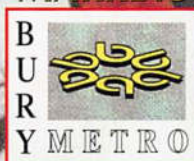




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Runners-Up: 1926/27, 1931/32

Lancashire League Winners: 1924/25, 1927/28,
1928/29, 1930/31, 1960/61

Lancashire War League Winners: 1939/40

Lancashire Cup Winners:

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Runners-Up: 1910/11, 1923/24, 1931/32,

1960/61, 1961/62, 1962/63, 1964/65, 1972/73

B.B.C. Floodlight Trophy Runners-Up: 1966/67

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CLUB RECORDS

Record Attendance:

44,621 Wigan v Warrington 7/4/51

Record Score For:

90-0 v Prescott Panthers 11.8.96

Record Score Against: 0 - 78 v Wigan 29/9/92

Tries in game:

6 Mark Riley v Prescott Panthers 11.8.96

5 W. Wallwork v Widnes 15/12/1900,

5 J. Evans v Bradford Northern 30/9/1922,

5 H. Halsall v St. Helens 24/1/1925,

5 R. Cracknell v Whitehaven Rec. 11/2/1928,

5 R. Lewis v Keighley 12/1/1946,

5 J. Stopford v Bramley 22/12/1962,

5 A. Buckley v Salford 8/4/1964,

5 J. Ropati v Nottingham 21/1/1990

World Record Kick: Martin Hodgson 77 1/2 yards
(for Swinton) April 13th 1940, at Rochdale.

Goals in a game:

12 K. Gowers v Liverpool City 3/10/1957

Points in a game:

30 Greg Pearce v Prescott Panthers 11.8.96

Tries in a season: 42 J. Stopford 1964/65

Goals in a season: 128 A. Blan 1960/61

Points in a season: 283 A. Blan 1960/61

Tries in a career: 197 F. Evans 1921 to 1931

Goals in a career: 970 K. Gowers 1954 to 1973

Points in a career: 2015 K. Gowers 1954 to 1973

Appearances in a career:

594 - 8 sub. K. Gowers 1954 to 1973

Consecutive Club appearances:

150 R. Fleay, August 1972

OFFICIALS & HONOURS

THE CHAIRMAN



A warm welcome to today's game, the first home game of a new season and a new millennium.

Welcome to all our supporters and to the directors, players and supporters of Oldham RLFC.

Having added Chris Highton, Jon Neill, Phil Coussons and Paul

Loughlin, with the welcome return of Matty Knowles, Jason Roach and Ian Pickavance to our retained squad I am both hopeful and confident that we will have a team which will compete at the highest level of the Northern Ford Premiership. With Mike Gregory in charge I am also confident that the team will be successful in an entertaining way. I think Mike would accept that the board have backed him in his rebuilding for this coming

season and now I hope that the fans will back the team and the club.

Obviously our aim is to achieve entry to Super League and we need the fans to back us. It would be pointless to achieve the ambition and then be turned down on the grounds that we could not attract sufficient support to sustain a Super League place. To our supporters - if you are about the club, if you want us to be successful, if you want us to retain our own identity, then please get behind us both on and off the field.

This year is very important for Swinton Lions and, the way things are going, very important for all Premiership clubs and rugby league in general. I think it will be an exciting season and hope you all enjoy yourselves in the Lions Den.

Malcolm White

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This afternoon I extend a warm welcome to Mike Ford and his Oldham team. I played in the same

Great Britain team as Mike and of

course I have played against him many times. Fordy is still a fine player and he is an integral part of this new Oldham side. Oldham have completely reshaped since last season with some intelligent signings, at least five of which have followed Mike from his previous club Bramley. It is my guess they will be a much improved side and pushing for

a top eight spot. I am delighted with my seven new signings Loughlin, Neill, Knowles, Roach, Highton,

Pickavance and Coussons and I feel we now have a squad to compete in all games and push for honours. Because of holiday deadlines these notes were written before our opening game at Workington so I just hope the team got reward for all the hard work and dedication they have shown in pre season training.

They have prepared well and shown lots of endeavour. Today's game is a local derby and will generate lots of emotion both on and off the field.

I look forward to a really

with **MIKE GREGORY**

THE COACH

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exciting encounter and hopefully a winning home start for the Lions.

Can I take this opportunity to wish everyone Happy New Year and all the very best for year 2000 and to Swinton supporters please get behind the team and let's look to have a successful season.



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This afternoon it gives me great pleasure to welcome our visitors from Oldham and all their travelling supporters.

Our Match Sponsor today is J. Properties (Oldham) Ltd and we are delighted to welcome John Humphreys and his guests. Can I say a big thankyou to John and I hope you all enjoy a great day.

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St. Helens and it's welcome to Brian Honey and his party.

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JUNIOR LIONS



Hi there!

Firstly let me take this opportunity on behalf of the junior lions committee to wish both Swinton and Oldham fans a very happy new year. New year, new century, will this be the century that sees both Swinton and Oldham play at Wembley? Will it be the century that sees rugby league's governing body leave the nineteenth century and join the rest of us in the twenty first? To those questions and many more only time will tell. Hopefully today is the 2nd January and the first home game of the season, by that I mean the den is not frozen, covered in snow, waterlogged or the goalposts have not been moved again? The winter has been very mild so far but as I'm putting these notes together on December 12th to keep the printers happy anything may have happened. On to the months that are in front of us and by April 2nd Sean Casey will have lifted the Trans Pennine Cup, the Lions will be top of the Northern Ford Premiership, things are beginning to happen as crowds start to come to the Den to see this great team of ours keep marching towards the Grand Final on July 29th. All these things would put smiles on the faces of every true Lions supporter but the biggest smile of all would be that of our chairman Malcolm White who

once again has put a lot of money into Swinton Rugby League Club. Once again for our part we must sing, shout, stamp our feet and let the boys on the park know that we are right behind them every pass, tackle, kick, scrum. And don't forget sometime during the season things will not be going as we would like but when this time comes, as it will, don't knock the boys but keep on with all the encouragement you can and come July 29th it will be party time here at the Den. At the next home game on the 16th I'll give you a run down on our new players if it's not been covered on other pages of today's programme. A donation of £200 has been handed over to the club by the Junior Lions prior to today's game. Congratulations to Tony Barrow (junior) and his lovely wife Nicki who had their second child Lucy in September.

Have you got your Lions lucky numbers off Margaret. Listen for your name. Winning name come down to pitchside at half time, also get your correct score ticket.

The first Junior Lions quiz of the season is sponsored by Junior Lions Committee £10.00 Swinton Lions gift voucher

1. On December 12th Oldham beat Rochdale in the AJ Law Cup. True/False
2. Former Lion Gavin Price-Jones played in the same match for Rochdale. True/False
3. Name Oldham's new coach. Is it Mike Ford/Northern Ford/Ford Escort.
4. Last year's game with Oldham was family fun day for the children's hospital in Pendlebury. True/False

5. Name today's referee?

Answers to me at club shop on Station Rd by January 22nd.

DID YOU KNOW: Chief Executive Tony Barrow once coached Oldham.

SPOT PRIZE: First to name me two of our new players? (£1 coin)

Latest on my keeper John Prince, he has put weight on, he is working hard at his physio and is talking rugby league, still a long way off full fitness but knowing the big guy he will be itching to get back home and to call in the den to see us. Yours in Sport

Vinny Lion



AT THE TIME OF DOING TODAYS NOTES
TODAYS MASCOT IS NOW KNOWN.

JUNIOR LION OF THE WEEK

Jeffrey Janssen
D-O-B: 18/1/87
School: Mount
Carmel R.C.H.S.
Wordsworth
Road,
Accrington
Jeffrey was
runner up in last
seasons Junior
Supporter
award.



THE PERFECT FACE *for*

Rarely can we have approached a new season with more optimism than we do at the dawn of the new age. A new season, a new year, a new century, a new millennium. (Same old shirt, sadly, but you can't have everything.)

Appropriately, the Lions enter the new era with a new-look team, and the best available expert opinion is that we shouldn't lose a game all season. Unfortunately, because of the millennium bug/Christmas festivities/pressure of work/hangovers/ printing plant holidays/ volatile situation in the Balkans etc. I am having to write these words before the match at Workington, so for all I know, the bubble has already been pricked. I suspect not, though.

Whatever happened, I very much hope I was at Workington to witness it, because if I wasn't I will have been at my mother-in-law's on Boxing Day. Nothing against my mother-in-law. Fine woman. It's just that this is a Catholic family, and all the relatives seem to have more kids than is strictly necessary. They are all lovely in their own right,

of course, and cherished by their parents, I am sure, but they are not inclined to sit around quietly playing Scrabble, if you get my drift. A far better way to spend Boxing Day from my point of view would be to have been in the car with my brother on the long drive to Cumbria (nice to have a local derby at holiday time) seeing if either of us can name an entire Swinton team beginning with the letter 'H', all playing in position (Houghton, Harries, Halliwell E... that's a start for you).

It seems strange to be starting the season at Christmas time. I always felt it was a handy mid-point of the season, a chance to reassess, regroup, and maybe recover ground lost in the first half of the campaign. The chance to start that process against local rivals was an

added bonus.

There have been some memorable matches in Christmases past, although interestingly I can't remember any of them off the top of my head, either because of age (mine) or the millennium bug. What I do remember quite vividly from Christmas fixtures is the smell of the cigar smoke wafting up from the terraces, as what used to be known rather quaintly as working men cracked open the Wills Whiffs their kids had given them for Christmas.

I think it was Marcel Proust in his masterpiece *A La Recherche du Temps Perdu* (not sure about the spelling, but I know we will get a flood of letters if that is misspelled) who pointed out how important smell is in creating a nostalgic yearning for the past. If it wasn't Proust, my apologies, but I did not want to disappoint the editor of the programme by completing a column without using any foreign words.

So, like my old mate Proust, let's remember the past, but let us also embrace the new era with all its opportunities for the Lions. Au revoir, and a bientot.

with . . . MARTIN KELNER



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SWINTON VS OLDHAM

KEITH BRENNAN

A late entrant into the pro ranks, Keith played for Higginshaw and Shaw Rhinos before impressing as an amateur for Oldham towards the end of the 1999 season. Did enough to be offered a contract for 2000 at the age of 25. An extremely accomplished scrum half who is expected to push player-coach Mike Ford all the way for the No 7 jersey.

MARK CAMPBELL

One of the 16 new boys brought to the club by Mike Ford during the first two months of the player-coach's reign. Formerly with Leeds Rhinos and Keighley Cougars, this 24 year old hard working back-row forward is studying at Leeds University for a degree in chemical engineering.

LEO CASEY

Tough prop, who played with the former Oldham club, Featherstone Rovers, Swinton and Rochdale Hornets before signing for the Roughyeds for the 1999 season. Captained the side and, at the age of 32, became a firm favourite of the crowd. An Irish international, he was the first and only Oldham player to

command a transfer fee of £100,000 when Peter Fox took him to Featherstone.

JASON CLEGG

A product of Littleborough RL Club, this heavyweight prop turned pro for Bradford Bulls and had a stint with Batley before signing for the Roughyeds shortly after the club was formed. Made a first-team place his own property in 1999 and earned selection for the West of Pennines side against an East side coached by Mike Ford. Received an approach from France, but chose to re-sign for Oldham for the year 2000.

MIKE FORD

A scrum half who has been making the right sort of headlines all his sporting life. Played for Wigan at Wembley when only 19. Also starred for Leigh, Oldham,

Castleford, Warrington, Wakefield and South Queensland

Crushers. Toured Down Under with Great Britain

in 1988. Coached Bramley to mid-table

respectability in 1999 before landing the Oldham job - at the third

attempt - to fulfill a sporting ambition.

ANTHONY GIBBONS

One half of the twin combination which played for Leeds Rhinos and Bramley before joining Oldham at the start of the 2000 season. A utility back, 23 year old Anthony is earmarked to play right centre. Signed a two year contract after impressing Ford with Bramley in 1999.

DAVID GIBBONS

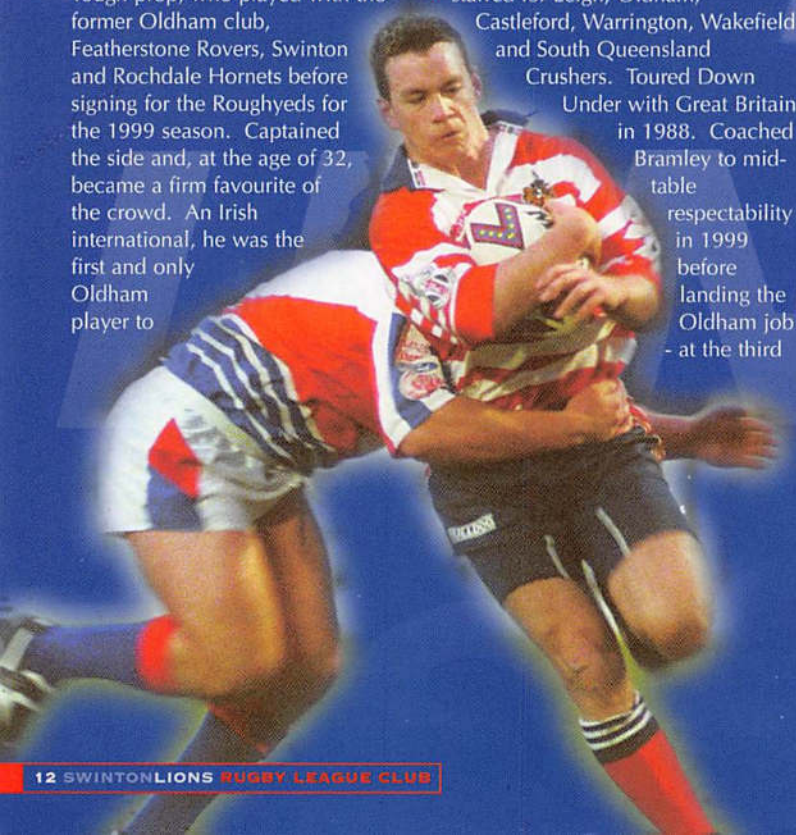
The other twin, like brother Anthony, David turned pro with Leeds Rhinos as a 17 year old to follow in the footsteps of their uncle, Neil Hague. Both became household names at Headingley and played more than 20 senior games, including several in the first Super League season on 1996. Formerly captain of Bramley, David will be a key figure for the Roughyeds at stand off half.

JOEY HAYES

A young winger who has crammed a lot into his relatively short spell as a pro. Made his name with St Helens for whom he played in a Regal Trophy Final and a Super League premiership final to earn a place on the Great Britain tour squad which went to New Zealand, Fiji and Papua New Guinea in 1996. Suffered a setback with a serious knee injury, but fought back to play 11 Super League games with Salford Reds in 1999.

JOHN HOUGH

Will go down in local RL history as the first player to sign for the new Oldham club when it was launched in the autumn of 1997. Has had two cracking seasons in 1998 and 1999. When he took the club's player-of-the-year award. A native of Oldham, John played more than



30 senior games for Warrington before returning "home" to hook for the Roughyeds.

KEVIN MANNION

Another Wiganer, 22 year old Kevin is a ball-playing loose forward, who made his senior debut with Rochdale Hornets when only 16. Starred for the Hornets Academy and Alliance sides, but then concentrated on his studies at Lancaster University. Played for England and GB Students, for whom he has toured Australia and played in France.

JOE McNICHOLAS

Played his first senior game in the Bears last match at Leeds. Broke his leg for the Roughyeds in the new club's first league game at Workington and missed the rest of the 1998 season apart from a brief spell as sub in the final match. A pacy winger, Joe bounced back to hold down a regular spot on the right flank in 1999.

TOM O'REILLY

An international for Papua New Guinea, 25-year-old Tom is an Aussie with an Irish passport. Can play stand off or loose forward equally well, but will be earmarked by Ford for the No 13 jersey. In line to play for PNG in next year's Lincoln World Cup.
First

recommended to Ford by Darryl Van de Velde. Ford, then coach of Bramley, was not disappointed.

ANDY PROCTOR

Named captain of the club by Ford for the 2000 season. This former Saddleworth, Wakefield Trinity, Oldham and Bramley prop forward, now aged 30, won a man of steel award while with Trinity, as the club was then called, and has built a reputation as rugged players' player who performs well above his weight.

PAT RICH

Another of the younger signings, 21 year old Pat is a native of the North East. Played regular senior rugby for Keighley in 1999, while studying for a law degree at Leeds. Also represented England Students, for whom he played in the centre in the World Cup Final at Hull. Can play centre of back row forward.

WES ROGERS

A strong second row forward, Was has joined his home town club after stints with Widnes and Swinton. A hot property as a teenager, he was signed for Widnes by Doug

Laughton. Scored two tries for Swinton against the Roughyeds at Gigg Lane last season.

GRAEME SHAW

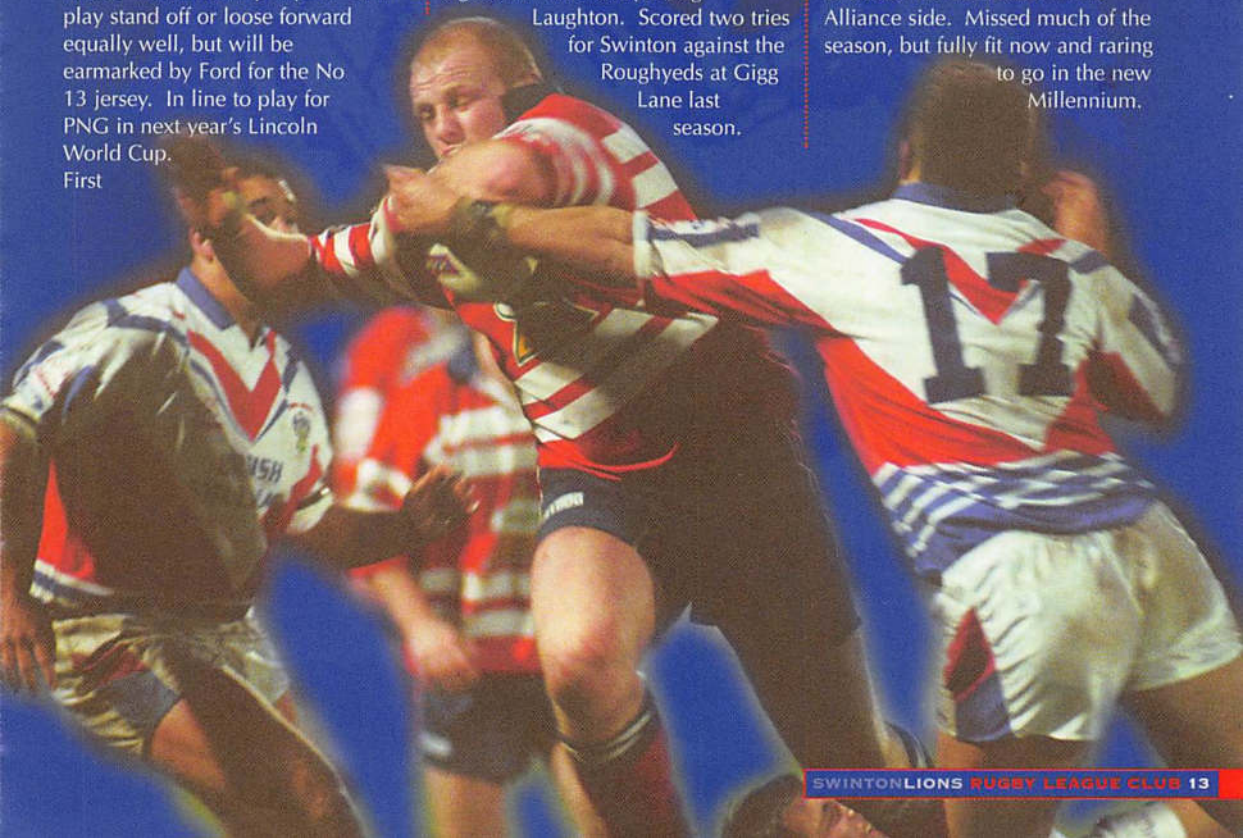
Another ex-bradford forward, Graeme is the son of former Oldham Athletic striker David Shaw. Ready for his third season with Oldham, he has won Scottish international honours and won recognition as the new club's first international. Runs and tackles hard. Another ex-student with a degree in chemical engineering.

MARK SIBSON

An exciting full back and goalkicker, this 23-year old played for Loughborough University for four years before turning out for Castleford's Alliance side. Recommended to Batley and became an instant hit, going out on loan to Super League club Huddersfield Giants. Has signed a two year deal for Oldham.

NATHAN VARLEY

One of the best tacklers in the club, Nathan played for the Roughyeds in 1998 and 1999 after signing from bradford. Had an injury free first season, but was desperately unlucky in 1999 when he broke an ankle, smashed a wrist and then damaged a foot on his comeback in the Alliance side. Missed much of the season, but fully fit now and raring to go in the new Millennium.

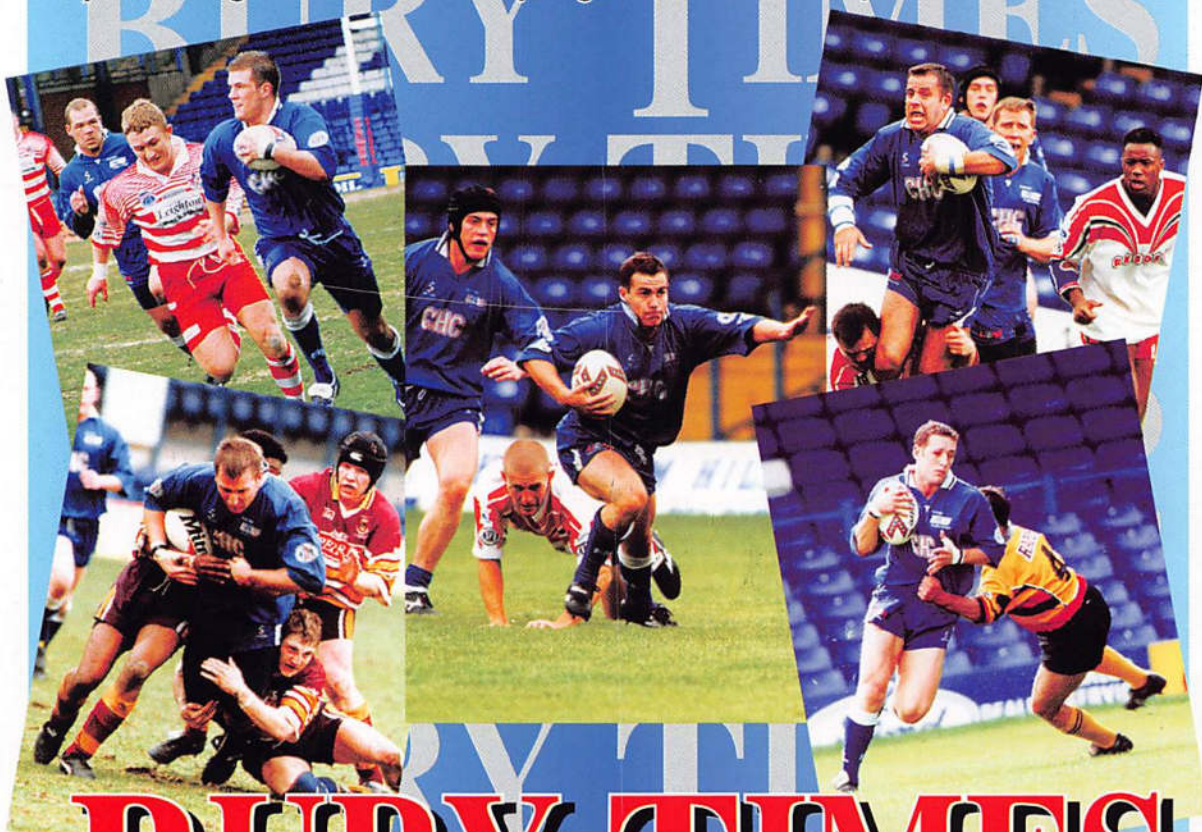


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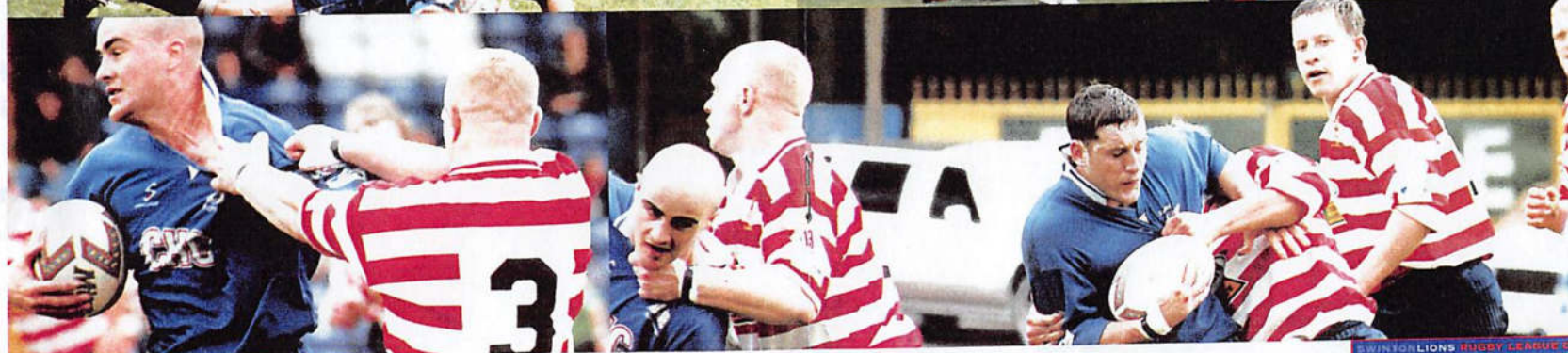
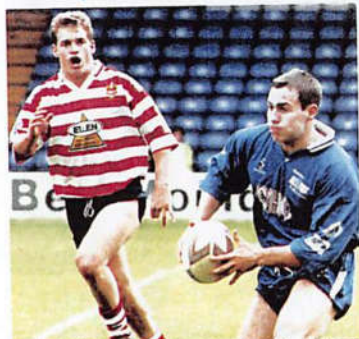
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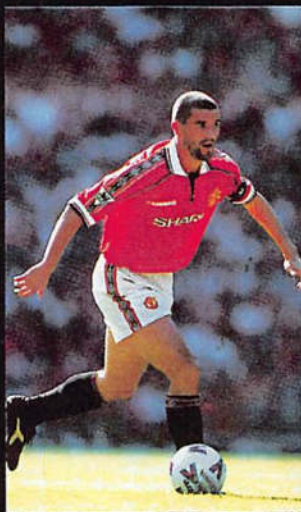
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WELL FOLKS HERE WE ARE AGAIN AND I WISH YOU ALL A HAPPY NEW MILLENNIUM AND I HOPE SANTA REMEMBERED TO COME DOWN YOUR CHIMNEY!

Well, it's been one hell of a close season hasn't it? Bramley in, then out, then??? Sheffield merge with Huddersfield Desperations, sorry, Giants, then join, and don't join us, in the Premiership, then??? Gateshead move lock stock and barrel down the East Coast to join the Hull Lloyds. Whoops, wrong again, Sharks. Sold down the Tyne!

What the hell is going on? I thought we got a kick in the unmentionables when the shrine was sold from under our noses and we relocated here at the Gigg back in '92. But what about the fans now, of these three clubs? They don't know if they're on their arse or their elbow, and why were they not consulted? They've been s--t on from a great height! Wrong! Wrong!

Wrong!

As you know I love this game, but Rugby League is in turmoil and from where I am sat, the hierarchy couldn't give a toss! How saw you lot out there? The R.L.S.A. had a meeting at the Willows and despite it not being my favourite acre on this planet I swallowed my pride and went! Nice room, nice bar, shame about the team!



Resign Goodway! Now!

Two carloads of Thunder fans drove down to voice their disgust at the way their team has been stolen from them, and the general mood of all the people there was that the game they love, the greatest game on the planet is in crisis, due to the way it is (not) being run! Why? Why? Why?

Speaking of the hierarchy, why the hell have they not sacked Andy Badway from the GB job? This guy is a joke! He's just not got it! His record in full internationals reads Played 8 Won 1 Drawn 1 Lost 6, which based on 2 points for a win and 1 for a draw works out as 12 1/2 per cent! Even bloody V.A.T. is higher than that! Resign Goodway! Now!

So there you have it we're in the third millennium and as the song goes 'Things Can Only Get Better!' They can't get much worse!

PS:

Oh yes!

"The Monton Mouth"

It's a title imposed on me by mon amis de Paris.

THE MONTON MOUTH

with SPELLEY





It's been a winter so far of discontent amongst rugby league fans, whether you are in the

Northern Ford Premiership or the European Super League for your diet of arguably the best game in the world.

There's hardly been a day when shock headlines have not hit the newspapers and the 13-a-side game has escaped the glare of others not so closely connected to the game as you people at today's game with Oldham and myself.

I've cringed at some of the goings on I've heard and seen plus what my father, Dave Nosey Parker, has heard around the traps, as the Aussies call it. In the two mergers and demise of Bramley it is the fans who have been hurt the most. The directors have got away without any financial comebacks and the players who have been freed have, on the whole, all found clubs, although maybe not at the sort of level contract wise they were on previously, although one Willie Peters has done very nicely at Wigan, thank you.

There may only have been 250 hardcore spectators with Bramley at the end of last season, but how they will miss their rugby club and the feeling of involvement when we all get underway today.

WHAT WE NEED RIGHT NOW IS POSITIVE ACTION ON THE FIELD FROM OUR PLAYERS...

Bramley will never comeback because the powers that be do not want them back, but the game needs those 250 spectators and I doubt they will turn to following the Leeds Rhinos. Hunslet Hawks may benefit by a few but we could see them lost to the game entirely.

Our family accountant who has done the books of a professional RL club for many years and is steeped in the game says his appetite for rugby league has really waned in the past few months and it is going to take some regenerating.

I'm so sorry to sound so negative with the first of my columns, but I'm sure my thoughts and his are echoed right across the game at this moment. What we need right now is positive action on the field from our players and, after months of politics being played out by our game's rulers, positive action from them is now putting the supporters and their opinions first.

Over the winter so far I have been watching some professional football at the

McAlpine Stadium, but unlike rugby league you go to the game, take your seat and then after the game leave it and just make your way to the car. What appeals to me in rugby league is that unless the club's employ a few "Hitler's" on the doors the barriers come down and you can mix with supporters pre and post match and the players after the game. You really feel part and parcel of the proceedings and not just a spectator like you are at football where there is no chance at the bigger clubs of being one of the "gang".

One thing for sure I'm glad the live action is back but I'm not so sure that I'll get used to usual things of winter rugby, trying to feel my feet and hands, and wondering after a frosty or snowy night if the game of my choice is going to be on or off. One thing about spring and summer rugby is that apart from the occasional downpour one feels much warmer.

A good tip the other day on the radio was for the spectator to take two average size potatoes to the game having had them in the oven all morning. Apparently the best thing is to wrap them in a pair of old socks and then go to the game with the overcoat on and one in each pocket. Whatsmore, if you are hungry on the way home you can eat them, so pack the salt and a couple of butter portions!

Yes, M'LADY... with Charlotte Parker



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Project Bury Football Ground, Bury:
Demolition of existing structure and removal of all timbers and existing facilities to the main stand. Reconstruct an all seater facility with executive facilities, pitch viewing and dining facilities. All work undertaken and completed in the close season.



Premiership

Express

with MARTYN SADLER

MARTYN SADLER,
Managing Editor of
Rugby League Express,
examines the nature of
the NFP Championship
play-off that will take
place at the end of this
season.



Many Rugby League fans might be asking why the Northern Ford Premiership is changing its play-off format this season, after the successful operation of the top-five format in the last two seasons.

The system is being changed to a top-eight format, and for one simple reason. The NFP wants to give more of its clubs the chance to participate in finals football. Eight out of the 18 NFP teams will feature in the play-offs this season, which means that the majority of clubs will have plenty to play for right throughout the season, right through to the Grand Final on the last Saturday in July.

But the new finals system won't be played under the old Premiership format, where the team finishing first played the team in eighth spot, second playing seventh, etc, with the loser of each game being eliminated.

Leigh coach Ian Millward pointed out the fault with that system in 'Total Rugby League' last August.

"In a straight knock-out competition, you could finish first and see six months hard work go down the drain in one match, which obviously isn't fair," said Millward at the time.

The system the NFP has come up with, like the top-five system, gives the highest placed clubs in positions one to four a second chance, if they are defeated on the first weekend, whereas the clubs finishing fifth to eighth are playing straight knockout football throughout the play-offs.

I have to take the credit (or the blame!) for suggesting the system to the NFP clubs, so I'd better explain in some detail how it works.

Set out below is the week-by-week guide to the top-eight play-off system.

WEEK 1

Preliminary Semi-finals
Match A Team 1 v Team 4
Match B Team 2 v Team 3
Winners go into Major Semi-finals
Losers go into Minor Semi-finals

Elimination Semi-finals
Match C Team 5 v Team 8
Match D Team 6 v Team 7
Winners go into Minor Semi-finals
Losers eliminated from play-offs

WEEK 2

Byes into Major Semi-finals in week 3
Winner of Match A
Winner of Match B

Minor Semi-finals
Match E
Loser of Match B home to Winner of Match D
Match F
Loser of Match A home to Winner of Match C
Winners go into Major Semi-finals
Losers eliminated from play-offs

WEEK 3

Major Semi-finals
Match G
Winner of Match A v Winner of Match E
Match H
Winner of Match B v Winner of Match F
Winners go into Grand Final
Losers eliminated from play-offs

WEEK 4

Grand Final
Match I
Winner of Match G v Winner of Match H
Winners are NFP Champions for the 2000 season

If this system had operated in 1999, Hull KR, York and Whitehaven, as the teams finishing sixth, seventh and eighth respectively, would have qualified for the play-offs.

But Whitehaven, as the eighth team, would have faced a tough battle to reach the Grand Final, having to win three times away from home to make it to the big one. Contrast that with the team finishing top, which only has to win twice at home to make the Grand Final.

You can see, I hope, the potential for a fascinating and exciting finals series. I, for one, can't wait for the last Saturday in July.



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with Mike Caine

THE ROVING MIKE



The Annual Presentation night at the end of last season was less well attended than in recent years,

but this can be put down to two major contributing factors. Firstly, there was the lack of time for preparation and planning caused by the unfortunate demise of the Supporters Club, which forced the "old guard" to act in haste. On the other hand there was a feeling of apathy amongst fans, not only at Swinton, but at many clubs throughout the League.

However, one thing happened at our presentation night, which has shone out like a bright star amongst all the political nonsense which has blighted the game throughout the autumn and early winter...Mike Gregory's speech. Never have I felt so uplifted by listening to a speaker as I was that night. It was brilliant and made me feel that our club is in good hands for the foreseeable future.

But, what about all these going's on since the curtain came down on last season. There was the refusal to allow NFP Grand Final winners, Hunslet Hawks into Super League. The so-called Hull/Gateshead and Huddersfield/Sheffield mergers. The demise of Bramley and re-birth of the Eagles. In fact there has been so much political bickering that we seem to have completely forgotten the total shambles of a performance by Great Britain and Ireland in the tri-nations series down under. To put in bluntly, the game is in a big mess. It makes me wonder why people follow it when the powers that be seem incapable of agreeing on anything, the rules are changed at his or her whim and everything seems so damned parochial.

The truth is, in my opinion, that since 1995 Rugby League has been ruled by greed, instead of good old common sense. Super League might as well be a four letter word as far as I am concerned. Just ask

yourself, why should the NFP accept Hull as a member to allow Gateshead to continue? Why were Huddersfield not relegated as they should have been? Why is there no promotion for Hunslet? More to the point, what the hell are Super League playing at by allowing the 1998 Challenge Cup winners to almost fade away completely? I don't know about promotion and marketing. It strikes me that Caisley and his cohorts couldn't run a stall on Pendlebury market, without being knee deep in debt!!! As for the NFP, what on earth are we doing starting the season on Boxing Day? A knee jerk reaction if ever there was one. Oh dear, what a gloomy picture I have painted. Can't help it though, as it's been doom and gloom throughout the closed season. So what on earth are we all doing back here as another campaign unveils? It was Mike Gregory's speech which kept me going, a real motivational effort if ever there was one. Alex Murphy has got nothing on our coach, I'll tell you!!!!

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Hello again brain-boxes! As usual I'll be asking you six questions on a sporting theme. Today's theme is...
"FORMER R.L. VENUES".

SPELLY'S QUIZ

1. **Liverpool City R.L.F.C. played at which ground last?**
2. **Blackpool Borough R.L.F.C. played at which ground last?**
3. **Where do The Lions play before moving to Station Road?**
4. **The Athletic Ground is now the site of a supermarket, who played there?**
5. **Which Rugby League team played at Wheaters Field?**
6. **Which Rugby League team's first home ground was Owlerton?**

ANSWERS 1. Knotty Ash 2. Borough Park 3. Chorley Road 4. Rochdale Hornets 5. Broughton Rangers 6. Sheffield Eagles



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**FOR NEWS,
VIEWS &
INTERVIEWS**

FROM THE LIONS ARCHIVES...

AN A-Z OF SWINTON GREATS ~ PART ONE



TOM ANDERSON

Anderson was a fine scrum-half whose career spanned the Great War. He made his debut on 11

November 1911, and often appeared in the same line-up as his brother, Fred, who was a winger. The brothers answered the patriotic call in 1914 and indeed Fred was awarded the Military Medal, whilst Tom spent much of his time digging the trenches in a labour battalion. Having survived the war, Tom continued at scrum half until early 1921 when he was sold to Warrington following the Lions' acquisition of a certain Bryn Evans. Anderson's solitary representative appearance came almost by accident. He was selected as reserve for a Tour Trial at Leeds in 1920, but due to a Widnes player being delayed by a late train Anderson ended up playing. However, he did not make final selection for the Great Britain tour to Australasia later that year.

Swinton Career Record: 99 appearances, 12 tries, 14 goals
Representative Honours: 1 Tour Trial

CHARLIE ARMITT

The son of the Lions' great hooker, Tommy Armit, Charlie carved a niche for himself in the second row after making his debut on 18 October 1947. However, he could also play loose forward and even had several outings on the wing including one for his club against the 1948/49 Australians, but his eye for a try made him the top scorer at Station Road during that same season. At the end of the 1948/49 campaign he made his debut for Lancashire, and in September 1949 he played for England when they lost to the Other Nationalities at Workington. Prior to the start of the 1953/54 season he was sold to Huddersfield.

Swinton Career Record: 145 appearances, 32 tries, 3 goals
Representative Honours: 1 England cap, 1 Lancashire cap.

TOMMY ARMITT

Arguably Swinton's greatest ever hooker. In fact Tommy had tried his luck at soccer with Crewe Alexandra before the Lions snapped him up from a local junior rugby team at the turn of the 1930s. He made his debut at the opening of Barrow's Craven Park on 29 August 1931, and went on to enjoy a glittering career. However, he was on the losing side with Swinton in 3 major cup finals before his club won the RL Championship in 1934/35. He also won the Lancashire League and Cup Double in 1940 in what should have been his testimonial year. However, in a show of great loyalty to his club which would shame many modern day players, Armit refused his testimonial because he felt that Swinton RLFC could ill-afford the expense during what was the early

years of the War. Tommy Armit made his Test debut at Station Road against the 1933 Australians, and went on to win 8 caps in all. He toured the Antipodes in 1936 alongside Martin Hodgson, and gained many other representative honours. On top of all this he was also twice on the winning side for Swinton against Australia. The War (during which he sometimes guested for Hull) cut short his career, but he did play on until 19 October 1946 when he made his final bow at Leigh. Swinton Career Record: 352 appearances, 24 tries, 6 goals
Representative Honours: 8 Great Britain caps (plus 8 Tour games), 10 England caps (1 try), 13 Lancashire caps (1 try), 1 Lancashire League, 3 Northern Rugby League, 1 Tour Trial

OWEN BADGER

Swinton's signing of the Welsh Rugby Union international centre, Owen Badger, caused a nationwide sensation back in 1897. Badger was persuaded to leave Llanelli for a reputed fee of £70, but his wife's opposition to the move was to cause him great difficulties during his relatively short stay at Chorley Road. Indeed on one occasion he found himself suspended for a breach of the anti-professional rules after he had gone home to visit his sick child and therefore had not worked prior to a Saturday match as he was required to do. He scored a try on his Swinton debut in a victory at Rochdale Hornets on 4 December 1897, but by 8 April 1899 he had made his final appearance. In between he had played for Lancashire against Yorkshire at Salford's New Barns ground.

Swinton Career Record: 27 appearances, 6 tries, 19 goals
Representative Honours: 1 Lancashire cap



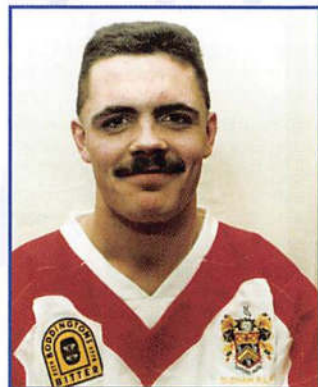
LADIES & GENTLEMEN OUR - GUEST SPEAKER



**Today
Swinton
Lions Chief
Executive
and former
Oldham
Coach Tony
Barrow.**

'Back to the good old days' playing Rugby League over Christmas and New Year. I personally like the idea and I strongly believe winter is the season for rugby. I have listened to all the arguments why we shouldn't play in winter but I ask the question "Have gates improved by playing in the summer?" I think not.

I have looked forward to today's game from the minute we received the fixture list. What could be better than Swinton v Oldham on New Years Day (well near enough!)? It is a great pleasure for me to welcome Oldham to Gigg Lane



**Winning Try Scorer in
Premiership Final 1990
TOMMY MARTYN**

and of course I have fantastic memories from the years I coached them. Those memories include winning the Division Two Premiership at Old Trafford by one point after being down by twenty points at half time, reaching the final of the Lancashire Cup and playing in that fantastic Challenge Cup Semi Final at Wigan. That Semi Final was against another old club of mine, Warrington, and I'm sure lots of today's visiting Oldham fans will have been at the game.

In the last minute of the game Paul Lord dived in at the corner following a chip kick from Mike Ford only for referee John Holdsworth to disallow the try for offside. I swear to this day Lordy was onside but the referee is always right (so they say!). Players from that team are still involved with Oldham today, including Leo Casey, Paul Round, John Henderson and last but not least Oldham's new Player Coach Mike Ford. I wish Mike all the very best in his coaching position (except in games against Swinton of course).

I have the greatest respect for Mike Ford and believe he is one of the top young British Coaches in the game along with our own Mike Gregory. Talking of Mike Gregory, I would like to take this opportunity to wish him

and his players all the best for the coming season. I do believe the team Mike Greg has assembled are, in stature, the biggest Swinton has seen in many a year and you can't beat a good big un. With seven new signings, five of which have come from Super League, we should not lack guile, drive or experience.

Finally, I would like to wish all our supporters, all visiting supporters from Oldham and supporters of Rugby League everywhere a happy and prosperous New Year.

Tony Barrow



LIONS PROMOTIONS



Treasureline Weekly Draw

It maybe the first home match of a new season but the Treasureline Weekly Draw carries on 52 weeks of the year. We thank all our collectors who helped during 1999 and need the same sort of commitment in 2000. To that end, we need help in the following area's with collectors willing to do a couple of hours per

week:-
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Little Lever
Farnworth
and Walkden

Agents receive 15% commission, 10% bonus on winners sold and in most cases a FREE MATCH TICKET. Ring Steve Walmsley on 705-2144 or Marlene on 794-6150.

Millennium Draw

Many of you have received and sold tickets for the Millennium Draw which takes place this Saturday. **£2,000** is the big prize on offer, overall prizes totalling **£3,000** if you haven't had any - call in reception after today's game, or at the shop on Station Road.

Treasureline Winners

No.	Name	Agent
£1000 R3945	Mr Greenhalgh	Bhikha News

£10 Consolation Prize to holders of the same number as the above winner, BUT with a different prefix letter.

£100	T0130	S Wark	Richard Corbett
	C1227	Neil Brockbank	Visa Paymen
	I2398	Mrs Hulme	Susan Talbot
	C5647	L Francis	Beverley Calvert

£50	D3938	Mrs A Dunstan	James Parkinson
	J5605	Mrs Lee	Paul Mather
	J1024	Mr S Greaves	Brian Clarke
	L0161	Mrs Kim Baker	John Phillips

£25	K6110	Mr L Smith	Jim Evans
	R3915	V Williams	Owen Williams
	T4133	Mrs Shebani	D&J Mellor
	E0056	Mr Warburton	Jack Robins

£10 Consolation Prizes: G3823 G6985 Q1691 R4624
Agts Watch Winners: Arnold Cook, Stan Devlin, Debbie Talbot

Golden Gamble

With a decent gate expected today lets see a good pay out on the Golden Gamble draw, only possible of course with your help.

Souvenirs

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FIXTURES

SEASON 2000 APPEARANCES & SCORERS

	DATE	OPPONENTS	TIME	VEN	SCORE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
JANUARY	SUN 26	WORKINGTON TOWN	3.00	A																		
	SUN 2	OLDHAM	3.00	H																		
	SUN 9	LEIGH CENTURIONS	3.00	A																		
	SUN 16	LANCASHIRE LYNX	3.00	H																		
	SUN 23	WIDNES VIKINGS	3.00	A																		
FEB	SUN 6	ROCHDALE HORNETS	3.00	H																		
	SUN 20	BATLEY BULLDOGS	3.00	H																		
MARCH	SUN 5	WHITEHAVEN WARRIORS	3.30	A																		
	SUN 12	BARROW BORDER RDRS.	3.00	H																		
	SUN 19	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	3.00	A																		
	SUN 26	KEIGHLEY COUGARS	3.00	H																		
APRIL	SUN 2	DRAGONS	3.00	A																		
	SUN 9	DEWSBURY RAMS	3.00	H																		
	SUN 16	SHEFFIELD EAGLES	3.00	H																		
	FRI 21	WORKINGTON TOWN	3.00	H																		
	MON 24	OLDHAM	7.30	A																		
	MON 1	FEATHERSTONE ROVERS	7.30	A																		
MAY	SUN 7	HUNSLET HAWKS	3.00	H																		
	WED 10	YORK	7.30	A																		
	SUN 14	LEIGH CENTURIONS	3.00	H																		
	SUN 21	LANCASHIRE LYNX	3.00	A																		
	FRI 26	WIDNES VIKINGS	7.30	H																		
	MON 29	ROCHDALE HORNETS	3.00	A																		
	SUN 4	BATLEY BULLDOGS	3.00	A																		
JUNE	SUN 11	WHITEHAVEN WARRIORS	3.00	H																		
	SUN 18	BARROW BORDER RDRS.	3.00	A																		
	SUN 25	YORK	3.00	H																		
	SUN 2	KEIGHLEY COUGARS	2.45	A																		
JULY	SUN 2	KEIGHLEY COUGARS	2.45	A																		



NFP SCOREBOARD 2000

	BARROW	BATLEY	DEWSBURY	DONCASTER	FEATHERSTONE	HULL K R	HUNSLET	KEIGHLEY	LANCASHIRE	LEIGH	OLDHAM	ROCHDALE	SHEFFIELD	SWINTON	WHITEHAVEN	WIDNES	WORKINGTON	YORK
BARROW																		
BATLEY																		
DEWSBURY																		
DONCASTER																		
FEATHERSTONE																		
HULL K R																		
HUNSLET																		
KEIGHLEY																		
LANCASHIRE																		
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OLDHAM																		
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WHITEHAVEN																		
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COACH MIKE GREGORY

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COACH MIKE FORD

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Touch Judges: TBA

Reserve Referee: TBA

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