

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP



OLDHAM v DEWSBURY RAMS
MONDAY 15 FEBRUARY 1999
KO 7.45PM
AT SPOTLAND, ROCHDALE
OFFICIAL PROGRAMME £1.50
FOURTH ROUND



FIELDS OF DREAMS

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP

1999 SILK CUT PRIZES

This is the final season of Silk Cut's current £2.1 million three year sponsorship of Rugby League's most famous knockout competition, played under the Silk Cut banner since 1985. However, a two year extension to the contract worth £1.8 million has been agreed, taking the sponsorship to the year 2001 and guaranteeing Rugby League's first £1 million in sponsorship in the final year. The 1999 Wembley victors will receive a record prize cheque for £110,000.

Of the 1999 sponsorship investment of £750,000 a total prize fund of £525,100 is projected for the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. The remaining funds will be deposited in the League's Capital Development Fund. The complete 1999 Silk Cut Challenge Cup prize structure is:

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP

Third Round losers (First and Second Division Clubs)	£4,200
Third Round losers (Amateur Clubs)	£1,200
Fourth Round losers	£5,250
Fifth Round losers	£8,500
Quarter-Final losers	£16,000
Semi-Final losers	£21,500
Runners-up	£53,500
Winners	£110,000
PROJECTED PRIZE FUND	£525,100
PROJECTED CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND	£224,900
GRAND TOTAL	£750,000

1999 SILK CUT AWARDS

Silk Cut Awards will again be presented to the adjudged Man of the Match in each tie from the first round onwards. In each case the winner will receive a commemorative medallion, plus a cheque for £200 (from the third round through to the quarter finals). The Man of the Match at both semi-finals receives a cheque for £400 plus an engraved silver plated replica rugby ball.

1999 SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP TIMETABLE

First Round	5th and 6th December '98	Fifth Round	27th and 28th February
Second Round	19th and 20th December '98	Quarter-Finals	13th and 14th March
Third Round	30th and 31st January	Semi-Finals	27th and 28th March
Fourth Round	13th and 14th February	Final	1st May

1999 SILK CUT TICKETS

Tickets for the all-seater 1999 Silk Cut Challenge Cup Final on Saturday 1st May can be booked now priced £41, £37, £30, £27, £22, £17 and £12 in the stadium, and £50 in the Olympic Gallery.

Please forward order and remittance, made payable to the Rugby Football League, to: THE TICKET OFFICE, THE RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE, RED HALL, RED HALL LANE, LEEDS, LS17 8NB. Switch, Visa and Access credit card bookings can be made by telephoning the Ticket Hotline 0113 232 9444 between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

1999 SILK CUT DRAWS

The draw for the first round will be made live on GMR at 7.10pm on Tuesday, 17th November 1998. The draws for the second and third rounds will be made live on BBC Radio Leeds at 7.10pm on Wednesday 9th December and Wednesday 6th January respectively. The fourth round draw will be made live on BBC Radio Five Live at approximately 5.15pm on Monday 1st February 1999.

The draw ceremonies for the fifth round, quarter-finals and semi-finals will be made live on BBC TV Sunday Grandstand at approximately 5.10pm on the following dates:

Fifth Round	Sunday 14th February
Quarter-Finals	Sunday 28th February
Semi-Finals	Sunday 14th March

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CHRISTOPHER HAMILTON

Chairman's Chatter



MONDAY night football again arrives at Spotland for the fourth round of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. Our opponents tonight, Dewsbury, will provide stiff opposition and we will need to improve on our last outing at Batley if we are to progress. There is no doubt that everyone at the Club was as disappointed as the fans last Sunday, but we have to make sure that we step up a gear tonight. It is very easy to forget, however, that we are still only just embarking on our second season and if anybody thinks that everything will simply click into place this season then they are going to be mistaken.



Last week saw the launch of the Northern Ford Premiership and I'm sure that all the Clubs hope that their sponsorship will be as long and rewarding as that of Silk Cut who have provided excellent service to the game of Rugby League for a number of years. The game needs these high profile corporate sponsors if it is to prosper, and every Club has a responsibility towards making sure that such deals work.

At the present time we are working hard towards assembling the squad that will be wearing Oldham shirts in the Alliance Competition this season and although publicly numbers of signed players may be not high I can assure you that privately a lot of work is going on to ensure that the right quality of player comes to the Club. The days of the Alliance team merely keeping first team squad members fit have gone and the introduction of the under-21 rule will mean that younger players will get the opportunity to develop their game in the Alliance team and will be more able to cope with the demands of elevation to the first team when selected.

The process of signing players for the Alliance team at Oldham has a primary concern and that is to ensure that players have the potential to be future first team players and not merely stopgaps to comply with the under-21 rules. There is more competition than ever for the capture of these players at this time because this season all Super League clubs are fielding Alliance teams.

I hope that once again tonight you will get behind the players – it does make a difference – and thank you for your support against Eccles and at Batley last Sunday.

Best wishes,

Christopher Hamilton

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Statistics

John Blair

Programme Editor

Geoff Cooke

Club Honours

A J Law Cup Winners 1998

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Finalists 1998

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OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE'S

Roger Halstead

A COMPARATIVELY small club maybe, but Oldham's capture of Graeme Bradley as latest addition to the Club staff confirms that the Roughyeds are not lacking in ambition.

It indicates also, as chairman Christopher Hamilton has said publicly more than once, that the newest club in the game is not backward at coming forward when it has positions to fill and some of the biggest names in Rugby League are available.

Oldham never did admit that they made an offer to Garry Schofield, but when the chairman was put on the spot by one fan at a public meeting he admitted that the former Great Britain captain had formed "part of the equation" in the Roughyeds' search for a half-back.

We can assume from that that the board DID go for Schofield before he chose to sign for Doncaster . . . and the signing since of Bradley, the former Bradford Bulls star who has joined the coaching and marketing staff, merely confirms the Roughyeds' determination to build for the future.

The 34-year-old Australian, who retired as a player at the end of last season, spent 14 years at the top level playing for clubs on both sides of the world.

He played in Australia for Illawarra, Sydney St George and Penrith and in England for Castleford and Bradford Bulls and in these parts he will certainly be remembered best for his three-season stint with the Bulls, which included a Super League title and two appearances at Wembley in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final.

His playing days over, Bradley has signed a one-year contract with Oldham, for whom he will work in a full-time capacity, helping Mick Coates, coaching the 'A' team and working on marketing and development.

Oldham will doubtless see his high-profile presence as a means of attracting new players to the club, particularly those in the 18-20 age group who would qualify for the under-21 side.

Bradley himself makes the point that, at a time when top Super League clubs are signing up boys of 15 or 16, a lot of lads in the 17 to 20 age range could be conditioned into believing that the pro game had passed them by.

The man who spent 14 years at the highest level and played a significant role in the rise of Bradford Bulls over the past three years didn't sign his first pro contract until he was 20, so he should know what he is talking about.

He aims to give the under-21s who turn out for Oldham's new Alliance side the benefit of his vast experience from a career that has seen him working under top Aussie coaches such as Brian Smith, Phil Gould, Ron Willey, Darryl van de Velde and Matthew Elliott.

One of the first local youngsters to sign was 20-year-old Saddleworth Rangers full-back Kevin Fitzpatrick, who has put his name to a two-year deal and readily admits that he can't wait to start work under Graeme's guidance.

A student of journalism, Fitzpatrick signed for his home-town club after showing plenty of promise as a trialist in the pre-season friendlies at Widnes and Leigh.

He made his own headlines in the Oldham Evening Chronicle the night he signed . . . and he will soon get the opportunity to prove that, even as a budding reporter, actions speak louder than words.

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MICK COATES

Game On...



WELCOME to everyone from Dewsbury, I hope the journey here was a good one but that the result will not be as enjoyable!!!

Well, now that we have had our first taste of what to expect in Division 1, we need to wake up to the job ahead. To say I was disappointed is a slight understatement because I certainly don't think Batley are 30 points better than us, but, the scoreboard doesn't lie! It would be easy to single out individuals for criticism, but it is a team sport and the good, and the bad, will be shared by all concerned.

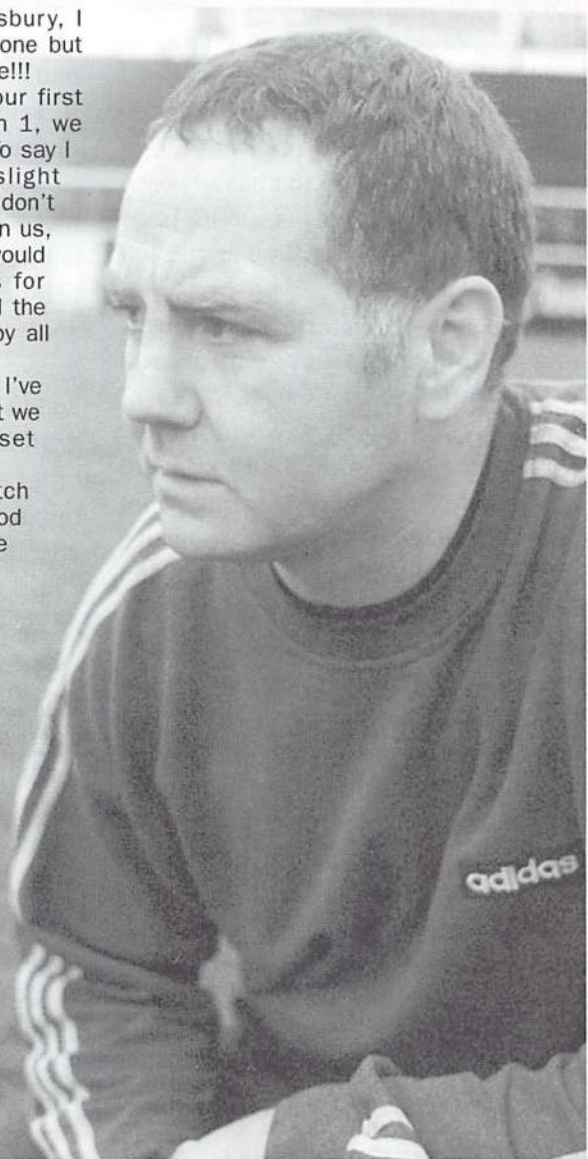
In spite of our defeat and now I've had time to sleep on it, I'm confident we can achieve the goals we have set ourselves.

Today of course is a Cup match against a tough team who have a good record in the First Division and are fancied by the bookies to do well. This makes it all the more important for the team to start playing well, to get some feeling and respect for team mates alongside and to fight for each other.

On a bright note you will all be aware that Graeme Bradley has joined the Club and his experience will be a great asset to everybody.

We've a busy week ahead with Featherstone on Friday and, so long as today's game goes for us, the next round of the Cup a week later. For the losers tonight it is going to cause a blank weekend which is something we don't want.

Anyway, I hope it is a good game, but more important we "win"!



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FROM

The Editor

I AM NOT an opponent of summer rugby: in fact I would watch Rugby League anywhere, anytime. But for preference I would always choose a winter season before a summer one. I have in front of me a FASDA survey on this issue which was never returned because there is no address on it. I wonder what the result of this survey was?

Asking a similar question, the Rugby League Supporters Association poll returned a figure of 66% in favour of summer rugby. But I wonder how representative a sample the 1,300 replies were? In theory a sample that size should give a pretty accurate picture. Except, of course, if you poll people at a game you will never hear the views of those who have voted with their feet and stopped going to games, the very people whose opinions matter most because to increase attendances and expand the game it is vital to attract both a new audience and the floating spectator who may or may not attend according to circumstance.

My suspicion is that Super League summer rugby is here to stay, but given that some top amateur teams can attract 'gates' as big or bigger than First Division clubs for a winter season I wonder if the game has got it right,

particularly when the 'summer' season involves fixtures in January, February and March but none in October and November or, for non-top five sides, September.

It has never ceased to amaze me that there has not been - to the best of my knowledge - a thorough survey of attendances to determine trends in spectator interest. One might, after all, expect a marketing department worth its salt to be fully equipped with appropriate graphs, pie charts and statistics in order to argue a standpoint rationally rather than emotionally or instinctively, still, that's Rugby League for you.



ON THE SAME theme I note that a lot of correspondents to League Express recently have urged BARLA to move to summer rugby for its junior sections. This is a call I have some sympathy with: I can well recall being cold, wet and miserable playing both rugby and soccer in my own boyhood. However, I would not be keen on anything which might diminish participation in cricket. England needs all the cricket talent it can get!



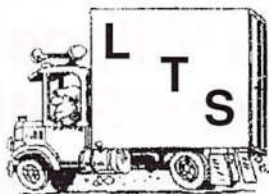
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JUNIOR

Roughyeds



HI TO ALL THE JUNIOR ROUGHYEDS



Debra Rafferty

A very warm welcome to the Dewsbury team, Supporters and Junior members.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Andy Pemberton for his ongoing support of the Junior Roughyeds.

Andy is busy at the moment designing the new Juniors Birthday Card.

Andy sketched two fabulous caricatures for the end of season Presentation Night at the Civic Centre.

Andy did a caricature of Afi Leuila who won the Junior Roughyed Player of the Season. Afi was delighted with his prize.

Andy also sketched a caricature of Chris Hamilton in recognition of all the support and hard work Chris gave to the Junior Roughyeds last season.

Thanks to Chris and thanks to Andy.



Andy and Chris

BIRTHDAYS

We wish to send out Happy Birthday wishes to all Junior Roughyeds having birthdays in February.

Sarah Robinson	2nd February
Anee Marie Wright	3rd February
Aaron Gaskell	4th February
Lawrence Sambrook	4th February
Kyle Smith	9th February
Rebecca Bushell	10th February
Sean Casey	26th February
Stephen Fitton	26th February
Adam Carter	28th February
Ashley Ogden	29th February

Hope you all enjoy a great birthday.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Ballboys and Ballgirls for the season. They looked great in their Oldham coats and Oldham Noddy hats – Is it summer rugby we are playing!

Many thanks to:

James Hutchinson
James Pemberton
Stephen Fitton
Samantha Shaw
Frankie Byrne

Leo Casey
James Mills
Lisa Connor
Nigel Scott
Patrick Harwood

On Sunday, 24th January, Chris Hamilton was very proud when his son Jordan was chosen to be the Mascot against Leigh in the pre-season Friendly.



Jordan Hamilton

My Day As Mascot

by Jordan Hamilton (Aged 7)

"I was the Mascot for the game against Leigh. My dad thought that I would be nervous on the pitch but I wasn't. I went onto the pitch with the players and I passed the ball with Emerson Jackman and Afi, then I went with the Captain – Paul Crook – and shook hands with the Referee and Craig Dean of Leigh. I also had my picture taken in the middle of the pitch. We lost the game but I was still very proud to be mascot."

In the Fourth Round of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup against Eccles, the Club Captain Leo Casey was very pleased to lead out his Town team and his son Callum as Mascot for the day.

My Day As Mascot

by Callum Casey (Aged 8)

"I got ready with Sean and Leo my brothers. Leo was being a Ballboy. I went onto the field with my brother Sean, my dad and all the team. We passed the ball about then we had one minute's silence – me and Sean got cold. Then Sean tossed the coin and it hit the Ref on the nose. We won the toss and the game. I had a good night."



Callum Casey

Debra Rafferty



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A Rough Guide to

NEIL KELLY - Head coach

Recently appointed Rams Chief Executive. First played for Dewsbury 1981, making almost 300 appearances. Now in his fourth year coaching. Was named FASDA Coach of the Year last season.

DARREN COEN - Coach

Also an ex Dewsbury player before moving to Bramley and coaching the "A" team. A former Castleford player, also in his fourth year.



Nathan Graham

NATHAN GRAHAM - Full Back

Rejoined the Rams from Bradford Bulls at the start of this year. First joined Dewsbury in 1989 making almost 200 appearances before moving to Bradford in 1996.

RICHARD AGAR - Half Back

Son of Alan, a former player in Dewsbury's 1973 Championship winning team. In his fifth season with the Rams. Has had spells with Rochdale and Featherstone Lions. A clever kicker of the ball.

RICHARD ARROWSMITH - Winger

A youngster who progressed from the Academy to the first team last season. Scored seven tries in sixteen appearances.

DAMIAN BALL - Utility Player

Signed from York at the start of last season. Played in thirty three of the thirty six games last term in various positions.

ALAN BOOTHROYD - Prop Forward

In his second season with the Rams after joining from Bradford. An experienced player, formerly with Halifax and Huddersfield.

PAUL DELANEY - Utility Player

A Dewsbury lad who began with Dewsbury Moor ARLFC and was signed by Leeds. Transferred to Dewsbury in 1991. Played at half-back, hooker and loose-forward last season.



Barry Eaton

BARRY EATON - Half Back

Now in his fifth season at Dewsbury. Signed from Wakefield in 1995. A prolific goal kicker he was up with the leading scorers in the Rugby League all last season. Top scorer for the Rams.

SCOTT DYSON - Hooker

Another youngster from the Academy still to make an impact in the senior side, but gained County Honours with the Yorkshire Academy team.

PAUL EVANS - Centre

An Australian formerly with Perth Western Reds before playing for Paris in the Super League. Joined Dewsbury at the start of last season.

JASON FIRTH - Utility Player

Another local lad, signed from local amateur's Thornhill in 1994. Has played in various positions for the Rams

ADRIAN FLYNN - Centre/Second Row

Another Dewsbury lad who turned professional with Wakefield. He has also played for Castleford and Keighley. Signed from Leeds in 1997.



Adrian Flynn



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ALEX GODFREY - *Winger*

A recent signing from York after a successful season there in 1998. A former Hull Sharks Academy player.

MARK HAIGH - *Back Row Forward*

A long standing Dewsbury player he first joined the club in 1990 from a local amateur side. Now in his tenth term with the Rams.



Simon Hicks

SIMON HICKS - *Forward*

Signed at the start of this season from Wakefield. A Trinity regular over the past few years after progressing from the Academy. A former Stanley Rangers Amateur.

ROBIN JOWITT - *Forward*

Known at the club as "Big Bird". Another player who has come through the Academy. Shows plenty of promise.

BILLY KERSHAW - *Back Row Forward*

A player with plenty of Academy and "A" team experience he got into the First Team last season.

MATTHEW LONG - *Forward*

A Dewsbury lad who was signed by Hull Sharks from Thornhill ARLFC and came to the Rams at the start of last season. Played in 31 of Dewsbury's 36 games.

PAUL MEDLEY - *Forward*

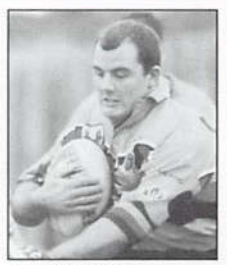
A player of vast experience, signed on extended loan from Bradford Bulls at the start of the season. A former Halifax and Leeds player and Great Britain Tourist.

GARY ROSE - *Prop Forward*

A very popular player now in his fourth season with the Rams. Plenty of experience having also played with Hull, Featherstone and Leeds.

ANDREW SPINK - *Back Row Forward*

Joined the Rams from Thornhill ARLFC on returning from the BARLA under 18 tour of Australia in 1997. A first team regular who also played for Yorkshire Academy last year.



Andrew Spink

BRENDAN WILLIAMS - *Threequarter*

An Australian formerly with South Queensland and Hunter Mariners. Has had two very successful seasons at Dewsbury and is up with the leading try scorers. Holds a degree in Sports Science.

SHAYNE WILLIAMS - *Forward*

Joined Dewsbury in 1992 from local club Dewsbury Celtic. A robust player he has been a regular first teamer for seven years. Scored eleven tries last season.



Leon Williamson

LEON WILLIAMSON - *Winger*

A local lad who played for Doncaster and Hunslet before coming home to Dewsbury in 1996. Was top try scorer in 1997.

DANNY WOOD - *Utility Back*

A product of Hunslet Junior Rugby. Played with distinction in the Academy team before earning a place in the senior side.

GAVIN WOOD - *Threequarter*

Another local lad who has progressed through the Academy side. A young player with great promise.

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TODAY'S GUEST

Dave Hadfield



WHENEVER the Challenge Cup rolls around, thoughts inevitably turn to those results that have been the lifeblood of the competition - the upsets that nobody saw coming.

We have a recent example, on the biggest day of all, in last year's

final, when Sheffield Eagles defied all probability and all predictions except their own by deservedly beating Wigan at Wembley.

Many readers of this programme, however, might prefer to reflect on that night 12 years ago when Paddy Kirwan's try beat Wigan at Watersheddings. We knew at the time that it was a remarkable result, but not how long it would be before anyone duplicated it.

There will always be scope for this sort of against-the-odds victory. A side fiercely "up for it" on the day will always have a chance of beating a theoretically better side that is not quite right on the night.

But, what we have seen a lot less of in recent years is instances of teams from outside the top division beating elite opposition - and I fear this is an irreversible process.

It isn't inevitable that this should be the case. In the most famous knock-out competition in world sport, the FA Cup, there is a case or two every year of a lower division side beating its betters. But football is a different game; your goalkeeper can have the match of his life; Man Utd. can miss a string of sitters; the referee can take leave of his senses.

Rugby league isn't quite like that; 99.9 per cent of the time, the superior side will win. There is simply no hiding place, no way of bridging the gap that separates the strongest, fastest and most skilful from the rest.

This hard truth has been consolidated over the last few years by the fact that Super League versus what is now the Ford Premiership often equates to full-timers versus part-timers.

Quite apart from the ever increasing concentration of talent in the top division, the different lifestyles at the two levels drive a wedge between the two levels of performance.

Taking the comparison with football a little further, you could stand David Beckham and Ian Wright alongside park footballers and they would not - expensive clothes and hairstyles aside - necessarily look much different.

Put full-time rugby league players alongside those who have to juggle the game with their other commitments and you see an unmistakeable physical distinction.

I've even seen it suggested that Super League players are so much bigger and stronger than their contemporaries at clubs like Oldham and Dewsbury that it is dangerous for the two breeds of player to go onto the same pitch. I wouldn't go quite that far, but I see what they mean.

The gap between Super League and the rest is now wider than that between the lower professional sides and the top amateurs. The likes of Featherstone Lions and - almost - Oldham St Annes will continue to claim a few victims, but further up the scale the element of unpredictability has gone missing.

So, what should be done? Some have already argued for a system of seeding that would keep Super League clubs out of the draw until even later. This season, for instance, that would mean just three other clubs qualifying to go into the draw for the last 16 - Gateshead have chosen not to enter, but that is another story.

I can see the logic of the argument, but I still feel that the history of the Cup means that it should be resisted and that the random nature of the Challenge Cup should be maintained.

That way a club can simply drop lucky with a favourable draw and find itself in the semi-finals. Once there, who knows? Well, we all do, deep down, but you can't take away the dream just because you suspect that it isn't based on reality.

Dave Hadfield
The Independent

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Down Memory Lane



DON LOOKS BACK TO A DEWSBURY MATCH FROM YESTERYEAR



OLDHAM'S FOURTH round opponents in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup are Dewsbury who have won this competition twice and on both occasions defeated the Roughyeds in order to lift this most glamorous of trophies. The first occasion was 1912 then these two clubs met in the final. Oldham were firm favourites to win but Dewsbury upset the odds to win 8-5. Dewsbury's other Challenge Cup victory came in 1943

when they defeated Leeds 16-15 on aggregate in the final. All the ties were staged over two legs that season with Oldham meeting Dewsbury at the semi-final stage. The first leg was at Watersheddings where Dewsbury won 25-3 and the following week they won even more easily at Crown Flatt where loose forward Charlie Seeling scored two tries and eight goals in Dewsbury's 43-5 victory.

Dewsbury hold another Challenge Cup distinction. They were the first club to reach Wembley when, in 1929, the beat Castleford in the semi-final. The other semi-final was drawn so Dewsbury qualified first although it was Wigan who took the honours under the twin towers, beating Dewsbury 13-2.

There have been other highlights in Dewsbury Challenge Cup history and a recent one which springs to mind was their fourth round tie against London Broncos in January 1996. Dewsbury had finished the previous campaign bottom of Division One so their hopes of an extended cup run did not look bright. Being drawn against Super League opposition made those hopes even dimmer but at least the tie would be played at the new Crown

Flatt stadium. Heavy snow and freezing conditions caused the match to be postponed on its scheduled date. The weather was not much better three days later. The pitch was covered in snow and temperatures were below freezing. But with only one Englishman in the London line up and several of the Australian contingent from tropical Queensland, Dewsbury were determined to get the match on. They succeeded with the following teams set to do battle in the arctic conditions:

Dewsbury: Pierre van Wyk; Craig Moore, Guy Coombe, Matt Bramald, Chris North; Shaun Austerfield, Barry Eaton; Glen Ball, Mark Haigh, Danny McKelvie, Gareth Pratt, Shayne Williams & Glynn Lingard. Substitutes, Mark Cocks & Gareth Bates.

London: Duncan McRae; Leo Dynevor, Scott Roskell, Dave Evans, Bernard Carroll; Terry Matterson, Kevin Langer; Darren Shaw, Tony Rae, Daryll Pitt, Justin Bryant, Sean Keating & Steve Rosolen. Substitutes, Mark Riley & Chris Smith.

Dewsbury began in determined fashion with total commitment to defence and a workrate which set the Londoners back on their heels. Scrum half Barry Eaton was Dewsbury's inspiration and his grubber kick after eleven minutes led to a try from Danny McKelvie. Eaton converted and also added three penalties as Dewsbury worked themselves to a standstill against opponents who were still struggling to come to terms with the weather. After 50 minutes of solid graft, Dewsbury began to tire and the Broncos scored when Kevin Langer went over from acting half for Terry Matterson to convert. Twelve minutes from time Bernard Carroll scored wide out and at 12-10 Dewsbury's magnificent effort looked doomed to failure. Despite their fatigue Dewsbury summoned up reserves of strength from somewhere to hold out and register an unlikely victory. Perhaps the weather helped but everyone in the meagre crowd of 531 must have admired the Dewsbury heroics in what proved to be a memorable encounter.

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Mike Prescott, Brian Quinlan.

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Roughyeds Action Replay





TODAY'S GUEST

Robert Gate

Robert Gate lives in Pennine Yorkshire with his wife Myfanwy and dog Lucy who try to help him to control an acre of tumbling moorland. As that is too hard, he consoles himself by writing books about Rugby League. *The Guinness Rugby League Fact Book* is his eighth book, following *Gone North – Welshmen in Rugby League (Vols I and II)*, *The Struggle For The Ashes, Champions – A Celebration of the Rugby League Championship 1895-1987*, *The Rugby League Quiz Book*, *Rugby League – An Illustrated History* and *An Illustrated History of Saints v Wigan Derby Matches*. Robert is the Rugby League's official historian and archivist, a founder member of the Rugby League Record Keepers Club and a contributor to *Open Rugby* and *Code 13* magazines.

CHALLENGE cup-ties? What are they all about then?

Well, they are certainly about winning and losing. They are also about hope and fear and, for this particular spectator, they are about unbridled elation and deepest frustration.

I have been watching Halifax all my life – over 40 years and I have only seen them win the Cup once. Yes, I know that I have been luckier than you Oldham fans but it still doesn't amount to much really. Oldham followers and the rest of the world were justifiably delirious when the Roughyeds dumped Wigan out of the Cup back in 1987 and the passage of time probably made that victory seem even more miraculous as Wigan subsequently won the trophy for ever after. At least until Salford did us all a favour.

However, I am damn sure that no one was happier than me in 1987, unless it was our Charlie, my brother, once we had untangled ourselves from each other after the whistle blew for full-time at Wembley on 2nd May. Halifax 19 St. Helens 18. It was easy to understand how people sometimes died of excitement at sporting events. At times I was sure my heart was going to abandon my body. A lot of Halifax folk had been waiting for victory at Wembley since 1939, so it had probably come early for whippersnappers like Charlie and me. I truly hope you Owdamers can have a similar out of body experience one day but, for Maurice's sake, don't hold your breath.

I know it's a coincidence but I bet you Oldham fans, who are old enough to remember 1964, probably swear blind that nothing could have been more frustrating than that semi-final saga with Hull Kingston Robbers. You are wrong though. I know it must have been heart-breaking, leading 17-14 in the replay and some fool of a referee deciding it was too dark to continue. Then losing the second replay - I dare say there were some suicidal thoughts.

But it was a lot worse for us Thrum Hallers in 1964. Take it from me. We had a flipping fantastic team and the bookies thought so too. They made us favourites to win the Cup - the kiss of death, I suppose. We had won the Yorkshire Cup already and would go on to win the Eastern Division Championship. We had Ken Roberts, Colin Dixon, Charlie Renilson, Terry Fogerty, John Burnett, Johnny Freeman, Ronnie James, to name but a few out-of-this-worlders, and a bloke called Alan Kellett, who might jog a few memories. This was our year and, what's more, we had drawn Batley at home in the first round. Piece of cake.

The day of the match dawned - 8 February, 1964. It was a pretty murky Saturday. Perhaps we should have seen the signs. The previous week we had lost 33-2 at Featherstone, the team we had beaten in the Yorkshire Cup final. Fax had put in a few reserves and paid the penalty. Even worse, our Great Britain hooker, John Shaw, had been sent off by Eric Clay (surprise, surprise) and was suspended out of the cup-tie. Still almost 8,000 turned up to watch the cake-walk. Batley had obviously not read the script. After 72 minutes the game was scoreless, Halifax were clueless and by that stage many of the home spectators were hairless. Ronnie James had broken his foot and substitutions had not yet been invented. We all knew what was going to happen. A Batley centre called Shuttleworth (I ask you!) scored at the pavilion end and Batley won 3-0. Talk about parrots and ill-health and I'll tell you about Thrum Hall in February 1964.

So there you have it. Cup-ties are very occasionally Halifax 19 St Helens 18 or Oldham 10 Wigan 8 but much, much more often they seem to be Halifax 0 Batley 3 or Oldham 17 Hull KR 14 (match abandoned). That's why they are so fascinating.



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All bloody clouds, and bloody rains,
No bloody kerbs, no bloody drains,
The Council's got no bloody brains,
In bloody Batley.

Everything's so bloody dear,
Two bloody quid for bloody beer,
And is it good? – No bloody fear,
In bloody Batley.

The bloody films are bloody old,
The bloody seats are bloody cold,
You can't get in for bloody gold,
In bloody Batley.

The bloody discos make you smile,
The bloody music's bloody vile,
It only cramps your bloody style,
In bloody Batley

The bloody rugby's bloody dire,
The bloody pitch is a bloody mire,
Most exciting thing's a bloody fire,
In bloody Batley.

Best bloody place is bloody bed,
With bloody ice on bloody head,
You might as well be bloody dead,
In bloody Batley.

*(with apologies to Captain Hamish Blair).
(AND especially to all at Batley Bulldogs!)*

ODE TO R. L. ADMINISTRATORS

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That they may study to comply
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Committees more than common
sense;
To train our minds to make no plan
And pass the buck where're we can.

And when old Lucifer seeks to give
Us feelings of initiative,
Or when alone we go too far,
Chastise us with a circular.

Mid war and tumult, fire and storms,
Give strength, O Lord, to dish out
forms.
Thus may thy servants ever be
A flock of sheep for M. Lindsee.

(adapted from an anonymous original)



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MICHAEL TURNER

First Time-Last Time

TODAY we look at our first and most recent Challenge Cup encounters with our opponents Dewsbury. The first time the two clubs met in this famous competition was in the first round on February 29th 1908. Dewsbury had home advantage and the match was played at Crown Flatt. Oldham took the honours that day with a thirteen points to two victory. The Roughyeds' points came from two tries by Welsh halfback David Beynon and one from winger George Tyson. Joe Ferguson added two goals.

Oldham's reward was an away trip to Hunslet where they went down by fifteen points to eight, this being the year that the "Parksiders" went on to win all four of the major Northern Union trophies. So far the

clubs have met on twelve occasions in the Challenge Cup with the honours even at six wins each.

The most recent meeting in the Challenge Cup was in 1989, again in the first round and again at Crown Flatt. This time the Roughyeds enjoyed a comfortable passage into round two by the score 40 - 9. The try scorers were: Keith Newton, 2. Duncan Platt, 2. Paul Round. Steve Robinson and Andy Ruane. Platt also kicked five goals with one from Chris O'Sullivan. Newton's two touchdowns helped him to take the "Man of the Match" award.

Team: D Platt; S Robinson, J Henderson, M Lord, K Meadows; M Ford, C O'Sullivan; I Sherratt, A Ruane, A Gilbert; T Croston, P Round, K Newton.

Subs: P Lord, T Flanagan.

Oldham progressed to the third round where they went down by 4 - 12 to Wigan on a snow covered Watersheddings pitch.



Alan Davies goes over for a try in the first round Challenge cup tie against Dewsbury in 1956. John Etty who can be seen celebrating the try also scored in a 31-2 victory for Oldham at Watersheddings.

The most famous Challenge Cup tie between the teams was of course the final of 1912 when, against all the odds, Dewsbury took the trophy back to Crown Flatt after defeating Oldham by eight points to five at Headingley.

IT IS HOPED TO CONTINUE THIS FEATURE IN THE PROGRAMME SHOWING PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE 'ROUGHYEDS OF YESTERYEAR'.
IF ANYONE HAS ANY PHOTOS THAT THEY THINK WOULD BE OF INTEREST PLEASE CONTACT
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DON YATES

On This Day

DON RECALLS THIS DAY IN RUGBY LEAGUE HISTORY



ONE of the busiest officials at tonight's cup-tie will be the Roughyeds' 'stats' man Johnny Blair. Too busy in fact to think back 23 years to what he was doing on Sunday 15th February 1976. Well, he was at Alt Park, Huyton that day, playing stand-off for Oldham in a first round Challenge Cup-tie which the Roughyeds won 16-4. It was a successful afternoon for Blair who scored two tries and landed two goals to go alongside further tries from centre David Treasure and full-back Martin Murphy. Huyton's points came from two penalties landed by full-back Geoff Worrall who began his career with Oldham. Another former Roughyed in the Huyton line-up was loose-forward Arthur Daley.

It was a mixed afternoon for the Oldham area amateur teams two years ago on Saturday 15th February 1997. That day St. Annes Lost 38-14 up at Egremont and Saddleworth lost 22-20 at home to Woolston Rovers in National Conference League matches. Waterhead, however, won 22-15 at Farnworth and Tameside Borough snatched a 25-24 home victory over Littleborough. Both sides scored two tries at Farnworth but Jon Perks with two conversions and five penalties made all the difference. A dropped goal from centre Chris Jones was the difference between Tameside and Littleborough in a nialbiting Pennine League encounter.

An even closer match took place twelve months ago, on Sunday 15th February 1998. That day Lancashire Lynx and Dewsbury fought out a thrilling 28-28 draw in a fourth round tie at Deepdale. A late penalty from stand-off Barry Eaton, his sixth goal of the match, snatched a replay for Dewsbury. The Rams then won the replay which set up a lucrative fifth round tie at home to Wigan. With the laws now changed to bring in sudden death extra time, could that Deepdale match be the last ever drawn Challenge Cup-tie?

One the same afternoon, Sunday 15th February 1998, Halifax beat Huddersfield 28-8. Making his debut for Huddersfield was scrum-half Chris Orr who had joined the Fartowners from Gold Coast (Australia). Orr made 23 appearances for Huddersfield and scored two tries. He was heading for Oldham last month but family illness has resulted in him remaining in Queensland.

It was on this day in 1909, Monday 15th February, that Great Britain met Australia in the third test of that 1908/09 tour. The match was staged in the unlikely setting of Villa Park, Birmingham and was decided by a late try scored by Oldham winger George Tyson which gave the home side a 6-5 victory.

Cup-ties usually attract big crowds and it was on this day in 1987, Sunday 15th February, that a record crowd of 1,579 was attracted to the Alfreton Town soccer ground. The big attraction were Hull, who beat home team Mansfield Marksman 38-7 in a second round Challenge Cup-tie. Six years previously, on Sunday 15th February 1981, Fulham attracted a record crowd to Craven Cottage for another cup-tie. Wakefield Trinity provided the opposition and 15,013 saw Trinity win a first round tie 9-5.

Finally, the Australian season invariably opens with the Charity Shield match involving South Sydney and St. George who meet at the Sydney Cricket Ground. Now there is rarely any charity offered between these two clubs and such was the case two years ago, on Saturday 15th February 1997. Both sides flew at each other right from the opening whistle and consequently a brawl erupted after only 45 seconds. The fighting spilled out over the touchline and the Shield was sent flying off a touchline table during the mayhem. The trophy was then removed into the safety of the grandstand until hostilities were over. The result? Saints recovered from an 18-4 deficit midway through the second half to win 26-18.

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Mar	3	Swinton Lions	A
	17	Batley Bulldogs	H
	31	Hunslet Hawks	H
April	8	Featherstone R.	A
	14	Dewsbury Rams	H
	24	West Cumbria	A
May	5	Keighley Cougars	H
	13	Dewsbury Rams	A
	19	Swinton Lions	H
	29	Barrow B. R.	A
June	10	Rochdale Hornets	A
	19	Batley Bulldogs	A
	23	Featherstone R.	H
July		West Cumbria	A (Date to be con')
	1	Keighley Cougars	A
	10	Barrow B. R.	H
	14	Hunslet Hawks	A
	31	Alliance Challenge Cup - 1st Rnd	
Aug	4	Leigh Centurions	H
	14	Alliance Challenge Cup - 2nd Rnd	
	18	Rochdale Hornets	H
	28	Alliance Challenge Cup - 3rd Rnd	
Sept	11	Alliance Challenge Cup - Semi-Final	
	25	Alliance Challenge Cup - Final	

THERE ARE 2 Alliance Leagues this season to be known as the Championship and the First Division. There will be 25 clubs in total with 14 teams in the Championship and 11 in the First.

The Championship is made up primarily of the Super League reserve sides with the exception being the inclusion of Widnes. Gateshead will not field a second team in this their inaugural season.

Lancashire Lynx, Bramley, York, Doncaster and Hull KR will also not field reserve teams this season.

Promotion is one up and one down providing the promoted club meet the minimum ground requirement criteria. Hemel Hempstead for instance won the Alliance First Division last season but having failed this season to secure a ground that meets the Leagues minimum standard will play instead in the Southern Conference.

Clubs are required to include in the squad 8 players under 21 years of age. The following season this will increase to 10 and the season after that to 12.

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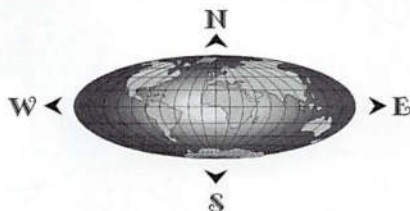
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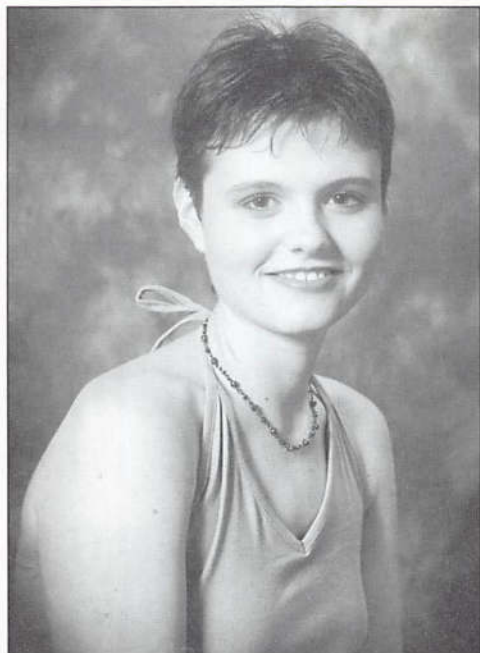
Slumberland

Slumberland Quality Group

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STAFF PROFILE

Jenni Muragtroyd

**Name:**

Jennifer Murgatroyd

Age:

20

Born at:

Boundary Park Hospital

Educated at:

Beech House School, Rochdale

Qualifications:

10 GCSEs, 2 'A' Levels, 2 'AS' Levels

Previous employment:

Oldham McDonalds restaurants - 1½ years,

United Norwest Co-op - 2 years

First interest in or involvement with Rugby League:

Went to the last Oldham Bears v Warrington match with Alison, my best friend. My next match was the Law Cup v Rochdale.

Current job and responsibilities:

Club secretary. I also do P.A. work for Chris Hamilton. It is a very demanding job!

Ambitions/future plans:

I get married on 30th May, so I'm currently planning for that. But I hope I can help take Oldham to the top on and off the pitch.

What do you enjoy about your job?

Seeing the end product and making sure that Oldham supporters go home happy.

What do you dislike about your job?

Mountains of paper work, people not being co-operative (e.g. not returning phone calls).

How do you see Oldham developing in the future?

As a town I think Oldham is losing a lot of tradition, but I hope the new club can put down foundations and re-establish the town's sporting traditions.

What would you do to improve R.L. in general?

Lay down firmer rules at the top. I found it inconceivable that the structure of divisions could change so quickly! I think it's important to have promotion and relegation. Teams at the bottom of a league have nothing to play for towards the end of a season, which disheartens their supporters who could go elsewhere to watch Rugby, leaving their first choice team struggling to survive.

Hobbies/favourite relaxation:

Watching Oldham Athletic. Reading, music and chocolate!

Favourite film:

The Batman movies, also Titanic, Deep Impact, I've seen everything from Scream to Spice Girls, I don't know which was scier! Next time I want to see Shakespeare In Love.

Favourite TV:

Coronation Street, Holby City, Friends and period dramas.

Favourite music:

George Michael.

Favourite reading:

Any Agatha Christie. Currently reading Richard Branson's 'Losing my Virginity' & Bill Bryson's 'Notes From a Small Island'.

Favourite other R.L. club/ground:

None - Yet!

Favourite other sport:

It's gotta be football.

SPEEDY HIRE CENTRES (NORTHERN) LTD.

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Good Fortunes to the Roughyeds throughout the 1999 Season

1	Rochdale H. (Law C)	L10-48	2879	Mead	Farrell G	Quinlan	Jackman	McNicholas	Crook	Barker	Casey	Hough	Clegg T	Shaw	Varley	Martindale	Coulter	Leulia T	Prescott	Round
17	Widnes	L6-12	2500	Mead 1T	Farrell	Leulia	Jackman	McNicholas	Crook	Barker	Round	Hough	Clegg	Shaw	Quinlan 1G	Martindale	Coulter	Prescott	Fitzpatrick	A.N.Other
24	Leigh	L12-34	1000	A.N.Other	Mead	Leulia	Jackman	McNicholas	Crook G	Farrell	Round	Hough	Clegg	Shaw	Quinlan G	Coulter T	Bostock	Barker	A.N.Other T	Fitzpatrick

1	ECCLES CC 3rd Rd	W26-7	1764	Minut 3G	Mead 2T	Leulia	Bostock	McNicholas	Crook	Brown 1T	Casey	Hough	Clegg 1T	Shaw	Coulter	Jackman	Round	Peralta	Prescott 1T	Perrett
7	Batley Bulldogs	L0-30	1018	Minut	Mead	Leulia	Bostock	McNicholas	Crook	Brown	Casey	Hough	Clegg	Shaw	Quinlan	Jackman	Coulter	Prescott	Perrett	Peralta

19 FEATHERSTONE ROVERS H 7.45

7. Allen K. R.	A	
8. Allen K. R.	A	

14	BARRUW S.N.	11
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21	Hunslet Hawks	A
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28 WIDNES VIKINGS H

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Bath
Bran
Dew
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5 LEIGH CENTURIONS	H	Barrow	18-12
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11	Bramley	A
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Dewsbury

MAY

Doncaster

Featherstone 32-12

3. Bredale Harnets A

G	Kleinlaw Course	A
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22	Swinton Lane	A	Hunslet
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25	WHITEDAVEN W	4	Keighley	42.16
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Lancashire	13-17
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15. BOGUSLAW HORNET	11	(Bogusław Horb)	Leigh	16-12
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10. BATHLEY DILLARD 11 3 3 45

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Rochdale

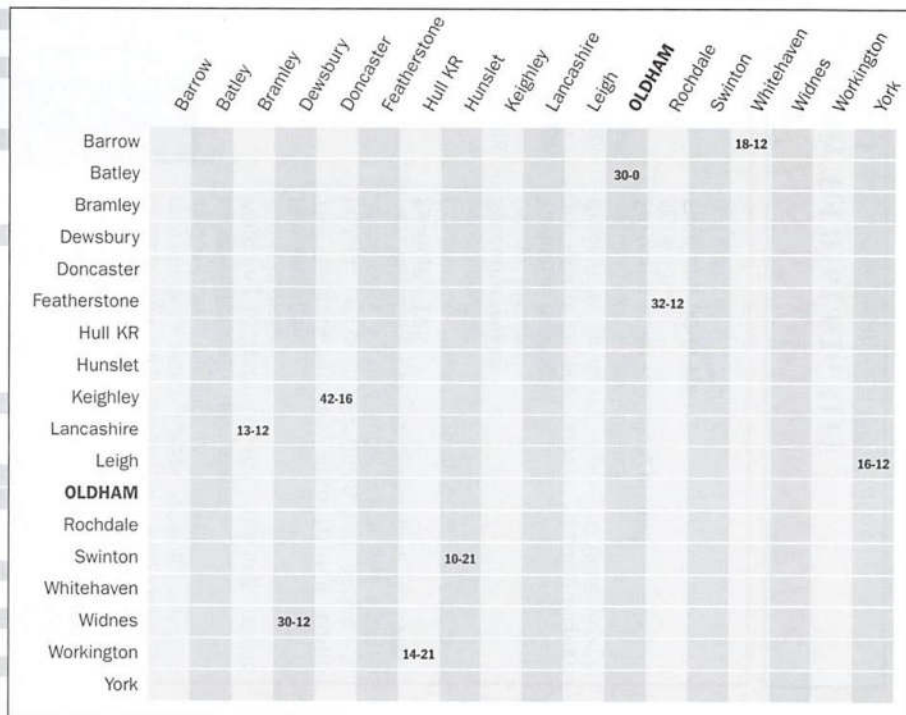
JULY	Swinton	10-21
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4	HULL K. H.	H	Whitehaven
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11	Barrow G. N.	A	Whitehaven
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18	HUNSLET HAWKS	H	Widnes	30-12
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25 Widnes Vikings A Workington 14-21

AUGUST 10th



**Oldham Council is proud to celebrate
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Metropolitan Borough 

Today's Sponsors

SILK CUT
CHALLENGE CUP



SILK CUT
CHALLENGE CUP

OLDHAM

Coach: Mick Coates

1	Laurent MINUT			
2	Adrian MEAD			
3	Afi LEUILA			
4	Josh BOSTOCK			
5	Joe McNICHOLAS			
6	Paul CROOK			
7	Daniel BROWN			
8	Leo CASEY			
9	John HOUGH			
10	Jason CLEGG			
11	Graeme SHAW			
12	Brian QUINLAN			
13	Emerson JACKMAN			
14	Gary COULTER	16	Mark PERRETT	
15	Mike PRESCOTT	17	Emmanuel PERALTA	

Today's Officials

Today's Referee
Mr P. Gilmour



Touch Judges
Mr R. Southward &
Mr G. Wallace
Reserve Mr J. Connolly

DEWSBURY RAMS

Coach: Neil Kelly

1	Nathan GRAHAM			
2	Alex GODFREY			
3	Adrian FLYNN			
4	Brendan WILLIAMS			
5	Leon WILLIAMSON			
6	Richard AGAR			
7	Barry EATON			
8	Matthew LONG			
9	Paul DELANY			
10	Gary ROSE			
11	Andrew SPINK			
12	Paul MEDLEY			
13	Billy KERSHAW			
14	TBA	16	TBA	
15	TBA	17	TBA	

AFTER THE MATCH VISIT MR WRIGLEYS

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP

1999 SILK CUT PRIZES

This is the final season of Silk Cut's current £2.1 million three year sponsorship of Rugby League's most famous knockout competition, played under the Silk Cut banner since 1985. However, a two year extension to the contract worth £1.8 million has been agreed, taking the sponsorship to the year 2001 and guaranteeing Rugby League's first £1 million in sponsorship in the final year. The 1999 Wembley victors will receive a record prize cheque for £110,000.

Of the 1999 sponsorship investment of £750,000 a total prize fund of £525,100 is projected for the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. The remaining funds will be deposited in the League's Capital Development Fund. The complete 1999 Silk Cut Challenge Cup prize structure is:

SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP

Third Round losers (First and Second Division Clubs)	£4,200
Third Round losers (Amateur Clubs)	£1,200
Fourth Round losers	£5,250
Fifth Round losers	£8,500
Quarter-Final losers	£16,000
Semi-Final losers	£21,500
Runners-up	£53,500
Winners	£110,000
PROJECTED PRIZE FUND	£525,100
PROJECTED CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND	£224,900
GRAND TOTAL	£750,000

1999 SILK CUT AWARDS

Silk Cut Awards will again be presented to the adjudged Man of the Match in each tie from the first round onwards. In each case the winner will receive a commemorative medallion, plus a cheque for £200 (from the third round through to the quarter finals). The Man of the Match at both semi-finals receives a cheque for £400 plus an engraved silver plated replica rugby ball.

1999 SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP TIMETABLE

First Round	5th and 6th December '98	Fifth Round	27th and 28th February
Second Round	19th and 20th December '98	Quarter-Finals	13th and 14th March
Third Round	30th and 31st January	Semi-Finals	27th and 28th March
Fourth Round	13th and 14th February	Final	1st May

1999 SILK CUT TICKETS

Tickets for the all-seater 1999 Silk Cut Challenge Cup Final on Saturday 1st May can be booked now priced £41, £37, £30, £27, £22, £17 and £12 in the stadium, and £50 in the Olympic Gallery.

Please forward order and remittance, made payable to the Rugby Football League, to: THE TICKET OFFICE, THE RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE, RED HALL, RED HALL LANE, LEEDS, LS17 8NB. Switch, Visa and Access credit card bookings can be made by telephoning the Ticket Hotline 0113 232 9444 between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

1999 SILK CUT DRAWS

The draw for the first round will be made live on GMR at 7.10pm on Tuesday, 17th November 1998. The draws for the second and third rounds will be made live on BBC Radio Leeds at 7.10pm on Wednesday 9th December and Wednesday 6th January respectively. The fourth round draw will be made live on BBC Radio Five Live at approximately 5.15pm on Monday 1st February 1999.

The draw ceremonies for the fifth round, quarter-finals and semi-finals will be made live on BBC TV Sunday Grandstand at approximately 5.10pm on the following dates:

Fifth Round	Sunday 14th February
Quarter-Finals	Sunday 28th February
Semi-Finals	Sunday 14th March



SILK CUT CHALLENGE CUP



FIELDS OF DREAMS