



TEAMS

OLDHAM FEATHERSTONE



Coach: Steve MOLLOY

Coach: Andy KELLY

Jon GODDARD	1	Nathan GRAHAM
Will COWELL	2	Jamie STOKES
Iain MARSH	3	Chris LANGLEY
Lee DORAN	4	Andy BAILEY
Gavin DODD	5	Adrian FLYNN
Gareth BARBER	6	Richard WHITING
Keith BRENNAN	7	Carl BRIGGS
Martin McLOUGHLIN	8	Chris MOLYNEUX
John HOUGH	9	Richard CHAPMAN
Dane MORGAN	10	Stuart DICKENS
Chris MORLEY	11	Steve DOOLER
Darren SHAW	12	Andy RICE
Phil FARRELL	13	Danny SEAL
Paul ANDERSON	14	Jon PRESLEY
Simon SVABIC	15	James HOUSTON
Ryan STAZICKER	16	Paul DARLEY
Steve MOLLOY	17	Ian TONKS

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

REFEREE: B. THALER
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OLDHAM
RLFC

Official
Matchday
Magazine

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The Roughyeds



FEATHERSTONE

NATIONAL LEAGUE 1 AT BOUNDARY PARK
SUNDAY 13TH JULY 2003 KO 3.00PM

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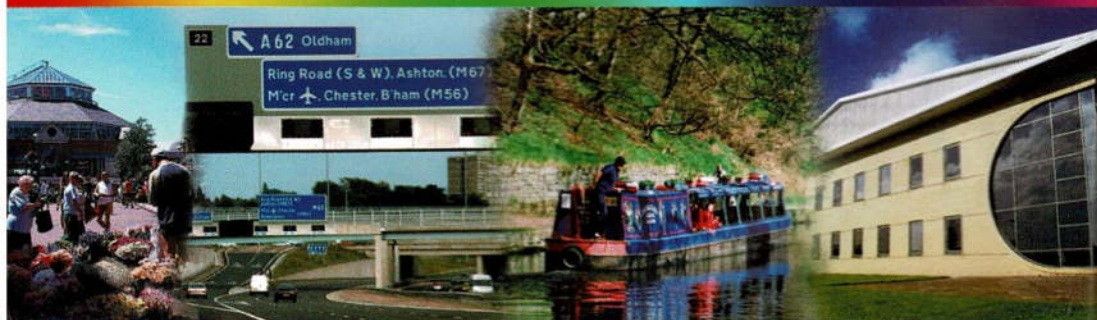
Oldham continues to take significant strides to be THE desirable place to live, work or visit in the North West.

Massive investment in regeneration and renewal continues apace and Oldham has the region's largest town centre based indoor shopping area.

Businesses are benefiting from the M60 motorway, which now puts Oldham less than 25 minutes away from Manchester Airport. The arrival of the Metrolink tram system possibly by 2006 and the continued development of the Cultural Quarter and south Union Street areas of the town centre will further strengthen the appeal of the Borough for investment and new opportunities.

Add to this superb opportunities for education and training, including a new Business Management School, exciting developments in tourism and the arts like the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the newly opened Rochdale Canal and the new Gallery Oldham and the attractions of the Borough become even more inviting.

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The Roughyeds

Oldham Rugby League Football Club (1997) Limited

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John Etty 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

THE last few weeks have been extremely tiring as we worked towards the opening of our new Social Club on Alfred Street.

As with any major project (and this for us was certainly a major project) there is an incredible amount of time, effort, money and organisation needed before you can even open the doors to the public.

As ever we have had an army of volunteers assisting us and without them we couldn't have done it. Our 'Opening' Night was packed with people queuing to get in, well before we opened the doors at 7 o'clock.

The evening was a big success and we are hoping for many more – please remember that every penny profit goes to Oldham Rugby League.

We have already had nearly 600 people make themselves members and the majority of those are members from when the Club was previously open.

It is our aim to significantly increase membership numbers by involving our fans at the club, which will be open before and after every home match. The players will return there after the games and there will be entertainment on Sunday lunchtime.

The more people that use this facility the more money ORLFC makes and don't forget we will be providing FREE transport to and from the ground.

We as a club have done as much as we possibly can and we now need you to back us in this venture. On a separate note, today sees us play for the very first time with our new main sponsors on the shirts 'Warsteiner the Best Selling German Beer' and we are very grateful for the support from **Thwaites Brewery**, who have taken over the Sponsorship on the Home shirts from **J. W. Lees & Co.** With Thwaites supplying the beer in our social club it was a natural progression for them and I would like to place on record my appreciation to both Companies in resolving what could have been a difficult situation mid-season.

We have worked well with **J. W. Lees** and thank them for their support and now we look forward to working with **Thwaites Brewery** in a similar vein.

We welcome Featherstone to Boundary Park in what will be their first visit since we formed the club. The next two games are very important to us and we have stated many times how tough the division is. We now need to demonstrate our own fighting qualities and move up the table.

Your support is important, please get behind the team.

Chris



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

WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE & RUGBY LEAGUE EXPRESS FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY

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Molloy's Message



WELCOME to everybody who's made the journey from Featherstone, a journey which I made on numerous occasions be it the other way round.

Featherstone are flying high and have taken some big scalps at Post Office Road in the first half of the season and are as yet the only side to have beaten a side relegated from Super League. So today looks to be another hard fought encounter.

At the midway point of the season, we must be found guilty of under performing. We have identified this and are all set to pull together to resolve this situation, but the fortunate thing about this game is that it's not how you start the season it's how you finish it.

It's a very worrying situation that Oldham Athletic find themselves in and I am sure that Roughyed fans and everyone involved with the club wishes them well and hopes for a speedy resolution, as it is imperative that a big town like Oldham has both a soccer and rugby league club.

On a more positive note the Oldham Rugby Club is now officially open and all the people involved in getting the club up and running deserve a massive pat on the back for all their hard work.

Let's hope to see you down there for the odd drink or two and that it proves to be a big success and something we can finally call our own.

Enjoy the game.

Steve

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IN TOWN Today-Featherstone



Richard Chapman

Richard Chapman (Captain)

Recently signed a 3 year contract which underlines his value to the Club. Outstanding all round ability with a knack of scoring some outrageous tries.

Stuart Dickens

One of the most consistent prop forwards in the National League. A model professional who sets a fine lead up front regularly taking his team over the gain line.

Steve Dooler

Strong running back row forward with a fine turn of pace. A quietly efficient performer regularly turning in some storming displays.

Andy Bailey

Young up and coming second row forward given his chance this season by Andy Kelly. Has adapted well to the demands of first team rugby.

Danny Seal

Free scoring loose forward who is a big favourite with the Rovers fans. Has the ability to turn a game with his eye for the gaps.

Andy McNally

Outstanding junior with Castleford whose career has been handicapped with injury. Now finding his feet after being out all last season.

Chris Molyneux

Another ex Huddersfield player who has made a big impact on the Club. A model of consistency who has a steadying influence on his team mates.

Robin Jowitt

A big mobile prop forward signed by Kelly to add some 'beef' to the pack. Goes about his job in a quiet efficient manner.

Danny Patrickson

A talented footballer signed from the Milford ARL. Equally at home at stand off or hooker. Has a promising future ahead of him.

Jamie Stokes

Back to his best after a lean spell last season.

Playing with bags of confidence and showing a hunger for work.

Ben Archibald

Elusive free running full back who has made his mark this season. Capped a fine debut with his first try for the Club earlier this season.

Paul Darley

Utility forward just regaining his fitness after a shoulder injury. Nephew of the legendary Malcolm Reilly.

Nathan Graham

Vastly experienced full back rated by many as the best outside Super League. Performs at a consistently high level.

Brendan O'Meara

Tough tackling Australian signed from Rochdale Hornets in the close season. Using his experience well on both attack and defence.

Ian Brown

A local lad who has had previous spells with Castleford and Sheffield. Signed as a utility player he has performed to a high standard this season making the centre position his own.

Adrian Flynn

Free scoring wing man signed from Dewsbury Rams where he was a big crowd favourite. Settling in well and looking hungry for more tries.

Richard Agar

Combining his assistant coaching role and playing to good effect. Finding his form after sustaining an injury in pre season which delayed his appearance in earlier games.

Carl Briggs

Experienced half back who has settled in well since joining the club at the start of the season. A shrewd organiser with an outstanding kicking game.

Ian Tonks

Signed from Castleford Tigers and using his Super League experience to good effect. Strong running forward with exceptional handling ability.

Andy Rice

Workaholic back row forward signed from Huddersfield Giants where he was a valuable member of the championship winning side. Settled in well with his new club.

A Potted History of Featherstone by Don Yates

THE current Featherstone Rovers club was founded in 1902 and accepted into the Rugby Football League in June 1921. Despite being located in a small town, Featherstone's achievements since then have been nothing short of remarkable. League Champions in 1977, Challenge Cup winners at Wembley on three occasions, they have appeared in the final of 17 other cup competitions and have provided numerous players for representative selection including sixteen who have gained full test recognition.



David Hobbs

Three of those internationals went on to play for Oldham including the current Roughyeds player-coach Steve Molloy. The other two were also prop-forwards, Terry Clawson and David Hobbs.

Featherstone Rovers have been promoted into the top flight of

competition three times and Oldham were promoted with them on all three occasions. In those days the top flight was Division One and Rovers were Second Division Champions during the 1979-80 and 1992-93 seasons. When Rovers won promotion in 1987-88, Oldham won the Second Division Championship. That was the season when Oldham and Featherstone Rovers met in that amazing Second Division Premiership thriller at Old Trafford. Oldham led 22-0 after 32 minutes but, after an unbelievable fight back, Rovers looked home and dry four minutes from time when they were 26-22 in front. At that point Des Foy made the break for Kevin Meadows to score the equalising

try which Charlie McAllister converted to snatch a 28-26 victory for the Roughyeds.

Since the inception of Super league seven years ago, Featherstone Rovers have figured outside the top league although they have made a significant contribution to the championship immediately below Super League. In 1996 they ended the campaign in fourth spot although that season there was no end-of-season play-off. Neither was there a play-off the following season, 1997, when Rovers finished in seventh position. However, late in the season their visit to the eventual champions, Hull, was televised as the Airlie Birds required a win to clinch the title. Featherstone spoiled the outside broadcast and also the championship celebrations by winning 18-4 at the Boulevard. Steve Molloy was a try scorer that day as Hull suffered their only league defeat of the season.

The closest Featherstone Rovers have been to gaining Super League status came in 1998 when the club reached the first Northern Ford Premiership Grand Final. That championship decider at Huddersfield proved to be a thrilling encounter in which Rovers led their neighbours and arch rivals Wakefield Trinity with five minutes of the match remaining. Trinity's late score, which snatched a 24-22 victory, was a real sickener for Rovers who many present thought deserved to take the title. The following two seasons saw Featherstone Rovers eliminated from the latter stages of the play-offs by clubs who went on to clinch the title. In 1999 they lost 17-9 at Hunslet and, twelve months later, were beaten 25-18 at Dewsbury.

The past two seasons have also seen Featherstone qualify for the play-off. In 2001 Rovers championship aspirations ended at Leigh where they were beaten 26-10 whilst last year they suffered a surprise 32-30 home defeat at the hands of Batley.

From The Pen Of

. Michael Turner



Of Roughyeds And ... Featherstone Rovers

TODAY we extend a warm welcome to the players, officials and supporters of Featherstone Rovers and so renew the rivalry with one of our long standing trans-Pennine opponents.

Featherstone entered the league in the 1921-22 season and first visited Watersheddings on February 18th 1922 in a match which resulted in a 28 - 5 victory for the Roughyeds. Oldham finished at the top of the league table that season only to concede the championship to Wigan when beaten in the play off final. Featherstone struggled a little in their inaugural campaign finishing third from the bottom of the league of twenty six clubs. However, just six years later the club had come on so much that they finished third in the table and fought their way through to the championship final by defeating second placed Leeds at Headingley. In the final, which incidentally was played at Watersheddings, they came up against the all conquering Swinton side who defeated them by eleven points to nil

on their way to taking all four major trophies that were up for competition at the time.

Fixtures between Oldham and 'Fev' were quite infrequent in those days and it wasn't until the war time emergency league match on November 21st 1942 that Rovers managed to lower the Roughyeds colours with a 18 - 10 victory at Post Office Road. Although there was a drawn match (3 -3) also at Featherstone on March 9th 1929.

Since then of course there have been many titanic struggles between the two clubs with Post Office Road being far from a happy hunting ground for Oldham, and most other clubs for that matter. Sorry to the Rovers fans to have to mention it again, but the biggest game between the sides was that Division two play off final at Old Trafford in 1988. Oldham won by 28 - 26 in one of the most exciting matches the clubs have ever conjured up between them.

For over eighty years our two famous clubs have done battle on the rugby field, let us hope the fixture prevails for as long again, and beyond.



Ike Southward falls to a two man Rovers tackle after taking an inside pass from Brian Lord. Action from the match at Watersheddings on September 20th 1960. Result: Oldham 20 Featherstone 12.

WELL WE might have gone a fortnight without a game but things have certainly been busy making the final arrangements for the opening of the new Oldham Rugby League social club. The last two months have been hectic as volunteers and club officials have worked non-stop to renovate and spruce up the old Hartford social club. The whole place has been redecorated and re-carpeted where necessary and the overall impression has been well appreciated by all who have seen it.

Last weekend saw the opening of the club - starting on Thursday with an open evening that was very well attended and followed on Friday by a VIP/Sponsors evening where the players were also in attendance after training, as they had no match over the weekend. Christopher Hamilton, the club Chairman thanked all those concerned for making the opening possible and presented Life Membership certificates to the volunteers and club staff who had put so much time into the clubs renovation. Saturday night was official opening night with top class cabaret booked, and all concerned waited with nervous anticipation of a good turn out. They need not have worried by 6.30pm half an hour before the doors were to open there was a queue forming outside. by 8.00pm there was not a seat to be had in the Concert Room.

It is thought that over 350 people were in attendance and many more new members were enrolled on the

night. There are now well over 500 paid up members, the vast majority being people who live in the vicinity of the club and once Oldham Rugby fans visit the club we are sure that the membership will further swell. I popped in on Sunday night and it was really pleasant to just sit and chat with Oldham Rugby fans who you normally just nod to at the game - in short it felt great to be in a place we could call our own and where you knew that the money you were spending was going to our club and not to others unconnected to the club or the game.

It was nice on Saturday night to be visited by a delegation from Leigh Centurions who were staying at the Avant Hotel just opposite in preparation for the Arriva Trains Final on the following day. Tommy Martyn was well received by Oldham Rugby fans present and he immediately likened the atmosphere to that of the old Watersheddings club.

It was good to see a 6,486 crowd at the Arriva Trains Final, which was bigger than four of the Super League games played over the weekend. Less pleasing was the violent nature of the game, but, all in all it, to me, proved that the Arriva Trains Cup has caught on - rugby league fans don't turn up to meaningless matches - and after all it was in direct competition to the Wimbledon Men's Final.

NM

Walkerbout

with
Brian Walker

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THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH

LAST YEAR we switched our annual fund raising golf tournament to CROMPTON AND ROYTON GOLF CLUB for the very first time and it was an unqualified success.

So it's no surprise that we are back there again for **GOLF CLASSIC 2003**, Lunch, 18 Holes, Dinner, Entertainment, Prizes, Fun and Fund Raising a wonderful day out!

The competition is open to sponsors, supporters and anyone who fancies playing 18 holes so take a day out and join us.

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Play off yellow flag

LL 9.30pm SERVED 12.30 TO 1.00pm
DINNER AT 6.45pm (See back cover)
DRESS SMART CASUAL

GOLF COURSE
THERE WILL BE REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE FROM THE KIOSK ADJACENT TO THE 9th GREEN




THE Oldham Roughyeds Golf Classic, 2002 at Crompton and Royton, raised a record £5,000 for the rugby league club - a 50 per cent increase on each of the previous four tournaments organised by the club.

"It was a magnificent success; the best we have had so far," said Brian Walker, a member of the organising committee.

Our picture shows club chairman Chris Hamilton positioning the balls

for Roughyeds players Gareth Barber and Gavin Dodd to tee off.

Winners of the four ball betterball team Stableford, over 18 holes, were Steve Slicker, Damian Harrison, Paul Finnigan and former Athletic player Steve Taylor, who accumulated 82 points with a ten under par performance.

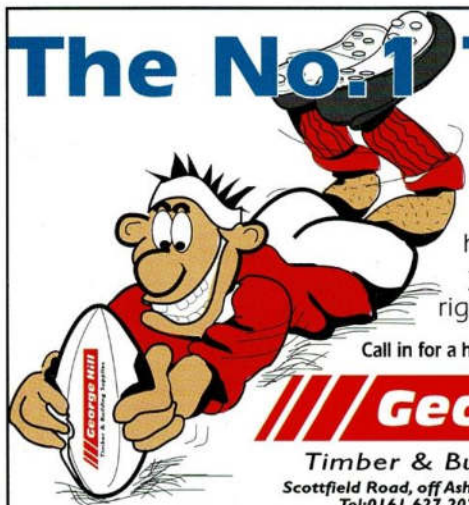
They represented Mike Neild Builders Ltd, chief sponsors of the tournament which was organised by a Roughyeds committee

comprising of John Barrett, John Battye, Robin Highfield, Brian Walker and club director Sean Whitehead.

There were 18 teams of four in competition and more than 80 sitting down to a post tournament four course dinner and prize presentation.

Said Mr Walker: "It was a superb day and we entertained many local businessmen who were keen to support the club and wish it well.

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Back On The Terraces

..... With Simon Winnard

WHAT EXCELLENT news it was to hear that the club have been successful in their bid for 'Sports Match' funding with their first ever application. They have managed to land a £50,000 grant that will significantly contribute to the development of the game at grass roots level in the town. Indeed, one of the critical factors in securing this backing was that the Roughyeds were prepared to stump up £50,000 of their own money, truly a measure of their own commitment to developing into a real community club. In committing this kind of funding, the Roughyeds have given up the vast majority of the 2003 sponsorship from Oldham Property Partnership (OPP).

The total of £100,000 will see the Roughyeds employ somebody working specifically on full time Rugby League development with the club appointing a full time Community Marketing and Development Manager on a minimum 2 year contract.

It's now 10 years since Neil Wood was Oldham's RL Development Officer and, having personally worked in the scheme along with Mike Ford and many others, I can honestly vouch for it's value, particularly in terms of giving all of Oldham's youngsters the opportunity to sample this great game. A structured and well-planned programme will not only see Rugby League played in every Primary school in the town but also allow the club to raise it's own profile whilst further developing links with the community.

The Roughyeds have in the past made strenuous but financially restricted efforts to get into schools and promote the game locally. However, at a time where the Roughyeds could have been forgiven for focusing solely on their immediate problems on the playing field, this success now presents the opportunity to make a significant investment in the game's longer term future in the town.

Whilst off the pitch developments are moving along at a pace, it's clear that we are struggling on it. A return to Boundary Park and a significant investment in playing staff raised pre-season expectations to unprecedented levels. However, we have sadly not lived up to the hype as was demonstrated in our last outing which saw us suffer an embarrassing defeat at the hands of you know who. Everybody has got an opinion as to why we presently find ourselves in this position. Indeed, I certainly have my own views but

these are neither appropriate or relevant to the purpose of this column. Whilst many people feel that some players are playing on past reputations when 'you are only as good as your last game'?. I certainly hope we are better than that!!

The only thing that is clear is that the slide cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. With games running out, we need to be aware of the very real threat of relegation to NL2. That's a fate not even worth considering but, whatever your opinions as to where the problems lie, nobody doubts the club's efforts to get themselves out of the end of season mire. As hard as it may be at times, let's give our backing to the boys today as we enter yet another crucial period in the club's short history.

On a brighter note, today could see Cleggy's long awaited return to action. It's been a difficult period for him as he adjusts to life as a paramedic. Following a lengthy residential course in Bolton, he has then had to adjust to shift patterns that are not always conducive to semi-professional RL, particularly when the squad has been in for 'additional' sessions due to our recent run of form.

However, commonsense seems to have prevailed as the chairman, coach and player finally sat down together and came up with a tenable solution. It seems only two minutes ago that his farewell card was being passed around the Rochdale Road end, such is his affinity with the Roughyed faithful.

Far from facing the possibility of being thrown on the scrap heap, Cleggy had other clubs interested in acquiring his services but only had the heart for one club, his beloved Roughyeds. That kind of loyalty is a rarity today and, if ever there was a time when the club needed a player with his undoubted commitment to the cause, it's surely now.

Finally, the news of ex-Roughyed, Shayne McMenemy's move to a top five club will come of no surprise to anybody that saw him pull on the red and white. Shayne has continually stood out in a poor Halifax side and was released by mutual agreement in an act which shows an acknowledgement by Fax that they are NL1 bound next season. Shayne will undoubtedly make a good impression at the KC Stadium and we all wish him the very best of luck.

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Iva Slateloose



EARLY SUMMER is the height of the examination season so Iva thought you ought to be put to the test. Please answer the following questions legibly and preferably in ink. You have two hours and ten minutes to complete the paper (or until kick off if time permits).

1. Is Dave McGreal really Stanley Unwin in disguise?

If you don't know who Stanley Unwin is you're too young to be reading this.

2. Jon Goddard or Kris Radlinski: can there be any choice?

[Candidates should not attempt to write on both sides of the paper at once].

3. Was Steve Ganson an immaculate conception?

[Candidates should not confuse existentialism with competence].

4. Speculate - or not - on the following: whether R.L. or wither R.L. Is this the game for the twenty-first century or should Alan Titchmarsh be asked to breed a hybrid.

[N.B. obscenity in the answer will be penalised].

5. Is Dane Morgan the son of Mick Morgan?

Candidates who can demonstrate a link with apple pies will score highly.

6. "I smell a rat." Is this a quote by

- a) George Galloway
- b) Phil Farrell
- c) the Oldham physio?

7. Who are more alike, Gareth Barber and Paul Daniels, or vice-versa?

8. Discuss in Latin or Greek, but not both, whether Lee Doran covers more ground than a sailor's blanket

[Be brief]

9. Have you any recollection of

- a) Dean Cross
- b) Warren Barrow
- c) Kevin O'Loughlin

10. What do you have any recollection of?

11. Would you say that Maurice Lindsay is responsible for the invasion of England

by Australians? If not, what would you say?

12. Estimate the average age of

- a) Steve Molloy
- b) the Ancient Britons
- c) Old King Cole

13. Trace by means of graphs, pie charts etc. a run by Joe McNicholas

[Extra sheets of answer paper available on request]

14. Estimate the size of

- a) Little John
- b) Tiny Tim
- c) The Big Bopper
- d) Danny Guest

15. Fill in the names of at least some of the following:

- a)
- b)
- c) Simon Svabic

16. "The end of the closing stanza of the second semi-final marks the beginning of the opening phase in the first stage of the selection of the finalists in the Challenge Cup". Confirm or confute with reference to Mike Stephenson and Eddie 2Hemmings.

17. Estimate how many St. Helens season tickets have been torn up or sent back. Speculate whether the owner can be sane.

18. Does Gavin Dodd suffer from Francophobia? Is it catching?

19. Is it possible to lose a penalty count? Answers on a writ of Habous Corpus to Spotland.

20. Is rugby league a homo-erotic sport and if so in which position would you select

- a) Dale Winton
- b) Michael Barrymore
- c) Danny La Rue

NB Candidates should not attempt to answer more than one question at once.

Candidates under twenty need not answer questions 17, 5, 2, 11, 4, 19, 1, 16, 20, 15, 8, 10, 19, 3, or 6.

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"HEY," said Shaz, "there's Paul Norton from Chorley Lynx and Chris Morley from Eccles (it should have been Morley from Chorley!) so, with a

Chorley cake and an Eccles cake, we must currently have the fruitiest pack in the league!"

"Fruitiest? FRUITIEST!" I exclaimed! "Nobody says FRUITIEST anymore! for some raisin I thought I was in a time warp when you said that!" "What? like going to Workington?"

D'ye know Paul's a structural engineer?" I continued, trying to get back to normal conversation. "Well, his structure looks pretty well engineered to me," she replied. "But he's a bit older than the ones you usually fancy, isn't he?" I asked "So? He might be an older model, but there's nothing

wrong with having a few miles on the clock!" "Steady on, Shaz - he might be called Norton but he's not really a motor bike!" "Well, he'd pass MY M.O.T.," she declared. "Go on, then, what's YOUR M.O.T.?" I could have throttled her as she then kept me in suspension (!) "Come on, I'm tired of this," as she was nearly choking through stalling. "Man with Overpowering Tackle!" she finally roared, I nearly fainted! "Cos they don't get up so quick when he's tackled 'em! All's pure to the pure!" she winked!

Then she said, "You know that op he had when they grafted some hip bone onto his neck? Well does that mean that when he's walking away, shaking his head at some dodgy refereeing decision, he's not shaking his head at all - he's really wriggling his hips at us?" Where does she get it from? See you soon,

*Love & Kisses,
Trace & Shaz*

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Profile of . . . Paul Norton



Paul "Knocker" Norton signed for the Roughyeds from Lancashire Lynx after training with the Oldham boys during the summer of 2000.

The Wigan born forward played his first match in a 22-6 home win against Workington, not in his normal prop forward position but partnering Phil Farrell in the second row.

Currently out injured after suffering a neck injury last season at Batley which culminated in a spinal operation. Made his comeback earlier this season against Leigh Centurions in the Arriva Trains Cup but has since struggled with after effects, he is hoping to get back in the thick of the action soon.

Played 66 matches so far for Oldham and looking forward to playing many, many more!

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Does the kit fit?



Paul Norton

WHEN asked what time he gets up on match days Paul's response was "Match day what match day?", at present I get up at 8.30am have porridge then get back into bed. If I do go to away games I sit alone, relaxing and going through the days game plan.

Once in the changing room the first thing out of my kit bag would be either a jock strap or a pair of undies but because I always forget my own I ask Mitch if he has any unsoiled ones in the (poo) sorry kit bag.

As the team just leave the changing room my usual routine is to scratch my head, pick my nose and slap Faz on the bum.

My main aim on match days is to beat my opposite number, out tackle, out carry and basically out do him in every department.

I don't really have a favourite coach, every coach I have worked under have been influential, although I do have a soft spot for Maurice Bamford, even when things have not worked out both on and off the field he never gave in, a real old trooper. I'd also like to give a mention to Alan Greenall and Ronnie Molyeaux from my time at St. Judes, for all the advice in my amateur days.

Best prep talks come from Faz he really does get you motivated he is inspirational both on and off the meadow.
Best/Worst Changing Room
Best - Somewhere I played in France once but I've forgotten the venue
Worst - Swinton
Best/Worst Playing Surface
Best - Boundary Park
Worst - Sorry but its the Batley slope again
Best/Worst Food
Best - Salford
Worst - Chorley - I'm a fine tuned athlete and they gave us sausage and chips.

Best player at the club so far has got to be Jon Goddard, he's always played well but since

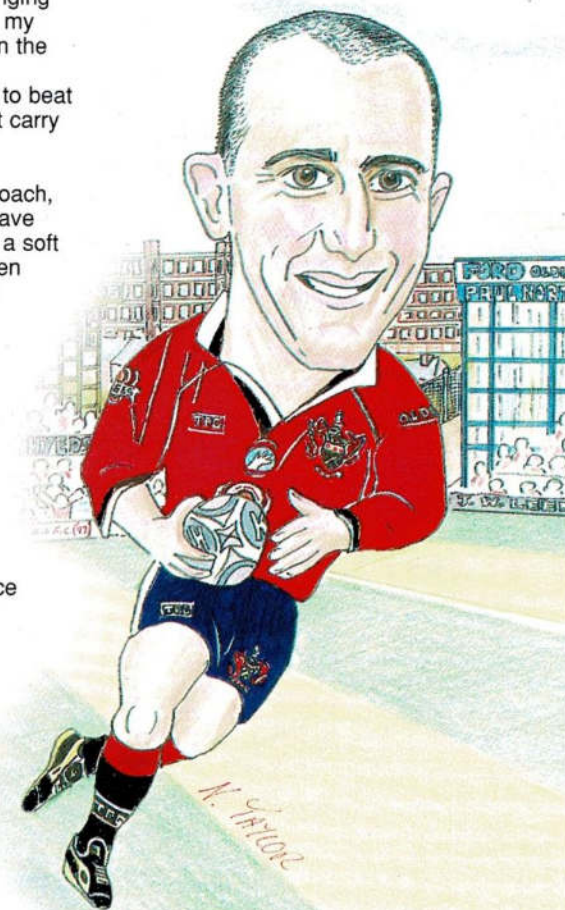
moving to fullback he's been superb.

My girl friend, Gemma, says I look like Nellie the Elephant, but I think I'm more like a cross between a Jumbo Jet and Concorde, but without any of the speed.

Joke

Did you hear about the gay sailor who re-enlisted because he didn't want to leave his mates behind.

Mitch

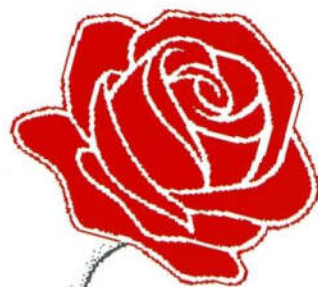


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Senior Academy

with Sean Gartland



Senior Academy Under 21 First Division

APRIL 2003 F - A

21 SHEFFIELD EAGLES 69 - 6

MAY 2003

3 DONCASTER DRAGONS H 16-28

10 BARROW RAIDERS A 48-23

17 Barrow Raiders H 48-12

24 DONCASTER DRAGONS A 28-26

31 SHEFFIELD EAGLES H 38-28

JUNE 2003

14 BARROW RAIDERS H 66-4

28 BARROW RAIDERS A 54-14

JULY 2003

12 SHEFFIELD EAGLES H 2.30

19 DONCASTER DRAGONS A 2.30

(THORNENSIAANS)

26 PLAY OFF RND ONE

AUGUST 2003

2 PLAY OFF RND TWO

9 SNR ACADEMY FIRST DIV GRAND FINAL

23 PROMOTION/RELEGATION PLAY OFF 1

30 PROMOTION/RELEGATION PLAY OFF 2

	P	W	D	F	A	P
DONCASTER DRAGONS	5	5	0	189	86	10
OLDHAM ROUGHYEDS	6	4	0	245	125	8
SHEFFIELD EAGLES	5	1	0	104	214	2
BARROW RAIDERS	4	0	0	73	186	0

(As at 9th JUNE 2003)

**THE PLAY OFF WILL TAKE THE
FOLLOWING FORMAT:**

1st v 2nd
with the winner through to the
Grand Final

3rd v 4th
with the loser eliminated

**Loser game one v
winners game two**
with the winner through to the
Grand Final

The relegation/promotion issue will feature a similar play off format between the bottom three sides in the Senior Academy U21 Championship and the winner of the Grand Final of the Senior Academy U21 First Division with the Grand Final winner taking the top ranking in the placings. The intention is also to reduce the Senior Academy U21 Championship to 12 teams for season 2004.

*All of Oldham's home matches will be played at
Oldham Rugby Union's Manor Park Ground at
Bardsley.*



*John Mitchell, loose
forward or centre who
kicked seven goals
during the 54-14 win at
Barrow and has topped
the tackle count in each
of the last three matches.*



*Forward Gavin Johnson
scored a hat trick of tries
in the 66-4 home victory
over Barrow.*

Words of Wilson

... by Ian Wilson

SINCE THERE is little positive to say about our performances during June - and especially the one at Rochdale - I thought it best to confine my comments this week to Super League. Given all the recent hype, about new, still higher standards on the field, and its super-competitiveness, just how valid is it?

At the start of the 2003 season, I had mentally divided the league into three groups - the top 5 (Bradford, Leeds, St. Helens, Wigan and Hull); the three strugglers (Halifax, Huddersfield and Wakefield); and the middle four (Castleford, London, Warrington and Widnes), one of whom would make the top six play offs. As I write, exactly 100 games have been played, with 32 more regular fixtures to come, and then the additional 36 before the play offs begin.

The extent to which the competition is genuinely competitive across the board can perhaps best be judged by how many results go counter to those that would be predicted by the above groupings. How many matches do the three strugglers win other than between each other? How many times do teams from the middle four defeat top five outfits?

So far, there have been eleven such 'shock' results. Of the bottom three Halifax have only the one-off first day win against London to their credit, Huddersfield have outstanding home wins over Saints and Wigan, and Wakefield have three 'scalps' - Warrington at home, and away to Castleford and Saints. Amongst the middle four, Castleford defeated Wigan at Wheldon Road, and Widnes recorded one of Leeds only two defeats so far, at the Halton Stadium; but the real 'shock' kings so far have been London, with incredible victories at

Bradford, Hull and Wigan.

How does this figure compare with last season, say? Then, there was a total of 20 such 'shock' results, a slightly greater percentage overall (though, it has to be said, five of those involved victories of the bottom three over Warrington, who hardly performed like a middle four side for most of 2002).

So this suggests that the hype is being a little overdone, perhaps? When you look at the current league table, my pre season top 5 are the top 5 clubs in the league, the middle 4 are the middle 4 and the three strugglers are in 10, 11 and 12th places - though undoubtedly Saints have under performed, and Huddersfield and London over performed, against expectation, marginally.

Maybe it is fairest to say that the jury is still out, with 68 fixtures still to play. And competitiveness is not just measured by results, but by the narrowest of winning margins as well; after all, what both TV viewers and match day attendances must want is a reasonably high degree of uncertainty of outcome. I am sure, for example, that the current very sad attendance at The Shay would rise considerably if the suffering Halifax public had a realistic expectation that their side would finish within, say, 10 points of their opponents - in fact, their current average losing margin is 25 points per match.

When you compare us with Australia, though, you can see that our premier competition still has a long way to go. Look at Penrith and North Queensland this season, compared with last, for example. Let us not claim qualities we don't yet possess.

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Half-term report . . .

Express

By GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS

THE National Leagues have reached their half-way point, making now the perfect time to assess how each side has fared so far.

SALFORD CITY REDS are sitting top of NL1, as widely predicted, but a defeat at Featherstone and two draws against Whitehaven have proved they are not the invincible force that was Huddersfield Giants last year. But they must still be seen as favourites.

LEIGH CENTURIONS are second, with just two blemishes - a shock defeat at Oldham and a 12-32 home loss to the Reds. At times they have looked every inch the NL1 title contenders that they are, and remain Salford's chief threat.

But ROCHDALE HORNETS cannot be discounted after a highly encouraging start to the campaign. Pushed Salford all the way at Spotland to underline their credentials, and have arguably the best pack in the division.

FEATHERSTONE ROVERS' year so far has been very much a home and away story. At the Lionheart Stadium they have beaten Salford and Rochdale, but have yet to win away and must improve on that.

WHITEHAVEN have been one of the success stories so far, though they must be rueing a home defeat to Doncaster. Two draws against Salford have shown they can compete with the best.

HULL KINGSTON ROVERS turned their season around after a stuttering start, though the heavy loss at Leigh has set them back a little. Another side very tough to beat at home.

DONCASTER DRAGONS have been up and down - conceding over 40 points at home to Rochdale and Hull KR but then winning at Whitehaven. Can beat anyone on their day.

OLDHAM have been a disappointment so far, a stirring home defeat against Leigh apart. The 58-14 loss at rivals Rochdale will have hurt.

BATLEY BULLDOGS have failed to scale the heights of last season as yet, and only two wins against Dewsbury have kept them off the bottom. But capable of considerable improvement.

Currently bottom of the pile are DEWSBURY RAMS, with just one win to their name, against Featherstone. Have it all to do to avoid relegation.

In NL2, KEIGHLEY COUGARS are top with just one

defeat, and must be seen as the leading contenders for Grand Final glory.

SHEFFIELD EAGLES are the only side to have beaten the Cougars, and if they can avoid their occasional off-days, they'll be there at the business end of the campaign.

BARROW RAIDERS have impressed in rising to third, and with their away form improving, can challenge the top sides.

HUNSLET HAWKS have faltered a little after an excellent start, while in contrast CHORLEY LYNX are now really coming to the fore under Darren Abram's coaching. Both are genuine contenders.

YORK CITY KNIGHTS must also be grouped in that category with their personnel, though they will be disappointed with their current position.

SWINTON LIONS and GATESHEAD THUNDER are the two sides most likely to break into the current top six, with WORKINGTON TOWN appearing to have too much to do despite improvement under new boss Billy McGinty.

LONDON SKOLARS had a major highlight with a draw at York, but have struggled since and will be looking for a couple of morale-boosting wins before the end of the year.



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In Yer Face

I HAVE BEEN proof reading the latest book on Oldham R.L.F.C. which Brian Walker is bringing out in time for Christmas. It contains some wonderful archive material and some outstanding images and I would thoroughly recommend it as essential reading for all Oldham fans, a splendid complement to Michael Turner's excellent Complete History of Oldham R.L.F.C. 1886-1997.

In the course of studying the written material it is surprising how certain themes suddenly appear. One such is that what goes around, comes around. It is not, of course, a world shattering observation that every dog has his day but the alternation of periods of success with periods of failure gives hope to all followers of the game. It is well known that Oldham enjoyed great success in the period just before the Northern Union breakaway, in the early years of the twentieth century, throughout the 1920's, again in the 1950's and once more in the period 1979-84. So, if you feel that the Roughyeds are currently in the doldrums, don't despair. Eventually Oldham will become a force to be reckoned with once again, though there is no way of knowing how soon that may come about. But, if history teaches us one thing, it is that all great empires eventually fall. So the fans of Bradford and St. Helens should enjoy their success while they can, for nothing is more certain than that one day they will taste the bitter fruits of failure once more.

A second theme that struck me was that a catalyst is required to inaugurate a period of success. It could be dynamic leadership or it could be finance, as with the successful lottery Oldham operated around 1978-79 enabling Brian Gartland to secure the cream of junior talent that became Frank Myler's outstanding team of the early eighties and which produced five Great Britain tourists to Australia in 1984. However, whatever the behind the scenes inspiration it will always be matched by a couple of key elements on

the pitch. And, by my observations, those key elements, which can transform a workmanlike side into an outstanding one, are a pack leader and a play-making half back. In the 1950's Bryn Goldswain was Oldham's first key-signing in sparking a revival but the players who really made Oldham's great side (bearing in mind they had great players in every position) were Derek Turner and Frank Pitchford. And what really brought home to me the importance of these key elements was the emphasis placed by Brian Walker - also to be found in Mike Turner's book - on the signing in 1973 by a Ray Hatton inspired committee of Frank Foster and Cliff Hill ending the dismal record of the 1960's and producing at least a half decent team at last after a decade of failure. It set me thinking how my own boyhood team of Halifax turned around a similar lacklustre period with the signing of pack leader Ken Roberts from Swinton and Roughyeds please note - Alan Kellert from Oldham. In the next three years Halifax won the Yorkshire Cup, the Eastern Division Championship and the League Championship in 1965 from seventh position in the league.

In the Frank Myler side I would suggest the key elements were Mick Morgan and Ray Ashton with Terry Flanagan assuming a gradually more influential role. And the moral of the story? Well, Oldham currently have a workmanlike side with a lot of good professionals. But what would happen if the club could add an experienced pack leader and a quality half back? Sometimes a couple of key signings are all it takes. We probably all have our ideas on who could benefit the current side and identifying the right men to be in the right place at the right time is the job of management. At the end of the day it's all a question of judgement. But getting it right defines that fine line between success and failure.

G.C.

ON THIS DAY

... with Don Yates



SIX years ago, on Sunday 13th July 1997, Featherstone Rovers faced a difficult trip to Naughton Park and a crucial fixture against Widnes. They tore into their opponents from the opening whistle and within quarter-of-an-hour Rovers led 10-0. Although Widnes fought back to close the gap to a couple of points by half-time, Rovers made a similar start to the second half and went on to win by 30 points to fourteen. Current Roughyeds player-coach Steve Molloy scored one of the early Featherstone tries and there were other touchdowns from Australian centre Davy Kimmel, hooker Richard Chapman, winger Paul Gleadhill and stand-off Karl Pratt. Chapman (4) and another Australian, substitute Ty Fallins, landed goals. Also included in the Featherstone line-up that afternoon was centre Shaun Irwin who had been signed from Oldham. Another former Oldham player, Jamie Bloem, was at full-back for Widnes and he landed their goal whilst at scrum-half was Anthony Murray, the versatile wanderer who joined the Roughyeds last year but who has since continued his nomadic career by signing for Workington Town.



Frank Pitchford

Frank Pitchford. Both scored tries as the Lions comfortably disposed of the opposition by 56 points to fifteen.

The 1946 British Lions included only one player from Oldham, second-row forward Doug Phillips. On Saturday 13th July 1946 he was a member of the Great Britain team which defeated Toowoomba 34-5. Four years ago, on Tuesday 13th July 1999, another touring team appeared in Toowoomba. They were the Great Britain under-16 squad who registered a comfortable 36-4 victory over the local schoolboys. Making a telling contribution to that victory was Alex Wilkinson, the talented former Royton Tigers centre who is currently with Hull in Super League.

The last British team to win a test series against Australia were the 1970 Lions. A member of that touring team was the Featherstone Rovers prop Jimmy Thompson. He appeared in the two tests against the Kangaroos which were won and also in the match against Newcastle which was played on Saturday 13th July 1970. The local side provided stiff opposition for the tourists although the Lions eventually came out on top, winning 24-14.

On Wednesday 13th July 1988 Great Britain were in New Zealand where they met a Wellington district team. The Lions were skippered by Oldham's Mike Ford that evening and another Oldham player, prop-forward Hugh Waddell, was also included in the British team. The home side also fielded a talented line-up with Mike Kuiti at loose forward. Kuiti later spent several years playing in England and enjoyed a couple of seasons at Watersheddings playing for the Roughyeds. Hugh Waddell was inspirational that evening and he led the late charge that brought three tries for the Lions in the closing 15 minutes and enabled them to snatch a 24-18 victory, which at one point looked unlikely. Second-row forward Karl Fairbank of Bradford Northern scored two tries with the other touchdowns coming from loose-forward Ritchie Eyres and winger Andy Currier (both Widnes). Centre Paul Loughlin (St. Helens) landed two goals, Andy Currier one and David Stephenson (Leeds) one.

STATS AND FACTS

APPEARANCES & SCORERS SEASON 2003

POSSIBLE MATCHES PLAYED 21 (SIMON SVABIC'S SUBSTITUTE TOTAL INCLUDING ONE NOT USED)

PLAYER	APP	SUB	TRIES	GOALS	D/G	PTS
Gavin Dodd	20	0	12	0	0	48
Iain Marsh	15	1	3	0	0	12
Jon Goddard	15	1	4	0	0	16
Paul Anderson	15	4	7	0	0	28
Joe McNicholas	7	1	2	0	0	8
Simon Svabic	10	11	2	45	0	98
Neil Roden	16	2	2	0	3	11
Steve Molloy	18	2	2	0	0	8
John Hough	17	2	4	0	0	16
Martin McLoughlin	5	6	0	0	0	0
Lee Doran	21	0	5	0	0	20
Chris Morley	15	4	2	0	0	8
Phil Farrell	15	0	5	0	0	20
Gareth Barber	11	7	10	31	0	102
Gavin Johnson	0	3	0	0	0	0
Ryan Stazicker	12	4	4	0	0	16
Danny Guest	1	10	0	0	0	0
Chris Campbell	9	0	5	0	0	20
Anthony Murray	4	1	1	0	0	4
Chris Irwin	12	0	4	0	0	16
Will Cowell	5	0	0	0	0	0
Darren Shaw	5	3	0	0	0	0
Keith Brennan	5	10	3	0	0	12
Dane Morgan	7	8	4	0	0	16
Adam Sharples	0	1	0	0	0	0
Jason Clegg	0	2	0	0	0	0
Paul Norton	9	1	1	0	0	4
Dan Potter	4	0	2	0	0	8

Roughyeds Kids



Hi to all you Roughyed Kids. First of all we would like to say a big thank you to all you Roughyed Kids (and mums, dads and grans) who took part in the sponsored walk today from the Oldham Rugby Club to Boundary Park. Everyone who did the walk has to shout really loud because if you don't the players won't hear us because we're up in the sponsors box. (Thanks Chris).

A big thank you also goes to our

sponsors for this season, who are Saddleworth Sports, F R Elswood Ltd., Third Axis Ltd. and A1 Upholstery.

We hope you all enjoyed the swimming party yesterday. Did you make a big splash and have a fab time?

Has anyone been to the new Oldham HQ yet, the entertainment is great and is fun for all.

The mascot for today is **Kieran Bowers**. Kieran is 7 years old and his favourite player is Jason Clegg. Hope you have a great day Kieran.

Don't forget our next meeting at the Oldham HQ on 24th July.

Have a great day.

Janet and Carole



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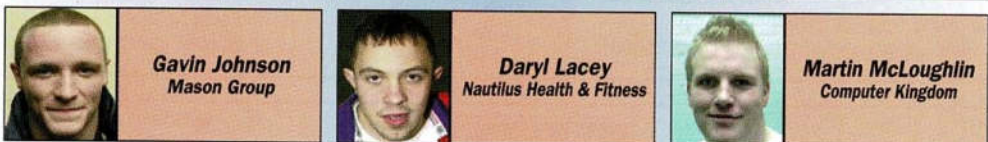
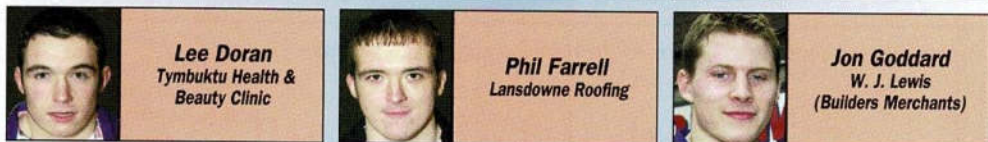
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Fixtures

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 L	4-62 2,839
16	LEIGH CENTURIONS	NL C L	26-31 1,945
CC OF			
23	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL C L	25-34 1,314
30	BARROW RAIDERS	NL C W	23-16 781
APRIL			
06	SWINTON LIONS	NL C W	68-14 1,032
13	SALFORD CITY REDS	NL C L	12-54 2,162
17	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL 1 L	28-33 1,754
MAY			
04	DEWSBURY RAMS	NL 1 W	41-21 1,198
10	SALFORD CITY REDS	NL 1 L	12-44 1,657
18	DONCASTER DRAGONS	NL 1 L	24-52 880
25	LEIGH CENTURIONS	NL 1 W	12-10 1,691
JUNE			
01	HULL KINGSTON ROVERS	NL 1 L	10-23 1,300
08		NL C SF	
15	WHITEHAVEN	NL 1 D	22-22 1,096
22	BATLEY BULLDOGS	NL 1 D	20-20 821
29	ROCHDALE HORNETS	NL 1 L	14-58 1,425
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	
SEPTEMBER			
07	FEATHERSTONE R.	NL 1 A	

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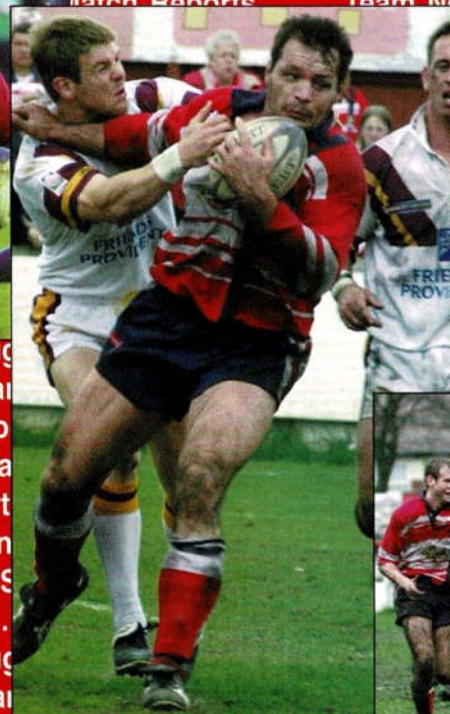
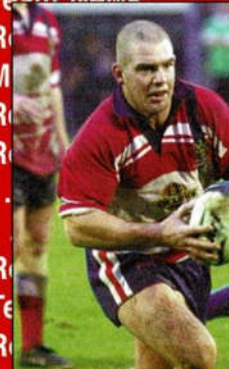
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