



TEAMS

OLDHAM SALFORD



Coach: Steve MOLLOY

Coach: Karl HARRISON

Jon GODDARD	1	Jason FLOWERS
Will COWELL	2	Danny ARNOLD
Iain MARSH	3	Stuart LITTLER
Lee DORAN	4	Ady KIRK
Gavin DODD	5	Wes DAVIES
Simon SVABIC	6	Cliff BEVERLEY
Keith BRENNAN	7	Gavin CLINCH
Steve MOLLOY	8	Neil BAYNES
John HOUGH	9	Malcolm ALKER
Dane MORGAN	10	Gareth HAGGERTY
Chris MORLEY	11	Simon BALDWIN
Darren SHAW	12	Paul HIGHTON
Phil FARRELL	13	Chris CHARLES
Neil RODEN	14	Steve BLAKELEY
Gareth BARBER	15	Dave HIGHTON
Martin McLOUGHLIN	16	Alan HUNTE
Danny GUEST	17	Andy COLEY

TODAY'S OFFICIALS

REFEREE: S. NICHOLSON
C. HATTON 4th

P. WHARTON
R. SOUTHWARD



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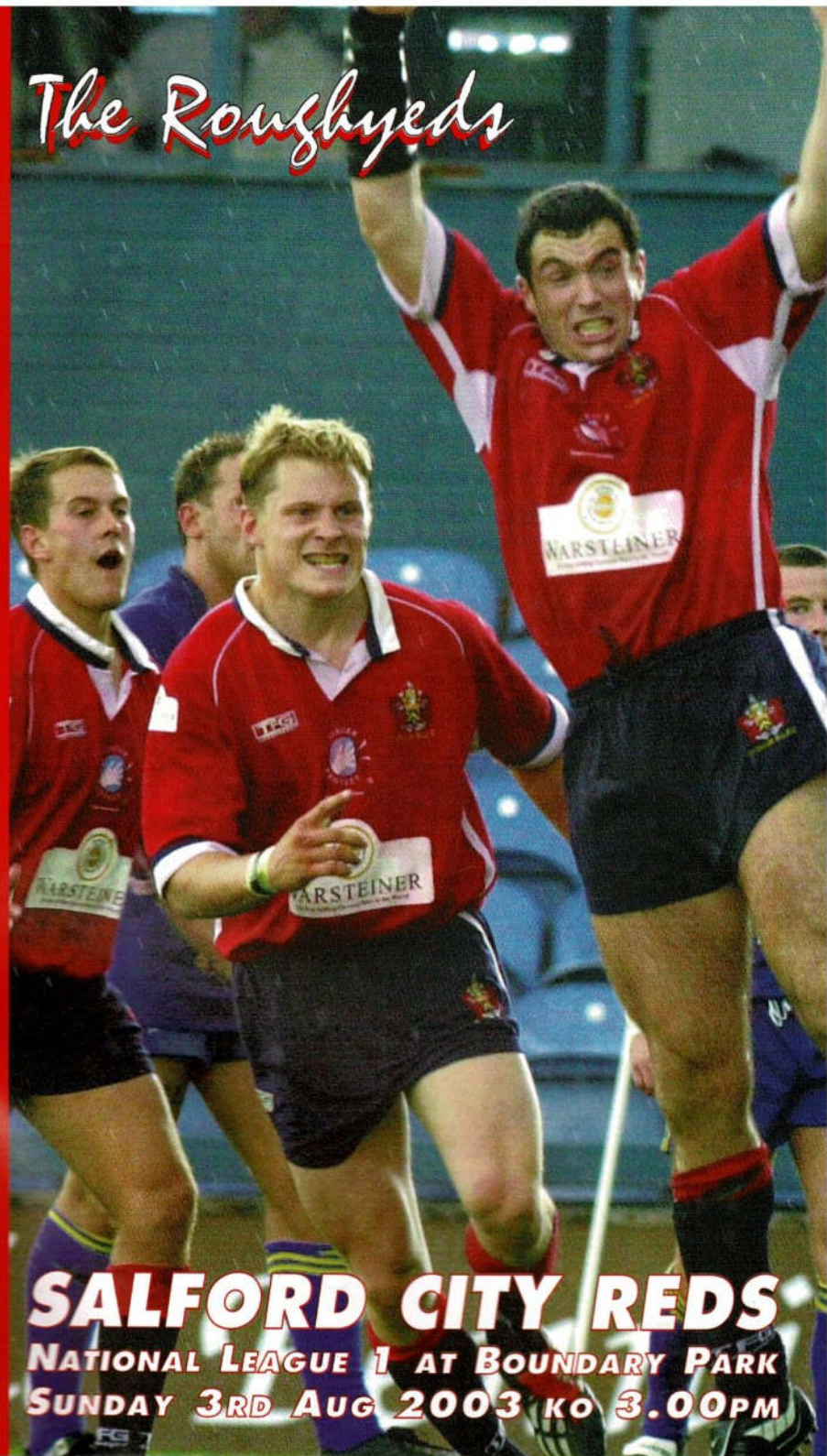
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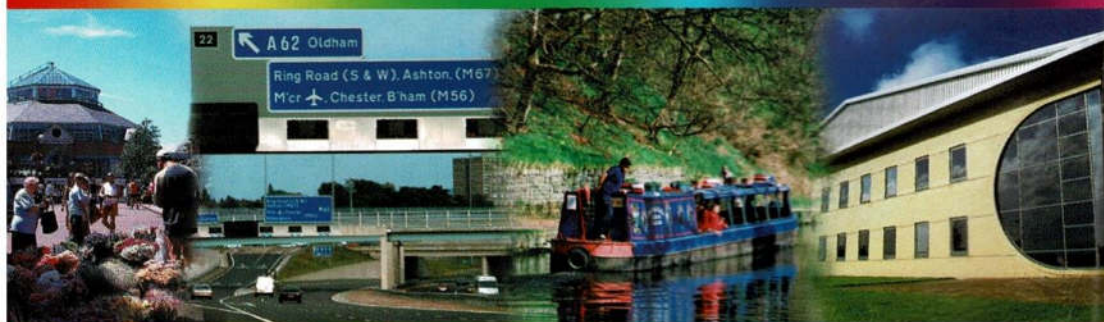
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IN THE HOT SEAT

Christopher Hamilton

AFTER last week's result at Dewsbury we have at last discovered some consistency in our results. The last three games have shown what we are capable of and our present league position shows what a tight division this is.

Today we entertain Salford who, although they have dropped points against other teams, have shown us the way home to some tune every time we have played them.

The memory of the 62-4 hammering we took last time at Boundary Park is still very fresh in my mind and I'm sure it will be so in every one of our player's minds as we go into today's game.

The one thing we must not do today is show any respect to Salford – we have already gone over the top in that respect with them this season!!

Other teams have demonstrated that they are not unbeatable and we must show the self-belief to follow that example, although we all know it will be tough.

The confirmation this week that Paul (Knocker) Norton has been forced to retire is sad news for everyone at the club. Knowing Knocker as I do (and I know him fairly well after Fuiengirola??!!) it must have been an incredibly tough decision to make when rugby plays such a big part of your life, but at the end of the day his health comes before anything else.

The best tribute I can pay Knocker is to say that he will be sorely missed by all at the club and especially his fellow players. He is similar to Leo Casey in that he doesn't say much. He shows with his actions what it means to him and he has been a 100% grafter every week since he joined us from Lancashire Lynx.

Knocker epitomises the ideal of a great pro – at Lynx he was the rock in a struggling team and yet still never took a backwards step. At Oldham he arrived when we were on the up – indeed I remember having to talk him step by step through his first winning pay packet!! And has played in a number of high profile games for us including the Grand Final in 2001.

Thanks for all your efforts Knocker, and good luck in the future.

Enjoy the game,

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 everyone from the City Reds this afternoon which we all know will be the sternest task of our remaining home games. The Reds have been a fine force in this division and played some outstanding football this season, with us being on the receiving end on three occasions. I am, therefore, looking at today as a benchmark for our improvement over the last month or so.

Today marks the start of the final third of the season with six left to play. Salford today and Leigh next week are not fixtures I would have hand picked but I feel if we're going to be serious contenders we must be competitive in these fixtures. Last week's Dewsbury game was one I am relieved to have got out of the way as the Rams had earmarked that game as a must win to stave off relegation. I thought the professionalism shown by the squad was well on the way to what we are striving for, and the way we kept our composure when we went two scores behind shows that the squad has gained greatly in confidence.

It would be remiss of me not to use this opportunity in my column to pay tribute to Paul (Knocker) Norton and his forced retirement from the game. If ever there was a player whose name was going to be on the team sheet it was Paul, as a no-nonsense, fierce competitor who would not take a backward step, he was a must. Over the years I have played alongside lots of big named front rowers with massive reputations, but Knocker just got on with the job, and it is probably only his fellow professionals who will appreciate how good a player and pro Paul was – no is! We certainly hope Knocker's face will be seen around these parts for many seasons to come.

Enjoy the game.

Steve

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IN TOWN Today - Salford



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

Andy Coley

Height: 6ft 3" Weight: 106kg

Second Row or Prop

Honours: Lancashire 2001

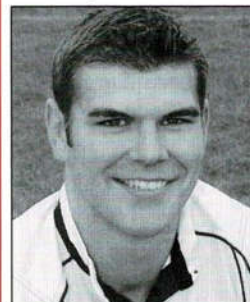
Andrew Gorski

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

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

International Honours: Ireland International

Jason Flowers

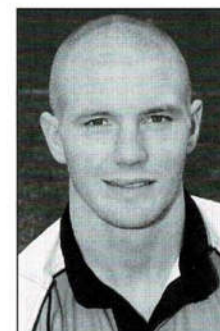
Height: 6ft Weight: 14 stone 8lb

Fullback, Centre or Second Row

Club Honours: Player of the Year with Castleford

International Honours: GB Academy and Scottish

International



Malcolm Alker

Malcolm Alker

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

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 Tries for a forward in a season for Featherstone

Rovers – 27 tries 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

International Honours: England Captain

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, skipping the British Lions on their first ever tour of Australasia in 1910. He joined 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



Peter Smethurst

but the highlights of that era were the First Division Championship successes of 1974 and 1976.

Relegation from Super League last autumn was a big blow for Salford but they have coped well in the National League. They reached the quarter-finals of the Powergen Challenge Cup and last month beat Leigh in the final of the Arriva Trains League Cup competition. Their position at the top of the National League suggests that they will enter the play-offs as favourites to lift further silverware and return to Super League as Champions of National League, Division One.

From The Pen Of

.....Michael Turner



Of Roughyeds And ... The Red Devils

TODAY we extend a warm welcome to the players, officials and supporters of the Salford club who despite this being an ultra competitive division remain hot favourites to return to "Super League" at the first attempt.

Fixtures between the two clubs go right back to the pre Rugby League era with the first meeting taking place in 1881. However, the "Reds" did not form part of the breakaway group of 22 clubs who formed the Northern Union in 1895 and so it was not until the opening day of the second season of the new competition that the teams met in a

league fixture. On April 4th 1903 the clubs played out a scoreless draw in the Challenge cup semi final at Broughton. Salford won the replay four days later at the same venue by nine points to nil but lost to Halifax in the final at Headingley.

In the 1909-10 season, Oldham finished top of the league of twenty eight teams with Salford in the runners up spot. In the play offs the Roughyeds defeated Wakefield at Watersheddings but Salford lost at home to Wigan leaving it to Oldham to take the Championship with a 13-7 win over the Central Parkers. The match again played at Broughton.

Both clubs have had their high and low points throughout the years but rarely has there been a time when both Oldham and Salford have been at top form. Nevertheless, a Roughyeds versus Red Devils fixture still fires the imagination and conjures memories of the "greats" who have represented the sides. Sid Rix and Bob Sloman for Oldham in the 1920s, with Alan Davies, Charlie Winslade and Sid Little in the 1950s. Gus Risman and Barney Hudson for Salford in the 1930s and that star studded team of the 1970s featuring the likes of David Watkins, Chris Hesketh and Paul Charlton to name but three.



Ike Southward goes over for a try in the match at Watersheddings on February 6th 1960. Result: Oldham 20 Salford 15.

THINGS certainly seem to be looking up since I last put pen to paper for the Doncaster game. We won that game well, despite a gutsy fight back from a Doncaster team who seem to be in the habit of late, of performing poorly in the first half and then coming good in the second. Last week at Hornets they won the second half 26-16 despite losing the match 50-34.

Last week at Dewsbury might not have been technically as competent as far as we were concerned – there were certainly lots of mistakes – but we won. And that was no mean feat considering what the game meant to Dewsbury and the fact that the 'new' Oldham club had never won before at Dewsbury.

Other results also went our way and we have now climbed to 5th place, level on points with 4th place Featherstone. But it's still very tight with only two points separating 4th and 8th place teams. On top of that we have a very difficult August with home ties against Salford today and Hull KR and visits to Leigh and Whitehaven. The Cumbrian side might be going through a dodgy spell but are never easy to turn over at home – Remember last season? I'm still having nightmares about that match.

One of the main topics of discussion amongst the rugby fanatics in and around the town has been to discover what in particular has been responsible for the team's turn around in form and results? There have been plenty of suggestions, including: the return from injury of experienced back rower, Darren Shaw; the movement of Jon Goddard to full back and Doddy to the wing; the conversion of Lee Doran into a centre; a more consistent 17 due to lack of injuries, especially in the half back pairings, and the team finally gelling as a unit. To be honest it's probably not any one of these but a combination of them all and the fact that they all seem to have happened in the last few weeks. This has given the lads more confidence in themselves and enabled them to play 'smarter' rugby. To me we are at our best and most dangerous in attack when we are allowed or determined to perform quick play the balls – and isn't it great seeing

"Scruffy" making those darting runs from acting half back again.

On the down side I must pay my tribute to Paul (Knocker) Norton who has been forced to give up the game because of a spinal injury. I am sure Chris and Steve will have something to say about this in today's programme so I will keep it brief. Knocker epitomises to me all that is good in the game of rugby league – a player most admired by his teammates. Knocker always reminds me of an incident in one of my first naive skirmishes with the microphone as PA at Hurst Cross last season. Cleggy had persuaded me, when announcing the teams half an hour before kick off, to replace Paul (Knocker) Norton with Paul (The Nose) Norton. Unfortunately this coincided with all the players doing press ups on the field as part of the warm up. They all collapsed on the ground in stitches and the warm up was seriously disrupted. I got a severe telling off but fortunately we won the game and Knocker seems to have forgiven me. Seriously we wish him all the best for the future and hope to still see him around at our games – we will all certainly welcome him.

On another disappointing note Barrow, at this very late stage in the season, have pulled out of the Academy League. This has made a real mess of the play offs – the two teams still to play them, Sheffield and Doncaster have been given the points with similar for and against scores. This means that Oldham finish top and go straight into the Grand Final and Sheffield and Doncaster play each other for the right to meet Oldham in the Final. (Details on the Academy page).

Finally a great big thank you to all of you who turned up after the Doncaster game for the BBQ at the new Social Club. It really was a great turn out and enjoyed by all. Can I just encourage as many of you as possible to start supporting the new club and making it your base and regular 'watering hole'. At present the old Hartford Club members far outnumber Rugby members and we really do want to make this a Rugby Club to be proud of and a regular meeting place for Oldham Rugby fans.

ROUGHYEDS

WALKERS CIGARS

JOE FERGUSON
628 matches, 1899/1923

JACK READ
463 matches, 1904/40

MIKE ELLIOTT
1906/79

FRED ASHWORTH
435 matches, 1906/38

NORMAN PUGH
365 matches, 1904/18

BERNARD GANLEY
341 matches, 1901/01

BILLY MITCHELL
310 matches, 1930/54

ALBERT AVERY
289 matches, 1900/14

BOB SLOMAN
268 matches, 1901/29

ROTHWELL MARLOR
254 matches, 1914/27

GEORGE FRATER
252 matches, 1896/1905

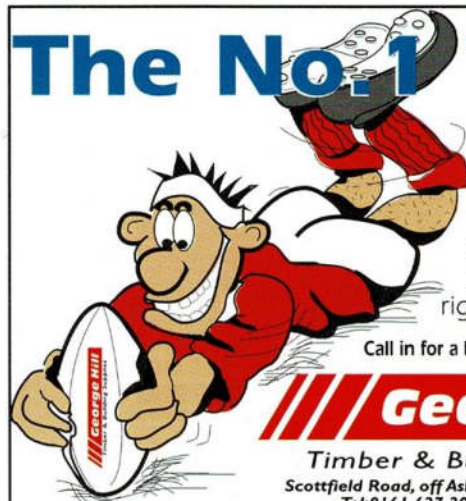
BILLY DIXON
201 matches, 1903/11

JOHNNY NOON
200 matches, 1904/04

The Story

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Back On The Terraces

..... With Simon Winnard

What a difference a few weeks can make in Rugby League, particularly when the game has finally found a truly competitive structure for the first time in my lifetime. Indeed, looking through all the divisions you can see that, for the vast majority of teams, there is a massive amount to play for as the season goes right down to the wire, something that can only be good for the game.

From Oldham's perspective, the last three games have resulted in 6 valuable league points which now means that the Roughyeds have given themselves a real fighting chance of reaching the play offs. The Roughyed rollercoaster ride continues when, just three weeks ago, we were staring at the possibility of getting dragged down into a relegation battle.

The last three weeks have seen us finally achieve some of that consistency that was so badly lacking earlier in the season. There is clearly a renewed optimism and an excellent team spirit on show for all to see and the spectators are now starting to respond to this as the lads make their traditional end of season push for the play offs.

Key to this has been the stability that an unchanged line up brings, players are communicating more effectively, reading each others games when previously they looked almost like strangers. Also key has been the switch to stand off of Simon Svabic, who has brought a whole new dimension to our attacking play. As a result we look far better organised, are now achieving a higher completion rate, the backs are receiving accurate ball in space and our kicking game has got a variety that constantly keeps opposition defences guessing. Don't get me wrong, we are far from being a one man team, indeed, Svabic's presence has opened the door for other team mates to show what they can do with the ball in their hands. Lee Doran out wide is a prime example of this with 7 tries in 3 games for the makeshift centre.

That said, it's all too easy to get carried away, the report card reads, 'showing signs of improvement but could do better'. Whilst attacking we are now really putting the opposition under real pressure, defensively we can still look rather frail at times, particularly out wide. However, what typifies the newly found never say die attitude of the

Roughyeds, is the tenacity of our scrambling defence which I believe is second to none in NL1.

Of course, Salford today provide a real test of just how far we have come in recent weeks. After the two drubbings received from them earlier this season, it will be interesting to see just how the boys react today. Level playing field? OK, they have TV money which allows them to employ a squad of full time professionals, they certainly couldn't do that with the gates they have achieved over the last couple of seasons, but I believe that this is more about attitude than anything else. Other teams such as Leigh, Whitehaven and Featherstone have shown what can be achieved if you front up to the challenge. Today we should see a different Oldham entertain their near neighbours and hopefully no repeat performance of their last visit, they should of course need no more motivation than that!!

On a wider scale, financial concerns have meant that Rugby League's international calendar is set to significantly change over the coming years with the establishment of a Tri-Nations tournament. Whilst the World sevens will be retained in Sydney, Great Britain will host the new 13 a side competition for the next three years. It was also confirmed that two Tests would be played between Australia and New Zealand next year.

The decision to confirm Great Britain as the venue for the Tri Nations tournaments of 2004, 2005 and 2006 was seen as a boost for the game in the UK. However, this effectively puts paid to the possibility of future Lions and Kangaroo tours in the short term, this despite the growing anticipation of the Kangaroo tour later this year. In respect of the sevens, it was viewed that the competition had provided a real boost for the game internationally, particularly in non-traditional/developmental areas for the game.

Personally, whilst World Cups have proven to be a severe financial risk, I believe that the tours are an integral part of the fabric of our game and represent the pinnacle of any RL players career. In terms of pounds and pence we will be able to judge their real popularity come the end of the year. Therefore, I would urge the International RL federation to hold fire before making any hasty decisions just yet.

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THE news that three RL players have been sentenced to be detained for brawling in Leeds City Centre is bad news for the sport. Following on the farcical failed drug test situation involving Keiron Cunningham, the sentences on Chev Walker, Ryan Bailey and Paul Owen, do the game no favours. So what should we expect of our professional players? Here's some pearls of wisdom collected by Iva over the years that might help put these young men back on the paths of righteousness.

YOU CAN WIN WITH ALL TYPES OF PLAYERS EXCEPT DUMB ONES.

If you can't improve a man as a citizen then you can't make him a footballer.

SOME PLAYERS ALWAYS LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WILL HAVE AN EXCEPTIONAL GAME NEXT WEEK. (? Chev Walker)

He will never be a good rugby player because of his ears - he never takes the trouble to listen.

YOU HAVE TO SEE A GUY PLAY - YOU NEED TO BE CAREFUL OF GUYS WHO ARE STARS IN THEIR UNDERWEAR.

If you start with a good player you don't want him to turn into a nitwit. (? Ryan Bailey)

YOU CAN'T GO AROUND THE PLACE LIKE A DUMMY ALL WEEK AND BE A CHAMPION ON SUNDAY. (? Paul Owen)

Unfortunately some players prefer to act like stars in bars rather than on the playing field. (? OUR THREE REPROBATES)

OR is Iva being too demanding in view of the following opinion?

AT TIMES RUGBY HEROES HAVE FALLEN SHORT OF OUR EXPECTATIONS IN THEIR PERSONAL LIVES, BUT IS IT FAIR TO PUT PLAYERS ON PEDESTALS,

A POSITION THEY NEVER REQUESTED. WHEN ALL THEY EVER REALLY ASKED WAS TO BE JUDGED ON THE BASIS OF HOW THEY PERFORMED ON THE FIELD?

♦ ♦ ♦

Some random observations:-

To be a hooker in League you have to be part gorilla, part bull and part sick! (Not John Hough, surely?)

HE'S BIG ENOUGH TO BURN DIESEL. (? Martin McLoughlin)

He's hostile, mobile and agile. (? Chris Morley)

HE LOOKS LIKE HE NEEDS WORMING. (One for older readers - Brian Bevan.)

He can't even catch his breath. (? Nathan Graham in the Cup final 1998.)

HE'S A RUGBY EXORCIST - SCARES THE DEVIL OUT OF YOU. (? Phil Farrell)

Scoring a try is a simple procedure. It's a matter of placing the ball over the white line - but getting yourself in a position to execute this is the tough part. (? Lee Doran)

THE FRONT ROW IS MAN TO MAN COMBAT; ONCE YOU GO IN, THERE IS NO ONE TO TURN TO. (Props and hookers everywhere.)

They say he's so fast he could turn the lights out and be in bed before it gets dark. (? Gavin Dodd)

LEGS LIKE TREE TRUNKS? HE'LL HAVE TO WATCH OUT FOR WHITE ANTS. (? Danny Guest)

He's tough enough - he's just bought one of those Tarzan chest wigs. (? Darren Shaw)

THE DOG THAT TROTS ABOUT FINDS A BONE. (? Simon Svabic)

Success is the child of audacity. (? Neil Roden)

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"You know I like doing anagrams," said Shaz, "well, get this one! Dane Morgan - A GRAND OMEN!! That must mean something

big is coming!!" I bet Featherstone's full-back thought that when he saw Dane charging towards him on that break, only I bet he didn't think those exact words! She said she wondered if he drives the Chron. van like he plays rugby? "I can see it now," she imagined, "here comes Morgan on the charge! He screeches to a halt in front of W. H. Smith's - oh, yes ... just before he stops, he puts out a peach of a delivery of a batch of Chrons. round the steering wheel and out

of the back door! Oh, no! ... the newsagent wasn't expecting that, and he drops them and breaks his foot, but, luckily, they went backwards (must have been yesterday's!) and off shoots Morgan to set himself up for another drive!"

"He was at the club after the Donnie game - that was a wicked 'do' - and he was well impressed, 'specially with the barbie. Except he asked where the prawns were, and they told him we were in the concert room! Cheeky or what? He said his favourite were Tiger prawns." So Shaz started acting like a "Blind Date" bimbo, and gushed, "if he chooses me, I'll show him I can be a REAL tiger!"

That'd be enough to make him veggie for life!

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See you there!

Love,
Shaz & Trace

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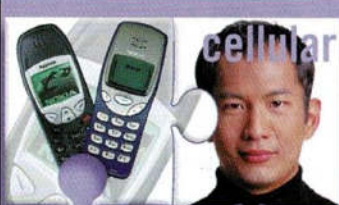


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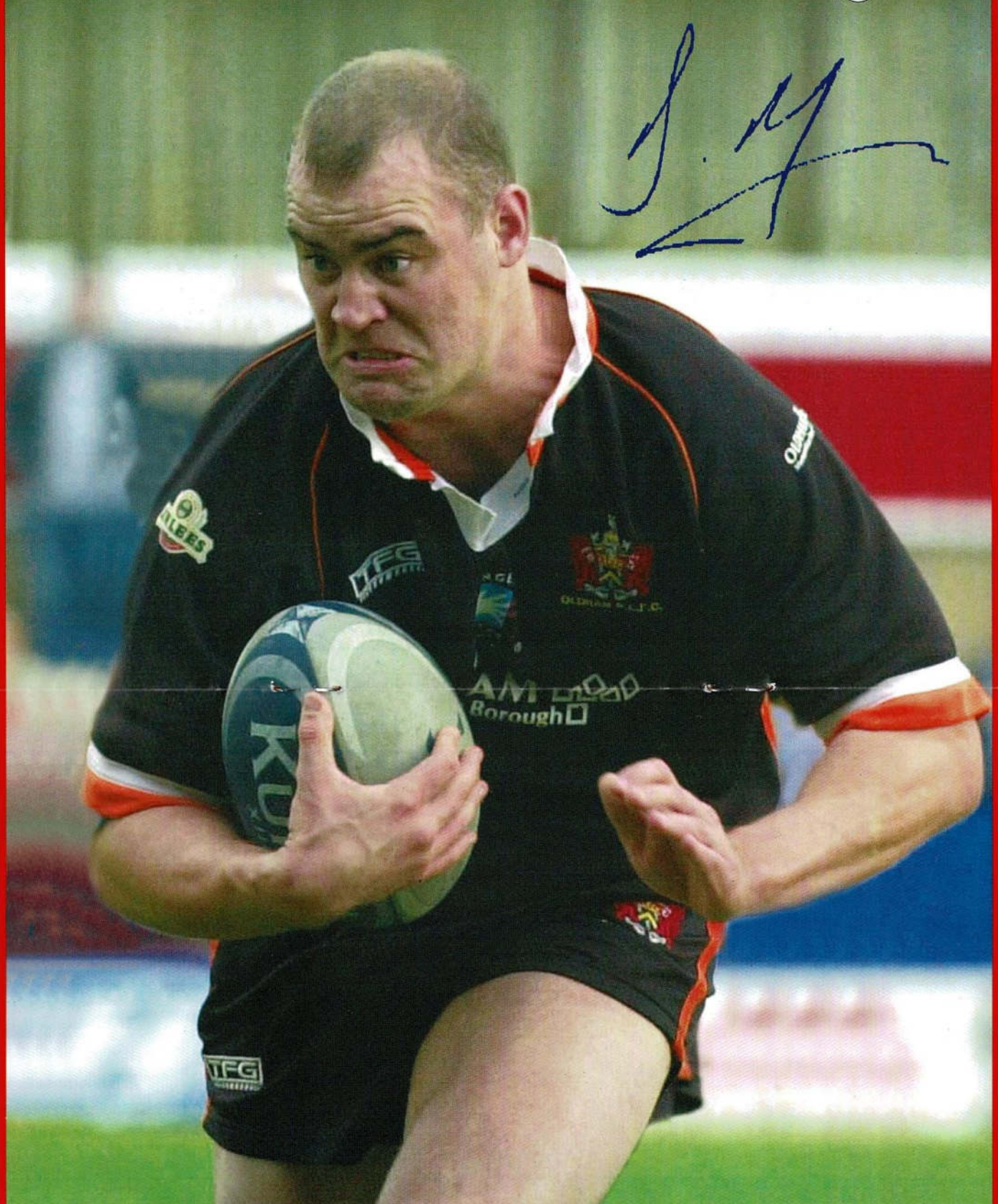
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Profile of . . . Dane Morgan



Oldham's big Australian prop Dane Morgan (24), who joined the Roughyeds in February on a contract until the end of the season, has a burning ambition to play in Super League. The ex West Tigers and North Sydney forward scored a try playing for Melbourne Storm when they defeated St. Helens in the World Club Championship at the JJB Stadium.

Morgan has hit a rich vein of form as the Roughyeds approach the business end of the season and is proving to be one of the best off loaders of the ball outside Super League.

Recently married he lives with his wife Julie in Chadderton and works part time for the Oldham Evening Chronicle in their Delivery and Promotions Department.

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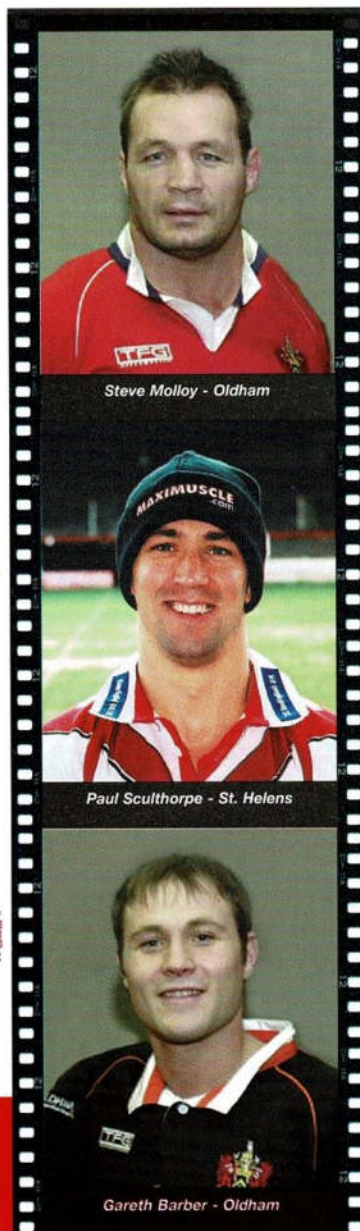
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Steve Molloy - Oldham

Paul Sculthorpe - St. Helens

Gareth Barber - Oldham

Does the kit fit?

Dane Morgan



9 am is Dane's get-up time on match days where he wolfs down four Weetabix and a banana bun (banana buttie to us). He sits on his own on the coach to away games, sometimes to concentrate on the day's game but mostly because he's such a long streak of *?£! and he likes to stretch out.

His first nickname on arriving in England from his team mates was Donk after the big, dumb bu**er from the Crocodile Dundee films, but lately they have taken to calling him Patch, as he is fast developing one (on his head).

Just before setting off to games he now likes to have a kick about with a football. Since he started doing it he thinks his form has improved. He doesn't know why "but, hey if it works, what the hell". For match prep he likes to sit on his own and focuses on his own game. It also gives him time and privacy to put on his lucky garter.

Best Advice from a coach came from Chris Anderson when at Melbourne: "You can never do too much training."

Worst Advice was from Mark Murray at Queensland who told him it was time he retired. "Cheeky Dag!"

Best pre-match prep talk was at High School when the coach sat them down to watch the Rocky films.

WORST AND BEST Changing Rooms

Best: Boundary Park

Worst: Barrow (too small)

Playing Surface

Best: Boundary Park

Worst: Batley (slope again)

Food

Best: Salford

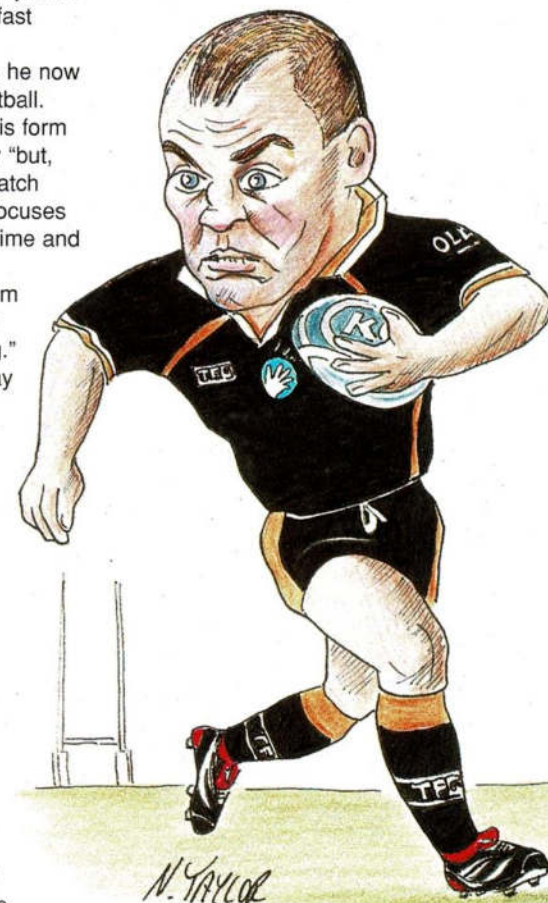
Worst: Hard to say we've had some muck in a few places.

"Jon Goddard certainly gets my vote as the most improved player, he just seems to get better every game."

He thinks he looks like Jean Claude Van Damme. I hasten to add this was his own opinion and I'm certain it was influenced by the amount of Warsteiner he'd consumed.

Joke: What's the difference between an Aussie Wedding and an Aussie Funeral? One less drunk.

Mitch.



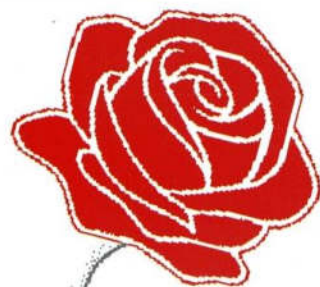
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Senior Academy

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 26-30

19 DONCASTER DRAGONS A 27-22

(THORNESIANS)

AUGUST 2003

2 PLAY OFF RND ONE

9 SNR ACADEMY FIRST DIV GRAND FINAL

23 PROMOTION/RELEGATION PLAY OFF 1

30 PROMOTION/RELEGATION PLAY OFF 2



*James Kirkland had a
top game against the
Dragons.*

THE Senior Academy U21 First Division fell apart last week when a quarter of the league surrendering – Barrow Raiders, who had anyway failed to storm any ramparts packed in.

After a cracking performance from the Oldham lads who slayed the Doncaster Dragon by 27 points to 22 at Thorne RU's Dunkirk ground to maintain their position at the top of the table. The demise of the Raiders means that their two unplayed matches against Sheffield Eagles and the Dragons have each been given a mythical score of 54-15 against the Raiders by the RL. Thus Oldham finished the season top of the tree with 14 points, Doncaster in second place also with 14 points but with an inferior scoring aggregate leaving the Eagles perched firmly on the third branch with 10.

Oldham now play Doncaster at home on Saturday August 9th in the play-offs, the winner automatically going through to the final and the loser then playing the Eagles to decide the second finalist.

There was supposed to be a relegation/ promotion issue with the 62 teams in the Senior Academy Championship who at the time of writing each still had another 28 league matches to compete, so just where Barrow's demise leaves that I am not quite sure but the RL have pencilled in a date sometime next year.

Anyway if the last three battles with the Dragons are anything to go by next Saturday's match will be a bust up! Put your money on St. George and take a tin hat!

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

Words of Wilson

... by Ian Wilson

What an amazing difference a fortnight can make! At 3 o'clock on Sunday, July 13 we were in 8th place in National League 1, with 6 points from 9 games, and staring the prospect of a struggle against relegation – with all that would involve – squarely in the face. However, by 5 o'clock two weeks later, here we are with 12 points from 12 games, settled in at 5th spot in the table, indeed level on points with Featherstone in 4th place.

When Batley drew level with us, and then missed two easy drop goal chances, you only had to observe the looks on most of our players' faces to see how little confidence they had. And of course this was further reinforced in the abject thrashing at Rochdale. However, the contrast at Dewsbury was quite remarkable. Even when Jamie Benn was putting over his two drop goals, well into the second half, to extend Dewsbury's lead over us, and playing up the slope and with the wind, we still had the look of a side with the belief that we could still win the game. And so it turned out.

How can such a turn around be explained? I am sure there is not just one factor involved. For example, Neil Roden's marvellous display off the sub's bench against Featherstone suddenly revitalised an attack which had looked fairly lack-lustre for most of the previous league games, if we

are honest. No doubt, too, the restoration of Simon Svabic at stand off, as Simon Winnard had previously suggested in this programme, has also helped in this respect.

But I would also like to point to the contributions of some of the most experienced heads in the pack. Phil Farrell – an old head in terms of the way he plays, at least, though not in terms of chronological age – has been immense in all three of the wins. Steve Molloy has also hit on what seems to be a very effective method of rotating his forwards, with Danny Guest and Martin McLoughlin achieving great things off the bench, and Dane Morgan particularly effective in his second half spells. The second row men too, particularly Chris Morley down the left, have been solid when it mattered.

Of course, it would be stupid to think that we have suddenly become a Grand Final side. I still personally have a real concern about our defence – an average of 29.4 points conceded per game, so far and only once, in the superbly committed effort against Leigh, keeping our opponents below 20 points. And, starting with today's game, there aren't too many easy points to be had in our remaining fixtures, it should be said. However, at least we have seen significant change in the right direction – some smiles on faces!

Ian Wilson

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Clubs prepare for thrilling run in

Express

By GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS

THE National League seasons are now two thirds of the way through, and both competitions are set for a thrilling run-in.

In National League One, the top three places look assured at present with Salford, Leigh and Rochdale the current occupants and well clear of their rivals. But they will all be jostling for places among themselves, with a place in the top two the most coveted ahead of the play-offs.

All three still have to play each other, with Salford having the upper hand as they play both the Centurions and Hornets at home.

Underneath that trio lies a cluster of teams scrambling for the remaining three places.

Going into the Round 13 of fixtures, five clubs are separated by just two points - Featherstone, Oldham, Whitehaven, Hull KR and Doncaster. And all five will feel they have a good chance of making the top six.

The only two teams that appear out of the race are bottom duo Batley Bulldogs and Dewsbury Rams - whose main concerns now are avoiding relegation.

Only the bottom club is automatically demoted - and the Rams are firm favourites at the moment, not least because of their daunting fixture list. Of their six remaining games, only two are at home and one of those is to leaders Salford. They also still have to travel to Leigh, Rochdale and Whitehaven. In contrast, four of Batley's remaining six games are at home.

But - wrongly or rightly - the teams that finish eighth and ninth can also be relegated due to the unusual format. Eighth will play ninth in an additional play-off match, and the loser of that game will face the defeated NL2 Grand Finalists. Whoever loses that showdown - which will be played at the NL1 club's ground - will play in National League Two next season.

IN NL2, there are seven teams in contention for the six places - and just five points separate top of

the pile Keighley from seventh placed Swinton.

With all those sides having several fixtures against each other, the permutations between now and the end of the campaign are almost endless.

Those sides that can find some consistent form between now and September will find themselves in the top three. And it could easily be any three of that leading seven.

The only clubs out of the race are Gateshead Thunder, Workington Town and London Skolars.

But despite the fact that they cannot be relegated, they will all have their own objectives between now and the end of the campaign - especially the Skolars, still looking for their first win.

All of which illustrates why the splitting of the old NFP has been a tremendous success, on the field at least. A few more supporters through the gates wouldn't go amiss, but that's an issue for another column...



**Jon Goddard- League Express
Man of the Match v Dewsbury**

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HERE'S TO THE NEXT ONE

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In Yer Face

FOR fans of international rugby league the news that a tri-nations series will be played in each of 2004, 2005 and 2006 is good. Or is it? While contests against Australia and New Zealand will generate much needed interest and publicity, this is surely second best to staging a World Cup. Yes, I know 2000 wasn't a rip-roaring success but rugby league needs to take a good, hard, long look at itself for snatching failure from the jaws of success. After all 1995 had been an outstanding tournament and made it clear that the right organisation and marketing could provide a fabulous competition. The tragedy, of course, is that the Australians are now almost as insular as the Americans. Rugby League down under has almost become like American football or baseball, where the only contest lies within the nation. And so a 'World Series' pits New York versus Boston and woe betide upstart Canadians in Toronto should they dare to challenge native supremacy.

These days the height of Australian ambition is Roosters versus Knights and – similarly – woe betide New Zealand Warriors for having the effrontery to reach a Grand Final. And, of course, the ultimate contest is Queensland v New South Wales. Sorry, but here in the Old Dart, however tough those contests are they seem a poor substitute for international competition. And that opinion seems sure to be upheld when all the hullabaloo starts around the 'kick-and-clap' World Cup this Autumn. If Australia has the ability to stage a World Sevens competition successfully in February each year then I think it's about time their administrators took the plunge and staged a World Cup. For a start I reckon they could count on around 10,000 British fans on the trip of a lifetime. And if they don't think they can get the 'cobblers' to turn up for France v Papua New Guinea then it's time they acknowledged that, though they might be world champion players, as spectators and followers of the game they're second class

❖ ❖ ❖

AFTER three successive victories things are starting to look a little brighter here at Boundary Park. While the Dewsbury victory did not carry the conviction of the home results

against Featherstone and Doncaster, it did suggest that the Roughyeds are finding some form when it matters – at the business end of the season.

Today's visit by Salford City Reds, everybody's favourite for a quick return to Super League (at least outside Leigh), will test Oldham to the limit. After three good hidings at the hands of this particular opposition Oldham will at least enter today's match with rather more confidence than previously, but to pull off what would be a surprise victory the Roughyed pack will need to get on top of a powerful Salford six and then subdue the best halfbacks in the division in Gavin Clinch and Cliff Beverley. A tall order, yes, but an impossibility, no.

Meanwhile competition for the play-off places intensifies and is succeeding in its objective of maintaining interest to the end of the season. Dewsbury look favourites for automatic relegation yet are – as we saw last weekend – an extremely competitive side. Batley look likely to finish immediately above them, victims of the loss of their outstanding halfback pair from last season, Dean Lawford and Glen Tomlinson. Thereafter it's wide open with every match absolutely vital. Apart from Oldham having today's toughest encounter, how about Featherstone v Leigh? The visitors may be full of confidence but Fev at the Lionheart are almost invincible, Whitehaven v Rochdale could go either way with my money on a home win and, although Doncaster might be expected to dispose of Dewsbury and Hull KR to account for Batley at the Mount, don't be too surprised if either of the Heavy Woollen sides come up with a win.

National League Two is equally intriguing with some enthralling encounters to come and, although Keighley are my favourites for promotion, what price Darren Abram's Chorley to claim a promotion spot? It's all great news for the new format which, in my view, has proved extremely successful. If only we could get the bodies through the turnstiles to support the game at this level. I despair of people's attitude to sport these days when only the top level of competition will do. It's killing soccer; let's hope rugby league, with sensible budgeting, can prove more robust.

GC

ON THIS DAY

... with Don Yates

AUGUST
03



SIX YEARS AGO Salford were one of the Super League clubs battered from pillar to post by the might of the Australian Super League in the World Club Championship. However, on Sunday 3rd August 1997 the Red Devils gained revenge for a 50 point mauling which they suffered in Adelaide when they beat the Adelaide Rams 14-12 in the return encounter at the Willows. The Australian domination of the competition looked likely to continue when Adelaide scored two first half tries. Despite these early setbacks, Salford stuck to their task. Winger Darren Rogers scored a try and stand-off Steve Blakeley landed four penalties which enabled Salford to draw level at 12-apiece. In the closing ten minutes of the match Salford substitute Mark Lee snatched victory with a couple of dropped goals, much to the delight of the crowd of 6,995.

It was on this day in 1920, Tuesday 3rd August, that the Great Britain touring team defeated King Country 47-3 at Taumarruni, New Zealand. The tourists ran in eleven tries that day with Harold Wagstaffe (Huddersfield) and Squire Stockwell (Leeds) each claiming a hat-trick. Oldham full-back Alf Wood landed six goals in that match.

The British Lions of 1946 endured a much tougher afternoon on Saturday 3rd August when the tourists were entertained by a powerful Auckland District XIII. The captain of those tourists was Gus Risman and also included in the British party was another Salford player, front-row forward George Curran. Both played against Auckland when a crowd of 20,000 saw the Lions win 9-7.

There were no Salford players selected for the 1958 tour although three Oldham players did make the trip. Prop Ken Jackson suffered injury early in the trip but centre Alan Davies and scrum-half Frank Pitchford both played significant roles throughout the tour. On Sunday 3rd August 1958 they both played against the New Zealand West Coast in Greymouth, a match which the Lions won

19-2. Davies scored more tries for Oldham than any other player, 174, and he later enjoyed short spells with Wigan and Wakefield Trinity before ending his playing career at Salford.

Stuart Whitehead was another player who enjoyed spells with both Oldham and Salford. He was a member of the Salford team that appeared at Wembley in 1969.



Stuart Whitehead

Salford lost that final but on Saturday 3rd August 1968 Whitehead was included in a Salford line-up which enjoyed a much better afternoon. The Reds took part in the Wigan pre-season sevens that day when they beat Bradford Northern 11-2 and

Warrington 11-10 before lifting the trophy with a 26-23 win against Leeds in the final.

Oldham collected some silverware on Sunday 3rd August 1980 when they entertained Rochdale Hornets at Watersheddings in the Law Cup. The Roughyeds won 32-15 that afternoon with tries from Geoff Munro, Clive Hunter, Mike Cowley, Ray Ashton, Roger O'Mahoney and Terry Flanagan. Mick Worrall, another player who appeared for both Oldham and Salford, landed six goals and Ray Ashton landed one.

Finally, it is to be hoped that the weather this afternoon is much better than it was twelve months ago. On Saturday 3rd August 2002 the local amateur pre-season knockout competition was due to start with Shaw Rhinos entertaining St. Annes and Saddleworth Rangers visiting Waterhead. Unfortunately heavy rain caused both matches to be postponed because of waterlogged pitches.

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	23	0	14	0	0	56
Iain Marsh	18	1	3	0	0	12
Jon Goddard	18	1	4	0	0	16
Paul Anderson	15	6	8	0	0	32
Joe McNicholas	7	1	2	0	0	8
Simon Svabic	13	11	3	59	1	131
Neil Roden	16	5	5	0	3	23
Steve Molloy	21	2	2	0	0	8
John Hough	20	2	4	0	0	16
Martin McLoughlin	5	9	0	0	0	0
Lee Doran	24	0	12	0	0	48
Chris Morley	18	4	3	0	0	12
Phil Farrell	18	0	5	0	0	20
Gareth Barber	11	8	10	31	0	102
Gavin Johnson	0	3	0	0	0	0
Ryan Stazicker	12	4	4	0	0	16
Danny Guest	1	13	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	8	0	0	0	0	0
Darren Shaw	8	3	0	0	0	0
Keith Brennan	8	10	5	0	0	20
Dane Morgan	10	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 Roughyed Kids

We hope you are all enjoying your holidays (we are). Have you been doing loads of fun and exciting stuff?

Our next meeting is on the 5th of September. Most, if not all of you will be back in school then (YES!!) so we hope to see you all there at our usual place, the Roughyeds HQ.

Carole and myself must offer a big

apology to the **Oldham Advertiser** for not having thanked them along with our other sponsors for this season, who are, **Saddleworth Sports, F. R. Elswood Ltd. Third Axis Ltd. and A1 Upholstery.** As you know the **Advertiser** sponsors the framed photographs which each of our mascots receive as a memento of their big day. We are very grateful for their support and apologise once again for not having mentioned them before.

Today's mascot is 9 year old **Kristian Goodison**, whose favourite player is Steve Molloy. We hope you enjoy your day and bring us good luck.

See you soon,

Carole & Janet



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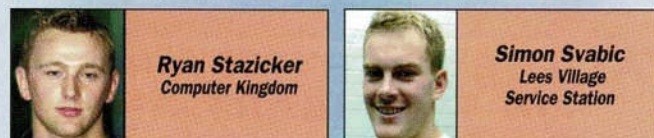
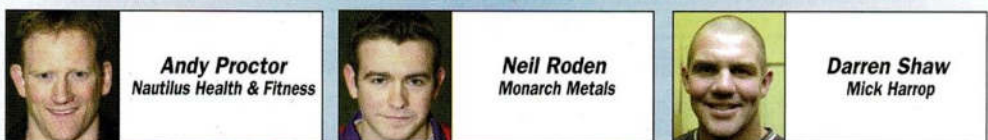
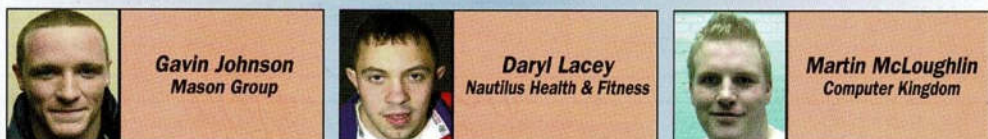
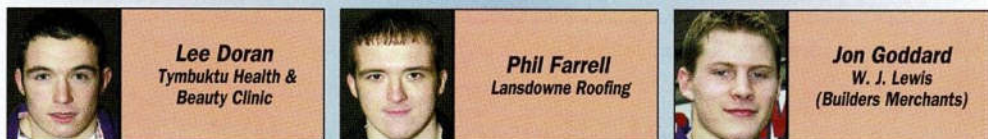


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Fixtures

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
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 W	35-24 1,235
20	DONCASTER DRAGONS	NL 1 W	31-20 1,254
27	DEWSBURY RAMS	NL 1 W	32-26 1,098
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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