



TEAMS

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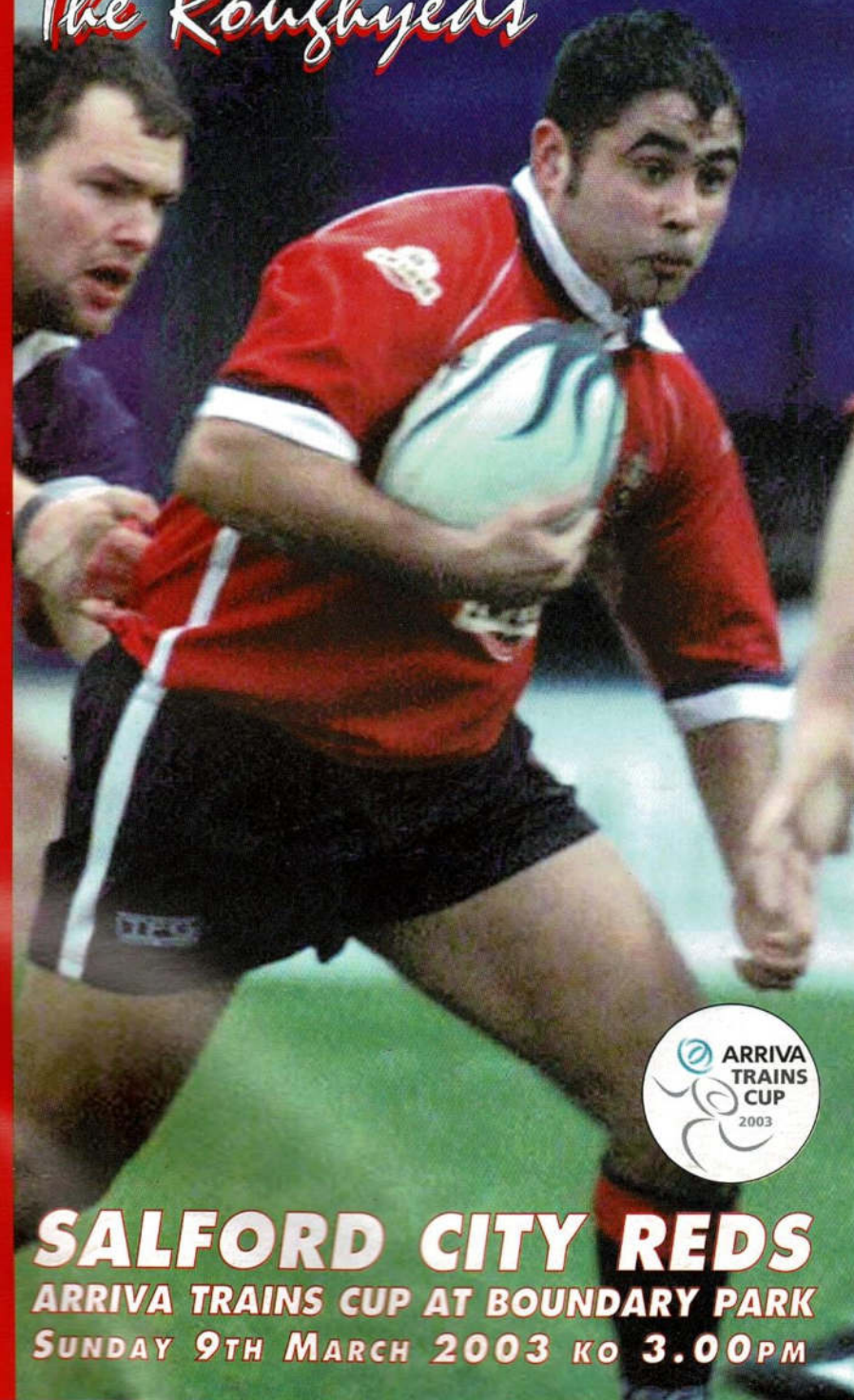


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RLFC

Official
Matchday
Magazine

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The Roughyeds



SALFORD CITY REDS

ARRIVA TRAINS CUP AT BOUNDARY PARK

SUNDAY 9TH MARCH 2003 KO 3.00PM

- | | | |
|-------------------|----|-----------------|
| Gavin DODD | 1 | Jason FLOWERS |
| Chris IRWIN | 2 | Mike PLATT |
| Iain MARSH | 3 | Stuart LITTLER |
| Jon GODDARD | 4 | Alan HUNTE |
| Joe McNICHOLAS | 5 | Danny ARNOLD |
| Simon SVABIC | 6 | Cliff BEVERLEY |
| Neil RODEN | 7 | Gavin CLINCH |
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| Anthony MURRAY | 9 | Malcolm ALKER |
| Martin McLoughlin | 10 | Andy COLEY |
| Lee DORAN | 11 | Simon BALDWIN |
| Ryan STAZICKER | 12 | Neil LOWE |
| Phil FARRELL | 13 | Chris CHARLES |
| Gareth BARBER | 14 | Paul HIGHTON |
| Dane MORGAN | 15 | Dave HIGHTON |
| John HOUGH | 16 | Gareth HAGGERTY |
| Chris MORLEY | 17 | Andy GORSKI |

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

REFEREE: P. TABERNER
C. DEAN

S. MARSHALL
C. TOBIN

OLDHAM

at the very heart of the North West

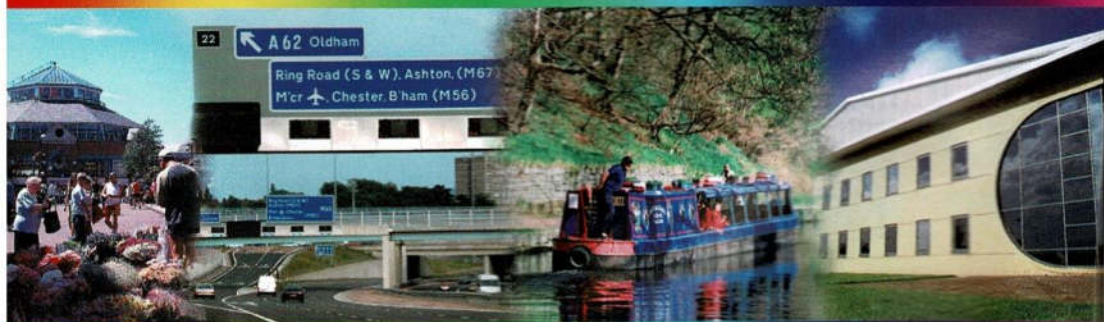
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Metropolitan Borough



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Bernard Ganley 1950-61
John Ety 1954-59
Derek Turner 1955-59
Bob Irving 1964-74
Martin Murphy 1966-82
Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

IN THE HOT SEAT

Christopher Hamilton

TODAY will be a big test in relation to our aspirations for the season.

Whilst winning or losing will not make or break the team the fact that Salford are everybody's favourites to go straight back up to Super League will provide a good guide to how we are progressing as a team.

It was always going to take time for new players to settle in and the large turnaround of players in and out this time has highlighted this.

There were definitely signs against Barrow last week that we are making progress towards the type of consistency we will need if we are to be successful this season but we will need to improve again this week to get a win.

Much has already been made, and will continue to be made, no doubt, about the full time status of the Salford players. My opinion, for what its worth, is exactly as last year with Huddersfield Giants. If a team is fortunate enough, for whatever reason, to be able to be full time in contrast to all the other teams in its division then not only is it lucky but it would be foolish not to take advantage. It is up to ourselves and the other clubs to minimise that advantage and hopefully our players will show that today.

On another note I, for one, will be hoping for a significantly higher attendance today than last week. The club has taken the bold step of allowing all under 16's free entry to today's game - bold because unfortunately we don't make any money from concessions inside the ground - but we are through our concessions with the Oldham Evening Chronicle and Revolution Radio and via the special season ticket prices for Roughyeds kids making a concerted effort to attract more younger supporters to our games. Big games, like today's are the kind that will hopefully encourage people to come back again and we will be working with our partners throughout the season with more initiatives now we are back in Oldham.

Today, as ever, we need your vocal support in what will be a difficult game. At the risk of repeating myself please believe you the supporters can make a difference.

Enjoy the game,

Chris

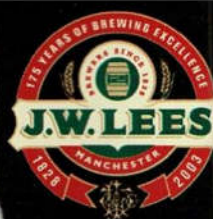
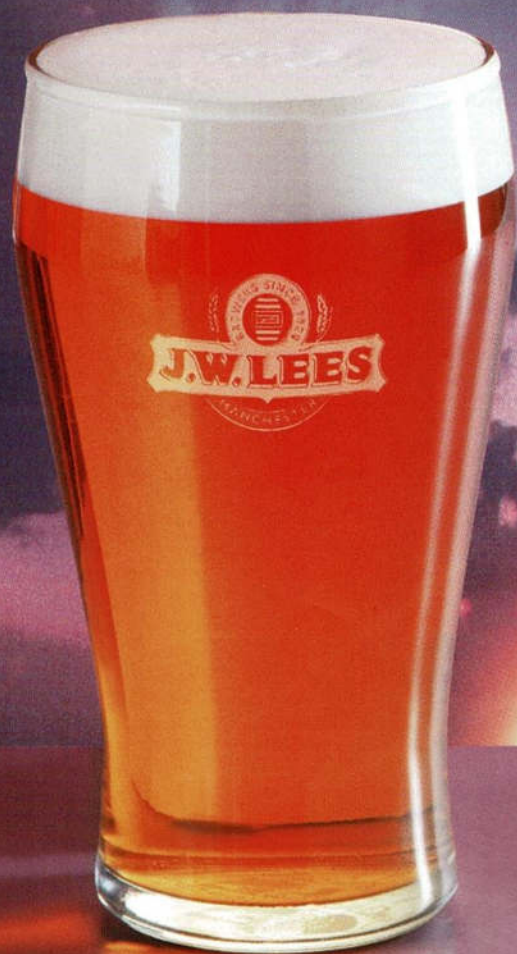


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FROM YOUR MATE
JOHN WILLIE**



**JOHN WILLIE
TO HIS MATES.**

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Molloy's Message



WELCOME to what I hope will be one of the biggest attendances of the year. With the special initiative of 'KIDS GO FREE' we are hoping for a very vocal following. Let's hope a few of these new youngsters will soon become ardent fans of the club.

A special welcome to Salford and especially my old front row adversary Karl Harrison, who I know will be looking for a speedy return to Super League with Salford, who are as yet, unbeaten this season.

I feel today will be a real benchmark for the club and the players as we pit ourselves against full time opposition. It should give us an indication of how far off the mark we still are - if at all.

I was pleased we could give Adam Sharples a run out against Barrow as a reward for all the hard work he and the other Academy players have done over a very long off-season. Adam has a big future in the game and I know he's wise beyond his 17 years. The most frustrating and frightening thing for me though, is the fact that I'm (almost) twice his age. (Old enough to be his dad eh! Steve, [Editor]). It's very important that we nurture the young talent that we have in the Academy, encourage them as much as possible but not be guilty of just throwing them in at the deep end.

The Arriva Cup West group is certainly hotting up. When the Barrow game was called off I went to Hilton Park - sorry - The Coliseum - to watch the Leigh, Salford match and a very entertaining contest it was, ending up as a draw. It showed me how competitive a side Salford are. They have a real 'never say die' attitude, which, we hope, will make today a real contest.

Don't forget, let's hear you all,
Enjoy the game,

Steve

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IN TOWN Today - Salford



Alan Hunte

Andy Coley
Height: 6ft 3" Weight: 106kg
Second Row or Prop
Honours: Lancashire 2001
Andrew Gorski
Height: 6ft Weight: 15 stone 4lb
Second Row, Prop, Loose Forward
Club Honours: Academy Captain 2002
International Honours: GB BARLA Under 18's,
GB Young Lions Under 19's

Chris Charles
Height: 5ft 10" Weight: 15 stone
Loose Forward, Second Row
Club Honours: 2nd Division Winners 1996,
Silk Cut Plate 1997
Cliff Beverley
Height: 1.84m Weight: 88kg
Stand Off, Centre
Club Honours: Barrow Players' Player of the Year,
NFP Team of the Year

Danny Arnold
Height: 6ft 2" Weight: 15 stone
Wing, Fullback
Club Honours: 2 Challenge Cup Wins, 1 League Win
International Honours: GB Under 21's, England 1996,
Scottish international since 1996

Dave Highton
Height: 5ft 9" Weight: 85kg
Hooker, Loose Forward, Full Back
International Honours: GB Academy

Gavin Clinch
Height: 5ft 10" Weight: 80kg
Scrum Half
Club Honours: 21's Premiership twice,
Reserve Grade Once

Jason Flowers
Height: 6ft Weight: 14 stone 8lb
Fullback, Centre or Second Row
Club Honours: Player of the Year with Castleford
International Honours: GB Academy and Scottish
International

Alan Hunte
Height: 6ft 2" Weight:
14 stone 4lb
Wing, Fullback, Centre
Club Honours: 1
Premiership Final, 2
Challenge Cup, 1
League
International Honours:
GB Under 21 - 2 apps,
GB - 15 apps,
England - 1 app, GB
Lions tourist in 1992
and 1996

Malcolm Aiker
Height: 6ft Weight: 92 kg
Hooker or Second Row
Club Honours: Player of the Year 2002, 2001,
Supporters Player of the Year 2001,
Players Player of the Year 2000
International Honours: Lancashire Origin Squad 2002

Mike Platt
Height: 6ft 2" Weight: 15 stone 7lb
Full Back, Centre, Wing
Club Honours: Lancashire Senior Academy



Neil Baynes

Neil Baynes
Height: 5ft 11"
Weight: 110 kg
Prop Forward, Second
Row
Club Honours: Fans
Player of the Year
2000
International Honours:
GB Academy
Neil Lowe
Height: 6ft Weight: 16
stone
Second Row, Centre,
Loose Forward
Club Honours:

Yorkshire NFP Player of Month,
Most Trys for a forward in a season for Featherstone
Rovers - 27 try's in the 2001/2002 season
International Honours: GB Academy, Scottish
International

Paul Highton
Height: 6ft Weight: 16 stone
Second Row, Loose Forward, Prop Forward
International Honours: GB Academy, Welsh
International

John Clough
Height: 5ft 10" Weight: 13 stone
Hooker
Club Honours: Junior Academy Captain
International Honours: Lancashire Academy, Great
Britain Academy

Simon Baldwin
Height: 6'2" Weight: 100kg
Back Row
International Honours: GB Academy Under 21's,
England International

Steven Blakeley
Height: 5ft 10" Weight: 81kg
Stand Off, Scrum Half
Club Honours: Champions Div 1 1995, 1996,
Premiership 1996

Stuart Littler
Height: 6ft 3" Weight: 15 stone
Centre, Wing, Fullback
Club Honours: Lancashire Academy

A Potted History of..... Salford.....by Don Yates

THE ORIGINS of the Salford club can be traced way back to 1873 although they were not founder members of the Northern Rugby Football Union in 1895. Salford preferred to wait for twelve months to see how the new code progressed before switching to professional rugby in 1896. Since then Salford, like most other clubs, have endured several ups and downs with the club enjoying three periods of outstanding success, in the early 1900s, the 1930s and the 1970s.

Although Salford were a force to be reckoned with at the turn of the century, they failed to lift a major trophy until 1914. On four occasions Salford reached the Challenge Cup final, in 1900, 1902, 1903 and 1906, but on each occasion Salford met with defeat. Captaining Salford in two of those finals was James Lomas, a powerfully built centre or stand-off with a devastating hand off. He was one of the games superstars during that era, skippering the British Lions on their first ever tour of Australasia in 1910. He joined



James Lomas

Salford from Bramley for a World record £100 transfer fee in August 1901 and in January 1911, when he left the Willows to join Oldham, it was for another World record transfer fee, £300. That first great era of Salford success ended with the onset of war although, before then, in April 1914 Salford were crowned Champions when they beat Huddersfield 5-3 in the final at Headingley.

The 1930s era was the most successful in Salford's history. Between 1931 and 1939 Salford were Lancashire champions five times, Lancashire Cup winners on four occasions, League

Champions three times and Challenge Cup winners for the only time in their history. The Challenge Cup success came after a 7-4 victory over Barrow at Wembley in May 1938. Centre Albert Gear scored the only try of the match in the dying minutes after stand-off and skipper Gus Risman had landed a penalty and a dropped goal. Risman and coach Lance Todd were the mainstays of that great Salford squad. Todd joined Salford in August 1928 and remained with them until his death in a road traffic accident outside the Floating Light, on the Oldham-Huddersfield boundary, in November 1942. Risman was signed from Welsh rugby union in 1929 and stayed until 1946 when he joined Workington Town. A brilliant all-round footballer, Risman is generally regarded as being the greatest player ever to play for the club. When his playing days were over Risman enjoyed a spell as coach up at Watersheddings.

The fifties and early sixties were a bleak period for Salford but the arrival of Brian Snape as chairman in September 1963 changed all that. Several costly signings were made which enabled the Red Devils to enjoy their third outstanding era. Between 1965 and 1975, in the region of £200,000 was spent on player recruitment including Charlie Bott and Peter Smethurst, both signed from Oldham. In 1972 Salford won the Lancashire Cup but the highlights of that era were the First Division Championship successes of 1974 and 1976.

Relegation from Super League last autumn has left Salford with a huge mountain to climb if the Reds are to repeat those successes of thirty years ago. They are favourites for promotion and, under the leadership of Karl Harrison and John Wilkinson, will be the team to beat once the Championship campaign begins next month. Until then Salford have a huge part to play in this Arriva Trains League Cup competition and are certainly capable of causing a shock or two in the latter stages of the Powergen Challenge Cup.

From The Pen Of

.....Michael Turner



Of Roughyeds And (City) Red Devils

IT IS with great pleasure that we at Oldham RLFC renew our rivalry with the Salford club after an absence of almost six years. The last encounter was back in May 1997 when the "Bears" met the "Reds" in a Super League match at Boundary Park. Oldham prevailed that day registering a 19 - 10 victory.

Although fixtures between the two teams pre-date the "Rugby League" era, it was in the second season after the formation of the Northern Union that Salford threw in their lot with the breakaway rebels and Oldham opened the 1896-97 campaign with a trip to play their Manchester neighbours. The Roughyeds won by nine points to nil and completed the double at Watersheddings in December.

At the start of the 1907-08 season Oldham remained undefeated from their first match at Merthyr in September until the following February when Salford won the day by five points to nil on a near waterlogged pitch at the Willows.

In January 1911, Oldham paid a record fee of £300 to secure the services of the legendary Jim Lomas from Salford and, as fate would have it, he would make his Roughyeds debut against his former club at Watersheddings on February 4th helping his new team-mates to a 16 - 11 victory on the

day and to become the league champions by the season's end.

On August 30th 1939 Salford beat Oldham, at the Willows, by fifteen points to four. However, within a week war had been declared and the regular championship was cancelled to be replaced by a Lancashire league competition.

Frank Stirrup came to Oldham from Salford in November 1950, making his senior debut on January 20th, 1951. Although not as high profile a capture as the Lomas transfer, it is unlikely that Oldham ever made such an important acquisition from Salford (or perhaps from any club) as they did when the multi-talented half back came to Watersheddings.

In the 1960s Charlie Bott, Stuart Whitehead and Peter Smethurst all had successful spells down at the Willows after first playing for the Roughyeds and it was against Oldham that Salford legend David Watkins made his debut.

Moving more up to date, when the first provisional Super League structure was announced in 1995 the powers that be seemed to suggest that Oldham and Salford were to merge into one club. As fate would have it this news broke at Easter time and so it was that on Good Friday 1995, Oldham entertained

Salford with both sets of fans joining together in a impassioned, still peaceful demonstration, that left the respective sets of directors in no doubt as to exactly what they could do with the proposed mergers. What is more, and typical of the events of the time, no one knew it but the winners of this match would clinch their place in "Super League". Oldham won 28 - 16 and finished tenth in the league, if the result had been reversed it would have been the Red Devils who would have taken their place in the first SL season.



Fred Ashworth and Ab Clayton ? give chase to a Salford attacker during the match at Watersheddings on January 23rd 1932. Result: Oldham 10 Salford 18.

AFTER a month away from Rugby League except for half and full time summaries from our Chairman over a mobile phone it was nice to see a comfortable victory against Barrow Raiders last week. Although I know coach, Steve Molloy, is still far from satisfied overall, there were to me signs of things to come when Steve finally decides on a settled 17. Some of the open plays were quite exciting especially the one that led up to Paul Anderson's second half try. Also encouraging were the debuts by Dane Morgan and Adam Sharples. Dane had not played rugby league for quite some time and certainly promises to be a strong running forward who will further strengthen the pack for the long season ahead.

Adam got an earlier start than he probably expected after the cut to Ryan Stazicker's head early in the first half. His tackle count must have been good and, despite, close attention from Barrow's more experienced forwards was not afraid to drive the ball forward. He was the choice of Chairman Christopher Hamilton for 'The Champagne Moment' award but couldn't be found after the game to receive it. Man of the Match, Simon Svabic's explanation of this was that he was still taking in oxygen. Joking apart this was an excellent debut for local lad Adam and again augers well for the future.

I wonder how many of you noticed we were playing with a new ball against Barrow. Kukri Sports, a Preston based company, are the new match ball sponsors for the next two seasons. The new ball is unique, I think, in not being basically white. It is a striking blue and

silver and has a revolutionary new coating that makes it easier to grip the ball. So coaches will presumably be looking for better handling skills and less knock-ons. According to the manufacturers it is the first rugby ball to be specially balanced for true flight.

Away from Oldham the Swinton result was probably the one that caused people to sit up. Coach, Peter Roe, must have been even more pleased with the result being against Featherstone, his old club. It certainly quickly confirmed Steve Molloy's prediction after Oldham's game last week that Swinton were a team to be reckoned with and would shock a few clubs this season. The more I see of the new National League 2, the more I am convinced it is going to be a fiercely competitive league, which can only be good for the game and, of course, for the teams in that League. Whilst still on the subject of National League Two clubs, has anybody noticed the massive number of injuries these teams seem to be picking up - Workington last week only being able to field 16 players for their Arriva Trains Cup match against local rivals Whitehaven. Let's hope that this does not, in the long run, lessen the competitive nature of this League by putting those clubs, unable to afford a large squad at a disadvantage.

Finally we hope that today's crowd is swelled by a large contingent of youngsters in the Rochdale Road Stand who have been admitted free for today's game. The future of the game lies in the younger generation and we are doing all in our power to gain their interest and hopefully encourage them to regularly attend our matches and support the club.

Walkerbout

with **Brian Walker**

SOMETIMES things just slot together nicely. Like that complicated journey by bus and train when everything goes exactly to plan. Off the bus, straight onto the train, arrives on time, taxi waiting, so on and so forth.

But for this story read 'slots together nicely' as 'too much of a coincidence' or even 'bloody spooky.'

Let me explain. Over the Christmas period I received telephone calls from Peter Heap, Oldham supporter and member of the Independent Supporters Club, Roger Halstead from the Chron and from Tom Mather a rugby league author and father of ex Wigan player B. J. Mather and a letter that arrived via the Rugby League from a Mrs Lever in New Zealand.

And they all surrounded events that happened around the same time, almost one hundred years ago.

Peter Heap explained to me that a relative had just inherited three rugby caps awarded originally to an Oldham winger of yesteryear, a Cumbrian from Carlisle called Frank Spottiswoode and we soon discovered that one of the caps was for playing for England in the first ever Rugby League international, England v Other Nationalities way back in 1904. This was the very first ever Rugby League international match! The first ever England match! and he wanted to donate the cap through the Independent Supporters Club to the Oldham Rugby League Heritage Trust. Excellent!

The calls from Roger and Tom Mather both concerned another Oldham stalwart, Bill Nanson an ex England Rugby Union international forward also from Carlisle. Nanson

was killed at Gallipoli during the First World War and awarded the Queen's and King's medal for gallantry. Tom is writing a book about rugby players who have been killed in action or received medals for bravery and was looking for Roger to place an appeal in the Chron seeking information about Nanson.

The first coincidence then, Nanson and Spottiswoode both came from Carlisle, played together for Carlisle at union and Cumberland at league and for a time shared the same lodging house in Horsedge Street, here in Oldham.

The next coincidence! The letter from New Zealand was from a lady in her late 80's whose father had played for Oldham and emigrated to New Zealand back around 1906. His name was George Frater, a Scotsman who also had played in the Oldham pack at the same time as Spottiswoode had played out on the wing. With the letter was a photograph of a rugby cap that had been awarded to George for playing in that very same first ever Rugby League international but this time for the Other International side!

Another coincidence! The Trust owns the England cap of Joe Ferguson also awarded for playing in the first ever international and during the time this was all happening we had taken the cap off exhibit in the Civic Centre to have it photographed for a new historical publication surrounding this period!

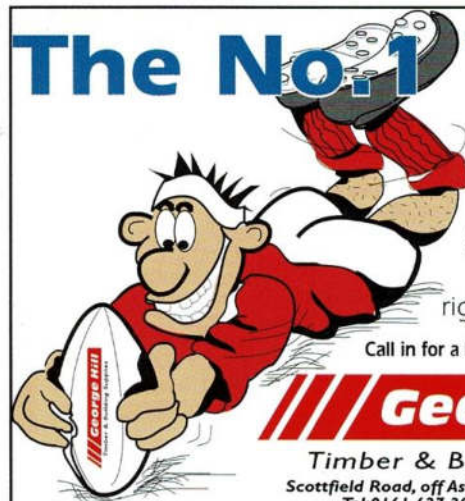
The Ferguson cap was the only cap from that first international known to have survived all these years and in a historical sense, priceless.

And now there are three! Just spooky or what?



Peter Heap (centre) holds the England Cap from the first ever international match.

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Back On The Terraces

..... With Simon Winnard

TODAY we play host to Salford for what will be a most welcomed local derby here at Boundary Park. After a close struggle, and with the absence of Huddersfield to occupy their almost customary basement position, the City Reds found themselves relegated from Super League last season.

On the face of it, you would think that last season offered only doom and gloom at the Willows, however, many of the Waste Lane faithful actually enjoyed last season's epic struggle with Wakefield and Warrington as they actually had something to play for – survival.

The re-introduction of promotion and relegation to and from the top flight has generally been well received in the game – certainly in these quarters. However, there are many that take the view that parachute payments made to relegated Super League clubs actually promotes a problem that has historically blighted our game in recent history.

Indeed, it wasn't too many years ago that Rugby League tried to restructure the game to avoid the 'yo-yo' syndrome that all too often involved the usual suspects such as the likes of Oldham, Salford, Leigh and Wakefield. Effectively we now have the remarkable scenario that sees the very same governing body actually funding clubs to effectively achieve the same scenario.

Of course the powers that be are making this payment with the best intentions as nobody wants to see a re-occurrence of what happened to Workington and the Bears. However, whilst this is treating the symptoms, it is perhaps not preventing the disease. Let's face it, Super League clubs receive a significant amount of funding over and above the revenue that they generate as a going concern. Therefore it can be nothing other than bad management that sees any top flight club go under.

If you or I were to seek capital from a lender to start up a business, we would of course be asked to submit a detailed 5 year business plan that had a contingency for a worse case scenario. Therefore, rather than funding under achievement, is it being unrealistic to ask all clubs to submit a pre-season business plan that takes into account the possibility of relegation instead? The crucial thing here is that the game has got to be played on a level playing field. On a positive note, the early signs are that this NL1 season will be far more competitive and, whilst the parachute will no doubt help to break their fall, today's visitors don't of course have the benefit of a millionaire backer as the Giants did in an uncompetitive NFP last year.

When considering the relegation scenario, one consideration needs to be the fact that the transfer market has changed dramatically in light

of the Bosman ruling. Indeed, I doubt whether we will ever see the day again when Oldham can sell a player like Leo Casey to Featherstone for £100,000. The game outside SL has seen a dramatic change with a general acceptance of one year rolling contracts and a merry-go-round of transfer activity come the closed season. This offers clubs the flexibility to cut their cloth accordingly, as opposed to offering long term contracts to players and then not being able to honour them.

However, should clubs still wish to tie in players for long periods, perhaps a similar idea as currently being considered in Football should be looked into. In football we have seen the likes of Derby County and Leicester City almost collapse as a result of relegation from the Premiership and clubs are now looking at the possibility of adding a relegation clause to player's contracts. That clause would effectively reduce a player's wage relevant to the club's income in the event of being relegated or give the option to be released.

Additionally, the investment in youth development has undoubtedly been affected. Whilst clubs can still command a fee for a young player, the size of that fee has been significantly reduced due to the downturn in the market. As a result, the larger clubs continue to monopolise the market in terms of the best young players. Not only do they effectively have the first pick of promising youngsters, but also get a second chance to pick up the ones that slipped through the net the first time around and for a fraction of the cost. The investment made in younger players would ultimately be rewarded back in the 'yo-yo' days but what price now a Lee Doran or Gavin Dodd?

This also brings in to play the somewhat rhetorical question of where all that top flight money has gone at a time when RL is a considerably richer sport in terms of TV revenue? The simple answer is of course the players' pockets. Over the hill antipodeans squeezing out one last pay day that forces us, as a RL nation, to continue to 'paint over the cracks' in key positions. When's the last time you saw a stand off playing at stand off for Great Britain? There is a choice of course and the likes of Wigan have made the first step to making that change – will there be more to follow?

On a final note, today we welcome Salford who have had a large turnover of staff since their relegation but also made a few key signings. In my opinion, the likes of Baldwin, Clinch and Beverley are all playing below themselves at this level. Let's hope that we have a big crowd for a real grass roots local derby to cheer on the Roughyeds to what would undoubtedly be a hard fought victory.

Iwa Slateloose



They Said It

"Football's like a big market place and people go to the market to buy their vegetables"

(Sir Bobby Robson)

- THE TRUE DEFINITION OF A SOCCER PLAYER AT LAST

"Aston Villa are seventh in the League. That's almost as high as you can get without being one of the top six" (Ian Payne - Radio 5 Live)

- EDUCATION STANDARDS ARE IMPROVING ALL THE TIME.

"I got into moisturiser when I played football. If you're out in all weathers you have to take care of your face" (Vinnie Jones)

- LOCK, STOCK AND A JAR OF NIVEA.

"In the last race, the favourites backers would certainly have had their hearts in their chests"

(Derek Thompson - Channel 4).

- AND THEIR FEET IN THEIR MOUTHS PRESUMABLY

"I don't have any real enemies" (Pim Fortuyn, Dutch Politician shortly before he was assassinated)

- PLEASE DON'T INTRODUCE ME TO ANY OF HIS FRIENDS.

"Vicious, violent and horrible" (Mo Mowlem)

- NO, IT'S NOT LEIGH BUT HER FORMER CABINET COLLEAGUES

"Fifty per cent of the population do not know what fifty per cent is" (Trade and Industry Secretary

Patricia Hewitt)

- BUT EVERY FOOTBALL MANAGER KNOWS WHAT A HUNDRED AND TEN PER CENT IS EVEN THOUGH IT DOESN'T EXIST.

"We are reviewing and updating our technical advice on walking."

(Junior Transport Minister David Jamieson)

- THEY USED PAUL GASCOIGNE AS THEIR CONSULTANT

"Illness is a consequence of sin." (Senior Vatican Official)

- SO THAT'S WHY I ALWAYS HAVE A COLD!

"Coconuts kill ten times more people than sharks." (Spokesman for Insurance firm Club Direct)

- YES, BUT WHAT IF THE SHARK'S ARMED WITH A COCONUT?

"Bat suits, buck teeth, glasses, afros, prosthetics, make-up jobs, everything."

(Michael Jackson on various disguises he has used)

- SO THAT'S WHY I NEVER RECOGNISE PHIL FARRELL!

"Do not under estimate the determination of a quiet man." (Iain (Ian?) and Duncan Smith)

- COULD THIS BE JASON CLEGG?

Speaks for itself

"Please note that we do not recruit tax specialists"

(Notice on the Inland Revenues website)

"If this letter contains your correct address you do not need to do anything. If the address on this letter is wrong please tell us your correct details on this form." (Letter from the Pensions Service)

"Passengers to wait ten years for fast trains."

(Headline in The Times).

"That sniper story - some bullet points"

(Mike Parry on Talk Sport)

"Village to run up flagpole"

(Worcester Journal)

"Driving instructors will no longer be asking motorists taking their tests to execute a three PINT turn"

(South Wales Guardian)

"Twelve year wait for toilets"

(Long Eaton Advertiser)

"If you enjoy working with people why not become a mortuary technician?"

(Dorset Echo)

"Let's not put the willies up a lot of people who are having IVF." (Sharon Allcock, Radio 5 Live)

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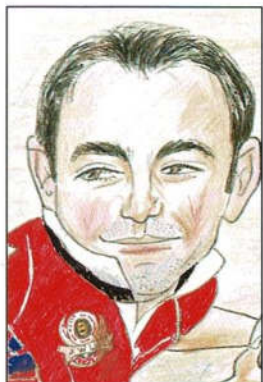
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Tracey's Tittle Tattle



"I've come over all intellectual this week" Shaz announced to me proudly. "Do you know Neil Roden's second name

is an anagram of 'Drone'? So he's either a male honey bee, or a bore, through droning on all the time about being top scorer." "Well" I said, "We're not bothered if he's had more girlfriends than anybody else, he'd be better off concentrating on scoring more tries." "It's the same difference anyway," she said, "because all a drone bee has to do is keep the Queen Bee happy!"

I thought that was it on the nature lesson, but no, there was

more - as the other one of God's creatures, Jimmy Cricket - used to say, "Did you know," she went on, in full flow now, "That a bee has 6 legs and 4 wings which makes his name even more right for him, because it explains how he can jinx about so quick and fly up the pitch!" Then she returned to her own self again. "Can you imagine if he really had 6 legs, all like the two he's already got?" she said dreamily. "Yes," I said, "Chris would make him buy extra socks and boots." "You've no romance," she said. "And a drone bee might not have a sting, but he gives me a buzz."

She doesn't get any better, does she?

*Love & Kisses,
Tracey*

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Profile of Neil Roden

Neil Roden



Signed from Wigan along with Phil Farrell April 2000 after serving a month on loan
Made the scrum half spot his own playing in 96 first team matches out of a possible 101 scoring 44 tries
A PHENOMENAL RECORD

Club's leading try scorer last season with 20
Played for the U21 First Division side against U21 Super League representative side 2001

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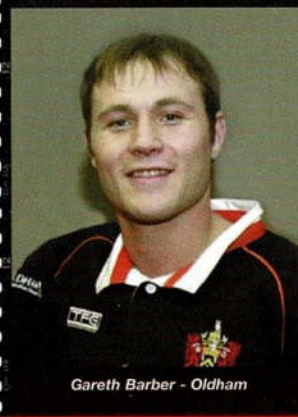
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Steve Molloy - Oldham



Paul Sculthorpe - St. Helens



Gareth Barber - Oldham

Does the kit fit?



Neil Roden

RAT gets up at 9.00am on match days and is another one of the players who breakfasts on baked beans and scrambled eggs. His travelling pals are Barbs and Faz, who he says, according to Faz, are the best looking trio on the bus. They spend most of the journey taking the mickey out of the rest of the team.

Best/Worst Changing Rooms

Best JJB

Worst Swinton

Best/Worst Playing surface

Best Headingley

Worst Hull KR

Best/Worst Food

Best Leigh (full Sunday dinner)

Worst The other week at Swinton - we christened it 'Soggy Swinton Slop'.

The best advice he got from a coach was from Fordy who apart from Molly was his favourite coach and always filled you with confidence. He said something like 'Compete for every set and play to be always above your best.' Like Faz the advice he still doesn't understand, which came from a recent Oldham coach was "if you want to learn to dance, learn to tap dance' !!!!!?????"

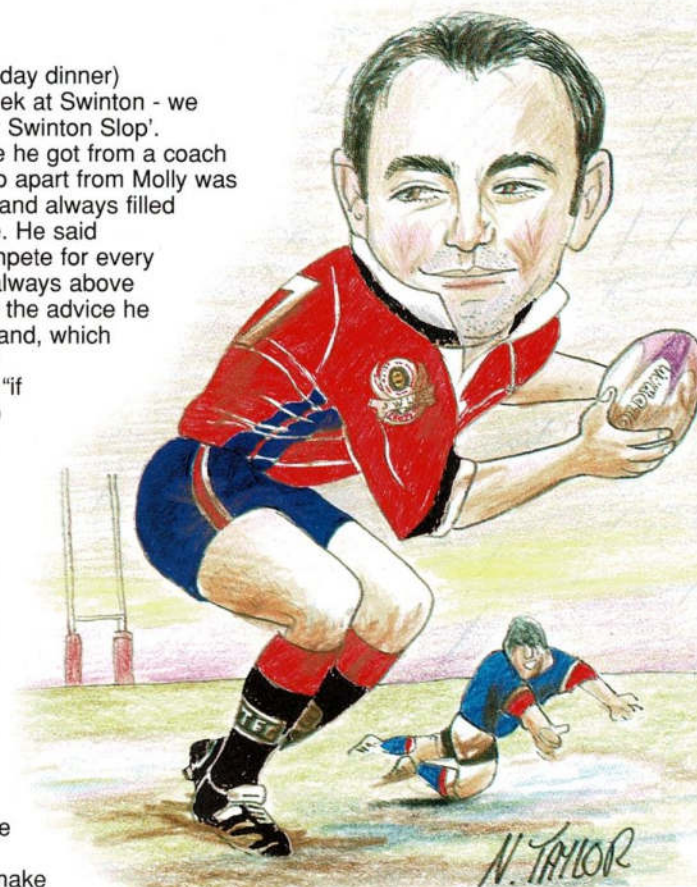
When asked what advice he would give youngsters coming into the game he said, 'Play to enjoy yourself, keep smiling and give more than you take.' His own dad's advice according to Mitch was 'If you're not involved in the game and you have to scratch your bum, make

sure you cut your nails.'

Neil predicts we finish the season in the top 2 or 3 and reach the Grand Final.

As for printable jokes Joe Mc once again gets the blame for 'What do you call a Japanese car thief?' Tomi Tukamota.

He said he'd never been mistaken for anybody famous but a voice in the background was heard to shout out ROLAND RAT.



Best wishes to Oldham Rugby League this season.

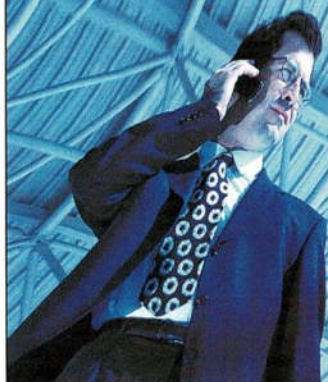
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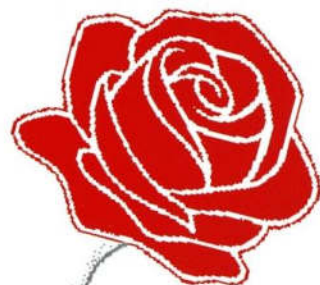
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Roughyeds Kids



WELCOME to the Roughyeds Kids page and I hope that you are enjoying the season so far.

Thanks for all the Roughyeds Kids who have joined this year and are benefiting from their season ticket. If anyone out there wants to join please see myself, Adele, at the Clayton Arms before or after any home match this season. It will cost only £10 to join and you will be invited to our parties and meetings with the players that are occurring throughout the season.

This first Mascot of the season is 10 year old **Ryan Murgatroyd**. This is the first

time that he has ever been the mascot for the Roughyeds and I hope that he enjoys his day.

Ryan goes to St Edwards Primary School in Lees and he plays rugby for the U.10's at Saddleworth Rangers (the best! Isn't that right Ryan?)

Ryan's favourite player is our player/coach Steven Molloy.

Hope that everyone enjoys the game against Salford and lets hopes for a win like we had last Sunday.

See you soon.

Adele

Roughyeds Kids Rule, OK?

So that's our new name for 2003!!
The Roughyed's Kids!! Good or What?

And for the very first time a free kids season ticket for the Rochdale Road stand is available to each and every **ROUGHYED'S KIDS** member!!

To qualify simply pay your annual **ROUGHYED'S KIDS** fee of £10. It's as simple as that.

Fill in the form (below) and either pass it to Adele (along with your members fee) in the Clayton Arms before today's match or before the Leigh game on the 16th of March.

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Words of Wilson

... by Ian Wilson

ALTHOUGH there have now been 7 weekends of the 2003 season, somehow things don't really seem, to me, at least, to have properly got going yet. It's probably because of the mixture of competitions, with no continuity - we have had 2 cup ties, 4 Arriva Cup matches and one postponed match. Or it may be the awareness that the real stuff, National League One, doesn't start for another 6 weeks. Whichever, I must say I am really looking forward to the now, Maundy Thursday clash with Rochdale when we begin the league season proper.

What of our performance so far? Mixed, I suppose, would be a fair summary. An unconvincing win over the amateurs, and a disappointing low key loss in London in the cup; and five points from four Arriva Cup games, although with also generally unconvincing performances, except perhaps in parts of the games at Leigh, and at home to Rochdale and Barrow. However, perhaps the next two, hopefully in front of good crowds, today v Salford and next week v Leigh, will bring both improved atmosphere and more sustained and cohesive 80 minute performances.

Of course we have a lot of new players, and I have no doubt that Steve Molloy is, to some extent, experimenting still in the search to identify his best 17. Obviously, with 26 men already having worn the new strips, and several of them in more than one position, we have yet to see much consistency, and it is no surprise that patterns of play have been a bit

haphazard at times, and similarly levels of concentration in defence a bit variable. However, if we see many more tries of the quality of 2 or 3 of those against Barrow, I would hope that the crowds will come flocking in to watch the entertainment on view.

What of the game nationally? Again it all seems a bit confusing. One round of Super League, fitted in between two of the Challenge Cup, is hardly the recipe for spectators to get into regular habits, and the Saints thrashing by Easts, as well as their farcical 'contest' v Sale Sharks, was hardly the ideal build up to the season. However, I do think there are some positive signs to be detected.

In the first place, crowds seem to be at least holding up decently. The weekend of the Fourth Round of the Cup, when most sides played, saw the 58,000 reported total which has been the norm for several seasons, and the following weekend aggregated 60,000. With the wins for Hunslet against Huddersfield and Swinton against Featherstone, not to mention Wath Brow against Workington, the 'magic' of the cup has clearly not completely disappeared, even though there is presumably little doubt that, in the end, the Cardiff final will be contested by two of the 'Big Five'. The results on the first day of Super League suggested that, maybe, the competition might be a bit more competitive this season, with more unpredictable score lines, which is always good for interest.

At least, anyway, there is RL.

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Back on Track . . .

Express

By GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS

NATIONAL League attentions refocus on the Arriva Trains Cup this weekend, as a full programme of fixtures includes several crucial clashes.

With many teams now reaching the half-way stage of their group fixtures, the four regional pools are beginning to take shape, with the games taking on added importance.

With the top two teams from each group qualifying for the quarter-finals, there is little margin for error.

The one team which has pulled away from their group rivals is Whitehaven in the North section who, having won all four of their games to date, lie five points clear of their nearest rivals. As the only National League One side in their pool, 'Haven were always expected to progress, though there is a fascinating battle taking place behind them, with just a point separating Chorley, Workington and Barrow.

Steve McCormack's 'Haven can take a step closer to qualification against NL2 side Swinton today, though the Lions have proved something of a bogey side in recent years and will be buoyed by their exploits in the Challenge Cup.

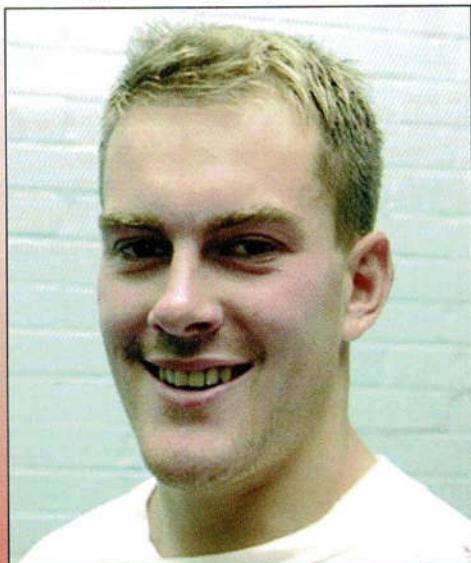
Hull Kingston Rovers also have a 100 per cent record in the East pool, though their progression is not yet assured due to the closer nature of their group. Doncaster and Featherstone will both harbour strong hopes of progression, and the Dragons' trip to Craven Park this afternoon is a vital one for both sides. Featherstone - stunned by Swinton in the Challenge Cup last weekend - have a tricky-looking game at Hunslet.

In the Central pool, Batley, Dewsbury Rams and Hunslet were all tied on six points ahead of Wednesday night's game between the Bulldogs

and Sheffield, a result not known at the time of writing. And today sees a mouth-watering clash between the Bulldogs and local rivals Dewsbury at Mount Pleasant.

The West pool is arguably the most interesting, with four battling it out at the top. Two of those - Salford and Leigh - are currently undefeated. But both should have those records put to the test in today's games, with the Centurions travelling to a Rochdale Hornets team eager to make amends for their heavy defeat at Salford, and the Reds taking on an Oldham side yet to hit top gear. If the Roughyeds manage that today at Boundary Park, then Salford's resolve will be given a thorough examination.

Predicting the eight qualifiers at the moment is an arduous task, but one that will become clearer with each passing weekend. Forthcoming games will reveal exactly which sides have strong designs on making progress in an increasingly interesting competition.



**Simon Svabic - League Express
Man of the Match v Barrow**

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CLUB CALL

CLUB CASH

CONGRATULATIONS to winners of weeks 12 & 13 as listed below. Thanks once again to those who have allowed us to make our draw at their premises.

I am pleased we were able to finally visit Sav at **Levers Chippy** to do the draw on the 21st February and then to Siddalls Newsagents - opposite our old offices on 28th February.

This weeks draw is due to take place just before the 'Strippers' at the White Hart on Rochdale Road - I promise not to stay and watch!

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Lottery Winners Week 12

Andrew Taylor, Mossley	£300	A7948
Steven Izweic, Equitable St	£100	B1882
J.O. Ingham, Shaw	£10	C1189
David Whitaker, Royton	£10	A6795
Sylvia Coyre, Littlemoor Ln	£10	B8769
Lisa Tweedale, Briscoe St	£10	C0489
Mrs Pass, Hadrian House	£10	B5815

Jackpot Accumulator

7 - 12 - 10 - 5

No Winner -

Next Week **£650**

Lottery Winners Week 13

E. Hamilton, Fulton Hill	£300	A4887
S. Hart, Holts Village	£100	A5310
Paul Eyre, Chorley	£10	B7822
Joan Smith, Sun Inn	£10	C8431
Alan Yeomans, Salem	£10	B4428
Dennis Woodcock, Chadderton	£10	A1564
Kevin Richardson, Holmfirth	£10	B0759

Jackpot Accumulator

23 - 25 - 15 - 11

No Winner -

Next Week **£700**

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In Yer Face

BOTH the Observer and League Express have recently carried an article and a letter respectively outlining the merits of the system employed by American Football to ensure as even and competitive a competition as is possible. It is a topic close to my heart, I have no doubt in my mind that the domination of Wigan for a decade and of the Bradford, Wigan, St. Helens triumvirate since the inception of Super League has done the game of Rugby League no favours. Of course no Board of Directors can be blamed for pursuing their own club's best interests and for striving to make their club the best in the land, that is an entirely laudable ambition. However, if we think a little further, how can it be right that at one point an entire team of Wigan players represented Great Britain? And currently the chances of any player outside the big three plus, for some reason, Leeds of gaining international honours are slight. A couple of Hull F.C. and Castleford players are knocking on the door but when push comes to shove you can bet representation for the perceived four 'top' clubs will get the nod because they are supposed to be more familiar with the pressure of high intensity matches. Apparently gone are the days when Warrington, Halifax, Wakefield, Huddersfield or Widnes (and London come to that) could expect to field a current international. And this, obviously, is reflected in the Super League competition. Before a ball is passed it would be a mug punter who put his money on any club other than one of the big three to win the Grand Final. Just look at the odds at your local bookies. This cannot be healthy for the game as a whole.

Equally NL1 starts off with a similar problem. Last year full time Huddersfield waltzed away with the NFP. This year Salford start with the same advantage. I do not say that the City Reds will win the competition and gain promotion but I would say it is theirs to lose rather than anyone else's to win. So, what is the solution? Well we do not have the American college system and draft picks to fall back on to help even up the competition but we sure as hell can do more to even up the monies received by every club, to impose a more equal salary cap and to level out each club's necessary expenditure. The trouble is can we persuade club directors that it is in their interest?



AFTER THE furore surrounding the Featherstone-Villeneuve match comes the news of the expulsion of Redhill from the Conference League and the problems surrounding the Hull K.R. v Siddal Challenge Cup game. These examples of violent conduct and consequent verbal

recrimination do the game no good. Few enough people watch rugby league at any level without people being discouraged from attending by acts of violence. How are we ever to develop our sport if those responsible are not dealt with? Club officials should make it their business to know what is going on in all parts of their ground so that incidents of bad behaviour can be nipped in the bud. By and large the players on the field show outstanding discipline notwithstanding that they can be subject to extreme physical and verbal provocation. But players know that discipline can and does win matches. Time for hot-headed spectators to follow their lead.



BRADFORD BULLS changed their kit supplier from Joe Bloggs to Logitog, a company whose contract it has now terminated leaving the Bulls with a significant problem regarding the availability of replica shirts for sale to their fans. Meanwhile Oldham Athletic could lose large amounts of revenue should they qualify for the divisional play-offs because they will be short of replicas which are imported from the Far East and require six months notice for a production run.

I really do wonder, especially since I work in the sports trade, about the wisdom of clubs choice of suppliers. Every couple of years new suppliers appear on the scene and they, together with one or two older firms with poor capitalization or organisation, then disappear. Remember Bukta or Umbro (now exclusively a soccer brand but once a major player in the rugby market)? Or how about Litesome, Serena or more recently Match-winner, Lorimar, Pelada etc? Meanwhile, other well structured companies continue profitably. So what, you say? Well, the rapid emergence and death of these companies makes marketing the clubs and the game almost impossible. As a retailer I should be able to obtain for sale the shirt of any rugby league club. I sell precisely none. I commented previously on not being able to obtain a Kiwi or New Zealand Warriors shirt easily in N.Z. itself. Last Autumn I contacted Puma to obtain Kiwi shirts in view of the New Zealand Test Series. They were not available in this country I was told. However, I am able to obtain shirts produced by the Australian company Classic. These include Newcastle Knights, Sydney Roosters, Cronulla Sharks, Melbourne Storm, Paramatta Eels, Wests Tigers, St. George - Illawarra Dragons, Northern Eagles, Brisbane Broncos, Canterbury Bulldogs, Penrith Panthers and, of course, Australia and Great Britain! Marketing - we're still in the dark ages.

G.C.

ON THIS DAY

... with Don Yates

MAR
9



BOUNDARY PARK is likely to attract a sizeable attendance this afternoon but it is unlikely to match the crowd that assembled here six years ago, on Sunday 9th March 1997. That day Bradford Bulls were in town to contest a quarter-final Challenge cup-tie. The match attracted a crowd of 11,254, the biggest attendance for any rugby league match staged on this ground. Bradford won 38-12 in a match which marked the debut in Oldham colours of utility back Luke Goodwin whose 20 appearances for the Bears during that fateful 1997 campaign saw him score 10 tries and land 17 goals and a couple of dropped goals. Five players who appeared that afternoon later joined Salford. They were Bradford substitute Warren Jowitt, Oldham half-backs Francis Maloney and Martin Crompton, Oldham second-rower David Bradbury and the Bears substitute Joe Faimalo. Faimalo scored one of the Oldham tries that afternoon, centre Darren Abram scored the other and there were two conversions from Francis Maloney.

It was on this day in 1932, Wednesday 9th March, that a tour trial was staged at Headingley, Leeds. At stand-off for the Reds in that match was Oldham back Jack Oster whilst four Salford players were included in the Whites line-up. They were full-back Gus Risman, winger Barney Hudson, hooker Bert Day and loose-forward Jack Feetham. The Whites led 7-3 at half-time but the Reds recovered to win 10-7. Unfortunately Oster, despite finishing on the winning side, failed to make the tour squad but three of the four Salford representatives did make the tour, Gus Risman, Barney Hudson and Jack Feetham. Another Salford player, prop Billy Williams, did not figure in that trial match but still found himself on the boat to Australia.

Three Salford players were involved in an international match which was staged at the Parc des Princes stadium, Paris on Sunday 9th March 1969. Stand-off David Watkins, second-row forward Colin Dixon and loose-forward Ron Hill were included in the Welsh team which lost 17-13 to France. Watkins landed a first half penalty before

being replaced by Phil Morgan (Hunslet). Centre Gordon Lewis (Leigh) scored two tries for Wales and full-back Terry Price (Bradford Northern) a try and goal.

On Saturday 9th March 1957 one of Salfords most loyal servants made his debut for the club. Centre Les Bettinson had been spotted playing for Millom and was invited to play a trial match against Batley at the Willows. Salford won that match 16-5 and, although Bettinson did not score, he was signed after the match. It was the start of a 34-year association with the club. As a player he made 319 appearances for Salford scoring 75 tries and ten goals during the following twelve years. He later coached the club and was in charge when the club lifted the First Division Championship in 1974 and then in 1976. He later had a spell on the board and, away from Salford, was manager of the British Lions when they toured down under in 1988 before being elected as president of the Rugby Football League. Incidentally, Bettinsons wing partner against Batley 46 years ago was Bert Baines, father of David Baines, the current police chief here in Oldham.

Exactly three years ago, on Thursday 9th March 2000, Oldham completed the signing of Australian back-row forward Shane McMenemy who had been released



Shane McMenemy

by Rochdale Hornets. The former Sydney Western Suburbs player was outstanding for the Roughyeds during that 2000 campaign. He made 22 appearances and scored three tries, three goals and a dropped goal. It was no real surprise when

Super League Halifax snapped him up the following December.

STATS AND FACTS

APPEARANCES & SCORERS SEASON 2003

PLAYER	APP	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	D/G	PTS
Gavin Dodd	5	0	5	0	0	20
Iain Marsh	4	1	0	0	0	0
Jon Goddard	5	0	2	0	0	8
Paul Anderson	5	1	2	0	0	8
Joe McNicholas	4	0	1	0	0	4
Simon Svabic	3	3	0	17	0	34
Neil Roden	5	0	1	0	0	4
Steve Molloy	6	0	0	0	0	0
John Hough	3	2	1	0	0	4
Martin McLoughlin	4	1	0	0	0	0
Lee Doran	6	0	2	0	0	8
Chris Morley	2	3	1	0	0	4
Phil Farrell	6	0	4	0	0	16
Gareth Barber	3	3	3	6	0	24
Gavin Johnson	0	1	0	0	0	0
Ryan Stazicker	4	1	1	0	0	4
Danny Guest	1	1	0	0	0	0
Chris Campbell	2	0	2	0	0	8
Anthony Murray	3	1	1	0	0	4
Chris Irwin	3	0	0	0	0	0
Will Cowell	2	0	0	0	0	0
Darren Shaw	2	1	0	0	0	0
Keith Brennan	1	1	0	0	0	0
Dane Morgan	1	0	1	0	0	4
Adam Sharples	0	1	0	0	0	0
Jason Clegg	0	1	0	0	0	0

ARRIVA TRAINS NATIONAL LEAGUE CUP - WEST

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	PTS
Leigh Centurions	4	3	1	0	104	64	40	7
Salford City Reds	3	2	1	0	136	42	94	5
Oldham	4	2	1	1	110	71	39	5
Rochdale Hornets	3	1	1	1	70	88	-18	3
Swinton Lions	3	0	0	3	32	106	-74	0



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Fixtures

DATE	OPPONENT	RSLT	ATT
DECEMBER 2002			
28	ROCHDALE HORNETS	LAW C W	28-22 2,141
JANUARY 2003			
19	LEIGH CENTURIONS	NL C L	14-22 3,070
26	EAST HULL	CC R3 W	32-6 1,270
FEBRUARY			
02	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL C D	22-22 2,050
09	LONDON BRONCOS	CC R4 L	12-42 1,014
23	SWINTON LIONS	NL C W	24-16 923
MARCH			
02	BARROW RAIDERS	NL C W	50-11 1,280
09	SALFORD CITY REDS	NL C H	
16	LEIGH CENTURIONS	NL C H	
		CC QF	
23	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL C A	
30	BARROW RAIDERS	NL C A	
APRIL			
06	SWINTON LIONS	NL C H	
13	SALFORD CITY REDS	NL C A	
		CC SF	
17	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL 1 H	
21	DONCASTER DRAGONS	NL 1 A	P
26		CC FINAL	
MAY			
04	DEWSBURY RAMS	NL 1 H	
11	SALFORD CITY REDS	NL 1 A	
18		NL C QF	
25	LEIGH CENTURIONS	NL 1 H	
JUNE			
01	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	NL 1 A	
08		NL C SF	
15	WHITEHAVEN	NL 1 H	
22	BATLEY BULLDOGS	NL 1 A	
29	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL 1 A	
JULY			
06		NL C FINAL	
13	FEATHERSTONE R.	NL 1 H	
20	DONCASTER DRAGONS	NL 1 H	
27	DEWSBURY RAMS	NL 1 A	
AUGUST			
03	SALFORD CITY REDS	NL 1 H	
10	LEIGH CENTURIONS	NL 1 A	
17	HULL KR	NL 1 H	
24	WHITEHAVEN	NL 1 A	
31	BATLEY BULLDOGS	NL 1 H	
07	FEATHERSTONE R.	NL 1 A	

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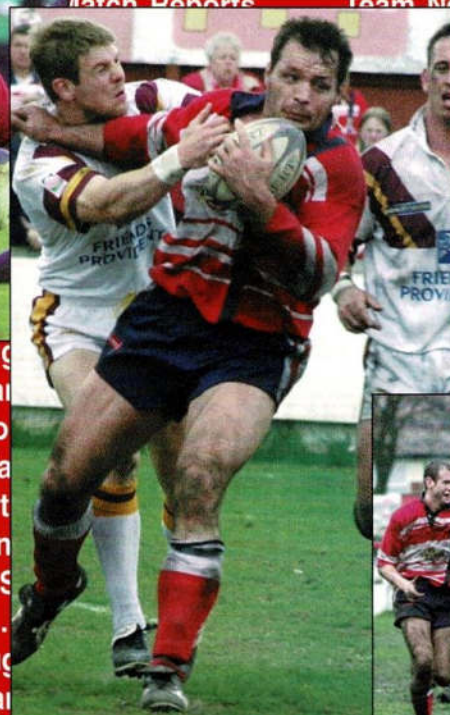
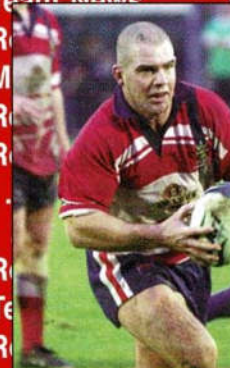
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