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The Roughyeds



GATESHEAD THUNDER

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Up Front

... with Christopher Hamilton



AFTER the hard fought win against Hull K.R. in midweek it's back to league action this afternoon against Gateshead. Steve Worsnop and his colleagues have picked up the baton following the Super League debacle that was Gateshead Thunder 'Mark I' and it is obvious for all to see that things are proving to be more difficult than was envisaged.

Having been through a very similar situation ourselves we know that at the moment Steve and his fellow devotees will be working very hard to make sure the club comes through this difficult time. At any new club things don't click into place as soon as anybody would like, but it's having the courage of your convictions that makes you persevere. Good luck to everyone at Gateshead in that respect.

Last Tuesday night's win over Hull K.R. was another testament to the progress the players have made. Against difficult opponents and despite not playing well when in possession the team again showed the willingness to put in the extra effort when defending that ultimately provides the platform for victory. The spirit among the players is excellent as you see every week and that camaraderie is what makes the difference in the tight games.

The weather over the past week has been much better and it has been good to get some games played. With postponed games both home and away which we hopefully will have re-arranged before today we do not want any further fixture backlog.

Thank you once again for your support against Hull K.R. in midweek: as ever it is appreciated by everyone at the club and it does make a difference.

Enjoy the game,

Chris



The Roughyeds

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FRONT COVER

David Gibbons

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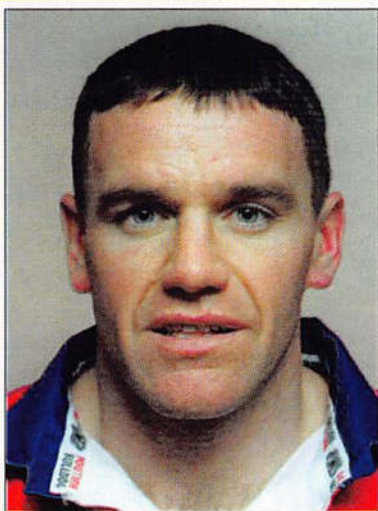
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FORD FOCUS . . . with Mike Ford



THE WIN against Hull Kingston Rovers in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup was very pleasing for everyone associated with the club. I knew the Hull lads would come at us hard and for the first thirty minutes they showed more enthusiasm than we did and pressured us into a lot of unnecessary mistakes. At this stage our strong defence certainly came to our rescue and, indeed, we were terrific on defence throughout. We felt it was important to go in with a lead at half time which would damage them psychologically, something along the lines of 'we've hit them with our best and we're still behind'. All praise then for Dave Gibbons quick tap penalty, Jason Clegg's barnstorming run and Gareth Barber's finishing which gave us the lead we wanted.

At half time we talked about our own enthusiasm and I thought we improved 100%, so much so that we dominated the second half. Again we scored at a great

time psychologically and Hull K.R. were forced to play catch up football. We'd also planned to move them around a lot because we were the more mobile side and I think they tired a lot and started to make mistakes. This gave us much better field position and the chance to dictate play more. I thought John Hough had worked himself to a standstill so I came on for the last ten minutes to gee things up. However, I am definitely NOT planning to get in the middle of the front row on a regular basis.

Although we are looking forward to playing against Wakefield, which should be a great day for the club and the fans, there is the little matter of Gateshead to deal with first. Andy Kelly is a friend of mine and I speak to him regularly. I really admire him for taking on the challenge of coaching Gateshead because it's a really hard task starting from scratch. We won't be taking Gateshead lightly and we will be re-addressing our own enthusiasm in what has become a stop-start season. We had no major injuries from the cup tie and hopefully the Alliance team will have played on Thursday, which will have given me the chance to look at players who didn't feature last Tuesday and who might get a run-out today.

Enjoy the game,

Mike

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Michael's Match



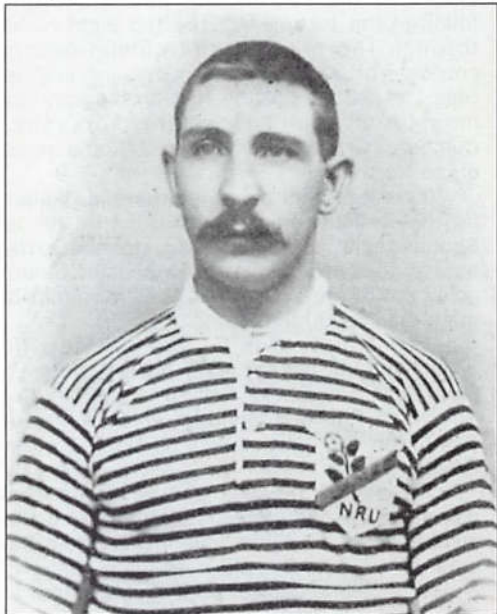
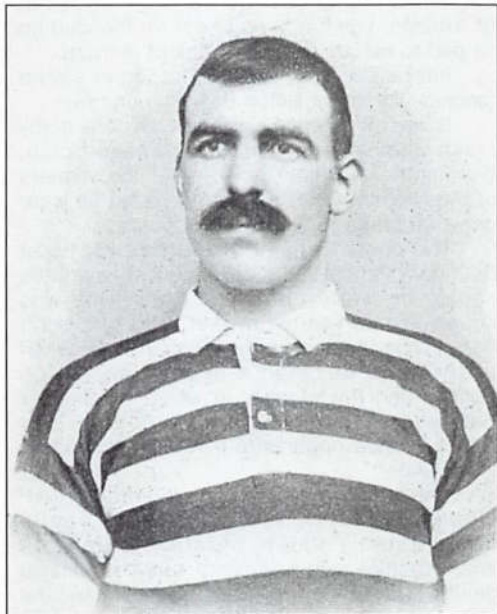
... from the pen of Michael Turner

TODAY we welcome the players, officials and supporters of the Gateshead club for their first visit to Boundary Park. I would imagine that most people will be under the impression that this is the first encounter between the 'Roughyeds' and opposition from the North East. This is not the case but you have to go back a long way to find the previous fixture. In fact it was almost one hundred years ago on October 26th 1901 when the South Shields club played Oldham in a friendly at Watersheddings.

The Roughyeds were very much one of the leading teams of the time and the Geordies ended up on the wrong side of a 43-0 thrashing in front of a crowd of 3,000 spectators. A return match was played the following April in South Shields and this proved to be a much more even contest with Oldham again the winners, this time by thirteen points to two. A trialist for Oldham in that second match was Jimmy Leytham,

who played at stand off half. Jim eventually went on to become a legend on the wing for Wigan.

While we are on the subject of rugby in the North East it is worth noting that at the time of the breakaway from the Rugby Union, Oldham recruited two players from the Tudhoe club in County Durham. First to arrive was forward Bob Edwards who played in Oldham's first ever match in the Northern Union at Hunslet in September 1895. A few months later he was followed to Watersheddings by his former team mate Scottish born Tom Martin. Martin was a fast and elusive winger whose 100 appearances for Oldham yielded him 58 tries and earned him three caps for Lancashire. Edwards did even better winning five caps for the red rose county. Both players had previously been capped for Durham county by the Rugby Union.



Bob Edwards and Tom Martin - Two Oldham players imported from the North East at the dawn of the Northern Union.

ROGER

ROGER



LEIGH CENTURIONS struck a blow for the Northern Ford Premiership with their rousing fourth round Silk Cut Challenge Cup defeat of Super League's Salford City Reds at Hilton Park last Sunday.

Too many people, particularly those in the media who make decisions about coverage of sporting events, disregard the NFP and treat it as some sort of feeder organisation for Super League.

With the backing of the RFL, the Association of Premiership Clubs is striving hard to push and promote the NFP as a competition that merits media and corporate interest and attention in its own right.

Yorkshire Television's 'Rugby League Raw' series at the end of last season, which followed the fortunes of the top eight clubs through the play-off and culminated in coverage of a terrific Dewsbury-Leigh final at Gigg Lane, Bury, put the NFP on the sporting map throughout Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cumbria, part of Lincolnshire and some areas of the North-East.

It created a lot of interest here in Oldham as the Roughyeds knocked out Hull KR at Spotland and then pulled off a stunning extra-time victory in a thriller at Doncaster before going out of the semi-final at Leigh in front of more than 6,000 fans.

The final itself was a terrific advertisement for the NFP, but no more so than Leigh's defeat of Salford in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup last Sunday, which went out live across the entire nation on BBC2 Sunday Grandstand.

The role of the Leigh club within its local community, its culture, its history and the inspirational way it has fought back from the brink of extinction in the past three years, is almost a carbon copy of what we have here at Oldham in the shape of the Roughyeds.

The Centurions are probably a couple of years ahead of Oldham, given that the

Roughyeds had to start from scratch in the autumn of 1997, but you can certainly liken the advances made at Hilton Park to the astonishing progress made by the Roughyeds - from ABSOLUTELY NOTHING in the past three and a bit years.

To come back from 12-0 down against Super League opposition and march into the last 16 was a magnificent achievement by Leigh, and the BBC cameras captured the excitement of the occasion from the viewpoint of the Leigh fans and players alike.

To return to Hilton Park an hour and a half later for live coverage of the fifth round draw enabled the BBC to put Leigh and the NFP even further into the national sporting spotlight on a wet, winter's Sunday afternoon.

It was a nice touch to have a couple of former greats in Andy Gregory and Roger Millward assisting Greg McCullum in the draw and it soon became clear that Ian Millward, the former Leigh boss now working miracles at St. Helens, still has a soft spot for the club he helped to rescue from the brink of oblivion.

Interesting, too, to hear Tim Street say he fancied Oldham at Hilton Park in round five.

It wasn't to be. Leigh were given a derby clash against another Super League club, Warrington, at Wilderspool, while the winners of the Oldham v Hull KR fourth round tie were drawn at home to Wakefield Wildcats.

The postponement of the Hull KR tie at Boundary Park last Sunday meant these notes had to be written before the outcome was known, but suffice to say that Wakefield won't be relishing a trip to either Oldham or Hull KR in the face of Leigh's demolition job on Salford and the manner in which Keighley (v Hull) and Dewsbury (v Castleford) gave their Super League opponents a few frights before going under.

There were a few heavy defeats for NFP clubs at the hands of Super League opponents - most notably Swinton's embarrassing concession of more than 100 points against Leeds - but, in the main, the clubs towards the upper reaches of the NFP did themselves and their competition proud.

Roger Halstead

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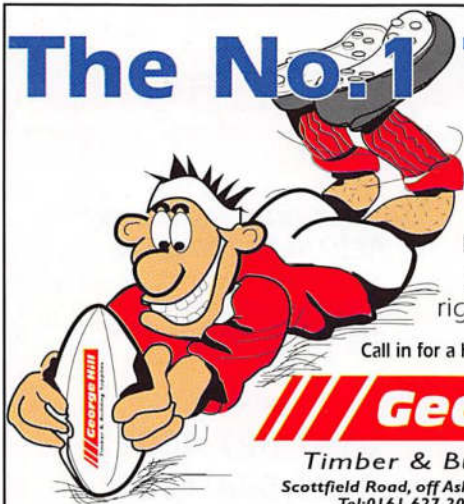
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Alliance Action

... with Haydn Walker

WITH first team home games coming thick and fast and the Alliance struggling to play at all it is becoming a little difficult putting this column together.

I thought I would take this opportunity to give an insight into how the Alliance team operates. On a Monday we train at Castleton Gabriels, this session usually consists of some fitness work, team and individual skills work. Prior to the session Mike has a coaches meeting and we discuss the previous week and also go through the coming week's schedule. Following training the players are given the week's training schedule which tells them when and where we train. They also get the various weights schedules for the coming week, these would be for Tuesday and Saturday if we play on Thursday.

Our next session is on a Wednesday and this would consist mainly of team running. This involves going through our pattern of play in attack and defence. Then it's game day on Thursday. Following the game I get a copy of the video and usually get to bed about 1.00am, after doing the players individual match reports.

Friday night is rehab night, this would see the team doing a few basic skill drills. We would then look at the video - Mike will have done some edits during the day - and debrief from the game. Players would get an individual match report. This consists of all their match statistics plus a few comments on their performance. I try to be positive

ALLIANCE TEAM FIXTURES

Dec				
6	Keighley	A	7.30	L16-36
21	Rochdale	H	7.30	W24-0
Jan				
3	Hunslet	A	7.30	W26-10
10	Leigh	A	7.30	L36-18
18	Widnes	H	P	
20	Workington	H	2.30	W24-0
Feb				
3	Whitehaven	H	P	
15	Hunslet	H	7.30	
22	Batley	H	7.30	
March				
17	Whitehaven	A	2.30	
22	Featherstone	H	7.30	
29	Doncaster	A	7.30	
April				
4	Batley	A	7.30	
19	Doncaster	H	7.30	
May				
3	Featherstone	A	7.30	
10	Keighley	H	7.30	
19	Workington	A	2.30	
24	Rochdale	A	7.30	
31	Leigh	H	7.30	
June				
7	Widnes	A	7.30	
13	Top Five Play Offs			
14	First Division Grand Final			

with these comments and don't just highlight deficiencies. I will then take the opportunity to speak to any player that has any specific problems.

The players would then do weights on Saturday and get Sunday off. We then start all over again.

Haydn Walker
Alliance Coach

Probing The NFP

THE leading NFP clubs generally did themselves proud in the fourth round of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup and none more so than Leigh Centurions whose thoroughly deserved win against Salford City Reds was the achievement of the round. You can't fault a team which comes from 12-0 down at half-time against supposedly superior opposition



Tim Street

to earn a 16-12 victory. It was a testament to the fitness, skill and self-belief of the Centurions who were rewarded with an attendance of 6,408, second only on the day to Bradford Bulls. And as a bonus we even got a TV interview with the 'people's prop' Tim Street.

Keighley Cougars also put on a good show against Hull FC to earn big wraps from visiting coach Shaun McRae. Trailing only 12-16 at half-time Cougars ran out of steam against 12 man Hull - Tony Smith having been red-carded for a high tackle by Robert Connolly in only the third minute - but earned a standing ovation from their fans at the end. And just to set inter-club relations to rights the Hull fans behaved themselves impeccably.

Dewsbury Rams performed equally impressively against Castleford Tigers. Again the NFP side were within striking distance at half-time, behind by only 6-4. Indeed it was not until the 70th minute that the Tigers opened up a lead of more than a single score when Dean Sampson ploughed over, the visitors finally running out 18-4 winners.

Featherstone meanwhile, already handicapped by the loss of chief playmaker Jamie Rooney with a broken jaw, were subjected to some dubious tactics by Huddersfield Giants who triumphed by 28-6 at the McAlpine. Needless to say Peter Roe was not best pleased.

Everywhere else I think we can say things went as one would have expected with several scoring feats of note. The most

outstanding was Iestyn Harris's 17 goals (from 18 attempts) and a try at Swinton where Leeds Rhinos set up a club record score, a record away win and a record victory margin in their 106-10 defeat of the Lions.

For Wakefield Trinity Wildcats Martin Pearson landed 8 goals against Workington in an easier than anticipated 56-6 victory which must serve as a warning to their fifth round opponents. At Barrow Adam Hughes of the Blue Sox scored a hatrick and six goals and Darryl Cardiss also had a hatrick. And of interest to Oldham fans was Shayne McMenemy's two tries on competitive debut.

At Valley Parade Bradford's Michael Withers had a hatrick and Henry Paul landed 7 goals as the Bulls outclassed Widnes 54-10. And finally if you want a Challenge Cup dark horse keep an eye on London Broncos. Despite a tough task in the next round at Hull, the Broncos have a much stronger squad than for some time. They easily disposed of Batley 44-6.



Jamie Rooney

Today the big game of the NFP is at the Lionheart Stadium where Featherstone take on Leigh. A superb home record will be fully tested by the Centurions, who I will take to win, but only because of the absence of Jamie Rooney, rumoured to be interesting Wigan incidentally, from the Rovers colours.

There could be close games at three grounds, namely Batley v Barrow (Bulldogs to win), Rochdale v Doncaster (an unconfident prediction of a Dragons win), and Workington v Sheffield (a reasonable bet for an Eagles victory). With Keighley the team without a game, Dewsbury and Oldham can gain ground with home victories against the bottom two, Chorley and Gateshead respectively. And elsewhere Hull KR will beat Whitehaven, Hunslet will turn over an out of sorts Swinton, and Widnes will wallop York. Meanwhile in midweek Doncaster and Dewsbury will have fought each other to a standstill: and if you predicted the result let me know so I can give my bookie a roasting next time round!

IN Town TODAY



GATESHEAD THUNDER

TODAY WE welcome Gateshead Thunder for their first ever visit to Boundary Park. The controversial demise of the Super League Gateshead club is well documented and our opinion of that charade well known. However, as if to give the lie to the idea that true devotees of Rugby League can only be found within spitting distance of the M62, the fans of the Thunder rallied round to form a new club which, after a season's absence from the league, gained admission to the N.F.P. If those fans thought the lower level of football would be an easy nut to crack they have been in for a surprise. To date the Thunder have yet to record their first league victory with the inevitable effect on attendances. In addition Gateshead's fans are learning in this season of appalling weather that 'winter' rugby is most certainly not the same as 'summer' rugby! Nevertheless, despite their hardships we wish everyone at Gateshead, be they Directors, staff or supporters, every success for the future in their struggle to establish the game on Tyneside.

On their acceptance into the N.F.P. Gateshead moved quickly to appoint the highly regarded ANDY KELLY, former Wakefield player and coach, as their new Head Coach. It's a move that will eventually pay off because Kelly, who also had a hand in coaching the Irish World Cup squad, is a deep thinker about the game and a powerful motivator of his players. He is, however,



Andy Kelly

learning, as we at Oldham had to learn, that establishing a new club takes time and patience and no little sound judgement. As his right hand man Kelly appointed the experienced ROY SOUTHERNWOOD as his player-coach. With experience at Castleford, Halifax and Wakefield and the ability to play halfback or hooker, Southernwood is a key asset in the building of the new team.

Another element of the Gateshead story that contradicts the idea that players can only be found in the traditional three counties is the recruitment of several County Durham men, partly a product of the strength of the junior game in Durham over the last decade and more, and which led to the signing of our own Pat Rich, a player covered by the Thunder. So, on Gateshead's books we find the following Thunder Academy products: 18 year old prop forward GARETH BARROW; 19 year old back-rower STEVEN BRADLEY, who has also had a spell at Hull before returning to Gateshead; 19 year old back-rower STEPHEN RUTHERFORD, who trialled with

Sheffield Eagles before signing for Thunder; 18 year old half-back PAUL THORMAN, brother of Huddersfield Giants' Chris; and hooker or half-back 19 year old RICHARD SPENCE. All of which goes to show that in the land of the Prince-Bishops there is more to life than Sunderland F.C.

Not surprisingly, given the background of Andy Kelly, a number of players have West Yorkshire connections. From Dewsbury Rams come utility back RICHARD ARROWSMITH; hooker or scrum-half SCOTT DYSON, who won an Alliance Championship medal with the Rams, as did back-row forward MATTIE ROBERTS; and young wingman ANDREW FIELD, a Thornhill Trojan when they beat Sheffield in the Challenge Cup last year but also a former Ram and Wildcat.



Stephen Hall

And talking of Wakefield Trinity Wildcats a clutch of players have moved from the West Yorkshire 'capital' to Tyneside. 24 year old prop LEE GARSIDE is one, as is goal-kicking centre STEPHEN HALL. Then there's loose-forward PAUL SEBINE a member of the Wakefield Grand Final winning squad of 1998.

Other players out of Yorkshire are 19 year old RICHARD MERVILL and 21 year old centre WESLEY MCGIBBON, both from Halifax Blue Sox; together with LEON WILLIAMSON, a threequarter from Sheffield Eagles, and the well travelled halfback CARL BRIGGS with experience at both Halifax and Sheffield. Meanwhile packman PAUL LISTER, at 31 a relative veteran, arrived at Gateshead from Doncaster. From Huddersfield came second-rower JAMES CARLTON, a regular for the Giants under Mal Reilly, and full-back DARREN SIMPSON. Also with Doncaster and Huddersfield appearances to his name is DARRELL DEROSE, although in this case the strong running second-row forward signed from Rochdale where he played a couple of mean games against Oldham last term. Another second-row man is CHRIS PARKER, who has played in New South Wales rugby in Australia but arrived at Gateshead from Bradford Bulls.

Just to prove there is no anti-Lancashire bias, however, three players originate from the County Palatinate. Halfback-cum-hooker MARTIN GAMBLES was in Wigan Warriors Academy cup winning team. Prop ANDREW GRUNDY has county honours as a junior and also signed from Wigan. And, finally, utility back MATTHEW BROWN played with Warrington Wolves and - whisper it - Orrell R.U.F.C.

Walkerbout . . .

DON'T FORGET YOUR ROOTS! . . . with Brian Walker

IT'S IRRITATING standing in the pub next to the kid wearing a baseball cap especially when he also spends over two quid on a bottle of 'Bud'. It's not the 'good manners' thing it's the 'American' thing and I must be just as sad mouthing silently to the barman 'and do you take greenbacks?'

So when I read that Manchester United and the New York Yankee's had got together in a potentially massive merchandise deal why wasn't I surprised? I can't remember the last time anybody walked into my local sporting a red and white bobble hat ordering a pint of dark mild. United have the cutting edge when it comes to making a buck!

What raised my eyebrow was that the following morning most papers carried similar headlines 'DON'T FORGET YOUR ROOTS!' concerned of course that United was concentrating on casting its cash net too far and too wide and taking their eye off what really mattered, winning trophies. Fat chance.

It wasn't the first time baseball had played a part in North West sporting life having already once spread its roots as far as Watersheddings. And for a short time it was a money spinner!

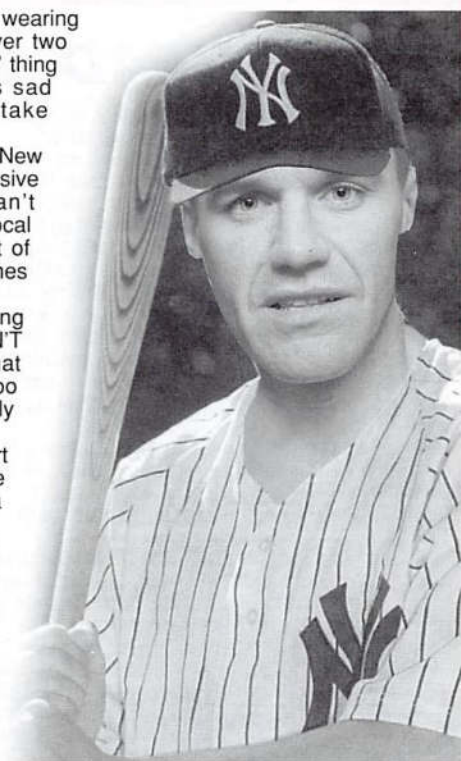
It was back in the early thirties when almost anything American was in fashion and baseball was no exception. Local baseball teams and leagues literally sprang up overnight. Manchester and district was no exception.

Bill Brown had just opened the Oldham Greyhound Track (adjacent to the rugby ground) and latching on to the baseball euphoria organised trials for a side to play on a pitch marked out in the middle of his new greyhound stadium.

Urged on by Brown, many of the Oldham rugby players were enthusiastic enough to give this new summer sport a go and the news soon spread. Oldham's (nicknamed the Greyhounds!) first league match was in 1935 against Manchester North East Blue Sox captained by Wigan rugby clubs' Jim Sullivan. The Oldham side included rugby tourist Tommy Rees and brothers, Ray and Sid Gaunt, from Rochdale Hornets. Oldham won in front of a sizeable crowd.

Brown craved success for the Oldham team and started to bring in experienced players. Alex Movat came over from Winnipeg, coinciding with the arrival of other overseas players Zola Alpert and Leo Fred.

Oldham progressed quickly and won the regional North of England Championship and the following season the North of England Challenge Cup but it was as if Bill Brown's death in 1937 was meant to coincide with the sudden demise of the pitch-and-hit sport. Just as quickly as the game captured the imagination, the sporting public turned its attentions back to a more traditional sport - cricket!



Another Mike Ford big hit!



Oldham Greyhounds win the Cup.

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Cook(e)ing up a storm



Stuart Cummings

IT'S THAT time again! You know that time when we get hot under the collar about head tackling (or not if you're Stuart Cummings). When oh when are we going to get head tackling stamped out? I can tell you from personal experience that a broken jaw is a

terrible injury to suffer and I wouldn't wish it on anyone. So when a class player like Featherstone's Jamie Rooney gets belted it's only right that someone should be held to account. As a consequence down comes the instruction to referees to take action. At Keighley Robert Connolly does precisely that with Tony Smith and quite right too. So how come Steve Ganson can only manage a yellow card at Huddersfield and Stuart Cummings, supposedly our best official,

can only manage 'on report' at Knowsley Road? Now I don't want to see constant sendings-off in matches because the best contests are always 13 v 13, but at the same time I don't see why a team's next opponents should get the benefit of a player suspended when the side offended against in a previous game has to put up with a man staying on who clearly should have been dismissed. Given Mr Cummings' speed of action in dismissing Ian Sherratt in a Premiership Cup Final for Oldham v Sheffield Eagles at Old Trafford (17.5.92) I don't see why Wigan didn't have someone sent off for first use of the soap against St. Helens. I'm fed up with top teams getting away with it. And I don't give a stuff if it's not good for the image when the game's on tv. In fact I'll tell you this: the general difference between our game and that other nonsense is that thuggery gets punished. Please make a mental note Mr Cummings because the viewing public prefer justice to a cover up.



Continuing our look at N.F.P. Programmes

BARROW BORDER RAIDERS

Price: £1.00,
32 pages. Black & White

Content: Written content not very extensive. Paddy McAteer is the main contributor with support from Alan Tucker and the Supporters Club. There are no action shots and rest is statistical and visitors pen pictures.

Verdict: It won't make a big hole in your wallet but at the same time it won't detain you for long.

Rating: 4/10

ROCHDALE HORNETS

Price £1.00 28 pages. Black & white with blue standing colour. Good red, white and blue cover. Printed by Vibrant Graphics, Congleton.

Content: Limited written material with the best contribution from Gareth Walker. Comment from the Boardroom, the Coach and the day's opponents, together with pen pictures, 'A' team, a notice board and an 'in the spotlight' feature.

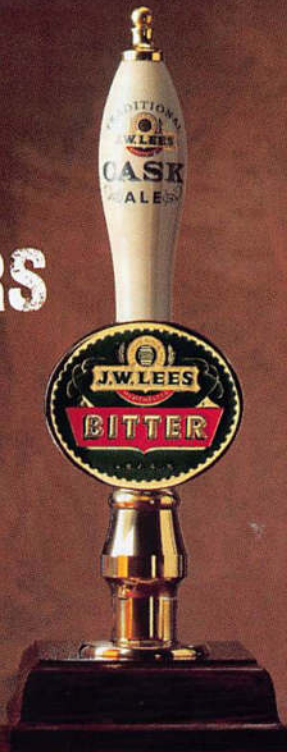
Verdict: Nicely produced and presented. Good value at £1

Rating: 6/10.



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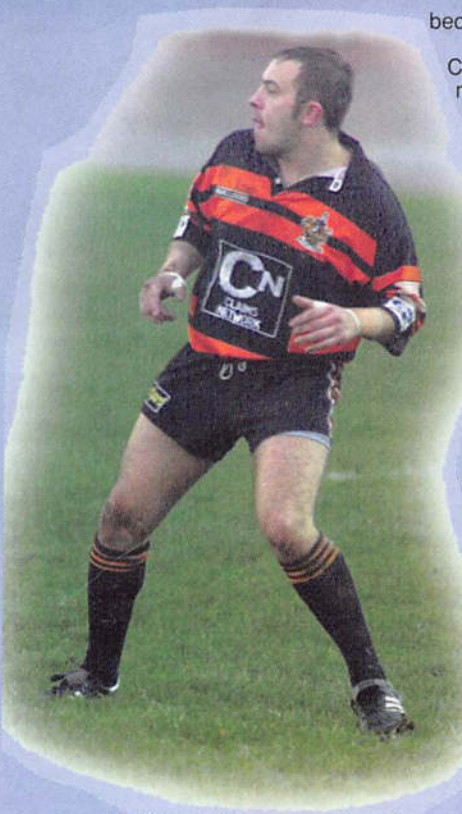
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..... **Daryl Lacey**



Q. When did you first start playing Rugby League?

I was about 4 years old and I wanted to play with my big brother Keiron. We played at St. Helens Crusaders till I was about 12 years old and then I went to Blackbrook for a couple of years before returning to St. Helens. Then, when I was 16, I signed for Wigan Academy where I played alongside Simon Houghton and Mick Cassidy.

I played regularly for the Wigan 'A' team being coached by Andy Goodway, a coach with modern ideas from whom I learned a lot. But as time passed and many overseas players were being brought into the club I felt I was not getting many chances and so gave my future a lot of thought.

When Oldham came in for me I didn't hesitate because I thought I'd get more chances of first team rugby.

One thing I must mention is the under 16's North West Counties tour of the Southern Hemisphere, we spent a month on tour and it was terrific. After a short stop over in America we went to Fiji where we played the National side, then onto New Zealand to play an under 16's representative side before finally arriving in Australia where we played in Cairns, Manly and Sydney. It was an amazing experience.

Q. Who has been your favourite player past and present?

Ellery Hanley is my choice. He has been the most dedicated professional, an all round skilful athlete. At present Sean Long is a brilliant player. His display when St. Helens won the World Club Championship was superb.

The roughest, toughest team for my money have been Leigh, say no more!!!

Q. Have you any personal ambitions?

In my playing career I really want to try to get a regular spot and with Oldham reach the Grand Final, and from there Super League. The squad at Oldham are a great bunch. There is marvellous team spirit and we have some characters. We train hard and try to help each other on the park.

On a personal level when not training I enjoy football on television, I like to play pool and part of my fitness levels include swimming, which I love.

A while ago I holidayed in the Dominican Republic and would like to visit the Caribbean again sometime. But to get back to Oldham, the players are grateful to the great supporters especially during a rough patch in a game: the fans can certainly give you a lift when you feel a bit tired.



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"That's right m'lud. I didn't see a thing".

JUDGE:

"Witness X what is your occupation?"

WITNESS X:

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JUDGE:

"That explains it: case dismissed!!!"

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AND NOW, SOME POEMS

"Twas an evening in November,
As I very well remember,
I was strolling down the street in drunken pride,
But my knees were all a'flutter
So I landed in the gutter,
And a pig came up and lay down by my side
Yes, I lay there in the gutter
Thinking thoughts I could not utter,
When a colleen passing by did softly say,
'You can tell a man that boozes
By the company he chooses.' -
At that, the pig got up and walked away!
(Jason Robinson, Wendell Sailor and others please note).

I eat my peas with honey
I've done it all my life
It makes the peas taste funny
But it keeps 'em on the knife!

"Tis dog's delight to bark and bite
And little birds to sing,
And if you sit on a red-hot brick
It's a sign of an early spring.

Here lies John Bun
He was killed by a gun,
His name was not Bun, but Wood
But Wood would not rhyme with gun,
but Bun would.

Mary had a little lamb,
She ate it with mint sauce,
And everywhere that Mary went
The lamb went too, of course.

Mary had a little bear
To which she was so kind
That everywhere dear Mary went
She had a bear behind.

Doctor Bell fell down the well
And broke his collar bone.
Doctors should attend the sick
And leave the well alone.

Walkerbouts

... with Brian Walker

THE BRYLCREAM BOYS BOW OUT

THE OTHER Friday night Jason Robinson spent eighty minutes shivering and contemplating his navel. Yes, Jason made his England debut, well to be precise his England 'A' debut and surprise, surprise, hardly got a touch. The 'A' competition is of course the side show to the 'real thing', the Five, sorry Six Nations annual reunion of the Brylcream boys. Mind you at this level union does do it well with impressive packed stadiums, excellent media coverage and seemingly a contract with the deity for reasonable weather....pity about the rugby.

Time was that leaguers could yawn away a Saturday afternoon in front of the telly picking out the union star most likely to pin the 'Gone North' notice to his front door. But not any more. These guys earn good money and gone, perhaps forever, is the temptation of the cheque wafted under their nose by the league scout. And I am the first to admit that our code will be all the poorer, for players of the quality of Davies, Gibbs, Sullivan, Bevan, Richards, Fielding, Risman and co. perhaps not gracing our grounds in the future.

Union internationals, have, of course in past, attracted the attention of the Oldham club and the headlines have acclaimed the arrival of the likes of Nigel Heslop, Bob Mordell, Ken Wilson, Malcolm Price and Sean Quinlan. But isn't that the underlying problem? Whilst Ken Wilson was the corner stone of the Oldham pack for years, playing well over three hundred games, the other four hardly mustered a hundred games between them. I don't know what Oldham's investment in those four was but it would undoubtedly have been a handsome sum. I am not advocating that league clubs should never again sign players out of union, but I much prefer to see union 'investing' its millions in the likes of Jason Robinson and now, it seems, Wendell Sailor than the money going the other way Already the Australians, supported by Maurice Lindsay, are advocating changes in the salary cap to help ward off union bids for our top stars but let union carry on and make its own mistakes and suffer the subsequent pain associated with overstretched finances. Signing union players is no different than signing 'quick fix' league players, the risk far greater than the much wiser long term investment in the future of our own kids.



Ireland v Wales '57, Sean Quinlan sat front row far right



England v. France Twickenham '63, Ken Wilson back row third from left



Wales v France Cardiff '60, Malcolm Price is seated middle row far left

Behind the Scenes

... with Dave Roberts

SUSAN ZOMAN

Job Title

Secretary to Chris (so I believe)

Time in Job

Six days

Previous Employment

I was a P.A. in the M.O.D. which was a job that involved moving around, I have lived in Northern Ireland, Germany and Brunei and have been back in England since last September.

What do you know about ORLFC?

Nothing, like I know nothing about rugby, but I intend to learn.

Favourite T.V.

All the soaps

Other interests

Reading, cross stitch, picture making - I am a boring person.



Susan Zoman

2000/20001 Match Results (12.2.01)

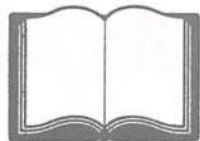
	Barrow	Batley	Chorley	Dewsbury	Doncaster	FEATHERSTONE	Gateshead	Hull KR	Hunslet	Keighley	Leigh	OLDHAM	Rochdale	Sheffield	Swinton	Whitehaven	Widnes	Workington	York
Barrow												16-28				5-4	6-6		
Batley					16-19	6-37	24-4	18-16											12-4
Chorley	24-38										4-56				12-30				
Dewsbury		24-12				21-12		32-10											50-2
Doncaster									36-8	17-23				22-2					
Featherstone					34-4		68-6		26-14				12-15						
Gateshead					8-27			0-18	12-26	0-52									
Hull KR					0-30	6-6			40-12										2-0
Hunslet		4-13		2-34						12-44				14-0					
Keighley				32-6		22-22		24-8											
Leigh	19-8												48-0		46-4		70-0		
OLDHAM			56-2								18-44						20-12		
Rochdale			52-12									6-10					14-24		
Sheffield		34-1		6-25			38-12	11-12		16-52									
Swinton	26-24												4-8					20-29	
Whitehaven			28-4								8-30		13-4		4-8				
Widnes										20-25					16-8	22-14		26-16	
Workington												6-22	18-8		31-10				
York					8-26	6-37			20-20	14-48									

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Amateur Album



.....WITH DON YATES

ONE OF the most experienced officials in the Oldham Society is Fred Royales who has officiated on every professional ground in Britain except Gateshead after enjoying a highly successful playing career in local amateur competition.

Fred has been involved in rugby league throughout his life. He was an outstanding winger during his playing days although a twice broken leg almost ended his playing career before it had even begun. He started off with Fitton Hill under 16s but was with Oldham 'B' when injury struck. Having overcome that problem Fred went on to play successfully for Ferranti and Saddleworth Rangers before winding up his playing career with Shaw. At his peak, Fred was good for 30-odd tries per season and was a regular in the Oldham Town Team. He was a member of the Oldham team which reached the National Inter League Cup Final in 1981 although the final ended in a disappointing 24-0 defeat against Leeds. Fred enjoyed better results in the local competitions. He has played in five Standard Cup Finals, the first with Ferranti in 1974 and four with Saddleworth between 1976 & 1981. Two of those finals were won, Rangers beating Waterhead 16-4 in 1976 and St. Annes 11-8 in 1980. It was during his time with Saddleworth that Fred enjoyed a brief flirtation with professional rugby. He was persuaded to join Blackpool Borough in 1976 and was a member of the Seasiders squad which sensationally reached the John Player Trophy Final that autumn. However, a

disagreement before reaching that final caused Fred to turn his back on the professional game. He played in eight consecutive matches for Boro' before returning to Saddleworth and continuing his successful amateur career.

Once his playing career was over, Fred moved into refereeing. His first appointment in 1983 was Moldgreen 'A' versus Higginshaw 'A'. He enjoyed it and has been enjoying it ever since, especially the social side of the game. Fred quickly moved through the grades and he has refereed several cup finals and internationals. He has refereed two Standard Cup Finals, in 1987 and again last year, as well as the 1992 Lancashire Alliance Cup Final when Warrington 'A' defeated Whitehaven 32-8. Fred's most incident packed afternoon, not surprisingly, took place in Lezignan during March 1990. The BARLA under 19s defeated France 12-4 that day, their first win in France for six years and a result which did not please the partisan home supporters. Fred was escorted off the pitch by the local gendarmerie at the end of the match and later a mob of around twenty furious Frenchmen waited for Fred outside the changing rooms.

Fortunately Fred escaped unscathed from that predicament and has officiated over in France on a couple of occasions since without a repetition of that unruly behaviour. He intends to continue for as long as possible and maybe he will get an appointment up at Gateshead soon to complete his clean sweep of British grounds.

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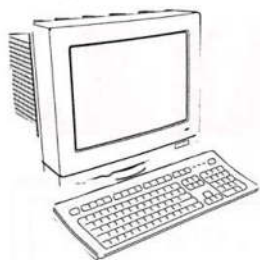
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... with Simon Winnard

TODAY WE welcome Gateshead Thunder to Boundary Park. A new addition to the Northern Ford Premiership family following their untimely eviction from Super League after an extremely successful inaugural season - on the park at least. Despite running up massive financial losses in Super League, the same management team was then entrusted with the wholesale transfer of the club to Humberside. However, despite being sold down the river, a hardcore of RL fans have ensured the re-birth of the Thunder. The difference this time around being that the club has been formed on the basis of the support and a sound business plan, not simply from a hand out and a group of imports with no affinity with the local community.

The season to date has been a struggle for Gateshead and they have perhaps been surprised by the standard of rugby and competitiveness of the NFP. Oldhams transition into their first season in the NFP proved to be a similar struggle. Its a time of adjustment but in the guise of Andy Kelly they have an outstanding young British coach who knows how to get the best from his players. Only time will tell, but I predict that the new club will prosper in the NFP and long may the family continue to grow.

Rugby League in the North East has potential in the true sense of the word. The support for the game in the area, particularly at youth / development level, is phenomenal. A perfect example of this is the recently announced expansion of the Summer RL Conference, to date Rugby League's only real success when seeking nationwide expansion. A significant financial investment at this grass roots level has already proven to be a great success. hardly rocket science is it? It's a shame that the powers that be don't deem it appropriate to make a similar investment in the game's heartland.

From its official inception in 1998 the Rugby League Conference, in similar fashion to Student RL, has gone from strength to strength at national level. Its first summer season saw 14 clubs from the Midlands, East and South of England participate. The 2001 season will now see 30 clubs compete for the Harry Jepson Trophy, currently held by the competition's most successful club, the Crawley Jets.

Former RLC Director and Chairman, Lionel Hurst has now become Chief Executive at the London Broncos. This move has seen some of the Broncos home fixtures being staged at Crawley as the RFL looks to promote Conference clubs links to the professional game with a view to increasing the games profile nationally.

Following a successful pilot competition in 2000, five new clubs from the North East are to be added to last season's participants, which is great news for today's visitors. Last year's North East Conference Premiers, Teeside Steelers are joined by Sunderland City, Newcastle, Bridlington Bulls and Gateshead Panthers from the area.

The other new club hails from South Wales in the form of the Cardiff Demons. With links to the student game, which is extremely strong in the area, they also have links with the North East as they are led by former student international and Gateshead Thunder player Stuart Singleton.

Thunder have made sincere efforts to attract local talent to the club and our very own Pat Rich, himself a product of the student game, was subject to a bold pre-season bid to take him back to the North East. These conference clubs will now benefit from the Thunder's admission to the NFP as the profile of the game in the area is increased. In return, they will surely provide a breeding ground for future home grown talent in the area which will see the Thunder flourish.



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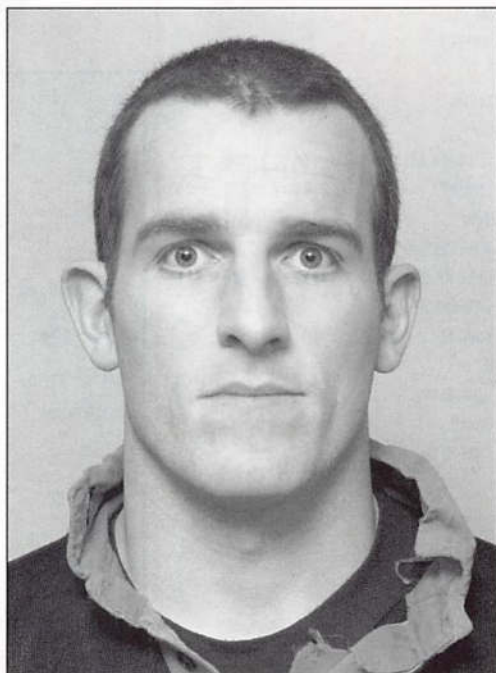
ON THIS DAY . . .

Don Yates looks back to February 18th yesteryear

THIS AFTERNOON the latest addition to the NFP, Gateshead Thunder, visit Boundary Park. Unfortunately they have found life difficult during the opening weeks of the season and they face Oldham today in an almost identical position to that of Chorley during the 1989-90 campaign. It was on Sunday 18th February, 1990 that Chorley, in their inaugural season, visited Oldham in an attempt to avoid their fifth consecutive defeat. As now, the Roughyeds were chasing the Championship and proved much too powerful for the visitors who were beaten 66-16. Oldham crossed for twelve tries that afternoon with scrum half Brett Clark grabbing a hat-trick whilst another scorer was young prop Leo Casey. Included in the Chorley second row for that match was Mark Knight, the current Roughyeds' academy coach and a forward who likes nothing better than to step out on the meadow with his young charges and show them how to deliver the big hits.

One hundred and five years ago, on Tuesday 18th February 1896, the Roughyeds were involved in a much closer encounter when they visited Bradford. In those days the one point field goal was called a dropped goal and was worth four points. Oldham winger Jack Hurst landed one which enabled the Roughyeds to pull off a 7-5 victory at Park Avenue. By 1939 the value of a dropped goal had been halved but, even so, just one would have kept Oldham's interest in the Challenge Cup alive when they again visited Bradford on Saturday 18th February. It wasn't to be, for full back George Carmichael landed a penalty in that second round tie which Northern won 2-0.

Apart from changes in scoring values, bye-laws have also changed in the various competitions. Until three years ago, drawn Challenge Cup-ties were always replayed but nowadays extra time and the 'golden point' come into play. It was on this day in 1998, Wednesday 18th February, that the last Silk Cut Challenge Cup replay, a fourth round replay, was staged following the 28-all draw between Lancashire Lynx and Dewsbury. With home advantage Dewsbury won the replay 31-14 although the final score flattered Dewsbury somewhat. They scored just one more try than Lynx but Barry Eaton exaggerated Dewsbury's success by landing seven goals. Two players who appeared in that historic match are likely to be on view this afternoon. Oldham's Paul Norton was a substitute for Lynx, whilst on the wing for Dewsbury was Leon Williamson who has since transferred to Gateshead.



Paul Norton

It was on this day in 1967, Saturday 18th February, that Leigh and Featherstone Rovers fought out a 14-all draw at Hilton Park. No replay was necessary, of course, because it was a league match. Making his senior professional debut in that match was Leigh second-row forward Jimmy Fiddler. He had been signed from Orrell RUFC and developed into a capable goal-kicking forward who went on to enjoy spells with Blackpool Borough, Salford and Bramley as well as Oldham. He came to Oldham in 1979, scoring one try and kicking 44 goals from 19 appearances.

Finally, exactly twelve months ago, on Friday 18th February 2000, Tate Moseley, the Australian second-row forward, returned home to Sydney after only a couple of weeks with the Roughyeds. Perhaps he knew what sort of weather we were set to endure during the following twelve months although he claimed that his departure was triggered by news that his girl friend was pregnant and that he wanted to be with her. Well it had just passed Valentine's Day!

Fixtures

Date Opponent Result Att

DECEMBER	F - A	
3 Barrow	28 - 16	1,294
17 Workington	22 - 6	1,295
24 Rochdale	10 - 6	3,402

JANUARY

1 WIDNES	20 - 12	3,471
7		
14 LEIGH	18 - 44	4,747
21 Swinton	A P	
28 QUEENSBURY (SCCC R3)	64 - 0	1,559
30 CHORLEY	56 - 2	1,210

FEBRUARY

4 WHITEHAVEN	H P	
11 HULL KR (SCCC R4)	H 17 - 6	2,008
18 GATESHEAD	H	
25 WAKEFIELD (SCCC R5)	H	

MARCH

4 HUNSLET	H	
11 Dewsbury	A	
18 SHEFFIELD	H	
25 Featherstone	A	

APRIL

1 York	A	
8 BATLEY	H	
13 ROCHDALE	H	
16 Widnes	A	
22 Batley	A	
29 KEIGHLEY	H	

MAY

6 BARROW	H	
13 Chorley	A	
20 WORKINGTON	H	
27 DONCASTER	H	

JUNE

3 Gateshead	A	
10 SWINTON	H	
17 Whitehaven	A	
24 Keighley	A	

JULY

1 Hull KR	A	
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APPEARANCES & SCORERS 2000-01

(ALL GAMES)

PLAYER	APPEARANCES	SUBSTITUTIONS	TRIES	GOALS	DROP GOALS	POINTS
M. SIBSON	8		7			28
D. CROSS	7		4			16
J. McNICHOLAS	1					
A. GIBBONS	6		1			4
P. RICH	9			38		76
W. BARROW	2					
D. LACEY	5		1			4
D. GIBBONS	9		10			40
N. RODEN	9		4		4	20
A. PROCTOR	7		3			12
J. HOUGH	9		2			8
J. CLEGG	3	6				
L. CASEY	6	2				
P. FARRELL	9		1			4
P. NORTON	5	3	1			4
S. McMENEMY	1					
I. SINFIELD	8	1				
G. BARBER	3	1	2			8
M. FORD		6			1	1
D. GUEST	1	7				
C. FARRELL	1	4	1			4
D. ARNOLD	4		4			16
K. MANNION	4	2				
G. DODD		1	1			4
L. DORAN		2				
K. BRENNAN		1				

NEIL GIBBISON

—B.D.S., V.U. Manc—

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Oldham – a leading player at the heart of the North West

Take a look around the Oldham of the 21st century and you won't fail to be impressed with what's been achieved. There are now huge efforts taking place to ensure that the Borough remains in its rightful place at the hub of the North West region.

Two hundred million pounds and more has been invested in turning the town centre into a modern and vibrant place to shop and work. Money has also been spent regenerating and renewing areas like Westwood, Glodwick, Fitton Hill and Hathershaw, and building 23 new schools in just 20 years. An exciting new town centre Cultural Quarter is taking shape; new industry, new investment and more tourists are coming to the Borough and a state-of-the-art Business Management School is now open.

Oldham is already at the heart of the motorway network and now also benefits from the new M60 orbital route. Metrolink is also coming to the town, and the brand new £3.4 million central bus station has opened this year.



The M60 Motorway



Town Centre Shopping

There are many other reasons which make Oldham a desirable place to live, work and visit – its reputation for hard work, commitment and down to earth friendliness are just some of them.

Put them all together and they make Oldham a leading player at the heart of the North West.

Enquiries about projects being undertaken by the Council, or any of its policies, to the Marketing and Communications Unit, PO Box 160, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham OL1 1UG,

telephone 0161 911 4708, fax 0161 911 4936,
ce.presspr@oldham.gov.uk
or visit our website at www.oldham.gov.uk

OLDHAM 
Metropolitan Borough 



TODAY'S TEAMS



OLDHAM

Coach: Mike FORD

GATESHEAD THUNDER

Coach: Andy KELLY

Mark SIBSON	1	Darrell DEROSE
Dean CROSS	2	Andy FIELD
Anthony GIBBONS	3	Darren SIMPSON
David GIBBONS	4	Steve HALL
Pat RICH	5	Leon WILLIAMSON
Gareth BARBER	6	Carl BRIGGS
Neil RODEN	7	Paul THORMAN
Andy PROCTOR	8	Paul LISTER
John HOUGH	9	Martin GAMBLES
Leo CASEY	10	Richard MERVIL
Phil FARRELL	11	Jim CARLTON
Ian SINFIELD	12	Chris PARKER
Kevin MANNION	13	Steve RUTHERFORD
Mike FORD	14	Paul SEBINE
Jason CLEGG	15	Lee GARSIDE
Paul NORTON	16	Matty ROBERTS
Danny GUEST	17	Gareth BARRON

TODAY'S

PAUL TAYLOR

PAUL GRIMSHAW

STUART LEE

OFFICIALS

REFEREE:

PAUL

LEE