

THE ROUGHYEDS

V DONCASTER DRAGONS

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DRAGONS**

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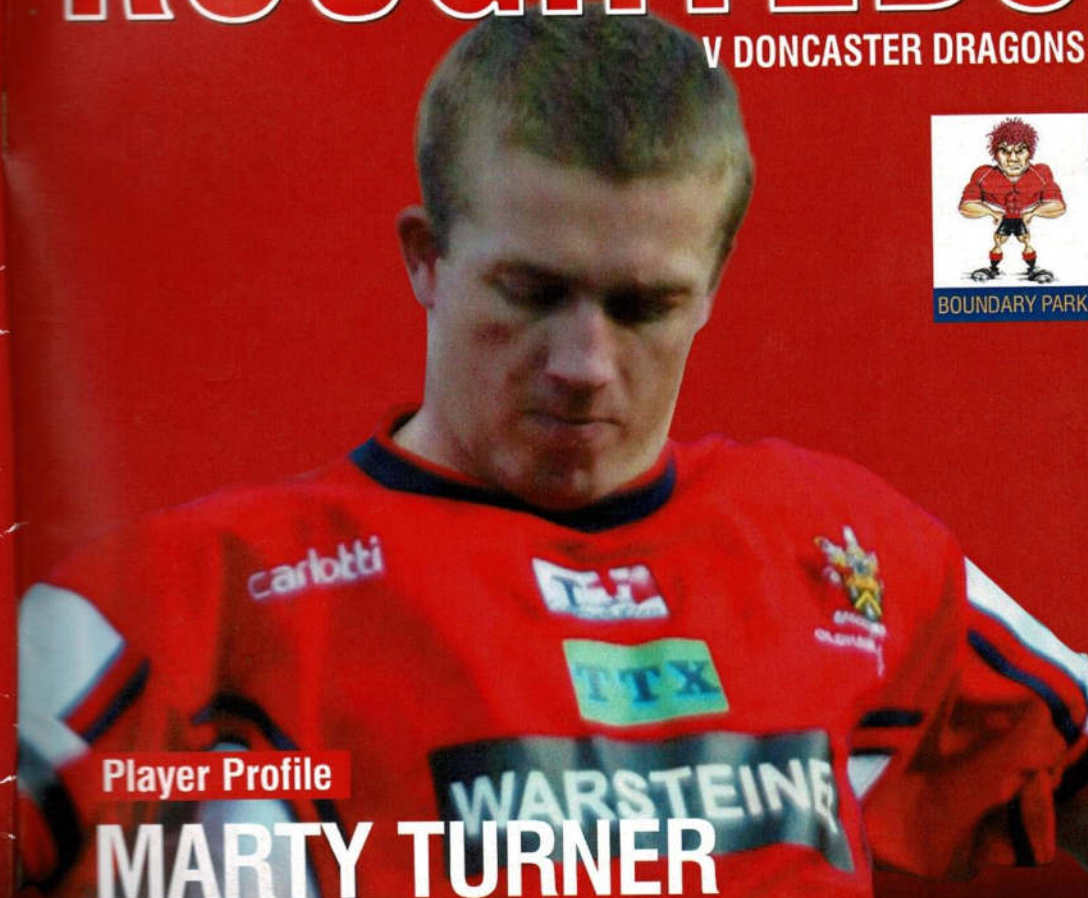
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THE ROUGHYEDS

V DONCASTER DRAGONS



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Player Profile

MARTY TURNER

A look at Oldham's New Zealand connection- Page 17

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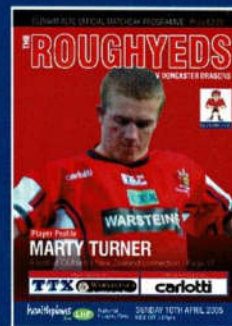


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Derek Turner 1955-59
Bob Irving 1964-74
Martin Murphy 1966-82
Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

The views expressed in this matchday magazine do not
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Oldham RLFC (1997) Ltd.

We would like to express our thanks to the Oldham
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photographs.

10th **APRIL** 2005

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Club Records - 1998-2004

Trans-Penine Cup
Finalists - 1998

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

MOST APPEARANCES: John Hough, 189 - Jan 1998 - September 2004
CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES: Phil Farrel, 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: Nick Johnson, 25 - 2004
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
James Bunyan v Featherstone Rovers, 4 - Apr 12th 2004 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 (amt), 64-0 - Jan 28th 2001
RLCC 3rd Rnd at Boundary Park

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The Chairman's Thoughts

with CHRIS HAMILTON

Welcome back to Boundary Park for what is another vital game for the club.

Last week was obviously a disappointment in more ways than one but we are still here and still fighting!

These are difficult times but it is at times like this that you find out about peoples character and I know for sure I am still fighting tooth and nail!

The squad has been working hard in training to work towards eradicating the errors that are costing us at present and in todays opponents Doncaster we know they will be fired up and anything less than 100% will mean a loss.

The focus this week has inevitably been on the off field events and there is no doubt that it was a blow for the CVA proposals to be rejected.

We are now in a race against time to come up with a satisfactory conclusion to the money owed to the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise. We are exploring a number of ways to do this but it is serious and we dont want a similar scenario to Oldham Bears in 1997 when the liquidation of the club almost crept up on people.

Whatever you can do to help, financially or otherwise, please do as soon as possible and to all of you who have already donated or helped or simply come to games we thank you once again.

Our opponents today have been through similar situations themselves in the not too distant past and they are very fortunate to have, in John Wright, an individual who is wealthy and committed - how we would love the same!

If and when that happens we shall see but in the meantime I cannot stress enough what a difference each and every one of you can make - please don't leave it to somebody else because that may mean it doesn't happen full stop and once it's gone its amazing how many people come out of the woodwork offering help and saying how much they care.

We don't have time for that and we need to act now before it's too late.

It is important to think of the reasons for our predicament and they are simply down to the losses we have incurred by having to play out of town. That is not a dig at anyone but a statement of fact and it is hard to plan cash flows and budgets when you don't know what is going to happen from one season to the next.

It shows our commitment however that we are prepared to fight on against all the odds - what other club faces the same problem? - BUT WE NEED YOU TO HELP AND WE NEED IT NOW!

Enjoy the game

Christopher Hamilton

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From The Touchline

with Gary Mercer

First of all can I welcome Synge and the directors, players and supporters of Doncaster Dragons to Boundary Park this afternoon?

I would like to especially welcome my old Leeds' teammate Graham Holroyd. It's great to see him still involved playing the game, he always was a quality player, still is and is the player who makes the Dragons tick.

I am so angry after watching the tape of the York game. WE SHOULD HAVE WON THE GAME despite a less than satisfactory performance. In the first twenty minutes we played probably the most clinical football we have played all season: Playing the game in their half, kicking well, defending well and completely dominating the game. Unfortunately at the end of this we were only six points up. Once again however as soon as something negative happened our heads went down and we let them in for three quick tries. As soon as things go wrong we lack discipline, composure and stop being clinical on last plays.

I have picked out at least six opportunities we had to win the match and we blew them all. One good example was very significant as it was in the last minute. We were sending the ball wide to the left and all we needed were soft hands from Haughton to Wilkinson to Johnson and we had an overlap on the left that Nicky would not have refused but we bungled it through poor handling. A second vital moment was midway through the first half with the score standing at 10 - 6 to York. We were given a penalty in front of the posts and we should have had composure and gone for two points at that vital stage and brought the score back to 10-8 and possession. As it was we took a hurried penalty sent it out wide to the right where Will Cowell knocked on over the line. They came back immediately from this broke our left side defence and Potter scored. Within a minute not 10-8 down but 16 - 6 - dumb rugby.

On top of this I thought we had a certain penalty try disallowed. We allowed them to score six

tries, which once again shows how soft we are still defensively. Too many one on one tackles are being missed. I never tire of telling the players that defence in rugby league is a personal thing and our players must get much more personally proud of their defensive play. Against York I'm afraid five of my players didn't perform defensively and this meant we couldn't pull together as a squad.

I apologise if I keep repeating myself in this column but I believe in saying things as they are and just as I will praise players to the hilt when they play well and to the team plan similarly when things aren't going right they will receive criticism, and unfortunately the same individuals are letting us down because of a lack of caring and a lack of personal pride. It is my job to ensure this does not continue and that is going to take a lot of hard work.

So this week you can be sure we will have been working hard again on defence and me trying to teach some players how to tackle. Those players who are not yet performing must look to every aspect of their training, their home life, their preparation on the morning of a match, the day before, the hour before. It is meticulous detail in simple things like this that make the difference. In short at Featherstone, which I must mention as I was so pleased with this performance, we had 15 fellows giving their all for the team, the club and the fans. Against York I'm afraid I only had 10, and that's not good enough.

Not cheerful reading I'm afraid but be assured I'll not give up and I do believe we'll get there in the end as they're a great set of lads. Keep up the support.

Gary

• Gary has answered the two questions asked of him this week in his honest and forthright column. (Nigel)



Jon Goddard

York

03/04/05

80 min on field
19 tackles
0 misses
18 hit ups
73m gain
Av gain 4m



Marty Turner

York

03/04/05

80m on field
26 tackles
0 misses
9 carries
40m gain
Av gain 4.4m
7 kicks (5 positive)

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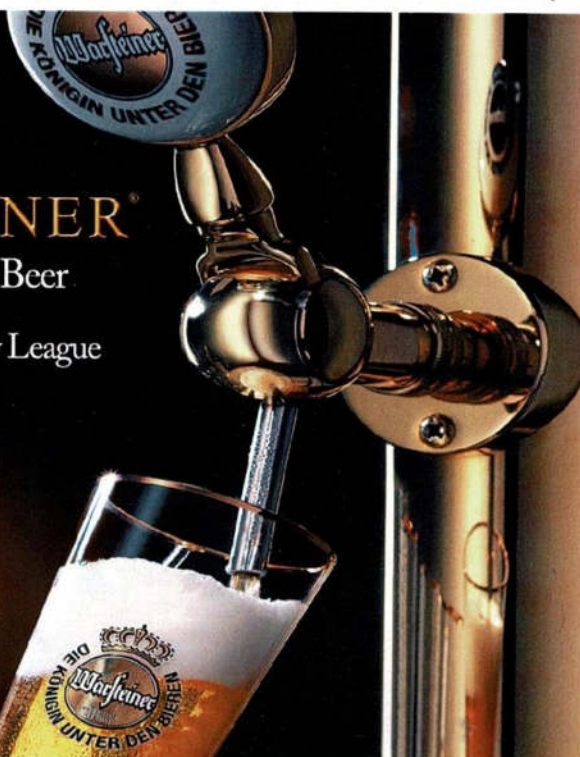
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As Ian Sees It!

What a fantastic start to Super League X. Since the premier division began in 1996 in its current format, and after only eight rounds of fixtures, admittedly, there has not been a more interesting competition. The attendances so far reflect this too.



There has already been recorded the highest individual crowd of the era, as well as the highest aggregate for a set of six fixtures, and with six sides now regularly recording five-figure gates, the total number of spectators per weekend at all professional games is also showing a significant increase.

There are two reasons for the increase in interest - the quality of the fare on offer on the field, and the fact that the outcome of any individual match is genuinely not predictable, at least with a great deal of confidence. The most obvious examples of the latter were two Easter Monday games. Who would have expected Wakefield to take Leeds to the cleaners at Headingley as they did, or a much-heralded London to lose at Leigh? Those two results also had the effects of removing the possibility of Leeds going through the league season undefeated - surely never a realistic prospect anyway? - and of Leigh remaining without a win all season, two events which would have made something of a mockery of claims of a more competitive league.

But those were by no means the only shock results so far. With 48 fixtures completed, I reckon that a further 8 games have had an unexpected outcome - and that excludes fixtures which have been genuinely 50/50 before they were played. That makes 21% of matches so far which have had an against-the-odds winner.

What about the quality on the field? There is clearly a more subjective aspect to this, but there are many well-qualified pundits around who argue fairly cogently that standards

have never been as high. The advent of full-time professional squads has had a clear effect on standards of fitness and conditioning, and there can be little argument with the quality of RL produced by, for example, Leeds at Bradford, St.Helens against Wakefield and London against Wigan.

Of course quality is not just about what a team can do with the ball in their possession. It is also about how it operates when the other side has the ball. And that must lead to reference to Wigan's Good Friday performance against Saints. I can do no better than quote Martin Sadler from last week's League Express: Supreme courage under fire, toughness beyond the call of duty, finely honed teamwork, intense discipline (and its occasional lapses), audacious raids on the opposition's lines, serious injuries, and young boys being forced to attain manhood in the face of overwhelming odds was his description, using a very apt military analogy; and though I am by no means traditionally a Wigan enthusiast, on this occasion I can only agree. Quality indeed.

Is this of any relevance to us? Certainly. The performance at Featherstone, under at least as difficult circumstances as those faced by Wigan, demonstrated exactly the same qualities as Sadler identified above. It certainly sets the standard for the remainder of our NL1 campaign.

Ian Wilson

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In Yer Face!

with GEOFF COOKE

Is Rugby League too dangerous? Only a matter of weeks (in some cases only a matter of days) into a new season a large number of clubs boast an injury list as long as your arm.

What's more a lot of the injuries are serious enough to put players out for the season. I know injury is part and parcel of the game and generally the players and coaches accept it.

And, thankfully, hardly any injuries are the result of deliberate and serious foul play. However, as players get bigger and stronger, even at N.L.1 and N.L.2 level, and the game gets faster and more intense is it time to do something to reduce the casualty rate? Remember all this is happening when protective equipment is more readily available and is lighter and more comfortable than ever before. So, just to raise a couple of issues, does the interchange rule mean that players who are spelled stay fresher and more dangerous especially to those players who have to do the full 80 minutes? And is the ten metre rule just too much because it increases the impact of the tackle? You may well disagree but what I hope you will agree with is that the health and safety of the players is paramount.

League Express last Monday had a brilliant letter from Paul Loxton of Wakefield. In it he said that the Northern Rail Cup could culminate in a double headed Wembley Final with the Challenge Cup. His argument was that such an arrangement would give added significance to the competition, would stop Coaches treating it as a mere warm-up to the league fixtures, and would improve attendances because fans would realise the

added importance of the games results. Simple but brilliant. Count me in.

Last week Rugby League lost two remarkable servants of the game with the deaths of Trevor Foster and Paul Reynolds. Trevor Foster had come North from Newport in 1938 and was a quite outstanding player and worker for the game, in particular for his beloved Bradford Northern/Bulls. In fact without Trevor Foster it is doubtful if there would be a Bradford club at all as he was a major influence in the formation of the new Bradford club in 1964. It is ironic that his passing came just three days after the launch of his autobiography written in conjunction with his son Simon and Rugby League historian Robert Gate. We are not likely to see his like again.

Paul Reynolds, meanwhile, was the serving Chief Executive of Rochdale Hornets whom he had followed for over 50 years. A major influence in the survival of his club when it was faced with financial difficulties, Paul Reynolds will be missed by all at Spotland.

Our condolences to the families of both men.

My warning that Halifax would be a major force in N.L.1 this year in last week's programme was fully borne out when they dumped Castleford out of the Challenge Cup. What price an upset in the next round when they travel to Leigh? With Hornets and Swinton putting on sparkling performances against Salford and Widnes respectively just how big is the gap between the best N.L.1 sides and the poorer teams in Super League?

Although I've defended referees in my last two columns I'm as bad as anyone when it comes to my own team. So, Mr. Morris when is a spear tackle not a spear tackle? And Mr. Hewer what constitutes a penalty try? And if it's not a penalty try why is a defending player interfering to prevent an attacking player from scoring not sent to the sin-bin?



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In The News

I've left writing this as late as possible, hoping that we might have heard something on the financial front. Unfortunately at Wednesday lunchtime still no news. All we can do is keep our fingers crossed and hope.



Last week's performance was not good but I hope you agree with me that Gary does not hide behind the problems or to try and mask what is going wrong. He tells it as it is and I have to say that working on the coaches column is a joy and I personally feel they are more informative than any others I have read or been involved in.

The Prediction League is certainly proving to be great fun with wit and repartee abounding, especially against me. It would be nice if we could get a lot more members and at just £20 it works out at just over £1 a game.

You can still join without losing out as we will give all late entrants the average score so far. So if you were to join after today we would work out the average points scored over the two games scored by members and that is what you would start with for Game 3. To get details contact the office 01616283677 or log on to www.roughyeds.co.uk and go to the top of the message board. Entries can be sent by e mail to orlfcpredictionleague@yahoo.co.uk

Despite the fact that things aren't going great on the field I am amazed and thrilled at the positivity and enthusiasm of so many of the true fans and I intend to mention just a few here. In so doing I apologise to all those I have missed out. On Thursday morning before the York Cup game there was nobody booked into the Sponsors' Lounge. But by Sunday afternoon thanks to Goughie and friends the place was full with people enjoying a £25 buffet etc. Not only this there were more raffles, auctions, cards, competitions going on than you would believe. The atmosphere was brilliant. Thanks to all concerned.

After the game we had a two year old star of the future raising money for the club. Tanisha Gorey, Andy's niece, got up on stage and sung a song all on her own

and raised £26. If a two year old can do this there is no excuse for the rest of us. We keep getting people arriving with small amounts of money they have raised and this is all welcome. Eg 13 year old Sarah Mullen sold a football card and raised £10 all on her own. Michael Ackroyd is busy successfully selling memorabilia on E Bay for the club and Phil Burdge has generously opened up his own site Digisport to sell ORLFC items on line. Thanks to all these people.

A lot of organising is going on to set up a Supporters Team and hopefully you will see them in all their glory in the Oldham Chronicle next week. I must also thank Charlotte and mates for all the work they did printing and distributing posters for the Standard Cup Final and of course all the people who have helped with the bucket collections. The people who care are brilliant, we just need a lot more of them. To conclude, isn't rugby league a great game? I heard from just one bucket collector who told me of two York supporters who put £25 and £35 respectively into the bucket and the week before as I was passing through the Main Stand to get down to pitch side an anonymous supporter casually said please put this in a bucket Nigel. When I got down to pitch side I saw it was a cheque for £50. After the York match in the Board Room the York Chairman gave a really supportive speech and then added, almost too quietly for anyone to hear, that they wanted to return £250 of the match takings they were entitled to. With such people around surely we cannot fail.

Thanks to everyone and keep up the good work.

Nigel

Ps Just heard the bad news - more on what we can do next week.

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Walkerbouts

With Brian Walker



Walkerbouts



OLDHAM RLFC

Oldham is a proud club with a great tradition. Founded in 1876 as a rugby union side, it grew swiftly and during just its third season John B. Rye became the first of many of its players to gain representative honours when he was selected for Lancashire. Oldham were the first Lancashire team to lift the Challenge Cup when Huddersfield were beaten in 1899, the beginning of a truly golden era in the history of the club. For the next thirty years it would never be far away from the honours and this period included a sensational spell during the 1920s when it appeared in four consecutive Challenge Cup finals.

The skilful side of the 1950s is still fondly remembered, the names of Davies, Cracknell, Ganley, Winslade, Jackson, Little and Co. etched into the memory of those supporters who were amongst the 62,000 crowd at Odsal Stadium to watch the 'Roughyeds' beat Hull 15-14 and lift the 1957 Championship.

Remarkably, the team from the old cotton town has not won a major trophy since, despite, in 1996, being a founder member of Super League and the following year playing in Australia in the World Club Championships. Unfortunately, in 1997 pressing financial problems forced the club into liquidation.

Professional rugby league was not allowed to die in the town, however, and due to the efforts of a group of enthusiasts a new Oldham club was formed and entered into the Second Division Championship of 1998.

The story continues right up to the present day. With over 200 photographs, many extremely rare and dating back to the club's formation, this book brings to life once again many of Oldham's heroes. This is a timeless record of a famous rugby league club that boasts over eighty international players, and is a must for any supporter, young or old.

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TO BE PUBLISHED IN MAY

There have been many rugby league books published over the years, (albeit a small number when compared to union), some fans being in the envious position of having as many as a dozen or so relating to their club. Well known publishers Tempus have four excellent collections of league books; Images of Sport: 100 Greats: 50 Finest Matches and Rugby Voices. Many of our clubs are represented in one section or another, some in all four. For the first time Oldham RLFC will feature in the Images of Sport series. This pictorial history, featuring over 200 photographs, will be published during May, the exact date soon to be announced!

TODAY'S OPPONENTS

Doncaster Dragons

Graham Holroyd Stand-off. Graham is now in his 2nd full season with the Dragons following spells with Super League Leeds, Halifax, Salford and Huddersfield. Has bags of experience and a great kicking game, he is also the clubs Senior Academy coach.

Alex Muff Centre / Winger. Brighthouse lad Alex signed for the Dragons in 2003, and after playing some big games for the Academy became part of the 1st team squad for much of the 2004 season. In 2005 Alex will be aiming to make the centre position his own.

Craig Lawton Second row / loose forward. Supporters / coaches and players player of the season in 2003 Craig has continued to impress with his work rate and commitment to the side, even filling in at centre on more than one occasion.

Peter Green Second row / hooker. Development officer, former Toll Bar junior and Castleford hooker Peter signed for the Dragons in 2001 and has, following his switch to the second row made the position his own, with his consistency and hard work seeing him make over 100 consecutive appearances for the club.

Wayne Green Winger / centre / fullback. Brother of Peter and another product of the Toll Bar junior set-up Wayne progressed to the Dragons Academy side scoring 20 + tries every season for the under 21's. Wayne is elusive, has pace to burn and is an accomplished goalkicker and in 2004 he made the step up to 1st grade still scoring tries.

Martin Moana Stand-off / loose forward. Back for his second spell with the Dragons Martin brings with him a wealth of experience having played for clubs such as Halifax, Wakefield and Salford Reds in Super League. A fine playmaker Martin can both score and create tries for the team.

Chris Hemmings Prop / second row. Chris is another local lad who has come through the clubs Academy set-up, getting his chance in the 1st team in 2003. 2004 started well for him being a 1st team regular until a broken leg ended his season early in the league campaign.

Dean Colton Winger. Local lad Dean is another to come through the ranks at the Dragons, and began life in the 1st team in 2003 as a half-back but was switched very successfully to the wing in 2004.

Tom Buckenham Prop. Yet another Doncaster born player who has been knocking on the 1st team door for the last couple of seasons, big strong and aggressive Tom was voted Academy supporters club player of the season in 2004.

Martin Ostler Prop / second row. Former Hull FC forward Martin signed for the Dragons in 2002 and despite suffering injury problems has made 60 appearances for the club scoring 6 tries.

Shaun Leaf Halfback / loose forward. Great Britain student international who joined the club in 2003 initially as a stand-off, but has also performed well at loose forward and full back.

Craig Cook Hooker. Former Hull FC Academy hooker Craig joined the Dragons in 2003 on loan before making the move permanent in 2004 and being one of the clubs most influential players in both defence and attack.

Gareth Handford Prop. Fans favourite Gareth is now in his 4th season with the Doncaster club and has been one of their most influential props over recent seasons making 91 appearances scoring 12 tries.

Dean Andrews Prop / second. New signing from Hull KR, Dean is not a stranger to the club having previously had a brief spell with the Dragons in 1998. Big, strong and mobile, he will add strength in depth to the Dragons pack.

Craig Horne Full back / centre / winger. Utility back Craig played for the Dragons in 2003 and rejoined the club in mid season 2004 after a spell in France with UTC. Versatile player who can play anywhere in the backs and has an eye for the try line.

Dean O' Loughlin Prop / second row. Product of the Hull FC Academy set-up, Dean joined the Dragons toward the end of the 2004 season. Before joining the club he had been out for several months with a knee injury, so hopefully in 2005 the Doncaster supporters will see a big improvement as he reaches full fitness.

Kirk Netherton Utility back. Another young player who has come through the Hull FC Academy set-up, and was being courted by several clubs before choosing the Dragons. Kirk can play anywhere across the back line as well as at half-back or hooker and is rated a very exciting prospect for the future.

Ben Weston Half back. Signed in the close season from Bradford Bulls where he had starred in their senior academy side helping them to the grand final against Leeds academy. The 21 year old scrum half has previously played on Humberside with Fish Traders and West Hull.

Dale Cardoza Centre signed in the close season for his second spell with the Dragons. The former Leigh, Featherstone, York and Warrington centre scored 4 tries in 6 matches in a the 2003 season before moving on to Hilton Park. Elusive, powerful player with an excellent try scoring record.

Chris Langley Centre. Another new signing for the Dragons, Chris the former York City Knights centre had a great season last year being a regular in the Knights side that got to the brink of promotion in the Second Division play-off Final. Another great prospect for the future.

Craig Farrell Centre / wing. Yet another new signing and another former York City Knight who has also starred for Hull KR. Big in attack and strong in defence Craig will be a great asset for the Dragons this year.

Craig Miles Wing. Joined the Dragons in 2004 from Dewsbury Rams, scoring 5 tries in just 4 appearances. Has spent the amateur season with Eastmoor getting back to full fitness, has pace to burn and should score plenty of tries this season.

Gareth Lloyd Centre / second row. Gareth is now in his 3rd season with the Dragons after signing from York and is equally at home in the pack or threequarters. Lloydie will be looking for a big year in 2005 after missing the end of the 2004 season with injury.

Sean Colton Half back / hooker. Younger brother of winger Dean, Academy Captain Sean leads by example and but for a horrific injury sustained in the under 21's at Keighley last season would surely have made his 1st team debut by now.

Jason Eagle Second row. A product of the Dragons Academy set-up, Jason made his 1st team debut in 2003 and will be working hard to gain his place in the 2005 squad after missing out last year.

Wayne Frost Full back / wing / centre. A product of Featherstone Rovers Academy set-up Wayne made a bright start with the Dragons before 2004 was disrupted by injuries. Wayne is another young Academy player hoping 2005 will see him make the step up to 1st team regular.

Jonathan Jones Prop / second row. Young forward Jonathan is another new signing having previously played with Castleford outfit Redhill. Jonathan will add yet more competition for places in the Doncaster pack.

Player Profile by Roger Halstead

MARTY TURNER

MARTY Turner, currently playing his best football since he stepped on to English soil for the first time in January, believes Oldham can surprise a few teams in the new LHF Healthplan National League first division.

Scrum-half Turner recognises that last Sunday's defeat by York City Knights here at Boundary Park in the fourth round of the Powergen Challenge Cup was a major disappointment, but he feels the Roughyeds are on the verge of better things.

"We are on the right lines, and moving in the right direction," says the 23-year-old New Zealander, who is here as the club's one permitted overseas quota player.

He added: "Individually and collectively we are working hard under Gary (Mercer) to improve our overall performance, and if we can learn to cut out our silly mistakes and minimise the time when we take wrong options we will be well on the way."

Turner was born and raised in Christchurch, that beautiful city in New Zealand's South Island, and he played for the Linwood club from the age of six to the age of 18 when he was spotted by NRL club Melbourne Storm and invited over to Australia.

His brother Glen, two years his senior, had already crossed the Tasman in pursuit of his rugby league dream and, coincidentally, it was about the same time that Melbourne spotted Glen playing for a club in the Illawarra competition that they also pounced on Marty after watching him play in a national tournament in New Zealand.

Recalled Marty: "Storm took both of us on, but I was only 18 so I knew I had loads of work to do if I was going to climb up the pecking order at a club like Melbourne Storm.

"They keep a full-time squad of 25 in Melbourne and all their other young hopefuls are packed off north to play for their feeder club, Brisbane Norths, in the Queensland Cup.

"I was two years up there but then in 2002 I was called down to Melbourne and I played in three first-grade NRL games."

Cont over...



Player Profile

MARTY TURNER

"Marty is a great kid. He leads by example and I would not hesitate to say he is the best defensive scrum-half in this division."



Cont...

The world appeared to be Marty's oyster at that stage, but he then suffered serious injuries in a horrific road accident which caused him to be out of rugby league for a full year.

He recalls: "We had a day off in midweek and on that particular day two of us decided to drive down to the coast to spend an hour or two on the beach.

"On the way we were hit by a truck. I suffered severe concussion and internal injuries and I was informed later that I had suffered a ruptured spleen.

"I was unconscious for ages and even though I was out of rugby for a year I had to pass strict examinations and tests on my head before the medical people cleared me to play again.

"The ruptured spleen was another worry, but the doctors didn't want to operate if they could possibly avoid it. They told me to rest all the time and they monitored me for eight or nine months before they told me the spleen had healed naturally and I wouldn't have to undergo surgery.

"I don't think my life was ever under serious threat, but my rugby career might have been but for the first-class care I received."

A year after the smash, and still barely 22, Marty was playing again in Brisbane and striving once more to haul himself up through the ranks and up the Storm ladder.

He got one NRL game in 2003, against Manly, but like his brother Glen he discovered it wasn't exactly the easiest job in rugby league to take the scrum-half shirt off a certain Matt Orford.

Storm's star man, said to be the best player never to have played State of Origin football and now a target for English Super League clubs for 2006, was an automatic choice to work the Storm scrum.

It was at about this time that former New Zealand Test boss Frank Endacott, who had followed Marty's career from being a teenager in Christchurch, asked the youngster if he would fancy a spell in England.

Said Marty: "I told Frank I would jump at the idea and it wasn't long before he was back on to me to say he could fix me up at a place called Oldham with a former Kiwi Test star, Gary Mercer.

"That seemed fine to me and that's how I came to arrive in town one dark, bitterly cold night in January when Gary picked me up at the airport and took me straight to training at Chapel Road to meet the boys.

"I'm settled here now and I love it. I've been a bit hot and cold in my early games, but I'm working hard to improve my game and I'm feeling good and playing with a bit more confidence than I did earlier in the season.

"It isn't about me or any one of us, though. It's about the team and how we play as a unit, and I'm sure that we will soon start to gel even though we were disappointed to go down to York.

"As for National League division one, it gives us the opportunity to make a fresh start and kick on. We have no further interest in the Northern Rail Cup or the Powergen Challenge Cup, so we can concentrate on the league.

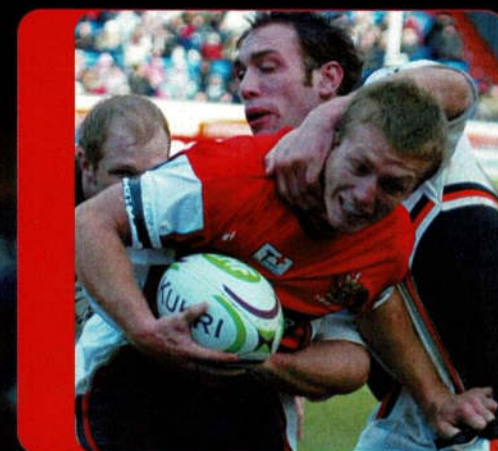
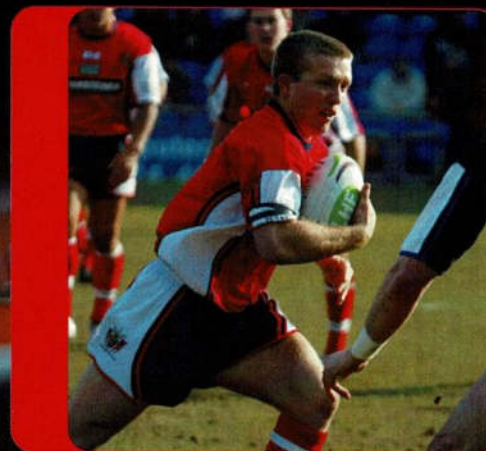
"And don't forget this: we are unbeaten in the league so far!"

That tongue-in-cheek remark was a reference to Oldham's battling 20-20 draw at Featherstone on the opening day of the National League campaign, Easter Monday, and if Turner and his team mates can reproduce that sort of grit and determination on a regular basis they won't go far wrong.

Gary Mercer, for one, has the highest regard for his fellow Kiwi.

"I have a lot of respect for Frank Endacott," said Gary, "and I knew when he recommended Marty that he would be spot-on. Frank knows his rugby.

"Marty is a great kid. He leads by example and I would not hesitate to say he is the best defensive scrum-half in this division. He is going to get better, too."



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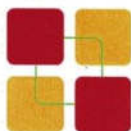
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On this day

Don Yates looks back to April 10th yesteryear



In 1950 Oldham spent a busy Easter in which they played four matches in five days. After losing at home to Salford on Good Friday, the Roughyeds won at Rochdale 24 hours later and were beaten again on Easter Tuesday at Warrington.

Squeezed in between those league fixtures was a tour match against a Combined Bordeaux & Villeneuve XIII which was played at Watersheddings on Easter Monday 10th April 1950. Oldham won that match 14-3 with loose-forward Bryn Goldswain playing a significant role in the victory. Once his playing career was over Goldswain moved into coaching and spent four seasons as coach to Doncaster between 1960 and 1964. Two other former Oldham players have also coached at Doncaster, Don Vines briefly in 1979 and Clive Sullivan during the 1983-84 campaign.

On Wednesday 10th April 1957 the French national team visited England and took on Great Britain at Knowsley Road, St. Helens. France played particularly well that evening and trailed by only 9-2 at half-time. After the interval the match opened up and Britain won an entertaining encounter 29-14. They scored five tries through winger Mick Sullivan (Huddersfield), who scored two, full-back Glyn Moses (St. Helens), stand-off Ray Price (Warrington) and centre Lewis Jones of Leeds who also landed seven goals. There were two Oldham players included in the British pack, prop-forward Sid Little and loose-forward Derek Turner.

The biggest attendance of the 1948-49 International Championship was attracted to the final, and decisive, match between France and Wales in Marseilles. Thirty thousand spectators attended the match on Sunday 10th April 1949 and they saw France clinch the title with an 11-0 victory. Playing in the centre for Wales that afternoon was Norman Harris, grandfather of the current Bradford player Iestyn Harris. Norman had joined Oldham from Cross Keys RUFC in December 1945 and made 119 appearances for the Roughyeds, scoring 35 tries and seven goals, before moving to Leigh shortly before that international against France.

Norman Harris is one of 28 Oldham players who have represented Wales. On Wednesday 10th April 1935 there were two Oldham players in the Welsh team which played England at the Stanley Greyhound Stadium, Prescott Road, Liverpool. They were prop-forward Lou Rees and second-row forward Norman Pugh. A crowd of 7,100 saw England win that match 24-11. Rees joined Oldham from Cardiff RUFC and Pugh from Swansea RUFC.

The former St. Annes junior, Mike Ford, enjoyed a successful rugby league career as both player and coach before switching codes and joining the rah-rah. He represented England and Great Britain, making 594 senior appearances during an eighteen-year playing career with nine different clubs. He enjoyed two spells with his home town club, Oldham. In 1983 he turned professional with Wigan after returning from the BARLA under-19 tour of New Zealand. Before going on that trip, Ford made four appearances for Wigan as an amateur. The first, his senior debut, was on Sunday 10th April 1983 when he was scrum-half in the Wigan team which played Oldham at Central Park. A crowd of 8,501 saw Wigan win that match 7-2.

In 1994 Doncaster won promotion to Division One, today's equivalent of the Super League. They lost only one of their last twelve league matches of that 1993-94 campaign. Included in that sequence was a 29-12 home victory over Dewsbury which took place on Sunday 10th April. Centre Vila Matautia (2), full-back Brendan Carlyle, winger David Evans and second-row forward Audley Pennant scored tries for Doncaster that afternoon with centre Robert Turner adding four goals and a dropped goal.

ROUGHYED KIDS + Co

Hi KIDS

Back to school for most of you this week after the Easter break and I bet your mums are glad.

It was nice to see quite a few of you at the practice match last week against Shaw Rhinos. We know those of you who went really enjoyed yourselves and we look forward to having similar events in the future.

After today's game in the Social Club there will be another mascot draw and the player answering questions this week will be Marty Turner. So come along with your mums and dads and also enjoy the disco and karaoke.

Our mascot today is 8 years old Matthew Cavanagh who has never been a mascot before so we wish him well and hope he brings us good luck.

Once again a big thank you to all our sponsors who can be found elsewhere on this page. Good luck to Gary and the boys.

See you soon,

Carole & Janet

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Members of the support Group are actively involved in helping the club on match days and at other events. Assistance is given after home matches when the players return to the social club for their refreshments. We are very pleased to have obtained sponsorship of fresh fruit, which supplements the food available to the players. Our sincere thanks go to - JIMMY CLARK of TOMMYFIELD MARKET - for his generous supply of fruit since the latter part of last season. His support is very much appreciated.

QUIZ NIGHT – 12th April 8:30pm

This event has been fully sponsored so EVERY pound taken will go to club funds. Please come and join us.

RED ED wants a new head and one of his ideas is to have a section of this page devoted to our dear mascot with ideas for raising money. He also wonders if any company would be interested in sponsoring this page all season and all this sponsorship money will go towards RED ED'S NEW HEAD. Contact Nigel at the club.



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For this season the format for this page will be to take a look at players who have represented both Oldham and the opposition of the day.

from the pen of MICHAEL TURNER

As was the case with our opponents in the last home match (York) there have been few players that have played for both Oldham and Doncaster.

The most significant in terms of appearances was Mick McCone.

A former Tattersfield favourite, Mick signed for Oldham in February 1972 and played 118 first team matches over the next six years. A lively scrum half he scored 27 tries and formed an effective partnership with both Cliff Hill and David Treasure during his days at Watersheddings.

The most famous player to wear the colours of the "Roughyeds" and the "Dons" would be Clive Sullivan. The Humberside legend played 18 games for Oldham in the 1980-81 season before having a spell at Doncaster.

Other to have represented both clubs, although some for just a handful of games for either Oldham or Doncaster, include: - Tony Jeff, Ian Birkby, High Gumbs, Alf Gouldbourne, Tony Miller and Jamie Bloem.



Mick McCone



Clive Sullivan during his Hull K.R. days

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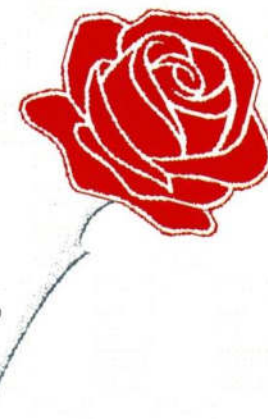
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Rugby Talk

Danny Lockwood
Publisher, *League Weekly*

THERE'S a vocal minority that believes rugby league referees are a separate species; that at some stage in evolution one branch of homo sapien picked up a pig's bladder and ran off grunting down the meadow looking for someone to stiff-arm, while a slower-developing Neanderthal thought 'sod that', learned how to use two of his fingers to whistle, and started spoiling everyone else's fun.

And in the past dozen millennia or so, that's pretty much how refs have been regarded. 'Progress' has been technical (wireless communications/video screens), dietary (improved fitness levels) and fashion-based (colourful stripey shirts), but in terms of the basic premise that refs are born, not made, probably due to some inherent genetic defect, it's been business as usual.

Until last week, that is, when any minuscule probability of the rogue refereeing gene being surgically grafted onto the body of rugby league, was extinguished like a cheap candle.

Whether the diktat emanated from Richard Lewis's office or Stuart Cummings' matters little. When the 'attention' of Red Hall was drawn by St Helens to the matter of proposed Giants-Saints ref Ian Smith attending a Huddersfield fans' forum a few days before, a decision had to be made. It came down in favour of removing Smith from the game, giving it to Ronnie Laughton. At a stroke the presumption of referees as some other-worldly, special case, was confirmed. Keep 'em in a compound, why don't we? Simply set them loose on their adversaries – the teams – on game day. Because that's what this does – sets up referees as something apart, and certainly not to be trusted to open their mouths in public, or heaven forbid be responsible for their own actions.

The RFL will kick and scream in denial, no doubt, and will throw a Bible-sized book at Huddersfield coach Jon Sharp into the bargain, over his understandable post-St Helens rant. But for once, someone at the top should raise a hand in apology and admit human fallibility – as Ian Smith did at that controversial squadbuilder forum.

In fact it was nothing like controversial – and I was on the panel with Smith. It was great PR for refs, and by extension for the game. We should see more of it, at any club or forum willing to play ball, whatever the date. Let's bring the referees closer to the game, not quarantine them from it. The so-called 'rule' used to take the game off Smith is obscure enough that no one saw fit to raise it when his presence on the panel was mentioned in *League Weekly* and other newspapers. That would have pre-empted this whole sorry mess.

Instead Ronnie Laughton was put in an impossible position (unless someone won by 30 points), Ian Smith's impeccable integrity was effectively questioned – whatever the 'official' line – and Jon Sharp's reaction was forced upon him, because to have taken that lot on the chin would have been to desert his troops and his club.

Not a good day for the Greatest Game.

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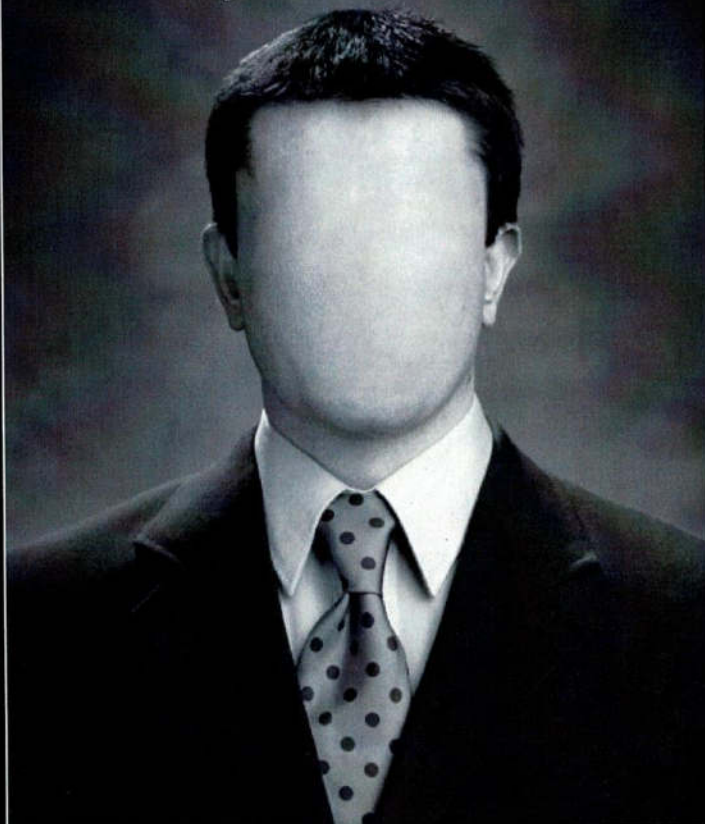
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NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

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A GREAT BEGINNING

THE opening round of National League fixtures certainly proved something - that nothing will be predictable in the two divisions this season.

There were plenty of surprise scorelines, and a handful of heroic efforts, to ensure that NL1 and NL2 will again be tough to call every week.

And with a fixture set-up that sees every team play just 18 league matches, there is little room for error. The sides that find their consistency quickest will be the ones to prosper.

Perhaps the most remarkable result of the first weekend was Oldham's 20-all draw at Featherstone Rovers.

It wasn't just that a previously disappointing Roughyeds side claimed an unlikely share of the points - it was the circumstances surrounding their effort.

Coach Gary Mercer could name just 16 players - and one of those, substitute Mark Roberts, was unable to play any part because of illness.

That left Mercer with 15, with his two remaining subs both inexperienced Academy products. Throw in the fact that the loose forward was assistant coach Keith Brennan, who recently came out of retirement because of the club's injury crisis, and that Oldham actually played in Featherstone's away shirts due to a kit mix-up, and it was a stunning result.

Elsewhere in NL1, Barrow put their Northern Rail Cup blues behind them to almost stun Whitehaven, while Batley came even closer at in-form Rochdale, losing by just a point.

At the Shay, two teams with play-off aspirations clashed, with Hull KR beating Halifax 11-10, and Doncaster pushed title favourites Castleford close in the first 65 minutes, before the Tigers secured victory.

In NL2, Swinton Lions laid down an early marker with a great win at much-fancied York City Knights, while Gateshead Thunder gave Workington Town a fright before going down to a high-scoring defeat.

Keighley Cougars started their attempts to bounce straight back up with a gritty win at improving Blackpool, and Dewsbury Rams showed why they are many people's favourites for promotion with a big win over Hunslet.

Sheffield Eagles also got off to a winning start with an accomplished win in the capital at London Skolars.

After a week's break for the Challenge Cup, today it's back to LHF Healthplan league action, and ten more fascinating match-ups. Where will the shocks come today?

Read the best match reports from all today's matches in Monday's Rugby Leaguer & League Express

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Fixtures 2005

DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
09/01/05	Rochdale Hornets	Law Cup	Away	15.00	24-8	L	1,404
21/01/05	Leeds Rhinos	Testimonial	Away	20.00	22-10	L	5,196
30/01/05	Halifax	Friendly	Away	15.00	34-12	L	1,443
13/02/05	Blackpool Panthers	NT Cup	Home	15.00	22-20	W	1,446
27/02/05	Swinton Lions	NT Cup	Away	15.00	46-14	L	1,101
06/03/05	Swinton Lions	NT Cup	Home	15.00	30-37	L	1,116
13/03/05	Sharlston Rovers	Powergen CC 3rd Rd	Away	19.30	14-46	W	852
16/03/05	Rochdale Hornets	NT Cup	Away	19.30	68-26	L	1,161
20/03/05	Blackpool Panthers	NT Cup	Away	15.00	16-35	W	250
25/03/05	Rochdale Hornets	NT Cup	Home	15.30	10-54	L	1,544
28/03/05	Featherstone Rovers	NL1	Away	19.30	20-20	D	1,463
03/04/05	York City Knights	Powergen CC 4th Rd	Home	15.00	28-32	L	1282
10/04/05	Doncaster Dragons	NL1	Home	15.00			
17/04/05	Castleford Tigers	NL1	Home	15.00			
24/04/05	Hull K R	NL1	Away	15.00			
01/05/05	Northern Rail Cup Play Offs	NT Cup	TBA	TBA			
08/05/05	Powergen Cup 5th Rd	Powergen CC	TBA	TBA			
15/05/05	Whitehaven Warriors	NL1	Home	15.00			
29/05/05	Northern Rail Cup	NT Cup	TBA	TBA			
22/05/05	Batley Bulldogs Quarter Finals	NL1	Away	15.00			
05/06/05	Rochdale Hornets	NL1	Home	15.00			
12/06/05	Barrow Raiders	NL1	Away	15.00			
19/06/05	Northern Rail Cup Semi Finals	NT Cup	TBA	TBA			
26/06/05	Halifax	NL1	Home	15.00			
26/06/05	Powergen Cup Quarter Finals	Powergen CC	TBA	TBA			
03/07/05	Featherstone Rovers	NL1	Home	15.00			
10/07/05	Doncaster Dragons	NL1	Away	15.00			
17/07/05	Northern Rail Cup Final	NT Cup	TBA	TBA			
24/07/05	Castleford Tigers	NL1	Away	15.30			
31/07/05	Hull K R	NL1	Home	15.00			
07/08/05	Whitehaven Warriors	NL1	Away	15.00			
14/08/05	Rochdale Hornets	NL1	Away	15.00			
21/08/05	Batley Bulldogs	NL1	Home	15.00			
04/09/05	Barrow Raiders	NL1	Home	15.00			
11/09/05	Halifax	NL1	Away	15.00			
18/09/05	Play Offs	NL1	TBA	TBA			
25/09/05	Play Offs	NL1	TBA	TBA			
02/10/05	Play Offs	NL1	TBA	TBA			
08/10/05	Grand Final	NL1	TBA	TBA			

Key

NT Cup - Northern Trains Cup

Powergen CC - Powergen Challenge Cup

NL1 - National League Division 1

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