

Oldham RLFC



**The Roughyeds**

Arriva Trains Cup  
West Group Match v Rochdale Hornets

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| Lee Marsh         | 13 | Darren Shaw      |
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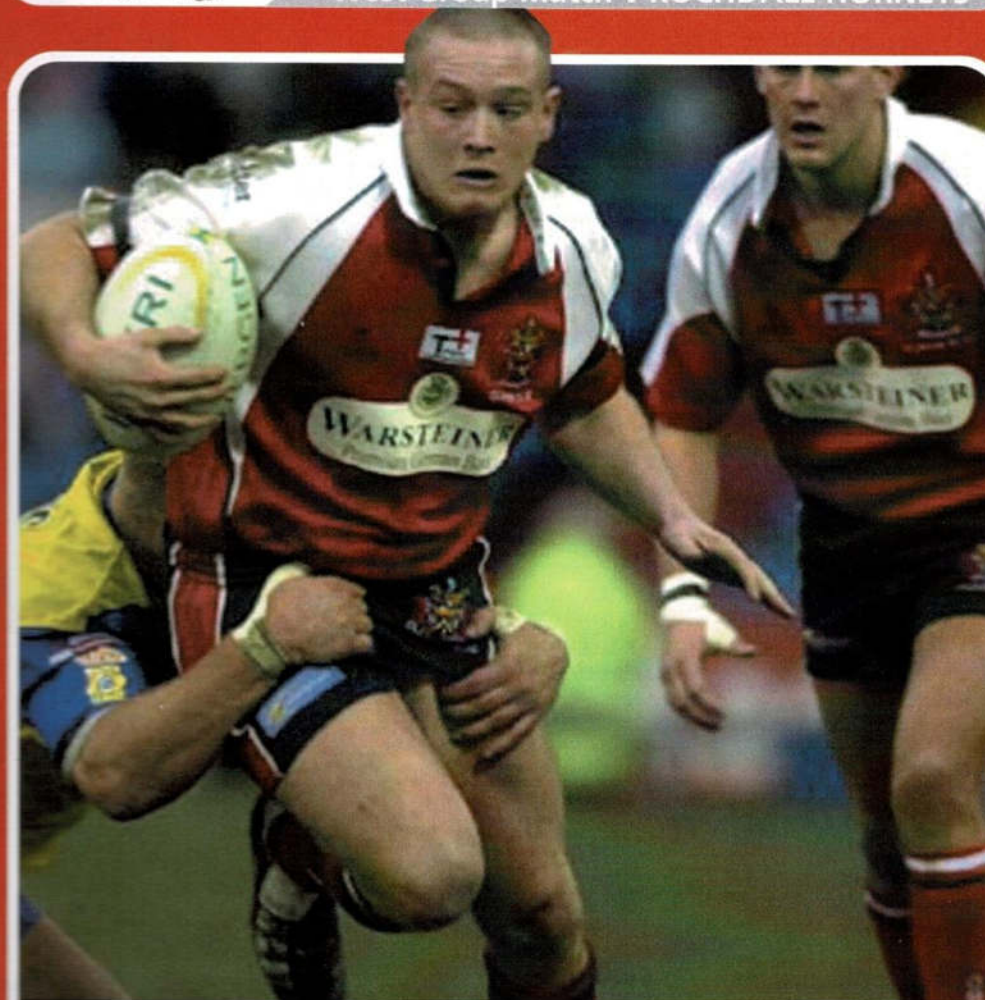
Oldham RLFC

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**The Roughyeds**

Arriva Trains Cup  
West Group Match v ROCHDALE HORNETS



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**KICK OFF 6.00pm**



**The Roughyeds**

**Oldham Rugby League  
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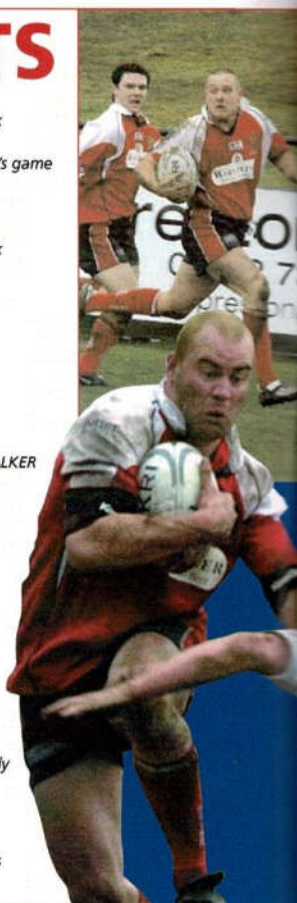
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"Like all local derbies, form will mean nothing, and I am certain it will be just as passionate an affair as usual"

## IN THE CHAIRMAN'S OPINION

with **CHRIS HAMILTON**

Welcome to tonight's local derby against our close neighbours, Rochdale Hornets, where we are trying something different by kicking off at 6.00pm. The main reason for the change has been to give fans a chance to have a real "rugby league day" by watching the two televised Powergen Challenge Cup ties this afternoon before hopefully coming along to Boundary Park to see some live action. It will be interesting to see what sort of a crowd we get tonight and I hope people understand the reason for the change. Over the past few years we have been one of the most consistent clubs with our kick off times and our supporters have usually known that our games are Sunday 3.00pm - it's just where they have been played that has been inconsistent!

It will be good for the National League to have had one team (Whitehaven) in action on nationwide TV today because over the past five or six years they will have been only the third team, outside of Super League, to have gained such exposure. The other teams were Featherstone v Leeds and Leigh v Salford. That statistic really does show how we suffer from lack of exposure and whilst there are obvious differences in skill and fitness with the dawn of full time professionalism, our leagues must strive hard for whatever media coverage we can get.

At the APC meeting this week we were given details of the TV coverage that the BBC will provide for the National Leagues this season. The End Of Season Play Offs will be covered with a magazine type programme similar to the twice award

winning ITV programme, Rugby League Raw. Love it or hate it, Rugby League Raw gave all the teams involved in the play offs a chance to sell themselves to a wider audience and we are all hoping that this year we will be just as successful.

There is a lot of hard work required before the end of the season arrives and there is no doubt Rochdale will want to avenge our Law Cup win in January, when they had virtually only just put the side together. Since then they appear to have made steady progress and their results have reflected that. Like all local derbies, form will mean nothing, and I am certain it will be just as passionate an affair as usual. There is no doubt our lads need to make sure they are up for the "battle".

Since the Leigh debacle our form has been better but still there is plenty of room for improvement and we will hopefully see that continue tonight. Our injury situation shows no sign of easing and at the moment with the seriousness of the injuries we can't wait until somebody is just out with a strain!

Your support in the Warrington game and at Chorley last week was first class. Let's just hope we can give you more to shout about in this game.

See you next week,

**CHRIS HAMILTON**

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 express our thanks to the Oldham Evening Chronicle, League Publications Ltd, Phil Burdge and all concerned for the use of photographs.

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## COACHLINES

with **STEVE MOLLOY**

Welcome to everybody concerned with the Rochdale Hornets camp, for what is our first competitive meeting of the new season. Our Law Cup clash was a thriller and since then Bobbie's men have certainly been pulling together and by all accounts playing some good football. This of course does not surprise me at all, knowing as I do the great wealth of knowledge that Bobbie has acquired over the years.

So it's vitally important our recent better form continues and fingers crossed, our injury situation does not get any worse. To have five of your first team squad members out with long term injuries as early as this in the season puts a lot of pressure on our small squad. The fact that two of these players happen to be the team's captain and vice-captain makes the situation even worse.

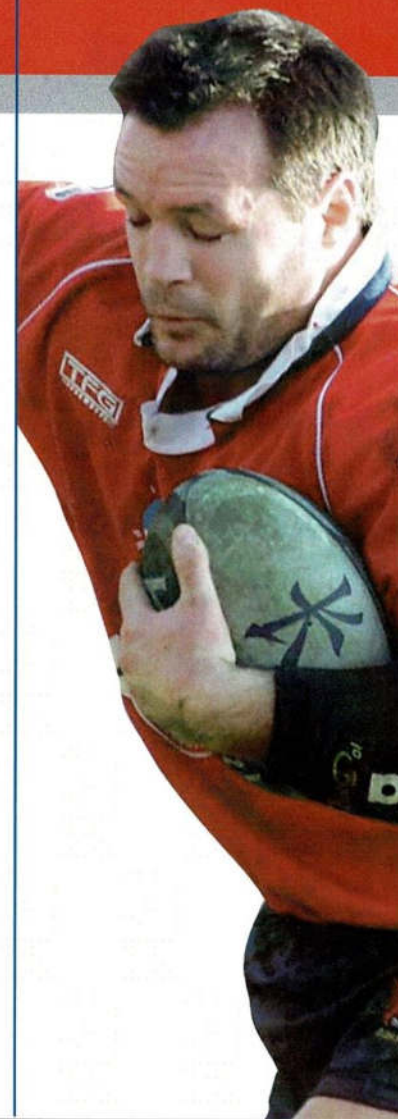
**"So it's vitally important our recent better form continues and fingers crossed, our injury situation does not get any worse."**

On the positive side this situation does throw up opportunities for other members of the squad in that it gives them the chance to establish themselves as first choice players. I have also discovered in the past that added responsibility can be the making of some players. Faz and Gav Johnson look like the first two to be back and for me their returns cannot come quick enough.

I was pleased with the way the spectators got behind the guys for the Challenge Cup clash with Warrington and I feel the players responded with a gutsy effort with the final score not being a true reflection of the game on the whole. We cannot get complacent however; there were still many areas we can improve on.

We took a lot of the commitment shown against Warrington into our Arriva Trains fixture at Chorley and came away with a creditable professional performance. There were some scintillating tries scored and the first hat trick of the season scored by Nick Johnson. Let's hope it's the first of many. But let's not get carried away we SHOULD be inflicting this sort of damage on National League Two sides. The next progression is to take this form and attitude into our games against National League One sides.

Enjoy the game,  
**Steve**



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## IN THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

with PHIL FARRELL

First of all can I thank our supporters for the way they backed the lads in the Warrington game. Your support throughout the game, even though we were losing, was really appreciated and the standing ovation at the end of the game as the lads came off was something else. This was all particularly pleasing, as we know how disappointed many of you were the week before after the game against Leigh. There, however was no way the lads were allowed to rest on their laurels, as "Molly" was still not satisfied with certain aspects of the game, especially that ten minutes just before half time when we seemed to lose our concentration and allowed them in for three tries.

We trained four nights again before the Chorley game as we were determined to get in some essential training on grass. This is proving difficult with the present weather conditions, as Oldham Rugby Union, where we train are, quite understandably, concerned about their pitches being ruined. Generally I thought we put in a professional and workmanlike performance against Chorley Lynx and must now start to get results like this against fellow National League One sides, and today would be a great day to start.

My own training schedule is going well and the physios are letting me do a lot more gym work to build up the strength in my shoulder and I am continuing to increase the contact work. The shoulder is sore afterwards but I am coping with it better and better and feel I am definitely on target to return at least for the start of the league season against Featherstone Rovers on 12 April.

A few people have asked why our present captain, with 'Scruffy' and I out injured, Lee Doran has got the nickname 'Tuna'. I have got to admit this is down to me and goes back to my very early days at Oldham when Lee was a young Academy player. I remember him at the end of the season going off back to Wigan after the last match, looking as normal, like an 11 stone weakling. When he arrived back for pre season training the difference was incredible. He had put on weight and really muscled out. He looked completely different and had obviously, I thought, worked hard on this during the close season. When I asked him what he had done to bring about this dramatic change I will never forget his answer. "Oh, nowt much, I've just changed my diet a bit and eat a load of tuna." So from that day forward it's been "Tuna" as far as me and the rest of the lads are concerned.

Enjoy the game,

Faz



"My own training schedule is going well and the physios are letting me do a lot more gym work to build up the strength in my shoulder"

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# AS IAN SEES IT

with IAN WILSON

Today sees the Quarterfinal rounds of the Powergen Challenge Cup being contested, apparently for the last time, at this time of the year. Is the change of timing right?

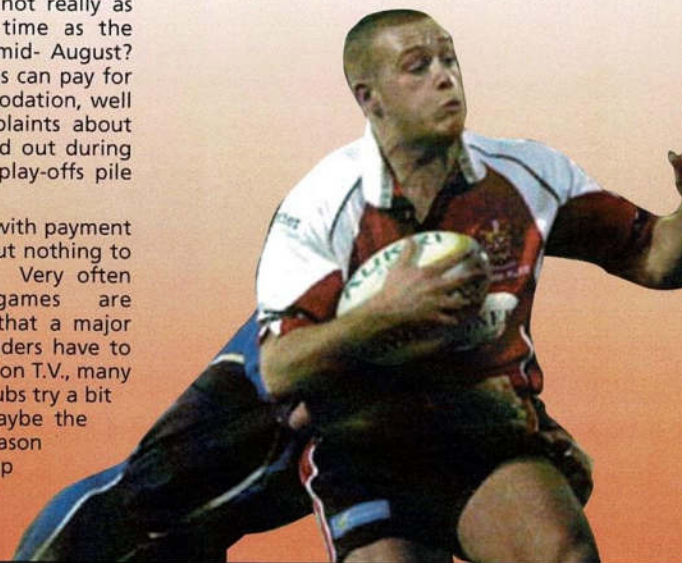
Of course, it was inevitable. Both for the reasons of money, and to maximise national T.V. coverage, we really had to fall in with the B.B.C.'s wishes. And there is no doubt that, with the "new" structure of the R.L. season – though perhaps we should really stop referring to it as that by now – the timing of the Cup as an early season competition has taken some of the gloss off it, at least in the early rounds. I quite fancy the idea of cup matches in summer weather too, I have to say – even though the memory of some titanic battles in frozen conditions or thick mud at Watersheddings, as we battled to overcome the Wembley hoodoo in early rounds, in days gone by, will become even more nostalgic!

I didn't personally go along with some of the arguments put forward by those who have been protesting against the change of timing. Surely late August is not really as regular a "summer holiday" time as the period between mid-July and mid- August? And regular Cup Final attendees can pay for their tickets, and book accommodation, well in advance, so removing complaints about lots of money having to be laid out during August to October as League play-offs pile up.

As an aside, there is a problem with payment for Cup and play-off matches-but nothing to do with the season's timings. Very often attendances at these games are disappointing, and I am sure that a major reason is that season-ticket holders have to pay cash; when the match is live on T.V., many choose not to. So why don't clubs try a bit of imaginative marketing? Maybe the offer of a second category of season ticket: a bit more expensive up front, but valid for all home

games including Cup and play-off matches? Or maybe simply reduced price admission for season-ticket holders?

What of today's matches themselves? Although I suppose both Wigan and St Helens have to be favourites, especially with home advantage, wouldn't it be marvellous, and very much a breath of fresh air, if the semi-final line-up consisted of Hull, Huddersfield, Warrington and Wakefield. (Whitehaven is probably too much to hope for!) ? Talk about memories: My first ever Wembley visit was to see Wakefield beat Huddersfield in 1962; Warrington's two consecutive finals in the mid 1970's, one winning and one losing; Hull's thrashing by Wakefield in 1960, and their eventual win at Elland Road in the 1982 replay. I cannot think of a better boost for the game than a Millennium Stadium Final contested by none of the current " big four". We live in hope.



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# TODAY'S OPPONENTS ROCHDALE HORNETS

## COACH - BOBBY GOULDING

One of the great names of the modern era, Bobby Goulding, joined Rochdale Hornets in the close season, replacing Martin Hall. On being appointed, Goulding immediately set about building a squad capable of holding its own in National League One.

Wherever he has played, on the international or domestic fronts, Goulding has made his mark as a wily scrum half with a tremendously astute tactical kicking game. His competitiveness and desire to win has always shone through and it is those qualities that he hopes to bring to the Hornets. The players he has brought in comprise of a mixture of experience and youthful promise and he has sought to build a solid platform from which the backs can play from by putting together a physically strong pack.

## PAUL ANDERSON (CENTRE)

Probably the most experienced player to have joined Hornets during the close season, having had Super League experience with St Helens and Sheffield notching over 40 appearances. Came to Hornets having played at National League level with Leigh and Oldham. A centre with excellent try scoring ability, a powerful runner who can also operate in the back row. GB under 21 and Scotland international honours.

## ROB BALL (PROP)

Product of the successful Wigan youth set up who came to Hornets via Leigh. A player with Super League experience having played for Wigan. Tall, strong and mobile forward likely to form the cornerstone of the Hornets pack.

## JANAN BILLINGS (HOOKER)

22 year old Aussie who signed from Gateshead Thunder in the close season. Good hands and elusive runner and is expected to relish the step up to NL1.

## LEE BIRDSEYE (HALF BACK)

At Widnes Vikings since the age of 16 where he was a regular star performer in the under 21's. Jumped at the chance to join Bobby Goulding at Hornets to further his career and become a regular first team performer. A player with an abundance of pace and a good kicking game.

## JOHN BRADDISH (STAND OFF)

Product of St Helens youth system having played twice for them in Super League. 23 years old and a reputation as an astute tactical kicker with the ability to dictate the pace of a game. Has also played for Oldham and Chorley Lynx.

## SAM BUTTERWORTH (HALF BACK)

Rochdale lad joined Hornets from the successful Mayfield team after a string of impressive performances. Accurate goalkicker but his main asset is his pace and deceptive footwork. A great professional career awaits Sam if he continues this rate of progress.

## ANDY GORSKI (SECOND ROW)

Another of Hornets major close season signings with Super League experience. At 6ft and 15st he was signed by Goulding from Salford City Reds to bring his powerful running style and solid defensive game to Hornets' pack. GB BARLA under 18's and GB Young Lions under 19's honours.

## ANDREW GRUNDY (PROP)

Another product of Wigan's youth development system having arrived at Hornets in the 2002-03 close season after a spell at Chorley Lynx. At 25 years of age he still has the best years of his career in front of him and will be looking for a big season at Hornets.

## JOHN HAMILTON (HOOKER)

Signed from Leigh Centurions during the 2003 season to add impetus to Hornets campaign. Unfortunately suffered a broken leg after 8 appearances but his pugnacious, go forward approach had already made him popular with the fans who will be pleased to see him return.

## ANDY HIBBERT (BACK ROW)

Another product of Widnes under 21's side looking for a chance to further his first team career after limited opportunities at Widnes. Spotted playing for the successful Widnes Albion ARFC team and will be looking to repay Goulding's judgement to bring him to Hornets.

## TONY KIRWIN (PROP)

Played for Widnes under 21's for two seasons before suffering a serious leg injury. Looking to resurrect his career at Hornets. He is renowned as a go forward, robust player who takes the ball up well and tackles tenaciously. Another player spotted by Goulding playing for Widnes Albion.

## ANDY LEATHEM (PROP)

Another player who has vast Super League experience having played over 30 matches for St Helens and Warrington and was a member of the St Helens cup winning team in 1996. He is a blockbusting prop forward who scores more than his fair share of tries and has had recent National League experience with both Swinton and Leigh.

## MICHAEL PLATT (FULL BACK)

Major coup for Hornets having captured his signature from Salford City Reds where he played in Super League. At 6ft 2" and 15st his pace, power and versatility will be a telling factor in Hornets quest for success this year. Lancashire senior academy honours.

## GARETH PRICE (PROP)

One of the few players still on the books who played in Hornets successful 2003 campaign. Made a big impact, playing 32 games and scoring 5 tries, was a model of consistency whether starting or coming off the bench. Another player with Super League experience having played for Salford, London and St Helens.

## DARREN SHAW (BACK ROW)

Vastly experienced Super League player having played for Salford, London, Sheffield and Castleford as well as having spells down under with Brisbane and Canberra Raiders. A superb professional and genuine leader on the field with a game based around his strong defence. Has come to the club as Bobby Goulding's assistant.

## LIAM WILLIAMS (WING)

Joined the club from St Helens where he was a product of the academy set up. His sheer pace bagged him many tries for Saints and if he can get the same running chances for Hornets the tries will surely follow.

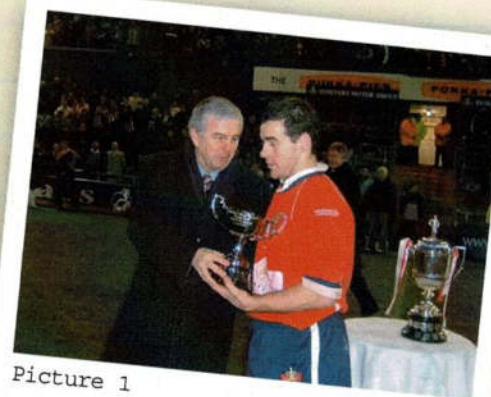


## FROM THE PEN OF MICHAEL TURNER

### "Roughyeds v Hornets"

*Photo 1.* Ian Watson was the first recipient of the Heritage Trust Trophy. This award will be presented to the outstanding Oldham player in the pre season Law Cup fixture. The image shows Ian accepting the trophy from Brian Walker after the match at Boundary Park on January 18th this year when the Roughyeds prevailed by 26 points to 24 after a gallant show from the hastily assembled Rochdale squad

*Photo 2.* This photo shows a scene from the match at the Athletic Grounds on October 12th 1957. Don Vines and a Rochdale player scramble for a loose ball as Roughyeds hooker, Jack Keith looks on. Oldham won the match 29 - 21 in front of a splendid attendance of 13,844.



Picture 1



Picture 2

# IN THE NEWS INCORPORATING IN YER FACE

There is no doubt that the last two games since I last contributed to this column have certainly seen our team move forward from the low of that poor performance at home against Leigh. It must also be remembered that this has been achieved with an ever-worsening injury situation. "Molly" certainly does not appear to have had any luck, on the injury scene, since he took over as coach. For the game against Warrington he was down to 17 fit senior players and this had been reduced to sixteen for the game against Chorley Lynx, with a shoulder injury to James Bunyan, which meant youngster, James Lomax had to be drafted into the squad.

The importance of this is magnified when you hear of Whitehaven resting ten players for their ATC game against Barrow last weekend to prepare for the home Cup-tie against Warrington earlier today. There is not a great deal of difference in the size of both squads but a vast difference in the relative injury situation at the two clubs. (While I'm on the subject of Whitehaven, I hope they've had a bumper crowd today and whatever the result, made their fans proud of them and shown Super League television fans the quality and entertainment value available at National League games.)

Getting back to the injury situation it does not just appear to be an Oldham problem. Bradford, Wigan, St Helens, Hull, Castleford, London Broncos, to name but a few have had horrendous injury problems. Why is that so when fitness levels are so much better and sports medicine, diets and training programmes so sophisticated and players have a lot more padding and protection? Surely the cold, wet sponge and tub of Vaseline were not so effective? Ray French had some interesting views on the situation earlier in the week. The difference in the concept of the tackle where there is such an emphasis on twisting in and out of tackles plus the importance of the defenders to turn players on their backs appear to be the cause of many leg injuries and were certainly contributory to Marsh and Hough's injuries for Oldham. French also highlights the high kicks to wingers and fullbacks and the tendency now for the defender to leap in the air to retrieve it, which results often, in the player being illegally dumped to the floor from a great height.

However in French's opinion the major factor in the increase in injuries is a combination of the modern players being so much better muscled and more powerfully built than in the past and the introduction of the 10 metre rule rather than previous three and five yard rulings. Forwards can now get up a much more powerful head of steam. French's final thoughts are: "Are we reaching the point where some of the charges made by a 17 stone giant at another 17 stones monster from a distance of ten metres away are becoming too intense and strong? Can the player's body stand all the forces at work, when the 34 stones collide at great pace? It is exciting and makes for great entertainment – but at what cost to the player?"

What has made the situation worse at Oldham is the players who have been picking up the injuries have been some of our most consistent and ever present players like Phil Farrell, John Hough and Neil Roden. They are not only vital for their rugby skills but also for their leadership qualities. The Iain Marsh injury is another really unfortunate one for the team as he was playing out of his skin and for the first time you could see why the barrow fans had been so excited about him when he played alongside Cliff Beverley two seasons ago. We wish Iain well and although we know a speedy recovery is not on the cards we certainly hope for a complete one and know Iain will be determined to come back even stronger and more focussed.

As far as Oldham are concerned the situation is also not helped with training facilities. I wonder if supporters realise how hard it sometimes is, especially, in the bad weather months, to enable the players to train on grass. I know there are times when "Molly" is literally tearing his hair out (That explains the latest style) to find suitable facilities for physical one on one training which is so vital in the modern game. Oldham are not the only club to have these problems but I feel this does not help the injury situation.

As we talk about injuries the whole question of the Academy side and their role as a feeding ground for the first team squad comes into question. Here again the situation has not always been helpful. The set-up last season and the mass exodus of the majority of National League clubs from



The Ball Boys appear to have got the balls and the Giant SUBWAYsandwiches mixed up as Jon Goddard tries to get play started again.

Academy rugby meant our lads had little variety as far as their opponents were concerned. On top of that the opposition was often well below their standard and they were winning games too easily. This season so far just the opposite is the case. The U21 League means the lads are playing generally much older players the majority of whom are full time, some with Super League experience. On top of that the initial rule which only allows one over-age player in the 17 prevents the club from beefing up the squad, adding some much required experience and providing a place for previously injured players to gain essential match fitness. Let's hope these initial stages of the competition, which are meant in some way to seed the clubs, are not too demoralising for the lads. Losing by a massive amount is just about as unhelpful as winning in the same way.

Just a thought, although I'm not usually one who mourns after the past and allows nostalgia to colour my views, isn't there a sense where the old open age "A" team set up, alongside a junior Colts league would be helpful. It would allow players not catching the first team to impress the coach, allow injured players to gain match fitness and be a place for talented, older members of the Colts, to prove their worthiness for a step up to the first team squad. At the present time I feel there is too much of a gap between National League Academy and National League proper.

As you may have read in the local press this week two more sponsorship deals have been announced which can only be good for the club. Firstly The Oldham Evening Chronicle have signed a deal as one of our shirt sponsors. This is the first time they have ever appeared on any sports team's shirts and it is to the credit of Chairman, Christopher Hamilton that he has been able to broker this deal. Also our thanks go out to the newspaper that now not only produces, without doubt, the best rugby league coverage in the country, through our own Roger Halstead but also supports the town's rugby league team financially.

The second deal is also a first as it is with a new company who have only just arrived in town, Subway, the sandwich chain who have just opened up a branch on High Street, Oldham. Their deal means they provide the food for the Boardroom after the game and also the post match refreshments for home and away teams and officials back at the Social Club. They also sponsor Oldham's goal kicker whoever that happens to be in a match and are the official sponsors of the Oldham ball boys, usually young amateur rugby league players who do a terrific job on match days at Boundary Park. Subway has provided their brand new waterproof outfits which were seen for the first time at the game against Warrington. Our thanks go out to Subway for their generosity.



ORLFC Chairman, Christopher Hamilton and Oldham Evening Chronicle Managing Director Philip Hirst admire the new kit with Dane Morgan and Player Coach Steve Molloy looking on

As Geoff Cooke is still away sunning it in the West Indies whilst watching our very successful cricket team and having taken his lap-top with him so we can't try and unearth the three articles he has left for us I have decided to combine the In The News and In Yer Face articles this week. There is no way Geoff would have missed talking about the announcement of the new date for the Powergen Challenge Cup Final next season. This will now be played on the Saturday of the late August bank Holiday 2005. I don't know what Geoff would think but my own views are similar to those of Ian Wilson elsewhere in this journal – with the present season it seems vital that it takes place later in the season and the choice of a Bank Holiday to my mind is good – didn't it often use to fall on May Bank Holiday.

As to results, I think there will be some shocks and although my heart may well be overruling my head I think Wakefield if they can produce their first half performance against Salford for the full 80 minutes can narrowly beat Wigan. Despite everything I can't see York or Whitehaven going any further, and I think home advantage will just seal it for St Helens against Hull but I expect it to be very close. So my final four are Wakefield, Huddersfield, St Helens and Warrington. And wouldn't it be great to have a Warrington versus Huddersfield or Wakefield Final.

NM



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## Joe Ferguson

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## Alan Davies

1950 to 1961

Of all the big-name players who graced Watersheddings in the "Fabulous Fifties", Alan Davies was king. One of the greatest centres the sport has ever produced, Davies was the complete rugby league player



## John Hough

1998 to present

John, a local lad, made Oldham RL history on December 2, 1997, when he became the new Roughyeds club's first signing. With 180 appearances, he is now contracted for 2004 and looking forward to his 7th season as a Roughyed



Across the decades, the Chronicle has kept its readers on the ball with match reports, news and views from Oldham Rugby League Club — the Chronicle's reporters and photographers have been there for every game.

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# OLDHAM EVENING Chronicle

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# WALKERBOUT

With Brian Walker

Herbert Ellis can be best described as a 'Tug Wilson' of Oldham's all conquering pack of the late Victorian era. Signed from the then class Liversedge club, who he had just helped become Yorkshire champions, workaholic Ellis then assisted the Oldham side into becoming the first Lancashire club to win the Challenge Cup, when in 1899, they beat Hunslet 19-9 at Fallowfield Stadium, Manchester.

Born in Ravensthorpe in 1877 this hard tackling forward was just 19 when he arrived at Watersheddings and only 22 when he played in the final.

Equally as exciting for the Oldham supporters of the period was to the success of the following season when Oldham become Lancashire champions, which in those days, along with the Yorkshire championship, was the main league competition. Heady times even for a fabulous side especially for Ellis who became one of only two players from the era who managed to win both Yorkshire and Lancashire championship medals.

Earlier this year Ellis' Lancashire championship medal was offered for sale by famous auction house Bonhams and despite stiff competition his medal was snapped up by the Oldham Rugby League Heritage Trust. Yet another piece of Roughyeds history that has been brought back to the town for generations to come.



"Herbert Ellis remained in Oldham after his playing days ended and became a well known bookmaker in the town".

# NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



## RFL PROVIDING VITAL HELP

THE month of March saw Featherstone Rovers and Workington Town - two of the most famous names in the game - come out of administration.

A few weeks earlier, Whitehaven announced that they had traded at a significant profit.

With the RFL taking a more pro-active role in helping National League outfits than ever before, are clubs at National League level facing up to financial realism at last?

Perhaps. But one undeniable fact is that the RFL is now playing an active role in helping out clubs at this level.

Spearheaded by the Rugby Football League's Club Support Unit - which helps members by giving valuable advice on everything from lotteries to stadium development, community work to marketing - the game's governing body is earning a much more positive reputation.

During times of difficulty, such assistance has been invaluable to clubs such as Featherstone.

"I spent two thirds of a day at the RFL recently, and every person I met said 'if you've got any problems, please phone us up - we're here to help'."

Featherstone chief executive Chris Beaumont told 'Rugby League World' magazine.

"That was like a breath of fresh air, because for a long time we had the impression that everybody at the Rugby League was against us. To go there and

be met with open arms has been absolutely fantastic."

"They came down and did a presentation, and we now know where we need to be, which is always great," Evans says.

"If you don't know where to go, you've got no idea how to get there. We know what we have to do, we realise we've got financial limitations. But we also know that we have to speculate to accumulate to a degree, by employing people on the commercial side."

Meanwhile, the Arriva Trains Cup is gaining momentum as the group stages head to their climax.

The competition had another major shock on Sunday, when Cougars produced a remarkable performance to stun Halifax 26-8 at Cougar Park.

Fax and their coach Tony Anderson realise that they will need a marked improvement if they are to turn the tide for today's massive clash with Leigh Centurions, in a game that will provide an early NL1 form marker, as well as possibly providing the ATC's biggest crowd this season.

Elsewhere, there is an intriguing local derby between Oldham and Rochdale, while Doncaster against Batley should be a real humdinger.

And don't forget York and Whitehaven's participation in the Powergen Challenge Cup quarter-finals. It promises to be another fantastic weekend for the National Leagues.

## PLAYER PROFILE

# GAVIN DODD

IT'S a little over four years since local boy Gavin Dodd first signed for his home-town club.

Then aged 18, he was said to be "a utility threequarter who can handle most positions in the back division with a preference for full-back."

Sure enough, four and a bit seasons further down the track, the Roughyeds very own Doddy (this one from Chadderton, not Knotty Ash) has played first-team rugby for the club at full-back, on both wings and in both centre positions.

He went to North Chadderton School and played rugby there under the tutelage of Iain MacCorquodale. He also played youth rugby at Royton Tigers and, aged 17, he sampled open-age rugby for both Heyside Eagles, now defunct sadly, and Royton Tigers.

Tigers had one season at open-age level in the NW Counties League and Gavin experienced that as well as playing academy rugby for both Rochdale Hornets and Bradford Bulls.

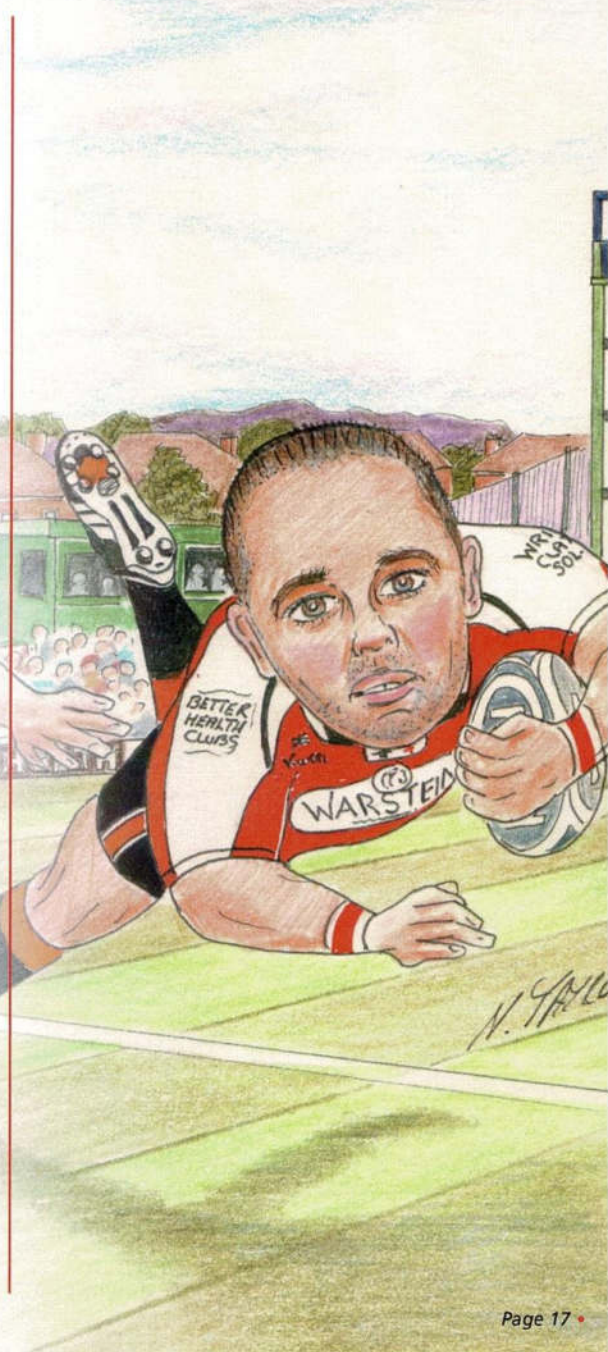
Prior to signing his first professional contract for Oldham he played in several positions for the Roughyeds reserve side and, after signing in February, 2000 he continued his apprenticeship before breaking into the first team with just a couple of substitute appearances that summer.

In 2001, the Grand Final season, he made 18 senior appearances -- ten at full-back, two on the wing and six as a substitute.

His best spell was in mid-season when he was preferred to Mark Sibson at full-back and figured in nine out of ten games as first choice No 1.

Fast on the break, yet unpredictable at times, Dodd scored a stack of tries in the Alliance team and added another seven touchdowns in the Northern Ford Premiership.

He represented Great Britain Students in Australia and New Zealand in 2000 and,



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## GAVIN DODD CONT...

a year later, was one of five Oldham nominees for the Great Britain under-21 squad.

The season 2002 was his real breakthrough. He played in 30 out of a possible 39 Oldham first-team games and did enough to attract the interest of French club Lezignan, whom he joined with Oldham's approval in October that year, but only after he had signed a new deal for the Roughyeds to November 30, 2003.

As it happened, things did not work out quite as Gavin expected and he was soon back in Oldham and looking forward to the 2003 season.

It was to be another good campaign for him. He played in 30 of the team's 32 matches and scored 14 tries --- enough to earn him yet another contract for 2004, although this time negotiations took considerably longer and were more protracted than hitherto.

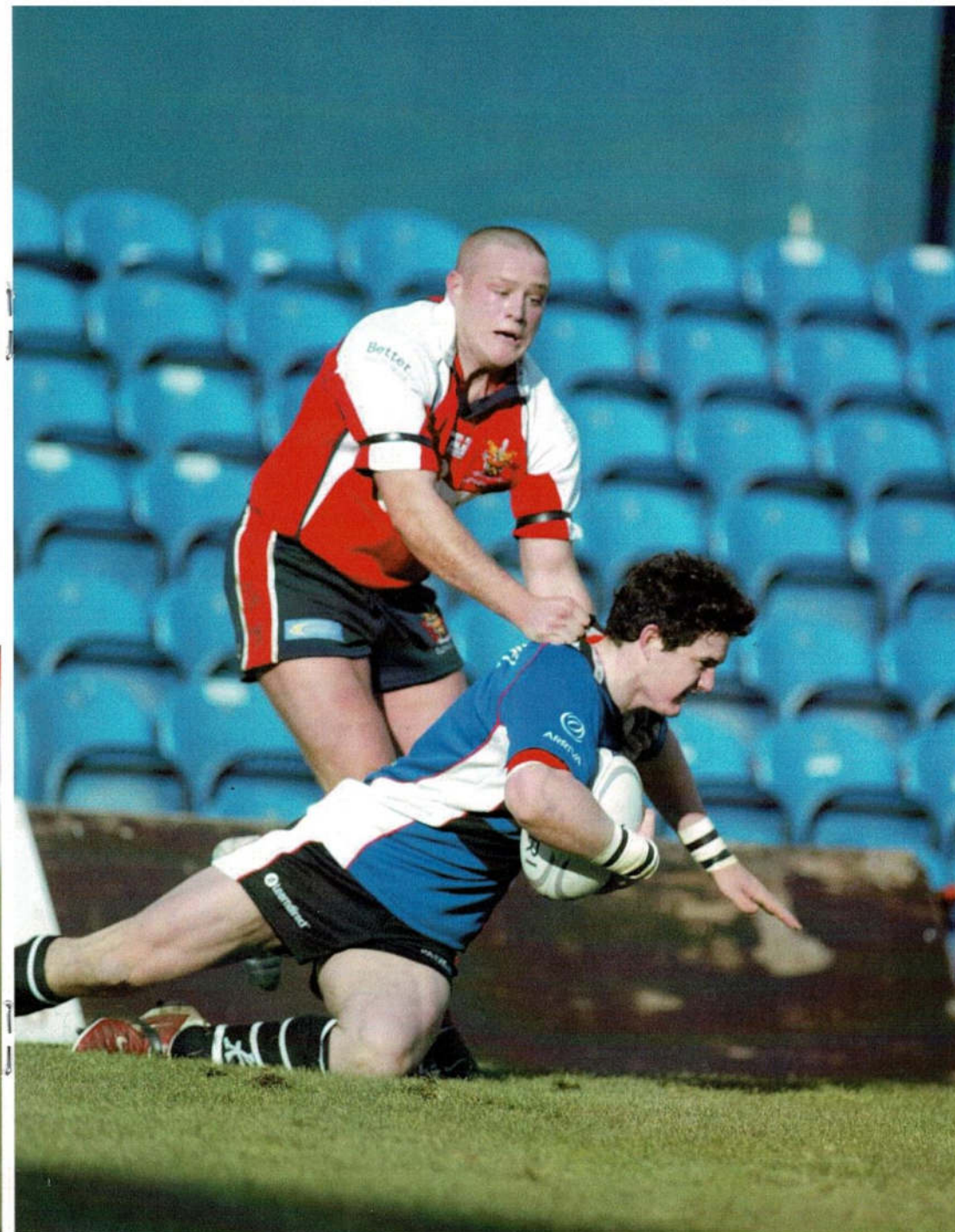
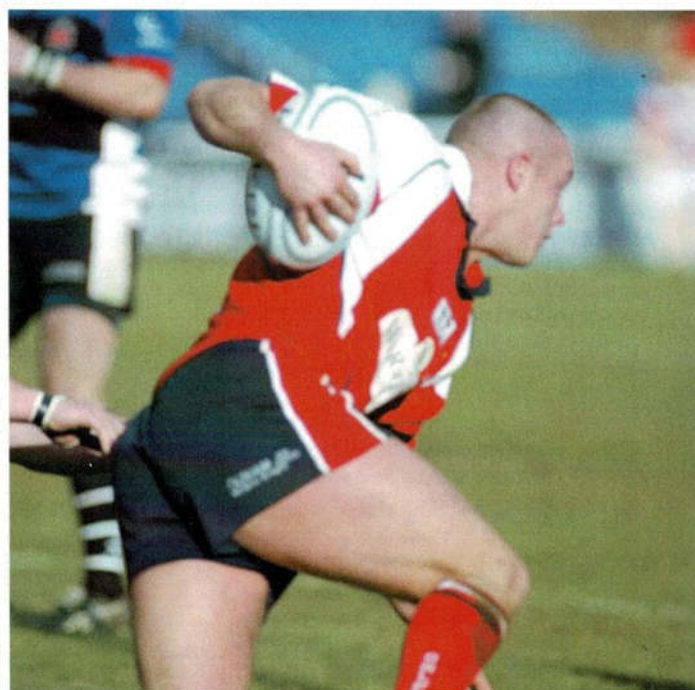
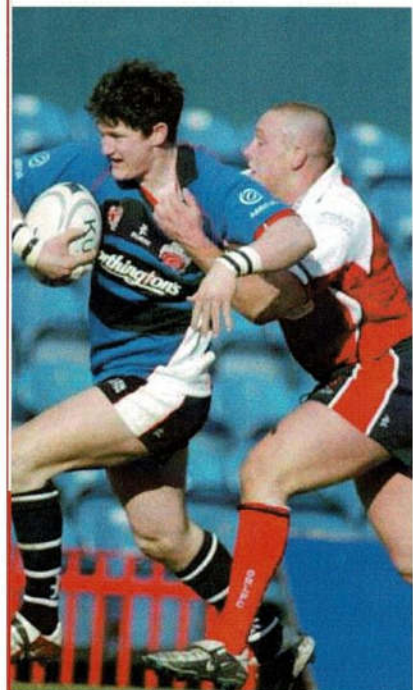
He didn't put pen to paper until a few weeks before Christmas, when he said in the Oldham Evening Chronicle: "I'm just glad it's all over -- it

was dragging on a bit and the new season was getting closer."

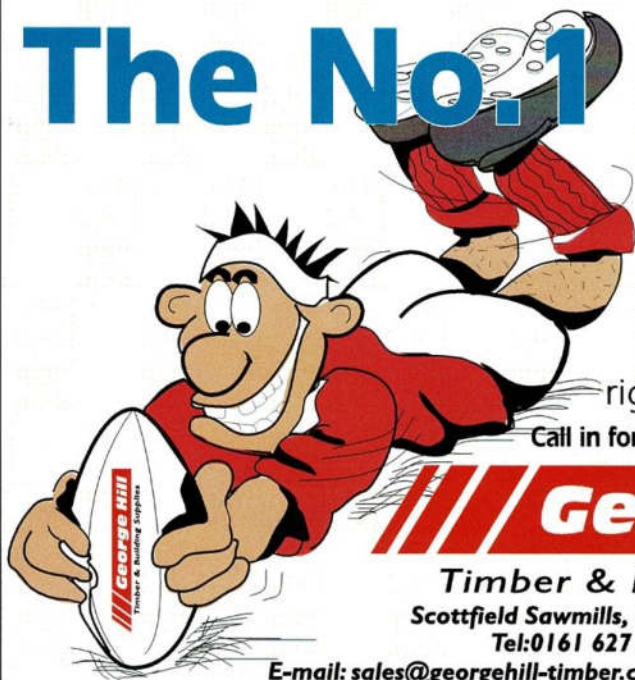
In ten out of ten appearances so far this season, one of them as a substitute and nine in his favourite full-back spot, Gavin has scored four tries --- the last of them a length-of-the-field beauty at Chorley last Sunday.

His total record for the club at senior level is 32 tries and one drop goal in 90 appearances and on current form he is capable of scoring a lot more tries in the season that stretches ahead.

**Roger Halstead**



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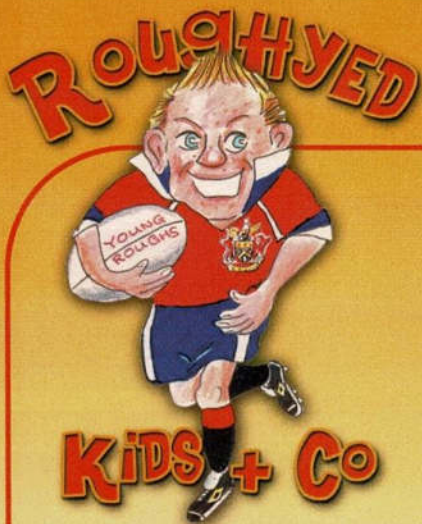


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Confused with the mascot picture today? Don't be, Adam whose photo appears in this programme very kindly agreed to change places when Kieran, our man on the pitch, couldn't make the Sharlston match.

As we have already given you Kieran's stats we can tell you that Adam is 13 years old and goes to Middleton Technology school. His hobbies are Rugby and 'mathematics' and his favourite player is Ian Watson.

Thanks once again to our sponsors Saddleworth Sports, F R Elswood Ltd, The Oldham Advertiser, Cartridge World Oldham, Warbutons Bakery & ASDA Chadderton.

Good Luck to Steve & the 'Lads'

Janet & Carole



## TODAYS MASCOT

**Adam**

**Age:** 13

**Hobbies:** Rugby and Mathematics

**Favourite Player:** Ian Watson

## OLDHAM RUGBY SUPPORT GROUP

Have you visited the Social Club yet? Many paid up members haven't. If you're one of these how about starting off Easter with a family party night at the EASTER EXTRAVAGANZA on Thursday 8 April at 8.00pm The evening, organised by the Roughyed Kids is for all ages and will include games for the kids and a disco. For the creative amongst you there will be prizes for the best junior and senior Easter Bonnets, so start to prepare now to join in the fun. Admission is by payment on the door - Adults £3, Children £1 with Roughyed Kids getting in free. Food will be available.

Tickets will be on sale at the Social Club after today's match and prior to the Swinton game for the Big Egg Draw. Proceeds will be shared between the Breast Cancer Charity, BREAKTHROUGH and our fundraising for ORLFC.

In a personal comment from the writer of these notes, I would like to compliment the Roughyettes for their well disciplined performances in their new strips. They are a credit to the club. Also, the quality production and content of the match day programme is another very positive feature of the club's efforts. In these days of negative comment there is a definite need to accentuate the positive.

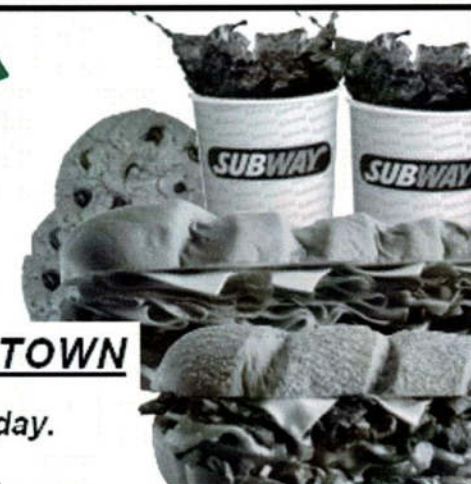
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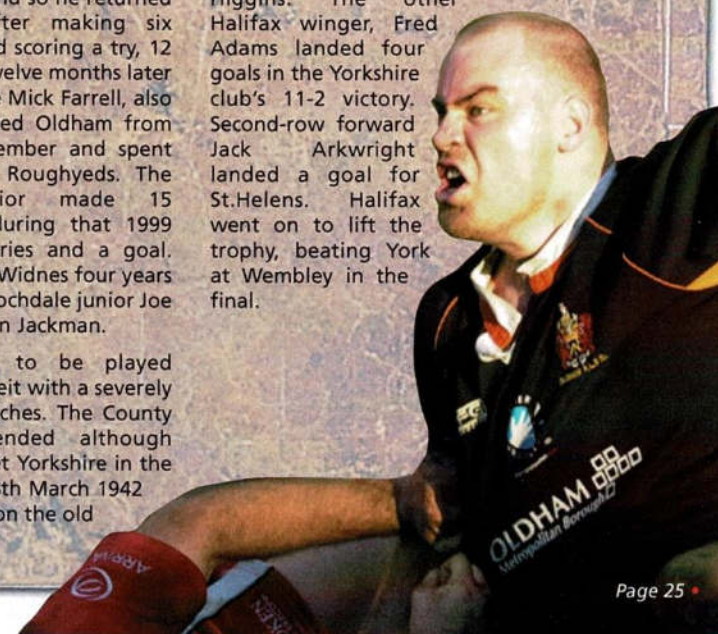
Between November 1969 and April 1970 the Roughyeds suffered a run of nineteen consecutive league defeats, the worst sequence in the history of the club. On Easter Saturday, 28th March 1970, the team travelled to the Athletic Grounds where they met old rivals Rochdale Hornets. Having lost to Oldham twice earlier in the season, in league and Floodlit Trophy competitions, Hornets were in no mood to offer sympathy and beat the Roughyeds 18-0. They ran in four tries, touched down by loose-forward Henry Delooze, former Oldham winger Terry Dolly, prop George Snape and centre Terry Corcoran. Full-back Alan Holt landed three goals.

On Sunday 28th March 1999 two players made their debut for Oldham, one after joining the club from Rochdale Hornets and another who later moved to Rochdale Hornets. The Roughyeds met Widnes that afternoon across at Spotland where Oldham played during that 1999 campaign. Widnes won the match 33-18 but Oldham were satisfied with the form of their two debutantes. Stand-off Danny Wood, on trial from Dewsbury, landed three goals and gave an impressive performance. Unfortunately terms could not be agreed with the versatile Yorkshireman and so he returned to the Ram Stadium after making six appearances for the club and scoring a try, 12 goals and a dropped goal. Twelve months later he joined Hornets. Substitute Mick Farrell, also a versatile inside back, joined Oldham from Rochdale the previous December and spent just one season with the Roughyeds. The former Waterhead junior made 15 appearances for Oldham during that 1999 campaign and scored six tries and a goal. Oldham's three tries against Widnes four years ago were scored by former Rochdale junior Joe McNicholas (2) and Emmerson Jackman.

Rugby league continued to be played throughout Word War II, albeit with a severely reduced programme of matches. The County Championship was suspended although Lancashire continued to meet Yorkshire in the Roses match. On Saturday 28th March 1942 the Roses match was staged on the old

Crown Flatt stadium in Dewsbury. A crowd of 5,000 cheered Yorkshire to a 13-2 victory on that occasion. There were three Oldham players included in the Lancashire team for that match. On the wing was Frank Lees whilst the pack contained two outstanding servants to the Oldham club. At hooker was Edgar Brooks, who served the Roughyeds for 17 years, and at loose-forward was Alex Givvons, who spent ten years as a player at Watersheddings and another 45 years in various coaching and administrative posts.

Both Oldham and Rochdale Hornets are amongst the nine professional clubs who share their playing accommodation with the local soccer club. Prior to moving to Spotland, Hornets played at the Athletic Grounds, a stadium which staged several major events. One test match, two County Championship fixtures, a Lancashire Cup Final, three Challenge Cup Finals and seven semi-finals were all played at that venue. On Saturday 28th March 1931 the Challenge Cup semi-final between Halifax and St.Helens drew a crowd of 21,674 to the Athletic Grounds. It was a hard-fought cup-tie which produced just the one try, scored by Halifax winger Laurie Higgins. The other Halifax winger, Fred Adams landed four goals in the Yorkshire club's 11-2 victory. Second-row forward Jack Arkwright landed a goal for St.Helens. Halifax went on to lift the trophy, beating York at Wembley in the final.



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# STATISTICS

## Player stats for season 2004

| Player            | Appearances<br>(Including Subs)<br>[Max. 10] | Tries | Drop<br>Goals | Goals | Total Points |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------|---------------|-------|--------------|
| Jon Goddard       | 10                                           | 3     | -             | -     | 12           |
| Will Cowell       | 10                                           | 5     | -             | -     | 20           |
| Iain Marsh        | 8                                            | 6     | -             | -     | 24           |
| Gareth Barber     | 10                                           | 1     | -             | 12    | 28           |
| Nick Johnson      | 10                                           | 9     | -             | -     | 36           |
| Simon Svabic      | 9                                            | -     | -             | 19    | 38           |
| Ian Watson        | 10                                           | 2     | -             | 2     | 12           |
| Paul Southern     | 9                                            | 2     | -             | -     | 8            |
| John Hough        | 5                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Dane Morgan       | 10                                           | 3     | -             | -     | 12           |
| Lee Doran         | 10                                           | 2     | -             | -     | 8            |
| Martin Elswood    | 6                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Craig Farrimond   | 4                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Gavin Dodd        | 10                                           | 4     | -             | -     | 16           |
| Gavin Johnson     | 2                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Adam Sharples     | 3                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Neil Roden        | 7                                            | 3     | -             | -     | 12           |
| Martin McLoughlin | 9                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Steve Molloy      | 8                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |
| Lee Marsh         | 9                                            | 3     | -             | 2     | 16           |
| Keith Brennan     | 7                                            | 1     | -             | -     | 4            |
| James Bunyan      | 6                                            | 1     | -             | -     | 4            |
| James Lomax       | 2                                            | -     | -             | -     | 0            |

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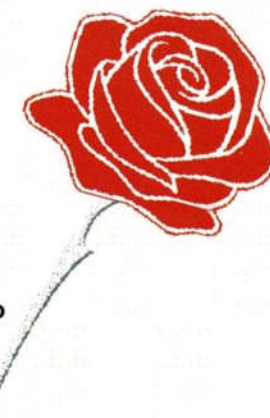
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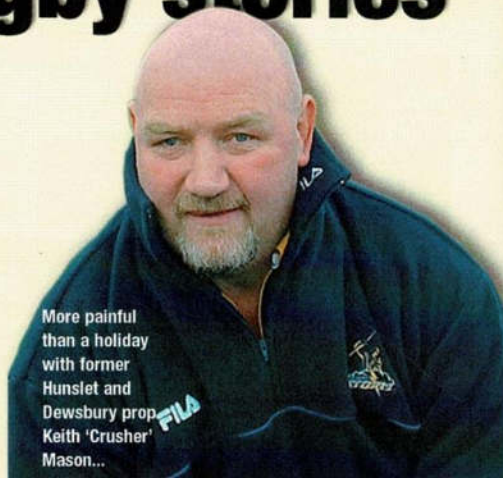




**Danny  
Lockwood**

**Publisher  
League Weekly**

# rugby stories



More painful  
than a holiday  
with former  
Hunslet and  
Dewsbury prop  
Keith 'Crusher'  
Mason...

RUGBY has been 'good' to me, in a "love hurts" kind of way. But for that funny shaped leather ball, I would probably never have experienced one beautiful nurse swabbing my buttock, let alone a dozen. So what if they were about to plunge a tetanus needle into it, before stitching up this, plaster casting that, or undislocating the other. Beggars can't be choosers...

In the glamour stakes, rugby has been my personal Thomas Cook, too. I've played in 10 countries - 11 if you count the time me, Keith 'Crusher' Mason and ex-Hunslet cousins Simon Wilby and Tommy Oldroyd played murder ball on a piece of Benidorm beach the size of two bath towels. That frightened the horses I can tell you. (It also pretty much finished Tommy's career. The ball and one of Crusher's flip-flops ended up stuck in a palm tree and we formed a human pyramid to retrieve it, with Tom up top. But when the pyramid suddenly dispersed, Tommy tried to keep hold of the tree and slid down it, cartoon-fashion, leaving half his chest on the bark. Pain? Crusher's stiff-arm was nothing by comparison.)

Ah, the memories. Playing in 120 degree heat in Las Vegas and Palm Springs; walking off Dudley Hill's ground crying from the pain of the frostbite. It's not much fun being a winger at -10 degrees, with the icy sleet coming horizontally at you straight off the Pennines - especially when the coach has decided "we're keeping it tight to the forwards today lads". I'll bet Paul Deacon's never had to kick goals while unable to feel anything below his knees.

There was the time ex-Gt Britain physio Ronnie Barrett got me fit for a BARLA Yorkshire Cup final by dropping sandbags on my damaged knuckles from a great height (it worked). Oh, and the Hemsworth hooker who picked up all 15-stones of me by the crown jewels. The animal-like cry that came from some hitherto uncharted place in my being drowned out the ref's whistle and shattered the windows in a nearby block of council flats.

Then there was the look on the face of Dr John Pagliano, Hollywood's "foot doctor to the stars", upon seeing my sprained and fractured ankle. He actually took photos to show his clients (Carl Lewis, Magic Johnson etc). "Those wusses don't know REAL injuries!" he gushed, as he set to work. Mind you, he did actually get me 'fit' to play in a big match 10 days later. Such memories. Some still bring a tear to the eye. Literally.

But checking out the Western Australian RL website this week, brought back the most painful memory of all. No broken bones, dislocated joints, frozen toes, or burning lungs. Just seven words from a flat-nosed Aussie hooker. Well, my girlfriend and I were travelling light. As you do. The laundry basket was full. I'd hardly given a thought to my undergarments, until I rushed into the 'sheds' to change for training, where the lads were already stripped. As my treads hit the deck, and thumbs hooked into elastic that seemed suddenly tighter than normal, a hush descended on the men of the Applecross Jets, WA minor premiers of 1991. My one solid gold Aussie pal, ex-Sheffield Eagles hooker or loosey, Warren Smiles, dropped his gaze to the floor and shook his head in sad resignation.

"Jeez guys," drawled Derek, our number 9, eventually. "The Pom wears women's gear!"

You want to know about pain? That's pain ... and no, they never did let me explain.

## LEAGUE WEEKLY

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## Fixtures

| DATE     | OPPONENTS                         | CUP            | VENUE | K. O. | RESULT | W/L |
|----------|-----------------------------------|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-----|
| 01/02/04 | Chorley Lynx                      | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 | 64-14  | W   |
| 06/02/04 | Castleford Panthers               | Powergen CC    | Home  | 19.30 | 16-8   | W   |
| 15/02/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | AT Cup         | Away  | 15.00 | 51-32  | L   |
| 22/02/04 | Swinton Lions                     | AT Cup         | Away  | 15.00 | 18-30  | W   |
| 29/02/04 | Sharlston Rovers                  | Powergen CC    | Home  | 19.45 | 24-4   | W   |
| 07/03/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 | 10-54  | L   |
| 14/03/04 | Warrington Wolves                 | Powergen CC    | Home  | 15.00 | 10-44  | L   |
| 21/03/04 | Chorley Lynx                      | AT Cup         | Away  | 15.00 | 10-40  | W   |
| 28/03/04 | Powergen CC<br>Quarter Finals     | Powergen<br>CC |       |       |        |     |
| 28/03/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | AT Cup         | Home  | 18.00 |        |     |
| 04/04/04 | Swinton Lions                     | AT Cup         | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 09/04/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | AT Cup         | Away  | 19.30 |        |     |
| 12/04/04 | Featherstone Rovers               | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 18/04/04 | Powergen CC<br>Semi Final 1       | Powergen<br>CC |       |       |        |     |
| 18/04/04 | Halifax                           | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 25/04/04 | Powergen<br>CC Semi Final 2       | Powergen<br>CC |       |       |        |     |
| 25/04/04 | AT Cup Play-offs                  | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 02/05/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 09/05/04 | Hull Kingston Rovers              | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 15/05/04 | Powergen CC Final                 | Powergen CC    |       |       |        |     |
| 23/05/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 30/05/04 | Batley Bulldogs                   | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 06/06/04 | AT Cup Quarter Finals             | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 13/06/04 | Keighley Cougars                  | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 20/06/04 | Whitehaven                        | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 27/06/04 | AT Cup Semi Finals                | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 04/07/04 | Doncaster Dragons                 | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 11/07/04 | Halifax                           | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 18/07/04 | At Cup Final                      | AT Cup         |       |       |        |     |
| 25/07/04 | Leigh Centurions                  | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 01/08/04 | Hull Kingston Rovers              | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 08/08/04 | Rochdale Hornets                  | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 15/08/04 | Batley Bulldogs                   | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 22/08/04 | Keighley Cougars                  | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 29/08/04 | Whitehaven                        | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 05/09/04 | Featherstone Rovers               | NL1            | Away  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 12/09/04 | Doncaster Dragons                 | NL 1           | Home  | 15.00 |        |     |
| 19/09/04 | NL 1 & 2 Play-offs                | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 26/09/04 | NL 1 & 2 Play-offs                | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 03/10/04 | NL 1 & 2 Play-offs                | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 10/10/04 | NL 1 & 2 Grand Finals             | NL1            |       |       |        |     |
| 17/10/04 | NL 1 & 2 Prom/Releg.<br>Play-offs | NL1            |       |       |        |     |

### Key

AT Cup – Arriva Trains Cup  
Powergen CC – Powergen Challenge Cup  
NL1 – National League Division 1

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Oldham RLFC fully support the **Let's tackle Racism in Rugby League** campaign and welcomes all players and spectators irrespective of their ethnic or racial origins. Racism has no place in our game and racist chants are totally unacceptable.

Allow everyone to enjoy the game.

# You won't want to put it down.

The image shows a woman with blonde hair, seen from the back, washing her face in a white sink. She is holding a copy of the Oldham Advertiser newspaper. The newspaper's front page features a large headline: 'NEWS INDUSTRY HONOUR FOR OLDHAM ADVERTISER'. Above this, it says 'Your best weekly read and that's official'. A '21 YEARS' anniversary logo is visible in the top right corner of the paper. The sink has a chrome faucet and a blue dish rack with yellow sponges. The background is a plain wall with a window showing a view of a building.



It's all about Oldham