

Oldham RLFC



The Roughyeds

LHF HEALTHPLAN NATIONAL LEAGUE 1
V WHITEHAVEN

OLDHAM

V

WHITEHAVEN

Jon Goddard	1	Gary Broadbent
Gavin Dodd	2	Jamie Marshall
James Bunyan	3	Mick Nanyin
Iain Marsh	4	Wesley Wilson
Nick Johnson	5	Paul O'Neill
Simon Svabic	6	Leroy Joe
Ian Watson	7	Sam Obst
Paul Southern	8	Dean Vaughan
Keith Brennan	9	Aaron Lester
Dane Morgan	10	David Fatialofa
Lee Doran	11	Brett McDermott
Phil Farrell	12	Howard Hill
Lee Marsh	13	Craig Walsh
Will Cowell	14	Carl Sice
John Hough	15	Marc Jackson
Martin McLoughlin	16	Spencer Miller
Martin Elswood	17	Chris McKinney

Match Officials:

REFEREE: M DAWBER

TOUCH JUDGES: D WINSTANLEY A DUGDALE

4TH OFFICIAL: MJ KIDD

Oldham RLFC

OFFICIAL MATCHDAY PROGRAMME £2.00



The Roughyeds

LHF HEALTHPLAN NATIONAL LEAGUE 1
V WHITEHAVEN



The Roughyeds at Victory Park, Chorley

SUNDAY 20th JUNE 2004 • KICK OFF 3.00pm



The Roughyeds
Oldham Rugby League
Football Club (1997) Limited
 14 Waterloo Street
 Oldham OL1 1SQ
 Telephone: 0161 628 3677
 Fax: 0161 627 5700
 Club Shop: 0161 627 2141

CHAIRMAN
 Christopher Hamilton
DIRECTORS
 Christopher Hamilton
 Sean Whitehead
HEAD COACH
 Steve Molloy
ASSISTANT COACH
 Andy Proctor
SENIOR ACADEMY COACH
 Shaun Gartland
CLUB CAPTAIN
 Phil Farrell
PHYSIOTHERAPISTS
 Nic Walker & Clare Gross
TIMEKEEPER
 David Lord
COMMERCIAL MANAGER
 David Bradshaw
OFFICE MANAGER
 Jacki Collier
PROGRAMME EDITOR
 Nigel Marland

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1998-2003

Trans-Penine Cup
 Finalists - 1998

Northern Ford Premiership
 Club of the Year - 2000
 Grand Finalists - 2001

MOST APPEARANCES: John Hough, 175 - Jan 1998 - September 2003

CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES: Phil Farrell, 67 - April 2nd 2000 - March 15th 2002
 *John Hough was on the team for every match February 1st 1999 - April 16th 2001 (82)

TRIES IN A SEASON: Mark Sibson, 23 - 1999-2000

GOALS IN A SEASON: Pat Rich, 146 - 2000-2001

POINTS IN A SEASON: Pat Rich, 320 - 2000-2001

DROP GOALS IN A SEASON: Neil Roden, 7 - 2001-2002

TRIES IN A CAREER: Mark Sibson, 60 - 1999-2002

GOALS IN A CAREER: Pat Rich, 254 - 1999-2001

POINTS IN A CAREER: Pat Rich, 576 - 1999-2001

DROP GOALS IN A CAREER: Neil Roden, 18 - 2000-2003

TRIES IN MATCH: Mark Sibson v Wigan St. Judes, 4 - Feb 8th 2000 at Boundary Park
 Mark Sibson v Queensbury, 4 - Jan 28th 2001 at Boundary Park
 David Gibbons v Chorley Lynx, 4 - Jan 30th 2001 at Boundary Park

GOALS IN A MATCH: Simon Svabic v Swinton Lions, 10 - Apr 6th 2003 at Boundary Park
POINTS IN A MATCH: Gareth Barber v Dewsbury Rams, 26 - Apr 2nd 2002 at Hurst Cross
 (7 goals, 3 tries)

DROP GOALS IN A MATCH: Neil Roden v Workington Town, 2 - Dec 17th 2000 at Derwent Park
 John Braddish v Hull KR, 2 - Dec 16th 2001 at New Craven Park

HIGHEST SCORE/WINNING MARGIN: v Yorks Wasps, 70-6 - Apr 1st 2001 at Huntington Stadium
 v Queensbury (amtl), 64-0 - Jan 28th 2001 RLCC 3rd Rnd at Boundary Park

IN THE CHAIRMAN'S OPINION

with **CHRIS HAMILTON**



Well once again we find ourselves on the road - this time playing a home game 30 miles from Oldham.

Just to make matters worse we come up against the current league leaders and congratulations must go to everybody connected with Whitehaven for what they have achieved so far this season because they also enjoyed a good Powergen Challenge Cup run and are in the semi finals of the Arriva Trains Cup.

After our win at Keighley we must maintain the momentum and try to secure another two points today.

One thing is for sure our defence has to improve considerably or we will be nowhere come the end of the season.

In a perverse way I am hoping that our enforced absence from "home" will bring out that Oldham fighting spirit that we have seen so many times before. Our players are certainly aware that being at the club usually has its twists and turns and this latest search for a venue has been no different.

However at the end of the day we have what we have and we must get on with it. There is absolutely no point in feeling sorry for ourselves and certainly nobody else will as will be demonstrated by our oponents today.

It was good to get back some of the injured players last week and hopefully that game will have stood them in good stead for this afternoon's encounter where there will be no quarter asked or given.

We are hoping that plenty of you will have made the trip across from Oldham and once again for those of you that

have may I, on behalf of the club, thank you for your continued support during this difficult period.

The LHF Healthplan National League One is developing into a mighty battle even at this stage and isn't it refreshing this year with no full time team to compete against to see how open and competitive the division is.

Despite what the so called experts might think I personally think it will be impossible to forecast who will end up in Super League and the eventual winner could be one of several teams. I don't think we will see one stand out team this year who walk away with it and it all augers well for the Play Off series.

With no game next week we will have Nick Johnson competing in the Powergen Fastest Man in Rugby League competition which is being held at Robin Park, Wigan starting at 6pm and anybody who has seen Nick flying for us this season so far will surely think that he must be in with a chance. So if your not doing anything try to get along and support him as he will be competing against entries from every club in the professional game.

Finally please keep up your super vocal support - today as ever you can make a difference - dont miss the opportunity.

Enjoy the game

Chris

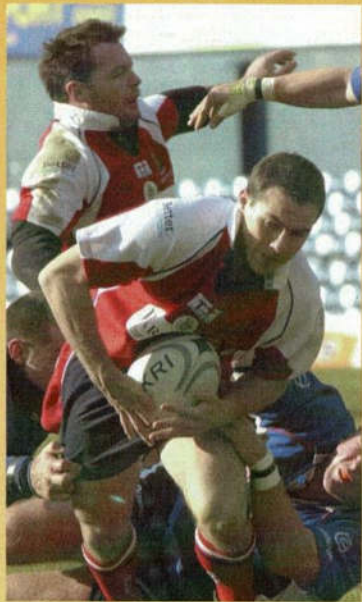
"One thing is for sure our defence has to improve considerably or we will be nowhere come the end of the season."

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.

www.roughyeds.co.uk

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COACHLINES

with **STEVE MOLLOY**

I would like to welcome everybody to our new, temporary home at Victory Park. Today's game promises to be a hard fought encounter against the highflying Whitehaven team. In some people's eyes they are the surprise package of National League 1 but as any Oldham fan will tell you they have been a force for a few years now under the guidance of Paul Cullen and more recently Steve McCormack.

I would like to go on record and thank everybody at Chorley for the use of their facilities and for helping us out at such short notice. Although it's not the nearest stadium to Oldham and for our supporters means yet another journey, the alternative of having weeks where we played three games, in this tough, hard fought

division, was never really an option.

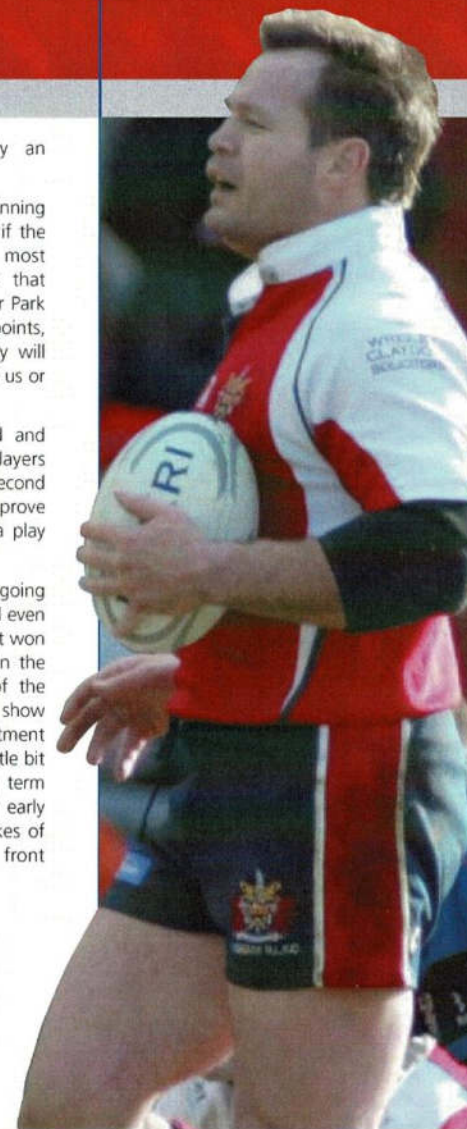
It was good to get back to winning ways against Keighley even if the performance wasn't the most convincing. It's important that you go to places like Cougar Park and come away with the points, because at some point they will beat somebody either above us or in the surrounding pack.

With a lot healthier squad and hopefully some of our players showing good form, this second third of the season will prove crucial in cementing us in a play off spot.

Keeping a healthy squad is going to be a major factor, as I feel even in the games that we haven't won this season we have been in the contest for large periods of the game, which just goes to show that the skill and commitment levels are there but with a little bit of luck and no more long term injuries we can build on our early season form and join the likes of Whitehaven and become front runners.

"this second third of the season will prove crucial in cementing us in a play off spot."

Enjoy the game,
Steve



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IN THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

with PHIL FARRELL

Well what can you say about our performance at Keighley last Sunday other than the fact that we won. Little else I'm afraid. It certainly wasn't one of our best performances as we made far too many handling errors and therefore gave away valuable possession. What was perhaps most disappointing was our second half performance when we had done all the hard work in the first half of playing up the Keighley hill.

In short we were unconvincing, but there were some positives to come out of the game. It gave valuable match practice to players out for a long time because of injury and suspension. At the time of writing they have all come out of the game with nothing more than minor knocks. It was particularly pleasing to see "Marshy" (Iain Marsh) back in the fray after a three and a half month absence with a cruciate ligament problem. Paul Southern also came through the game O.K. and it doesn't look as if Pat Rich's ankle injury is as bad as it was first thought and he trained with us on Monday.

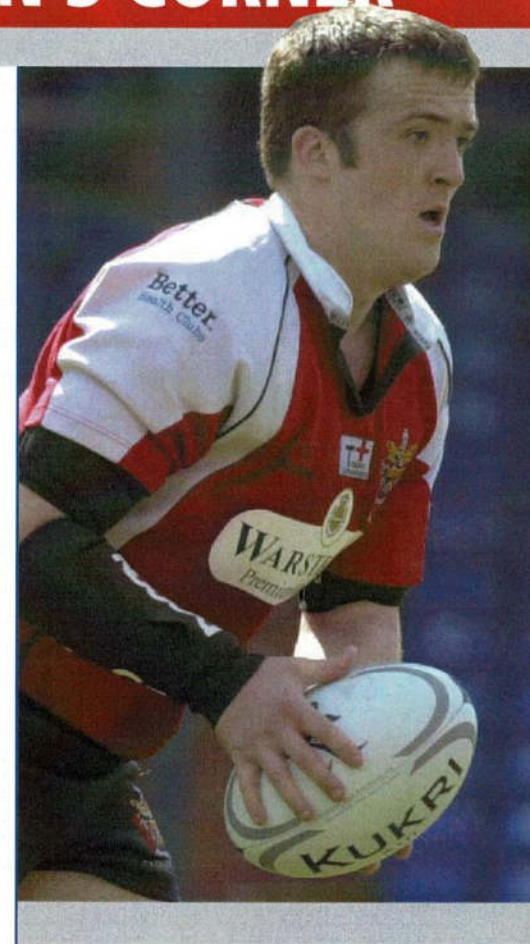
With Will Cowell due to play with the Academy last Wednesday and "The Rat" (Neil Roden) and the boss, (Steve Molloy) hopeful of being fit for today's game we may have something like a full squad to choose from with the exception of Gavin Johnson, Craig Farrimond and Adam Sharples. A sustained period with no serious injuries would, I am sure, bring out the best in what I still believe to be a very talented squad.

Well here we are at yet another "home" ground, Victory Park, Chorley. To be honest the lads aren't really worried where we play. In fact, for at least eight of the lads: myself, Martin McLoughlin; Neil Roden; Lee Doran; Craig Farrimond; Simon Svabic; Lee Marsh and Iain Marsh it will be, in some ways, more of a home game than playing at Boundary Park, as many of us are almost within walking distance of the ground-so no excuses there.

Hope as many of you as possible have made the journey for what promises to be a great game against the form team of the division. Let's hope we can put a stop to their winning run and it will certainly help having your vocal support behind us.

Enjoy the game,

Faz



"A sustained
period with no
serious injuries
would, I am sure,
bring out the best"

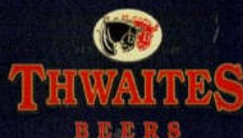
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them every success for the season



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AS IAN SEES IT

with IAN WILSON

How often do props get man-of-the-match – awards, or other individual honours? Not often enough, I suggest. It always seems to be the try scoring winger or the full back's forays, or the scheming halfback, or the Jimmy Lowes style hooker, or (at last in days gone by) the ball playing loose forward who gets the plaudits. But the importance of props has rally been brought home, at least to me, in a few recent games.

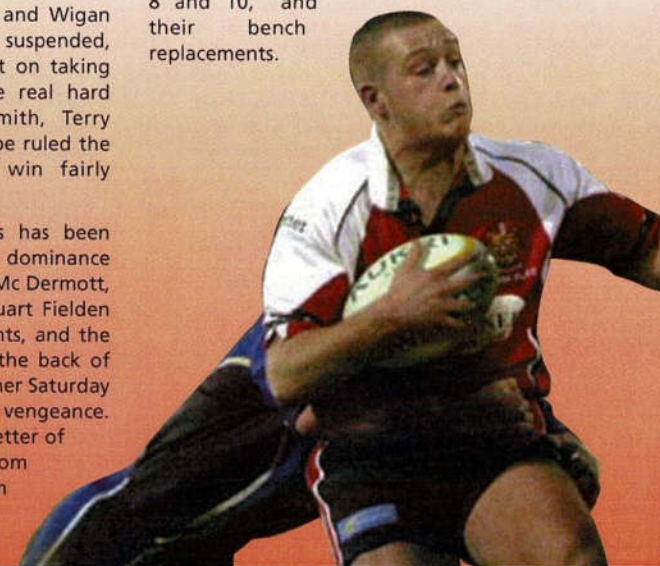
The other week in Super League there were outstanding wins for Wigan over Saints and for Leeds against Bradford, and on both occasions it was the dominance established up front, in terms of drives with the ball, hits without it and general physical intimidation, which was the basis of the wins. Saints, last season, struggled for props, and won nothing. Early on this season, Fozzard and Mason, with good support from Edmunson in particular, outplayed all their opponents, and the rest of Ian Millward's side reaped the rewards. They established similar prop dominance in the Cup Final, and Wigan were easily beaten. But with Mason suspended, and Fozzard seemingly more intent on taking peoples heads off than doing the real hard graft, the outstanding Craig Smith, Terry O'Connor and later Danny Sculthorpe ruled the roost, and Wigan went on to win fairly comfortably.

Much of Bradford's recent success has been based on their four props and the dominance they have often established. Brian Mc Dermott, Paul Anderson, Joe Vagana and Stuart Fielden proved too much for most opponents, and the magic of Lowes and the Pauls, on the back of them, has done the rest. But the other Saturday night, Leeds turned the tables with a vengeance. The evergreen Barry Mac. got the better of Fielden and with excellent support from McDonald and Bailey, the platform

was set for Diskin and Dunneman in particular to run the game.

The reference to us? I would venture to suggest that the first hour against Rochdale, and the final fifty minutes against Batley, in our last two "home" games were our poorest efforts for quite some time – and in both cases, we were stuffed down the middle before our game fell apart everywhere else too. It is often no coincidence whatsoever that Paul Southern missed both games, of course, and that Steve Molloy was forced to watch the whole of the debacle at Blackpool from the bench. In both games, Dane Morgan was our stand-out player, but there is a limit to what he can achieve on his own – and when he was taking his turn on the bench, the floodgates seemed to open wide.

There is lots going wrong this year, of course. But I have no doubt that Steve Molloy knows full well that, if we are to have any chance of turning things round, it has to start at numbers 8 and 10, and their bench replacements.



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in yer face

WITH GEOFF COOKE

Oldham's long and fruitless search for a ground to play on after Boundary Park was ruled out for two months finally came to a happy conclusion when Chorley Lynx came to the rescue. Many thanks to Henry Morris and his fellow directors for their timely assistance.

The whole episode points up the problems faced by Oldham since they lost their own ground at Watersheddings. And if summer rugby is to continue into the future it confirms-in my opinion at least-that the Roughyeds could still do with their own ground no matter what the good intentions of the new owners of Oldham Athletic and of Oldham Council, though how that can be achieved I do not know. Ground maintenance work is one of the obvious perils of shared facilities because at the end of the day grass has to have time to grow no matter what the sophisticated rooting systems now in place on many pitches.

Another peril of summer rugby highlighted by recent comments from Steve Molloy is rock hard pitches. I wonder if the large number of injuries suffered by Oldham and other clubs would be fewer on softer grounds? Apparently, taking Keighley as an example, not everyone has the facilities or the desire to water their pitch. All well and good, but it does expose the players to greater risk of injury.

I have recently taken to reading League Weekly, the successor paper to the Rugby Leaguer, in preference to League Express. Largely this is because I like the number of interesting columns by such as Peter Roe, Maurice Bamford, Dave Parker, Chris Pearson and editor Danny Lockwood. Best of all is Ray French whose weekly output is not just readable but full of common sense and, more importantly, is inspired by a vision of the future of our great game. Despite the quality of the writing I am pleased to note that the new League Weekly has not lost some of the typographical errors which graced the old Ruby Bleaguer. For instance, I note that in a recent Oldham academy fixture "Oldham had conceded twenty pints before half time. I just wish I'd been at Manor Park to grab one of them!

Another regular column in League Weekly is "Life with the Lynx", an enjoyable insight into the trials and tribulations here at Chorley. I note

that Henry Morris sang the praises of the club's recent fixture with Hunslet, a high quality match full of good football and intense drama. As ever, however, Chorley's progressive chairman was left tearing his hair out at an attendance of fewer than 400. We at Oldham do not need reminding of the difficulty of attracting spectators as 1200 seems to be about the norm for a Roughyeds match. While the powers that be are crowing about record attendances in Super League (although all the best weekly averages occur when London Broncos play away please note) it might be as well for some serious attention to be paid to LHF Healthplan Divisions One, Two and Three. It is not good enough to say individual clubs have to market themselves effectively when the salary of a commercial manager could account for the entire marketing budget of a small club. Most lower division clubs are entirely reliant on the goodwill of small local businesses to help sustain them but the bucket can only go to the same well so often before the well runs dry. Some years ago I was at Swinton in the sponsors lounge when the commercial manager thanked his sponsors for the day with the sentiment that they were the most important factor in keeping the club going. Not the spectators, note, but the sponsors! Not necessarily true for every club but there's food for thought there. So isn't it about time more resources percolated down to the lower reaches? Without the amateurs and the semi-professionals where will Super League draw its players from? Or are we happy to populate our leading competition with Australian has-beens?



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FROM THE PEN OF

MICHAEL TURNER

Roughyeds v Whitehaven

Photo 1. The first photograph shows action from the encounter at the Recreation Ground two years ago when Whitehaven snatched the spoils from the Roughyeds with a last minute try to register a 20 - 17 victory before a crowd of 1,010. The photo shows ex- Oldham favourite Howard Hill being brought down by Neil Roden



Picture 1

Photo 2. The second image goes back to August 30th 1958 and a Lancashire cup first round match at Watersheddings. It was a classic performance from the Oldham team who overwhelmed the visitors, 49 - 5. Alan Davies can be seen turning towards the posts with Alan Kellett in support. This being one of four tries Alan scored on the day. The attendance was 12,000.



Picture 2

In The News

With just over a third of the season over I thought it might be interesting to look at my suggested final league table, which I drew up before the season started and compare it with the situation going into today's game.

My Prediction	As it stands today	PTS
1 Leigh	1 Whitehaven	12
2 Whitehaven	2 Leigh	10
3 Oldham	3 Batley	10
4 Hull KR	4 Doncaster	10
5 Halifax	5 Hull KR	8
6 Batley	6 Oldham	8
7 Featherstone	7 Featherstone	6
8 Doncaster	8 Halifax	2
9 Rochdale	9 Keighley	2
10 Keighley	10 Rochdale	2

All in all I'm quite pleased with my predictions. Obviously Doncaster and Batley have done better so far than I expected and Halifax have disappointed. On top of that Oldham have had to cope with a massive injury problem. Halifax, it is interesting to see, play their bottom of the league rivals in the next two games so have the chance to climb the table. Featherstone have difficult games against Whitehaven and Batley and Batley must also face Leigh who then take on Hull KR. With us having hard matches against Whitehaven and Doncaster there is every chance of quite a turnaround in the next two games, which will mark the half way stage in the season. I venture to suggest that my predicted table will be closer to reality when we reach that half way stage. More of that in the Halifax programme, but one thing is for certain, this surely is one hell of a competitive league.

NM

TEXT YOUR MAN OF THE MATCH

Oldham RLFC is the first club in the National Leagues to set up a text messaging service for fans.

Launched TODAY. Fans can vote for their **MAN OF THE MATCH** and **WIN A VIP DAY OUT AT THEIR CLUB & £50 CASH.**

Just TEXT mom (space) Oldham (space) and the player's number to 89303

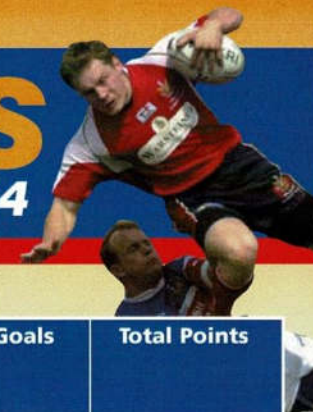
E.G. mom Oldham 9 (For Oldham fans)
or mom Whitehaven 7 (For Whitehaven fans)

You can vote up to midnight on the day of the game and the winner will be announced on the following Wednesday. (Winner chosen at random by computer from all entrants who chose most popular player)

The service will be used on an ongoing basis for further competitions and debates. Oldham RLFC will benefit financially from every text. Text costs £1.50 each.

STATISTICS

Player stats for season 2004



Player	Appearances (Including Subs) [Max. 20] (inc Law Cup)	Tries	Drop Goals	Goals	Total Points
Jon Goddard	19	8	-	-	32
Will Cowell	16	8	-	-	32
Iain Marsh	9	6	-	-	24
Gareth Barber	18	3	-	18	48
Nick Johnson	20	19	-	-	76
Simon Svabic	18	2	-	25	58
Ian Watson	18	4	2	2	22
Paul Southern	14	2	-	-	8
John Hough	8	-	-	-	0
Dane Morgan	19	8	-	-	32
Lee Doran	20	3	-	-	12
Martin Elswood	16	2	-	-	4
Craig Farrimond	5	1	-	-	4
Gavin Dodd	18	9	-	-	36
Gavin Johnson	4	-	-	-	0
Adam Sharples	5	-	-	-	0
Neil Roden	14	12	-	-	44
Martin McLoughlin	18	-	-	-	0
Steve Molloy	17	-	-	-	0
Lee Marsh	17	9	-	9	50
Keith Brennan	17	3	2	-	14
James Bunyan	13	5	-	-	20
James Lomax	2	-	-	-	0
Pat Rich	10	2	-	35	78
Phil Farrell	7	3	-	-	12
Danny Nanyn	1	-	-	-	0

www.roughyeds.co.uk

Unrivalled coverage of Oldham Rugby League spanning 3 centuries!

Joe Ferguson

1899 to 1923

Arguably the greatest ever Oldham player, Joe made a record 627 appearances for the club. But for the First World War his appearances may have crept up to 700, a fantastic record



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.

From the club's first game in 1895 to its most successful post-war season in 1956-57 to the present Oldham Roughyeds, the Chronicle has been on the touchline!

Make the most of your evening with Score on Monday and Roughyeds Round-up every week during the season



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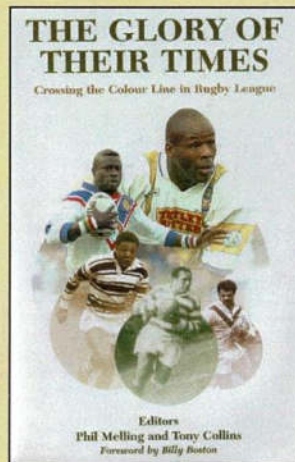
WALKERBOUT

With Brian Walker

QUESTION:

What do each of these ex Roughyeds have in common?

Add the name of prop forward Rowland Phillips (1996) to the list and these former Oldham players all have one thing in common. The dates given in brackets are a clue. If you think you know the answer and you fancy your chances of winning a copy of the fabulous new book THE GLORY OF THEIR TIMES featuring former Oldham stalwart Alex Givvons please either e mail briandobcross@btopenworld.com, phone 01457 875084 or post your answer to myself at 15, Treetops Close, Dobcross, Oldham OL3 5AS. The winner will be drawn from the hat and announced in the match programme for the Halifax game. WALKERBOUT will also include a full feature surrounding the achievements of this unique group of players.



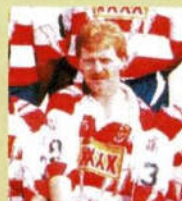
Charlie Bott (1966)



Frank Dyson (1959)



Frank Foster (1967)



Paul Groves (1987)



Cliff Hill (1966)



David Hill (1971)



Keith Holden (1963)



Len McIntyre (1963)



Johnny Ray (1965)



Les Thomas (1947)



Charlie Winslade (1959)

MEANWHILE, THE OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE HERITAGE TRUST IS ORGANISING AN EXHIBITION "THE ROUGHYEDS" AT GALLERY OLDHAM, RUNNING FROM THE 21ST OF AUGUST THROUGH UNTIL THE 18TH OF SEPTEMBER. IF YOU HAVE ANY ITEMS THAT YOU THINK ARE WORTHWHILE FEATURING, PLEASE CONTACT ME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

TODAY'S OPPONENTS WHITEHAVEN

GARY BROADBENT Fullback Joined club from Salford in 2003. One of best full backs in NL1. A classy skilful player who was selected for the NL1 All Star team last season and also captained Cumbria against New Zealand A.

WESLEY WILSON Full back/centre A skilful player who grabbed international honours, with BARLA, at U18 level. Signed from Wrath Brow in January 1997 and quickly secured a first team place. Has been unlucky with injuries in the last few years but came back well last season.

PAUL O'NEILL Fullback/winger Originally signed as a full back but now features mainly on the wing, this former Kells youngster graduated to the top flight during 2001 although injuries curtailed his opportunities last season. A consistent goal kicker.

JOHN LEBBON Winger A young player with a big future. A former Egremont junior who came into the first team towards the end of last season and did really well. Toured France with the NL under 21's last October.

MICK NANYN Three-quarter 'Haven's major close season signing from Rochdale Hornets, older brother of Danny who made his debut for the Roughyeds a couple of weeks ago. A big pacy three-quarter who was Hornets' top scorer last season. Good goal kicker was voted NL1 Young Player of the Year for 2003.

DAVID SEEDS Full back/centre Is one of the best centres outside Super League. Toured Australia with the BARLA GB squad in 1993. Another product of the famous Kells club, he signed pro later that year. Established a new club record for career tries in 2002 and taking a deserved benefit this season.

HOWARD HILL Centre/second row Local lad who played for Oldham Bears in Super League and has now rejoined his hometown club after a spell at Swinton. He brings a physical presence to the team and turned in consistently good performances last season.

RYAN CAMPBELL Centre/back row A former Wath Brow Hornet who has graduated from the Academy side and has a lot of potential. A Cumbria County Academy and GB student's player.

STEVEN WOOD Utility Back A Whitehaven lad who joined the club last season after playing with Workington. A versatile and skilful player who filled most of the back positions last season.

JAMIE MARSHALL Winger Former Barrow winger who joined 'Haven in the close season. Quick and elusive, 'Haven hope he shows the form which brought him 26 tries for Barrow last season.

MARK WALLACE Winger Returned to Whitehaven in 2000 after spending some time at Workington Town. A pacy winger who missed most of last season through injury but is making a good comeback this year.

LEROY JOE Stand off Re-signed last year after a spell with Hull KR. Originally joined the club from North Queensland Cowboys. Represented Cook Island in the 2000 World Cup. A classy footballer and key member of the 'Haven squad. Was top try scorer with 26 last season.

LEE KIDDIE Half back Signed from Kells in 1994 and now in his benefit season. A skilful and elusive footballer who has been a regular try scorer for the club and is now approaching his 100th try for the club. Played for Scotland in the 2003 European Nations competition.

STEVEN KIRKBRIDE Scrum half Another product of Kells. Joined Warrington in 1997 and was their Alliance Player of the Year in 2000 before returning home in January 2001. A classy number 7 and a very accurate kicker.

DAVID FATIALOFA Prop A former junior Kiwi who joined the club in 1996. A strong running and solid tackler who was 'Haven's most consistent forward in 2003.

AARON LESTER Hooker/loose forward Another New Zealander, Aaron is rated by many as one of the best players outside of Super League. A dedicated professional who played for Auckland Warriors before coming here in 1996. Current club captain.

CARL SICE Hooker Former 'Haven Academy hooker who re-joined his home town club last year after featuring for Workington. An exciting runner from dummy half, Carl played for Cumbria against New Zealand A last year.

MARK JACKSON Utility forward This live wire forward was signed as a hooker from Wath Brow in 2001. A former BARLA international who has quickly adapted to pro. Rugby filling in most pack positions in the last two seasons.

DEAN VAUGHAN Prop Young player with tremendous work rate. A former Academy skipper, looking to bounce back this season after a 2003 where injuries forced his season to end early.

PHIL SHERWEN Prop Big powerful forward who joined us in January 2001 after featuring for BARLA in the emerging Nations World Cup. Another product of Wath brow, he is looking for a big season in 2004 after missing most of 2003 through injury.

MARK COX Prop Back on loan at the club after joining London Broncos last season. Looking to re-launch his career after his 2003 season was cut short due to a car accident.

GRAEME MORTON Second row A strong tackling, hard running forward who never takes a backward step. Signed from Kells in 1993 after representing BARLA Great Britain Under 19's against Australia and France. Played for Cumbria v New Zealand A last year. Another in his benefit season.

CHRIS McKINNEY Second row A member of Widnes Vikings NFP Premiers in 2001. Returned to his home town team during the close season and is proving a good acquisition. A hard working, industrious back row forward.

GARY SMITH Utility forward Signed from Kells in 1999 and made his name in the Alliance side before gaining some first team experience last season. Selected for the National League under 21's recently.

SPENCER MILLER Back row Another product of Kells, he is a hard running forward who was a regular first teamer last season. Represented NFP under 21's in 2001 and played for Scotland in the 2003 European Nations Competition.

BRETT McDERMOTT Loose forward/centre

Signed from Workington in the close season and has also played for Barrow. Tough and aggressive and can cover a number of positions. Played for Cumbria against New Zealand A last season.

GARRY PURDHAM Loose forward Member of Egremont's Conference winning side and has powered his way into a regular first team spot since joining the club. Powerful runner and strong in defence, his brother Robert plays for London Broncos.



PLAYER PROFILE

DANE MORGAN

DANE Morgan has become progressively more influential in the Oldham forwards since he made his debut against Barrow at Boundary Park on March 2, 2003.

Now in his second season with the Roughyeds, the popular Aussie is an anchor in Oldham's pack. Be it at prop or in the second-row he is one of the first to have his name pencilled on the team sheet when Steve Molloy picks his line-up each week.

Arriving in Oldham during a cold February last year, he spent many a mid-winter training session shivering in the cold on the all-weather pitch at Grange. And Dane himself would be the first to admit it took him a few weeks to settle when faced with the hardship of a northern hemisphere winter.

He also had to come to terms with a different style of rugby – English rugby – as well as settle down with his newly-acquired wife in new surroundings and to a different way of life.

He hardly lacked experience, having played back home for Wests Tigers and Melbourne Storm and having been to England once before when he was a substitute for Melbourne on the occasion they thrashed St Helens in the World Club Championship.

That was a comparatively brief visit, but he liked what he saw of England and he vowed then that, one day, he would come back and play here.

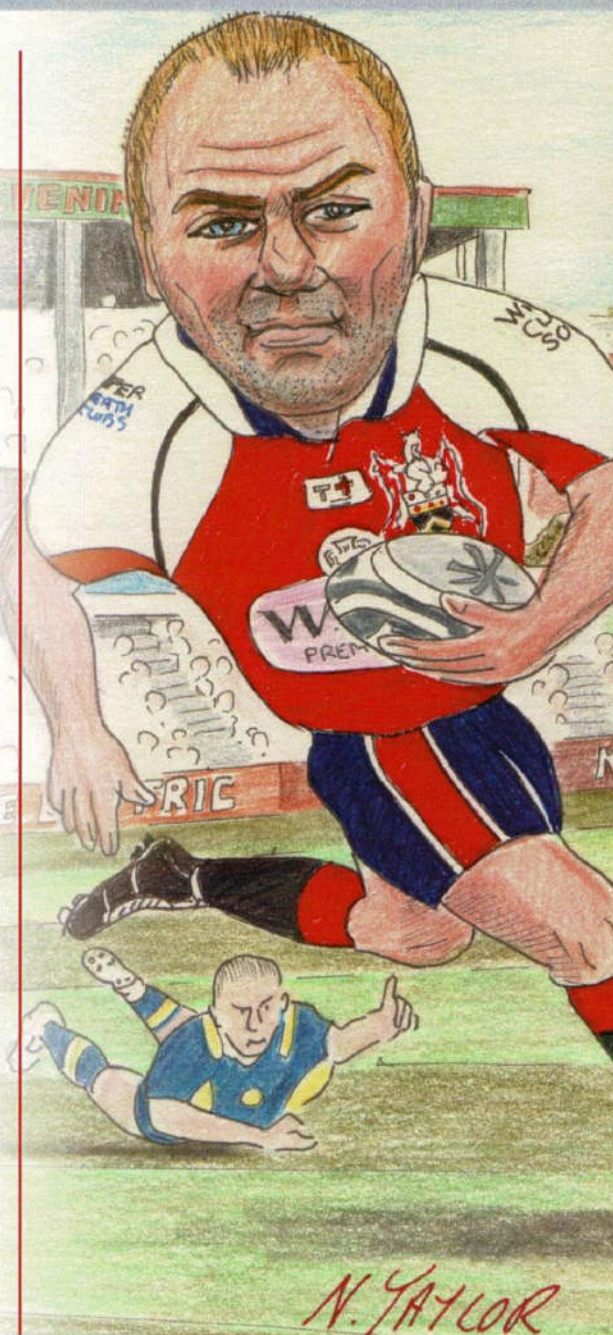
And so it was that he stepped out in Oldham colours for the first time with No 10 on his back on a March day 15 months ago. On the same day Adam Sharples made his entry into the senior side at the ripe old age of 17.

The team that beat Barrow 50-11 that day was: Dodd; Campbell, I Marsh, Goddard, McNicholas; Svabic, Brennan; Molloy, Murray, Morgan, Doran, Stazicker, Farrell. Subs: Anderson, Barber, Shaw, Sharples.

In the first couple of months or so here Dane struggled to find his feet – and how he hated those training nights in the rain, sleet and biting winds that sweep down into Oldham from the Pennines in the early part of the year.

He was in the starting line-up only three times in the first five matches after his arrival, and he spent the next seven games coming off the bench, while Molly and Knocker (Paul Norton) filled the prop positions.

It was when Knocker was forced into retirement on medical grounds after the 12-10 win against Leigh at Boundary Park on May 25 last year that Dane became an automatic choice on the blind-side of the front-row.



DANE MORGAN CONT...

The winter storms had blown themselves out; the sky was blue; the grass was green; the players had the sun on their backs --- and the lad from downtown Sydney felt at home.

By this time he was a dashing Dane, and he was to star in the last 14 games of the season, playing a major role in the late-season scramble to make the play-off six.

Eight points from a possible 12 against Whitehaven, Featherstone and Doncaster at Boundary Park and Batley, Rochdale and Dewsbury away raised hopes of qualification.

Four defeats in a row by Salford and Hull KR at Oldham and by Leigh and Whitehaven away carried the Roughyeds out of the top six and many fans feared the worst.

Molloy's men had to win their last two games to squeeze in and they did it in style by beating Batley at home 36-10 and Featherstone at Post Office Road 19-14 --- Oldham's first win there in 18 years!

Morgan was a kingpin of the Oldham pack throughout that roller-coaster ride to the play-offs, but none more so than at Featherstone.

With time running out fast, and the Roughyeds playing up the slope, and trailing, it needed something special to put them back on top.

The great Dane provided it with a solo try which required phenomenal strength to take a posse of Rovers defenders over the line with him.

That was neither the first nor the last time that season that the Aussie emerged an Oldham hero and it was fitting that he should figure in the end of year presentations for a job well done.

It came as no real surprise when, on returning from a

close-season trek across Europe with Mrs Morgan, he again signed on the dotted line to spend a second season with the Roughyeds.

This time he was established in England and more was expected of him. He has certainly delivered.

A big shift of emphasis this season saw him move from prop to second-row, his favoured spot. He has played some games at prop, particularly latterly when both Molly and Paul Southern were out injured.

That left a huge hole up front in the engine room and Dane came to the rescue. Mainly, though, he has been in the second-row this time, operating alongside Lee Doran.

He has missed only one of the side's 21 games in all competitions and he has proved equally effective at both prop and second-row.

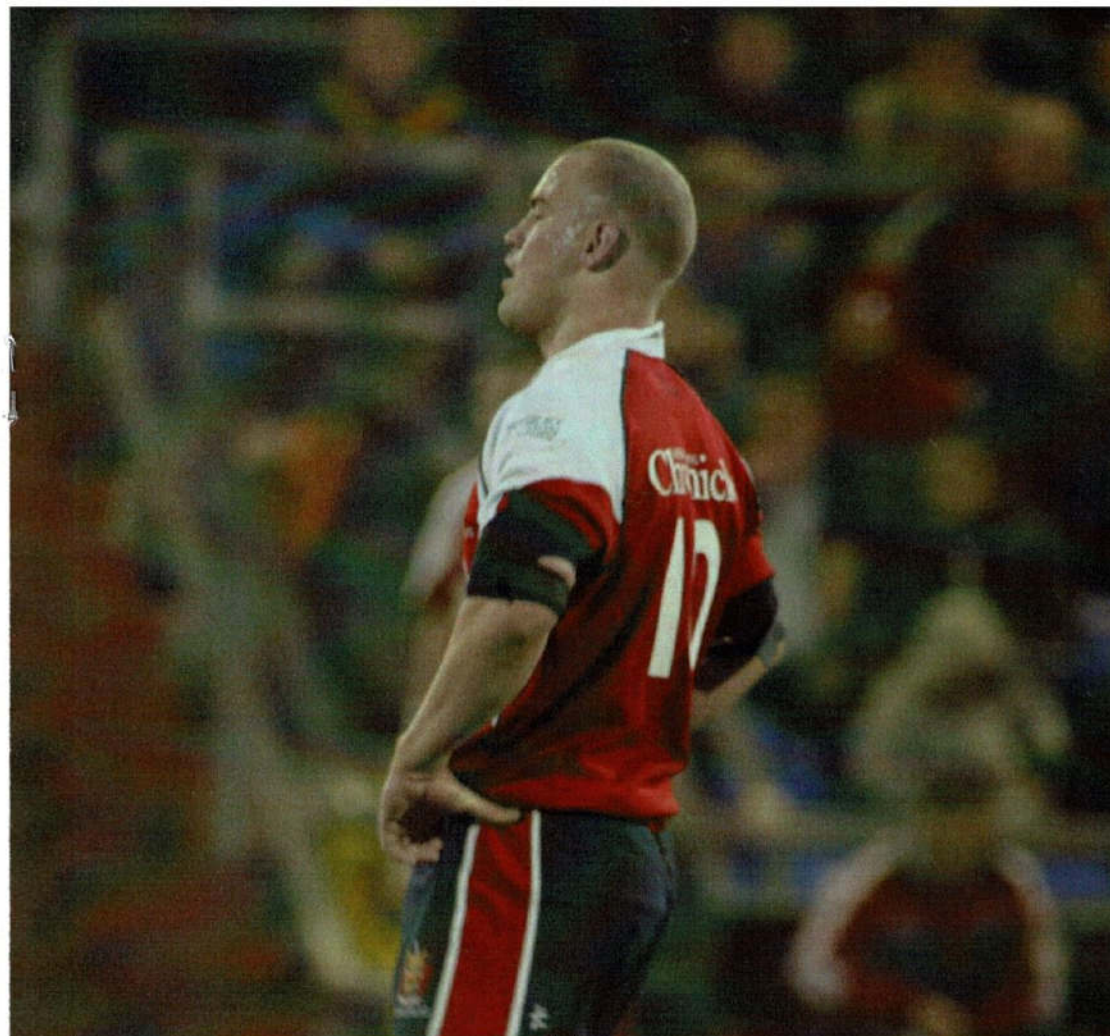
He plays a similar type of game from both positions. He isn't a wide runner like Lee. Dane drives up the middle, has a good offload (they like that expression in Australia) and, once he makes a break, he can be relied upon to make good fast yards and to look for his support.

He blotted his copybook when he was sent off against Leigh for allegedly swinging a punch or two in the direction of Simon Knox. Claiming provocation and going to the disciplinary meeting with a squeaky clean record, he escaped a ban. Justice was served.

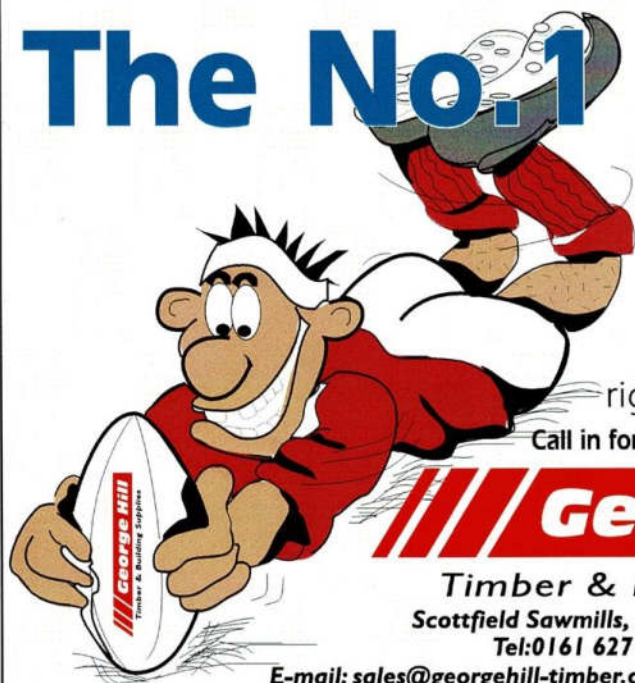
Now, the big Aussie can look ahead with confidence to the second half of the LHF Healthplan National League first division campaign and, hopefully, the play-offs.

From here on in every game will be a cup tie in this highly competitive division -- and that's a situation that Dane should relish.

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Hi KIDS

Well we're certainly getting about these days, what with our trips to Blackpool, the theatre and now a day out in Chorley. Unfortunately I don't think we are going to see any Lions or Tigers or Bears today, not even a ride on a donkey.

Never mind I'm sure we will be able to do those things again sometime. Meanwhile if we shout loud enough the "lads" will hear it and us will help them to a big win.

Carole and myself hope you enjoyed the trips we arranged and that you are going to tell your friends what a great time "Roughyed Kids" have.

Today's mascot is 5 yr. old Owen Baldwin. Owen goes to Thorp Primary School and his favourite player is captain, Phil Farrell. Those of you who go to the Academy matches will recognise Owen, as Oldham's unofficial score keeper.

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Good Luck to Steve & the "Lads"

See you soon

Janet & Carole



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Owen Baldwin

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Hobbies: Oldham's unofficial score keeper

Favourite Player: Phil Farrell

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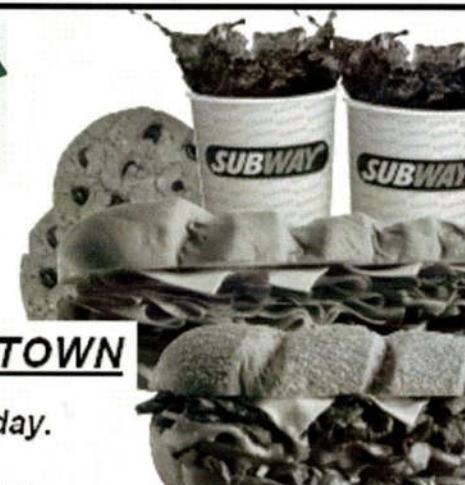
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ON THIS DAY

DON YATES LOOKS BACK TO JUNE 20TH YESTERYEAR

Although Oldham fans will, once again, have had to travel for today's home game, they will not have had to travel as far as they did seven years ago to watch their favourites. On Friday 20th June 1997 Oldham were playing 12,000 miles away when they visited Adelaide in the World Club Championship. There was a crowd of 13,852 at Adelaide Oval that evening when the Rams defeated the Bears 42-14. Oldham took the lead in the second minute of that match when Paul Topping scored after the Adelaide defence failed to deal with a Martin Crompton bomb. Francis Maloney converted to put Oldham 6-0 in front. By half-time the Rams had recovered to lead 18-6 and, from then on, they were never in danger. Joe Faimalo and Francis Maloney did score tries for Oldham in the second half but the Bears never looked capable of overhauling their hosts.

Twelve months later, three local juniors were 'down under' in Australia with the BARLA touring team. The opening match of that 1998 tour took place at Davies Park, Mareeba, near Cairns, on Saturday 20th June when the tourists met a North Queensland Aboriginal squad. Winger Paul Brassington (Waterhead) and hooker Jason Wilkes (Saddleworth Rangers) were included in the team whilst utility player Emerson Jackman (Saddleworth Rangers) sat that match out. After an hour of the match BARLA trailed 24-22 but the tourists stepped up a gear in the closing quarter to win 36-24.

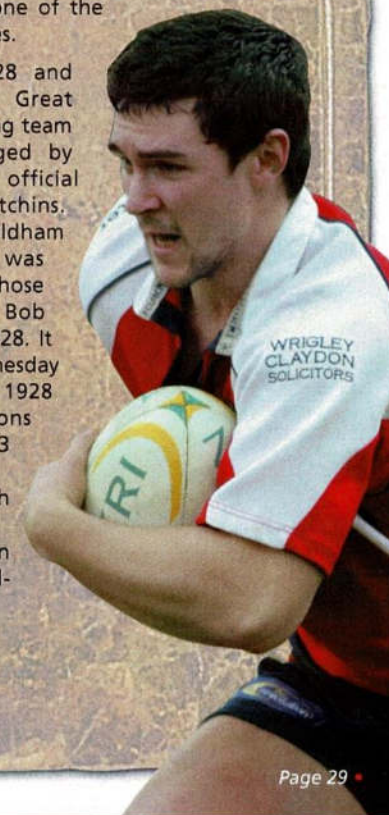
Another former Oldham junior, winger Terry O'Grady of St.Marys, was in sensational form when the senior British Lions met Wide Bay at Maryborough on Sunday 20th June 1954. Great Britain won that match 60-14 and, in so doing, ran in 14 tries. Five of those tries were scored by O'Grady.

The 1984 British Lions included five Oldham players within their ranks including current Oldham assistant coach Mick Worrall. They were not the most successful touring team of

all time and on Wednesday 20th June 1984 suffered a particularly disappointing defeat when they met Toowoomba. After scoring an early try, the Lions crumbled to a 12-4 half-time deficit and eventually lost 18-16, a final score which flattered the tourists. Oldham's Des Foy began the match at centre but was replaced midway through the first half by the other Oldham player involved in the match, Ray Ashton.

The 1914 Lions tour of Australasia included the famous Rorke's Drift test. Three players from Oldham, Alf Wood, Billy Hall and Dave Holland, played in that epic test. Earlier in the tour, on Saturday 20th June 1914, Great Britain registered a superb 22-8 victory over Queensland before a 12,000 crowd in Brisbane. Stand-off Billy Hall, usually a centre, played against Queensland and scored one of the six British tries.

In both 1928 and 1932 the Great Britain touring team were managed by Oldham official George Hutchins. Only one Oldham player was involved in those tours, Bob Sloman in 1928. It was on Wednesday 20th June 1928 that the Lions won 23-13 against Ipswich with Sloman turning out in the second-row



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LEAGUE WEEKLY

Danny Lockwood, publisher

THE promotion and relegation debate looks set fair to stay with us for the next 18 months, as rugby league considers its options in light of Perpignan's invitation to the party. It's ironic, given that the constantly changing face of the professional sport seemed to have settled down over the past couple of years. The most dogmatic critics of the modern game have almost unanimously swallowed their arguments, as Super League has dragged the sport kicking into the 21st century. Indeed the latest three-division format provides tremendously competitive platforms throughout the pro game. With the Skolars beating Swinton last week, and the LHF National League Three now providing a further link between the grassroots nationwide growth and the bottom of the pro game, rugby league's case for being considered a 'national' sport has never been more sound.

True, there are enough 'national' teams playing here, there and everywhere, to start their own league. Is the 'Irish' team that plays the USA on St Patrick's Day the same as the Irish team that entered the last World Cup? Obviously the English team playing in the current Home Nations isn't the same as the England A that nearly beat the all-conquering Kangaroos last October. We're all pretty clear about the difference between the Gt Britain big boys and the BARLA Gt Britain lads who will shortly be touring Australia. And I think the Academy tourists going down under are no relation to the Academic Lions I seem to recall from last year. It will all come out in the wash. However if it means we get the same level of funding as the union chappies, and lift the Gillette Tri-Nations to boot, then you can give everyone who ever strapped boots on an international cap for my money.

But we're still left with the thorny promotion/relegation issue. And as long as the answer lies with the vested interests of the existing Super League clubs, I don't believe we are likely to get a solution which provides the best long-term future for the game. Two-down-one-up, one-down-none-up, one down and a play-off ... we've had all kinds of possibilities thrown out. A 13-team league, 14-team league take your pick. What is assured at the moment is that the Super League perennials are highly unlikely to vote for anything which dilutes their revenue streams, and that in itself limits the number of possible outcomes.

After the absolute mess of the 2000 World Cup, the RFL reinvented itself and whether through luck or judgment, found itself an executive chairman and a management team to build a bright new future. The success, in financial, marketing, development and organisational terms, has been profound.

My own feeling is that promotion and relegation to and from Super League should end, probably the year after next. I'll expand on my reasons for that some other time. For now, the Perpignan introduction creates the right time and place to examine the entire structure, and consider a whole range of associated issues. Those decisions should be arrived at independently of the vested interests, under the guiding eye of Richard Lewis. The clubs have managed to trust Mr Lewis on many issues we wouldn't have thought possible a scant few years ago, and been richly rewarded for it. Why stop there?

LEAGUE WEEKLY – Featuring Ray French, Denis Betts, Dave 'Nosey' Parker, Peter Roe, Maurice Bamford, plus Phil Hodgson on the amateur game. Full national & international coverage. Full colour! Full on! EVERY MONDAY



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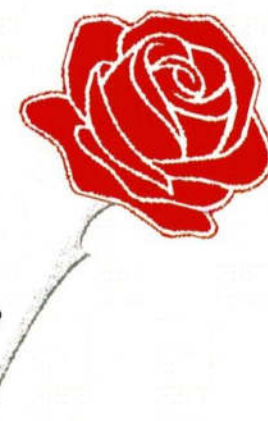
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NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



SKOLARS CONTINUE PROGRESS

THE most startling results of last weekend came at the New River Stadium - where London Skolars marked their continuing progress with a second win of the NL1 season over Swinton.

Here is a National League club making genuine progress.

They are now in their second season, having won just one game in their debut campaign - their home match with Gateshead Thunder.

They beat Thunder again earlier this year in the league - their first away win - having defeated Sheffield at home in the group stages of the Arriva Trains Cup.

And the victory over a Swinton side featuring several established National League players marks the latest notch on their bedpost of conquests.

The Skolars have certainly improved markedly on the field this season - gone are the days when they would regularly receive 60-point plus hammerings.

In fact, in August last year, they hit their lowest point in the professional ranks when they were soundly thrashed 98-4 by Sheffield.

That they recently defeated the Eagles is testimony primarily to the work of joint coaches Marcus Tobin and Alex Smits, the second of whom continues to have a significant influence as a player.

This season they have considerably cut down on the number of players they have used, which has doubtless aided their continuity and familiarity on the field.

But it is not just the first team picture where the Skolars' success can be measured.

Their blossoming junior section continues to make strides, and would shame most other National League clubs.

And their crowds are on the increase. Sunday's attendance of 465 might not sound particularly impressive, but for a fledgling club battling against the odds outside the game's heartlands, it is highly encouraging.

Especially when you consider that this is still, ultimately, a team that is losing more often than not - and travelling support is almost always at a minimum.

As one Skolars official commented this week, the nature of Sunday's thrilling 28-26 should encourage spectators to return - hopefully with a few friends.

Certainly League in London could do with the boost, with the Broncos struggling at present.

It would be nice if the Skolars could provide that lift.

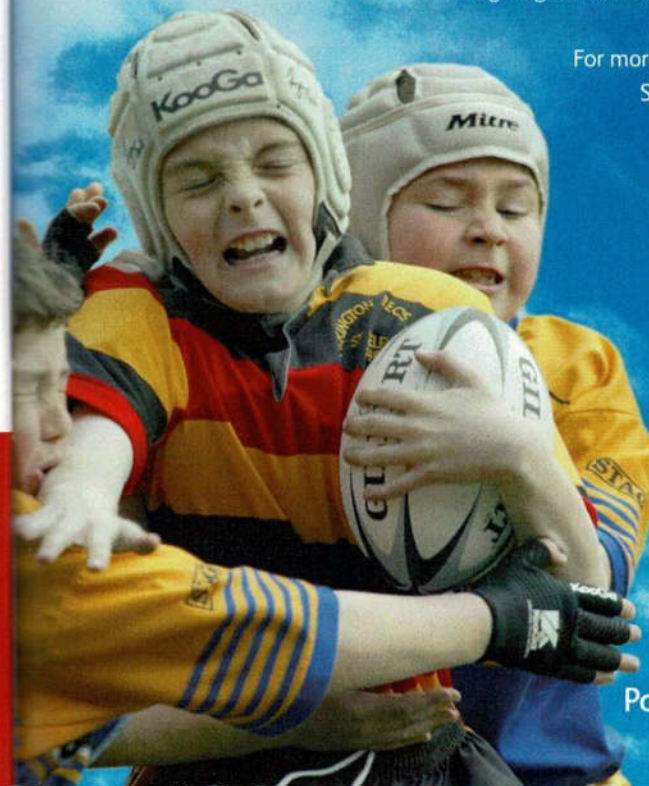


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Fixtures

DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
01/02/04	Chorley Lynx	AT Cup	Home	15.00	64-14	W	1096
06/02/04	Castleford Panthers	Powergen CC	Home	19.30	16-8	W	1003
15/02/04	Leigh Centurions	AT Cup	Away	15.00	51-32	L	2316
22/02/04	Swinton Lions	AT Cup	Away	15.00	18-30	W	783
29/02/04	Sharlston Rovers	Powergen CC	Home	19.45	24-4	W	1301
07/03/04	Leigh Centurions	AT Cup	Home	15.00	10-54	L	1805
14/03/04	Warrington Wolves	Powergen CC	Home	15.00	10-44	L	2859
21/03/04	Chorley Lynx	AT Cup	Away	15.00	10-40	W	370
28/03/04	Powergen CC Quarter Finals	Powergen CC					
28/03/04	Rochdale Hornets	AT Cup	Home	18.00	56-12	W	1214
04/04/04	Swinton Lions	AT Cup	Home	15.00	42-15	W	983
09/04/04	Rochdale Hornets	AT Cup	Away	15.00	12-48	W	1305
12/04/04	Featherstone Rovers	NL 1	Home	15.00	50-24	W	1320
18/04/04	Powergen CC Semi Final 1	Powergen CC					
18/04/04	Halifax	NL1	Away	15.00	6-25	W	1807
25/04/04	Powergen CC Semi Final 2	Powergen CC					
25/04/04	Doncaster	AT Cup	Away	15.00	32-28	L	835
02/05/04	Leigh Centurions	NL 1	Home	15.00	20-60	L	2104
09/05/04	Hull Kingston Rovers	NL1	Away	15.00	29-22	L	2121
15/05/04	Powergen CC Final	Powergen CC					
23/05/04	Rochdale Hornets	NL 1	Home	15.00	26-24	W	1243
30/05/04	Batley Bulldogs	NL 1	Home	15.00	20-44	L	1541
06/06/04	AT Cup Quarter Finals	AT Cup					
13/06/04	Keighley Cougars	NL1	Away	15.00	28-33	W	1153
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. Play-offs	NL1					

Key

AT Cup – Arriva Trains Cup

Powergen CC – Powergen Challenge Cup

NL1 – National League Division 1

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