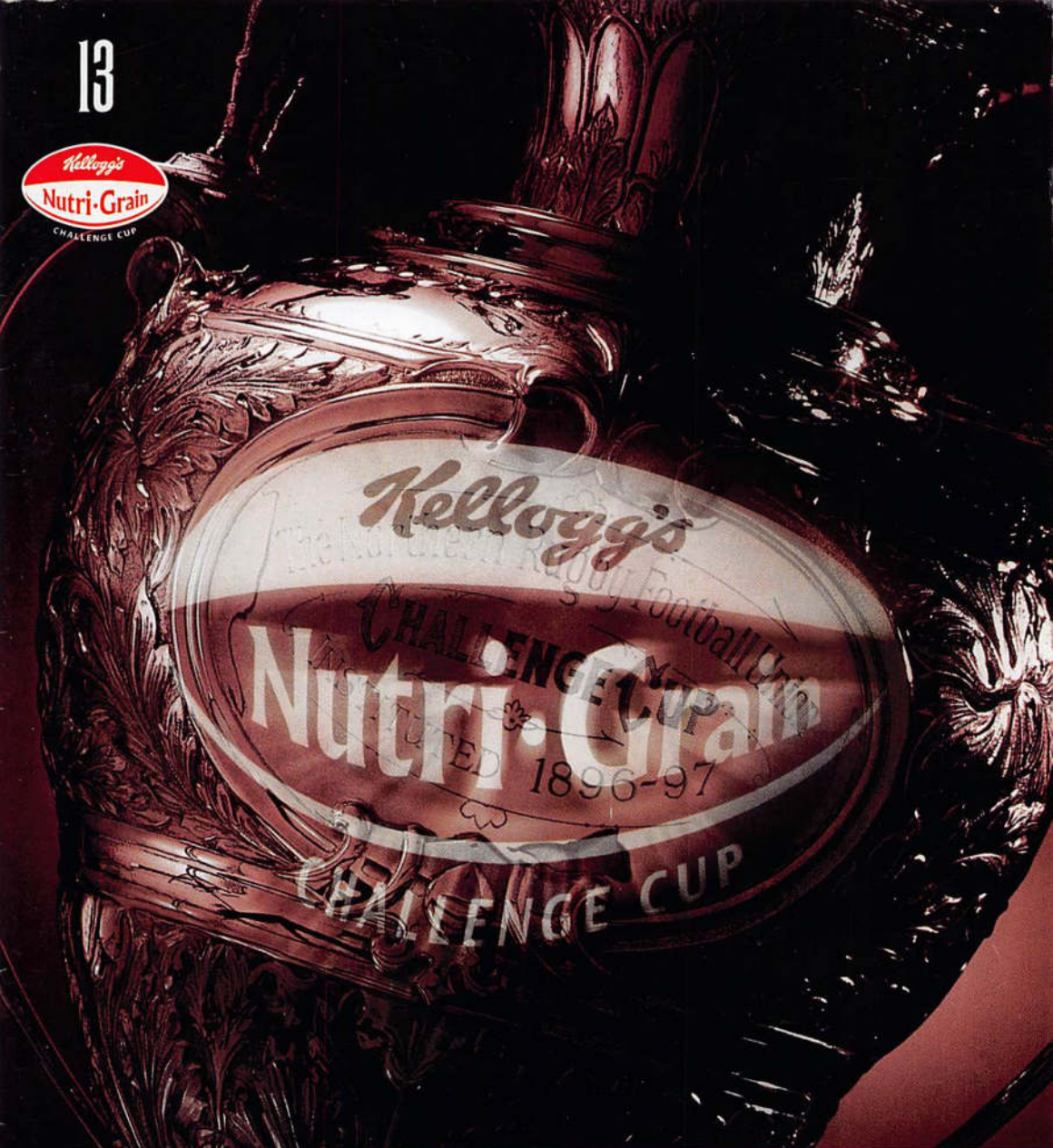


13



THE ROAD TO MURRAYFIELD 2002

Oldham RLFC vs St Helens

Sunday 10th February 2002

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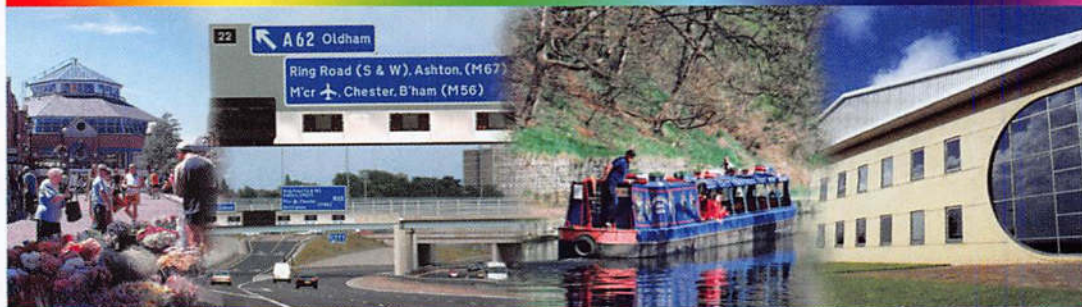
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IN THE HOT SEAT

with
Christopher Hamilton



WELCOME to our latest 'Home' Stalybridge Celtic. I have to admit that my joy at being drawn at home to probably the most successful team since the start of Super League was immediately tempered by the reality of the situation - where do we play it?

Quite clearly Ashton United would not have been able to cope with a game of this size and we tried to play at Boundary Park but were unable to do so as Chris Moore was out of the country. Next on the list was Spotland but with the soccer club home on the Saturday and the rugby at home on the Sunday that was also a no no.

The RFL byelaws prevent the tie being switched to St. Helens and we obviously wanted to play as near to Oldham as we could so when Stalybridge offered to negotiate with us for the use of their ground it was the natural choice.

What it does however underline the problems we face by not having our own ground and I don't know of another club that has to go through what we do at Oldham. A game that should have been a delight to stage has become a long and arduous road with many meetings with Stalybridge officials, Tameside MBC, local Police, Safety Officers etc.

I hope at the end of it all we have a sizeable crowd to watch what many will see as an opportunity to witness first hand one of the best teams in the world in St. Helens and one which is renowned for playing attractive rugby.

This will also be the first time that our new Coach, John Harbin, will have taken full charge of the side and I hope that you will join me in wishing John all the best for his tenure at Oldham which we all hope will be a long and happy one. John will bring his own inimitable style to the job and you can rest assured that we will all be working hard to take the team up the table.

Our challenge today, however, is for the players to make the 80 minutes as hard as possible for our opponents and for you to get behind the team vocally as much as possible - sport is all about the underdog!!

Finally I would like to thank everybody at Stalybridge Celtic, Tameside Council and all the staff at our club for their efforts in making this game possible.

Enjoy the game.

Chris



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THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THIS MATCHDAY MAGAZINE DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT THOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT AND STAFF OF OLDHAM RLFC (1997) LTD.

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COACH'S COMMENTS . . . with John Harbin



HELLO to all you Oldham fans and let me tell you how much I'm looking forward to the challenge of guiding the team in the NFP. I was getting real frustrated sitting behind a desk at Dewsbury and its no disrespect to them to say how great it is to be back in a tracksuit and working with the players.

From what I've seen so far the attitude of the Oldham players is excellent: they want to do well, they want to learn and improve and they're eminently coachable. With me anyone that shows they can do it will be promoted and, as a sign of this, I've already taken three Academy boys into training with the first team squad. If the chance comes to strengthen, finances permitting, we'll do it but the quality of player needed isn't always around.

Today's a big game for you Oldham fans because we don't often get the chance to meet top flight opposition. We'll be focussing on our own game and looking to eliminate errors. Obviously, I'll have one or two points to make about St. Helens but we won't be overcooking it. We're playing on a decent ground with good facilities and we'll definitely be giving it a go.

I thought the small core of fans who made the journey to Workington were great. They really got behind the lads which is what we want. Moaning and whingeing never does any good but then Oldham fans are noted for their backing, so if we all pull together we'll start to get somewhere. The result at Workington was not what we wanted but the players kept their heads, gave a generally good display and fought back from behind. So there won't be any heads down or feeling sorry for ourselves this week. We made some basic errors which can be put right and we won't always have to contend with the weather conditions we encountered in Cumbria.

Make your voice heard for us today,

John



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In Yer Face



IN welcoming our illustrious visitors St. Helens their Directors, players and supporters we also welcome today our new Coach John Harbin.

Our visitors today will need little introduction because they are the most successful club side in Rugby League since the formation of Super League. Their list of honours is impressive and formidable: World Club Champions 2001 and Runners Up 2000; Super League Champions 1996, 1999, 2000; and Challenge Cup Winners 1996, 1997 and 2000.

John Harbin, meanwhile, comes to us with a more than useful pedigree, having been Director of Football at Dewsbury and Head Coach at Wakefield Trinity Wildcats, where he defied all the odds to keep Wakefield in Super League and endeared himself to the fans with his honesty and integrity. He also has a list of coaching appointments in Australia. We wish him well.

And in welcoming our visitors and our new Coach it would be remiss of me not to pay two tributes. Firstly, our thanks go to Mark Knight who acted as Caretaker Coach in the interim period between Mike Ford and the appointment of John Harbin. With the exception of the match at Dewsbury, when it would be fair to say that the events of the previous week had come as a bodyblow to everyone connected with the club, Mark guided the side to three victories and did a splendid job. We welcome his promotion as Assistant Coach to John Harbin and feel sure that working with someone of John's experience will enhance Mark's credentials and will lead one day to his own advancement to a position as Head Coach.

And secondly, our thanks go today to the officials of Stalybridge F.C. for allowing us to stage this prestigious cup tie at their well-appointed Bower Fold ground. We hope you enjoy your visit and to those of you who like to notch up new grounds on which you have watched rugby league here's another one to add to your collection.



THE performance of Bradford Bulls in lifting the World Club Championship against the Newcastle Knights emulates the achievement of today's visitors St. Helens in 2001 and gives a tremendous fillip to the British game on the eve of a new Super League season. And the individual display of James Lowes emphasised just how great a loss to Great Britain was his injury (and those to Keiron Cunningham and Terry Newton) which prevented Britain fielding a recognised number 9 against Australia in last Autumn's Test series. There is no doubt in my mind that the playing standards both in Super League and in the NFP are rising all the time. If only we could convince the Australians that greater international competition would be of benefit on both sides of the globe: time perhaps for an inter-club competition featuring the top four sides in either hemisphere. Time, too, for the NFP's top four to be taking on France's best.



FINALLY, on the subject of the World Club Championship a word of praise for Andrew Johns. Not only is he an outstanding player, but he was also a model of grace and good manners in acknowledging Bradford to have been a better side on the night. Would that some leading managers of English Premier League soccer clubs could display the same characteristics!



I apologise for the lack of a player profile in today's centre pages and for the re-location of the teams. As you will have been able to deduce this is because of the requirements of the competition sponsors Kellogg's Nutri-Grain. My - purely personal - reaction is that I am disappointed with this disturbance to our usual format, which I feel could have been preserved with a little forethought. No doubt my opinion will not be well received.



'THE DON'

ON THIS DAY . . .

Don Yates looks back to February 10th yesteryear

FOR Challenge Cup holders St. Helens, opening their Challenge Cup campaign at an alternative venue is no new experience. Eleven years ago, on Sunday 10th February 1991, Saints were drawn away to Swinton and when heavy snow threatened the tie, the Lions switched the match to Maine Road, the Manchester City soccer ground. Although the attendance was a disappointing 2,922, the match itself provided excellent entertainment with Swinton rocking St. Helens with two early tries from winger Ian Pickavance. The Lions led 8-4 at half time before Saints recovered to win 18-8. John Harrison, Tea Ropati and Mark Bailey scored tries for Saints that afternoon and Paul Loughlin landed three goals. Saints went on the reach Wembley that year but were beaten by archrivals Wigan.

Saints and Wigan have met many times in the Challenge Cup including a meeting twelve months ago when Wigan lost out at the very first hurdle. On Saturday 10th February 2001 the pie eaters visited Knowsley Road where they were beaten 22-8. The biggest attendance of the fourth round ties, 13,593 saw Anthony Sullivan, Chris Joynt, Tim Jonkers and Tony Stewart cross for tries with Sean Long adding three goals.



Chris Joynt

Today's match has special significance for Oldham stand off Jon Braddish. Four years ago, on Tuesday 10th February 1998, Braddish turned professional with St. Helens when they signed him from Crosfields juniors. Unfortunately he has only made one first team appearance for Saints so, in an

effort to kick start his career, Braddish moved to Oldham last November and now has an early opportunity to show Saints just what they have missed.

Forty years ago, on Saturday 10th February 1962, two coach loads of fans and many more in their own vehicles set off over the Pennines to watch St. Anne's who had qualified for the first round of the Challenge Cup. The famous green and golds were required to visit Hunslet for a Saturday morning kick off and they made a grand day out of it. They were not expected to win because Hunslet were one of the top sides around at that time but Saints put up a superb performance before bowing out 53-10. Joe Tully and Keith Taylor scored their tries and Brian Jones landed a couple of goals.

Until nine days ago, St. Helens were World Club Champions following their victory over Brisbane Broncos. It was their most recent of a lengthy list of victories over Australian opposition, the first of which came on Wednesday 10th February 1909 when the touring Kangaroos were beaten 9-0. 'Butcher' Prescott, Jimmy Greenwood and Jack Flanagan each scored a try for Saints in a match that was played in pouring rain. The weather reduced the afternoon attendance to a mere 1,500 and so, after all expenses had been met, Saints made a financial loss on the match. Nowadays, of course, clubs do not rely on gate receipts alone to finance their organisations. Sponsorship in many forms is a vital part of any club's income. It was on Thursday 10th February 2000 that Huddersfield announced that they were offering local businesses the opportunity to place an advertisement on the backside of the club's physiotherapist. The idea surfaced after physio Karen May commented that she had noticed that the most photographed part of her anatomy, when she was on the pitch treating players, was her bottom.

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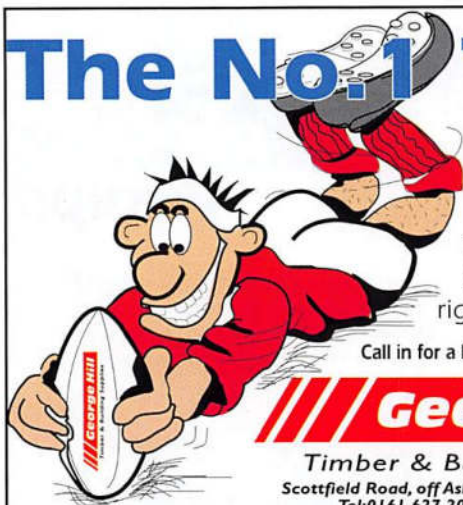
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.....with Shaun Gartland and Mark Knight

OLDHAM'S games in the Alliance Spring Cup (since when was January Spring?) have not yet beaten the weather. However others have and to date the recorded results are, Dewsbury Rams 6 Batley Bulldogs 32; Batley Bulldogs 10 Rochdale Hornets 20; Gateshead Thunder 6 Dewsbury Rams 70.

The competition format sees Batley and Dewsbury play each other home and away as do Oldham and Rochdale and Gateshead and Workington. The other teams meet only once for a total of six fixtures followed by play-offs (1 v 4 and 2 v 3) before a Grand Final in April.

With Rochdale Hornets now using Butterworth Park at Castleton all Oldham's home games will be at Manor Park, the home of Oldham RUFC. Please watch the local press for details of rearranged fixtures.

ALLIANCE UNDER 21 SPRING CUP FIXTURES

Thursday 17th January	Rochdale Hornets (A) at Castleton Gabriels 7.30 ko
Saturday 2nd February	Workington Town (H) at Manor Park 2.30 ko
Thursday 14th February	Dewsbury Rams (A) At Ram Stadium 7.30 ko
Saturday 2nd March	Rochdale Hornets (H) at Manor Park 2.30 ko
Saturday 9th March	Gateshead Thunder (A) at Bullocksteads Sports Ground 1.30 ko
Saturday 16th March	Batley Bulldogs (H) at Manor Park 2.30 ko

Week ending 6th April Play-off 1 v 4 and 2 v 3

Saturday 13th April Final

NORTHERN FORD PREMIERSHIP TABLE 2001-2002

	P	W	D	L	For	Agst	Diff	PTS
Huddersfield Giants	8	7	1	0	287	66	221	15
Workington Town	9	7	0	2	224	149	75	14
Whitehaven	9	6	1	2	220	102	118	13
Hull Kingston Rovers	7	6	0	1	198	92	106	12
Leigh Centurions	6	5	1	0	228	67	161	11
Rochdale Hornets	7	5	1	1	188	103	85	11
Featherstone Rovers	7	4	1	2	161	120	41	9
Sheffield Eagles	8	4	0	4	212	144	68	8
Barrow Raiders	9	4	0	5	221	184	37	8
Batley Bulldogs	8	4	0	4	119	176	-57	8
Doncaster Dragons	6	3	0	3	132	118	14	6
Dewsbury Rams	6	3	0	3	113	118	-5	6
Oldham	6	2	0	4	114	148	-34	4
Chorley Lynx	8	2	0	6	126	204	-78	4
Hunslet Hawks	6	1	0	5	76	246	-170	2
Keighley Cougars	6	1	0	5	78	261	-183	2
Gateshead Thunder	7	0	1	6	62	148	-86	1
Swinton Lions	4	0	0	4	36	115	-79	0
York Wasps	7	0	0	7	52	286	-234	0

NFP Round Up

THE Third Round of the Kellogg's Nutri-Grain Challenge Cup did not throw up any real surprises. Those of you who thought Keighley would beat the French side St. Gaudens were wrong and, I am pleased to say, my forecast of a French win was fully justified to the tune of 24-0 no less.

Nearest to an upset came with the delayed tie at Gigg Lane when on the Wednesday night Swinton required extra time to dispose of Skirlaugh the top amateur club from Humberside.

My hottest tip for an amateur win was Woolston but despite trailing 13-8 at half-time Hunslet Hawks rallied to win 18-13 at Wilderspool, fullback Kieran Allen's five goals proving the difference between the two sides.

In so far as my predictions were awry Farnworth did themselves proud after I had said Rochdale would win by the widest margin of the day. A 44-28 scoreline, with the visitors recording five tries, was a fine achievement. Meanwhile Featherstone disposed of Gateshead more easily than I had thought while York's 42-0 defeat of Milford was much more clear cut than could have been expected.

There were not that many outstanding individual scoring feats but three players notched hat-tricks in Oldham full-back Mark Sibson - one of these a splendid length of field run through the Hurst Cross mud - Whitehaven wingman Leigh Smith and Workington fullback Steve Wood. On a bad day weather-wise for



Mark Sibson

goalkickers top spot went to York Wasps fullback Jamie Benn with seven, while Huddersfield halfback Chris Thorman and Rochdale number 6 Danny Wood each landed six.

So to today. As ever there are some intriguing contests but I don't foresee any

major shocks. Looking down the list of ties I might have fancied Sheffield Eagles against Wakefield Trinity Wildcats, but after the way the Wildcats disposed of Oldham last year I think it is extremely difficult for an NFP side to turn over a Super League outfit, notwithstanding Leigh's defeat of Salford a year ago. Muddy winter pitches, rain and wind all help to level things up but at the end of the day full-time professionalism ought to prevail. So, I'm sorry, but Widnes will beat Swinton; London Broncos will overcome Batley (though what they will make of Mount Pleasant and its notorious slope is anyone's guess); Warrington will win at Barrow; Wakefield will overcome Sheffield; and, adopting a strictly neutral and unbiased viewpoint, St. Helens will account for Oldham.

In the all Super League clashes expect home advantage to tell in each case. This means that Castleford will beat Salford; Wigan will defeat Hull F.C. and Bradford Bulls will eliminate Leeds.

The all NFP clashes promise some ding-dong battles, none more so than Leigh's visit to Spotland. In a game which could go either way I will forecast a Hornets victory but, let's put it this way, I wouldn't put my shirt on it. An equally tough call is Hull KR's visit to Featherstone. Once again, however, I'll plump for home advantage to tell. In form Whitehaven should have less trouble in dealing with Dewsbury, but again any underestimation of the Ram's big pack could prove costly. To me this means the away winners are most likely to be Huddersfield at Doncaster and Workington at Hunslet, the visitors in each case enjoying forward dominance.

And finally what of the French challenge? Well, in my view two French sides will be in the draw for the Fifth Round with the prospect of English fans enjoying a mid-winter break to the South of France. The winners? Expect Villeneuve to defeat York and U.T.C. to win at Chorley. And St. Gaudens? Sorry, they've had their moment of glory at Cougar Park. Halifax Blue Sox will be much too strong for them.

IN Town TODAY



ST HELENS

PAUL WELLENS A local born youngster who played for Great Britain in the winter Ashes series against Australia. Paul is a 'Mr Versatile' playing at fullback and in the half backs last season, and scored 15 tries in 35 games in the 2002 season. Paul played the full 80 minutes in the Saints' World Club Challenge victory over Brisbane Broncos in 2001 despite fracturing an eye socket in the first half.

SEAN HOPPE The former New Zealand Test winger holds the Kiwi try record with 17 tries in 33 games. Sean has been a regular since joining Saints at the end of the 1999 season and has been involved in the 1999 & 2000 Grand Final in addition to the World Club Challenge victory and the 2001 Challenge Cup success. Sean has also played for Canberra Raiders (two seasons), Norths (one) and Auckland (five) before joining Saints.

MARTIN GLEESON Warrington born, centre of outstanding potential. Scored 8 tries in 26 games for Huddersfield Giants in 2001 before signing a two year contract with Saints. Highly rated by Saints new asst coach Jon Sharp who worked with Gleeson at the Giants. Toured South Africa with England U21s in November 2001.

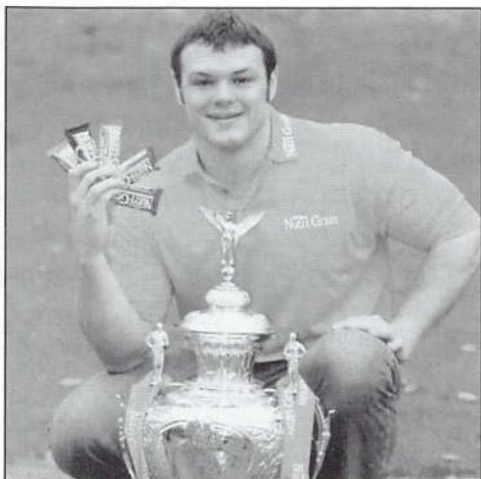
PAUL NEWLOVE 2001 was cut short for Paul following a serious Achilles Tendon injury in the game against Hull - before his injury Paul had scored 15 tries in 21 games. Paul will be forging a new centre-wing partnership this season following the departure of Anthony Sullivan. Son of ex-Hull star John, Paul was the youngest ever GB international when he made his debut against New Zealand at the age of 18 years and 72 days. However he announced his retirement from international rugby during the 2001 season. Paul has pace, power and skill in abundance and Saints missed his influence last season. Saints smashed the world record to get Newlove in November 1995 when they paid Bradford Northern £250,000 cash and sent Sonny Nickle, Bernard Dwyer and Paul Loughlin to Odsal. Missed the 2000 Grand Final victory over Wigan but played in both World Club Challenge and Challenge Cup successes in 2001.

DARREN ALBERT The Blonde Bomber joined Saints for 2002 in a two year deal after flying in for 65 tries in 89 games for Newcastle Knights. The NSW State of Origin winger grabbed the winning try for Newcastle, coached by Mal Reilly, in their 1997 Grand Final win over Manly. Notched 16 tries in 23 games for the Knights in 2001.

SEAN LONG Sean won the Man of Steel award in 2000 but his 2001 was abruptly halted against Huddersfield Giants at the McAlpine Stadium. The former Wigan youngster had a brief spell with Widnes before Saints invested a shrewd £80,000 with another £20,000 after 30 first team games. Represented England in the 2000 World Cup and has played for Great Britain on four occasions. A try scorer in Saints World Club Challenge victory in 2001.

DARREN BRITT The Canterbury Bulldogs prop will beef up the Saints pack in 2002. Scored 10 tries in 170 matches for the Bulldogs including 23 appearances in 2001. Played five Tests for Australia from 1998-99.

KEIRON CUNNINGHAM Local product who is rated the best hooker in the world. Tremendous strike rate for Saints with 93 tries in 225 games! Superb dummy half who boasts tremendous strength and pace. Keiron missed the winter Ashes series through injury. One of 10 children with eldest brother, Eddie, a former Saints international.



Kieran Cunningham

BARRY WARD Darren Britt's Canterbury team-mate. Joined Saints to replace retired prop David Fairleigh. Began ARL career with Ian Millward's St George-Illawarra. Six tries in 105 games in ARL including 12 appearances for the Bulldogs in 2001.

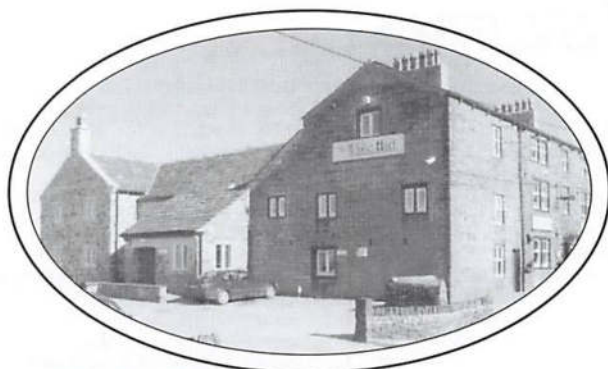
CHRIS JOYNT Saints popular captain who took over his role from Bobbie Goulding in August 1997. Leads by example and joined Saints from Oldham in August 1992. A devastating second row forward, Chris won the Man of the Match award against Brisbane Broncos in the World Club Challenge to add to his two Harry Sunderland Trophy awards. Represented Ireland in the 2000 World Cup, scoring a try against Samoa.

PETER SHIELS The 6ft 5ins forward, nicknamed 'Stretch', joined Saints in a three year deal in 2001. Sydney born forward with more than 100 first grade outings for Penrith, Perth Western Reds and Newcastle Knights. Suffered a gashed head in the World Club Challenge victory against Brisbane Broncos and was involved in the 2001 Challenge Cup success over the Bradford Bulls.

Continued on page 30.

Walkerbouts

... with Brian Walker



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THE White Hart at Lydgate has been an hostelry of note since way back in 1788, the adjoining barn having served to house the hounds of the local hunt, as the local police station in which highwaymen were held in shackles and later, during the Second World War, as a watch tower by the Home Guard.

Nowadays the White Hart, perched high on the Saddleworth hills is **THE** place to dine. This fine hostelry, has, since being redeveloped by partners Charles Brierley and Chef Of The Year 2000 John Rudden picked up catering awards galore with 2002 looking to be no exception gaining recognition from 'Good Food Guide 2002', 'The Which? Hotel Guide 2002' and 'AA Pub Guide 2002'

Cpt Mainwaring and Cpt Jones would have had a fine view over Hurst Cross from their Lydgate lookout but never in their wildest dreams could they have anticipated that some 60 years on the combination of White Hart and Hurst Cross would offer perhaps the best rugby league entertainment package in the business! This time not just targeted in the direction of corporate sponsors but very much at Oldham's supporters too!



Oldham fans enjoy lunch at the White Hart prior to the West Hull tussle.

Continued on page 32

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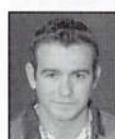
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Michael's Match

... from the pen of Michael Turner



TODAY we welcome the players, officials and supporters of the St Helens club - the proud holders of the Rugby League Challenge Cup and our feature concentrates on a previous cup tie between the two clubs. In a change from our usual format today we look at the Oldham Chronicle coverage of the 1958 Lancashire Cup Final between the Roughyeds and the Saints.

* Tremendous pack steam rolled Saints' mighty reputation

* Pitchford and Turner won personal duels

* Opportunity try and goal for Kellett

OLDHAM WIN LANCS CUP FOR 3rd TIME ON RUN

OLDHAM .. 32-12 ST. HELENS .. 10-2
PROP-FORWARD RON ROWBOTTOM played in the Lancashire Challenge Cup final on a double helping of potato pie and rice pudding. "Normally it would have been a sandwich," said Rowbottom, "but I was so sure I wouldn't be playing I told the wife to go to town." The heavy lunch didn't worry Oldham's forward: it was St. Helens who got the indigestion in an 80 minute pounding that gave Oldham the trophy for the third successive time.

Burly Rowbottom, stepping in at the last minute for Duffy, played a magnificent part at Swinton. This was one day Oldham wanted a lot from him and he gave it unsparringly.

IN FACT OLDHAM'S PACK TO A MAN PLAYED A TREMENDOUS GAME, WITH INCREDIBLE ENERGY, THRILLING SPEED AND SURE HANDLING THEY DROVE THE SAINTS, AND THEIR MIGHTY REPUTATION FOR POWERHOUSE RUGBY, RIGHT INTO THE TURF.

St. Helens were unlucky to carry their hooker, Tom McKinney, with a rib injury for most of the game, but this was Oldham's day and a full Saints pack would not have altered the result.

So often the victims of heavy-handed rugby, Oldham completely tipped the scales and showed that if the need was really there, they could also raise the strong arm.

To provide the perfect contrast, the team from Watersheddings also took their opportunities to illustrate their prowess as a footballing team - rapid on the ball, eager for support and ever-ready to take any chance.

Menace of Kellett

Their first two points showed just that. After a hefty spell of hammering at the St. Helens defence, the ball swung infield where the wall was just as strong. KELLETT saw that: he stopped dead and lifted the ball precisely over the bar for a classic drop goal.

In this game Kellett was the perfect menace, balancing his remarkable defence with some astute attacking. St. Helens had no match for the 21 year old and they seldom had an answer.

His try in the 65th minutes was so typical of his zest for taking a chance. From a halfway scrum, Pitchford put through a groundkick and Fearis nipped in for what seemed a perfect cove

But the ball was still the schemer in this try, as he was the schemer in so many

more attempts. As for his bid to show up better than the Saints scrum-half Murphy, he got a clear decision as early as half time.

Murphy showed that he packed menace in the early part of the game, and he put in some bright and very dangerous running, but as the play wore on it was Pitchford who started to take the initiative.

Personal Victory

Back to that sterling set of forwards on the Oldham team. No praise could justify their untiring efforts to take away the supremacy and hold it intact.

For my book, Turner won his personal duel with St. Helens loose-forward, Karalius. Both showed tremendous vigour but Turner was the man with the ideas.

Unlike Karalius, he had a keen eye for a pass to make his power breaks so much more effective. He was the man at the root of Oldham's first try in the 34th minute.

He pushed his way through just inside the St. Helens half and sent Winslade hurtling through it ignoring the centre and wing alongside him, Winslade carried on towards the touchline.

Winslade tremendous

It seemed he would be crowded out of play, but DAVIES moved quickly inside of Winslade, called for the ball and ran over, unchecked, by the posts. GANLEY kicked the goal and got his other from a penalty chance in the second half.

Throughout the game Winslade searched for work. His control of several difficult passes was an absolute treat to watch and his work in defence tremendous.

Filling in for Sid Little, McKeown won nothing but praise. In defence he didn't wait for the men to come his way; if they had the ball he wanted after them and didn't stop until they were safely tackled.

Keith had it tough at the scrums but ended only 22-18 behind. Maybe he could be faulted there, but like Jackson, playing on the blind side of the front row, his loose play was beyond reproach.

There was no comparison on the other side. Tiger Karalius kept his claws out the whole game through, but apart from flashes, the true terror on men like Briggs, Delves and Terry was never allowed to frighten anybody.

With so much accent on forward play, the movements of the three quarters were restricted. Davies teamed up well with Cracknell and out on the left lion-hearted Noon and his brave partner. Etty, flashed on to all the ball they could get.

Gaining ground

All four played a more important part in defence. With a virtual monopoly of the ball in the first half St. Helens were well in the mood for raiding, but whether it was the combined menace of Greenhall and Vollenhoven, or the bubbling enthusiasm of Large and Carlton, Oldham's four brought them to a stop.



Pitchford tries to drag down Vollenhoven, the Saints winger, as Jackson dashes in to help.

Kicking played a great part in making ground and there was nobody better on the field than Oldham's Bernard Ganley. His long, precise kicks for touch went where they were aimed, and gained valuable ground.

Not so lucky for Fearis, the former Oldham centre. He got a 29th minute goal but he had little else to enthuse about. His failure to cover the ball properly when Kellett scored amounted to tragedy.

But mistakes win games and Fearis can take some consolation that it was the combined errors of his team that gave Oldham the cup rather than his one real defensive lapse.

There will always be some wonder as to the result if St. Helens had scored in the opening minutes. Superb defensive positioning by Cracknell prevented an almost certain try when the Saints outnumbered Oldham by four to two in the left hand corner.

And what if St. Helens had maintained 13 fit men? I have watched Oldham enough to know that this was one day when, with or without injuries to their opponents, they would have won.

OLDHAM: Ganley; Cracknell, Davies, Noon, Etty, Kellett, Pitchford; Rowbottom, Keith, Jackson, Winslade, McKeown, Turner.
ST. HELENS: Fearis; Vollenhoven, Greenall, Large, Carlton; Howard, Murphy, Terry, McKinney, Brown, Briggs, Delves, Karalius.

Referee: Mr R. Gelder (Wakefield)

Attendance: 38,780 Receipts £6,933 (comp record)



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Keith BRENNAN

Jason CLEGG

John HOUGH

Andy PROCTOR

David GIBBONS

Bryan HENARE

Phil FARRELL

ST HELENS

Coach: IAN MILLWARD

Paul WELLENS (1)

Darren ALBERT (5)

Sean HOPPE (2)

Martin GLEESON (3)

Anthony STEWART (19)

Tommy MARTYN (20)

Sean LONG (7)

Darren BRITT (8)

Keiron CUNNINGHAM (9)

John STANKEVITCH (14)

Chris JOYNT (11)

Tim JONKERS (15)

Paul SCULTHORPE (13)

14 Mick HIGHAM (17)

15 Dwayne WEST (18)

16 Mark EDMONDSON (21)

17 Ade GARDNER (22)

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THE business of consultation is on the increase. An organisation is headed by a Managing Director, run by directors of experience, staffed by executives of competence and zeal and backed up by footsoldiers who work all the hours that God sends. And yet they need to call in consultants to tell them how to run the business!

And what are the qualifications of these consultants? A correspondence course? Night classes at the local Technical College? Who knows?

So, what are they for? Well, on the one hand they are there to act as scapegoats for whatever goes wrong, especially if the organisation employing them plans to make changes. On the other hand they can be used to block changes demanded by outsiders but not to the liking of the managers.

Example: the organisation needs a new image to make it more popular. The consultants recommend spending half a million on re-decorating the offices with wood panelling, plush chairs, the latest gizmos and a new corporate identity in the form of a brand new logo. Great!

However, this doesn't have the impact required. Answer: call in a new firm of consultants. Advice: move offices altogether, install new Directors, contract out major services, acquire new

computers for a quarter of a million as a symbol of progress, demolish all partitions to make a general office out of the space previously occupied by individual offices and change the colour scheme which was primrose and white to lilac and cream. This increases your budget but shows the organisation to be dynamic and forward thinking.

It doesn't work! Two years down the track you're wrestling with debt, the left hand doesn't know what the right is doing and there's a terrible clamour among the public.

What to do? A new firm of consultants is hired (at the usual hefty fee of course). The advice this time? Cut down on overheads. So most of the staff are sacked. The old computers are scrapped and new ones bought (computers don't answer back or offer gratuitous advice). The general office is divided up by partitions to form individual offices so avoiding distractions. The colour scheme which was lilac and cream is changed to primrose and white. And that's where we stand today.

Will it work? Who knows?

And what's the relevance? I'm sure you know!

(With thanks to C. Northcote Parkinson)

Wilson's Wisdom

... with Ian Wilson

I CAN only congratulate Chris Hamilton and the rest of the board on the appointment of John Harbin. I think it is imaginative, and with Mark Knight on board too as a young up and coming coach, exactly what the club needs if it is to have long term prospects for real growth and development within professional rugby league.

I say this because what we most need is to build a strong supporter base. The 1,000 or so who have remained loyal and active through the hard times still represents a fantastic bedrock of support, and it is vital that this contribution should not in any way be ignored. But, if we are to stand any chance of returning the club with the elite, genuinely competitive with the top 8 or 10 in the country - and surely this is the long term aim - then the regular support base has to be increased to at least 5,000, and then beyond. And John Harbin seems to me to be one of the few men around who have the potential to give us some chance of beginning this process.

Why do I say this? Because of what he found himself capable of during his short time at Wakefield. In particular, I went to watch two games involving Trinity towards the end of last season - at home to Hull, and away to Salford. In the first, although his side were clearly second best in terms of skill, they battled away manfully, and even though Hull eventually won the game, you could see why the Wakefield fans at the game had nothing but praise both for the team's efforts, and the coach who was motivating and guiding them to produce it.

The final game of the season, of course, was one of those "I was there" occasions. I stood on the terraces behind the posts in the midst of the Trinity fans.

Their side had to win the game to guarantee Super League survival, so that you could almost touch the tension before and during the game. To cut a long story short, they won, after being behind, and the fans chaired Harbin around the pitch afterwards. The genuine affection in which he was held could not be doubted.

Of course, this affection and, indeed, respect - had been built up over a period of time. He is a straight talker, who understands the working class roots of the game. He is also absolutely genuine in feeling for the game itself, the underdog, and the badly done to, and transmits those passions without trying to. But he also has a superb sense of humour, which again naturally endears him to people.

I am sure that those who saw him last season on Sky will agree that it was the best programme of the season, for the repartee as well as for the quality of the RL analysis. Last Thursday, too, in GMR's talk programme on the sport, there was another simple example. In case you didn't hear it, the programme featured discussions of the forthcoming Bradford v Newcastle game, and in particular, of Andrew Johns. "do you agree that he is the best current player in the world, John?", said the interviewer, "Well", drawled John, "he is certainly good - but then there's Jason Clegg, don't forget". The whole studio was reduced to chaos for a few seconds.

It seems to me that, provided we make progress on the field, John has the personality to connect with real people in the Oldham area, to enthuse them, and to get them interested in the club. It will be a slow process, of course. But at least there is a chance, I feel. Let us all live in hope!

Junior Roughyeds



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WELCOME to the Junior Roughyeds page. First of all the Juniors would like to give a warm welcome to our new Coach, John Harbin, and we hope that once he has settled in he will come along to one of our meetings to meet us all.

We would of course like to give a welcome to all the players, staff, supporters and especially the Junior Supporters of St. Helens and hope that we will have an enjoyable day.

Whilst we are on the subject of welcomes we would like to welcome back one of our 'Old Junior Roughyeds' members, Paul Sculthorpe. Paul said that he was a member of the Junior Roughyeds until he was about 12 but, unfortunately he never got to be a mascot but, as you may be aware he got to be a ball boy instead! He said that he enjoyed being a Junior Roughyed and he hopes that one day some of our Juniors will become professional players and enjoy Rugby League just like Paul.

Today's mascot is **Adam Woodward**. Adam is 10 years old and attends Alkrington Primary



Adam Woodward

School. Adam plays rugby for Royton Tigers and his favourite player is Keith Brennan because, as Adam says, "He sets up lots of tries and scores lots of tries". Let's hope he does so today. Have a great day Adam.

The Junior Roughyeds would like to say a big thank you to Oldham Markets who have become our sponsor for our home mascots this season. We are very grateful for this sponsorship and once again thank you. We are also looking for sponsorship for our mascot for away games and if anyone can help please contact the club for further details.

Enjoy the game.

Adele Knowles

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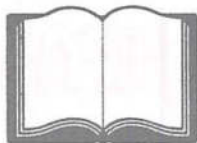
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Club Call continued on page 25

Amateur Album

.....WITH DON YATES



EARLIER this season the poor results suffered by Saddleworth Rangers led to a coaching upheaval at the club. As a result joint coach Mark Lord is no longer involved in the sport. It is a sad loss to local rugby for Lord enjoyed a successful playing career both at amateur and professional level followed by further success when he switched to coaching



Mark Lord

Mark was introduced to rugby league at Shaw. However, it was with St Annes that he gained international recognition, touring New Zealand with Great Britain Youth in 1983. It was a marvellous experience for the talented centre. 'Running out for your country is just the business,' he said. Another high spot for Lord was the 1987 Standard Cup Final when he won the Ben Powell Trophy as man-of-the-match as Saints defeated Saddleworth Rangers 38-18.

At that time Leeds, Oldham and Salford were showing interest in Lord but Mark opted for Headingley and he spent two and

a half brilliant years with the Loiners. 'I learned so much just training with the likes of ET (Andrew Ettingshausen) even though he restricted my opportunity of first team rugby,' recalled Mark. Nevertheless Lord did enjoy success with the Leeds second string who, in the 1988-89 season defeated Castleford 22-20 to win the Yorkshire Senior Cup and then St.Helens 24-12 in the final of the Alliance Challenge Cup. Shortly after that victory over St.Helens, Hull Kingston Rovers' coach Roger Millward came in for Lord but, put off by the travelling, Mark joined Rochdale Hornets. In two seasons at Rochdale Lord was the top Hornets try scorer, 34 touchdowns in 57 appearances.

In October 1991 Lord was persuaded to join Workington Town by the then Workington coach Ray Ashton. It was a bad move, made worse by injuries and at the end of that season Lord retired from playing.

Six months later he began coaching at St.Anne's. It was a highly successful spell for the Higginshaw Road club. They won promotion to the Premier Division of the Conference League, were Lancashire Cup Finalists and Standard Cup winners. After three years with Saints, Mark and his assistant Mick Swift left the club. 'We had taken them as far as we could. Fresh ideas and fresh faces were needed,' he said.

Lord still enjoyed success coaching the town team and then in November 1997, Mark and Mick Swift took over at struggling Saddleworth Rangers. Relegation was avoided against all odds and the Standard Cup was won.

Last September Mark parted company with Rangers. The full story of that break up has yet to be revealed but Mark now fills his Saturday afternoons watching and encouraging his son, James, who is goalkeeper for the Heyside under 8s soccer team.

Lord is certainly not disillusioned with the sport and several local clubs are following events closely. Mark's considerable talents could soon be put to good use once he feels ready to return to the game he has served with distinction over the past twenty years.

CLUB CALL

THE SATURDAY YANKEE

The Sat Yankee is a major source of the clubs income and prize money last month reached a record level of £5000 and that was for just £1 weekly stake. If you are not a member of this existing lottery you can help the club and hopefully yourself by filling in a Saturday Yankee form or calling Lorraine at the club on 0161 628 3677. Also we need collectors for most areas around Oldham and we offer good commissions.

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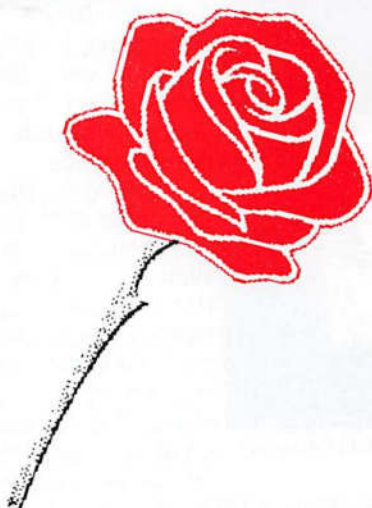
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The Whistle Blower

..... With Sam Shepherd

Sam Shepherd, perhaps Oldham's most famous International Rugby League referee and assessor, is a new columnist for the matchday magazine.

THE record of taking charge of four R. L. Challenge Cup finals at Wembley is shared by three officials -

George Phillips (1939, 1948, 1949, 1953),

Ron Gelder (1954, 1955, 1956, 1958)

Fred Lindop (1970, 1980, 1982, 1988).



John Holdsworth

Ron Gelder also refereed the 1954 replay at Odsal (Warrington 8 Halifax 4) before a crowd of 102,000.

Fred Lindop refereed the 1982 replay at Elland Road between Hull and Widnes. The following refereed at Wembley on 3 occasions: Charlie Appleton, Billy Thompson, and Robin Whitfield, while Eric Clay, D. T. H. Davies and John Holdsworth refereed twice.

Among the many favourites at 'Sheddings, (who refereed one Wembley final were), Peter Geraghty, Joe Manley, Eric Lawrinson, Mick Naughton and Harry Hunt, while John Hebblethwaite was unlucky enough to be in charge on a waterlogged

Wembley in 1968, when Leeds beat Wakefield 11-10.

Fred Lindop was one of the world's top referees for twenty years: his record of domestic finals is one of the most extensive of all time;

5 R.L. Challenge Cups

(including replay)

3 Premiership

2 BBC Floodlit Trophy

4 John Player/Regal Trophy

3 Lancashire Cup

1 Captain Morgan Trophy

1 Charity Shield

He was named the Man of Steel Referee of the Year a record four times, 1980/2/6/88 - a record he shares with John Holdsworth.



Fred Lindop

Poser: Is the ball in touch, if a player in touch, touches the ball which is in the field of play?

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TOPIC OF THE DAY

...THE 100 GREATEST RUGBY LEAGUE PLAYERS - EVER!

(Well, 1951 to 2001)

80 JACK WILKINSON Halifax, Wakefield and Great Britain prop Jack Wilkinson, a tourist to Australia in 1954, was a tough-as-teak front-rower of the highest calibre. Two Wembley appearances with Halifax were followed by three more winning appearances with Wakefield in the early '60s in a team also graced by ex-Oldhamers John Etty, Don Vines and Derek Turner. Wilkinson also played in Britain's 1960 World Cup winning team and toured again in 1962. In a career of 17 years he was never known to flinch any challenge.



79. TERRY CLAWSON

Goalkicking forward Clawson was a Rugby League nomad. He appeared for Featherstone (twice), Bradford (twice), Hull K.R., Leeds, Oldham, York and Wakefield as well as Great Britain. First capped in 1962 he was a star of the 1972 World Cup winning team. Harry Sunderland trophy winner as

Man of the Match in the 1972 Championship Final, Clawson appeared in seven major finals all told. He also played in Australia. His Oldham career spanned just 19 games in 1973-4 and 1974-5 with a tour to Australia with Britain in between.

78 KEIRON CUNNINGHAM Even the Australians think Keiron Cunningham is the best hooker in the world. His inclusion in the current World XIII is testament to the skills of the current St. Helens, Wales and Great Britain star. A bruising tackler, skillful handler and brilliant reader of the game, Cunningham is the epitome of a modern dummy-half player and the absolute master of his craft. Enjoy him while you can.

77 ERIC FRASER If Clive Churchill was the outstanding full back in Australia in the 1950s then in Britain that accolade has to go to Eric Fraser, the man who was so good he could keep Bernard Ganley out of a Great Britain shirt. Last line in all Warrington's cup and league triumphs and first choice in Britain's greatest ever touring team (that of 1958 when he racked up 238 points from 110 goals and 6 tries) he was one of the heroes of the famous (or infamous) Brisbane test won by a battered Britain 25-18. Well balanced, immaculate and supremely confident, Fraser had all the qualities you could wish of a great fullback.

76 JIM MILLS Discipline was never the strong point in Jim Mills' game. A fiery, but terrifyingly ferocious prop forward, Mills was dismissed 20 times in his career. The Welshman's career included appearances for Halifax, Bradford, Salford, Workington, North Sydney and Britain. But his most successful times were in two spells with Widnes. Altogether he played in eleven major Finals, toured in 1974 and 1979, represented Other Nationalities and Wales (including the 1975 World Championship side) and became notorious for inflicting severe injury on N.Z. prop John Greengrass. As an enforcer or tackle buster they didn't come any better than Big Jim who

maintains his association with R.L. today as a Director of Widnes.

75 KEITH HEPWORTH When Castleford first acquired the epithet 'classy' Keith Hepworth was the quicksilver scrum-half who made them tick. He scored a try at Wembley as Cas lifted the Cup in 1969, toured in 1970 and was in the 1970 World Cup squad. In 1971 he renewed his halfback partnership with Alan Hardisty at Leeds, a move which launched the Loins on a decade of cup and league success. In 1978 he moved to Hull and was granted a testimonial after 20 years in the game. The embodiment of all that was best in scrum-half play: that was Keith Hepworth.

74 HARRY PINNER Emerging in the late '70s and blossoming through the '80s Harry Pinner was one of the great ball handling loose-forwards. A master of the pass round the back plus an ability to time a pass to perfection gave the St. Helens loose-forward the ability to split any defence. Although his selection for Britain was limited Pinner was the star for Saints in what for them was a relatively unproductive period. Nevertheless like his contemporary, Terry Flanagan, Pinner was always a pleasure to watch.

73 RAY PRICE Back to the 1950s and back to Warrington. Stand-off Ray Price was an exact contemporary of Eric Fraser and vied with the great Willie Horne for Great Britain selection. The Price - Helme half back partnership was the brains behind the Wire in the early/mid '50s just before Oldham overtook them as Lancashire's finest. A runner and try-scorer in the manner of stand-offs of the day rather than the 'link man' fashion of the modern game.

72 BOB HAIGH In 1970-71 running second-row Bob Haigh scored 40 tries in a season for Leeds, then a record for a forward and one destined to stand for over 20 years. Haigh had begun his career with Wakefield in 1964, joined Leeds in 1970 and moved to Bradford in 1976 where he won further honours being Man of the Match in the 1978 Premiership Final. In the 1968 World Cup Squad and with 14 major finals to his credit, Haigh ended his career at Dewsbury. It is arguable that there has never been a better second-row runner.

71 LEE CROOKS Still turning out for Castleford Lock Lane Lee Crooks has often been underestimated. Having burst on the scene as a teenager with Hull FC Crooks was an international by 19, an incredibly young age for a prop. Tough, durable and uncompromising Crooks has been a master of the offload and a deliverer of some bone-jarring big hits. In a career taking in Hull, Leeds and home town Castleford Crooks appeared in eight Tests against Australia. A phenomenal goal-kicker, who could forget his touchline goal to level the game against New Zealand at Elland Road in 1985?



Stat Attack

ST HELENS

...continued from page 13

PAUL SCULTHORPE 2001 Man of Steel. Played in both the forwards and backs during Saints injury hit 2001 Super League campaign. Joined Saints in December 1997 in a £370,000 record deal for a forward. Oldham-born loose forward who began his career at Warrington Wolves. Scored 27 tries and 82 goals in 31 games in 2001. Paul was an important member of the Great Britain team in the 2001 Ashes series.

JOHN STANKEVITCH Widnes born forward who played for Golbourne Parkside. Broke into the first team in 2000 and played a major part in the 2000 Grand Final victory against Wigan Warriors. Surprisingly omitted from the 2001 Challenge Cup team but returned to action later in the season with a number of impressive performances.

TIM JONKERS Amsterdam born with Dutch father and English mother. Moved to St. Helens area as a six year old and a past pupil at Cowley High School. Started 13 matches in 2001 and was substitute on 24 occasions, scoring 9 tries. Represented Ireland in the 1999 European Championship.

SONNY NICKLE A fan favourite. Enjoyed a brief spell at Northern Ford Premiership side Barrow Border Raiders this winter but didn't play a game. Returned to Saints for his third spell in December 2001. Previously played for Hunslet, Sheffield and Bradford. Made 28 appearances in 2001 and scored 3 tries.

DWAYNE WEST Son of ex-Wigan coach Graeme. Born in Hawera, New Zealand and joined Wigan from Wigan St. Patrick's as a 16 year old. Played two Super League games for Wigan in 1999 before joining Saints for 2000. Dwayne has now made 6 starts and 13 substitute appearance for Saints, scoring 5 tries.

ANTHONY STEWART Wigan born youngster who turned professional from Hindley in 1994. Made 25 starts in 2001, scoring 12 tries. Selected for Ireland in the 2000 World Cup but was forced to withdraw due to a hernia operation.

TOMMY MARTYN The 2000 Super League Player's Player of the Year. Won the 1997 Lance Todd award as Saints beat Bradford Bulls at Wembley. Recovered from two reconstructions on separate knees and four hernia operations. Joined Saints from Oldham in 1993 and has scored 106 tries in 176 matches. Represented Saints in the 2000 World Cup.

MARK EDMONDSON Scored his first points in his Saints career during the 2001 season. The forward signed from Vale of Lune RU in 1997 and made his debut against Salford in March 1999. Was a target for Salford in 2000 but opted to stay at Saints.

ADE GARDNER The exciting Cumbrian threequarter joined Saints from Barrow Border Raiders on a three year contract in October, 2001. Elder brother Jean-Paul played for Warrington, younger brother Matthew

at Leeds. Scored two tries in three Tests for GB Academy on 2001 tour to Australia and New Zealand. Joined Barrow from Barrow Island in April 1999 and made debut v Hull KR in last game of 2000 season. Grabbed 16 tries in 30 matches for Barrow in 2001 including a hat trick v Gateshead.

MIKE BENNETT Back row forward signed from Golbourne Parkside. Made his debut against Wigan on Good Friday 2000 as a substitute and made his only start in 2001. Wigan fan as a youngster!

FOOTBALL MANGER: KEL COSLETT St. Helens legend who took over from Eric Hughes as football operations manager in November, 2001. Joined Saints as a player in July 1962 after playing for Llanelly, Aberavon and Wales RU. Lance Todd Trophy winner at Wembley for Saints v Leeds in 1972. Still holds Saints goals (214) and points (452) records in a season set in 1971-72. Also played more games for Saints 531 (12) and booted more goals, 1,639, than any other player. Also coached Saints, Wigan, Rochdale and Wales.

HEAD COACH: IAN MILLWARD The Australian-born Coach was Tetley's Super League Coach of the Year in 2001 after leading Saints to a famous World Club Challenge win over Brisbane Broncos and the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final triumph against Bradford Bulls. He steered St. Helens to a Millennium Grand Final success at Old Trafford. He took over at St. Helens from sacked Ellery Hanley in March, 2000. The ex-llawarra half back was forced to retire from playing after sustaining a broken neck against North Sydney in 1983. Began his coaching career at llawarra Western Suburbs as assistant to John Dorahy. Had a spell as Wollongong University Coach before moving to llawarra as right hand man to Graham Murray in 1994-5. Then assistant to Alan McMahon in 1996 and Andrew Farrar in 1997-98 at his home club llawarra before taking over at Leigh Centurions from Norman Turley in September 1998. Took Leigh from the bottom of Division One to fourth in his first season and won the Coach of the Year title. Leigh were top of the Northern Ford Premiership when he moved to St. Helens. Married with three children. Agreed new three year contract with Saints in July, 2000.

ASSISTANT COACH: JON SHARP Took over from Harry Bryant as right hand man to Ian Millward in November, 2001. Featherstone born. Turned professional for Hull in 1991 Premiership win v Widnes. Left Hull after 11 seasons to join home town club Featherstone. Spent two years as a player at Rovers before becoming Academy Coach. Then joined Wakefield as asst coach to Andy Kelly before seven months as Batley Head Coach. Then moved to Huddersfield as asst coach to Tony Smith. Signed two year deal with Saints.

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Walkerbout . . .

. . . continued from page 14

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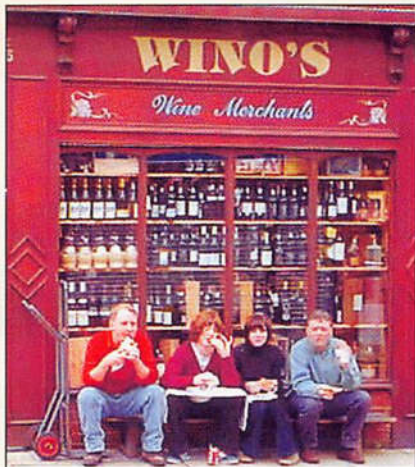
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Fixtures

Date Opponent Result Att

DECEMBER

2 SWINTON LIONS F - A

16 Hull K.R. 10-26 2032

23 ROCHDALE HORNETS P

30 Leigh 12-46 3388

JANUARY

6 YORK 32-16 1130

13 Dewsbury Rams 6-30 1410

20 CHORLEY LYNX 34-2 1114

27 WEST HULL (3rd Round)H 38-4 1131

FEBRUARY

3 Workington 20-28 991

10 Kellogg's Challenge Cup (4th Round)

17 GATESHEAD H

24 Kellogg's Challenge Cup (5th Round)

MARCH

3 Huddersfield A

10 DONCASTER DRAGONS H

15 Sheffield Eagles A

24 FEATHERSTONE H

29 Rochdale Hornets A (Nat Cup)

APRIL

1 DEWSBURY RAMS H (Nat Cup)

7 Huddersfield A (Nat Cup)

14 KEIGHLEY H (Nat Cup)

21 Hunslet Hawks A (Nat Cup)

MAY

5 BATLEY BULLDOGS H (Nat Cup)

12 National Cup Quarter Finals

19 National Cup Semi Finals

26 National Cup Final

JUNE

2 Keighley Cougars A

9 WHITEHAVEN H

16 Barrow A

23 BATLEY BULLDOGS H

30 Hunslet Hawks A

JULY

7 LEIGH H

14 Chorley Lynx A

21 Whitehaven A

28 HUDDERSFIELD H

AUGUST

4 HUNSLET HAWKS H

11 Batley Bulldogs A

18 Rochdale Hornets A

25 WORKINGTON H

SEPTEMBER

1 York A

8 KEIGHLEY COUGARS H

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