

TODAYS TEAMS

20TH FEBRUARY 2005 • KICK OFF 3.00PM

Rochdale Hornets



Oldham RLFC

THE OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF

Rochdale Hornets

v Oldham RLFC

Try	Conversion	FD Goal			Try	Conversion	FD Goal
			Dave Alstead	FULL BACK	John Goddard		
			Chris Giles	RIGHT WING	Will Cowell		
			Mark McCully	RIGHT CENTRE	Damein Munro		
			Richard Varkutis	LEFT CENTRE	Alex Wilkinson		
			Chris Campbell	LEFT WING	Nick Johnson		
			Lee Birdseye	STAND OFF	Simon Svabic		
			John Braddish	SCRUM HALF	Marty Turner		
			Andy Leatham	OPEN SIDE PROP	Paul Norman		
			Dave McConnell	HOOKER	Gareth Barber		
			Gareth Price	BLIND SIDE PROP	Danny Nanyin		
			Andy Gorski	OPENSIDE 2ND ROW	Ricky Bibey		
			Lee Doran	BLINDSIDE 2ND ROW	Tere Glassie		
			Phil Farrel	LOOSE FORWARD	Carlos Mataora		
			Tommy Hodgkinson	SUBSTITUTE ONE	Craig Farrimond		
			Sam Butterworth	SUBSTITUTE TWO	Gavin Dodd		
			Dave Newton	SUBSTITUTE THREE	Marlin Elswood		
			Phil Cantillon	SUBSTITUTE FOUR	James Kirkland		

PROGRESSIVE SCORE

SCRUMS

SCRUMS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

SCRUMS

SCRUMS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24

PROGRESSIVE SCORE

THE OFFICIALS

P. Taberner, R. Huddleston C. Neilson, C. Dean I. S. Muir

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Club Secretary: Mr K Oldham

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Mr N Halsall (Vice Chairman)
Mr K Oldham
Mr D Vining
Mr P Reynolds
Mrs A Manock

Coach: Bobby Goulding

Assistant Coach: Darren Shaw

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Hornets Magazine Production:
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HORNETS WEBSITE

Why not visit the Hornets supporters' website on:

www.rochdalehornets.com

CLUB HONOURS

Challenge Cup Winners	1921-22
Lancashire Cup Winners	1911-12, 1914-15, 1918-19
Beaten Finalists	1912-13, 1919-20, 1965-66, 1990-91
Regal Trophy Beaten Finalists	1973-74
BBC2 Floodlight Trophy Beaten Finalists	1971-72

CLUB RECORDS

Debut Season	1895-96
Biggest Victory, 98-0 v York Wasps	2000-01
Heaviest Defeat, 10-82 v Hull Sharks	1999-2000

MOST TRIES

In a career - 103, J. Williams	1931-37
In a season - 31, M Billy	2000-01
In a match - 5, J. Corsi, M. Billy J. Williams, N. Brelsford	1921-22 1933, 1972, 2001

MOST GOALS

In a career - 733, W. Gowers	1922-36
In a season - 150m M. Strett	1994-95
In a match - 14, S. Turner	1989

MOST POINTS

In a career - 1481, W. Gowers	1922-36
In a season - 350, M. Nanyin	2002-03
In a match - 32, S. Turner	1988-89

MOST APPEARANCES

455, W. Gowers	1922-36
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Rochdale Hornets are proud of our family friendly image and agree wholeheartedly with the Rugby Football League 'Tackle Racism' Policy. As such the club will not tolerate any foul, abusive or racist language or behaviour within the stadium. Anybody found to be committing such offences will be removed from the ground and liable to prosecution.

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BOBBIE'S VIEW



WELCOME TO ROCHDALE HORNETS

Good afternoon and a warm welcome to the players, staff and supporters of Oldham.

After excellent pre-season training sessions and two successful warm up games last Sunday's result was a huge disappointment to all concerned. Although I felt we did enough in the 1st half the wheels came off in the 2nd half and it was difficult to put a finger on why. However we have worked hard on the lads this week and we are ready to turn things round this afternoon against an Oldham side who will be very different from the team we meet in the Law Cup.

Enjoy the game.

Bobbie

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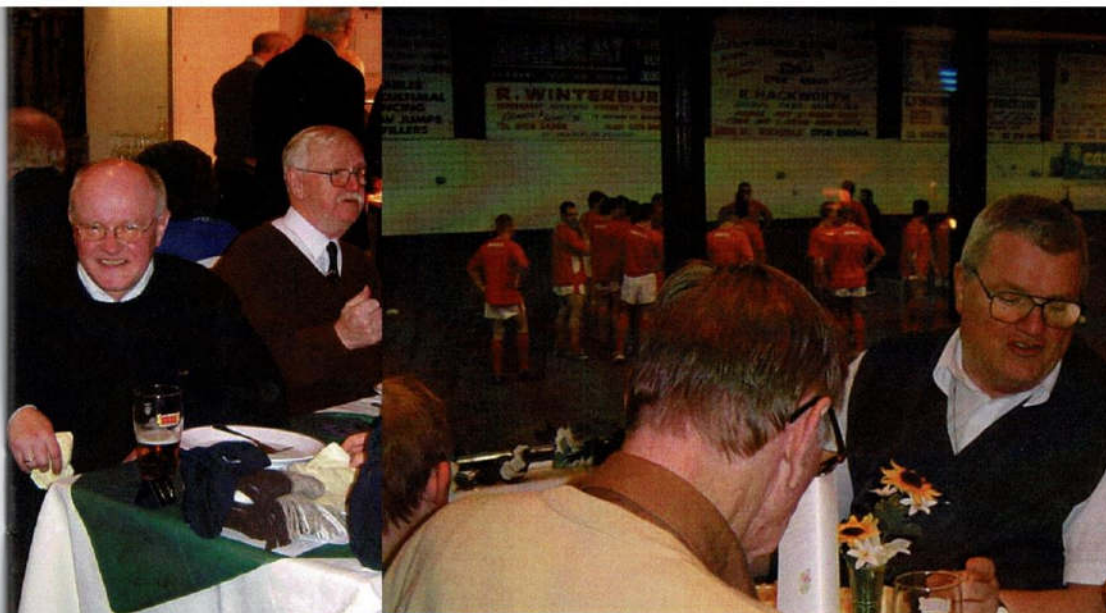
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MEET & GREET!

Over 100 Hornets supporters attended the recent "meet and greet" night at Birchinley Manor Leisure Centre.

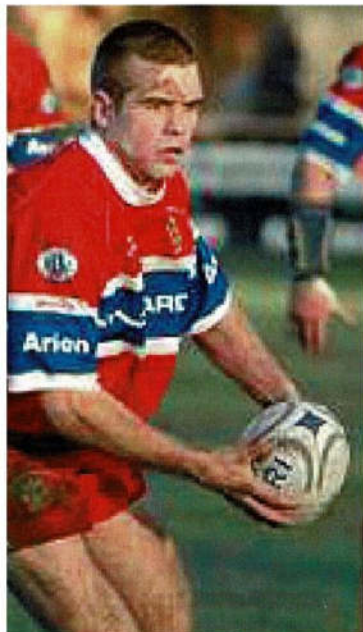
Supporters of all ages enjoyed the opportunity to meet the Hornets Squad, take photographs and obtain autographs.

A big "Thank You" to Birchinley Manor staff for their time and superb facilities.

A big Thanks also goes to Andy Birch, Mark and Deb Wynn and also Directors Ann Manock and David Vining for all their sterling hard work and organisation of the evening.

It has been agreed that we should have more of these social occasions.





Swinton 20 - Hornets 14

DOWNBEAT START AT SWINTON

The sizeable Hornets contingent in the crowd will have left Sedgely Park feeling decidedly short-changed by this limp, lack-lustre performance.

Despite playing under the handicap of three sin-binnings, Swinton kept their shape and used the ground's huge dimensions far more smartly than a Hornets side that failed to splutter, never mind spark.

The first 25 minutes were an arm-wrestle: both teams content to plough the centre of the field in search of an opening. John Braddish went close for Hornets on 22 minutes, but was held up over the line; in the ensuing post-mortem Ian Watson let his mouth off and was dispatched for a ten minute cool-down.

His absence sparked Swinton to life and in their next foray Marsh and Sinfield shipped the ball neatly wide for Maye to score. The game reverted to type, with Hornets withstanding three back-to-back sets as Swinton pinned them down in their own in-goal with a series of well-balanced kicks.

With half-time looming, Hornets managed their only semblance of cohesive football of the afternoon: Doran's break; Cantillon in support to score; Birdseye adding the extras. Right on the hooter, Maye was sin-binned for dissent; Birdseye popped over the penalty and Hornets went in two points ahead 6-8.

With the wind and the slight slope in the second half, Hornets fans expected some improvement - but the Lions grabbed the game by the scruff and took control.

Again, a barrage of kicks into the in-goal prevented Hornets from gaining any meaningful ground and, on 55 minutes, Swinton returned a resulting drop-out with interest. The ball was worked downfield; Watson's pin-point flat pass found Marsh arriving at pace and he crashed through to score.

On the hour, Swinton delivered a killer blow. With Hornets struggling to get out of their own half, Coates found a huge hole in their defensive line and - with men either side - found himself with just Alstead to beat. Wayne English was the recipient and he planted the ball under the black dot.

Hornets did, briefly, flicker into life: Cantillon taking the ball to the Swinton line and Campbell scoring wide out (Birdseye adding a superb conversion) - but the two point deficit was as close as they got.

With four minutes remaining, Watson and Marsh worked a carbon copy of their earlier effort; Hornets defence fell for it again and Swinton deservedly took the spoils.

Despite some last minute bull and bluster in a desperate scramble for a point, Hornets were never really in the hunt in the second half - and Bobbie Goulding will need a combination of harsh words and hard work if we are to better this effort.

"They were smarter and more enthusiastic than us," said Goulding. And Hornets supporters might have been justified in wondering where Hornets' trademark enthusiasm had gone on this half-hearted disappointing afternoon.

Jim Stringer

What the papers say!

NATIONAL RAIL CUP

MARSH AT THE DOUBLE

Swinton 20 - Hornets 14

By Trevor Baxter

Swinton Lions coach Paul Kidd praised his side's defending as they opened their Northern Rail League Cup campaign with a victory.

Two tries from Lee Marsh, and one from Chris Maye and Wayne English, secured victory for the Lions.

But they had to be strong to fend off a late fightback from Rochdale, who scored a try in each half through Phil Cantillon and Chris Campbell.

Kidd said "Our defence was outstanding. The team has gelled together well over the pre-season training and today it showed on the field, as we didn't let Hornets get into their stride."

Maye opened the scoring after Marsh and Ian Sinfield had set him up for a converted try. Cantillon crossed the try line for Hornets, and a conversion and a penalty from Lee Birdseye put the visitors ahead at the break.

Marsh and English scored second-half tries to put Lions in control, although Campbell gave Hornets hope with a score of his own. Marsh's second try, three minutes from time, finally saw Lions safe.

(Article courtesy of Manchester Evening News)

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**HORNETS
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onward - together

**TOGETHER, HORNETS FANS
CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

Hornets Nest-Egg - Hornets' independent supporters association - was founded and named in December 2002 to enable ordinary Rochdale Hornets supporters to invest constructively in the future of our proud old club. In addition, it was hoped that such an association - run by supporters for supporters - would provide a vital forum for Hornets fans to raise and discuss issues relating to the club and the game that we all love.

Look what we've already contributed:

- A £1,000 donation to the club.
- £2,000 towards player costs in May 2003 when we went six weeks without a revenue-raising home game.
- £650 towards securing the services of a key player.
- £1,000 in travel and accommodation costs.
- £300 in player sponsorships.
- £250 in matchball sponsorship.
- A £6,000 investment in the new share issue.
- A £100 contribution to merchandise costs.

So far the Nest Egg has contributed over £11,000. That's a magnificent achievement - and the first time that the 'ordinary supporters' have made such a significant contribution to their club.

Another reason for forming an independent supporters' association was to provide a conduit for meaningful dialogue with the Club. The Nest Egg holds regular question and answer sessions with the board and coaching staff where supporters are able to air their views and concerns directly to the people that can give them the answers they needed. As a shareholder we can also present members' questions at the Club's shareholders' AGM. This open communication between Rochdale Hornets and its supporters is a feature of the Nest Egg that we hope to develop further in the future.

• So what can you do?

As the teams outside the top flight continue to seek all possible sources of revenue, Hornets - like all clubs - needs positive input from its fans more than ever. That's why we founded the Hornets Nest-Egg - an independent supporters' association run by Hornets fans for Hornets fans - to enable us to play a direct role in helping secure the future of our club.

• How does it work?

Basically, you pay to become a member of the Nest Egg. The money we raise helps fund investment that will help secure success on the field. The Nest Egg has a bank account administered by members of the scheme. A democratic voting system ensures that members always have the final say in how the money will be spent. The Association won't hand over a penny without the say-so of the majority of its membership.

• What's in it for Hornets?

In a perfect world we'd have 1000 fans paying £100 and we'd have the cash-richest club in the league - but all we can do is try and get as many people as possible involved and raise as much as we can. The Nest Egg currently has over 50 members - each making a vital contribution. If we can significantly increase our membership, we can help ensure that Hornets remains a competitive team that we can all take satisfaction in watching.

• What's in it for Hornets fans?

Primarily a consistent, competitive and successful club to watch in the future. At Nest-Egg meetings we also endeavour to auction or raffle exclusive Hornets items only available to members. There is also an e-mail newsletter to keep members informed of what's going

on. You also get one of our exclusive members-only Rochdale Hornets Nest-Egg badges!

• Why now?

Those clubs that can maintain stability through the next few years will have a better chance of long-term survival. If Hornets are to survive and grow, we can all make an investment in the future of our club by getting involved in the Nest-Egg.

• What now?

If the Nest-Egg is to make a bigger contribution to the success of Rochdale Hornets, your support is vital. Initially we asked supporters to contribute either £100 or £10 a month by standing order. Now, while the amounts we're asking for haven't changed, the way in which the money is donated has.

We ask that all members pay a common membership fee. The fee this year - as last - will be £5. We are asking that anything above that be considered a donation to the Nest Egg. As we don't want to exclude anyone from getting involved - that can be whatever you can afford. We welcome every penny.

Last year we had kids paying £5 right through to people donating over £500 - but whatever you donate, if you pay the £5 membership fee, you will be granted full membership of the Nest-Egg.

We know that £100 sounds like a lot of money - but it works out at less than £2 a week to help maintain a competitive team - and ensure that Rochdale Hornets has a successful future. We've seen already that the passion that Hornets fans have for the club can be the driving force that takes us onward - together.

For more details on how you can join the Nest Egg, visit www.rochdalehornets.com

or call Jim Stringer on 07876 011 084



THE OPPOSITION OLDHAM RLFC

BY BRIAN WALKER

Brian Walker is a lifelong Oldham supporter, a trustee of the very active Oldham RL Heritage Trust and author of the recently published book 'Roughyeds the Story'.

I still love it when the Roughyeds put one over on the Hornets, I hate to think of the Law Cup tarnishing in Rochdale's trophy cabinet but I'm dead envious of the Spotland set-up, so much so that the ease of once resisting the temptation to ram an offered copy of Big Issue up a dark place was startlingly easy.

Whilst there's always been keen rivalry between the fans of two of the oldest rugby clubs in the country there has never been the animosity so easy to sniff out of a Wigan v Saints or United v City affair, although having said that, if you were sat in the Oldham director's box directly behind that knot of fervent Hornet's supporters or after reading postings on either of the club's websites you might be tempted to ask a question regarding my sanity for making that statement in the first place.

Nevertheless, whilst a little bit of needle often creeps into the proceedings there's no Rangers v Celtic mentality here, the dozens and dozens of players that have pulled on both jerseys have seen to that and I haven't seen a scrap on the terraces since all those years ago when a tiff between that nice man Stan Owen and an Oldham 'askedferit' spilled over the wall into the bottom tier of the Hutchin's stand.

Since the Oldham club was reformed in time for the 1998 season and 'hostilities' recommenced, today's match is the 28th between the two old foes (compared to 11 during the seven seasons between 1991 and 1997) many rival fans now on first name terms.

With familiarity more likely to breed complacency than contempt it's all too easy to get that 'I've seen it all before' feeling. Playing each other so often makes it difficult for the local press to drum-up a crowd, and whilst I love matches against Hornets I've got to say that after playing each other five times last season and even though both league matches were close affairs I had more enthusiasm for Oldham's home match against Halifax (albeit being held at Victory Park), a team which we played just twice. I remember back in the early 90's when both Hornets and Oldham were in a second division of eight clubs each playing the other four times and fans stayed away in droves.

Having said that, the home games against the Roughyeds last season in both the league (1403) and Arriva-Trains cup (1305) provided Hornets with their biggest gates in those competitions. In fact, the Arriva-Train attendance was greater than for the league matches against Halifax and Leigh. On the other hand, the attendance of 1243 for the league match against Hornets at Boundary Park lagged behind those for the games against Leigh, Batley, Hull KR and Doncaster and the 1214 for the home Arriva-Trains cup, whilst better than those against both Swinton and Chorley, was below the 1805 that turned up for the Leigh encounter.

Last season Hornets averaged 1049 over nine league matches whilst the Roughyeds managed 1317 (albeit badly affected by playing three 'home' matches



away from Boundary Park) so whilst the league match against Oldham was above the Spotland average, Oldham's was below.

In 1998 the two club's met just the once when 3,097 turned out for the Law Cup and in 1999, which on the playing front was a lousy season for Oldham, the sides clashed three times, the Law Cup played at Spotland attracting 2879, the league match at the same venue 1468 and the return at Boundary Park 3023.

So, next year if the National Trains fixture format is again discussed let's not assume that the idea of playing near neighbours from the same division is preferable. Let's give the fans variety. Unless from another division keep the derbies for the league tussle.



THE OPPOSITION OLDHAM RLFC

GARY MERCER (head coach): One of the most consistently good and honest forwards of the past 20 years. Record proves his durability -- 21 Tests for New Zealand, ex-captain of Leeds, former player-coach of Halifax. Won most of the honours available after spells with Bradford, Warrington (twice), Leeds (twice) and Halifax. Was No 2 and then head coach at Castleford last year and now coaching at National League level for the first time.

KEITH BRENNAN (assistant coach): Retired as a player at the end of the 2004 season after five seasons with the Roughyeds. Initially appointed academy coach, but then upgraded to Mercer's No 2 when the club decided to go without an under-21s side in 2005. One of the club's most loyal and dedicated players since he first signed from local amateurs Shaw Rhinos in 1999. His elevation to the coaching staff was richly deserved.

GARETH BARBER: Now one of the longer serving Oldham players, local lad Barber began his rugby league career at Warrington and joined the Roughyeds in the early days of the Mike Ford era. Basically a stand-off, but also able to play at hooker in the 'new' game. Gareth has played more than 100 senior games for his home-town club. He holds the club record for the most points in a single match -- 26 from three tries and seven goals in a 47-12 defeat of Dewsbury at Hurst Cross in April, 2002.

RICKY BIBBY: Former Wigan and St Helens prop. Signed for Oldham just before the start of the 2005 season. He has also had a spell on loan at Leigh, for whom he played in a National League first division grand final. Aged 23, he has more than 50 Super League appearances behind him and he has the rare distinction of having won a Challenge Cup winners' medal for Wigan against St Helens and also for St Helens against Wigan.

WILL COWELL: Somewhat unlucky with injuries, yet this popular Cumbrian -- a native of Whitehaven and reared in rugby league at Kells -- has still played 60 senior

competitive games for the Roughyeds after joining the club from Warrington at the start of the 2002 season. He has scored a total of 16 tries for Oldham, mainly from the wing. Works hard from defence in helping his pack to carry the ball forward.

GAVIN DODD: Favourite position, full-back, but also able to play centre and wing. Played mainly wing in the last two seasons because of the outstanding form at No 1 of Jon Goddard. Strong runner, quick too and capable of scoring tries from deep inside his own half. Made his debut five years ago and has an excellent try-scoring record -- 44 in 110 senior appearances.

MARTIN ELSWOOD: Another local lad, and yet another who came 'home' via a Super League club. Only 20, he signed for Huddersfield Giants from Royton Tigers and is now starting his second season with the Oldham club that he and his family have supported all their lives. Originally a centre, he is now a back-row forward. A dislocated shoulder restricted him to 21 senior games in 2004, but he is looking for better luck, and more game time, in 2005.

CRAIG FARRIMOND: Aged 22, Craig is a versatile player who can operate equally well at hooker or loose-forward. A Wiganer, he was snapped up by Warrington as a youngster and it was from the Warriors that he joined Oldham for the start of the 2004 season. Injury restricted him to eight senior games last season, but he hopes for better luck in 2005 under a new coach and with a new-look squad.

TERE GLASSIE: The most experienced of Oldham's three new Cook Island internationals, 27-year-old Tere has played all over the park in his years in Australia. These days he will operate mainly at prop or second-row. Auckland-born, he has lived in Australia for most of his life and has played at various levels in various competitions in New South Wales. Recommended to Oldham by ex-Kiwi Test star Kevin Iro after he helped Cook Islands to a Pacific Cup victory over NZ Maoris in the final of the 2004 competition.

JON GODDARD: Walked off with all Oldham's major player-of-the-year titles in 2004 after a brilliant season. Was also named as one of the LHF Healthplan National League first division's top three full-backs. Played in 32 of Oldham's 33 games that season and was man of the match in many of them. A Castleford lad, he signed originally for his hometown club, but he joined Oldham three seasons ago and he has never looked back after being switched from centre to his favourite No 1 job.

ANDY GOREY: One of the youngest members of the squad, 19-year-old Andy is still waiting for his first-team debut. A scrum-half who has also done well at full-back in under-21s rugby, he too has been unlucky with injuries. In fact, he was due to be given a run in one or more of the 2005 pre-season warm-up matches until he badly gashed an arm at work and ended up in a micro-surgery unit at a Manchester hospital. Now fighting back to full fitness.

SIMON HAUGHTON: Formerly with Wigan Warriors and then Orrell RU Club, Simon won many medals and honours with the crack Wigan side, often playing second-row alongside Denis Betts and matching Betts in the try-scoring charts. Joined Oldham in mid-December, 2004 and was certainly Mercer's highest-profile capture. He played mainly in the backs with Orrell, but Mercer plans to use him as Wigan did -- as a wide-running second-row forward with a thirst for tries.

JOHN HOUGH: A hooker, John is unique in Roughyeds folklore. He made local rugby league history in early December, 1997 when he signed for the newly-formed club as a free agent from Warrington Wolves to become the Roughyeds' first ever signing. Since then he has been a magnificent servant which was rewarded in November, 2004 when he was offered and accepted a three-year contract to take him up to retirement. He has played in 194 senior games for the Roughyeds -- more than any other player.

ANDY ISHERWOOD: Another new signing for 2005. Andy signed for

Wigan as a youngster before joining Leigh and then moving back to Super League with Widnes. An injury on a pre-season trip to South Africa put paid to his chances of progressing at Widnes, but after a long spell of recuperation he bounced back with Leigh and helped them to qualify for Super League in 2004. He opted to stay part-time in 2005 so Leigh's loss was Oldham's gain. A rugged back-row forward.

NICK JOHNSON: An old-style winger who loves to hug the touchline, Oldham-born Nick played in all 33 Oldham games in 2004 and scored 26 tries to set a club record for most tries in a season. Formerly with Bradford, last season was his first full campaign with the Roughyeds and he got off to a flier by scoring 15 tries in the first 13 games. In a purple patch last March and April he scored ten tries in five games against Warrington (cup), Chorley, Rochdale twice and Swinton.

JAMES KIRKLAND: Another 19 year old, James is a hooker who has worked his way up through Oldham's junior and senior academy teams of the past three years. Pre-season games apart, he made his senior debut as a substitute in the first Northern Rail Cup game of 2005 against Blackpool Panthers. Highly thought of by coach Mercer.

CARLOS MATAORA: Another Cook Islands international. Like Tere Glassie and Dana Wilson, he played in the Pacific Cup campaign for the Cooks, who beat Tonga and Fiji on their way to the final in which they conquered the Maoris. Another Kevin Iro recommendation, this 21 year old can play hooker, loose-forward or half-back, a very versatile performer of whom exciting things are expected in 2005.

DAMIAN MUNRO: Son of Geoff Munro, who made a name for himself with the old Oldham Bears club as a high-scoring and strong-running wing. Damian scored 32 tries for Leigh in 2003, mainly from the wing, and proved to be one of the most exciting finishers over distance outside Super League. He has come 'home' to Oldham to play

essentially in the centre and there are some who feel he could rival Johnson this year in the race to become the club's top try scorer.

DANNY NANYN: A 19-year-old prop, pocket-battleship Danny has burst on to the Oldham scene this season and has impressed Mercer with his all-action performances in pre-season. He also won a man of the match award on the opening day of the season in the 22-20 win over Blackpool. Younger brother of Whitehaven points machine Mick Nanyin, he is expected this year to give Oldham's more experienced and established props a good run for their money when front-row places are up for grabs.

PAUL NORMAN: Back in his younger days, Paul used to play for the former Oldham club, mainly in the 'A' team in those formative days of his rugby league career. When that club went into liquidation in 1997, he moved on to Leigh where he had several good seasons and became one of the most reliable front-row forwards in the National Leagues. He was happy to come back to Oldham and has already showed himself to be a 100 per cent. Mr Reliable, indeed.

MARK ROBERTS: Mark impressed at Oldham while on loan from Warrington at the end of the 2004 season. The management, and Mercer, had no hesitation in going for him again for 2005, this time on a more permanent basis. Like all the other senior players, with the exception of John Hough, he is on a one-year contract. Mark proved his value last year and he is expected to have a good season in the back row of the pack.

ADAM SHARPLES: Another young prop, Adam gave up a promising future in swimming to concentrate on rugby league. He toured Fiji, Auckland and Australia with NW Counties under-16s in 2001 and has come on in leaps and bounds since, already possessing more than ten senior outings. Dedicated, and a hard worker in the gym and the training field, he is currently battling back to fitness after suffering a recurrence of a knee

injury in pre-season. A student of sports science at Alsagar College, Crewe.

SIMON SVABIC: Stand-off Simon began his career with the old Oldham club, moved on to Salford and then Leigh and then came back to Oldham for the start of the 2003 campaign. Now in his third year with the club, he is a midfield tactician with good hands, a rugby brain and a kicking game.

MARTY TURNER: A 23-year-old New Zealander, Marty is the club's overseas quota player for 2005. He will operate at scrum-half and will have the additional responsibilities of goalkicker. It will be his job to take the team around the field. He has played most of his rugby in Australia and comes to Oldham on the recommendation of his fellow Kiwi and Widnes coach Frank Endacott. The tip was so strong that Mercer felt he had no alternative but to unload Aussie forward Dane Morgan to make way for his playmaker on the quota.

ALEX WILKINSON: Another former Royton Tiger, Alex signed for Bradford as a youngster and he has a fair bit of Super League experience under his belt, having played out on loan for London Broncos and Hull FC, for whom he later signed permanently. Full time rugby and physiotherapy studies at Huddersfield didn't mix so he got his release and signed for his home town club, where his father used to be the club doctor. Younger brother also played for the Roughyeds until injury put paid to his hopes of a career in the sport.

DANA WILSON: A 21 year old prop from the southern hemisphere, Dana was born in Auckland of a Cook Islands mother and a Samoan father. He played for the Marist club in Auckland and then, last year, moved to Australia to play for a club in the Manly competition on the outskirts of Sydney. He made a big impression for the Cooks in the Pacific Cup and the Cooks manager, Kevin Iro, felt he was ready for the next stage of his development -- a trip to the UK to try his hand with Oldham in the National League.

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AMATEUR SCENE

BY MARK WYNN

As the new season gets underway a new feature for the Hornets programme will be a link to the local amateur scene.

Amateur Rugby League is the lifeblood of the game. It develops the players we have all come along to watch today, and gives children focus and direction when it is so easy for them to make bad choices in life (like playing union).

A club which has been a good friend to Rochdale Hornets is Littleborough Junior Rugby League Club.

They helped to promote the recent "Meet & Greet" night, have displayed posters advertising Hornets games and played in our half time game feature.

They are a well run club which has just won several awards including the Rochdale Community Sports Awards 2004 Coach of the year (MICK KEEGAN, STEVE BOSTOCK, STE VEEVERS, DAVE WIDDUP & IVAN COUPE) Special recognition to sport (CAROLE LOCKETT) Club of the year.

They even have their own website -

www.littleboroughjarlfc.co.uk

If you can help the club in any way or would like to play for one of the many age groups, boys and girls, novice and experienced, all welcome, contact the club through the following:-

CLUB SECRETARY : CAROLE LOCKETT

day : 01706-378348 • mobile : 07985590772

info@littleboroughjarlfc.co.uk

REGISTRATION SECRETARY : NICKY WIDDUP

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2005 Roll Call

NAME	P	SUB	TRIES	DG	GOAL	PTS
Dave Alstead	3	0	2	0	0	8
Chris Giles	3	0	1	0	0	4
Mark McCully	3	0	0	0	4	8
Richard Varkulis	3	0	0	0	0	0
Chris Campbell	3	0	1	0	0	4
Lee Birdseye	2	1	0	0	7	14
John Braddish	3	0	1	0	3	10
Andy Leatham	2	1	0	0	0	0
Phil Cantillon	1	2	2	0	0	8
Gareth Price	3	0	1	0	0	4
Andy Gorski	3	0	3	0	0	12
Lee Doran	3	0	0	0	0	0
Phil Farrell	3	0	1	0	0	4
Rodney Bowker	1	1	0	0	0	0
Sam Butterworth	0	3	1	0	0	4
Rob Ball	0	2	0	0	0	0
Lee Hansen	0	2	0	0	0	0
Kris Ratcliffe	0	2	0	0	0	0
Tommy Hodgekinson	0	2	1	0	0	4
Darren Robinson	0	1	0	0	0	0
Mick Grady	0	1	0	0	0	0
David Newton	1	1	0	0	0	0
Dave McConnell	2	0	0	0	0	0
Sean Conway	0	1	0	0	0	0
David Cunliffe	0	1	0	0	0	0



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Lee Doran SPONSORED BY Name	AWAITING PHOTOGRAPH	Andy Saywell SPONSORED BY Name	AWAITING PHOTOGRAPH	Richard Varkulis SPONSORED BY Rossendale Engineering Coatings LTD	AWAITING PHOTOGRAPH	Chris Campbell SPONSORED BY Name	AWAITING PHOTOGRAPH
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MARKETING MIX

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I would like to welcome our visitors today especially representatives from Arien/Nardi our new club sponsors.

We have maintained a partnership with British Millerain who are now one of our Associate Sponsors for the next three years.

Today's Match sponsors are The Rochdale Observer and Oldham Advertiser.

Our Match Ball Sponsor Today is Colin Biddulph's Rossendale Engineering Ltd, we wish Colin well for his move to new Premises on Kingsway West business Park.

Finally the club would like to thank lottery agent Terry Matthews from Syke, who has been a pools/lottery agent for over 40 years. Eric Armitage will be making a special presentation at half-time to Terry to thank him for all his hard work.

Enjoy the Game

Franky

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Rugby Talk

Danny Lockwood

Publisher, *League Weekly*

BY THE time you read this the matter of Andrew Farrell's eyebrow-raising move to rugby union should have been settled. With the public courting of the Wigan and GB hero being deeply flattering both to the individual and our game, it can only be down to whether or not Andy fancies the challenge. And some challenge it promises to be.

No two people I've spoken to so far can agree on what Union position he should – or more importantly could – play. One thing is for sure. If Farrell had been playing for England against France at Twickenham, they would have landed between 12-18 points more from goalkicking attempts than they did. But who's to say the 'new boy' wouldn't have been a liability elsewhere around the paddock, cancelling out any merits of that famous and exceedingly trusty left boot?

That's the 64 million-dollar question ... or at least the one million pound contract question in this case. Will the switch work?

To doubt it is not to question Farrell's inherent athletic qualities. It would be a brave man to say 'nay' with total conviction. He might take to it like a duck to water. But it would be a far, far braver man in my view to make the investment and roll the dice of sporting fate in the first place. If this is the Yellow Brick Road that England coaches Phil Larder and Joe Lydon are leading their boss along in the search for World Cup glory, then they really had better believe in the Wizard of Oz. We're not in Kansas any more Toto. Or Wigan.

None of us wish to lose a giant of a figure like Farrell from our game, but I confess I would far prefer to see him cross over than say Paul Sculthorpe or Kris Radlinski, and certainly moreso than a Danny McGuire or Richard Horne.

With respect, League has had the very best out of Faz, and as a sporting 'neutral' I think it would be fascinating to witness how the experiment pans out. And no, I don't slow down to gawp at motorway accidents ... but as a kid I did like to watch *Frankenstein* films.

Andy Robinson, Larder and Lydon seem intent on their own freakish experiment and for the leading role they've picked one of our real-life heroes.

Frankenstein's was always a misunderstood monster, seeking acceptance and happiness, but serving only to frighten and horrify. Therein lies my greatest misgiving – that Andy Farrell, recognised only weeks ago as a true legend of Rugby League from both within and without the code, could sacrifice that place in the British sporting conscience on nothing more than a whim.

I can't see glory coming in any way, shape or form from within a crushingly mediocre outfit that has masqueraded as an England rugby union team for the past 12 months and which is still on a downward spiral. Its defence is hit and miss, its attack stiflingly ponderous – and those are the good points. So let Twickenham find its own fall guys. One bad outing and I suspect the Union media brigade, never needing much of a reason to turn on its cousins, would unload their bile on our new man. And then the 'challenge' might not seem to have been such a good idea.

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NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



DAY OF THE UNDERDOG

IF the opening weekend of the Northern Rail Cup proved anything, it's that National League Two clubs cannot be underestimated in this competition.

Three NL2 sides stunned their higher division counterparts with shock wins, and several others went close.

Arguably the result of the day came at Derwent Park, where Workington Town shocked their Super League-chasing neighbours Whitehaven with a superb 28-8 win.

New Zealander John Tuimaualuga led a mighty pack effort to ensure Town earned the bragging rights in West Cumbria – for a few weeks at least. The teams clash again at the Recreation Ground on Good Friday.

Gateshead Thunder also recorded an incredible win, defeating NL1 side Barrow Raiders at Craven Park 35-28.

New coach Dean Thomas has put together a new-look, cosmopolitan team of players that most would have expected needed time to gel. But in their first competitive outing, and with Australian hooker John Tomes outstanding, they got their season off to the best possible start.

Completing a trio of shocks were Swinton, who put paid to Rochdale Hornets 20-14 at Park Lane.

The Lions have recruited shrewdly in the off-season, with one of their signings Lee Marsh integral to their win.

Two other NL2 sides came within a whisker of beating higher division opponents.

Blackpool Panthers almost marked their first match with a win at Oldham, before Gavin Dodd's late tried edged it for the Roughyeds.

And only a last ditch Paul Mansson drop goal prevented Keighley Cougars from snatching at least a point against Hull KR.

Others will have seen Sheffield Eagles' win over highly-fancied Dewsbury and Batley's narrow victory against Doncaster as surprises, while Hunslet can take heart from a spirited display against Featherstone.

Only London Skolars (at home to Halifax) and York City Knights (at Castleford) were well beaten.

Competition favourites Castleford were hugely impressive against the Knights, and certainly laid down a marker for coming weeks.

And what about the crowd at the Jungle? Almost 6,000 people flocked to see the Tigers, which is hugely encouraging.

Last weekend provided a great start for the Northern Rail Cup, and the action promises to get even better in coming weeks.

A full report of today's game will appear in the 'Rugby Leaguer & League Express' on Monday.

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DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP/LEAGUE	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
09/01/05	Oldham	Law Cup	Home	15.00	24-8	W	1,404
30/01/05	Keighley	Friendly	Away	15.00	18-50	W	518
13/02/05	Swinton Lions	Northern Rail Cup	Away	15.00	20-14	L	685
20/02/05	Oldham	Northern Rail Cup	Home	15.00			
27/02/05	Blackpool Panthers	Northern Rail Cup	Away	15.00			
06/03/05	Blackpool Panthers	Northern Rail Cup	Home	15.00			
13/03/05	Powergen Cup 3rd Rd	Powergen Challenge Cup	TBA	TBA			
20/03/05	Swinton Lions	Northern Rail Cup	Home	15.00			
25/03/05	Oldham	Northern Rail Cup	Away	15.00			
29/03/05	Batley Bulldogs	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	19.30			
03/04/05	Powergen Cup 4th Rd	Powergen Challenge Cup	TBA	TBA			
10/04/05	Castleford Tigers	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.30			
17/04/05	Barrow Raiders	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
24/04/05	Halifax R.L.F.C	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
29/05/05	Northern Rail Cup Play Offs	Northern Rail Cup	TBA	TBA			
08/05/05	Powergen Cup 5th Rd	Powergen Challenge Cup	TBA	TBA			
15/05/05	Featherstone Rovers	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
22/05/05	Doncaster Dragons	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
29/05/05	Northern Rail Cup Quarter Finals	Northern Rail Cup	TBA	TBA			
05/06/05	Oldham	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
12/06/05	Hull Kingston Rovers	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
19/06/05	Northern Rail Cup Semi Finals	Northern Rail Cup	TBA	TBA			
26/06/05	Powergen Cup Quarter Finals	Powergen Challenge Cup	TBA	TBA			
26/06/05	Whitehaven	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
03/07/05	Batley Bulldogs	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
10/07/05	Castleford Tigers	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
17/07/05	Northern Rail Cup Final	Northern Rail Cup	TBA	TBA			
24/07/05	Barrow Raiders	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
31/07/05	Powergen Cup Semi Finals	Powergen Challenge Cup	TBA	TBA			
31/07/05	Halifax R.L.F.C	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
07/08/05	Featherstone Rovers	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
14/08/05	Oldham	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
21/08/05	Doncaster Dragons	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
27/08/05	Powergen Cup Final	Powergen Challenge Cup	TBA	TBA			
04/09/05	Hull Kingston Rovers	LHF Healthplan National League One	Away	15.00			
11/09/05	Whitehaven	LHF Healthplan National League One	Home	15.00			
18/09/05	LHF HEALTHPLAN NL1 & 2 Play Offs	LHF Healthplan National League One & Two	TBA	15.00			
25/09/05	LHF HEALTHPLAN NL1 & 2 Play Offs	LHF Healthplan National League One & Two	TBA	15.00			
02/10/05	LHF HEALTHPLAN NL1 & 2 Play Offs	LHF Healthplan National League One & Two	TBA	15.00			
08/10/05	LHF HEALTHPLAN NL1 & 2 Grand Final	LHF Healthplan National League One & Two	TBA	15.00			

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