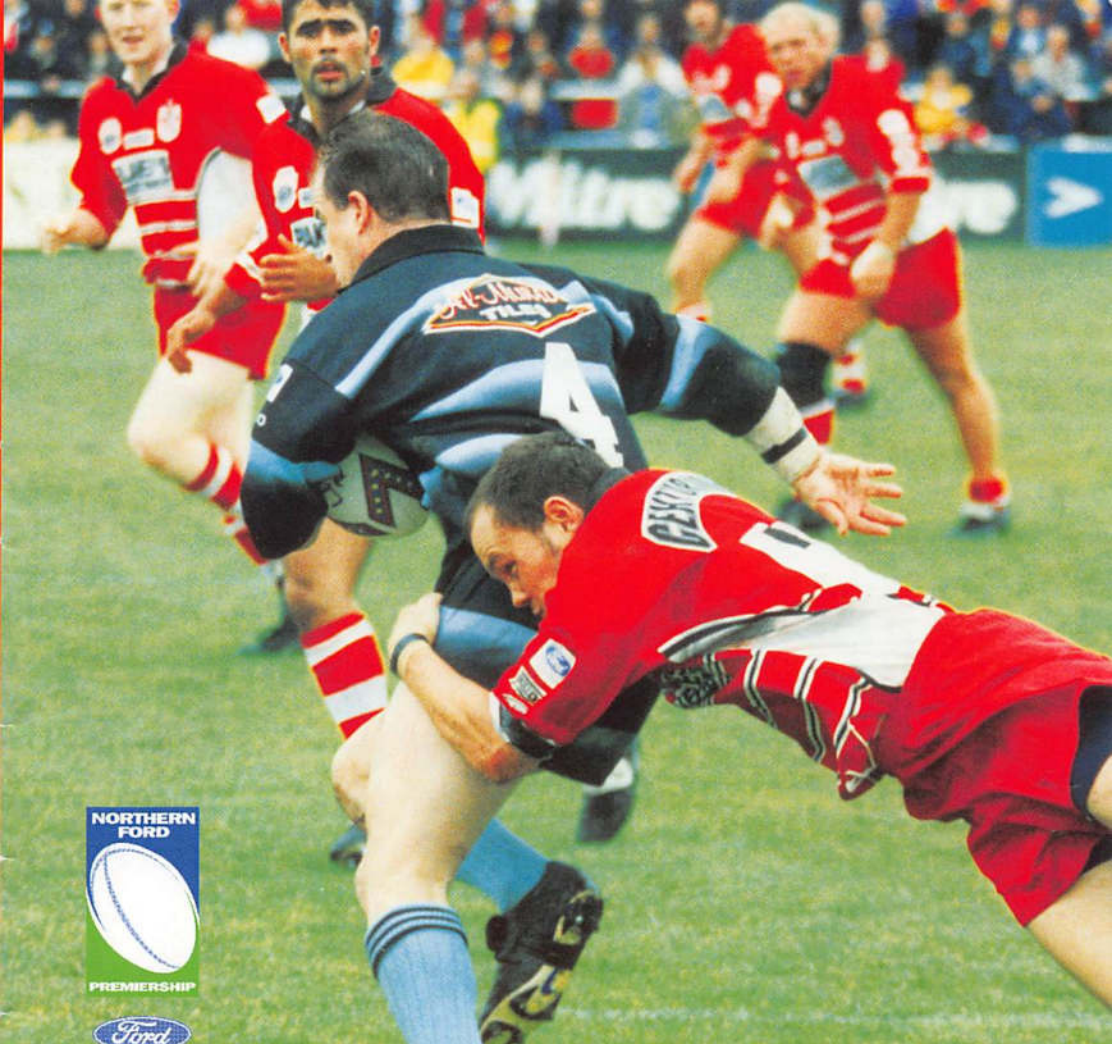
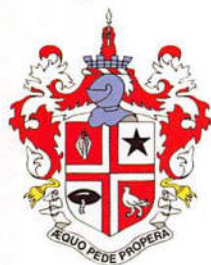




The Centurion

The Official Matchday Magazine of Leigh Centurions Rugby League Club • £1.50



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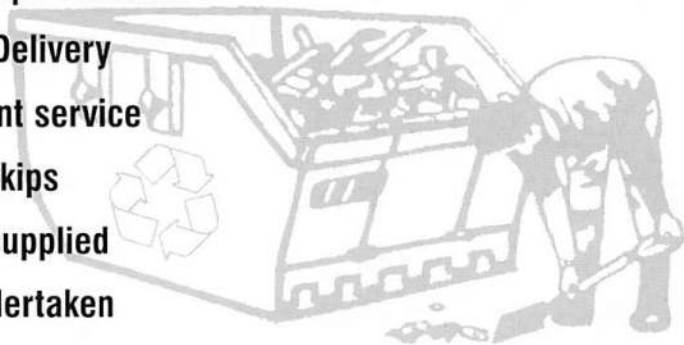
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Welcome to...

Oldham

.....

One all to date, each side winning it's home league fixture, 28-10 to Leigh, 27-10 to Oldham and now the decider. Oldham have had a great season starting with a new coach and a lot of new players - the season has got better and better. After a great win at Doncaster last week their confidence must be sky high.

MIKE FORD FROM PIE EATER TO ROUGHYEDS

This evening we welcome Mike Ford and his Oldham charges to Hilton Park for this NFP Elimination Semi-Final.

Mike is one of the most recognisable figures in the NFP after a great playing career with Wigan, Leigh, Oldham, Castleford (in two spells), Warrington, Wakefield and Bramley in this country, and a spell with Australian expansion side South Queensland Crushers.

His career has taken him to the pinnacle of success and the depths of despair, but through it all, Ford has been a focused, determined and talented player. Although almost 35, Ford is still proving a dangerous and clever player at NFP level, and is a major source of inspiration to his team. He is in the second year of a promising coaching career and has shown an eye for unearthing talent and moulding teams together at little cost.

Mike Ford has pushed the boundaries back as a coach, forging links with the student game that has led players like Mark Sibson trying their hand at the professional game. An Oldham lad, Ford has never been scared to accept new challenges. After helping Wigan to a Challenge Cup victory over Hull in 1985, Ford joined Leigh and played 27 times for the club before revealing his real dream, to lead Oldham at Wembley!

A childhood dream was realised for Ford when he moved to the Watersheddings and helped Oldham regain First Division status and an end of season Premiership before a big money move to Castleford. Arguably, Ford spent the best years of his playing career with the Tigers, guiding them to a Challenge Cup Final appearance and securing the Regal Trophy by virtue of an amazing 33-2 success over a Wigan team that rarely lost. With Ford at the top of his game, Under-21 and Colts honours were followed by two appearances for the RFL Great Britain side in 1993.

From Weldon Road, Mike moved to Brisbane to link up with former mentor Darryl Van DeVelde at new team South Queensland Crushers.

Unfortunately, Mike failed to settle on the Queensland coast and after just 15 games with the

Crushers, Ford made a return to the British game with a short and fruitless spell at Warrington.

Mike's career at the top level looked to be finished when he joined Wakefield but after just 24 games with Trinity, along came Stuart Raper and Castleford to offer the scrum-half another chance. Ford grabbed his opportunity with both hands and helped steer the Tigers away from the foot of the Super League table. Ford appeared in 22 of Castleford's 30 games and also played 25 games for the Tigers in 1998, with eleven of those appearances coming from the bench.

Sensing the time was right, Ford decided to move into coaching. He was successful with his application at Bramley and took the player-coach reigns. In his first season Bramley achieved a credible 11th position with 11 wins and a draw from 28 League games. Ford played in all 29 of his team's fixtures, scoring three tries and two drop goals and was instrumental in persuading players like Gary Schofield and Richard Russel to end their careers with the unfashionable Leeds Club.

Unfortunately, Bramley slid into oblivion and Ford moved on to coach his hometown club. The season, Oldham have done well with 19 wins and a draw from 28 matches. With the Ford factor behind them the Roughyeds are a team on the rise.

MIKE FORD FACTFILE:

Born: 18/11/65

Signed for Wigan from Oldham, St Annes ARLFC on 9/8/83

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	DG
1983-84	Wigan	4	2	0	0
1984-85	Wigan	21	3	4	2
1985-86	Wigan	31	4	14	0
1986-87	Wigan	9	6	6	1
Totals	Wigan	65	15	24	3

The first point of his career came in a 37-18 Wigan victory over Leigh before 10,439 at Central Park on 16/12/84.

His first try was scored against Castleford on 3/2/85.

Ford played scrum-half to Brett Kenny in the outstanding 28-24 Wembley Cup Final with Hull.

Ford scored a crucial try as the Riversiders defeated Hull KR 11-8 in a defence orientated John Player Trophy Final on 11/1/86.

Mike switched to Leigh on the 6/2/87.

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	DG
1986-87	Leigh	10	0	5	0
1987-88	Leigh	17	0	4	1
Totals	Leigh	27	0	9	1

Ford signed for Oldham 9/1/88

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
1987-88	Oldham	19	0	9	0	3
1988-89	Oldham	27	0	3	0	0
1989-90	Oldham	37	0	8	0	2
1990-91	Oldham	33	0	10	1	3
Totals	Oldham	116	0	30	1	8

Signed for Castleford 24/6/91

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
1991-92	Castleford	39	0	8	0	0
1992-93	Castleford	34	0	21	0	0
1993-94	Castleford	43	0	22	0	2
Totals	Castleford	116	0	51	0	2

Scored first hat-trick of his career against Hull KR in a 44-24 win on 6/3/94

Earns 2 caps for Great Britain in 1993, scores 2 tries.

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
95	Sth Queenlands	14	1	3	0	0
Totals	Sth Queenlands	14	1	3	0	0

Signed for Warrington 14/9/95

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
1995-96	Warrington	11	2	3	1	1
96	Warrington	4	1	1	0	0
Totals	Warrington	15	3	4	1	1

Moved to Wakefield Trinity 17/6/96

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
96	Wakefield	17	0	3	0	0
97	Wakefield	7	0	3	0	0
Totals	Wakefield	24	0	6	0	0

Rejoined Castleford 11/4/97

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
97	Castleford	21	1	1	0	3
98	Castleford	14	11	5	0	3
Totals	Castleford	35	12	6	0	6

Became Player-Coach of Bramley late in 1998

YEAR	CLUB	APPS	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	DG
99	Bramley	23	6	3	0	2
Totals	Bramley	23	6	3	0	2

Joined Oldham as Player-Coach in October 1999, leading them to 6th in the table. Ford was sidelined for several weeks with a broken jaw but since returning has played an influential role in the play-off defeats of Hull KR and Doncaster.

Oldham RLFC

Pen Pics

JASON CLEGG

Formerly a Bradford Bull this prop has a barnstorming season for the Roughyeds last year. 'Cleggy' is becoming a favourite with the Oldham spectators and is a member of a very consistent front row.

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 fulfil a sporting ambition.

ANTHONY GIBBONS

Signed with his twin brother, David, from Bramley this close season. Anthony can play anywhere in the backs but will be hoping to make the centre spot his own.

DAVID GIBBONS

Signed with his twin Anthony from Bramley. Can play anywhere in the backs but will be hoping to impress at stand off. David is very talented and began his career at Leeds.

DANNY GUEST

This 22 year old, 18 stone, prop was an up-and-coming youngster with the Bears. He played for

the Roughyeds in the new club's first ever and historic game at Rochdale on January 1, 1998 but then joined Keighley on a round-robin return to the Roughyeds via Lancashire Lynx.

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.

CHRIS HOLLAND

Aged 21 and a product of the youth game in Wigan, 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.

JOHN HOUGH

John will go down in the 'new' clubs history books as the first player to officially sign for the Roughyeds. A bright future is predicted for the ex-Warrington hooker who is renowned for his hard work and sportsmanship. Has been consistently outstanding for the Roughyeds and is one of the divisions form hookers.

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 recently returned from a knee injury and has been outstanding with his strong running out wide catching the eye.

JOE MCNICHOLAS

This young winger is one of the most exciting prospects in the new First Division. Having turned down an offer from Bradford Bulls, Joe was unfortunate to miss most of '98 after breaking his leg in the early season. Rochdale born, he is armed with pace and a great side step.

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 Austrian made his debut 48 hours after arriving from Sydney. Has surely been the NFP signing of the season with the tremendous impact he has made with the Roughyeds. Shayne has never shown anything less than 100% commitment and his strong tackling has been a revelation.

ANDY PROCTOR

Andy has returned to the club to play for Mike Ford, who was his coach last season at Bramley. Procky can play at prop or in the back row and with his professional attitude to training will be a valuable addition to this season's team.

PAT RICH

Signed from Keighley Cougars in the close season. Pat is a promising young centre who played for England in the recent Student's World Cup. He has the drive, ambition and ability to have a really big season.

WES ROGERS

Wes signed from Swinton Lions in the close season. Wes is very pleased to have signed for

his home team, not least because his family are all fanatics! Can play anywhere in the forwards and is major boost to the Roughyeds pack.

MARK SIBSON

Major pre-season signing for the Roughyeds. A lot is expected from this goal kicking full-back. Although he played 2 games for Huddersfield Giants in the Super League last season most of his performances were for Bramley.

IAN SINFIELD

Local lad, Ian signed for and played Super League rugby with Salford before joining Roughyeds in 1998. Had a brief stint in France in the early part of 1999 before returning to the club, finishing the season and re-signing for 2000. A back row for and who tackles hard, run strongly and uses the ball intelligently wide cut.

WARREN BARROW

Signed recently from St Helens Alliance side making his debut at Leigh on the wing. A regular try scorer whilst at Saints he can play either on the wing or at centre. A strong, abrasive runner who likes to help out his forwards.

PHIL FARRELL

Recently signed for the club after a successful loan period. Hard working back row forward who has the right pedigree, as he is the younger brother of Wigan and GB Captain Andy Farrell. Scored a memorable individual try in the defeat of Leigh Centurions and his work rate and commitment have made him a favourite with the fans.

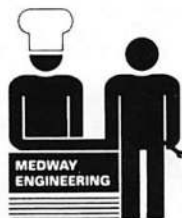
NEIL RODEN

Signed for the club from Wigan at the same time as Phil Farrell. Young half back who impressed in the Alliance side before making his senior bow against Hunslet at Boundary Park. Scored his first try for the club in the away win at Batley and looks like one to watch for the future. Switched to stand off against Doncaster and walked off with man of the match award.

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Action Replay...

LEIGH CENTURIONS 38 DEWSBURY RAMS 16 **2/7/00**

THE disappointment of losing out on Super League status was pushed on to the backburner as Leigh's timely win set up another crunch clash between the two sides in the opening play-off round next week.

The Centurions, the only team to have inflicted defeat on the Rams on their home ground, will have the upper hand after this comfortable win over the league champions.

Leigh coach Paul Terzis was quick to accept that fact. "Individually we were motivated this week and again today was the fruition of a lot of hard work," he said. "We have a psychological edge over them and it will be a great game. We are the only side to have beaten Dewsbury twice this season. We have had losses and know how to bounce back from them. I don't know if they can. Our ball movement in attack came up trumps. We possibly wanted it more today than Dewsbury, maybe they had a bit of complacency. We now want three more wins and we have won the Premiership." Terzis

praised Liam Bretherton, playing his first game at stand-off since moving on loan from Wigan. "Bretherton is a class act and he showed it out there today. He gives us more options." The coach said that he thought the bad news over Super League status did not affect the players' performance. "The Super League decision is outside the players' control. We just go out and perform. If a decision comes that Leigh deserve the chance to be reinstated then well and good.

"The RL need to start thinking logically instead of illogically. They need promotion and relegation to increase crowds and to keep the supporters' dreams alive."

Rams coach Neil Kelly was looking forwards as well. "We have expected to play them and it all points to being a great game next week," he remarked. "It probably gives Leigh a bit of an edge but we have to believe that after winning the league we can beat anyone on our day. It is always a tough place to come and get a result and they are now the only side to have done the double over us. I am disappointed overall. We allowed

Leigh to make too much headway up the middle and that pulls in defenders from out wide and they hit us there. We can play a lot better. The players are disappointed that some of our fellow clubs voted against us. But as long as our promotion bid is on the table we have hope. The vote in the first place was totally irrelevant as I don't know of any other club who has to ask where they can play."

It was the visitors who started the better and two early tries against sloppy Leigh tackling put them in the driving seat before the Centurions got their act together.

The Rams scored their first try inside three minutes when the ball was whipped along the line and Dan Potter shook off three tacklers before diving over.

They did not maintain the lead for long as a spilled ball near their own line was quickly pounced on by the Centurions and centre Paul Anderson blasted his way over for his 14th try of the season.

But it was still Dewsbury who looked the more dangerous and breached the Leigh defence again in the 17th minute when the influential Barry Eaton was put in the clear by Mark Cain

and then converted his own try.

Leigh bounced back with a sparkling try in the 23rd minute when Adam Bristow began a move on the half-way line. He burst through the defence before flicking a pass over his shoulder for Simon Baldwin, who laid it off to Stuart Donlan, who won a spectacular race for the line. Bretherton goaled.

The home side produced a timely score just before the break with another dazzling try when Aussie Bristow set up the try when he fed Bretherton who sent his halfback partner Kieron Purtill sprinting under the posts. Bretherton added another goal.

Leigh opened the second-half in style with a try within three minutes when Purtill cleverly turned the ball inside for Donlan to scamper over for his second touchdown and Bretherton added the touchline goal.

The Rams came storming back but Leigh's defence held firm for a series of tackles before finally wilting in the 59th minute when Eaton chipped ahead and Alex Godfrey dived on the ball and Eaton added the conversion.



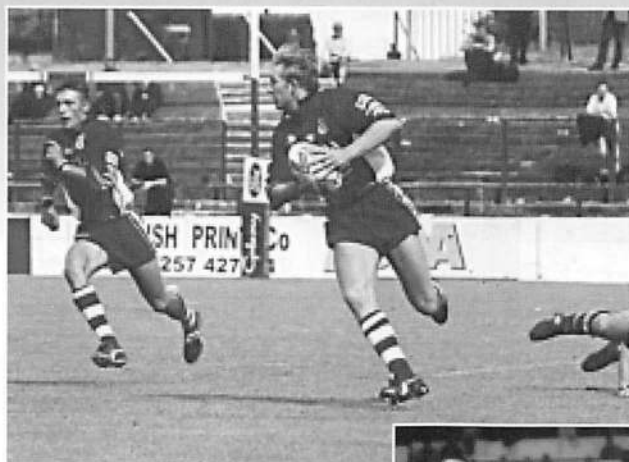
But hopes of a Yorkshire comeback were soon dashed when Phil Kendrick topped a fine display with a superb individual effort, bursting through four tacklers to score.

Leigh put the game out of reach in the 70th minute when Radney Bowker raced through another gap and Bretherton goaled.

In the last minute Bretherton, relishing the stand-off role, took advantage of sloppy tackling to dart over and kicked the goal.

GAMESTAR: Adam Bristow - full of effort and industry.

GAMEBREAKER: Phil Kendrick's powerful burst which put Leigh ten points clear in the 64th minute and ended the Rams' fightback.



Radney Bowker with Stuart Donlan
in support



Paul Anderson

Mick Higham





Paul Anderson

Radney Bowker
receiving congratulations



Kelron Purtil



Phil
Kendrick
celebrates

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DEWSBURY RAMS 12 LEIGH CENTURIONS 29

9/7/00

A typical Cup tie atmosphere, this crucial semi-final started with a firecracker explosion, when on 3 minutes, Rams lynchpin, half back Barry Eaton was cleaned out by a head high tackle after which Centurions second rower, Simon Baldwin, was sent off by top referee Russ Smith.

Eaton recovered to kick the ensuing penalty goal. The tough, uncompromising start continued, as tackles went in extra hard and only first class handling by Mr Smith eased the fire in the defences.

With the outstanding Adam Bristow leading the way, Leigh made light of being a man down and on 15 minutes a superb break by eventual man of the match, Liam Bretherton, covering fully 50 metres, saw swift handling between Bristow, the eye-catching Kieron Purtill and Andy Fairclough, to give strong running Phil Kendrick a chance to crash over for an unconverted try.

It was all Leigh now, but poor Dewsbury passing and handling did not help their cause. Bristow then was involved in two pieces of tremendous football that epitomised the Leigh spirit. Firstly, he kicked through, chased and caught Nathan Graham in his own in-goal area with a crunching tackle, then, two minutes later, on 24 minutes, Bristow fired out the sweetest of passes to lively centre, Fairclough who swept 40 metres and sent in the inside supporting Stuart Donlan for a copybook try converted by Bretherton.

A great run by Leigh wingman, Alan Cross ended when Bretherton kicked a neat penalty goal for a foul on Cross. The Rams appeared demoralised and Leigh made the game look so easy, on 31 minutes, as Mick Higham slipped through a raggy defence, passed inside to the ever supporting Purtill who, when challenged by Graham, sent Bretherton in under the sticks for a wonderful support try, the same player converted. With sub forward Tim Street rampant for Leigh, the Dewsbury defence was a shambles and Bretherton kicked a further penalty goal on 36 minutes and on 38 minutes rubbed in the first half drubbing by dropping a smart goal. The Rams had been given a harsh lesson in spirit, enthusiasm and support play.

Half Time 2-21.

Playing virtually the whole of the first half with 12 men, it was expected that Leigh would tire quickly but with Purtill in the van, and that jack-in-the-box Bristow slipping out superb passes and knocking Dewsbury's runners sideways in his defence, Leigh continued to control this semi-final in confident mood.

On 51 minutes Paul Anderson gauged a grubber kick to perfection for Cross to dive over too far out for Bretherton to convert. Rams began to realise that Leigh were vulnerable wide out and after a bout of sustained pressure the 12 men of Leigh succumbed to a neat pass by the home side's outstanding forward, Daniel Frame, who hit wingman Richard Baker with a wide ball, to give him a walk-in on 55 minutes.

With the visitors now tiring badly the Rams, with Eaton rushing them on, hammered on the Leigh line and only a brave Donlan catch held the Rams at bay. Unbelievably, Leigh scored again when, whilst attempting to clear his own quarter, on 65 minutes, Alex Godfrey sliced a kick which stood up for Cross to collect and scamper over. Graham dropped a pass with a walk-in open and on 76 minutes, with the game already lost, Godfrey raced 50 metres to set up a well deserved victory for the Centurions and quickly back to the drawing board for coach, Kelly and his battered troops.

TEAMS AND STATS:

Dewsbury: Graham 6, Baker 6, Omeara 5, Potter 5, Godfrey 6, Cain 5, Eaton 6, Long 6, Mycoe 5, Haigh 6, Richardson 8, Frame 7, Ball 6
Subs: Wood 6, Kershaw 5, Spink 5, McDonald 7.

Leigh: Donlan 8, Arkwright 7, Anderson 7, Fairclough 8, Cross 8, Bretherton 9, Purtill 8, Whittle 8, Higham 8, Leatham 8, Baldwin 8, Kendrick 8, Bristow 9. Subs: Ingram 7, Norman 8, Street 8.

Half Time: 2-21

Referee: Mr R. Smith (Cas)

Attendance: 2,500 (approx)

Weather: Cool, dull

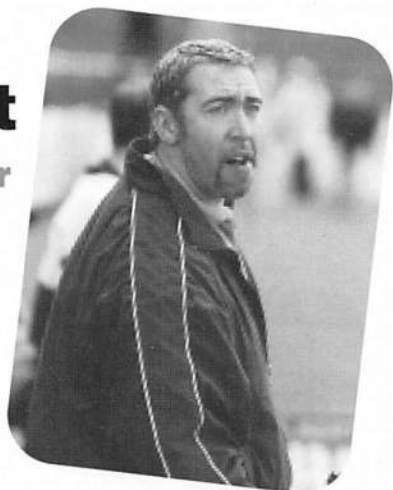
Man of the Match: L Bretherton (Leigh)

Match Rating: 45.

Centurions Staff

Kevin Prescott

Strength Conditioner



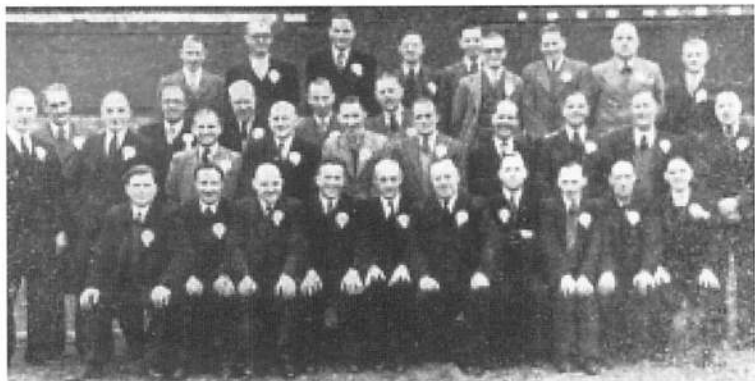
Frank Taylor

Rugby Manager /Physio



SUPPORTERS COMMITTEE

This photograph appeared in the Match Programme on 29th November 1947. The Committee was a working group who were largely responsible for the building of the present ground.



The Play-Offs

Week 1 - 9th July

Preliminary Semi-Finals

Winners to Major Semis, Losers to Minor Semis

Match A: Dewsbury 12 Featherstone 29

Match B: Keighley 44 Doncaster Dragons 22

Elimination Semi-Finals

Winners to Minor Semis, Losers eliminated

Match C: Featherstone Rovers 43 Widnes Vikings 24

Match D: Oldham 22 Hull KR 14

Week 2 - 16th July

Minor Semi-Finals

Winners to Major Semis, Losers eliminated

Match E: Dewsbury Rams 25 Featherstone Rovers 18

Match F: Doncaster Dragons 17 Oldham 24

Week 3 - 23rd July

Major Semi-Finals

Winners to Grand Final

Match G: Leigh Centurions v Oldham (KO 5pm)

Match H: Dewsbury Rams v Keighley Cougars (KO 1.30pm)

Week 4 - 29th July

Grand Final

Winner Match G v Winner Match H
at Gigg Lane, Bury. Kick-off 2.30pm

Photo Gallery

Sponsors and Mascots v Dewsbury



Above:
Team and collectors at end of Dewsbury game -
collection for Centurions 999 Challenge - a nationwide
competition on behalf of the police



Sue Lewis from
Forget-Me-Nots
Matchball
sponsors



Above:
Chairman Mike Nolan



Below:
Richard Waterfield of Waterfield Bakery.
Main Match Sponsor



Brogklands
Cleaning -
Video Sponsors

Right:
Nathan Coffey,
Johnathan Cheetham
and Ben Hardcastle
(with friend) - Mascots



Below:
John Williamson from
Altered Images. Prog
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Above:
Kevin on behalf of Logan Construction receives thanks
from Phil Kendrick

It Makes You Wonder!

.....

GREAT entertainment though it is - and the Northern Ford Premiership has thrown up many memorable sporting moments in the season now drawing to a close - Rugby League continues to do itself a great disservice by its failure to deal efficiently with simple fundamentals.

You wouldn't think it was too difficult, for instance, for extra-time arrangements in any knock-out competition to be agreed upon well in advance and to be widely publicised so that, in the event of a draw after 80 minutes everyone who needed to know would be well versed in what to do next.

When I get to Hilton Park this early evening for what has all the makings of an absolute cracker in the major semi finals of the NFP top eight play-off I will be interested to see if this programme tells us exactly what will happen if there is nothing to separate Leigh and Oldham at the end of normal time

There was a time, in the good old days when attention to detail was a matter of course and you weren't considered to be a doddering old worrier if you demanded rules and regulations to be specific, when extra-time details would be printed in appropriate match programmes by order of the Rugby League.

What a contrast in the year 2000. This is what we got over the public address system at Doncaster last Sunday when the Dragons and the Roughyeds were all locked up at 16-16 after 80 minutes.

First we were informed there would be ten minutes of extra time each way. Then we were informed that was wrong: that in fact there would be one period of ten minutes. Wrong again. Switching on for the third time, the announcer told us there would be ten minutes each way with the "golden point" rule applying if there was still nothing to separate the teams after 100 minutes.

At that point the teams kicked off for extra time just as the Press Box was informed by official sources that if the teams were still all-square after ten minutes each way there would be additional periods of ten

minutes until a winner was established.

Is it any wonder our friends in the round ball game often regard us as laughing stocks?

They've had a field day recently, what with preliminary semi finals, elimination semi finals, minor semi finals and major semi finals.

Now, I have no problem with the Aussie-style play-off system, yet can we do anything in Rugby League without howls of protest from one club or another about unfair formulae or uneven playing fields?

Then comes the stock answer: the clubs voted for it, the frightening thing is they invariably did.

Only Doncaster voted against the play-off system that has come in for considerable criticism. There was a similar situation in mid-season when several coaches, headed by Workington, protested that seven League games in May were far too demanding on players' endurance and on spectators' pockets, yet again the clubs had approved the fixture formula in the first place. This clearly raises several questions, "Do club reps attend meetings of the APC, the RFL, Super League Europe or whatever with a mandate from their clubs on each specific topic?"

As it is invariably coaches who protest about crowded fixture programmes, alleged play-off injustice or any manner of things can we assume that there is insufficient club-coach liaison before the hand goes up to cast a vote?

Are all clubs represented by senior personnel or do some send less senior members of staff or boardroom without a specific mandate? It is too easy to say clubs voted for this or for that and then to blame those of the shop floor, who perhaps never got the opportunity to make an input in the first place, for raising doubts or criticisms.

Anyway enough of that. Let's hope we see a cracking, semi-final today with or without extra time.

By the way, do YOU know how it will work if extra time has to be played?

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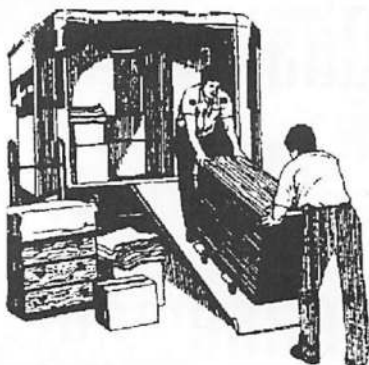
SALFORD RLFC 1958/9 OUR PLAYING REGISTER

Player	Birthplace	Height	Weight
Full Back			
A Gregory	Wigan	5-8	11-7
F Smith	Warrington	5-9	21-10
Threequarters			
A Baines	Leigh	5-9	12-7
L Bettison	Millom	5-10	12-4
G P Caudwell	Salford	5-9	11-4
J Chadderton	Oldham	5-6	10-9
J H Cheshire	Wattsville	5-10	11-10
F Dodd	Salford	5-8	11-4
I Farrington	Leigh	5-9	12-0
F J Fraser	Widnes	5-10	12-2
V B Hartley	Salford	5-11	13-0
E G Jones	Penarth	5-8	12-12
R M Preece	Salford	5-9 1/2	12-0
R Walker	Salford	5-11	13-2
B Hough	Manchester	5-10	12-4
Half Backs			
S A Lowdon	Whitehaven	5-11	13-2
T Ryan	Leigh	5-7	10-0
H Gregory	Wigan	5-7	12-4
A Greenslade	Treherbert	5-7	11-6
W Banks	Measteg	5-7	12-0
Forwards			
E Ayles	Wigan	5-8	14-0
F Alder	Leigh	5-8	14-2
C Armit	Salford	6-0	13-7
F Boardman	Salford	5-9	12-7
P Brereton	St Helens	5-9	14-4
H Council	Hyde	6-0	14-10
D Clarke	Llanelly	6-1	15-10
J Dignum	Northwich	5-10	14-2
P J Donoghue	Warrington	5-10	13-12
H Duffy	Shotts	5-10	13-4
L G Dutton	St Helens	5-9	14-0
A Evans	Swinton	5-9	11-6
D Fieldhouse	Wigan	5-11	13-12
T Garlick	Oldham	6-1	13-7
J Hancock	Newport	6-1	15-0
D N Kilgannon	Oldham	5-8	13-0
J McGuinness	Whitehaven	5-10	13-6
A Openshaw	Salford	5-7	12-4
R Stott	Oldham	5-10	13-7
A Storey	Wakefield	6-0	14-7
J Whalley	Leigh	5-10	13-0
D Adamson	Warrington	6-2	16-0
G Parsons	Newport	6-1	14-12
D Smith	Widnes	6-1	15-10

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Records - Grounds

.....

Leigh played at Buck's Farm, Pennington and The Three Crowns Field, Bedford before the ground at Mather Lane was opened in September 1889. In the early days the grounds was referred to as Frog Field before becoming more commonly known as Mather Lane. Leigh played there until 1940.

On the club's reformation in 1946 Leigh spent one season at the Leigh Athletic Club Ground at Charles Street before moving to Kirkhall Lane in 1947. The ground was renamed 'Hilton Park' in 1959.

MATHER LANE

First Match: 7 Sep 1889 v Aspull

First Match (Northern Union): 7 Sep 1895 v Leeds (League)

Last Match: 27 Apr 1940 v St Helens (League)

Attendance Records:

25,000 Wigan v St Helens (RL Cup Semi-Final Rep) 2 Apr 1930

21,940 Wigan v St Helens Rec (RL Cup Semi-Final Rep) 10 Apr 1929

21,500 v Rochdale H (Lancashire Cup 2nd rd) 12 Mar 1920

21,500 v Warrington (RL Cup 2nd rd) 12 Mar 1921

19,000 v Wigan (League) 25 Dec 1920

19,000 v Wigan (League) 22 Sep 1923

17,000 v Wigan (Lancashire Cup 2nd rd) 21 Nov 1908

CHARLES STREET

First Match: 14 Sep 1946 v St Helens (Lancashire Cup 1st rd)

Last Match: 10 May 1947 v Wigan (League)

Attendance Records:

13,000 v Warrington (League) 26 Apr 1947

12,000 v Widnes (League) 12 Apr 1947

KIRKHAL LANE / HILTON PARK

First Match: 30 Aug 1947 v St Helens (Lancashire Cup 1st rd)

Attendance Records:

31,326 v St Helens (RL Cup 3rd rd) 14 Mar 1953

29,500 v Wigan (RL Cup 1st rd) 26 Feb 1949

28,000 v Wigan (RL Cup 1st rd) 19 Feb 1949

28,000 v Wigan (League) 3 Feb 1951

26,262 v Leeds (RL Cup 3rd rd) 15 Mar 1952

25,000 v St Helens (League) 25 Apr 1951

An Eye on the Web

with David Parkinson and Centurions Online

.....

Well, here we are again at Hilton Park for the NFP Major Semi-Final with Oldham, for what really will be the last home game of the 1999-2000 season. Is it really eight months since the season kicked-off? Hasn't time flown!

May I firstly congratulate Oldham on reaching this stage of the competition. It is a big task to come from 6th place and Mike Ford and all the Oldham supporters must be very proud of the teams achievements this season, especially in light of the current situation where the Roughyeds have been playing in Rochdale once more.

As this is my final column of the season, I would like to extend my thanks to Dave Crowther, the programme editor who spends time pooling everything together for an edition of 'The Centurion'. It was Dave who gave me the opportunity to write in the programme and I hope everyone has enjoyed reading my articles as much as I have enjoyed writing them.

Currently on the site, I am taking nominations for the first internet player-of-the-year, please register your votes online if you haven't already done so.

Hopefully I'll be in a position during the next couple of weeks to launch the first article in a new section on the site entitled "Blast from the Past". If you have a memory you'd like to share with other Cyber-Leyther's, please e-mail me at leighrl@fandjp.freemove.co.uk and I'll look forward to hearing from you.

The rugby season may be drawing to a close, but Centurions Online will remain active during the coming months.

Since we were last here there have been a couple of talking points raised on the website message board, and I'll come to those in a minute. Did anyone see the indirect mention Centurions Online received in last weekend's edition of Total Rugby League. In an article concerning Liam Bretherton (voted NFP Man-of-the-Week v Dewsbury) (well done Liam!) it described some of the regulars of club message boards as "train-spotters". Excuse me, just because I list British Rail and Hornby models as two of my favourite sites that doesn't mean I'm a train-spotter!!

After the Dewsbury playoff heroics, a most one eyed Rams fan decided to visit the site and proclaimed our victory "lucky". Lucky? Luck is when you win from a drop kick when you were really dropping the ball, not when you've played with twelve men for 78 minutes and outscored your opponents 5-2 in the try count!

Another topic which has been discussed, is the re-introduction of promotion and relegation. Currently on the NFP site (www.nfp-rugbyleague.org) people are being urged to undertake a vote and the results are interesting. In a recent GMR poll 94% of callers wanted to see a return to this method while on the site a whopping 96% would like it re-installed. This is the time for the RL bosses to listen to the voice of the fans. Even a Huddersfield fan described the current situation with his club as "a joke".

Teams who have ambitions to play at the top level should not be held back, surely this could be termed restraint of trade?

The final topic was around the controversy surrounding the TV show "Rugby League Raw", Yorkshire TV's new documentary style show

about the Northern Ford Premiership. In the League Express this week, the RFL have labelled the programme, "compelling TV", despite the outbursts of a certain David Hulme, who was described, quite aptly in my opinion as "Chubby Brown's younger brother" on the message board.

Personally, I enjoyed the coverage of the games, but I felt the show swayed too much towards the "flat cap and whippet" image that RL has faced for as long as I can remember. The language of Mr Hulme, even if taken out of context has done the NFP no favours.

Yes the NFP does have traditional links with

the communities, clubs like Leigh and Oldham are in towns where there is that community feel, and we should never forget that, but coverage of Rugby League is vital if we are to progress. The sport could have a fine future as a whole, if only the management could see the big picture. We need positive publicity and unfortunately the talking of one coach has created controversy once again. I hope Leigh and Oldham are shown in a better light and that we will see a good game this evening witnessed by a big crowd.

Logging-off
David Parkinson.

Junior Centurions

Welcome to all of the Oldham supporters who have made the short journey to Hilton Park for today's game. We hope you enjoy your afternoon with us and have a safe journey home.

Of course this is not just any old game as Hilton Park plays host to one of the Northern Ford Premiership Play Off Major Semi-Finals. The other Major Semi-Finals sees Dewsbury take on Keighley at Ram Stadium.

Oldham arrive at today's semi final on the back of an epic match last week where they defeated Doncaster away from home after extra time. I'm sure I wasn't alone amongst Leigh supporters last Sunday being glued to the radio, especially during extra time, waiting to find out who our opponents would be today, and where we would be playing.

Today's game must be Leigh's most important match since the Challenge Cup semi-final against St Helens in 1987. Following the great performance at Dewsbury

two weeks ago, the Centurions go into today's game full of confidence and with the benefit of a weeks rest. However as Oldham proved at Doncaster they are tough opponents for anyone and this semi final is sure to be a thrilling contest which will probably go down to the wire before the side which takes it's place in the Grand Final at Gigg Lane is known. One thing is for sure, with the importance of the game and the fact that this is also a local derby, Hilton Park should see it's biggest crowd for many years.

This is obviously the last home game for the Centurions this season and we have had an amazing response to membership this year with nearly 750 youngsters signing up. At the present time the Super League dream is still alive for the Centurions (just) and consequently we don't know for sure when the season will start next year. Therefore we don't yet know the arrangements for membership next season. We will however announce what is happening prior to the start of next season, wherever and whenever that may be.

Does anyone remember the Junior Supporters Club Challenge that we held at Hilton Park a few years ago? For those who don't this event featured junior supporters clubs from various teams competing in several fun events like Tick Rugby, Obstacle Races, Penalty Shoot Outs etc. Well Wigan Warriors are holding a similar event in aid of the Mick Cassidy Testimonial and we have been invited to take part. The event will take place on August Bank Holiday Monday, 28th August 2000, at Orrell Rugby Union Ground. There will be all sorts of other events taking place including a celebrity football match. We are hoping to take a couple of Junior Centurion Teams to the event. If you would like to take part contact Steve and Carole on 01942 516398 or EMail us on stevewaywell@yahoo.com. We will be providing a coach to the event.

Can we remind all McDonald's Junior Centurion members to take their membership card with them as well as the McDonald's voucher when claiming the free offer.

McDonald's staff may refuse to accept the voucher without a valid membership card.

For all of our young supporters, don't forget to come to the Tuck Shop under the score board to vote for today's McDonald's Junior Centurion man of the match. The presentation will be made to the winning player in the Mick Martyn Suite after the match. Congratulations to the Micky Higham who won the award against Dewsbury following another non-stop display.

Today's Mascots

OLIVER DONOHUE

Aged three and a half. Favourite TV programmes - Pokemon and Thomas The Tank Engine

LUCAS DONOHUE

Aged one and a half. Favourite TV programmes - Bob the Builder and Tweenies

If you hadn't guessed - their parents are Jason and Karen



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Leigh's Cup Final Appearances

LANCASHIRE CUP FINAL

Saturday 26th September 1981 Leigh 8 - 3 Widnes

As the 1981-82 season dawned there was an air of confidence and expectation at Hilton Park with the feeling that Alex Murphy had assembled a Leigh side ready to challenge again for the game's top honours.

Enthusiasm was generated by the early season results and home wins against Whitehaven, Workington and St Helens took Leigh to their first Lancashire Cup Final for 11 years. Opponents were 'up kings' Widnes, who had begun the season with seven straight wins including Cup successes over Rochdale, Wigan and Salford. Clearly the Chemics were to provide the acid test to Leigh's revival hopes.

Sadly the weather for Cup Final day at Central Park was atrocious. Rain cascaded down from slate grey skies from early morning and made the pitch waterlogged in places. As hooker Ray Tabern recalls, however, Leigh were in a confident mood. "We had a tremendous team spirit at the club with everyone working for each other. There were two world class players, John Woods and Des Drummond, but our greatest was our team-work and determination. We were fired up and raring to go whereas Widnes appeared strangely tense. In the tunnel before the game we were all lined up ready to take the field but Widnes were still their dressing room. I remember Mick Hogan banging on the door and shouting, "Come on you lot, there's a game on!"

Despite the cold and driving rain the action was pulsating. Widnes were shaken out their stride by an early Leigh try.



Terry Bilsbury touches down for an opportunist try early in the game

After only seven minutes centre Terry Bilsbury, a fine opportunist, kicked past a flat defence and darted through to touchdown by the posts. John Woods tagged on the conversion.

This was the only score of a thrilling first-half dominated by the tremendous work-rate of the Leigh forwards. Tabern, Alf Wilkinson and Mick McTigue were the pick of the pack while half-backs Woods and Ken Green formed a redoubtable partnership. Leigh put in an awesome tackling stint, blotting out Chemics' danger man Brian Lockwood and halting the charges of second rowers Les Gorley and Eric Prescott with copybook defence. When Mick Adams tried to create something with some towering kicks, full-back Hogan was more than equal to the task, gathering the ball confidently and running out strongly.

For all Leigh's hard work Widnes looked like taking charge as they dominated play early in the second half. Gorley connected a loose ball and timed his pass superbly to send winger Keith Bentley on a clear run to the line (5-3). Widnes continued to press and ten minutes later Eddie Cunningham seized on another knee ball and kicked ahead. Steve Donlan reacted quickly and dived on the ball as he slid over the line only for the ball to run free for Bentley to claim a second try. A touch-judge ruled that Donlan had made the ball dead and Widnes were denied.

Leigh recovered their composure and again began to attack the Widnes line. A Woods penalty and a Donlan drop goal put them back in the driving seat as they achieved their first major honour for nearly nine years. It was a superb performance in the worst possible conditions and fittingly Tabern picked up the 'Man of the Match' award.

"That was a great surprise to me" recalls Ray, because I thought Kenny Green should have won the award. But perhaps it was right that a forward won it because our pack was superb that day. It was a tremendous all-round team effort, we covered the gaps and never stopped working for each other and it was that spirit which won the day. The supporters were super, there was red and white everywhere around the ground, and the scenes at the final whistle as Woody went up for the cup were never to be forgotten."

In Reserve

Alliance Team Match Report

LEIGH ALLIANCE 32 FEATHERSTONE ALLIANCE 34

Leigh's Alliance season ended in heartbreak as the Centurion youngsters were bundled out of the play-off's in the Elimination Semi-Final.

For the third game in succession Leigh held the lead at half-time thanks to first half tries from the outstanding Safraz Patel, Stuart Dickinson (his 14th of the season) and Craig Wingfield. It could have been worse for the visitors had Leigh Winger Ben Pye not been hauled back when seemingly in full flight. A high speed start to the second-half caught the hosts cold, however as Rovers staged a brilliant comeback from 16-4 down to take the win.

Academy fullback Simon Warhurst leapt high into the air to take a kick but was unable to hold onto the ball and Featherstone stand-off Gibson nipped through to put Rovers back in the game, Featherstone centre Chris Spurr has had an excellent year at Alliance level for Featherstone and it was he who showed great determination to cross from acting halfback. Tempers got the better of Patel and he was despatched to the sin-bin following a scuffle in midfield. With the extra space, Featherstone revelled, going close before hooker Morgan crashed over for a soft try to give Rovers the lead.

Leigh regained the lead with a huge stroke of luck. Scott Hilton looked to put the ball outside but an attempted intercept palmed the ball into the arms of Lee Sanderson who scythed through from 25 metres to send the supporting Warhurst over by the posts. With Leigh looking to take a grip on the game Sanderson just missed a "40-20" and Rovers were able to feed the ball wide for Spurr to break 60 metres. With

the defence still at sea Rovers fired possession out to the opposite wing and Riley put Turner in before another fight erupted in the in-goal area. Once things settled down, the referee sent Costello and Riley to the sin bin.

The Rovers conversion struck the posts and at 22-20 the game was finely poised. Featherstone struck again when substitute Bickerton had far too much pace for the defence and when Spurr collected a superbly weighted kick to go over, Rovers led by 34-20.

Cue the Leigh comeback, Dickinson had a quiet second period but came up with a great play to bust the defence and send substitute Halliwell romping over from close range. Sanderson converted with haste but was clearly unhappy with something that had gone on in back play. The scrum-half then lost his cool completely and was sent off for taking the law into his own hands, kicking a grounded opponent.

With under ten minutes remaining and down to 12 men, Leigh looked to have blown their chance but the Centurions battled forward and Costello barged over for an inspired score. Featherstone were left clinging to their lead when Wingfield converted quickly but time ran out for the Leigh side.

Leigh: Warhurst, Pye, Dickinson, Lewis, Prescott, Hilton, Sanderson, Costello, Patel, Conway, Platt, Wingfield, Lomax. Subs: Halliwell, Leach, A N Other, Owens

Tries: Patel, Dickinson, Wingfield, Warhurst, Halliwell, Costello

Goals: Sanderson 3/5, Wingfield 1/1.

In Reserve

Thanks to RL Express for this Match Report

.....

A LAST minute interception try killed off the challenge of brave depleted Leigh. An ambitious pass following the game's last scrum by Scott Hilton was swooped on by Haven's Spencer Miller who raced unopposed to the posts.

A combination of holidays and injuries reduced Centurions' contingent to fifteen, including assistant kit man Simon Warhurst and coach Mark Bailey. Safraz Patel returned after serving a one-match ban and Haven included Wath Brow back-rower Phil Sherwen, who trialled with Leeds Rhinos last term.

Haven hit a purple patch during Patel's sin-binning running in three tries, but were under the cosh again when the hooker redeemed himself with a late converted touchdown.

The Cumbrians, seeking a seasonal treble against their Lancashire opponents, took the lead against the run of play. Graham Colley taking an awkward ball after Miller and Andrew Nelson created an opening.

Two minutes later, Stephen McCourt crossed only to be denied for a forward pass and the home teams play fell flat after a potential 12-0 advantage quickly transformed into a 6-18 deficit.

Hilton, who kicked well throughout, hoisted a wickedly bouncing bomb with John Costello the grateful recipient. The stand-off crossed himself, shortly afterwards, when Patel slipped an excellent pass out of the tackle.

Haven fullback Paul Seager retired with a tennis elbow allergy and opposite number Damien Fishwick steamed through supporting a Lee Sanderson break.

Just before the break, Haven showed why they finished second in the league with a brilliantly executed move. Miller and Nelson were again involved and winger Ryan Campbell raced clear to the line.

Almost on the whistle Patel pulled off a 90-metre interception, but was recalled for an infringement.

Costello and Lee Sanderson came close in the second half and the scrum-half, who landed five goals from as many attempts, was successful with a long range penalty for an offence committed upon himself.

A dust up between the two hookers Colley and Patel resulted in yellow cards as Leigh's discipline began to fall away, with fully committed skipper Costello frequently engaged in heated dialogue with referee Paul Carr.

Haven prop George Suafoa also had a mighty game and he bulldozed over in the corner and Steven Stoddart's excellent conversion narrowed the arrears to two points.

The Miller-Nelson combination again clicked successfully for the latter to cross and a now rampant Haven moved eight points in front, McCourt supporting a Steven Morris break.

With Patel returning to whittle down the lead, Whitehaven were unable to relax until Miller's interception settled matters on the final whistle.

Whitehaven travel to the Auto Quest in the next round for potentially a Grand Final rehearsal, whilst Leigh entertain Featherstone and could quite conceivably make a return journey to the North West in a fortnight's time.

Leigh Academy

Academy Match Report

LEIGH 10 - 16 DEWSBURY 29

2nd June 2000 @ Hilton Park, Leigh

Missing the services of several regulars, Leigh Academy gave their worst performance of the season, slipping to a 10-29 home defeat.

The Rams, particularly promising South African duo Green and Schwartz, always had the edge on enthusiasm, and raced into a 6-0 lead after just 9 minutes when speedy winger Renton intercepted and ran 80 metres.

The first half was something of a stop-start affair but Leigh finally looked to be making an impact when good running from Hughes and Hartley almost put Watson over while Kilshaw was hauled back after Owens barnstorming run.

Dewsbury extended their lead with another great try, started by the pace of that man Renton. Leigh fullback Warhurst did well to delay a score, but with five men up with play, it was near impossible to stop the move. The conversion gave The Rams a 12-0 half-time lead.

When Rams fullback Green opened the second half scoring after just 8 minutes play, Dewsbury had a decisive 18 point buffer. Leigh struck back 5 minutes later with a good try by the corner flag.

With time ticking away Leigh grabbed their second try when Hartley split the defence to send Man-Of-The-Match Owens over.

That was as good as it got for Centurions as Dewsbury crossed for two further tries. A cheeky drop goal with little more than a

minute remaining confirmed victory that helps cement The Rams place in the top five.

Tries: Harcombe, Owens

Goals: Hartley 1/2

Line Up: Warhurst, Prescott, Orange, Harcombe, Hughes, Hartley, Baker, Bourhill, Bowdler, Watson, Owens, Lomax, Kilshaw.
Subs: Evans, G.Hodson, Molyneux, Thornhill.



**Michael Owens receiving
Man of the Match award
from Norman Turley**

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A few choice pieces of Wisdom

(Best read in a Yorkshire accent)

"Afoor long everything that isn't forbidden 'll be compulsory".

"Ah like long walks, especially when they're tayken by folk who annoy me".

"Most of us get what we deserve, but only them 'at's successful will admit it".

"Each one of our village quartet' as three good reasons what's up wi' it".

Thanks

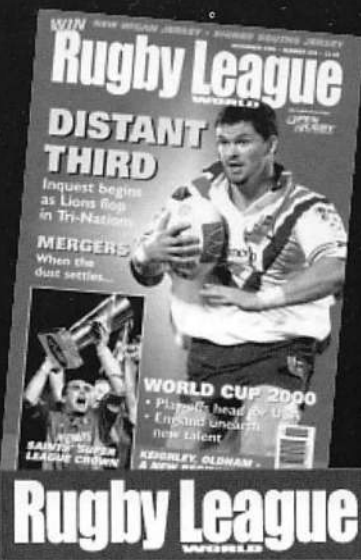
To all who have contributed to the programme this season. To our Printers, Vibrant Graphics of Congleton. To David Parkinson for Alliance and Academy Reports and articles about visiting teams and for keeping an eye on the web. To Jack Daniels. To Bob Shuttleworth and the Past Players Association. To Steve Waywell for his Junior Centurions column and to a Brian Wood for his always entertaining articles.

Editor

RUGBY LEAGUE...ALL YEAR ROUND



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