

Today's Teams

Swinton Lions	v	Oldham
Wayne English	1	Gavin Dodd
Jason Roach	2	Chris Irwin
Kris Tassell	3	Paul Anderson
Phil Hassan	4	Iain Marsh
Hugh Thorpe	5	Will Cowell
Rob Gallagher	6	Gareth Barber
Peter Cannon	7	Neil Roden
Andy Leatham	8	Steve Molloy
Rob Barraclough	9	John Hough
Simon Knox	10	Martin McLoughlin
Craig Wingfield	11	Lee Doran
Dave Ellison	12	Ryan Stazicker
Phil Cushion	13	Phil Farrell
Lee Hudson	14	Anthony Murray
Jason Johnson	15	Simon Svabic
Andy Cheetham	16	Chris Morley
Chris Roe	17	Darren Shaw

Referee: Steve Presley (Castleford)
Touch Judges: M. Leach & D. Millburn
Fourth Official: G. Maxwell

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VERSUS

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Sunday, 23 February 2003

Kick Off 3.00pm

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Swinton Lions Rugby League Club

Season 2003



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112 Station Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 6BT Tel: 0161 794 6150, Fax: 0161 794 6190
Lions Website: www.swintonlions.net **Lions Hotline:** 0900 8040012

CLUB OFFICIALS

General Secretary:

David Jones

General Manager:

Graham Smith

Head Coach:

Peter Roe

Assistant Coach:

Willie Johnson

Management Committee:

Pat Foy, Tony Griffin,

John Kidd, Cliff Lenord,

Richard Taylor,

Stephen Wild (Supporters Trust)

Other Officials:

Laura Henderson (Physio),

Norman Brown (Assistant Physio),

John Holden (Safety),

Paul Kidd (Development),

Rob McGivern (Head Steward),

Peter Morris (Lottery),

Eric Skeeck (Head Kit Man),

Vinny Kirkman (Assistant Kit Man),

Marlene Partington (Lottery Manager)

CLUB HONOURS

Rugby League Champions:

1926/27, 1927/28, 1930/31, 1934/35, 1962/63, 1963/64

Runners Up: 1924/25, 1932/33, 1939/40

Challenge Cup Winners: 1899/1900, 1925/26, 1927/28

Runners Up: 1926/27, 1931/32

Lancashire Cup Winners: 1925/26, 1927/28, 1939/40, 1969/70

Runners Up: 1910/11, 1923/24, 1931/32, 1960/61, 1961/62,

1962/63, 1964/65, 1972/73

Lancashire League Winners: 1924/25, 1927/28, 1928/29,

1930/31, 1939/40, 1960/61

Runners Up: 1892/93 1893/94 (under RFU) 1897/98, 1900/01,

1922/23, 1926/27, 1934/35, 1938/39, 1965/66

Second Division Championship Winners: 1984/85

Runners Up: 1986/87 1996; **Promoted:** 1974/75 1990/91

Second Division Premiership Winners: 1986/87

Runners Up: 1988/89

BBC Floodlit Trophy Runners Up: 1966/67

Western Division Championship Runners Up: 1963/64

Wigan Summer 7's Winners: 1985/86

Alliance Challenge Cup Winners: 1985/86

CLUB RECORDS

Record Win: 90-0 V. Prescott Panthers 11/8/1996 **Record Loss:** 10-106 V. Leeds 11/2/2001

Record Appearances: Ken Gowers 602 (inc. 8 Sub) (1954-73)

Record Points: (Career) 2105 Ken Gowers; (Season) 283 Albert Blan 1960/61; (Match) 30 Greg Pearce v. Prescott Panthers 11/8/1996; 30 Mick Nanyin v. York Wasps 25/03/2001; 29 Bernard McMahon v. Dewsbury 15/8/1959

Record Tries: (Career) 298 Jim Valentine (1884-1901), 197 Frank Evans (1921-31); (Season) 48 Jim Valentine 1888/89; 42 Johnny Stopford 1963/64; (Match) 6 Mark Riley v. Prescott Panthers 11/8/1996

Record Goals: (Career) 970 Ken Gowers; (Season) 128 Albert Blan 1960/61;

(Match) 12 Ken Gowers v. Liverpool City 3/10/1957

Ground Record Attendance: 44,621 Warrington V. Wigan 7/4/1951

Club Record Attendance: 26,891 V. Wigan 12/2/1964

World Record Kick: 77.75 yards by Martin Hodgson at Rochdale Hornets 13/4/1940

INTERNATIONAL HONOURS

Great Britain Caps

Tommy Armit 8; Alan Buckley 7; Fred Butters 2; Billy Davies 1; Bryn Evans 10; Frank Evans 4; Jack Evans 3;

Ken Gowers 14; Hector Halsall 1; Martin Hodgson 16; Ron Morgan 2; Billo Rees 11; Dave Robinson 12;

Johnny Stopford 12; Joe Wright 1; (Gordon Haynes & Frank Osmond each won 1 unofficial cap)

England Caps

Charlie Armit 1; Tommy Armit 10; Albert Blan 1; Chris Brockbank 1; Alan Buckley 1; Fred Butters 1;

Billy Davies 1; Bryn Evans 4; Jack Evans 5; Ken Gowers 1; Martin Hodgson 9; Jack Kenny 1;

Peter Norburn 1; Dave Robinson 1; Joe Wright 3

England Rugby Union Caps

Ted Beswick 2; Charlie Horley 1; James Marsh 1; Sam Roberts 2; Jim Valentine 4

Wales Caps

Brian Butler 2; Dai Davies 1; DB Davies 3; Dick Evans 3; Frank Evans 7; Gomer Hughes 3; Bob Jones 2; Paul

Kennett 1; Ralph Morgan 3; Frank Osmond 14; Owen Phillips 6; Billo Rees 6; Danny Wilson 4; (Ron Morgan,

Dai Moses & Rees Thomas each won 1 unofficial cap)

Ireland Caps: Leo Casey 2

Other Nationalities Caps: Dan Davies 1; Frank Evans 2; Billo Rees 2

Peter Roe's Verdict

Our cup result at Chorley was quite pleasing. I thought our attack generally played to the right pattern and on defence we coped well against the experience of Tim Street and Dave Whittle.

We have, however, lots to work on. My areas of concern are easy to remedy and rectify. Rugby league is not always as simple a game as I often hear quoted.

We desperately need a good, firm, well lit training area to enable us to work on specifics. This is now in hand. Things will improve when the longer daylight is with us but that is a few weeks off yet.

Our support recently has been terrific. The players are lifted by good solid support. The Swinton club may have had a nomadic set-up over recent years, but the team is looking forward with enthusiasm and confidence.

This season, after the Arriva Cup, will show that National League 2 will be full of healthy competition. Just take a look the way the likes of Hunslet and York are progressing. O.K. some funding from the Leeds Rhinos is filtering down to York (I'm only jealous), but to see our great game surviving and indeed prospering in York, can only be good for Rugby League.

Today's Arriva cup opposition is Oldham who are a club who's fortunes seem to be on the up. In chairman Chris Hamilton they have a forward thinking man at the helm and in Steve Molloy a new young coach striving to progress. We wish them well in the long term but, of course not today.

Enjoy the game,

Roey.

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Supporters' Trust

Chris Spalding

For those of you who attended the recent game against Chorley you can feel justifiably proud of yourselves for your magnificent support and proud of the team for a gutsy performance. It was a pleasure to watch the game and it's clear on the playing side that the club is heading in the right direction.

Both Trust and the Club however will need to redouble our efforts on the commercial front this coming season to ensure that Swinton RLFC has a stable financial future. Last year was a watershed in the history of the club and the emotions aroused by the possible loss of our club meant that it was relatively easy to galvanise people to support fund raising efforts. This time around we will have a much harder task.

The Trust Board acknowledges that our supporter base is small and we cannot continue to rely on the same people digging into their pockets month on month. We hope therefore to provide events that people other than Swinton supporters will be interested in attending so if you have any ideas please let a member of the Trust Board know.

In our efforts to continually improve our communications with the club management the Trust Board will have met with Dave Jones last Thursday to discuss various issues our members have expressed an interest in. The Trust will provide an up date in the next programme notes.

On Saturday 1st March we will be holding another of our highly successful Race Nights at the Folly Club and then on 22nd March we will be hosting a Table Top Sale, again at the Folly Club.

Hopefully at today's game you will see 'Vinny' the Lion wearing an example of the 'Champions 62/63' shirts that the trust is producing. Anybody interested in purchasing one please ring me on 07879226827.

On 9th March the Supporters Trust will be organising a bus to Whitehaven. It will leave the Folly Club at 9.30am calling at Keswick en route. Please phone Steve on 728 1068 or 07932 500 731 to book a seat. The fare will be advised at next weeks match.

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Welcome To Today's Visitors

Oldham

Paul Anderson

Signed from Leigh Centurions for the beginning of the 2003 season. His preferred position is centre three-quarter but is not at a loss in the second row. A burly build enables him to make a try out of sheer strength. Was Leigh's leading try scorer the season before last, and is well known for his bock-busting runs. His previous clubs include St. Helens and Sheffield Eagles.

Gareth Barber

A 21 year-old Oldham born half back who was reared on rugby with his best pal, Leeds and GB ace Kevin Sinfield. Barber was with Warrington before his signing for Oldham for the start of the 2000/1 season. A promising young player who made the Stand off position his own last season.

Will Cowell

Played 18 times in Super League for Warrington, mostly as a sub. The 22 year old Cumbrian a product of the prolific Kells club, he left Wilderspool to join Oldham. A Full back, Wing or Centre, preferring Full back, his chances to impress the coach will probably be as a Centre or Winger. Former Warrington coach Darryl van der Velde spoke well of him before the youngster was invited to join the Roughyeds.

Gavin Dodd

Former Royton Tigers youngster, who had a spell with Bradford Bulls Academy team. Fast on the break yet unpredictable at times, Dodd scored some good tries last season and made the full back position his own, pushing Mark Sibson out onto the wing. Dodd represented GB students in Australia and New Zealand and has been selected for Great Britain under 21's in the past.

Lee Doran

Another young player in whom Oldham have a lot of confidence. A Wiganer, Lee has worked his way through the Academy and Alliance teams at Oldham and is now probably one of the first names on the Oldham team sheet each week. Good pace and robust defence give him all the assets required to make a top class second row forward. Showed up well in the NFP under 21's in 2001. One of five Oldham players in that squad.

Phil Farrell

Phil starting his fourth season with the Roughyeds, has just been appointed club captain. Played most of his rugby at Oldham at second row but it looks like he will fit into the loose forward role this season, a position his older brother Andy fills for Wigan. One of the youngest captains in the league, will not be fazed by the responsibility.

John Hough

The first player to sign for his hometown club when Chris Hamilton and his fellow directors formed the new Roughyeds in 1997. Has just signed a new contract to take him to the end of the 2004 season. On his day, one of the best hookers in the National League, a danger to any defence from acting half back. By the end of the 2002 season he had made 152 appearances for Oldham, 37 of them in the 2002 season alone. Last season saw him cross the whitewash on 10 occasions, second only to Lee Doran in the Forward try scoring charts.

Chirs Irwin

Another player sign from Leigh Centurions at the end of the 2002 season. Chris is happy on the wing or at full back. Has natural pace and will be a great asset to the Oldham back line wherever he is chosen to play. Gained experience with the Centurions playing at the top level of the National League.

Iain Marsh

22-year-old goal kicking centre or winger signed from Barrow Border Raiders. Iain, a St. Helens lad played for Salford for 5 years including some Super League appearances, before signing for St. Helens. Was Cameron Bells first signing for Barrow last season and mainly played as a centre along side Kiwi Cliff Beverley. Scored 12 tries in 32 appearances. A solid defender and a very strong finisher.

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Steve Molloy

Ex-England captain, signed for his second spell at Oldham from Batley Bulldogs. Was the obvious choice as player coach when the previous coach left mid season. A front row forward who has played for Featherstone, Sheffield, Warrington, Sheffield and Leeds. Molloy is a local lad. Made a big contribution to Roughyeds excellent end of season run in which a place in National League One was secured.

Martin McGloughlin

Big front row man, can also play second row. Signed from Barrow at the end of the 2002 season. During the last season, was twice named in the NFP form team of the month.

Chris Morley

Older brother of GB star Adrian. Like his brother is a no-nonsense second row forward. Signed from Leigh in time for the 2003 season. Chris has the size and mean streak to stiffen up any back row.

Neil Roden

Signed from hometown club Wigan. The son of Wigan's chief scout, has the scrum half jersey all to himself after winning the accolade of Oldham players player of the year in 2002. One of the best scrum half's outside of Super League.

Anthony Murray

Signed from Swinton for a nominal fee. Can play hooker or scrum half and has also played loose forward. Previous clubs also include Wigan, Warrington, Leigh and Barrow.

Darren Shaw

Signed from Salford after their relegation from Super League. Highly experienced second row or prop forward, whose previous clubs include Sheffield Eagles where he won a Challenge Cup medal. Other clubs include: Castleford, London Broncos as well as Canberra Raiders. Darren is a firm favourite with fans at whichever club he has played at.

Ryan Staziker

After leaving Swinton, Ryan was picked up by Oldham on trial after playing for amateurs Ince Rose Bridge. Impressive Alliance team performances earned him substitute spots in the first team. A strong running second row forward with a high work rate.

Simon Svabic

Signed from Leigh at the end of the 2002 campaign. Started his career in Oldham with the now defunct Bears. A stand off with great guile is an important playmaker in the Roughyeds squad.



Swinton Supporters Trust Match Day Bus Timetable

£1 Adult Single • 50p OAP Single • Kids go Free

Little Hulton Dun Mare	14:05	Swinton Town Hall	14:30
Walkden Stocks Hotel	14:10	The Folly	arr 14:32
Morning Star	14:13	The Folly	dep 14:37
Red Lion	14:15	Top of Station Road	14:40
Bottom of Moorside Road	14:20	Bowling Green	14:42
Staff of Life	14:25	Moor Lane	14:45
Top of Worsley Road	14:27		

Return Journey leaves 10 minutes after the final hooter.

All fares taken Donated to Manchester Children's Hospital

Shirt Number Sponsorships

Own your own match worn shirt. By sponsoring the players for only £100, you will receive that same shirt at the end of the season.

Contact Marlene at the club shop to get your name down.

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Players' Stats

Up To And Including 09/02/2003

Players Name	Played	Subs	Tries	Goals	Drops	Points
Barracough Rob	1	0	0	0	0	0
Cannon Peter	4	0	2	0	0	8
Cheetham Andy	3	1	1	0	0	4
Cushion Phil	2	0	0	0	0	0
Ellison Dave	4	0	1	0	0	4
English Wayne	4	0	1	0	0	4
Gallagher Rob	3	1	0	0	0	0
Hassan Phil	2	0	0	0	0	0
Hough Chris	3	0	0	6	0	12
Hudson Lee	1	2	1	0	0	4
Johnson Jason	1	3	0	0	0	0
Knox Simon	4	0	0	0	0	0
Leatham Andy	4	0	0	0	0	0
Roach Jason	3	0	0	0	0	0
Roe Chris	0	4	0	0	0	0
Russell Rob	1	1	0	0	0	0
Smith Kris	3	0	1	1	0	6
Tassell Kris	2	0	4	0	0	16
Thorpe Hugh	4	0	5	0	0	20
Turner Danny	0	3	0	0	0	0
Wingfield Craig	3	1	2	4	0	16

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The Profile of Salford City Football Club locally and within the North of England continues to rise each year. The club operates in the semi-professional North West Counties League and is ambitious to gain promotion to the Northern Premier Unibond League next season.

Next Home Fixture

Saturday 1st March

Skelmersdale United

Kick Off 3pm

Salford City are holding a Sportsmen's Evening at Swinton Park Golf Club on Thursday 13th March.

Tickets are £12.50 including buffet and guest speaker for the evening will be GMR's Fred Fielder. Contact Bill Taylor on 0161 736 1840 for tickets.

Junior Lions News

by Colin Gettins

Hello to all our Junior Lions and also a warm Moor lane welcome to all the junior Roughyeds and their families who have made the short journey from Oldham.

Like the club, the Junior lions section has had to have an enforced change since last season with Vinny Kirkman, (Chairman and founder of the Junior section), giving up the Chairman job due to work commitments. On the positive side Vinny is staying on the Junior Lions committee to help organise events and competitions for the juniors. I am sure I will not be on my own in thanking him for all the time and hard work he has put in to keep the junior section alive and running successfully throughout all the good and bleak times.

Match Day Mascots

We are on the look out for match day mascots for home and away fixtures and if anyone is interested contact me (colin), via the shop or on match days at the ground.

Club Mascot Name

Our favourite club mascot Vinny the lion, named after the Junior section founder, is to have a name change to coincide with our new home and all the off field changes.

A competition is being run by the club to find a new name for our mascot and this will be open to all Junior Lions as well the schools our Development officer is working in. These schools are Moorside Primary Swinton, St Marks RC Swinton, St Ambrose Barlow High Swinton and Woodbank Primary Bury.

So come on all you Junior Lions get the thinking caps on and designed a new catchy and appropriate name. All entries to be sent to: 'Junior Lions Mascot Competition' 112 Station Road Swinton M27 6BT and the closing date is 30th April. The winner will receive a prize and this will be presented at the Gateshead match.

Easter Rugby Camp

Leading upto our Easter programme the clubs' Development team are running a Junior coaching camp at Beech Farm playing fields, Swinton. This will take place on Monday 14th April through to Thursday 17th April from 10am to 12noon each day with the cost being £12 for the 4 days. In attendance will be Head Coach Peter Roe, Development Officer Paul Kidd, Players Kris Tassell and Chris Roe to say but a few.

To book your place pick up a 'Easter Camp Form' from the Club Shop and if you require any further information contact Paul Kidd on 0161-794-6150.

Do you think you are a Budding Match Reporter?

The junior lions section are running a competition to find our own junior match reporter. Between now and the end of March we would like a match report of any Swinton game of your choice. There are 2 age categories: Primary School reporter and High School reporter. There is no limit to the amount of words used and all entries should be sent to 'Junior Reporter Competition' 112 Station road Swinton M27 6BT and the closing date is Friday 4th April. The competition will be judged by Head Coach, Peter Roe and the winner will receive a prize.

Membership Forms

Why not become part of the Junior Lions experience – fill in a Member's Form today available at the turnstiles and as well as the Club Shop.

Fixtures

Date	Comp.	Club	Venue	Result	Att.
Sun 19/01/2003	ATNC	Salford	A	6-58	3,334
Sun 26/01/2003	CC3	Shaw Cross	H	46- 0	315
Sun 02/02/2003	ATNC	Leigh	H	10-24	950
Sun 09/02/2003	CC4	Chorley	A	32-16	572
Sun 23/02/2003	ATNC	Oldham	H		
Sun 02/03/2003	CC5	Featherstone Rovers	H		
Sun 09/03/2003	ATNC	Whitehaven	A		
Sun 16/03/2003	ATNC	Salford	H		
Sun 23/03/2003	ATNC	Leigh	A		
Sun 30/03/2003	ATNC	Rochdale	H		
Sun 06/04/2003	ATNC	Oldham	A		
Sun 13/04/2003	ATNC	Whitehaven	H		
Fri 18/04/2003	NL2	Chorley	H		
Mon 21/04/2003	NL2	Workington	A		
Sun 04/05/2003	NL2	Gateshead	H		
Fri 09/05/2003	NL2	Sheffield	A (7.30pm)		
Sun 18/05/2003	ATN	QF			
Sun 25/05/2003	NL2	London Skolars	H		
Sun 01/06/2003	NL2	York	A		
Sun 08/06/2003	ATN	SF			
Sun 15/06/2003	NL2	Barrow	A		
Sun 22/06/2003	NL2	Hunslet	H		
Sun 29/06/2003	NL2	Keighley	A		
Sun 06/07/2003	ATN	F			
Sun 13/07/2003	NL2	Sheffield	H		
Sun 20/07/2003	NL2	Gateshead	A		
Sun 27/07/2003	NL2	Workington	H		
Sun 03/08/2003	NL2	Chorley	A		
Sun 10/08/2003	NL2	London Skolars	A		
Sun 17/08/2003	NL2	York	H		
Sun 24/08/2003	NL2	Hunslet	A		
Sun 31/08/2003	NL2	Keighley	H		
Sun 07/09/2003	NL2	Barrow	H		

T.B.A. Rochdale Away

From Within The Lions' Den

This week Tony Griffin

Firstly may I welcome all you loyal Lions fans for the game against Oldham today

There are lots of exciting things happening both on and off the field at your beloved Swinton right now. Many changes have been made in playing staff, coaching staff and backroom staff in a very short period of time at the club with more to come before the league season begins on good Friday. In any walk of life change is difficult to handle and has to be managed very carefully. I am aware that people become frustrated because things don't quite seem right at times but, I would ask you to remain patient and continue to trust in the people who are trying very hard to put Swinton Lions back in their rightful position. The club is actively trying to build a better communication link with its fans via the Supporters Trust so please give it time to come together.

Peter Roe and his coaching staff will put it right on the field and the management team are committed to support his every need. So in a nut shell stay behind the Lions and we will get there eventually!

One of our prime intentions was to build bridges with local business people and develop links with the community in Swinton. This showed signs of fruition when two local companies namely Swinton M.O.T. Station and R.R.G. Toyota sponsored free transport to the cup game at Chorley, so if you need an MOT go to Swinton MOT if when you get there it is knackered go buy a new one from RRG Toyota, in the mean time thanks to both of you it was a great day out for us all.

It will be a good feeling when we are properly reestablished back in the area, even so work has started in several key areas so here is a brief update.

From a training perspective the Lions have commenced training at Agecroft Road at the Willows football ground, soon to become known as Swinton Town, which has temporary floodlights erected for the dark evenings. Paul Kidd and Kris Tassell have commenced development in the Swinton junior schools and are working very well with Paul Hulme, no not that one, Sports development officer in the Swinton area. Structural and interior work has begun on the shop on Station Road, not that it needed it, which will staff an administration team for the Rugby department, a commercial department including point of sale merchandise in the shop front and the Lions Lottery, which is the life blood of the club and an area we have to focus on building and growing as soon as possible.

So there you are just a few snippets for you to think on before the BIG ONE next week. Spread the gospel to all and sundry especially all your mates who used to come to the games. We need you and them if the Club is going to grow.

Oh by the way yes we are aware that Man U play in the Worthington cup final that day, we have tried to switch the date and the kick off time but Featherstone will not change I just can't understand why they have financial problems can you?

Thanks

Tony Griffin

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A Lion in Exile

A warm welcome down to the lush, warm, fertile lowlands of the Irwell valley to our friends from Oldham, for the next instalment of the Arriva National Cup.

For me, Oldham means Watersheddings. According to my Collins Roughyed/English dictionary, this translates as "Cold. No, actually very cold. Well to be honest, absolutely bloody freezing". Their own unique East Lancashire version of El Nino would come howling down from the moors from St. Petersburg via Halifax. Watersheddings was the kind of place where you put your food in your coolbox to keep it warm. Still, now Russia has been admitted to the RLIF, the potential away fixture against Siberia Sabres will be a home-from-home experience.

I write fresh from two Challenge Cup victories over Shaw Cross and Chorley and an excellent performance against Leigh. I was fortunate enough to make the Shaw Cross match, despite a journey from hell capped off by the discovery that the Kersal had stopped serving Holts! I couldn't however make the Chorley game but managed to tune into BBC GMR over the internet (the unfathomed frontier where cutting-edge technology meets Jack Dearden). Unfortunately, with Leigh against Featherstone as the commentary game, I had to rely on my brother's far more frequent and reliable text messages. Fatefully perhaps we then landed Rovers in the 5th. Round, but I have a feeling in my waters – quite unrelated to Mr. Joseph Holt – that we will be progressing to the dizzy heights of the quarter finals.

Locally, London Broncos are down to a shortlist of three following a nationwide hunt for new talent under the title of - wait for it – "Prop Star". I love prop forwards (non-biblically of course) having been weaned on the beer-bellied characters that migrated slowly from scrum to scrum in the sixties (those of you who remember Kel Earl will go misty eyed in recognition). Big Kel was a delight to behold. His girth was so substantial that you couldn't side-step him. It was more of a circumnavigation, involving a long, painful study of Ordnance Survey maps and a call to the Coast Guard with details of when you were expected to appear around his dark side. Kel also unknowingly starred in a BBC documentary on Doncaster who were at that time in the middle of a horrendous run of consecutive defeats. Set to Grieg's Peer Gynt and filmed in slow-motion to enhance the sense of drama, Kel repeatedly breached the defensive line with the Doncaster three-quarter line orbiting his waist as a consequence of the immense gravitational pull exerted by his considerable frame.

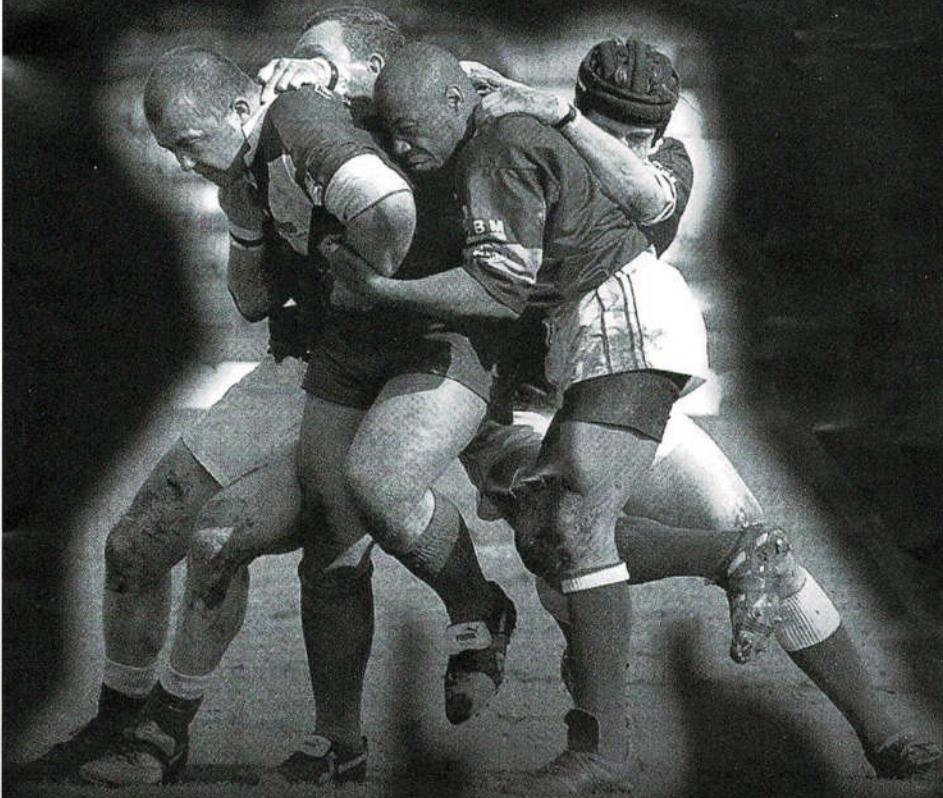
I wish the Broncos well in their quest. I would however advise against recruiting from the local Union ranks as their choice will be restricted to vertically challenged, cubically proportioned bald gentlemen whose heads and necks form a single contiguous limb and who have a peculiar affinity to drinking after shave, baring their behinds and singing rude songs.

Enjoy the game and come on you Lions!

Simon Green



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Commercial Corner

with Graham Smith

I would like to offer a warm welcome to all players, officials and fans who have travelled from Oldham this afternoon for what promises to be a very interesting game. Oldham came with a late push for promotion last year and provide very attractive opposition and a stern test for the Lions.

The win at Chorley was a huge step forward for the Lions. Peter Roe will be very proud of the squad whose brilliant performance sets up a fantastic fifth round match against Featherstone. Without wanting to put too much pressure on the players and coaches this is Swinton's most important match for years. The bookies will make Rovers the favourites, but we are definitely in with a chance. There is no need for me to emphasise what a win would mean to the club, in terms of financial gain as well as making a statement that the Lions are back. We need all regular fans and as many as possible new followers to get down to Moor Lane next week to get behind the players and hopefully bring a near capacity gate.

We have assembled one of the strongest squads in the division and some are already tipping the Lions to be promotion candidates, along with York and Keighley. Recent results show that the competition will be very competitive, with Hunslet, with that win over Huddersfield proving that the promotion battle will be fierce indeed. One problem that we have off the field at the moment concerns training facilities. Although we are very grateful to Newton-le-Willows Rugby Union Club for the use of their facilities we urgently require a ground in the Swinton area with floodlighting and a good pitch, for at least one training session a week. Training has been extraordinarily difficult so far with limited lighting and atrocious conditions under foot.

In my last programme notes I mentioned the amazing efforts of so many passionate individuals who work so hard behind the scenes for Swinton Lions. One such stalwart is Tony Griffin. Many will know that Tony provides a warmly hospitable meeting place for fans and officials in the shape of the very enjoyable Folly Club. This, in my opinion, is one of the best meeting points for Rugby League followers anywhere, and I know that Tony would offer a warm welcome to any Rugby League fans looking for hospitality in the Manchester area. Tony played a big part in assembling the squad prior to the start of the season, but is always on hand to help with any issue concerning the Swinton Lions, a stalwart indeed.

I hope everyone enjoys this afternoon's entertainment and that our visitors from Oldham enjoy their first visit to Moor Lane.

GRAHAM SMITH

One Lion on the Shirt

by Ian Jackson

The formation of the Swinton club in 1866 coincided with the rise in inter-club contests and the formal organisation of the various codes of football. The original name of Swinton and Pendlebury was shortened to Swinton Football Club within a few years of joining the Rugby Football Union in 1871. There was tremendous enthusiasm for football in the Manchester area at this time and it is not surprising that Swinton decided to play the rugby code given the physical nature of the town's main industry at the time, namely coal mining. Indeed, during those early days, the club was often referred to as the Colliers. Famously, the nickname of the Lions was adopted, after moving the club's headquarters from the Bull's Head to the White Lion, of course.

Swinton FC were a prominent and successful member of the rugby union ranks for thirty years after formation. This ended when the club decided to join the breakaway Northern Union (later to be re-titled Rugby League) in 1896 a year after the rebel code was created in a row over broken-time payments to players. Steve Wild's book "The Lions of Swinton" gives a wonderful narrative to this exciting period in the history of the club, as well as the massive contribution of England international Jim Valentine. The growth of the club was spectacular and a credit to the early pioneers, who ensured that the club had a successful start, including regular games against the top teams in the north such as Manchester and Birch and eventually a fixture against Oxford University.

There are a number of interesting facts about Swinton in the book "The Code War - English Football under the History Spotlight." There is an account of Swinton playing under floodlights in October 1878 at Broughton. Later that year there was a failed attempt to play under floodlights at Chorley, when the generator failed due to the rain. There is mention of the highly talented Swinton and Lancashire full back Arthur Paul who was as an architect, but more on this person in future programmes. By 1892-93 Swinton has been selected to take part in a ten team Lancashire club Championship that included Oldham, Warrington and Wigan as the dissatisfaction with the Rugby Union authorities grew stronger.

Rugby Union sources also provide valuable information on Swinton; such as the contribution of the club to the game in the early years. "The History of the Rugby Football Union" by O.L. Owen and published in 1955 shows that the Lions beat a visiting Maoris team in 1888-89 by 2-0 and that Swinton provided four players on the 1888 tour to Australia and New Zealand, namely T. Banks, W. Bumby, A. Paul and the tour skipper, Bob Seddon, who tragically drowned while in Australia. It also lists the five players that represented England at Rugby Union between 1882 and 1896. These players are E. Beswick (2 caps), C. Horley (1 cap), J. Marsh (1 cap), S. Roberts (2 caps) and J. Valentine (4 caps).

Finally, in the Complete History of Oldham RLFC by Michael Turner there is a mystery involving Swinton. The Lions were the first visiting team to Watersheddings and the last in a specially arranged game. Just prior to the match the scoreboard had a sign for Oldham and a sign for Swinton, but at kick-off the Swinton sign was gone and replaced by Visitors. Whodunit? Roughyed or Lion? In the next programme soccer books will be searched to find one lion on the shirt.

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The Monton Mouth

Hello again! Have you all signed up for the sponsored walk? If not please see me today. Thank you!

A week or so ago Steve Johnson and me battled through wall to wall traffic on the M62 and in Leeds to visit both Chris Caisley and Richard Lewis, and today's piece is about our chat with the Bulls' chairman.

Chris first started watching Bradford Northern, as they were then, when his uncle took him as a kid. And now he's the boss!

We first asked him if he was mis-quoted over the club v country saga of last season. His reply was that the only times the club have prevented the likes of Robbie Paul representing their country was when the insurance and or travel arrangements were not up to standard!

This led on to his belief that a "World League" i.e. about 4 British teams competing with a similar number from down-under would lead to a stronger GB side that is capable of knocking over The Convicts. No arguments from Spelly on that count Chris!

Another thorny we mentioned was the possibility of all RL coming under one umbrella. "It'd be OK in an ideal world." He said, "but certain people would be reluctant to vacate their cosy seats!" So I'm not holding my breath on that one!

He's really looking forward to moving back to Odsal (if only we could move back to Station Road!) and there's a 300-seat restaurant awaiting them where the fans can have a nosh and watch The Bulls at the same time!

Valley Parade is "on the wrong side of town" and gates have been down about three thou a match during their exile. He's hoping to re-recruit these people when they go back "home".

They're moving back to Sundays for the forthcoming season with a 6.00pm kick-off time. Although this will obviously not be the case when Eddie and Stevo are around!

"Do you go to other games?" we then enquired. "I don't get time!" was his quick and honest answer.

"Expansion of Super League to France, Wales etc?" "No problem as long as the financial structure within these new clubs will support them" he said "But there's no point having another Paris, and them folding very quickly".

I'm quickly running out of space here, and I'd love to tell you some more but I'll end with the last question we put to him, "If you could win only one trophy what would it be, the Challenge Cup or the Grand Final?" And after a lot of thought (and I mean a LOT) he came down on the side of the latter because "It takes 26 rounds and then a gruelling play-off system to win it."

Thanks a million for your time Chris; it's greatly appreciated!

In the next issue I'll give you chapter and verse on our chat with the RL supremo!

Come on you Lions!

Spelly.

Spelly's Quiz!

A similar quiz to last time for today! One question but there's TEN answers!

National League Three kicks-off on May 3rd this year, so I want to know the 10 teams that will be competing.

7 right scores you 1 point, 9 correct, and it's 3 points, but if you get a full-house I'll award you 6 points. Good Luck!

ANSWERS:

Bradford Dudley Hill, Coventry Bears, Crawley Jets, Hemel Hempstead Stags, Huddersfield Underbank Rangers, Manchester Knights, Sheffield Hillsborough Hawks, St. Albans Centurions, Teeside Steelers, Warrington Woolston Rovers.