

THE ROUGHYEDS

V ROCHDALE HORNETS

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KICK OFF 3.00pm

THE ROUGHYEDS

V ROCHDALE HORNETS



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Player Profile

GAVIN DODD

A look at the club's top try scorer- Page 17

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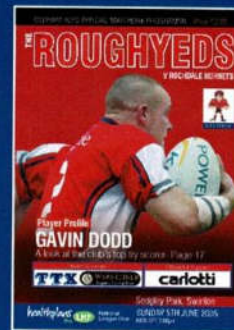
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We would like to express our thanks to the Oldham
Evening Chronicle, League Publications Ltd,
Phil Burdge and all concerned for the use of
photographs.

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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 Syvick v Swinton Lions, 10 - Apr 6th 2003 at Boundary Park

POINTS IN A MATCH: Gareth Barber v Dewsbury Rams, 25 - 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, 70-0 - Jan 28th 2001

at Huntington Stadium

v Queensbury (amt), 64-0 - Jan 28th 2001

RLCC 3rd Rnd at Boundary Park

www.roughyeds.co.uk



The Chairman's Thoughts

with CHRIS HAMILTON

Once again we are on the move and another "home" game finds another "home" ground.

Today its the turn of Sedgeley Park Tigers rugby union club to help us and we thank them for their assistance in providing us with a venue not only for today but also for our other games which have to be moved against Halifax and Featherstone Rovers.

The Halifax game will now be played on Friday 24 June kick off 7.45pm with the Featherstone game as originally scheduled on Sunday 3 July kick off 3pm.

A lot of our fans will be familiar with the ground from when we have played here against Swinton in the last couple of seasons and hopefully those of you who haven't been before will be taking advantage of the fantastic gesture once again from First Bus Manchester who are again providing free transport to our fans for the game.

On behalf of everybody at Oldham RLFC can I thank them for their very generous assistance once again.

Given our present position in the league we could have done without the disruption of having to move but our record at Boundary Park is hardly brilliant and let's hope that we can pick up our first win of the league season today against what is without doubt a strong Rochdale side.

In the midst of all this there is the small issue of keeping the club afloat and we will be presenting

what we hope will be an acceptable deal to the Inland Revenue in the next few days so that if it is rejected or needs some fine tuning we will be able to do that prior to the court hearing on the 15th.

One of the things that is proving difficult is keeping peoples focus on how serious the situation is and following the initial big response to the launch of Club 180 we need to get the enthusiasm of you the fans again as we ask you to play your part in not only ensuring there is a club but also in taking it forward. Please do not think it is assured that we will survive beyond the 15th June or that if we do we are out of the woods because we are not and as we have previously stated we cannot do this on our own.

Enjoy today's game and please get behind the team.

Thanks for your support.

Chris Hamilton

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From The Touchline

with Gary Mercer

Q&A

WITH GARY MERCER

Big Tim B asked:

Just a question re team selection against Whitehaven. You stated you like a big pack to set a platform for the team but you again started with two hookers and a small second rower against the biggest pack in the division. On the bench you had another two halfbacks, surely three forwards and an outside back would have been better. Also why was your interchange after 20 mins under the cosh a halfback and not a forward?

Gary replied:

I believe I chose the biggest pack at my disposal taking into account form and injuries. I took Carlos off because we were weak down their right flank and Carlos was being successfully targeted. I thought Svabic was the person to inject some life into that position and when he came off the bench I thought he did just that and scored the only try of the match.

Bellefield Boy asked:

Considering our forwards aren't the biggest (or bravest) do you think you rely too much on them in your game plans and wouldn't we be better suited to a deep attack using our backs more, considering we have two free scoring wingers in Johnson and Munroe, the best full back in LHF 2004, Jon Goddard and a great all round team player in Doddy. Should Oldham's form of defence come from a good attack?

Gary replied:

No! We must not play lateral football. We must be direct first and then our halfbacks play off that. If you look at probably our 3 most successful performances before the Whitehaven game, we played a very direct game and therefore allowed our backs to go forward and score tries.

Old Man asked:

Why do you at times make a substitution and then take the player off after about five minutes to replace him with the player you originally took off?

Gary replied:

These are often technical changes that I have to admit I would prefer not to have to do. They have been necessary because the player who has gone on is, for example, showing ill discipline and not doing the job asked of him.

This is the fourth time we have met Rochdale Hornets

There is no doubt Bobby has got a very good team together but as we have seen from results they are by no means invincible. To win however we must be competitive in every department. There is no doubt in my mind that if we come up with the performance we want and the performance we know we are capable of we can reap the rewards of two valuable points.

This is easily said but as we showed at Batley not as easy to achieve. Our performance there was in my opinion an all round poor team performance, where we played in patches through lack of thought at vital times and not doing the little things right. There is no doubt also after a long losing run that lack of confidence is starting to play a part.

We need to start enjoying playing rugby again and with that in mind we have organised a different fortnight lead up to today's game, which I hope has left our squad refreshed and wanting to play.

I thought Andy Sands had an impressive debut at Batley and I am sure with more game time can become just the sort of player I want with plenty of direct aggression. Robert Mill is also continuing to progress pleasingly and fully deserving his place in the first 13. Although in many ways we could be said to be giving up home advantage today I just hope we can put behind us some of the poor performances at Boundary Park and let's hope that Sedgely Park can prove a lucky ground and start us off on a successful run that will soon take us swiftly up the table.

Gary

this season and at present we have been heavily defeated on each occasion.



Adam Sharples

Whitehaven
(First game back)

15/05/05

Played **33** mins
Tackles **7**
Misses **1**
Hit ups **8**
Metres gained **32**
Average metre gain **3.9**



James Kirkland

Batley

22/05/05

Played **50** mins
Tackles **20**
Misses **1**
Carries **4**
Metres gained **16**
Average metre gain **3.2**



Tere Glassie

Batley

22/05/05

Played **60** mins
Tackles **18**
Misses **0**
Carries **13**
Metres gained **52**
Average metres gained **4.3**

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As Ian Sees It!

Nobody is a greater advocate than I am of growing strength of Rugby League, and I am delighted to see some long-term strategic thinking from the current leaders of the game.



It is vital, however, that the whole game is able to sign up to the future plans, and in order for there to be any realistic chance of this happening, there very quickly needs to be much greater clarity in what is being proposed.

I am very happy with minimum criteria, in such areas as facilities, financial strength, crowd potential and junior player development. I would accept, too, that there may be a case for slightly different ones for existing Super League members and for new applicants, at least for a short period. However, it is crucial that such criteria are completely transparent, with everyone fully understanding them in advance.

The next issue is that of the number of clubs in Super League. Here I feel that it is important to separate out the questions of the number of teams and the number of fixtures. I certainly do not favour a competition in which everyone plays everyone else twice - since this would greatly reduce the validity of our end-of-season play-off process which has been so successful. So 24 or 28 fixtures with 14 teams, or 26 fixtures with 12 or 13 teams, would be fine, for example. The number of fixtures would depend on decisions on player burn-out, international fixture programme, etc.

The crucial issue, though, is the mechanism by which teams enter and leave the premier competition. And here Mr. Lewis has got it wrong. For all the game's supporters to support the new strategy, and hopefully for more to be attracted, including those who have deserted the game in recent years from clubs such as Oldham, there simply has to be automatic promotion and relegation, even if not necessarily in its current format. Comparisons with Aussie RL or the NFL in the USA are of no validity in the British sporting culture, and Mr. Lewis needs to realise this very quickly.

So a club which wins the NL1 Grand Final - provided that it meets the pre-agreed minimum criteria - simply must gain promotion. I then have no problem with such a club having a minimum guaranteed period in the Super League - 3 years.

say. But, to maintain the integrity of the competition, the team which is last, provided it is not a 'probationer' club, must also be relegated.

How would this work out in practice? Let me try to illustrate using a few imaginary scenarios.

2005 Leigh and Widnes relegated. Castleford promoted.

2006 Perpignan in Super League, with a 3-year minimum guarantee. Wakefield finish bottom, and are relegated. Widnes are promoted. A new S.Wales club is accepted in NL2, and gains promotion.

2007 Perpignan finish bottom of Super League, but are only in their second 'probationary' year, and so are not relegated. Hull K.R. win NL1 and, having met the minimum criteria, are promoted.

2008 The season begins with 13 clubs in Super League - Leeds, St. Helens, Hull, Bradford, Warrington, Wigan, Huddersfield, Salford, London, Castleford, Perpignan, Widnes and Hull K.R. Hull K.R. finish last - not relegated. Whitehaven win NL1, and are promoted.

2009 14 teams start. Whitehaven finish last - not relegated. S.Wales win NL1, and are promoted.

2010 Toulouse are accepted into Super League, so 16 teams start - but still playing the agreed number of fixtures (24 or 26). Hull K.R. finish last, and so are relegated, since it is their third season since promotion. Oldham win NL1, but are not accepted into Super League since they do not meet the criteria - so 2011 would start with 15 clubs.

And so on. This seems to me to be the basis of a set-up which we could all support. It gives every chance for ambitious heartland clubs to achieve Super League status, whilst also enabling others from non-traditional areas to make it too. Wouldn't a universally-agreed strategy be marvellous!

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In Yer Face!

with GEOFF COOKE

Barrow Coach Peter Roe in this week's League Weekly suggests that it is now time for the clubs outside Super League, together with the amateur clubs, to stage a breakaway.

The argument is that if Super League, once it has adopted a fourteen team format, is going to pull up the drawbridge and effectively abandon promotion and relegation then the rest of the game will be better looking to their own interests. With, effectively, no monies percolating down to National Leagues One, Two and Three what is the point of staying linked to an organization that promotes its own interests but not those of rugby league football as a whole? A separate pro-am organization would be better placed to negotiate its own broadcasting and sponsorship deals. Roe argues and would almost certainly be better off playing a season running from September to April.

I have a great deal of sympathy for the Roe point of view. However, the RFL and Super League insist they have not abandoned promotion and relegation but are, rather, attempting to ensure that any club promoted in future will be up to the task. This involves guarantees that ground facilities, administration and revenue streams are adequate to sustain full-time, professional rugby, in return for which a promoted club could be given freedom from relegation as per 'Les Catalans' (UTC Perpignan in other words), possibly for a period of three years, to ensure some stability and avoid the old yo-yo syndrome of the 1970's and '80's.

My own personal view is that if there was a time to stage a breakaway 1995 was the time to have done it just as the Super League concept was being developed. A lot of clubs were treated shabbily at that point but apparently there was neither

the leadership nor will to go through with it, no doubt influenced by the prospect of pots of Murdoch money dangling before the eyes of greedy club Chairmen. The biggest flaw in Peter Roe's argument is that access to Sport England money for the development of the game would not be forthcoming to a breakaway organization. Indeed, the unification of the RFL and BARLA is essentially the product of the Government ruling that funds will only be available to unified administrations no matter what the sport.

However, the RFL's position is not altogether clear either and it is this which gives rise to the ill-feeling generated among Chairmen, Coaches and supporters of clubs outside the elite. For a start, expansion of the game to new areas, be it France, Wales or wherever, leaves little room for existing clubs to move up. And, will a guarantee of freedom from relegation serve any purpose? Let's face it ten years of Super League has produced a four club monopoly. No club outside the big four has yet won a trophy. Yes, at the moment Hull and Warrington are threatening to break the monopoly but when it comes to the business end of the season it would be a surprise if results did not revert to type. No, the real interest in Super League has tended to revolve around who will finish fifth or sixth and who will be relegated. Could Super League retain its interest and attendance levels without this annual scrap for survival? Furthermore for a promoted team to progress, with or without guaranteed status, it has to attract quality players. Firstly, this means promotion early enough to compete in the annual cattle-market as I argued in a previous column, a problem not addressed by the RFL. And secondly, it means persuading players to sign for a club with realistic prospects of success. Martin Gleeson says, in the same edition of League Weekly, that it was the prospect of some big name signings (none of them yet secured) that persuaded him to transfer to Warrington. This highlights the fact that players, being players, want to play for successful teams. That being so how does a newly promoted side attract the best? Just ask yourself: how many star names play for Leigh, Widnes, Salford, Huddersfield, Wakefield and London? And when they do how long is it before a 'top' club comes along to poach them?

So, confronted with two entirely different visions of Rugby League in Britain, just which represents the best way forward? I am sure both Peter Roe and Red Hall will welcome your input.



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In The News

Is it me or have all of you, in the last two months, found yourselves somewhat starved of Rugby League?



If you are out of the Challenge Cup and not featuring in the Northern Rail Cup there have been a lot of blank weekends. Now I know a lot of people will say it has allowed us, in some way, to get over some injury problems, but there is no doubt in my mind and certainly the players feel that there is nothing to beat proper match practice. Also I think in a lot of respects attendance at rugby matches is very much a matter of habit and as we have seen with falling crowds it's very easy to get out of that habit.

Just at this point in time when the club requires a regular and growing fan base to get it out of it's troubles we are hit by this lack of consistent, week after week, matches and also by a team who are finding it difficult to win their first match. There is no doubt in my mind that it is this final factor that is most important to increasing crowds. The recent article by Roger Halstead in the Chronicle on crowds over the last 40 years showed that the major contributing factor to crowd size was not whom you were playing, what league you were in or what your ground facilities were like. No, the major contributing factor was were your side winning on a consistent basis.

This was surely shown at Batley a fortnight ago. If ever a club are doing their bit for the community with excellent computer and education facilities for the local youngsters, new sponsors' facilities, excellent bar facilities and a brand new stand and yet the crowd on a sunny day with a special Kids Fun Day organised and playing a team with one of the best away followings in the league was just over 700. Also look at Leigh's crowds. Being in Super League isn't enough, if the side isn't winning.

So hopefully we can begin a winning spell today. Talking of winning here is the latest Prediction League. Those of you who only sent in Rounds 1-9 need to be thinking of sending in your 10-18 Rounds as soon as possible.

Nigel

PREDICTION LEAGUE ROUND 6

Stage Winner 1 - 6 Nigel Marland

May Month Winner David Schofield (34 points)

1	N Marland	88	(15)
2	Brian Walker	76	(8)
3	M Ackroyd	74	(11)
4	T Boycott	71	(6)
5=	Ashley Baxter	69	(15)
5=	D Schofield	69	(11)
7	C Hamilton	67	(8)
8	Michael Kivlin	65	(4)
9=	J Davies	62	(10)
9=	S McDonagh	62	(6)
11=	Paul Hulbert	60	(2)
11=	D King	60	(4)
11=	D Else	60	(2)
14	R Halstead	59	(8)
15	Paul Norman	58	(8)
16=	G Cooke	57	(6)
16=	S Jackson	57	(10)
18=	S Whitehead	56	(10)
18=	S Crossley	56	(9)
20	David Lord	55	(6)
21	P Gough	53	(2)
22	S Somerville	52	(4)
23	G Cheetham	51	(6)
24	John McAndrew	50	(4)
25=	A M Kivlin	46	(8)
25=	D Stevens	46	(8)
27	S Kivlin	45	(6)
28	Janet & Carole	44	(2)
29	S Hague	43	(6)
30	Nick Henry	40	(8)

() This weeks score.

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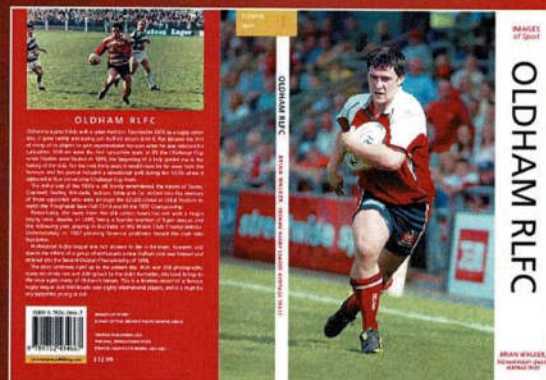


Walkerbout

With Brian Walker



Walkerbout

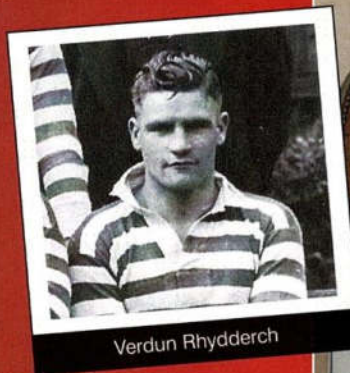


The new Images of Sport Oldham RLFC book is due off the press within the next couple of weeks. This pictorial history of the club includes over 200 images. Published by Tempus it will be available from the Oldham club shop, the Oldham Evening Chronicle or by mail order from the Oldham RL Heritage Trust. Ring Brian Walker on 01457 875084 (e-mail briandobcross@btopenworld.com) or Michael Turner on 0161 620 6005 (or e-mail matoldm@btinternet.com).

Two articles from yesteryear, both relating to Oldham and Hornets matches, have recently come to light. Back in the 1930s, in the days before free healthcare had been made available to one and all, the match-takings from the annual Oldham and Hornets Infirmary Cup game were shared between the Oldham and Rochdale Infirmarys. Since the introduction of the National Health the trophy has been renamed after its benefactor A. J. Law.

To help compensate for relinquishing their match fee players were often awarded a prize. In 1937 the Roughyeds beat Rochdale 9-4 at the Athletic Ground and each of the Oldham players received an inscribed barometer! The one pictured here for instance was presented to Oldham's Welsh centre Verdun Rhydderch.

And by a remarkable coincidence Gallery Oldham have just unearthed from their vast collection of Oldham related artefacts a poster advertising the 1938-39 Infirmarys 'Rugby Charity Cup'.



Verdun Rhydderch



Inscription plate from the barometer

Herbert or Hubert Dobbs?



The Heritage Trust website (see top of this page) includes the details of the playing career of each and every player that has represented the club between 1895 and 2004 and is receiving lots of hits from people searching for information, particularly about their descendants. After logging onto the site Haydn Thomas who lives down in Wiltshire has been in touch saying that it had allowed him to track down his uncle, Herbert Dobbs, a winger who played for the club during the 1930-31 season, but said that we had his Christian name listed as Hubert which was incorrect, though by coincidence it was the name of his younger brother.

Dobbs, who had played union four times for Gloucestershire, got his Roughyeds career off to a rip-roaring start with the press likening him to Huddersfield's Australian flyer Albert Rosenfield. Alas, he had played only nine first team matches when he was named on the flank in a third round Challenge Cup second-replay against Halifax. In front of a 20,000 crowd he and Oldham fullback Tommy Rees failed to clear a speculative Halifax kick, which allowed the Yorkshire side to score the only try in a 5-2 win. Halifax went on to lift the trophy, a competition that Oldham themselves had set their sights high on winning.

Whilst he was kept on the playing register for another three seasons Dobbs never played in the first team again and ended his sporting career playing soccer for Doncaster Rovers. But, why all the confusion surrounding his Christian name? I checked the playing register at the RFL and he is most certainly listed as Hubert. Every match report in the Chronicle lists him as Hubert. Records at Twickenham clearly name the player that had represented Gloucestershire as Herbert. Certainly the article in the Chronicle covering Dobbs signing stated that he had played four times for Gloucestershire and that his name was Hubert. Perhaps it was to disguise his true identity and if he didn't make the grade he could slip back to playing union. Or was it really Hubert?

Oldham fullback Alf Wood, another player who had played union for Gloucestershire, was one of the stars of the famous 'Rorke's Drift' Test victory over Australia played in Sydney in 1914. In his recent column in the Rugby League Express Don Yates points out that the Lions, early in the tour, posted a record 101-0 win over South Australia. Alf Wood kicked 15 goals and scored a try during the game. Bernard Ganley holds the record for the number of goals kicked during an Oldham match, 14 against Liverpool in 1959. He also broke the record against France when he kicked 10 playing for Great Britain during season 1957-58. But surely Wood's 15 must be a record haul for a Roughyed!



Alf Wood

TODAY'S OPPONENTS

Rochdale Hornets

DAVID ALSTEAD (Utility Back) : Played Super League for Warrington Wolves between 2000 and 2003. Moved on to Leigh Centurions where he became a regular member of the team in 2003. Played a prominent part in Hornets successful survival campaign scoring a total of 16 points.

CHRIS CAMPBELL (Wing) : One of Bobbie Goulding's first signings in preparation for the 2004 season. Had previous stints at Whitehaven and Oldham. He scored a total of 12 tries in the 2004 season making him the clubs leading try scorer.

MARK McCULLY (Centre) : Joined Hornets in June on loan from Leigh and stayed for the remainder of the season. Made a total of 13 appearances for Hornets in 2004 scoring 3 tries. Mark is also a very useful goal kicker.

KRIS RATCLIFFE (Forward) : Came to Hornets early in 2004 from the student Amateur Rugby League Network and made a huge contribution especially in the Arriva Cup competition. Made a total of 6 full appearances and 6 as substitute in 2004 scoring 2 tries.

DAVID CUNLIFFE (Centre / Loose Forward) : Joined Hornets in April 2004 from Liverpool St Helens Rugby Union side. Made a total of 18 appearances scoring 4 tries.

JOHN BRADDISH (Stand Off) : John had a great season with Hornets in 2004 finally realising the potential that got him into St Helens Super League squad in 2002. Came to Hornets via Chorley and Oldham. Made a total of 23 full appearances plus 2 as substitute and contributed 3 tries and 26 goals along the way.

LEE BIRDSEYE (Half Back) : Lee joined Hornets via the Widnes Amateur set up after spending the early part of his career in the successful Widnes Vikings Alliance team. Lee played at both Stand Off and Scrum Half making a total of 18 full appearances with a further five as substitute scoring 8 tries and 67 goals making him the Clubs leading points scorer in 2004.

RADNEY BOWKER (Stand Off) : The close season signing that most Hornets fans would have hoped for after his highly successful loan spell of 2003 under former coach Martin Hall. Radney had also made it clear that it was his preference to re join the Club that he had many fond memories of from his previous spell. His trademark mid field breaks will again be anticipated on his return to the Club.

ROB BALL (Prop) : Had a solid 2004 for Hornets with his experience gained playing at Wigan and Leigh proving vital. Made a total of 18 full appearances in 2003 and a further three as substitute scoring 1 try along the way.

SAM BUTTERWORTH (Utility Back) : Sam made a really successful transition to the professional game when he made the move from Rochdale Mayfield in January 2004. He made a total of 11 full appearances in 2004 with a further 13 as a substitute scoring 8 tries and 1 goal.

ANDREW GORSKI (Second Row) : Andrew was Hornets 2004 player of the year an award he richly deserved as he was a model professional and a well respected Captain taking over that role from Paul Anderson. No one at the Club made more appearances than Andy in 2004 he made 27 full appearances scoring 11 tries with his wide running becoming a feature of his play.

PHIL FARRELL (Loose Forward) : Joined the Club from local rivals Oldham in October 2004 after a string of impressive performances against Hornets prompted Bobbie Goulding to make a move for him. He is the Brother of Great Britain and Wigan Captain Andrew Farrell.

LEE DORAN (Second Row) : Joined Hornets at the same team as Phil Farrell in an excellent double swoop by Bobbie Goulding on local rivals Oldham. He is a current full international with Ireland and played in the recent European Nations Championship.

GARETH PRICE (Prop) : As usual his performances were excellent in 2004 with his block busting style of running again making him a firm fans favorite just had they had done in his previous two seasons. He made 16 full appearances in 2004 scoring 6 vital tries usually scattering the opposition in all directions along the way.

LEE HANSEN (Prop) : Lee Hansen was the Veteran of Hornets 2004 squad but what a vital contribution he would go onto make. He was a model of professionalism and his solid uncompromising play made him a fans favorite. In total he made 10 full appearances with a further 12 as a substitute.

TOMMY HODGKINSON (Prop) : Another master stroke pulled by Bobbie Goulding when he enticed Tommy back into the Pro game from Amateur Club Thatto Heath. He was consistently Hornets top yardage maker in many games and his defensive qualities were always evident. Made a total of 11 full appearances with a further 11 as substitute in 2004.

ANDREW LEATHEM (Prop) : A past Challenge cup final winner with St Helens Andy hopes to be fully fit for the start of the 2005 season after having an intensive pre season program. He made a total of 12 full appearances with a further 4 as a substitute.

DAVID NEWTON (Forward) : Joined Hornets in March from Neighbors Oldham, on the recommendation of former Hornets favorite Neil Flanagan, and quickly became a regular member of the first team squad. Made a total of 7 full appearances and 11 as substitute scoring 2 tries in the process.

DARREN ROBINSON (HOOKER) : Darren re joined the club in April for his second spell and quickly reminded the fans of just what he is capable of. It did not take him long to start scoring his hall mark tries from the dummy half position finishing the season with a total of 9 tries. He made a total of 13 full appearances in the 2004 season with a further 2 as a substitute.

RICHARD VARKULIS (CENTRE) : Bobbie Goulding will probably regard this as his biggest signing since talking the coaching reigns in 2003. Richard signed for the club in November 2004 from Super League outfit Warrington Wolves. Whilst at Hornets last season Richard made 9 full appearances and scored 5 tries in two separate loan spells.

Phil Cantillon (Hooker) : Another signing that has given Hornets squad for 2005 a massive boost. Phil brings his vast Super League experience to the Club having made nearly 50 appearances for both Leeds and Widnes. Goulding is extremely confident that Cantillon's electrifying runs from dummy half will quickly make him a firm fans favorite.

DAVID Mc CONNELL (Hooker / Back Row) : One of the unsung hero's of Leigh's 2004 Grand Final winning team and another player who joins Hornets 2005 squad who is of the highest quality. Dave made a big contribution to Leigh's success in 2004 making 12 full appearances with a further 15 as substitute scoring 4 tries.

Player Profile by Roger Halstead

GAVIN DODD

OF the players currently under contract to the Roughyeds nobody has scored more tries for the club than the unpredictable Gavin Dodd.

This Diddy isn't from Knotty Ash and he doesn't possess a tickling stick — well, not as far as I know, he doesn't — but, like the famous funny man from Liverpool, he can make you laugh and then make you cry in the time it would take to say: "Diddy and his diddy men."

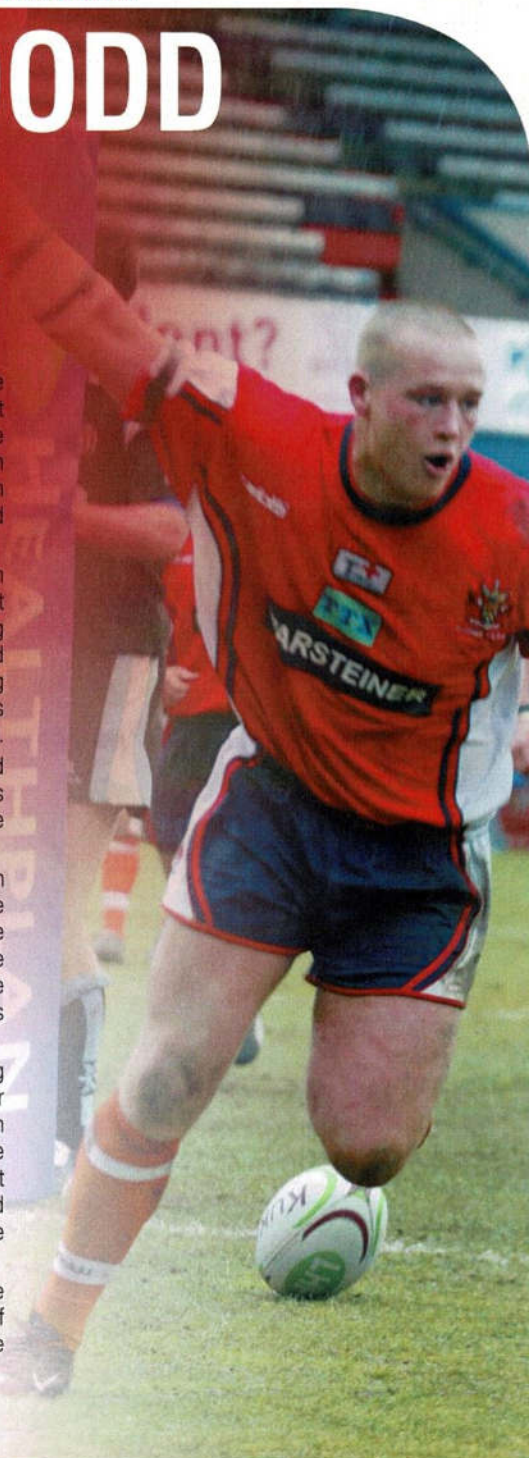
You know, there's a bit of the showman in our Gavin. Playing for the Roughyeds isn't quite like strutting your stuff at the leading theatres of the land, but in his own way and on his own stage Gavin can be just as big a crowd pleaser as the man who has made Knotty Ash famous across the world. He can be infuriatingly casual and laid back, one might even say too cool for his own good, particularly in defensive situations.

But give him the ball on attack with room to move and he can run like the wind. He loves scoring tries and the more explosive he has to be to get to the line the better he likes it and the more he can enjoy the celebrations with his team mates. That's the showman in him.

This season, his tries have been coming thick and fast despite the team's poor results. He has a dozen tries to his name in 17 appearances and they include a couple of hat-tricks against Rochdale Hornets at Spotland in the Northern Rail Cup and against York at Boundary Park in the Powergen Challenge Cup.

Despite Gavin's knack of getting to the line Oldham lost both of those games and if you can score hat-tricks in a beaten side you must be doing something right.

Cont over...



Player Profile **GAVIN DODD**

“Overall, he has touched down for 55 Roughyeds tries in 126 matches”



Cont...

His couple of "threes" have boosted his total for the season so far to 12 in 17 outings, and that's five more than Nick Johnson and seven more than another Roughyed with a try scoring reputation, Damian Munro.

With a minimum of 12 games still to be played Dodd is on course to easily beat his previous best for tries in a season -- 15 from 29 outings in the 2004 season.

Overall, he has touched down for 55 Roughyeds tries in 126 matches and that puts him one try ahead of hooker John Hough as the biggest scorer of Oldham four-pointers since the new club was formed for the start of the 1998 season.

Glance at the following list of leading Roughyeds try scorers over the past few years and it gives a graphic illustration of where Dodd stands in the pecking order.

	Tries	Appearances
Neil Roden	77	142
Mark Sibson	61	92
Gavin Dodd	55	126
John Hough	54	210
Gareth Barber	42	116
Nick Johnson	37	53
D Gibbons	37	95
A Gibbons	36	89
J McNicholas	36	106

Doddy will have two targets in his sights over the course of the remaining 12 games in the LHF Healthplan National League first division -- to beat Nick Johnson's 2004 club record of 26 in a season (a tall order) and the more realistic goal of scoring the seven tries he needs to pass Mark Sibson's 61 and thus become the second biggest try scorer, behind Neil Roden, in the new club's eight-year history.

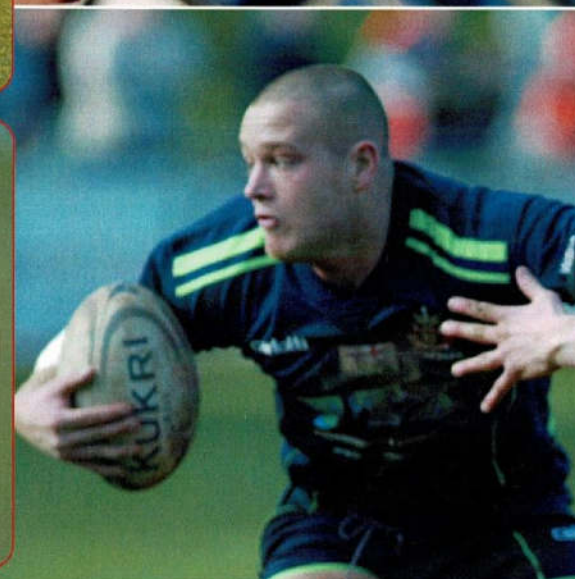
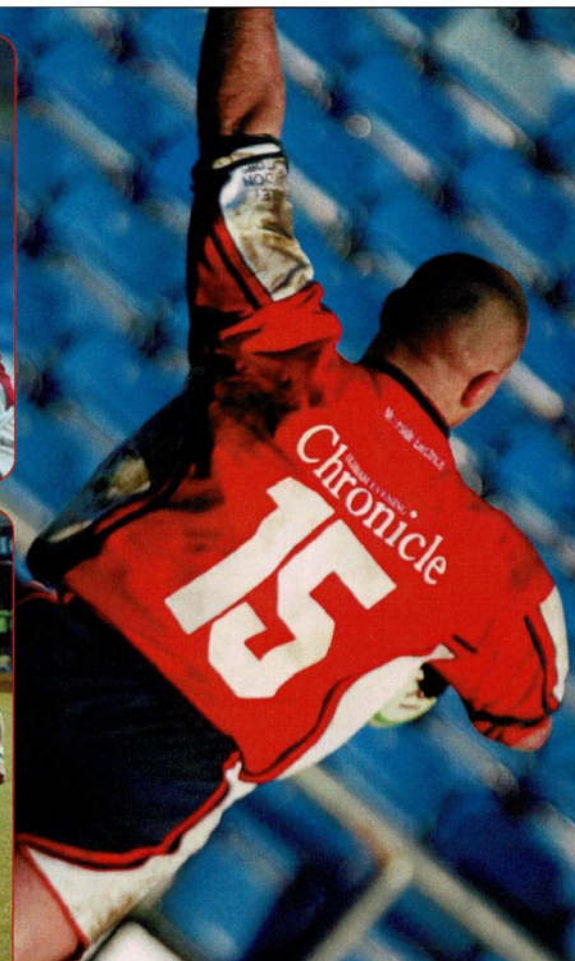
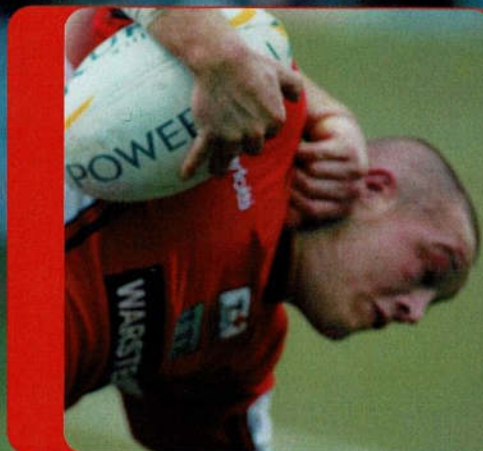
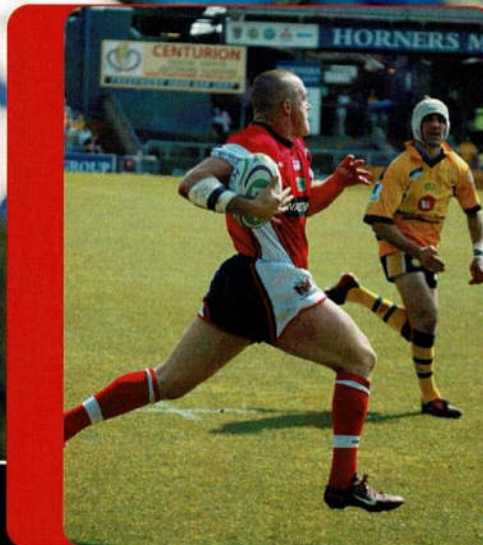
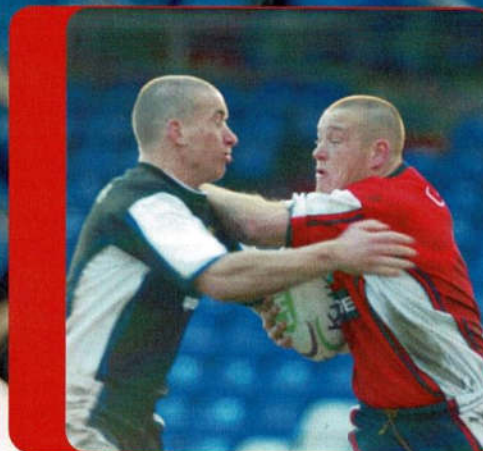
Dodd, a local boy, went to North Chadderton School and played rugby there under the tutelage of Iain MacCorquodale. He also played youth rugby at Royton Tigers and, at the age of 17, open-age rugby for both Heyside Eagles and Royton Tigers.

By the time he turned pro for Oldham in February, 2000 he had also played academy rugby for Rochdale Hornets and Bradford Bulls.

He played for Great Britain Students in Australia in 2000 and, towards the end of 2002, had a brief spell with French club Lezignan during the Roughyeds close season.

Some of the tales he later recounted about rugby league life at Lezignan were almost legendary. They were good enough when Gavin told them. If you had let the other Doddy loose on them he would have brought the house down at London Palladium.

Roger



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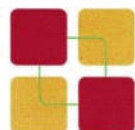
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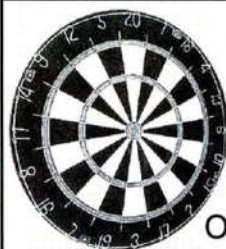
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On this day

Don Yates looks back to June 5th yesteryear



It was on this day in 1996, Wednesday 5th June, that European Champions Wales opened the defence of their title with a match against France in Carcassonne. Included in their line-up that evening was the Oldham full-back Paul Atcheson.

He had played an integral part in the capture of the crown by Wales and also excelled nine years ago when Wales began that defence in the best possible way, by winning 34-14. Atcheson scored one of the six Welsh tries that evening although the man-of-the-match and top scorer on the night was the former Oldham junior Iestyn Harris (Warrington) who scored three tries and five goals. Another product of Oldham junior rugby included in the Welsh squad was Martin Hall (Wigan), a substitute who was introduced into the match early in the second half at the expense of a player well known to supporters of both today's clubs, Ian Watson, then of Salford, now of Swinton but previously a player with both Oldham and Hornets.

Fifty-One years ago Oldham and Rochdale Hornets each had one representative in the Great Britain team which was touring Australia. From Rochdale came full-back Teddy Cahill and from Oldham came flying winger Terry O'Grady. On Saturday 5th June 1954 the Lions met New South Wales before a crowd of 55,518 at Sydney Cricket Ground. Both Cahill and O'Grady played in that match with Cahill landing a goal in Britain's 22-11 defeat. Barrow's Frank Castle, on the opposite wing to O'Grady, scored all three British tries. The Lions met New South Wales three times on that tour and failed to beat them. Teddy Cahill suffered injury later that month and his tour ended after eight matches in which he landed 14 goals. Terry O'Grady's tour was much more successful. He played in five of the six tests and scored 28 tries from a total of 17 tour appearances.

The last Rochdale player to represent Great Britain in the test arena was Terry Fogarty, a player whose career began in the Oldham amateur league with Saddleworth Rangers and continued with Halifax and

Wigan as well as Hornets. Fogarty toured Australia with the 1966 British Lions. On Sunday 5th June 1966 Britain suffered an embarrassing 17-15 defeat against North Queensland up at Townsville. Fogarty was in the second-row of the British pack that afternoon.

The visit of the 1920 British Lions was eagerly awaited in Australia. Sydney Cricket Ground was the venue of their opening fixture which was against Metropolis, a fancy name for what was a Combined Sydney XIII. That match took place on Saturday 5th June 1920 and such was the interest in the contest that a massive crowd of 67,739 attended the game. Oldham had three players on that tour, centre Evan Davies, second-row forward Herman Hilton and full-back Alf Wood. Prop Joe Bowers and talented inside back Ernie Jones were the two Rochdale representatives. Herman Hilton was the only player from that quintet who turned out against Metropolis. The Lions were given a tough test in that opening fixture but they were able to overcome their rivals and win 27-20. Unfortunately they were not so successful in the test series which the Kangaroos won 2-1. Exactly 51 years later, on Saturday 5th June 1971, Rochdale's Ernie Jones died aged 90 years.

One of the most disappointing performances given by a British Lions team occurred on Sunday 5th June 1988. On that afternoon a moderate New South Wales Northern Division team defeated Great Britain by 36 points to twelve before a crowd of 2,192 at Tamworth. One of the better British performances on what was a sad day for British rugby came from Oldham's Mike Ford who was at scrum-half.

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Hope you have all enjoyed you half term break from school and haven't driven your mums and dads up the wall. Bet some of you can't wait until tomorrow, back to school (mums and dads that is). Peace at last.

After today's match there will be a mascot draw back at the Social Club. We are also having the usual karaoke, disco, play your cards right and of course players question time. Hope to see as many of you as possible back there to enjoy yourselves.

Today's mascot is five year old Rebecca Trelfa. Rebecca has been a "Roughyed Kid" for quite some time and is a regular at all our parties, her favourite player this season is Nick Johnson.

Once again a big thank you to all our sponsors who now appear under our new heading.

As always good luck to Gary and the Lads.

See you soon

Carole and Janet

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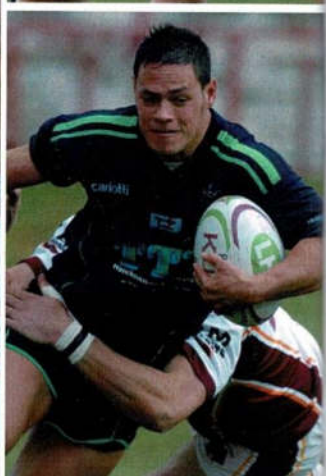
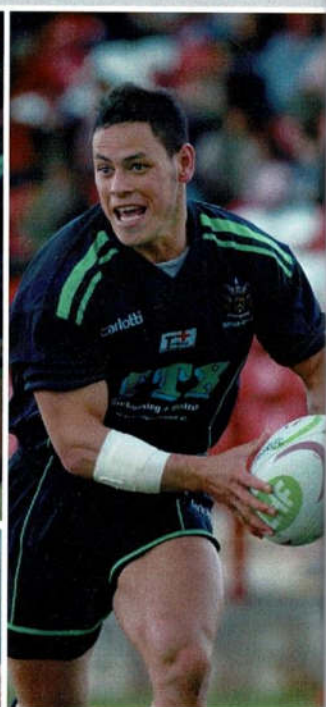
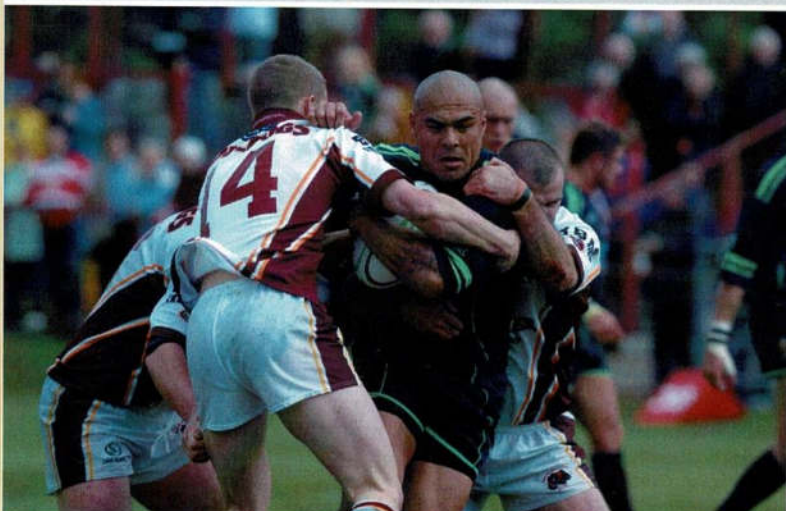
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For this season the format for this page will be to take a look at players who have represented both Oldham and the opposition of the day.

from the pen of
MICHAEL TURNER

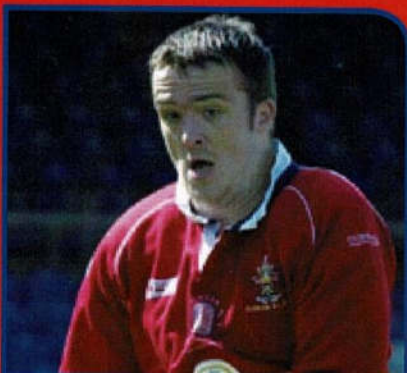
Just to reiterate from the notes in the programme for the Rochdale match in the Northern Rail Cup on March 25th, there as probably been more transfer activity between Oldham and the Hornets than with any other club in the Rugby League. Here are four more players who have served both clubs.



Martin Hall



John Dean



Phil Farrell



George Gummer

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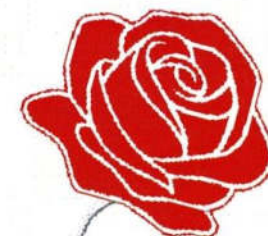
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Rugby Talk

Danny Lockwood
Publisher, League Weekly

HANDS up anyone who can tell me what colour the Leeds Rhinos' away shirt is? Yellow? If you call that yellow, your mum either needs to swap her Daz for Persil, or stop putting pairs of black socks in with the coloureds.

Even if it was 'lemon', which it isn't, you can't have a championship team poncing about in pastel-coloured kit. Not at rugby league, for crying out loud. Mustard? Maybe – but rather more Dijon than good old Coleman's English. What – it's traditional Leeds gold? Listen, if that's gold, I'm not buying the wife any necklaces from Gary Hetherington's jewellers. Either way, I can't help but think it looks washed out ... a bit like the Rhinos themselves at St Helens last Friday.

I've been nurturing a bit of a colour theory this season, although the Bulls did a good job of blowing it out of the water with their convincing win at Hull. Under my theory, teams prancing about in a shade of green that Robin Hood would have banned from Sherwood, couldn't possibly get the better of a good old black-and-white clad outfit like Hull.

Widnes have a chance of putting me back on track this weekend, when they sport their awfully anonymous grey away strip in an effort to put Leigh pretty much beyond hope.

A team taking the park looking like that can't possibly raise themselves to heights of passion and determination can they? We shall see.

And Saints, so dominant in their traditional white and red vee at home to Leeds, will have the chance at Odsal to show that two shades of blue (navy vee on a lovely hue of cornflower) has no impact at all on their performance levels.

It would be mildly diverting to examine statistics based on teams' performances in different colours and kits. Manchester United famously switched their grey away strip at half time when getting a hiding at Southampton, but it doesn't seem to have influenced anyone as a result.

The traditionalist in me likes the old fashioned idea of a club's away kit being the reverse of the home kit, or at least using the same colours – hence Bradford in black or red, or even amber. Leeds in white, with their famous blue and gold.

The marketing/fan exploitation argument aside, I can only imagine that the Nobles, Millwards, Kears and Smiths of the world spending their off-season pondering lists of available players, then asking their agents what their favourite colours are...

"Psst, Mr McManus ... we can get Kiwi international Vinnie Anderson next year, but he reckons white makes him look washed out ... blue goes with his eyes much better. A new away strip and we have a deal..."

Well if you've got a better theory on how the clubs come up with some of these mind-boggling colour schemes, I'd be only too happy to hear them.

**LEAGUE
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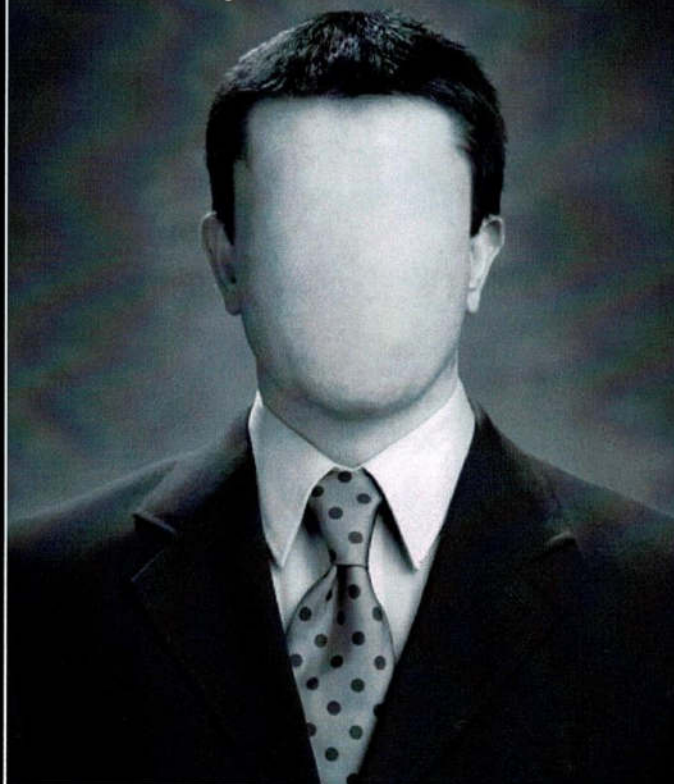
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OUR CUP OVER-FLOWS

ANYONE who doubts the credibility of the Northern Rail Cup should have been at one of four intriguing quarter-finals played last weekend.

Three of them produced tightly-fought, enthralling encounters, while in the other one, Hull Kingston Rovers showed their determination to progress in the competition with a stunning 62-0 win over a Swinton Lions side admittedly missing a handful of their most key players.

At the Lionheart Stadium, four tries from the Castleford fullback Michael Platt inspired the Tigers to a 38-14 win over Featherstone that was still in the balance going into the closing ten minutes.

The two teams have already clashed three times this season and will meet at least twice more – and they have certainly lived up to the expectation of those that have missed this most traditional of derby clashes.

Elsewhere, Whitehaven held off a spirited challenge from injury-hit Rochdale to progress, and Doncaster produced a stunning late comeback to eliminate Halifax in a point-a-minute thriller.

The Tigers must remain favourites to win the competition, which has gone from strength to strength this season.

There have been calls to move it to the end of the season – something I would personally support if it helped the NL1 Grand Finals winners prepare better for Super League – but its importance to clubs outside the top flight should not be underestimated. Suggesting that we move the competition – as a couple of coaches have done – is not down-playing its importance.

The opportunity to win a cup of any sort is something each club needs to aspire to. And the decision to stage this year's final at Blackpool appears a shrewd one – who wouldn't be attracted by a day out by the seas, watching their team in cup final?

Today it's back to league action, with another mouth-watering clash at the Jungle, where the top two clash when Castleford entertain Whitehaven. It will provide the first real indication of which side is best placed to kick on for promotion – though both coaches, and those at the chasing pack, will be keen to stress that nothing is ultimately decided today.

It should still be a cracker.

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	1,282
10/04/05	Doncaster Dragons	NL1	Home	15.00	22-44	L	1,266
17/04/05	Castleford Tigers	NL1	Home	15.00	20-32	L	2,054
24/04/05	Hull K R	NL1	Away	15.00	32-19	L	2,474
15/05/05	Whitehaven Warriors	NL1	Home	15.00	6-60	L	1,284
22/05/05	Batley Bulldogs	NL1	Away	15.00	25-18	L	792
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			
24/06/05	Halifax	NL1	Home	19.30			
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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