds took advantage to hit back strongly to score 3 converted tries in succession and raced into a 32-18 lead. We did however continue to play good attacking football with Paul Deacon, Mike Prescott and Aidie Meade making good second half breaks which were rewarded when Simon Svabie put Rob Myler in under the posts for a try converted by Paul Deacon to give a final score of 32-24 to Leeds. Although defeat is always disappointing I was impressed with Johnny Clarke's performance at prop, Mike Prescott at loose forward and both Stephen Wilde and Paul Deacon had their best games of the season.

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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OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

ROGER HALSTEAD

The Bears begin a crucial period this evening in their bid to pull away from the lower reaches of Super League.

With due respect to Salford, Bob Linder's men will be looking to avenge the early-season defeat at the Willows ... and then on Friday we are all back here at Boundary Park for the visit of bottom-club Castleford Tigers.

The Tigers had their morale-lifting first win at Wheldon Road last weekend - against Salford.

And their new Aussie boss Stuart Raper, a former Oldham player, will be desperately keen to win what some would describe as a "four pointed" between two teams locked in the bottom four.

Castleford, Paris St.Germain, Oldham and Sheffield Eagles occupy the bottom four spots. Have you



spotted the common denominator? We now have Raper, a former Oldham player, in charge at Castleford; Andy Goodway, an ex-Oldham player, coach in control at Paris; Phil Larder, another Oldham old boy, running the show at Sheffield.

So what are Oldham's prospects of pulling away? Judging by their performances in the last three games (these notes were written before

Friday's awesome task at Bradford), the Bears must be quietly confident of scrambling out of the danger zone. They were desperately unlucky to lose to Halifax with the last kick of the game, they won well at Sheffield and they staged a stunning second-half rally against Leeds to score 22 unanswered points while still ending up losers.

It was encouraging, therefore, to hear Luke Goodwin say at the post-match press conference that the squad was now priding itself on its defensive work.

He pointed to the second-half backs-to-the-wall effort at Sheffield and the fact that Leeds didn't score for the first 30 minutes of the second half in the next match at Boundary Park to support his statement.

Oldham Bears

in association with

Bob Sopel Travel

presents the only official club trip to Paris

PARIS v OLDHAM BEARS

26th August 1997

Option 1

2 nights by coach

£119.00

Option 2

Depart Monday night, arrive Tuesday lunch short sightseeing tour. Pick up late afternoon to travel to match, depart after match, arrive home early Wednesday

£69.00

Option 3

2 nights

Flight packages available from £159.00

for further details phone

0161 6332232



OLDHAM BEARS

MONDAY 26th MAY



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	☐	☐	☐
6	Francis Maloney	☐	☐	☐
7	Martin Crompton	☐	☐	☐
9	John Clarke	☐	☐	☐
11	Gary Lord	☐	☐	☐
12	Joe Faimalo	☐	☐	☐
14	Matt Munro	☐	☐	☐
15	Paul Davidson	☐	☐	☐
16	Howard Hill	☐	☐	☐
18	Mike Neal	☐	☐	☐
20	Afi Leuila	☐	☐	☐
23	Brett Goldspink	☐	☐	☐
26	Luke Goodwin	☐	☐	☐
27	David Stephenson	☐	☐	☐
28	David Jones	☐	☐	☐



V SALFORD REDS

1997 KICK-OFF 3pm



SALFORD REDS

	Team	T	G	DG
1	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Fata Sini	☐	☐	☐
3	Scott Naylor	☐	☐	☐
4	Nathan McAvoy	☐	☐	☐
5	Darren Rogers	☐	☐	☐
6	Steve Blakeley	☐	☐	☐
7	Mark Lee	☐	☐	☐
8	Andy Platt	☐	☐	☐
9	Peter Edwards	☐	☐	☐
10	Cliff Eccles	☐	☐	☐
11	Paul Forber	☐	☐	☐
12	John Cartwright	☐	☐	☐
13	Craig Randall	☐	☐	☐
14	Scott Martin	☐	☐	☐
15	David Hulme	☐	☐	☐
16	Lokeni Savelio	☐	☐	☐
17	Andy Burgess	☐	☐	☐
18	Ian Watson	☐	☐	☐
19	Paul Southern	☐	☐	☐
20	Phil Knowles	☐	☐	☐
21	Phil Coussons	☐	☐	☐
22	Ian Blease	☐	☐	☐
23	Esene Faimalo	☐	☐	☐
24	Peter Maitland	☐	☐	☐
25	Gary Broadbent	☐	☐	☐

SCRUMS

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18
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PENALTIES

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19	20	21	22	23	24

OFFICIALS

J Connolly

S Royle

D Tidman

P J Walton

W Blunden

R G Willis

THE BEARS BRIGADE !

