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Referee: Mr A Klein
Touch Judges: Mr P Wroe & Mr R J Stokes
4th Official: M J Kidd

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Well here it is at last the part we enjoy most, when regular rugby is being played. I feel as if I shouldn't be referring to this as the first consortium corner of the season owing to the amount of rugby we have witnessed over the last few weeks at Hilton Park. With Tommy's testimonial game and the Widnes u21 game giving us the opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the new faces. The early rugby saw young Adam Bibey the product of Ronnie and brother of Ricky signed to Widnes Vikings. I know Adam was particularly upset about leaving Leigh but felt he had to take his chance and I fully support that decision. Adam joins Widnes with our best of luck and although we would of much preferred to retain Adam we for once recieved a payment for a talented prospect.

I must congratulate Leigh Miners Rangers for hosting in my opinion the best game of rugby at Hilton Park this year. They were desperately unlucky in a spirited performance which they deserved to be the victors against a national league two championship winning side. They certainly did the town proud and were well supported by the public.

So to this season a slow start in the Arriva Trains competition at Swinton to a comprehensive victory of a spirited amateur side in Elland. That probably doesn't give us a great deal to go on but I firmly believe we have the personnel to be successful in all departments this year. In Alan Rowley we have an excellent Chief Executive who provides an excellent rounding of the business and reports to the board. Mike Callaghan has also worked hard in the closed season the results of which are clearly visible. But most importantly I feel we have a young aspiring coach with a hungry team of quality players who will deliver the goods we all crave.

This year we have invested increased funds into building a better team to the maximum cap permissible in our division. We as directors are committed to funding any shortfall but are actively trying to increase all income streams to minimise our expenditure in order that this can be utilised for developing other areas. With the new outside bar much improved catering cabins and Sky tv with discounted beer prices in the Mick Martyn Bar I hope you can join us earlier than usual supporting the bars that part fund the team on the field.

So today we welcome the directors officials players and fans of Oldham. I am sure this will give us a clearer picture of where we are against one of the main contenders of the division. Oldham will be as difficult as always and have made some good signings in the lead up to the competition. I am sure Darren will be keen to get one over on his old team which should make a cracking spectacle.

Enjoy the game and I look forward to seeing you in the Mick Martyn Bar at 6pm for the usual after match presentations.

MATCH VOUCHER

#1 (v Oldham)

15/02/2004

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MATCH RECORDS Goals: 15 by Mick Stacey v Doncaster 28/3/76
Tries: 6 by Jack Wood v York 4/10/47 & Neil Turley v Workington 31/1/01 Points: 38 by John Woods v Ryedale York 12/1/92 • **WORLD RECORD** Tries in a season by a Full Back: 55 by Neil Turley 2000-01 • **SEASON RECORDS** Goals: 173 by Chris Johnson 1985-88 Tries: 55 by Neil Turley 2000-01 Points: 400 by Chris Johnson 1985-88 • **CAREER RECORDS** Goals: 1,043 by Jim Ledgerd 1948-58 Tries: 189 by Mick Martyn 1954-67: Points: 2,492 by John Woods 1976-85, 1990-92 **RECORD APPEARANCES** 503 by Albert Worral 1921-35, 1936-38 **BIGGEST WIN** 92-2 v Keighley 30/4/86 **HIGHEST ATTENDANCE** 31,224 v St Helens 14/3/53

LEIGH CENTURIONS CLUB OFFICIALS

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The views expressed in this programme are not necessarily those of Leigh Centurions RLFC or the Directors

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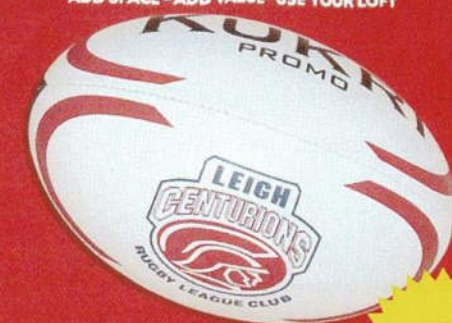
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Lottery Results

This weeks SuperLeigh winners are as follows: (Draw 27)
£1000, No.7613, J. PEACHEY of Leigh, Agent 85 (Sanderson)
£250, No.5277, J. DAY of Culcheth, Agent24 (Shuttleworth)
£100, No.6622, B. PILLING of Leigh, Agent 128 (Healey)
£50, No.2829, J. COX of Leigh, Agent 92 (Bowen)
£50, No.6979, H. JACKSON of Leigh, Agent 44 (Sumner)
£10, No.6115, B. ELSE of Golborne, Agent.149 (Lea)
£10, No.30, B. FAIRBROTHER of Leigh, Agent 79 (Keegan)

£5, No.921, J. WALTON of Leigh, Agent 71 (Sandford)
£5, No.4227, V. RILEY of Leigh, Agent 48 (Maplestone)
£5, No.10555, G. CLARKSON of Leigh, Agent 27 (Grainey)
£5, No.740, G. THORPE of Leigh, Agent 31 (Patels)
£5, No.1186, H. WALMSLEY of Atherton, Agent 49 (Holding)
£5, No.6450, R. PARKINSON of Leigh, Agent 41 (Dickinson)
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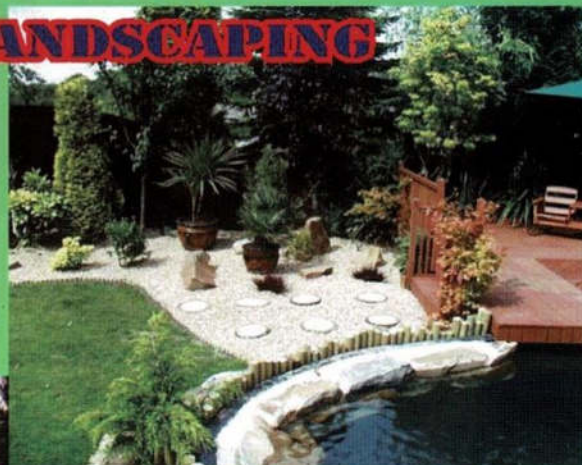
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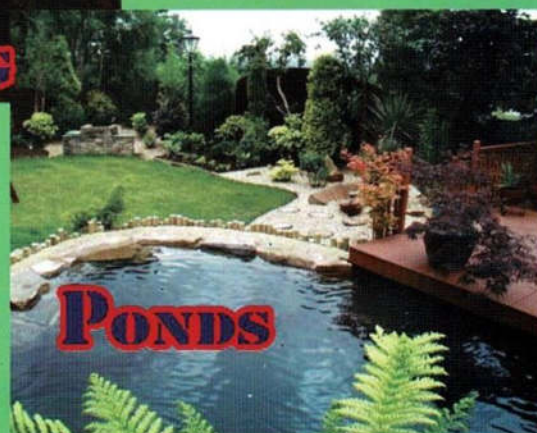
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Leigh Centurions 2004 Welcoming Oldham

Today we welcome Oldham for our first (proper) home game of the season. It was the same last season when we met in our first Arriva Trains Cup of last season. He is the match report from Leythers.co.uk.

Leigh Centurions 22, Oldham 14

Leigh took to the field in their 1st competitive game at the recently re-branded coliseum and emerged victorious against a stubborn Oldham side.

Leigh looked a bit rusty in attack but good defence ensured that Oldham created very little in way of attack and soon started trying to slow the game down.

Leigh started like a house on fire when 2 of the new boys created to score the 1st try just a few minutes into the game. The field position was set up by a great run by Adam Bristow. Then the 2 ex Widnes players combined as Sean Richardson sent over Damien Munro for a great try. Lee Sanderson was just wide with the goal kick.

Oldham hit back with a penalty goal through Simon Svabic.

On the half hour mark Lee Sanderson added another goal after having the ball ripped out in the tackle. It was the 3rd such offence in a matter of minutes but ref Peter Taberner felt it deserved no more than a talking to. Oldham looked very tired now and seems intent on trying to slow the game down at every chance. If their big forwards cant handle the game now, then they will really struggle when the pitches dry out.

2 Minutes later though Mr Taberner remembered he had brought his cards and he dispatched an Oldham player for lying on.

Lee Sanderson then added his 2nd penalty goal this time for lying on again. But Mr Taberner evened things up with a penalty that Simon Svabic getting a penalty for offside on the last tackle.

HT 8-4

Both teams started the 2nd half on fire. Oldham looked to have scored but were called back for a forward pass. Then Damien Munro went close after an intelligent kick from Adam Bristow.

Oldham then did score with a good try as they moved the ball along the line and created a gap out wide for Gavin Dodd's to just evade a last gasp tackle from Mike Watts who chased him down from the opposite wing. Oldham missed the kick to tie the scores.

Lee Sanderson then missed a penalty yet again for lying on.

John Hamilton then restored Leigh's lead as they ran the ball on the 5th tackle and surprised Oldham. Sean Richardson passed in the tackle and released Munro on a short run where he drew the fullback and sent John Hamilton over unopposed. Sandy added the goal.

The coliseum then saw a rare sight as a Leigh player broke in their own half and had enough pace to cross the line. Damien Munro broke the line and just went like a rocket having far too much pace for the Oldham defence. Sandy unfortunately missed the goal.

Both sides were then reduced to 12 men as Paul Rowley appeared to take exception to something in the tackle and started trading punches with Oldham boss Steve Molloy both were yellow carded and the incident placed on report.

With 5 minutes left Leigh let in a soft try as an Oldham kick was allowed to bounce and Oldham pounced for an easy try that was converted to narrow the gap to just 4 points.

Leigh weren't going to let this one slip and up the field they marched again. This time again scoring on the 5th tackle. Pat Weisner looked to have taken the wrong option when he ran the ball and looked to be wrapped up. But he showed all the strength his stocky build gives him and he released a perfect pass to the supporting Dave Alstead who powered over from 25 yards after taking 3 defenders with him. Sandy missed the kick.

FT 22 - 14

Leythers.co.uk man of the match

A close call between Sean Richardson, Adam Bristow and Damien Munro. Damien gets it though for his exceptional 2nd half try and all round speed during the game. Both in attack and defence.

Leythers.co.uk Magic moment

Has to be Munro's 2nd try. Pace to burn and looked to have more in reserve.

Leythers.co.uk Moan of the match

Different season same pillock's in the middle. Another year passes and still no clamp down on lying on and messing around at the ball.



Oldham Pen Pics

Dane Morgan

Oldham's big Aussie prop or second rower joined the Roughyeds in February 2003 and has recently extended his contract until the end of the 2004 season. He has a burning ambition to lay in Super League and has represented West Tigers, North Sydney and Melbourne Storm for whom he scored a try when they defeated St. Helens in the World Cup Championship at the JJB Stadium. He hit a rich vein of form at the end of last season and proved to be one of the best off loaders of a ball outside of Super League. Recently married, he lives in Oldham and works part-time for the local newspaper, the Oldham Evening Chronicle. Was voted the Junior Roughyeds Player of the Year in 2003.

Neil Roden

Joined the Roughyeds along with Phil Farrell from Wigan in April 2000 after serving a month on loan. He is the son of Wigan's chief scout and quickly made the scrum half spot his own. Very popular with his team mates, he was Player's Player of the Year in 2002 when he was also the club's leading try scorer. Has a phenomenal record at Oldham playing in 118 games out of a possible 126 in three and a half seasons, scoring 50 tries and 18 drop goals - a total of 218 points. Surely one of the best scrum halves outside of Super League.

Paul Southern

26 year old front row forward who, like Ian Watson, was also a major influence last year in the Rochdale Hornets camp. Big and strong he is known to be a clever ball handler and alongside Dane Morgan Oldham must have two of the best ball handling props in the business. Spent most of his career with Salford - much of it in Super League - and comes to Oldham to "prop-up" the front row following the departures of Paul Norton, Jason Clegg and Danny Guest.

Simon Svabic

Signed from Leigh at the end of the 2002 campaign. Simon battled for the standoff and goal kicking spot with Gareth Barber last season. Simon started his rugby league career with the now defunct Oldham Bears and has proved himself a skilful play worker and consistently good goal kicker. Also played at full back for Leigh. Showed great guile at times last season and is now part of one of the league's strongest half back squads consisting of Barber, Brennan, Roden, Watson and Simon himself.

Ian Watson

Aged 27, Ian is one of the most experienced scrumhalves in the game. Capped numerous times for Wales, he played most of his career with Salford City Reds, with whom he had considerable experience in Super League. A playmaker and midfield organiser, he was a key man in the Rochdale Hornets team that finished third in National League Division One last term. His last appearance for Wales was against the touring Australians at Bridgend in the autumn of 2003. He was picked at hooker and did enough to be named the best player in a red jersey.

Martin Elswood

Tall and fast, 20 year old Martin is an Oldham lad who lives in Shaw. Played soccer in his schoolboy days and was snapped up by Oldham Athletic on

schoolboy forms. When things didn't work out, he turned to rugby league, started to play for Royton Tigers and was quickly invited to the McAlpine Stadium for trials with Huddersfield. The Giants signed him on and he was there for a couple of seasons, mainly in the academy and alliance teams, until he snapped up the chance of a move to his hometown club in the autumn of 2003. Originally a centre, he now plays in the second row and that is where he sees his future.

Phil Farrell

At 23 Phil is one of the youngest club captains in the game. Brother of Wigan and GB captain Andy Farrell he joined Oldham from Wigan in March 2000 where he began a remarkable unbroken run of 67 matches - an almost impossible feat in modern day rugby. Played most of his career at second row but was converted to loose forward by Steve Molloy last season. Had surgery on his shoulder in the close season, but hopes to be back early in the 2004 season to lead Oldham from the front. Was voted the Players Player of the Year in 2003.

Craig Farrimond

Became a Roughyed on his 21st birthday at the end of the 2003 season. The club hopes this will be a good luck omen. Craig plays second row or loose forward. A Wiganer, who played his early rugby with Ince Rose Bridge before turning pro for Warrington Wolves. He captained the academy and then the alliance sides at Wilderspool before coming to Oldham highly recommended. He represented Super League under 21's last season against National League U21's at Leigh. He was picked at hooker and had a sound game.

Jon Goddard

Still only 21, Jon came to us on loan in 2002 on the recommendation of Castleford coach Graham Steadman. Signed a full time contract in 2003 and was one of the most consistent players all season, winning the Coach's choice as Player of the Year. Jon was reared in Castleford Youth & Schools rugby before going to the Jungle. Played three times in Super League for Castleford. Played most of his rugby at Oldham in the centre, but when Steve Molloy switched him to his favourite position of full back half way through last season he thrived and made the position his own.

John Hough

On his day seen by many as best hooker outside Super League and as good as many in it. "Scruff" was born in Oldham but signed for Warrington as a youngster. He, however, was the first player to sign for the newly formed "Roughyeds" in 1997 and has since played over 170 matches and scored over 50 tries. He was on the team sheet for 82 consecutive months between February 1999 and April 16th 2001. Is at present the club's vice captain.

Gavin Johnson

A back row forward who can also fill in at centre or wing. He has been joined this season by brother Nik who has joined the club from Bradford Bulls. Gavin also spent two seasons with the Bradford academy side before joining Oldham in 2000. He signed a two year contract in 2001 and has recently reviewed it for another year. He broke into the first team in 2002 but has made most of his appearances from the bench. Hoping to break into the first team proper this season.



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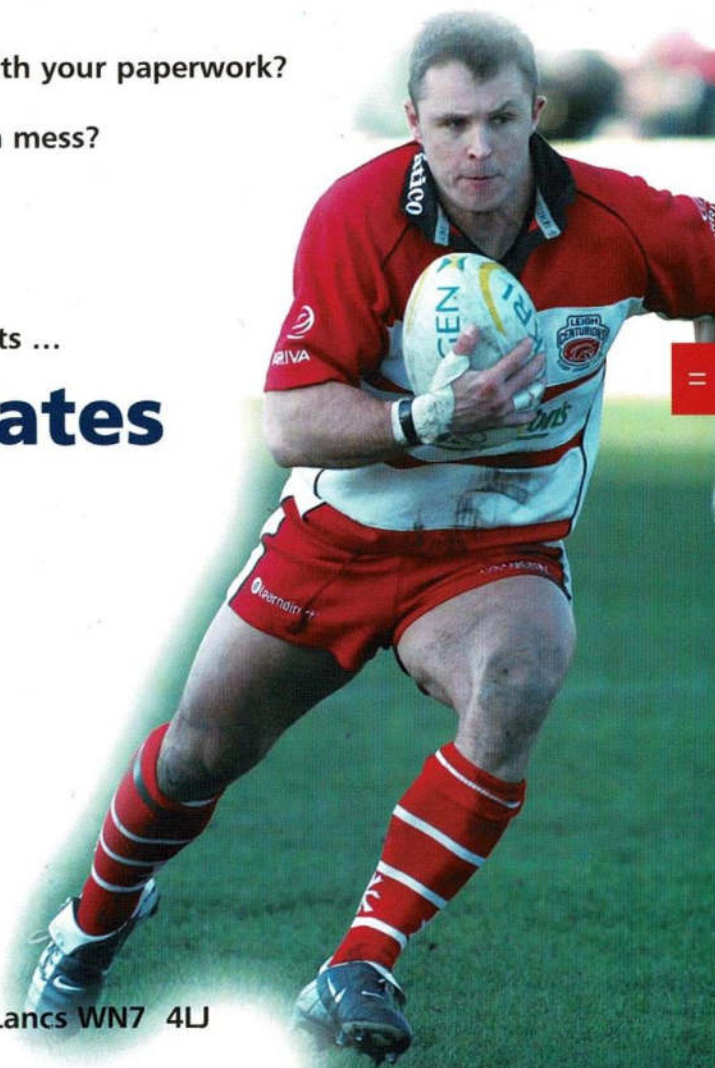
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Leigh Centurions 2004

Behind The Sticks

with Mike Hulme of the Leigh Journal

BskyB are to continue to pour their millions into rugby league over the next five years in exchange for all rights to broadcast Super League and international matches.

The expectation is that the BBC will now broadcast the Powergen Challenge Cup competition live over a similar period and to include the Super League play-offs and Tri-Nations tournament in a national highlights programme on Grandstand.

And for all this exposure RL bosses have even managed to negotiate a £7million increase in television income.

The League recently unveiled a new five-year broadcast agreement worth £53million with Sky Sports for coverage of the Tetley's Super League and the international game until the end of the 2008 season. The last contract, which ran out in November, was worth £46million.

The League have not broken down the new deal but it is thought clubs will receive around £700,000 a year, which is well down on the near £1million they received from the initial £87million deal in 1995 when rugby league agreed to switch to summer, but an increase on the current deal.

And there's even good news for clubs like Leigh. The Super League clubs have agreed to donate £250,000 between them over the next two years to the 20 National League clubs who are no longer part of the deal with Sky Sports. Thanks guys — it's not great but it's better than the kick in the nether regions we usually get.

Love it or loathe it, the game needs Sky's commitment and with the BBC seemingly ready to commit long term, the game should be able to make a double-pronged, and nationwide, attack via both satellite and terrestrial TV. It should further raise the profile of the game and as a consequence help with sponsorship and advertising opportunities.

But that's all well and good at the top end of the tree. What about those lower down the scale.

The National Leagues have done their utmost to raise their profile in recent seasons but still the competition can't attract a major sponsor. OK Arriva have their brand name attached to the old Trans-Pennine Trophy but the National Leagues still don't have a big business backer.

Why? Simple. No exposure. Companies will only spend their advertising budgets on things they think will bring a return i.e. televised games.

Now the National Leagues are free of the Sky TV handcuffs they should be free to negotiate their own TV deal. Whether they ever will or not is another matter. All I know is that it's something Red Hall should be pursuing as a matter of urgency.

Leigh Centurions 2004

Commercial Corner

with Mike Callaghan (Operations Manager)

Once again a new season dawns and from what has happened over the last couple of months commercially, it has been very exciting. If we achieve half as much on the field as we have done off it, this year will be something special. Firstly I would like to thank all our new principle sponsors, notably those on the new kit, especially Coors Brewery and the brand Worthingtons. Our record sponsorship deal with Coors will hopefully be the beginning of moving the club into a new level of corporate sponsorship.

Secondly a big thank you to all the fans who pre paid for their new shirts and came along to the official shirt launch at Leigh Super Bowl. The evening was a tremendous success and over 500 fans turned out. SKY TV came along and filmed some of the lads trying to bowl - needless to say they should stick to playing rugby.

The new away shirt will be launched before the end of February, and all I can say is watch out for another great shirt. We are planning a launch, which will be posted on the official website next week.

I would like to thank our match day sponsors and mascots today, along with the competition sponsor Arriva Trains, hopefully we can go one further this year and win it.

I would like to extend a warm welcome to 'Tom the Pom'. Those of you who use the message board on the website will know who I mean, Tom Jones, who now resides in Dunedin, New Zealand. Toms daughter is one of the mascots today. Tom emigrated to NZ back in 1992 and is over on a short holiday, if anyone would like to meet up with him he will be in the Mick Martyn Bar after the game (he's buying!!).

Some of you maybe thinking what has happened to the prematch entertainment, well for your information, don't worry we are going to commence the festival days at the Coliseum from the first National League game. We will be back bigger and better.

If haven't noticed the Mick Martyn Bar has a special match day drinks promotion, plus SKY TV. There is a new beer hut located on the AB Windows end of the ground so enjoy your day today and we look forward to seeing you next week for the Chorley game, and then for the big one against Hull on Sunday 29th February, 3.00pm.

Keep smilin

Mike Callaghan

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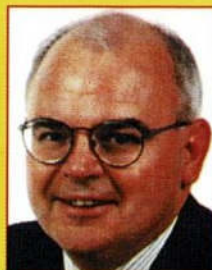
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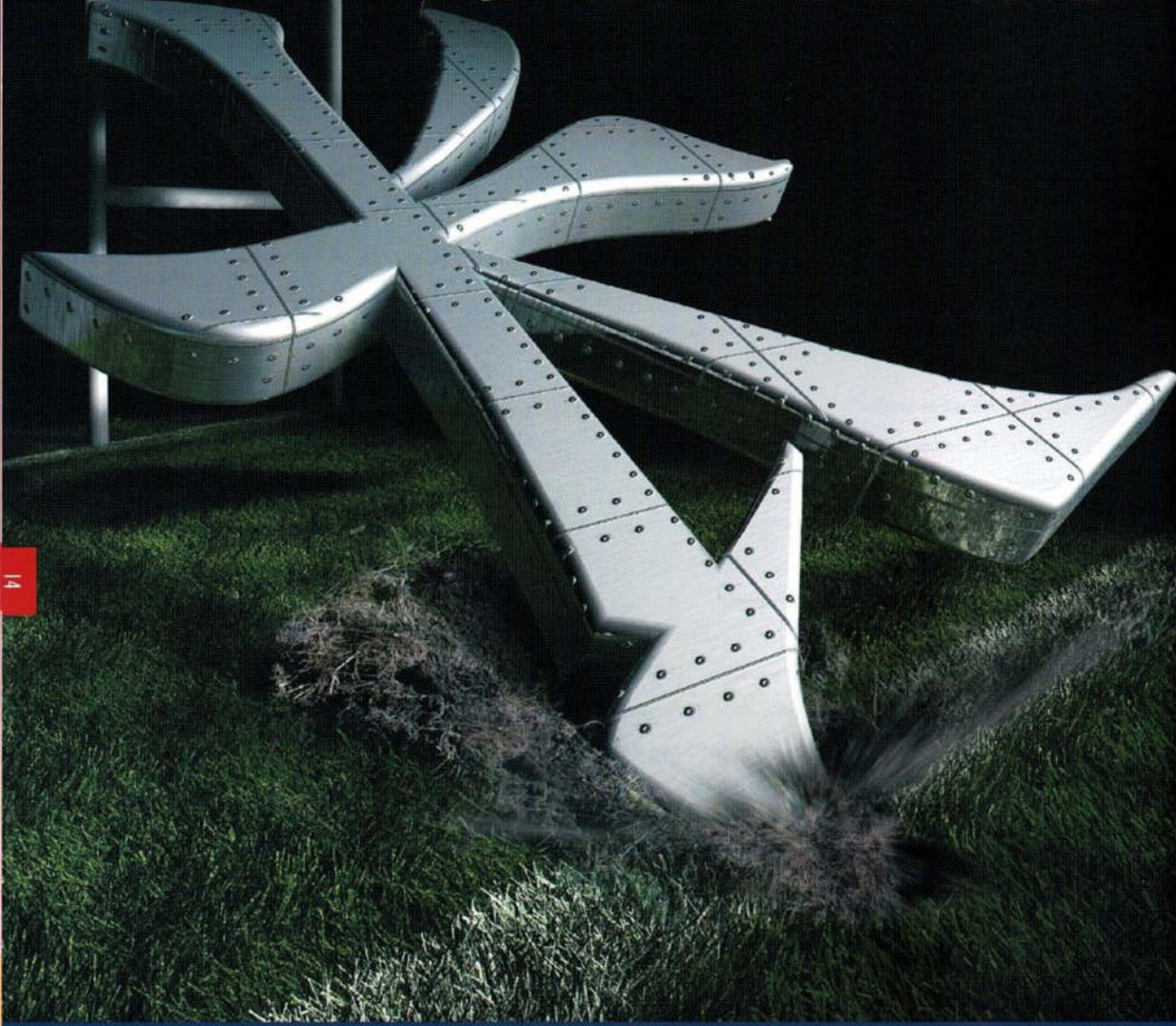

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Leigh Centurions 2004

Coaches Corner

with Darren Abram

ALTHOUGH we're only a couple of weeks into the season I've been quite pleased with the way the squad is starting to blend and gel.

What we musn't forget is that during the close season we had a huge turnover of staff, including myself, and it will take some time for all the pieces in the jigsaw to fit together. We've introduced new styles of play and it will take several games for these to bed in properly. One thing that happens when fatigue sets in is that players tend to slip back into their old ways and patterns; that's something we're addressing and will put right.

One area we have improved significantly is on our discipline. We had a letter from the Rugby League saying that we were one of the most ill-disciplined teams last season when it came to things like dissent. Technical offences will always happen but I have insisted we improve in other aspects. I won't stand for any dissent. If a decision goes against I don't want any back-chat. You're never going to change a referee's mind, so why bother.

Another area we have improved on is our defence. In two games now we've only conceded a try in each. If we do that in every game I know we'll win helluva lot of games.

Today we can expect our toughest challenge of the season so far from Oldham. They've strengthened significantly in one or two areas and will set us a big challenge. But if we're on top of our game I'm confident of a good result.

Enjoy the game.



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Leigh Centurions 2004

COP

First of all I would like to welcome all the children from Castle Hill St Philips, Leigh Central, St Johns Hindley Green, St Thomas' and Hollins Primary Schools. All of which have taken part in our Primary Schools Touch Rugby Programme sponsored by Catalyst Conservatory Roofs and Sportsmatch, over the last four weeks. Hope you all enjoyed having Craig and Paul in your schools.

Over the close season the Community department has doubled in size. We now offer not only a Primary Schools Touch Rugby Programme and a Numeracy through Rugby Programme but also a Secondary Schools and After Schools Programme.

In order to run all of these programmes we have had to recruit more staff so this season there are a few new faces in the community department some you will automatically recognize as we have been fortunate enough to secure the services of First Team Players Paul Rowley and Richard Marshall.

A new full-time member of staff, Craig Blackburn in, joins Paul going into Primary schools in the area and teaching children aged 4 years old to 11 years old in the non-contact form of Rugby - Touch Rugby.

So far the programme has visited 13 schools within the Leigh area and taught over 1000 children, by September 2005 Leigh Centurions Community department will have entered all Primary Schools within Leigh and surrounding areas.

Richard has the task of teaching Secondary School children in the area, the basics in Rugby. This programme was launched a month ago and has been very successful so far. The department aim to increase the programme over the next couple of months to include all young adults whether they are in mainstream education or not.

After the Half Term the community department will be in the following schools: St Peters, Garrett Hall, Sacred Heart Hindley Green, St Josephs Catholic Primary, Hesketh Fletcher Secondary School, Lowton Community High and Westleigh High school.

If you attend any of these schools we hope to see you over the forthcoming weeks and we wish Paul and Richard and the rest of the lads the best for today's match

Come on you Leythers!!!!

The Leigh Centurion High School Coaching Program is a 6 weeks program, delivered in curriculum time and will cover all the basic skills

- 1 Passing
- 2 Play the Ball
- 3 Try Scoring
- 4 Tackling
- 5 Kicking
- 6 Defence Line + Contact/ Touch Game (Depending on group's ability)

The program will be delivered by a first team player Richard Marshall

After participating in the program the children will be competent in the basic skills of rugby league and able to play the game, there will also be the opportunity for children who want to play the game to exit the program to local clubs.

The basic layout of the program is the same although the drills and way that the skills are acquired and perfected will vary according to the age and the ability of the group.

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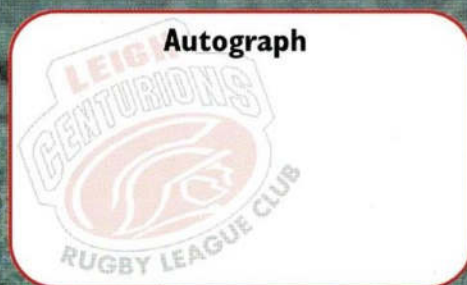
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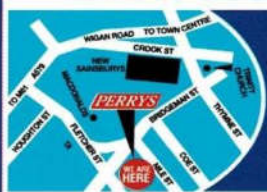
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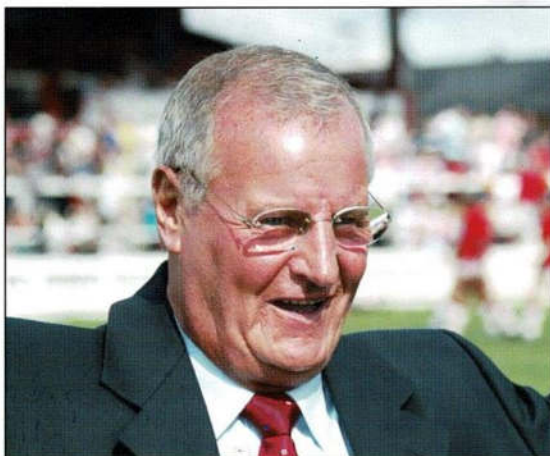
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Welcome to our first Arriva Cup game at Hilton Park, it is very important that this new band of players knit together as quickly as possible. We have got some very exciting talent and hopefully when the lads get into their stride they will do what is right for the club.

I would like to say to supporters, keep up your vocal support and keep encouraging the lads as this does make a big difference. And to all our new sponsors I hope that you have a very pleasant season as we do appreciate your support.

Regards

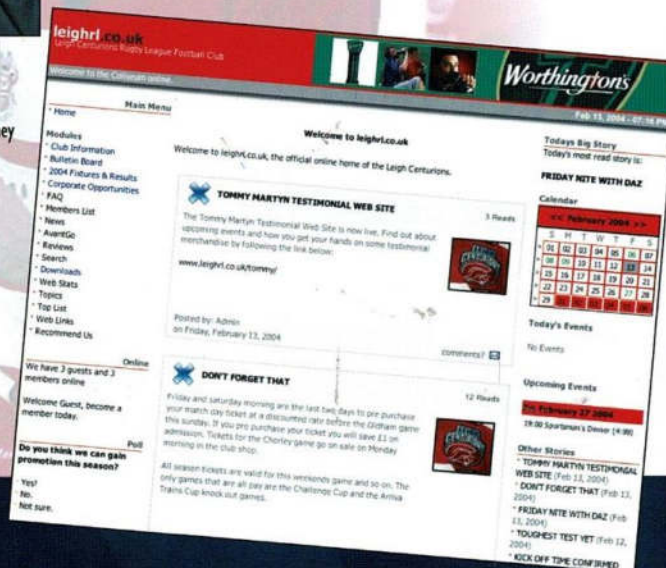
Alex Murphy OBE

Academy News

As soon as the RFL have confirmed fixtures for the U18's & U21's they will be printed here.

Leigh Centurions U21's V Wigan U21's Friendly
Sunday 22nd february 2004 Kick Off 12.15pm

Prior to the Centurions game versus Chorley next sunday the under 21's will be hosting Wigan in a pre season friendly. Season ticket holders can get in free. Kick off is 12.15pm, so please come along and support your team against our local rivals.



Check out the Official Leigh Centurions website

www.leighrl.co.uk

For all the latest information including:

- Match Details •
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- Club History •
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2004 Fixtures

Date	Opposition	Venue	Competition	Result
01/02/2004	Swinton	Away	ATC	22-6
08/02/2004	Elland	Away *	CC	64-4
15/02/2004	Oldham	Home	ATC	
22/02/2004	Chorley	Home	ATC	
29/02/2004	Hull FC	Home	CC	
07/03/2004	Oldham	Away	ATC	
14/03/2004			CC	
21/03/2004	Swinton	Home	ATC	
28/03/2004			CC 1/4 Final	
28/03/2004	Halifax	Away	ATC	
04/04/2004	Chorley	Away	ATC	
09/04/2004	Halifax	Home	ATC	
12/04/2004	Whitehaven	Away	NL I	
18/04/2004			CC Semi 1	
18/04/2004	Featherstone	Home	NL I	
25/04/2004	Play offs		ATC	
25/04/2004			CC Semi 2	
02/05/2004	Oldham	Away	NL I	
09/05/2004	Rochdale	Away	NL I	
15/05/2004			CC Final	
23/05/2004	Keighley	Home	NL I	
30/05/2004	Doncaster	Away	NL I	
06/06/2004			ATC 1/4 Final	
13/06/2004	Halifax	Home	NL I	
20/06/2004	Hull KR	Away	NL I	
27/06/2004			ATC Semi	
04/07/2004	Batley	Home	NL I	
11/07/2004	Featherstone	Away	NL I	
18/07/2004			ATC Final	
25/07/2004	Oldham	Home	NL I	
01/08/2004	Rochdale	Home	NL I	
08/08/2004	Keighley	Away	NL I	
15/08/2004	Doncaster	Home	NL I	
22/08/2004	Halifax	Away	NL I	
29/08/2004	Hull KR	Home	NL I	
05/09/2004	Whitehaven	Home	NL I	
12/09/2004	Batley	Away	NL I	
19/09/2004			NL I Play off	
26/09/2004			NL I Play off	
03/10/2004			NL I Play off	
10/10/2004			NL I Final	

* = Game played at The Coliseum, Leigh

Messages

Centurions Newest Fan

The very first picture of Olivia Marie Keane, taken just hours after her arrival at Bolton General Hospital. The first daughter of Debra and Tommy and little sister to Daniel she was born on Thursday 5th February weighing in at 8lbs 10oz.

Mother and baby are doing very well and can't wait to watch the Centurions when the better weather arrives.



Minutes Silence

Leigh Centurions have been saddened by the recent death of ourr popular steward Tommy Grimes (below left).

Tomm who was 61 died in January after a short illness and will be sadly missed by everyone here at the Coliseum.

The Leigh club sends their deepest sympathies to both the family and friends.



Peter Lloyd (21/1/24 - 2/2/04) (above right)

Earlier this month a lifelong Leigh supporter aged 80 years passed away after a short illness. Peter played for Leigh A, Keighley A and Leigh Shamrocks in the late 1940s. Over the last few years being disabled kept peter from attending games at Hilton Park, though he kept in touch with all things Leigh RLFC by way of radio, newspaper, matchday videos and his family whom are all avid followers of Leigh Centurions. Peter will be sadly missed by his family and friends.

Rest in peace.

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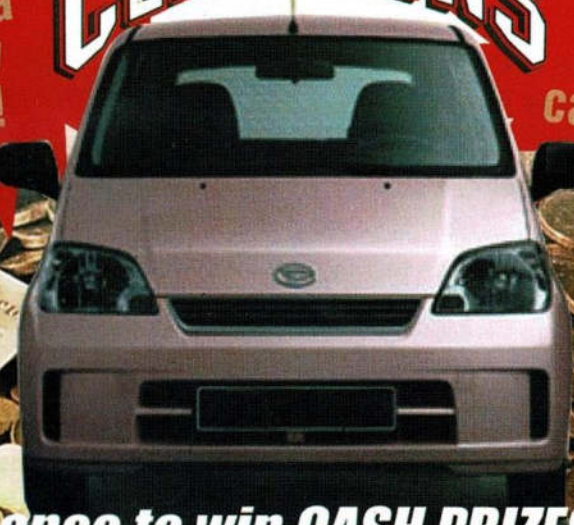


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Leigh Centurions 2004 National League Talk

with Gareth Walker of Rugby Leaguer & League Express



IT'S back to Arriva Trains Cup action this weekend, with a few clubs having some damaged reputations to repair.

Six National League clubs crashed out of the Powergen Challenge Cup last weekend at the Third Round stage - far more than anyone would have predicted.

Hull Kingston Rovers, Gateshead Thunder and Barrow Raiders all fell to French opposition on their home grounds.

And even more surprisingly, three clubs lost to amateur sides. Dewsbury Rams went down to Sharlston at Featherstone, while Keighley Cougars and Swinton Lions both lost at home - to Dudley Hill and East Hull respectively.

The beauty of sport though is that it usually allows you to get straight back on the metaphorical horse, and all six teams will be looking to respond immediately to last week's disappointments.

Dewsbury's loss was arguably the biggest shock - with Sharlston playing out of the regional Yorkshire league. The Rams get a chance to make amends at NL2 rivals Sheffield, who themselves didn't have things their own way against amateurs Leigh Miners Rangers, needing a late Gavin Brown try to seal a narrow win.

Few would have forecast Keighley losing at home to Dudley Hill either - and Cougars, boss Gary Moorby will be looking for a big response from his charges when they host Workington.

Swinton's season had started with something of a bang despite a home defeat to Leigh Centurions - but losing to East Hull was a major set back. Rookie coach Paul Kidd has an early test of his credentials as he takes his side up to Whitehaven.

Big things have been predicted of Hull KR this season - but losing at home to French outfit UTC was not part of the plan. They face a tough trip to Featherstone, whose form to date has been highly promising.

Barrow will be looking to make amends for their close defeat to Pia Donkeys by winning at Chorley. And while Gateshead's loss to Limoux may not have been totally unexpected, they need to start hitting the winning track, although York at home today will be far from easy.

Elsewhere they are a handful of potentially cracking matches and bumper crowds - particularly at Leigh, who entertain Oldham in a match that will go a long way to deciding who tops the West ATC Group.

Batley entertain Doncaster in a fascinating match-up at Mount Pleasant, while Bobbie Goulding's new Rochdale side face a major test with the visit of Halifax.

It could be argued that there was a seventh Cup shock at weekend - London Skolars beating experienced amateurs Rochdale Mayfield. The capital club will be looking to back it up at home to Hunslet, who have conceded one try in 160 minutes of action so far this season.

After today, there is another weekend of ATC action before the next stage of the Powergen Challenge Cup.

But while some clubs will already be looking forward to that, for others, this weekend is all about extinguishing the memories of some painful defeats. Enjoy the game.

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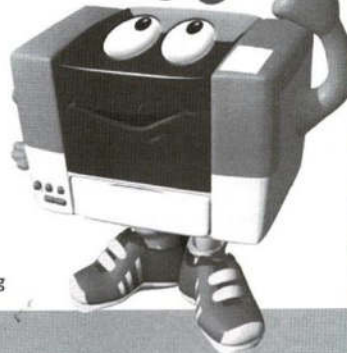
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Finally, the long, depressing wait is over, and here we are again, celebrating the first home match of a brand new season, - discounting, that is, last week's 'away' Powergen Challenge Cup tie, with Elland. At last, we can do something meaningful, on Sunday afternoons! (Not that trips to the Trafford Centre/B&Q, etc. are meaningless, but you know what I mean!) Bearing the last couple of weeks in mind, I did want to re-title this piece, 'From The Frozen Terraces', but I was told, in no uncertain terms, that we are officially a summer sport. How stupid of me to forget! Perhaps we will need a new title, when the Sports Village gets the go-ahead and we are in an all-seater stadium?

So, a new season, a new coach, a (mostly) new team, a new kit and new sponsors - so much to whet our appetites. Congratulations to the Board and the Commercial Department, for the part they have already played, in once again fuelling our dreams of Super League status. Welcome to the new players and welcome back to Darren Abram and some of our former players. Welcome also, to our new kit sponsors, especially the high profile Coors Brewers and their Worthington brand.

With so much new about the Club, it was a bit disappointing to see the old habit of spilling possession so prevalent in our opening games, against Swinton and Elland. Still, it's early days and once the lads get to know each other better and actually get to train regularly on grass, then things will improve. In fairness, the defensive organisation, in both these games, was excellent - something else that is 'new!' Also, it was a joy to behold players actually running into gaps, off Tommy Martyn's passes - and disproving the adage that you have to be prepared to run through brick walls, or prop forwards, to succeed!

Today's game is the first of three consecutive home fixtures, with Chorley visiting us next week, followed by Hull FC in the 4th Round of the Powergen Challenge Cup. Whilst I can reveal that the Board favoured a trip to the South of France and the coaching staff wanted an amateur team, there can be no doubt that we have drawn one of the plum ties, against a side who always attract considerable support and should ensure a memorable day at The Coliseum. No doubt the pairing of Bradford and Saints will once again trigger anguished pleas from certain Super League sides to be 'seeded' and kept apart, until later in the competition! Mind you, taking that thought a stage further, I'm sure that officials of Dewsbury, Keighley and Swinton could put forward a powerful argument, for seeding NL1 and NL2 teams, too!

So, how will we fare this season? The Arriva Trains Cup has changed somewhat from last season. - well, it wouldn't be Rugby League, without annual change, would it? We are grouped with Oldham, Chorley and Swinton, and Halifax, from outside our group. (Will this be the beginning of a seven-match saga, with them?) Following the Group stage, there will be a rather confusing 'free' draw, inter-twined with the National League One fixtures - but more of that, when the time comes. Also, more about the National League season, on it's commencement at Easter - where we have again been blessed with a 'local derby', this time at Whitehaven!

Enjoy today's game and, if you have travelled from Oldham, thanks for coming, and have a safe journey home.

Alan Edge

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Leigh Past Players Points League

The past players committee will be voting after every match, home and away, on who they consider was the Man of the Match, he will receive 3 points, second will receive 2 points and third 1 point.

The competition kicked off on February 1st when Leigh visited Swinton Lions at Sedgley park Rugby Union Club in the Arriva Trains group matches. The voting for that match was as follows:
Martyn 3 points. Turley 2 points. McCully 1 point.

The points league will be kindly sponsored this season by Leigh Past Players Association Arthur Thomas, and Cheshire Catering. Anyone else wishing to sponsor the points league, please contact one of the past players.

Last Sunday Leigh played Elland R.L.C. in the Challenge Cup Third Round at Leigh. A game which Leigh won - 64 points to 4 points. The voting for that match was Rowley 3 points, Isherwood 2 points, Turley 1 point.

Current League Table

Martyn	3 points
Turley	3 points
Rowley	3 points
Isherwood	2 points
McCully	1 point

Also this season we will be doing a Leigh Past Player Profile, featuring favourite players from the past to the not so far past, starting this week with the all time favourite Tommy Sale.

Leigh Past Player Profile Tommy Sale



1. Date and place of birth.
Hindsford, 21st July 1918.
2. Sporting interests as a boy.
Rugby, tennis, soccer and gymnastics.
3. General sporting heroes as a child.
Don Bradman, Jim Sullivan and Stanley Mathews.
4. Which R.L. Club did you support as a boy?
Leigh R.L.F.C.
5. Who were your favourite players?
Tommy Clarkson, Fred Harris, Billy Wood and Joe Darwell.
6. When did you start playing rugby (League or Union)?
1932.
7. At which Club?
Leigh R.L. Supporters Team, 14 to 16 years old 1932.

8. When did you sign for Leigh and from which Club?
1938, from Callenders Cables Rugby Team.
9. Who signed you?
Leigh R.L. Secretary Mr. Harry Prescott.
10. Do you remember your first team debut?
Yes, against Widnes, December 1938.
11. Do any matches spring to mind whilst at Leigh?
Yes, the Cup Tie against Halifax, I dropped the ball over the line and we lost 4-2.
12. What was the most memorable/special game for you?
Playing for Widnes in 1950, Cup Semi Final against Bradford, we beat them 8-6 I scored both tries to take us to Wembley.
13. In your playing days, which player did you rate most as a team mate?
Jimmy Ledgard.
14. And which did you rate the best opponent?
Brian Bevan. Unstoppable.
15. Any characters you remember, and why?
Joe Walsh, a great sense of humour which is good for team spirit.
16. What have you been involved in since you retired playing?
I have been involved with Leigh R.L.C. in every capacity.
17. Do you still take an interest in the modern game?
Very much so.
18. Do you prefer watching games live or on T.V. or both?
Watching live is the only way.
19. Has the modern game changed for the best?
No, it is too predictable.
20. Which of today's players have that world class?
Paul Sculthorpe.
21. And finally name your best XIII, from players any club or country of your era.
1. Jimmy Ledgard, 2. Brian Bevan, 3. Bev Risman, 4. Ernest Ward, 5. Jack Hilton, 6. Willy Horne, 7. Alex Murphy, 8. Alan Prescott, 9. Joe Egan, 10. Ken Gee, 11. Trevor Foster, 12. Charlie Pawsey, 13. Vince Karalius.

Competition Corner 1



- Question 1.** Name the two players?
Question 2. What year did they make their debut one of them was his second?
Question 3. Which club did they sign from?



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