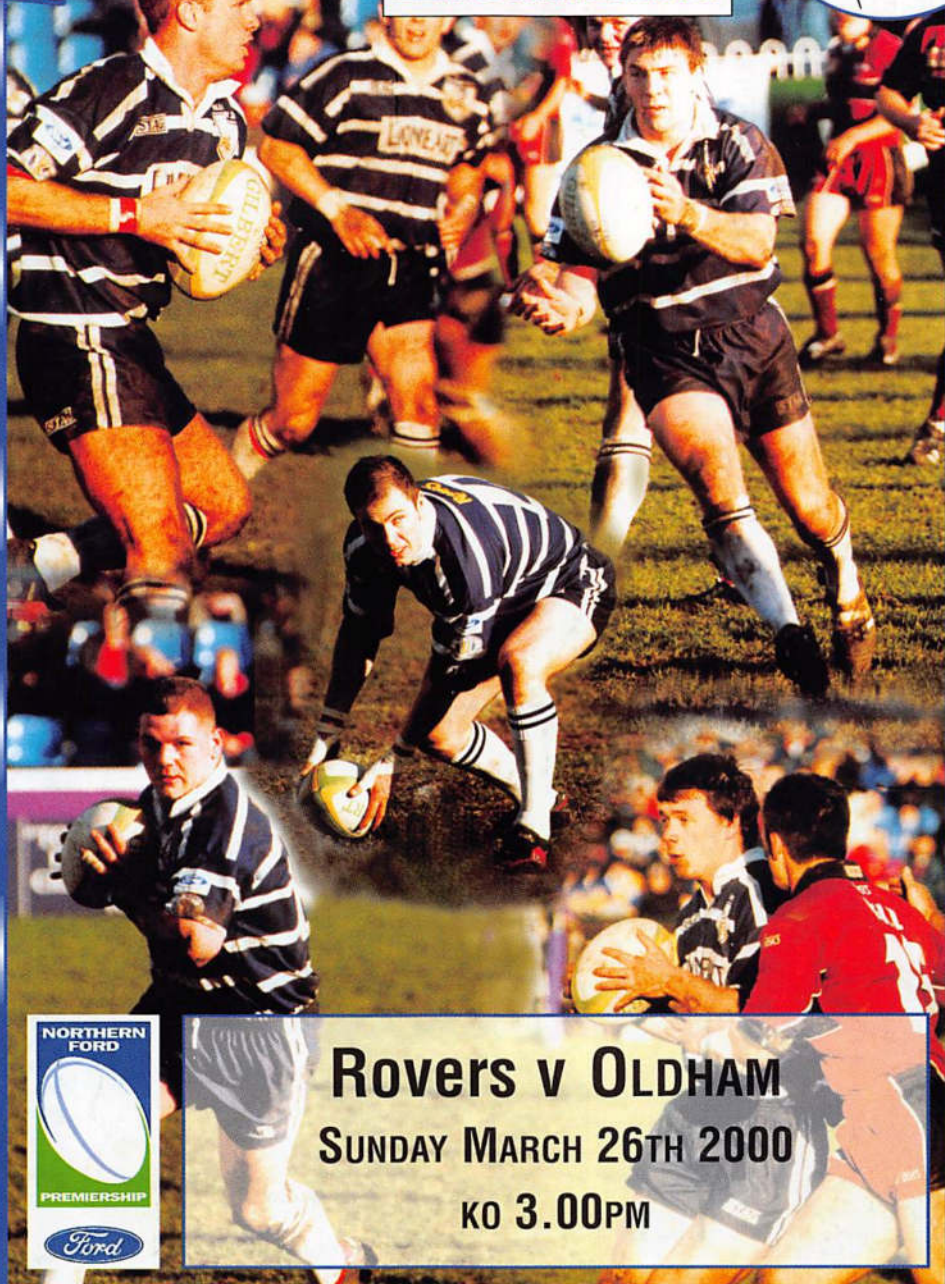


FEATHERSTONE

Rovers

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Rovers v OLDHAM
SUNDAY MARCH 26TH 2000
KO 3.00PM

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Game On!



... WITH **TERRY MULLANEY**

THIS afternoon's game against the in-form Oldham Roughyeds is the first in a sequence of tough looking fixtures which will really test the capabilities of the Rovers' young squad. Player coach Mike Ford has done tremendously well in transforming a below-average side from last season into an outfit which is capable of giving any team in the Northern Ford Premiership a run for their money, as high flying Dewsbury found out last Sunday.

Rovers themselves, have proved also to be one of the 'surprise packets' of the season so far, with only two league defeats, in attaining a lofty third spot in the Premiership table. The loss of star quality players such as Brendon Tuuta, Hitro Okesene, Wayne Simonds and Richard Slater was considered to be a huge blow to the immediate fortunes of the club with the responsibility being laid squarely on the shoulders of a crop of youngsters who many thought would lack the physical attributes and experience to cope. Incredibly those same young men have come of age very quickly indeed and are growing in confidence with every game they play.

It may be a coincidence but to my mind the one game which really proved to these youngsters that they possess genuine talent was the Silk Cut Challenge Cup game against the Leeds Rhinos when the players' performance against the current trophy holders won them so very many friends. Although Rovers were defeated, that game in my opinion, proved to be a psychological victory from which the side has not yet looked back.

Having said that, we are by no means getting carried away. There is a long way to go and many tough matches ahead. We still need at least one big, tough and experienced forward and the club is

confident in making progress in this department over the next couple of days, having agreed a deal with a player who will be no stranger to the supporters of both of today's competing teams. Get your thinking caps on!

Next Sunday's game at Hilton Park against table toppers, Leigh Centurions, will go ahead as normal due to the Trans Pennine Cup Final now being played mid-week on Wednesday 12th April. The game will see the return of powerful forward, Micky Clarkson, who completes his four match ban this afternoon. His offence, as you will remember, was leading with the elbow which, in fairness, has to be punished. The annoying aspect of Micky's suspension is that he appears to have been treated more severely than Wakefield's Frank Watene who was also dismissed for the same offence which looks every bit as bad, if not worse, on video than Micky's and he only received a three match ban. If Rovers win today Micky will have lost four winning pay packets. Presumably Frank Watene, being with a Super League club, will still be receiving contract money. There seems to be a great disparity in the level of punishment for the same offence. Unfortunately it is too late for us to appeal against Micky's suspension but I would like someone to explain the reason for such an inconsistent application of justice.

Another question that I would like to know the answer to is... who was the last Super League player to receive a ban of four or more matches for any type of offence? My guess is that you'll have to go back a long, long way.

As you all know I would be the last person to suggest that Super League players receive preferential treatment.

FANS' FORUM . . . FANS' FORUM . . . FANS' FORUM . . .

ROVERS CLUBHOUSE · THURSDAY 13TH APRIL 8.00PM

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The Panel – Gary Hetherington, Peter Fox, Peter Roe, Neil Tunnicliffe, Greg McCallum

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Coach's Comments

... BY **PETER ROE**

WHILST OUR winning run continues I wish to stress we must keep our feet firmly glued to the ground. We are, as I have stated many times previously, in a period of transition with only a scattering of experience to help bring the youngsters on.

Mike Ford and Chairman Chris Hamilton have really set their stall out this season and an influx of new players along side ex Featherstone favourite Leo Casey have made Oldham a tremendously competitive outfit so far and we will be up against an inform opposition today who in fact will come into the match fancying their chances no doubt.

As far as our club is concerned the in phrase is very much one of development. We are attempting to develop our First and under 21 grades of football with as many locally produced players as possible and of course our Academy side which will commence again soon.

The loss of Brad Hepi to Salford was a blow and obviously we will miss him, the younger lads enjoyed his company on and off the pitch, we wish him well with his new club.

We took three of our young players to Workington last week and I feel Richard Thaler, Lee Williamson and Ben (Herman) Smallman will have gained through the experience, they all acquitted themselves well on the overnight stopover and we hope they will all kick on from here.

Finally, last but by no means least, many thanks to the travelling army of Rovers fans who invested heavily in terms of petrol money and ground admittance last week at Workington, I firmly believe that your commitment to the team was a big factor assisting the win.

Yours in rugby,

Peter

Lancaster's Look Back

FEATHERSTONE Rovers entered senior Rugby League in the 1921/22 season after a number of successful seasons in junior football. As this is the first season of a new Millennium we thought we would look back at the men, some famous, some not so famous, who all played their part in that history making first year. *Steve Lancaster continues his look back at the players who played their part in Featherstone Rovers' history-making first year.*

JACK HIRST (36)

Debut: 27 August, Bradford (A) 17-3
Position: C
Farewell: 6 December 30 Broughton R (H) 4-7
Career: A T G Po
C 278 115 3 351

Hemsworth youngster Jack Hirst was given a trial in November 1920. Having impressed he was signed immediately afterwards and went on to become one of Rovers' finest ever players. In a 10 year career JH played 278 times scoring 115 tries, almost 1 every 2 games, a terrific record in any era. Jack was a Centre with pace and body swerve, he seemed to glide across the ground. Played in the opening fixture against Bradford, making 36/39 appearances scoring 9 tries that season. Had to wait until his 7th appearance for his first try against Leeds (H) 1/10/21 scoring both tries in 10-13 defeat. Jack Hirst has the honour of being the first Rovers' player to score a hat trick against Bradford (H) 23/12/22 finishing the match with 4 tries in a 40-12 win. In that 2nd season JH crossed the whitewash a further 14 times, giving him his best ever return 18/25 appearances. Amazingly for such a prolific try scorer Jack finished as the club's top try scorer on only three occasions, 1922/23, 1923/24, and 1928/29. Jack was a

try scorer on 28/4/28 (A) Leeds in the play off semi final when Rovers beat Leeds 15-12. A week later JH lined up in an unchanged side at Watersheddings against Swinton but was unable to prevent Rovers going down 5-0. Rovers were Championship runners up in only their 7th season, a remarkable achievement. The following season 1928/29 JH missed just 4 games, playing 40 times including Rovers first Yorkshire Cup final appearance at Belle Vue, Wakefield against Leeds. Rovers again went down 5-0. A regular County player and England International, Jack Hirst's career was cut short by a knee injury which forced his retirement. Jack's Final try on 26/11/30 came (A) Swinton in a 7-21 defeat.

TAYLOR JOHNSON (4)

Debut: 11th February Salford (H) 13-5
Position: C
Farewell: 4th March 22 Bramley (H) 0-0
Career: A T G Po
C 4 2 0 6

Signed from Dewsbury in July 1921, Taylor made a 2 try debut against Salford playing Centre. Last appearance came in a 0-0 draw (H) Bramley. Amazingly Rovers were nilled 8 times in that first season. Unable to force his way into the side, TJ drifted away from Post Office Road.

Featherstone Rovers RLFC



... **SEASON 1999/2000**

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Reformed: 1908

Elected to NR FL: June 1921

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A Jepson, A Morris, T M Mullaney,

J Reed, J Williams, T Jones, P Jones,

M Ashby, J A Jarvis & L Hawkins

REPRESENTATIVE PLAYERS

Great Britain:

T Askin, C Bibb, J Bridges, T Clawson,
M Dixon, S Evans, Deryck Fox,
Don Fox,

D Hobbs, G Jordan, S Molloy,
A Morgan, S. Nash, P. Newlove,
P. Smith, J. Thompson

Tourists

T Askin, C Bibb, J Bridges, G Cooper,
C Dooler, S Evans, Deryck Fox,
Don Fox,

D Hobbs, S Nash, P Newlove,
I Smales, J Thompson

World Cup Tourists:

A Morgan, P Smith, J Thompson

England:

J Bridges, I Butt, M Dixon, S Evans,
V Farrar, J Hirst, D Hobbs, A Morgan,
J Mullaney, P Newlove, P Smith,
R Stone, J Thompson, A Wood

Wales: P Banner, H Box

Ireland: L Casey, L. Child

Scotland: N. Lowe

France: D Divet, F Banquet

New Zealand: B Tuuta

Great Britain U21s:

C Bibb, P Bonson, Deryck Fox,
P Lyman, P Newlove, M Pearson,
I Smales

Great Britain U24s:

K Bell, S Evans, D Fennell, V Farrar,
M Gibbins, J Gilbert, D Hobbs,
T Ramshaw, P Smith, V Thomas,
J Thompson, L Tonks

Academy Tourist: Jamie Stokes

Academy Internationals: J Stokes,

N. Lowe, K. Pratt & S. Dickens

U21/Academy Representative:

D. Hunt

CLUB HONOURS

Championship Runners-Up: 1927/28

Division One Champions: 1976/77

Division Two Champions: 1979/80,

1992/93

Division Two Premiership Winners:

1992/93

Division Two Premiership Runners-Up:

1987/88

RL Challenge Cup Winners: 1966/67,
1972/73, 1982/83

RL Challenge Cup Runners-Up:
1951/52, 1973/74

Yorkshire Cup Winners: 1939/40,
1959/60

Yorkshire Cup Runners-Up: 1928/29,
1963/64, 1966/67, 1969/70, 1970/71,
1976/77, 1977/78, 1989/90

Captain Morgan Trophy Runners Up:
1973/74

Yorkshire League Runners-Up: 1928,
1962

1st Division Grand Finalists Runners
Up: 1998

RECORDS

In a Match:

Goals: 13 by Mark Knapper v Keighley
- 17 Sept 1989

Tries: 6 by Mike Smith v Doncaster -
13 April 1968

6 by Chris Bibb v Keighley - 17 Sept
1989

Points: 40 by Martin Pearson v
Whitehaven - 26 Nov 1995

In a Season:

Goals: 163 by Steve Quinn - 1979/80

Tries: 48 by Paul Newlove - 1992/93

Points: 391 by Martin Pearson -
1992/93

Appearances: 46 by C Woolford -
1959/60

In a Career:

Goals: 1,210 by Steve Quinn - 1975/88

Tries: 162 by Don Fox - 1953/66

Points: 2,654 by Steve Quinn
- 1975/88

Appearances: 440 by Jim Denton
- 1921/34

Highest Score: 86-18 v Keighley
- 17 Sept 1989

Highest Score Against: 70-2 at Halifax
- 14 April 1941

Attendance: 17,531 v St Helens
(RL Cup) - 21 March 1959

Yorkshire Cup: 10,700 v Leeds
- Sept 1959

League: 14,990 v Wakefield
- January 1962

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Phil Hodgson

. . . OF THE RUGBY LEAGUER



IT WAS a treat to see Gateshead - sorry, Hull - on the telly a couple of weeks ago.

Not only because they beat mighty Wigan. Given the strength of the squad assembled by Shaun McRae, that was hardly a massive surprise. No, it was the many elements away from the action that impressed me.

There is a term in the newspaper business and in other walks of life known as USP. That stands for Unique Selling Point, it's something many businesses would give their eye teeth for, and it's a quality that many professional Rugby League clubs have in abundance.

None more than Hull. The evidence was there for the nation to see against Wigan, as it will be today for the Silk Cut Challenge Cup semi-final against Leeds.

It was a terrible mistake when Hull discarded the sobriquet 'FC' for the anonymous 'Sharks'. And it was just as bad when the famous irregular black and white hoops were replaced by something which could almost have belonged to any club.

They could never gag the fans though, and Old Faithful has remained the rallying call from the Boulevard terraces and the Threepenny Stand.

Not that it's been heard too often in the past few seasons. But the signs are that the good times could be back. And the old cowboy song is likely to reverberate throughout the north and beyond for a while yet.

Happily, the fans will no longer be cheering on the Sharks. It's back to the stylish Hull FC, a master-stroke of marketing which has put right a piece of idiocy foisted on the club by someone with little regard for Rugby League's traditions.

The same goes for the shirt, back to the

style worn by the likes of Billy Batten. Those colours, I always thought, must have been worth five points start to the Airlie Birds and they look superb.

It never ceased to amaze me that so many clubs seemed intent on dumping the strips which had served them so well for so long and which looked so good. If that last remark seems outdated, I can only defend myself by pointing out that major companies such as Benetton sold polo shirts based on the traditional Workington Town and Dewsbury colours by the million.

It's a pity there was no right of copyright on those designs, but at least many clubs have seen the light and are reverting to their original strips.

Hunslet have brought back the proper Myrtle, White and Flame, Leeds are again recognisable, and St Helens no longer look like Val Doonican after a night on the tiles.

Perhaps the most evocative strip of all - Featherstone Rovers' - presently graces the National Conference League, courtesy of Featherstone Lions.

I wrote earlier that Hull FC's strip must have been worth five points start. Rovers' certainly was, and I speak from experience. No rugby side has looked classier or more fearsome than Featherstone, and I know I am not the only fan who hopes that the Post Office Road outfit opts to return permanently to one of the most famous strips in the world.

The same applies to all the other clubs with long and proud heritages that should be nurtured and cherished. Unique Selling Points are among the first things the successful Marketing man seeks to highlight. We appear, at last, to be making the most of them.

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More than a game

... WITH ALAN BROOKES

ROVERS V OLDHAM

Last time at Lionheart Stadium

27th June 1999

AT the time of Oldham's last visit to Featherstone we were pushing strongly for a top five spot, having regained our sense of direction under new coach Peter Roe. Only three points behind fifth placed Widnes, a win in this game was a must if our momentum was to be maintained.

Oldham on the other hand were languishing near the bottom of the table with only four wins from fourteen starts.

We had of course already beaten Oldham only two weeks earlier in a league game played at Rochdale, so we knew exactly what we were up against.

Inspired by acting skipper Richard Slater Rovers were in control from the start and never allowed the Oldham attack to get into gear.

Jamie Rooney kicked Rovers into a third minute lead and then only seven minutes later converted his own try after good work from Okesene and Bramald.

Newlove was next on the score sheet shortly followed by Stokes, who touched down under the sticks following a kick by Rooney.

With the young scrum half converting both tries and then coolly slotting over a drop goal on

thirty five minutes Rovers were fully deserved of their 21 - 0 half time lead.

The second period saw Oldham score their only points of the day albeit as a result of a terrible defensive blunder - two Rovers' defenders failing to collect a harmless looking kick allowed Farrell the opportunity of an easy try. The Oldham full back duly converted his own try but that was the last we saw of the Roughyeds.

Nine minutes into the half Rooney had Handley over the line for another converted try to make it 27 - 6 and at that point the remnants of the Oldham defence completely wilted.

Six Rovers' tries in the final quarter saw Oldham completely routed.

Coventry, only on the field a few minutes, began the final onslaught when he raced in from the halfway line, then Amone followed up in typical style by forcing his way over from short range. Next was Matt Bramald who gathered Handley's kick to score wide of the uprights, and as the scoring spree continued Okesene's class was apparent when both Handley and Tuuta were on hand to put the ball over the whitewash. In the dying seconds Tuuta provided the final pass for Handley to complete a well deserved hat trick.

Rooney landing five out of six conversion attempts during this last twenty minutes meant that he finished the day with a creditable twenty five point haul.

RESULT

ROVERS 61 OLDHAM 6

(Half time 21 - 0)

Teams :-

ROVERS:

SIMMONDS; STOKES (T); LAW; NEWLOVE (T);
BRAMALD (T); HANDLEY (3T); ROONEY (T, 10G, DG);
OKESENE; HEPTINSTALL; CLARKSON; EVANS;
LOWE; SLATER;
Subs. COVENTRY (T); TUUTA (T); AMONE (T);
DICKENS;

OLDHAM:

FARRELL (T,G); MEADE; SINFIELD; DARKES;
McNICHOLAS; BROWN; CROOK; CLEGG; HOUGH;
CASEY; ROUND; PERALTA; SHAW;
Subs. PERRETT; BARKER; JACKMAN; PRESCOTT;

Referee: Mr Peter Gilmour (Workington)

Attendance: 1,437

ROVERS V OLDHAM - PAST RESULTS

HOME

1999	ROVERS	61	OLDHAM	6
1994/95	ROVERS	36	OLDHAM	14
1993/94	ROVERS	30	OLDHAM	24
1992/93(2)	ROVERS	52	OLDHAM	14
1992/93(1)	ROVERS	24	OLDHAM	20
1990/91	ROVERS	28	OLDHAM	20
1988/89	ROVERS	18	OLDHAM	14
1987/88	ROVERS	8	OLDHAM	8

AWAY

1999	OLDHAM	18	ROVERS	25
1994/95	OLDHAM	10	ROVERS	20
1993/94	OLDHAM	22	ROVERS	8
1992/93(2)	OLDHAM	24	ROVERS	22
1992/93(1)	OLDHAM	4	ROVERS	24
1990/91	OLDHAM	18	ROVERS	20
1988/89	OLDHAM	40	ROVERS	18
1987/88	OLDHAM	15	ROVERS	18

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Terrace Talk

... WITH STEVE LANCASTER



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BACK TO Post Office Road for the action this afternoon with the visit of Oldham. Many supporters will make the journey over the Pennines as Oldham is currently having resurgence after the ill fated Super League days. It's nice to see, long may it continue. Have a pleasant day with us but hopefully not too much of a happy one, as Rovers supporters obviously want the win and two vital points. Welcome just the same whoever you're here to support today.

With Rovers sitting proudly up in the top four and a bit of a gap beginning to appear things are looking good despite Peter Roe constantly telling us how young, inexperienced a side Rovers are, not to mention how small a squad he has at his disposal. Of course Peter is right but supporters can't help themselves, his words are now a few inches above our heads instead of in our ears. I can't help comparing his words to those of David O'Leary who has been singing from the same hymn sheet all season, yet Leeds Utd are there, why not Rovers?

Oldham and Rovers go back along way without really having had our paths cross in any significant way, big games, finals or the like (except the Premiership at Old Trafford but that was division two, and anyway we lost, so let's not talk about that). 23rd April 1995 is one fixture no supporter can ever forget. The final fixture of that season, here at Post Office Road. The final fixture ever, possibly, no more Rovers. John's Hill's words on the video as fans flood onto the pitch in protest of the merger. (Where are you all now?). The result didn't matter; the players took an age to get off the pitch, lifted up as though they had just won the Championship. For the record Rovers won 36-14, but so what Rovers were to become Calder and Oldham were to become Manchester along with Salford and Swinton.

Visionaries, who needs em? Up until that point Oldham were just a Lancashire outfit playing in a crappy ground that you always fancied Rovers could take two points off. Oldham survived and thankfully now is on the up. Rugby League needs all our clubs however big or small they may be. Expect Cas, of course.

Nice to see Gateshead knocking Wigan out of the cup the other week especially when the camera caught Uncle Mo looking more than a little worried. Pity it didn't show him again at the end, but the final shot of Rovers old favourite Steve Collins blooded and batted was just as good. This could be Hull's best chance of glory again because next season most of the Aussies will have to be released. What a task that will be players like Collins, Daylight and Sammut, without being stars never put a foot wrong but will no doubt be let go. Funnily enough, if Hull do win the cup every one can still sing "You never won at Wembley" as the final will be at Murryfield.

Two points last week and the trip home from Workington was much more enjoyable, although I suppose both coaches will be disappointed with the defences. But Rovers won so no matter, it was great. Next week Rovers take on Leigh. This will show how far Rovers have progressed, but could just be the best time to play them as they have lost their coach and play Dewsbury this week and again on Wednesday in the Trans Pennine Cup Final. The supporters will take a bus; bookings can be made this afternoon in the hut or by ringing the above numbers. Membership has now closed, but non members are still welcome to travel but with a slightly higher fare. Book early this is a cracker with hopefully loads of Rovers fans making the journey to cheer the lads on. Enjoy the match, have a safe journey home.

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The Flat Capper

....BY COLIN SMITH

FIRSTLY, may I say congratulations to the lads and staff after their success in Cumbria. I understand they stayed overnight in 4/5 star accommodation, partly paid for by themselves. This is the sort of preparation and team spirit that will sustain us even when we have a decimated side. The seventeen selected all did justice to themselves and the proud name of Featherstone Rovers by their efforts. It seems that the quest for props could be over. To my mind Dickens, David, Lowe and Smallman can more than adequately foot the bill. We are showing endeavour, skill and pride and a big thank you has to go to our coach for this.

Have you seen the gates are falling in our league again? The opening of the caravan season plus the start of Super League has I feel, had an adverse effect. The decision has already been made to start next season on December 31st. I still think a full Winter programme starting in September would have been more beneficial for NFP clubs.

Well we now know what we long suspected. The disciplinary board has one rule for NFP clubs and another for Super League. As an ardent rugby fan I watch Super League on Sky, either taping it or watching live. The Leeds v Wigan match was exciting and produced some excellent rugby. However I counted ten players leading with the elbow in the first half alone! Ah! you will say, 4 matches and a fine-answer nothing not even a yellow card. Then we

have wild man Morley. He attempt's to decapitate Gilmour and then Houghton (very clearly shown on tele), then puts the nut on Mestrov and is put on report. The judiciary look at the video with their usual blinkers where Leeds are concerned and he gets THREE matches. Surely his offence was more severe than Clarkson's, I would have thought six minimum. Additionally I saw no mention of a fine. I am willing to be persuaded that my reasoning is wrong, but you will need a strong argument.

I see Ellery got the chop. Someone suggested to Millward their new coach that the way to survive at Saints was not to win anything, might have something there.

Oh incidentally I hear that all the Australians who play for London Broncos have hired Michael Caine as their voice coach so that Londoners can understand them. Get wiv it mate!

What do you think of the refs having mikes strapped to them. Aren't they polite to the Super League players. "Come along chaps, Henry stay back please you're offside" They are becoming regular little TV stars. Perhaps they might extend this courtesy to our league. What next bouffant hair styles and tailored outfits? The way they flash their teeth when the cameras are on them perhaps they will be doing toothpaste adverts soon. Stick to refereeing chaps, the players are the stars.

Finally, have a good game and safe journey home.

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Premiership

Express

with MARTYN SADLER

WHO'S THE BEST?

League Express editor MARTYN SADLER considers today's big game in the Northern Ford Premiership.



Few people would argue against the view that Dewsbury and Leigh have been the two form teams in the Northern Ford Premiership in the early weeks of this year's competition.

So it is wholly right and proper that these two clubs will contest the Trans-Pennine Cup final on Wednesday 12 April.

Dewsbury have only lost one game - to Keighley Cougars - while Leigh went down to Whitehaven and Swinton. More importantly, both clubs have an unbeaten run in the league competition, with Leigh's last defeat on 16 January in West Cumbria, while Dewsbury's defeat at Keighley came on 5 February, a game that I saw, when the Cougars played out of their skins to beat their Yorkshire rivals.

One of the two clubs will go into Trans-Pennine final with another defeat, however, if only because they play each other today at Ram Stadium in what looks likely to be the game of the season so far in the NFP.

Leigh are currently at the top of the league, with Dewsbury, having played one game fewer, in second place. It's the sort of game that should, by rights, have a massive crowd turning out at the Ram Stadium.

Leigh, despite losing their inspirational coach Ian Millward to St Helens recently, had a great 22-6 win last weekend at home to title challengers Doncaster Dragons, while Dewsbury came back to pip Oldham at the post 14-12 at Boundary Park.

I'm still not sure that the rest of the Rugby League world fully understands what a good standard the competition is reaching this season. Just read the report of these two

games in League Express last Monday, and you'll realise just how compelling they were.

Dewsbury, still missing Agar, did marvellously well to hold out the rampant Roughyeds, with Barry Eaton, as always, their main organiser, and the hard running Sean Richardson the game star.

Leigh, in their first game without Millward at the helm, gradually pulled ahead of the Dragons after being level at half-time, with Tim Street inspirational, as always, fullback Stuart Donlan a standout, and temporary coach Norman Turley timing his substitution just right, by swapping his hookers - the outstanding youngster Mick Higham and the experienced Anthony Murray - after 60 minutes, with two tries that clinched the game coming shortly afterwards.

It was great stuff, and would have been a pleasure for any Leigh fan, or NFP fans generally, to read about.

Despite all the great rugby, however, I still have a nagging feeling that the Northern Ford Premiership is not getting the profile it deserves, apart from in the Rugby League dedicated media.

If you really want to read more about the competition you should read 'Total Rugby League' every Friday to see my colleague Mike Latham's preview of the weekend's action.

But apart from that, and newspapers, where is the competition's profile? After a great start crowds have dropped away, and not just because of the onset of Super League.

It's disappointing, because many potential Rugby League fans are missing out on some great entertainment.



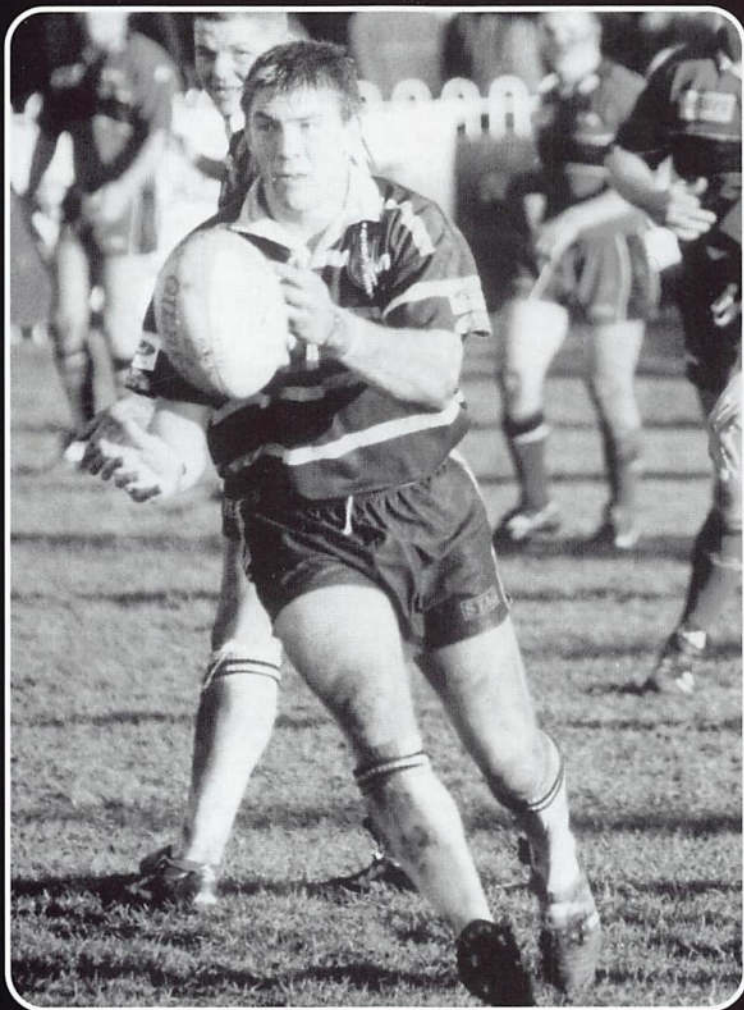
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RICHARD CHAPMAN



RICHARD'S stats for NFPL '99, already make an interesting comparison with this years figures and indicate the role that Peter Roe has given him; impact player, supersub call it what you will. Last year he came off the bench 9 times in 20 appearances. He has equalled that already and the team is only twelve games into the season.



A Rough Guide to ...

... OLDHAM

OLDHAM have had a rather troubled existence over the past few years, but appear to have put all their troubles behind them. A new Board and new thinking have put the club on a steady course.

MIKE FORD (Player/Coach) Has put together a well balanced side and now their performances on the field make them very strong candidates for the play-offs at the end of the season.

A very good away win at Widnes a couple of matches ago augurs well for their future. The Vikings themselves looked top five candidates and will have been blown off course by the home defeat by Oldham.

Last week they were at home to high flyers, Dewsbury, and in a splendid encounter only came off second best by 2 points. No mean feat.

MARK SIBSON - An exciting full back and goal kicker, this 23 year old played for Loughborough University for four years before turning out for Castleford's Alliance side. Recommended to Bramley and became an instant hit, going out on loan to Super League club Huddersfield Giants. An elusive attacker he has been a key player so far this season for the Roughyeds.

JOEY HAYES - A young winger who has crammed a lot into his relatively short spell as a pro. Made his name with St Helens but also played 11 Super League games for Salford City Reds last season. Turning into a real crowd favourite at Oldham and certainly must be one of the most exciting wingers in the NFP.

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. The 23 year old is playing consistently well at centre but also helped out at scrum-half against Rochdale in the Cup.

PAT RICH - Another of the younger signings, 21 years 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. Can play centre or back-row and recently achieved the new clubs points in a game record when scoring 18 in the win over Widnes. A sound goal kicker.

JOE McNICHOLAS - 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.

DAVID GIBBONS - The other twin. Became a household name at Headingley and played more than 20 senior games, including several in the first Super League season of 1996. Formerly captain of Bramley, David will be a key figure for the Roughyeds at stand-off half.

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 his dream job of coaching his home town club. Still a key player with an excellent kicking game.

LEO CASEY - A tough prop who played for 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. Recently returned from a three match suspension after being sent off at Rochdale in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. An Irish International and well respected by the supporters.

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. Played more than 30 senior games for Warrington before returning 'home' to Oldham. Been in tremendous form again this season which was encapsulated in a superb match winning try in the defeat of Widnes Vikings.

JASON CLEGG - A product of Littleborough RL Club, this heavyweight prop turned pro for the 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. In superb form this season and was voted the Oldham player of the month for February.

CHRIS HOLLAND - Aged 21, Chris has played for England and Great Britain students and took the Man-of-the-Match award in England's defeat by New Zealand at Hull in the last World Cup. Equally at home at centre or in the back row.

KEVIN MANNION - 22 year old Kevin is a ball playing loose forward, who made his senior debut with Rochdale Hornets when only 16. Played for England and GB students, for whom he has toured Australia and played in France. Has put in some good performances so far this season but was unlucky in picking up a serious knee injury in the victory over Widnes Vikings.

MARK CAMPBELL - One of 16 new boys brought to the club by Mike Ford during the first two months of the player coach's reign. Formerly with Leeds and Keighley Cougars, this 21 year old hardworking back-row forward is studying at Leeds University for a degree in chemical engineering.

DANNY GUEST - This 22 year old, 18 stone prop was an up-and-coming youngster with the Bears. Also played for Keighley and Lancashire Lynx before returning to Oldham. Has been playing mainly as a substitute this season but has been a consistent performer, as shown when scoring with his first touch of the ball in the recent rout of Lancashire Lynx.

SHAYNE McMENEMY - Recent recruit to the club replacing the injured Tom O'Reilly. Began the season at Rochdale Hornets where he caught the eye of Mike Ford. Hard working second row forward, this Australian made his debut 48 hours after arriving from Sydney.

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 a players' player, who performs well above his weight.

Donald Hunt

Head to Head

... BY ALAN BROOKES



ROVERS V OLDHAM

AT the risk of tempting fate it has to be said that we now have to be regarded as one of the form teams within the NFPL - with our fine away win last week making it seven on the trot, we have, along with league leaders Leigh, the longest run of successive victories within our division.

All who witnessed the game last week must have been pinching themselves at half time when we actually went in to the dressing room in the lead! Certainly the way the game had gone in the first half hour we had never really been off the ropes. To weather a storm like that and bounce right back, taking our chances as they came speaks volumes for the spirit within our young side. The difference between the two sides was there for all to see in the second period. Workington when under pressure simply folded and once behind, did not have what it takes to raise their game.

So, today in search of victory number eight, we take on the resurgent Oldham.

The Roughyeds - (can anyone explain that name?) inspired by Mike Ford, have recently hit

good form and only last week ran the league's "top side" Dewsbury very close - going down by a mere two points in what was reported to have been a thriller at Boundary Park. This came close on the heels of probably their best result so far this term when, only seven days previous, they raised more than a few eyebrows in beating Widnes 31 - 20 at the old Naughton Park - Make no mistake this will be a totally different situation to the one last season which saw us gain a comfortable 61 - 6 victory. All winning runs do come to an end but lets hope its not today.

OLDHAM FORM GUIDE - LAST TEN RESULTS

OPPONENTS		RES.	F	A
1 WHITEHAVEN	H	W	26	22
2 BARROW	A	L	16	19
3 WORKINGTON	H	W	30	17
4 WIGAN ST JUDES	H	W	44	0
5 DONCASTER	A	L	16	26
6 ROCHDALE	A	L	14	30
7 LEIGH	A	L	10	28
8 LANCASHIRE	H	W	50	8
9 WIDNES	A	W	31	20
10 DEWSBURY	H	L	12	14

1999/2000 Match Results

	Barrow	Batley	Dewsbury	Doncaster	FEATHERSTONE	Hull KR	Hunslet	Keighley	Lancashire	Leigh	Oldham	Rochdale	Sheffield	Swinton	Whitehaven	Widnes	Workington	York
Barrow								40-6	19-16	32-14	34-16			31-4				
Batley			8-18		14-32	18-27	18-28				24-12							
Dewsbury				20-16	14-2							33-18					36-6	26-19
Doncaster		42-8			32-14	52-12	19-12			26-16								
FEATHERSTONE	35-14	38-16	2-38			36-4	34-20					45-13						
Hull KR			8-4	2-2				14-18				6-4	54-16	22-14			30-10	
Hunslet			10-22		14-21	12-21	24-16										30-6	
Keighley			22-6		10-24			28-36				36-2					32-13	
Lancashire				6-34				6-68		22-38	20-33			22-12		12-34		
Leigh	48-22		22-6						28-10			20-22			24-16			
Oldham			12-14					50-8		23-20				26-22		30-17		
Rochdale									14-42					20-22	8-34	32-28	24-14	
Sheffield		12-22	10-16			17-12												
Swinton	35-22	16-32						54-6	18-23	34-16								
Whitehaven						10-56		24-6							13-6	42-0		
Widnes	17-10					30-21	64-8		20-31	3-0	22-14							
Workington	18-35				25-42			6-46				10-21			16-10			
York		8-10	1-36	12-25								16-15			18-50			



Junior Lionhearts

NICE TO SEE quite a few of you up at Workington last Sunday. Well done to the lads for another good win after a rather rocky start to the game. A tough game in prospect this afternoon. Can we do it? Help Rover cheer the team on and we know they'll do their best. A warm welcome to all young Oldham fans this afternoon. Enjoy the game.

MEETING

Next meeting will be a 'MEGA QUIZ' in the clubhouse on **Wednesday** 5th April. Note the change of day from the usual Tuesdays. This will be a quiz with a difference with plenty of prizes on offer, 7.30pm start. See you there.

NEWSLETTER

Get your jokes and other things sent in ready for the next newsletter. Don't forget all items sent in receive a prize.

PLAYER OF THE SEASON FORMS

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WORKINGTON AWAY - ROBERT CUNNINGHAM



Age: 7

School: St. Thomas' Featherstone

Fav Player: Richard Chapman

Fav. TV: Wrestling

Fav. Food: Pizza

Hobbies: Rugby, Swimming,
Playstation Games

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TODAY'S MASCOT - ADAM DYAS



Age: 9

School: St. Thomas' Featherstone

Fav Player: Richard Chapman

Fav. TV: Coronation Street

Fav. Food: Pasta & Garlic

Fav. Band: Venga Boys

Hobbies: Rugby, Football, Other sports

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Match by Match Analysis 1999/2000 . . .



DECEMBER 1999

27 Hull K.R.	D2-2	3402	Rhodes	Stokes	Law	Langley	Bramald	Coventry	Handley	Dickens	Heptinstall	Lambert	Evans	Helliwell	Chapman	Rooney 1G	David	Clarkson	Lowe
--------------	------	------	--------	--------	-----	---------	---------	----------	---------	---------	-------------	---------	-------	-----------	---------	-----------	-------	----------	------

JANUARY 2000

3 BARROW B.R	W38-14	1908	Rhodes	Stokes 1T	Law	Langley 1T	Bramald 2T	Byrne	Rooney 7G1DG	Dickens	Chapman	Lambert	Evans	Helliwell	Dooler	Gibson	Lowe 1T	Clarkson	Webster
9 DEWSBURY RAMS	L2-38	2574	Langley	Stokes	Law	Coventry	Bramald	Gibson	Rooney 1G	Dickens	Chapman	Lambert	Evans	Lowe	Dooler	David	Heptinstall	Clarkson	Webster
16 Doncaster Dragons	L14-32	2071	Rhodes	Stokes	Law	Bramald	Thompson	Gibson	Rooney 3G	Dickens	Heptinstall	David	Evans 1T	Helliwell 1T	Lambert	Chapman	Lowe	Clarkson	Dooler
23 KEIGHLEY C	W34-20	1987	Rhodes	Stokes 1T	Law	Bramald 1T	Thompson	Bastow	Rooney 1T5G	Clarkson 1T	Heptinstall	David	Evans	Lowe	Lambert	Langley	Gibson	Chapman 1T	Dickens 1T
30 WIGAN ST. PAT SCCC W64-6	940		Rhodes	Coventry	Law	Bramald	Thompson 1T	Bastow	Rooney 3T8G	Clarkson 1T	Heptinstall	Hepi	Evans	David	Lambert 1T	Dooler 1T	Lowe	Chapman 4T	Dickens

FEBRUARY 2000

6 SHEFFIELD	W45-13	1857	Rhodes 2T	Stokes 1T	Law	Bramald 2T	Thompson	Bastow	Rooney 6G1DG	Clarkson 1T	Heptinstall	David	Evans 1T	Hepi	Lambert	Gibson	Dooler 1T	Chapman	Dickens
13 LEEDS R SCCC Rd 4	L12-48	4001	Rhodes	Stokes	Langley 1T	Bramald	Thompson	Bastow	Rooney 2G	Clarkson	Heptinstall	David	Evans	Hepi 1T	Lambert	Gibson	Dooler	Chapman	Dickens
20 HUNSLET HAWKS	W36-4	1858	Rhodes 2T	Stokes 1T	Langley 1T	Bramald	Thompson	Gibson	Rooney 8G	Clarkson	Heptinstall	David	Evans	Dooler	Hepi 1T	Coventry	Lowe	Chapman	Dickens
27 Lancashire Lynx	W34-6	332	Rhodes 1T	Stokes 1T	Coventry	Bramald	Slatter 2T	Gibson	Rooney 1T5G	Clarkson	Heptinstall	David	Evans	Dooler	Hepi	Lambert	Lowe	Chapman	Dickens 1T

MARCH 2000

5 York	W25-12	1013	Rhodes	Stokes 1T	Coventry 1T	Bramald 1T	Slatter	Bastow	Rooney 1T4G	Dickens	Heptinstall	David	Evans	Lambert	Hepi	Gibson	Lowe	Chapman	Dooler
12 BATLEY BULLDOGS	W38-16	1684	Rhodes 1T	Stokes 1T	Coventry 1T	Bramald	Thompson 1T	Bastow	Rooney 6G	Dickens 1T	Heptinstall 1G	David	Dooler	Lambert	Hepi	Gibson	Lowe	Chapman 1T	Law
19 Workington Town	W42-25	829	Rhodes	Stokes 1T	Coventry 1T	Law	Thompson 2T	Bastow	Rooney 2T4G2DG	Dickens	Chapman	David	Dooler 1T	Lambert	Heptinstall	Gibson	Lowe 1T	Bramald	Smallman
26 OLDHAM	H	3.00																	

APRIL 2000

2 TRANS PENNINE CUP FINAL

Leigh Centurions	A	3.00
------------------	---	------

9 WHITEHAVEN W.	H	3.00
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16 Rochdale Hornets	A	3.00
---------------------	---	------

21 HULL K.R.	H	7.30
--------------	---	------

24 Barrow B.R.	A	3.00
----------------	---	------

29 SILK CUP CHALLENGE CUP - Final

MAY 2000

1 SWINTON LIONS	H	7.30
-----------------	---	------

7 WIDNES VIKINGS	H	3.00
------------------	---	------

14 Dewsbury Rams	A	3.00
------------------	---	------

21 DRAGONS	H	3.00
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26 Whitehaven W.	A	7.30
------------------	---	------

29 Sheffield	A	3.00
--------------	---	------

JUNE 2000

4 Hunslet Hawks	A	3.30
-----------------	---	------

11 YORK	H	3.00
---------	---	------

18 Batley Bulldogs	A	3.00
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25 WORKINGTON T	H	3.00
-----------------	---	------

JULY 2000

2 Oldham	A	3.00
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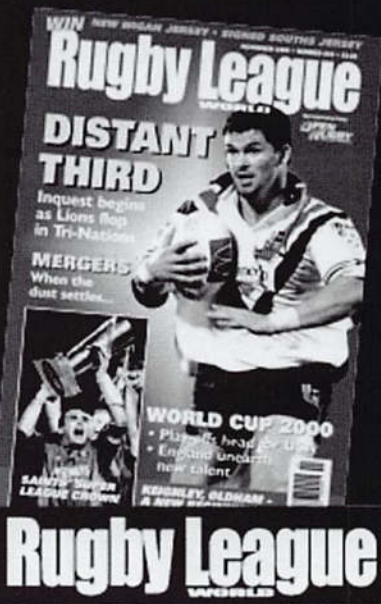
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DOWN TO EARTH WITH **PETE MOSS**



HE'S IN YER FACE. HE'S UP FOR IT . . HE'S DOWN TO EARTH, HE'S PETE MOSS 'FRIEND OF THE STARS'.

THERE ARE certain subjects that are pegs for us to hang our opinions about Rugby League on. It can be playing strips, overseas players and coaches, what time of year we play the game, and plenty of others. You know what they are and you've got your own standpoint. One of these 'pegs' is attendances. Martyn Sadler touched upon this in a syndicated article a couple of weeks back. His main point being that the rise in NFPL crowds has plateaued by comparing crowds for corresponding fixtures in 1999.

Remember that we are still within the boundaries of the old winter season and that on the field the competition is more vibrant and exciting than last year and that's going some.

Last week saw the second round of Superleague V. Remember that the party line is that we are supposed to be against summer football, Superleague is played mainly in summer and yet somehow (or so we are told week after week ad nauseam in this magazine) it's a scandal that we're not in it and that it's rubbish for all sorts of other reasons. On top of which we are told, and I'm sure many of you think, that it's a good idea to go even further back into mudbath territory next year: please god, no.

So lets carry on where Sadler left off and look at last weeks crowds. This time juxtaposing the NFPL and Superleague.

Giving the '99 figures first;
 Batley-Rochdale 478/464,
 Hull KR-Swinton 2,005/2,073,
 Hunslet-Lancashire 1,809/666,
 Leigh-Doncaster 1,372/2,767.
 Oldham-Dewsbury 859/2,115,
 Whitehaven-Keighley 803/905,
 Workington-Rovers 1,007/829,
 York-Widnes 1,214/757.

Bearing in mind that the Hawks have still got the monk on because they were (quite rightly in my view) excluded from Superleague, by an independent body I might add, who's decision SL are bound by and bearing in mind the changes in competitiveness on the field of some clubs: not always a factor as we shall see, only Leigh, Oldham and maybe the Robins have anything to shout about. Leigh were competitive last year, but still their crowds rise. Oldham are outside the top eight and Dewsbury don't have that big an away following, but still that crowd rose.

Perhaps we should ask them. Maybe they know something we don't.

Meanwhile in Superleague, bearing in mind that we had a semi final rehearsal which could have created more interest: we had

Bradford-Warrington 13,063/17,127,
 Hull-Saints 5,879/7,160,
 Broncos-Huddersfield, Sheffield 2,278/2,856
 (the corresponding Huddersfield fixture),
 Salford-Tigers 3,663/5,534,
 Wildcats-Bluesox 3,082/4,678,
 Wigan-Leeds 9,558/11,200.

The Broncos crowd might give the dinosaurs something to sneer at, but bearing in mind their recent ground move, which might take a bit to er, get off the ground and the state of the Giants it's not surprising, but is still compares favourably with say Rovers average crowd the year we won the championship and is better than our average crowd the year we last won the cup. I know they're a huge metropolis, but we're supposed to be a 'hot bed' steeped in Rugby League tradition aren't we? I recently read an article criticising the crowd for the recent Bulls - Giants cup tie, 6,000 and odd if memory serves. Intriguingly this crowd was significantly higher than Northern's (as they then were) average the year they came joint top of the league in, significantly, 1994.

And finally, why do we say 'traditionalist', when in fact we mean 'reactionary'. Rugby League has different layers of tradition. One of the most important of these is a willingness to change, innovate and adapt, and yes, take on authority. But to hijack 'tradition', in the name of an at best distorted and sometime non existent past doesn't do justice to the word. Remember, that when 50 odd thousand turned up to watch a championship final at Odsal in the early sixties a couple of hundred were turning up to watch a rapidly going bankrupt Bradford Northern at the same ground the rest of the time.

To sum up, as Peter Snow says on election night; can we stop whinging about Superleague, stop kidding ourselves that to succeed all we have to do is play in the depths of winter....and maybe acquire a bit of acumen and open up our minds a bit, think what we are really doing when we play the 'tradition' card, acknowledge all aspects of our history, not just the ones that fit our preconceptions.

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The Blue Lagoon

YORKSHIRE at 12.30, blazing sunshine, Cumbria at 12.31, cloud, mist and drizzle, this explains a lot (although not the high foreheads and overly long arms) about the strange people who inhabit that part of England. They seem a misty, drizzly sort of race whose dialect I didn't recognise until I watched a remake of "When Dinosaurs ruled the World". I know a bloke who once knew a fella who trimmed David Attenboroughs hedges and he reckons that they are called Homo Cumbriana. Their main characteristics are small brain cavities and a liking for rhubarb. They should add to that, watching overpaid inadequate ex Super League players bleed their club dry. Do Messrs. King, Watson, Cooke and Nadiolo bother to do any training or does their former star status mean they can forego training for the club bar. If our boys had been paying attention when the referee blew the whistle for the start of the game instead of waiting twenty minutes to begin, I dread to think what the score might have been.

On the subject of our boys, Mr Roe says we should not get too carried away by their exploits and I agree, but it is very difficult not to when they turn it on, like they did against Workington. Our troubles this season have been well documented by people who are better placed to comment on them than me. What I do know is that Mr Roe, the players and yes, even the committee deserve a big bag of sweeties and a lemon curd tart apiece for what they have achieved. They have done this on a

budget that most Super League clubs spend on just Rich Tea biscuits and athlete's foot ointment.

The day itself was what I would call a "Lou Reed Day". We set off from FEV at 11.00 am. We had a three course meal (£5) at the Waverley Hotel in Workington. Then watched ROVERS thump the mistiest, greyest team in Cumbria and were back in FEV for 7.00pm. Why was it a "perfect day?", because I've never liked spending too much time out of FEV, especially not in the countryside. It's full of grass, trees, hills and smelly animals that I much prefer to see on a plate, boned and roasted with some new potatoes and sprouts. One thing I did experience for the first time was having a go in them blue loos that look like police boxes, it was like going to the toilet in a tall wendy house. The sign said you should flush the loo before and after use, which was nice. When you flushed the loo an odd blue liquid swirled round the pan. Onslow said it was Blue Nun but not being a wine drinker I wouldn't know. It is good that Workington have toilets and toilet cleaner in the club colours, I bet no other club is so enterprising.

As on previous weeks the only remark I will make about the opposition is to note that it is Oldham...which means two more points, and a barrel full of beer. I might even try some rhubarb.

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DEALERS

Under 21's

...WITH DONALD HUNT



BATLEY BULLDOGS 4 FEATHERSTONE ROVERS 42

FEATHERSTONE played up the slope and soon had points on the scoreboard via a try by Chris Spurr after 2 minutes. Rovers had to defend well as the Bulldogs mounted several attacks and were alert when a speculative kick bounced off the cross bar back in the field of play and they were able to work the ball back up the park.

A good high kick by Richard Thaler was chased by Matt Turner, who outpaced the opposition to jump high and take the ball and score. Just before half time Spurr went in for his second try, which was goaled by Ged Byrne to leave Featherstone in front by 14 points to nil at the break.

The same combination re-opened the scoring, now down the slope. A forward pass spoiled an excellent move down the left wing. Rovers were well in command causing the Bulldogs to become frustrated. A clever kick though by David Riley, who re-collected and broke away, with only the full back to beat he passed to the fast supporting Steven Jones to score a well backed up try. Byrne again obliged.

Batley were now badly rattled and an incident resulted in the former Featherstone player, Lee Bargate, receiving the red card. Down to 12 men they had learnt their lesson, played much better and managed a try.

This upped the Rovers tempo as Spurr went in for his hat trick. Turner again made good ground to put Riley in under the posts and he converted his own try.

A thoroughly good afternoon for the Rovers whose defence was as good as their attack. The forwards worked well together and proved the cornerstone of the victory. It is good to see Simon Wileman return after a long lay off. Once again Matt Turner, David Riley and Richard Thaler are all training with the British Universities, and if selected there is the prize of a place in the touring side at the end of the season.

Team: D. Williamson (T), M. Turner (2T), D. Riley (TG), C. Spurr (3T), D. Harper; S. Byrne (2G), R. Thaler (T); B. Smallman, S. Raybould, L. Williamson, C. Barker, J. Houston, M. Law.

Subs: S. Jones (T), C. Sharp, S. Wileman, J. Ford.

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS 30 WIDNES 28

FEATHERSTONE were never behind but in the end it was a mighty close call against the League leaders, Widnes. The home side had a dream start when the Vikings left winger knocked on from the kick off and Lee Williamson was on hand to score before the visitors knew what had happened. David Riley converted to leave the home side 6 points clear in under two minutes.

This stung Widnes into action and they soon levelled the score. A penalty goal from the dependable Riley put the Rovers ahead again. Further Featherstone pressure resulted in a try by the alert Chris Spurr, converted by Riley.

The Widnes half back partnership were giving the home side a lot of trouble with their breathtaking speed. Scrum half George used this to good effect to score in the corner, the full back added the goal.

An innocuous scrum on the half way line was turned into something spectacular when George broke from the base and screamed over under the posts without a hand being laid on him.

David Williamson at full back was very safe and pulled off at least two try saving tackles. Just before half time Richard Thaler broke nicely to send Spurr in for his

second try. Since his comeback from injury, Spurr has looked very sharp and certainly knows his way to the line. As the whistle went for half time Rovers held a comfortable lead of 24-12.

On the resumption Widnes went about the their business to show they meant to keep the league leadership when scoring a try and a goal. Featherstone replied with a good try from David Williamson. Rovers had soaked up a lot of pressure on their own line when the change over came after six tackles. They took the ball right up the field and on the sixth tackle scored, a delightful movement. This put the home side on thirty points mark and looked as if they had the match won. The Vikings had different ideas, replying with two tries and a goal, to leave Rovers desperately hanging on to a two point lead.

The tackling had been excellent throughout, held good and a great match was won. It was a joy to see such good football, sending the crowd home in full appreciation of the brilliant show put on by both sides.

Ben Smallman was a giant in the home pack, with Thaler and Riley orchestrating some delightful moves. I feel the future of Featherstone rugby must be safe as these players grow in stature and experience. Home produced players are the best! What a difference to the crash bang tactics used in other quarters!

Team: D. Williamson (T); M. Turner, A. Slatter, C. Spurr (2T), D. Harper (T), D. Riley (5G), R. Thaler; B. Smallman, S. Raybould, L. Williamson (T), R. Helliwell, S. Byrne.

Subs: S. Smallman, S. Jones, S. Wileman, G. Sharp.

ALLIANCE 2000 FIRST DIVISION

		F	A
JANUARY			
8th	Workington Town	A	P
13th	KEIGHLEY COUGARS	H	W 30-26
22nd	Whitehaven Warriors	A	L 40-14
27th	LEIGH CENTURIANS	H	W 62-16
FEBRUARY			
3rd	Oldham	A	L 34-6
12th	BARROW B.R.	H	2.30 P
16th	Hunslet Hawks	A	L 18-14
24th	ROCHDALE HORNETS	H	W 37-8
MARCH			
11th	Batley Bulldogs	A	W 4-42
16th	WIDNES VIKINGS	H	W 30-28
22nd	Leigh Centurions	A	7.30
30th	OLDHAM	H	7.30
APRIL			
8th	Barrow B. R.	A	2.30
13th	Rochdale Hornets	A	7.30
MAY			
13th	WORKINGTON TOWN	H	2.30
17th	Keighley Cougars	A	7.30
27th	WHITEHAVEN WARRIORS	H	2.30
JUNE			
1st	HUNSLET HAWKS	H	7.30
7th	Widnes Vikings	A	7.30
15th	BATLEY BULLDOGS	H	7.30
JULY			
1st	TOP FIVE PLAY OFF		
22nd	GRAND FINAL PLAY OFF FINAL		



Appearances & Scorers

2000 SEASON

SENIOR RECORD

	Apps.	Sub.	T	G	DG	Pts.		Apps.	Sub.	T	G	DG	Pts.
ANDY BASTOW	7	0	0	0	0	0		7	0	0	0	0	0
MATT BRAMALD	12	1	6	0	0	24		44	1	19	0	0	76
SHANE BYRNE	1	0	0	0	0	0		1	0	0	0	0	0
RICHARD CHAPMAN	4	9	6	0	0	24		73	35	44	127	2	432
MICKY CLARKSON	6	4	3	0	0	12		17	37	9	0	0	36
JAMIE COVENTRY	7	1	3	0	0	12		39	14	8	0	0	32
MAEA DAVID	10	2	0	0	0	0		10	2	0	0	0	0
STUART DICKENS	7	6	3	0	0	12		50	18	9	39	2	116
STEVE DOOLER	6	5	3	0	0	12		20	19	8	0	0	32
DANNY EVANS	11	0	2	0	0	8		54	38	16	1	0	66
RICHARD GIBSON	4	7	0	0	0	0		4	7	0	0	0	0
PADDY HANDLEY	1	0	0	0	0	0		80	17	25	0	0	100
RICKY HELLIWELL	3	0	1	0	0	4		3	0	1	0	0	4
BRAD HEPI	7	0	2	0	0	8		7	0	2	0	0	8
ANDY HEPTINSTALL	11	1	0	1	0	2		25	6	4	2	0	20
MATT LAMBERT	11	1	1	0	0	4		24	14	3	0	0	12
CHRIS LANGLEY	5	1	3	0	0	12		5	1	3	0	0	12
MARTIN LAW	8	1	0	0	0	0		39	2	9	0	0	36
NEIL LOWE	2	9	2	0	0	8		52	42	13	1	0	54
MICHAEL RHODES	12	0	7	0	0	28		12	0	7	0	0	28
JAMIE ROONEY	12	1	8	60	5	157		31	4	17	126	13	333
ANTONY SLATTER	2	0	2	0	0	8		2	0	2	0	0	8
BEN SMALLMAN	0	1	0	0	0	0		0	2	0	0	0	0
JAMIE STOKES	12	0	8	0	0	32		52	7	33	0	0	132
IAN THOMPSON	8	0	4	0	0	16		18	0	6	0	0	24
MARK WEBSTER	0	2	0	0	0	0		0	2	0	0	0	0

1999/2000 Northern Ford RFL Premiership as at 20/03/00

Pos	Team	Pld	Won	Drn	Lst	For	Agst	Diff	Pts
1	Leigh C.	11	9	0	2	358	168	190	18
2	Dewsbury R.	10	9	0	1	227	115	112	18
3	Featherstone R.	11	8	1	2	307	182	125	17
4	Hull K.R.	11	8	1	2	215	120	95	17
5	Doncaster D.	10	7	0	3	249	123	126	14
6	Widnes V.	11	7	0	4	272	163	109	14
7	Keighley C.	10	6	0	4	265	174	91	12
8	Barrow B.R.	10	6	0	4	259	209	50	12
9	Oldham	10	6	0	4	237	192	45	12
10	Swinton L.	10	6	0	4	250	221	29	12
11	Whitehaven W.	10	4	0	6	179	209	-30	8
12	Batley B.	10	4	0	6	170	233	-63	8
13	Hunslet H.	10	3	0	7	166	239	-73	6
14	Rochdale H.	10	3	0	7	198	275	-77	6
15	Sheffield E.	11	2	0	9	140	243	-103	4
16	Workington T.	10	2	0	8	160	306	-146	4
17	York W.	10	1	0	9	117	278	-161	2
18	Lancashire L.	11	1	0	10	132	451	-319	2

Rovers Reflections

...WITH BOB FOWLER



I WONDERED if the lads had enjoyed the overnight stay in the Lake District too well at the start of the Workington game. It's all right enjoying the wonderful scenery that Derwent Park affords, but I think the wind generators behind the ground were blowing us off course for the first twenty minutes. Still when the team got their act together, thanks to a bit of good fortune, the result was some really entertaining Rugby League. I am, however, finding some of the decisions made by the referees and their touch judges, slightly bizarre of late. I know they have an extremely difficult job to do, but blatant knock ons and forward passes (by both sides) went unpunished last week, all of which could have produced an unfair result. If touch judges cannot keep up with play in order to assist the referee, then they should simply not be officiating in a professional game, which could make the difference between success and failure. It would also appear that it is more serious an offence to be offside than to try and take someone's head off nowadays. Not too long ago a player tackling above shoulder height would be sidelined for quite a long suspension. The referees today are too willing to point to a chest high tackle when most of the crowd are screaming for a high shot. This is not on, no matter who the teams are, any player going in to tackle at shoulder height, and at speed is going to have his arm round an opponent's neck just by the sheer momentum of the tackle. I am frightened that someone is going to get seriously hurt soon. I just hope that the officials will be able to look themselves in the mirror if this does happen. Too many are willing to pass the buck and place players on report. If foul play is suspected then the offending player should be punished. Mistakes will happen, but the dangerous practice of making high shots

might just be eradicated. I doubt it though because there are too many players who's only talent is thuggery.

Moaning time over and I now make an appeal for all genuine fans of the Rovers to try and get to Leigh next week. Hilton Park two years ago held no fears for us or any other team for that matter. Now, though it is one of the most formidable grounds in the NFP. We will need all the support we can muster, against a crowd that has suddenly appeared from nowhere to make it a very intimidating venue. I am not trying to predict today's result, because make no mistake Oldham are a better side than their league position shows and Peter Roe will give them the respect they are entitled to. Today apart, we have one of the games best away followings. It is a wonderful atmosphere when we all get together to urge our team on. The players respond and the difference that this can make is immeasurable, I am going in the hope that the pig falls off his bike (again) and because I want to try and watch every game this season. It might not be possible for me to achieve that as I have yet to discuss with my better half just when she can have a well deserved holiday instead of the usual Monday to Friday breaks we have had for the last three years. I am debating whether or not to have a weekend in the Lake District over the May Bank Holiday, the problem is how do I tell her that I'll just be popping down to Whitehaven for a couple of hours, when what she really wants is a boat trip on Windermere. I suppose that we could have an early Easter break in the Lakes instead, but then there is a little matter of going to Barrow on Easter Monday. Still there is a shopping centre opposite Barrow's ground, there that's settled. See you next week, if you get lost just follow the flags (£10 each in the club shop).



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THE FRISA STAND POINT

THERE WAS a letter in *Rugby League Express* on the Monday before last from "an avid Leigh fan" about Ian Millward's appointment to St. Helens. The writer bore no ill will towards his team's erstwhile coach, in fact he had nothing but admiration for the man and for what he's achieved in his eighteen months at Hilton Park, but he concluded his letter with the despairing words: "I feel we are now trapped".

He concluded thus after relating that Millward had turned down Saints the previous year, when Hanley was suspended, because at the time he felt Leigh had a chance of winning the Grand Final and thereby gaining promotion. In the light of what subsequently happened to Hunslet - the team that did win the Grand Final, didn't gain entry to Super League, but did, as a direct result of that win and that refusal, lose players, support and sponsorship - the writer understood that Millward, a talented, ambitious coach, had to go.

Trapped by that, and the belief that were his team to unearth another good coach, or star player, he would feel obliged to go too; that were Leigh to achieve anything on the field or, God forbid, win something, then rather than be rewarded they would suffer for it. What a crazy, Humpty Dumpty state British Rugby is in since it's come to this, via Murdoch and his schemes, and his money, squabbled over by his greedy underlings in the self serving, I'm all right Jack clique of a Super League that is his creature.

Do Featherstone Rovers want to be part of that exclusive Super League? What we want, surely, and what all the other clubs in our division no doubt want, is to be playing at the highest level against the best teams in the land. But it doesn't have to be a closed shop, or greedy, or under Murdoch's underlings' control. In rugby league we have a great product: a thrilling, high speed game full of skill and athleticism. There are bigger broadcasters than BSkyB, their number is growing all the time, all of them hungry for an attractive product. It's clear what the men in suits who run our game should be doing.

Where does that leave us, fans of a smaller, less glamorous, more indebted, though no less great club than Leigh or Hunslet? The short answer is it leaves us with a hell of a lot of work to do. In fact that's the long answer too. But apart from turning up to the games in greater numbers and filling in the form below (we're desperate for a powerful prop or two, and there are a couple of ideal candidates surplus to Gateshull's requirements we can't afford at the moment), you could come to the Rovers Clubhouse, Thursday April 13 at 8pm. There, at the Fans' Forum FRISA has organised, you can put your questions and frustrations to the blessed Hetherington, and Messrs Tunnicliffe and McCallum, as well as hearing the opinions of greats of the game like Peter Fox, and our own Peter Roe. See you there.

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Noticeboard



Yorkshire Youth Amateur Rugby League The Young South Africans are Coming to Yorkshire South Africa Tour 2000

IN 1997 THE Yorkshire Youth Amateur Rugby League took a total of 42 players (20 under 18's, 22 under 16's) on a 3 week tour to play against mixed race teams within South African Rugby League, and help promote and develop the game within the townships. This was a highly successful tour creating a tremendous amount of goodwill between our respective associations and it was agreed that the South Africans would tour the Yorkshire Youth in April 2000.

Arriving on the 14th April the South African RL Under 18's and 16's respectively (25 players per squad plus officials, we are envisaging providing accommodation for 58 people maximum) are to tour the Yorkshire Youth area. The tour encompassing playing representative sides from the Yorkshire Youth ARL, West Riding Youth ARL, Humberdale ARL, and a BARLA President's XIII with the Yorkshire Youth providing accommodation and transport in a reciprocal arrangement agreed with the SARL.

The Yorkshire Youth game will be played here at Featherstone RLFC on Sunday 16th April, 2000, 1st game to kick off at 1.00pm.

Rugby League in South Africa is still in the development stage and the SARL consider this tour as vital to their expansion especially within the townships of South Africa, and once the tour had been confirmed approximately 700 youths turned up for trial games in the

hope of being selected.

A tour of this magnitude is obviously very expensive to host, funds are being sought through sponsorship, any assistance or interest regarding sponsorship or fund raising would be gratefully received and you should contact Mr D. M. Kenny, Secretary Yorkshire Youth ARL, 7, Bank Grove, Earlsheaton, Dewsbury. WF12 8HQ. Tel/Fax 01924 459374.

The Yorkshire Youth are sincerely grateful to Featherstone RLFC for allowing us to stage our leg of this prestigious tour, and acknowledge their commitment to Youth rugby within the Yorkshire area.

Sunday 16th April
South African Tour 2000
Yorkshire Youth ARL v South African ARL
Under 16's k.o. 1.00pm
Under 18's k.o. 2.30pm approx
Admission £2/£1

The proposed weekend trip to London to take in the World Cup 2000 opener, England v Australia on Saturday 28th October, will not be taking place as it was not a viable proposition.

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TRYSORING SEQUENCE

Jamie Stokes of Featherstone Rovers has scored at least one try in seven successive Northern Ford Premiership matches. The winger's scoring run began in the 34-20 home defeat of Keighley Cougars on 23 January.

POINTSCORING SEQUENCE

Jamie Rooney of Featherstone Rovers has the current longest pointsoring run covering 27 matches, including two play off games and two Silk Cut Challenge Cup-ties. The scrum-half's run began with a goal in Featherstone's 19-14 defeat at Whitehaven Warriors on 13 June 1999.

WINNING RUNS

Leigh Centurions and Featherstone Rovers share the longest winning run in the Northern Ford Premiership of seven successive League victories. Neither has lost since 16 January.

Leigh's last NFP defeat was 24-6 at Whitehaven Warriors and Featherstone's was 32-14 at Doncaster Dragons.

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS RLFC . . . CASHLINE RESULTS

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Wednesday	A1150 B. Wilford, Leeds	Rovers Shop
Thursday	A6309 M. Wigglesworth	S. Lancaster
Friday	A2892 L. Byford, Pontefract	Hope & Anchor
Saturday	A5749 David Riley, Leeds	Rovers Shop
Sunday	C7404 F. Bullough, Normanton	L. Bullough

Other winners this week:

A. Wright, Streethouse, P. Emmerly, Featherstone, M. Williams, Pontefract, K. Glover, Featherstone, D. Westerman, Featherstone, D. Mullaney/P. Nicholls, Crofton

Agents Draw Winner: P. Eyre, Crigglestone

NEXT DRAW TO BE HELD AT THE CLUB SHOP ON 23.3.2000

▲ **PEAK** ▲

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Pontefract WF7 7PX**

John & Jackie Murray
WELCOME YOU TO



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Tel: 01977 620082**

MENU

— Our kitchens are open for you —

Monday - Saturday 11.30am - 9.30pm.

Sunday 12.00 noon - 7.00pm.

*Please find a vacant table & place your order at the bar with payment.
Cash, major credit cards & cheques with bankers cards are acceptable.
Your meal will be freshly cooked & served to your table when ready.
Please purchase your drink requirements at the bar.*

Rovers Reachout



SCHOOLS INITIATIVE

Sponsored by Lionheart Matched by Sportsmatch



**The Sponsorship of this activity has received an award under the
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PLAYERS POSITION SPONSORSHIP

- 1 Dransfield Newsagents
- 2 R J B Mining
- 3 Lionheart
- 4 Headland Electric
- 5 Fox & Hounds, Thorpe Audlin
- 6 Biffa Waste
- 7 Precision Engineers
- 8 Ace Engineering
- 9 Junior Lionhearts
- 10 Biffa Waste
- 11 Yorkshire Gears
- 12 Dransfield Newsagents
- 13 Fox & Hounds, Thorpe Audlin
- 14 Headland Electric
- 15 Sharlston Rovers ARLFC
- 16 Xtra Excl. Ladies Fashions
- 17 Supporters Club

ROVERS

Colours: Navy Blue & White Hoops

1	Michael RHODES			
2	Jamie STOKES			
3	Jamie COVENTRY			
4	Martin LAW			
5	Ian THOMPSON			
6	Andy BASTOW			
7	Jamie ROONEY			
8	Stuart DICKENS			
9	Richard CHAPMAN			
10	Maea DAVID			
11	Steve DOOLER			
12	Matt LAMBERT			
13	Andy HEPTINSTALL			
14	Richard GIBSON	16	Matt BRAMALD	
15	Neil LOWE	17	Ben SMALLMAN	

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

Referee:
TBA



Touch Judges:
S. GREENHALGH
S. MARSHALL

OLDHAM

Colours: Red & White Hoops, Navy Shorts

1	Mark SIBSON			
2	Joey HAYES			
3	Anthony GIBBONS			
4	Pat RICH			
5	Joe McNICHOLAS			
6	Dave GIBBONS			
7	Mike FORD			
8	Jason CLEGG			
9	John HOUGH			
10	Andy PROCTOR			
11	Chris HOLLAND			
12	Shane McMENEMY			
13	Mark CAMPBELL			
14	Leo CASEY	16	Ian SINFIELD	
15	Wes ROGERS	17	Lee DORAN	

... FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS ... FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS ... FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS ...

ROVERS V WHITEHAVEN • KO 3.00PM SUNDAY 9TH APRIL

TEAM SHEET 23rd MARCH

OLDHAM

1. K Fitzpatrick
2. G Dodd
3. P Ferris
4. W Barrow
5. W Druggitt
6. C Barker
7. N Roden
8. C Naylor
9. A Peet
10. L Doran
11. P Farrell
12. A James
13. I Sinfield

SUBS

14. M Tagg
15. D Harris
16. S Tillyer
17. D Winstanley

REFEREE: D. GILLESPIE

ROCHDALE

1. G Bradbury
2. L Hudson
3. L Sculthorpe
4. C Hilton
5. M Miller
6. J Winrow
7. C Hough
8. J Best
9. G Swinson
10. L Prest
11. M Martindale
12. P Harrison
13. C Newell

SUBS

14. P Ashton
15. D Newton
16. G Brown
17. R Swindle
18. S Cameron

LINESMAN: C. LEE

S. BROOK

***THIS WEEKS LOTTERY PRIZE OF £500 WAS
WON BY MR GARY AINSWORTH !!!***

***If you would like more information about joining please phone
Scott on 0161 628 3677.***

***THANKS FOR SUPPORTING THE ALLIANCE TEAM
YOUR SUPPORT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED.***

