

# TODAYS TEAMS

14th APRIL 2006 • KICK OFF 3.00PM

Rochdale Hornets



Oldham RLFC

|               |    |             |
|---------------|----|-------------|
| P OWEN        | 1  | G BARBER    |
| M McCULLY     | 2  | A WILKINSON |
| R VARKULIS    | 3  | M REDFORD   |
| L PATTERSON   | 4  | C MAYE      |
| C GILES       | 5  | A GOREY     |
| S BUTTERWORTH | 6  | I HODSON    |
| M FIRTH       | 7  | S SVABIC    |
| R BALL        | 8  | G HAYES     |
| D McCONNELL   | 9  | J HOUGH     |
| M STURM       | 10 | D BEST      |
| A GORSKI      | 11 | D GORTON    |
| L DORAN       | 12 | G CORCORAN  |
| T GOULDEN     | 13 | M ROBERTS   |
| P CANTILLON   | 14 | C HOUGH     |
| R BENJAFIELD  | 15 | J BEST      |
| P ANDERSON    | 16 | D NANYN     |
| J HILL        | 17 | M CALLAN    |

## THE OFFICIALS

Ref M Dawber • TJ R Huddleston • TJ R Stokes • RR N Taylor • MC R Tennant

## NEXT HOME GAME

Rochdale Hornets v York City Knights • SUNDAY 30th APRIL 2006 K.O 3.00PM

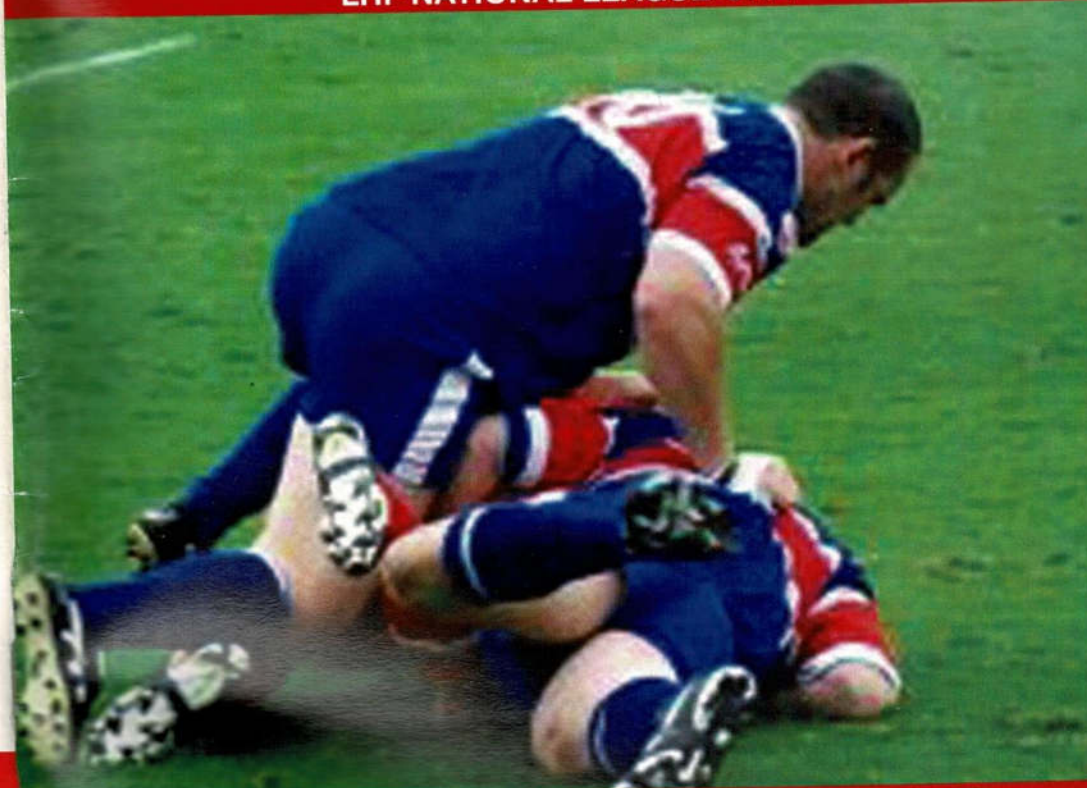


THE OFFICIAL PROGRAMME OF

# ROCHDALE HORNETS

V OLDHAM RLFC

ISSUE 5 • APRIL 14th 2006 • K.O. 3.00PM • Price £2.00  
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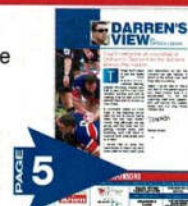
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# ISSUE NUMBER 5 IN THIS ISSUE

## DARREN'S VIEW

Looking ahead  
to today's game



## MATCH ACTION

ROCHDALE V  
DONCASTER  
Starting the  
season as we  
mean to go on!



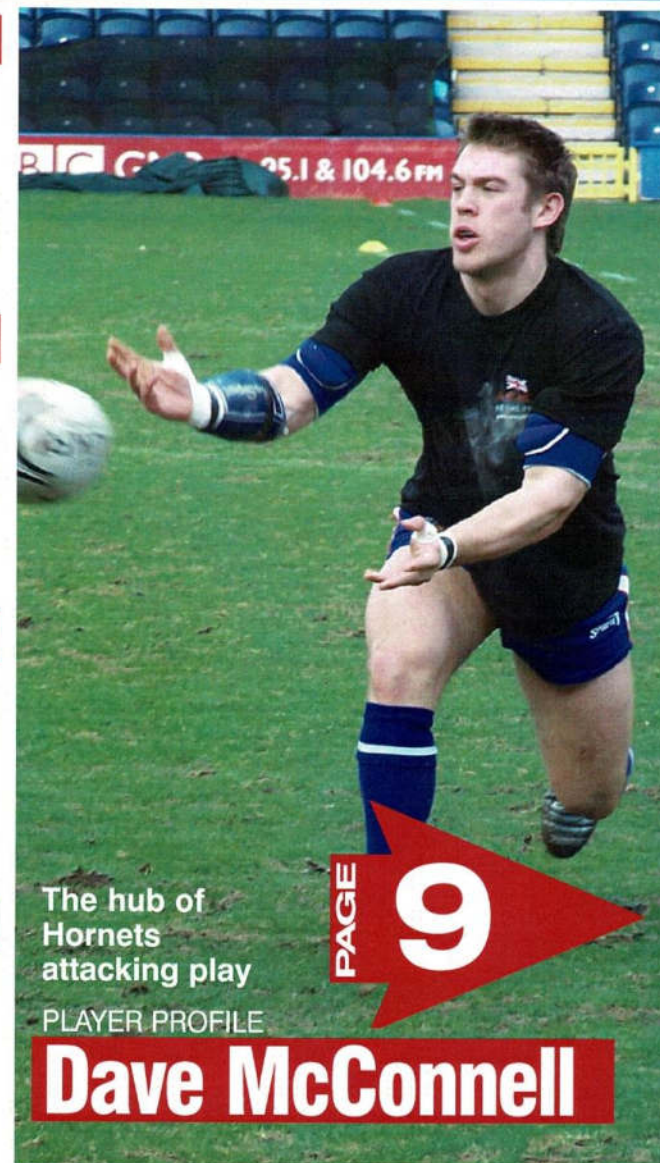
## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Commercial  
Directors Update  
New initiatives  
and today's  
sponsor  
information



## VIEW FROM ROW Z

By Jim Stringer



The hub of  
Hornets  
attacking play

PLAYER PROFILE

**Dave McConnell**

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HORNETS WEBSITE

Why not visit the Hornets supporters' website on:

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# ROCHDALE HORNETS RLFC

Reg Office: PO Box 48, Rochdale OL16 1PE Tel: 01706 648004 Fax: 01706 344545

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**Chief Executive:** Mrs Ann Manock

**Club Secretary:** Mr K Oldham

**Directors:**

Mr N Halsall (Vice Chairman)

Mr K Oldham

Mr D Vining

Mrs A Manock

Ms K Reynolds

**Coach:** Darren Abram

**Assistant Coach:** Willie Swan

Shaun Gartland

**Club Doctor:** Dr P C Duffy

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**Programme:** Karen Reynolds,  
Ian D Nield,  
Jim Stringer,  
Mark Wynn,  
David Ledsham,  
Mike Floyd,  
Gareth Walker,  
Danny Lockwood

**Hornets Magazine Production:**  
DigiGroup Tel: 0870 333 9994

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### CLUB HONOURS

|                        |                                       |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Challenge Cup Winners  | 1921-22                               |
| Lancashire Cup Winners | 1911-12, 1914-15,<br>1918-19          |
| Beaten Finalists       | 1912-13, 1919-20,<br>1965-66, 1990-91 |

Regal Trophy Beaten  
Finalists 1973-74

BBC2 Floodlight Trophy  
Beaten Finalists 1971-72

### CLUB RECORDS

|                                               |           |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Debut Season                                  | 1895-96   |
| Biggest Victory, 120-4<br>v Illingworth ARLFC | 2005      |
| Heaviest Defeat, 10-82<br>v Hull Sharks       | 1999-2000 |

### MOST TRIES

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

### MOST GOALS

|                              |         |
|------------------------------|---------|
| In a career - 733, W. Gowers | 1922-36 |
| In a season - 150m M. Strett | 1994-95 |
| In a match - 18, L. Birdseye | 2005    |

### MOST POINTS

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| In a career - 1481, W. Gowers | 1922-36 |
| In a season - 350, M. Nanyin  | 2002-03 |
| In a match - 44, L. Birdseye  | 2005    |

### MOST APPEARANCES

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| 455, W. Gowers | 1922-36 |
|----------------|---------|



## DARREN'S VIEW

BY  
DARREN ABRAM

Could I welcome all connected at Oldham to Spotland for the 3rd time already this season.

**T**hings don't seem to get any better for Chris Hamilton, coaches leaving, players finishing, injuries and bills to pay, but I'm sure Chris remains positive and will be making sure his lads put it all behind them and try to turn us over today.

A comment made by Chris Giles in the dressing rooms after our win at Donny "we've lifted the bar high today" shows that although we are going well the boys are not getting carried away with anything, and still want to improve both individually and as a team.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my back room staff for their hard work

and dedication so far, the success we are having is down to the whole club, and long may it continue.

Again I would like to thank you fans for the great support you have shown and it is appreciated by all the coaching staff and players, let's get behind the players today, and out sing those Oldham fans.

*Darren*

Darren Abram



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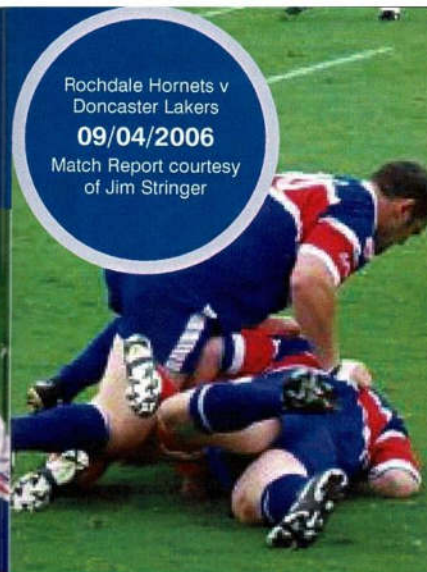
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# MATCH REPORT



Rochdale Hornets v  
Doncaster Lakers  
09/04/2006  
Match Report courtesy  
of Jim Stringer

## NIL DEPERANDUM

Hornets' Lakers shut-out provides positive outlook for the season

**I**nstead of parading their former stars at half time, Doncaster would have been better sending Carl Hall, Vila Matautia and Audley Pennant out for the second half as Hornets battered, bamboozled and, ultimately, blitzed a hapless Lakers into ignominious defeat.

This was a performance of consummate completeness: deft with ball in hand and watertight on defence, from the moment Tommy Goulden carved open the Lakers' defence with a neatly smuggled ball to Matt Firth on 15 minutes - only for it to be called forward - there was only going to be one winner. Indeed, with Doncaster players walking to the scrum, it was obvious that the home side were struggling to match Hornets' pace and power.

Injuries to Richard Varkulis (face) and Dave Mc Connell (ankle) forced an early reshuffle, but replacements Phil Cantillon

and Paul Anderson slotted seamlessly into the action as Hornets established their dominance. Aided by a referee so one-eyed, one suspected he'd make an excellent pirate, Doncaster thudded aimlessly into the Hornets defence with increasing impotence and, with just 20 minutes gone, the vociferous Hornets support suspected - correctly - that the Lakers had shot their bolt.

Bored with watching Graham Holroyd steer his side in ever decreasingly effective circles, Hornets steamed the ball upfield, where Sam Butterworth ghosted through a static defence to give Hornets the lead. Mark McCully converted.

Three minutes later Hornets were in again: Chris Giles capitalising on a Matt Firth kick through, Mark McCully converting superbly from wide out.

Just before the break, Matt Firth unzipped the Lakers' defence and his pass sent Lee 'Pogo'

Patterson in. Half time 16-nil to Hornets and the game rapidly accelerating away from Doncaster.

Indeed, the Lakers only plan to stem the tide in the second half was to niggle and spoil at every opportunity. On 55 minutes this rudimentary tactic saw Newlove dispatched to the sin-bin; McCully dispatching the penalty with ease. Two minutes later Doncaster transgressed again. The outcome was the same.

On the hour, good hands at pace fed Mark McCully into enough space for him to skate in for a deserved try.

Doncaster's desperation grew; and with lard-arsed prop Gareth Handford reduced to rapping with John Hill after the tackle, Hill exacted retribution in a flurry of punches that saw both players sent to cool off for ten minutes. It was Doncaster's last meaningful contribution to the game and they visibly deflated as McCully banged over the penalty.

Three tries in the last nine minutes provided the coup de grace that sent the home fans rushing for the exits. First, Phil Cantillon backing up some neat passing in traffic to grab his try; then Paul Anderson exploiting a huge hole in the defence to cross the line - then run 20 metres to plant the ball under the posts; and finally, a delicious chip from Sam Butterworth, the bounce perfectly timed by Chris Giles. 44-nil. That's nil, ladies and gentlemen: nothing, ne rien, nul, de nada, zilch!

Despite Doncaster's rabid ambition and profligate expenditure, on the day, they were simply outclassed and out-enthused by a team that's looking increasingly solid in defence. But Hornets aren't just a tackling machine. On attack, Hornets were fluid, slick and pacy: driven round the park in style by Sam Butterworth who, arguably, had his best game in a Hornets jersey.

Ultimately, it was the complete Hornets performance. Free scoring on attack, impermeable on defence, tough as teak and very, very well organised.

A mention too for the travelling Hornets support. While they may not be huge in number, there are few groups of fans as vocal - and their efforts on behalf of their team are worthy of credit.

*Jim Stringer*

*What the papers say!*

LHF National League One - By Mike Floyd

## Doncaster Lakers 0 Rochdale Hornets 44

HORNETS opened their LHF National League One campaign with a dazzling demolition job on Doncaster Dragons at the Earth Stadium.

The Dragons performances in the National Rail Cup had given the vociferous Doncaster crowd room for optimism, but it didn't last as Hornets, despite losing the influential Dave McConnell and the powerful Richard Varkulis early in the piece, stifled a brief spell of pressure from the home team to dominate the match.

Led by man of the match Sam Butterworth whose quick thinking and quick feet were a source of consternation for the home defence throughout the afternoon, Hornets ran in seven tries without reply. Mark McCully with a try and eight goals helped himself to 20 points.

Hornets took control from the off. They broke through in the 19th minute when Butterworth took the ball from acting half and skipped past several flat-footed defenders to score. McCully converted.

Hornets increased their lead when Firth's grubber bamboozled the home defence and Giles pounced to score. McCully added the extras.

Gorski then broke through on the short side, handed on to Patterson who coasted in to give Hornets a 16-0 interval lead.

After the break the Dragons' desperation saw them concede two penalties which McCully slotted over with ease. With the temperature dropping and the hailstone falling Hornets squandered a couple of chances, but once again, Butterworth wove his magic as he chipped over the top and hacked on for McCully to gather and fall over the line. McCully tagged on a tremendous touchline conversion.

From the restart Gorski summed up Hornets' day when he plucked a short kick from the air and knocked aside four or five would-be tacklers. John Hill carried on the run and when he was given a clip by Gareth Handford a donnybrook ensued. Handford and Hill were sent to the sin bin and McCully banged over the penalty.

The home team were visibly wilting and the try of the match followed as McCully and Tommy Goulden combined to set up Cantillon for a clear run to the line. McCully made it a six-pointer.

More was to follow as Butterworth slid through the Dragons' backline and Anderson took his pass to power over the line. McCully kicked goal number eight.

With three minutes to go a grubber from Firth caused havoc in the home defence and Giles snapped up the loose ball to stroll in for a well-deserved try.

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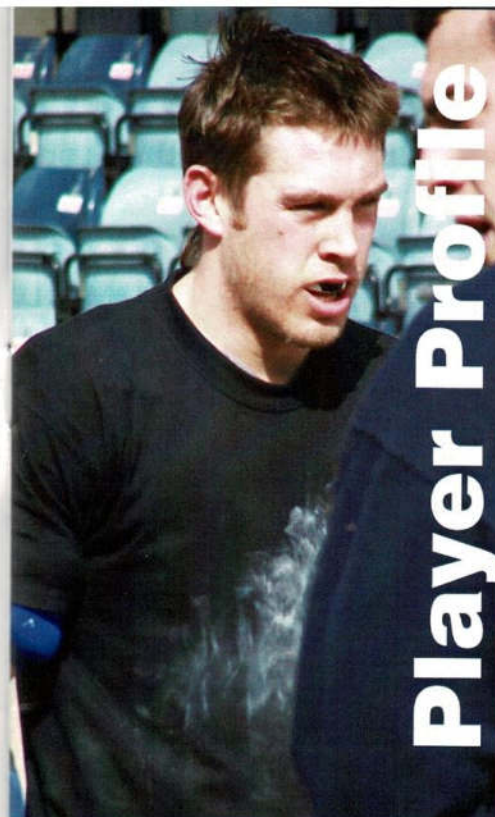
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Player Profile

## DAVE McCONNELL

Position:  
HOOKER

**A**nother of Hornets top performers in 2005 after signing in the close season from Leigh Centurions. David's work rate is exceptional and is at the hub of most of Hornets attacking play. A very versatile player Dave can play Hooker, back row or half back. Dave made 25 appearances in 2005 scoring 10 tries, and this season he has already scored 6 tries having played in all games to date. David is also a full Scottish international. Dave has recently been awarded Northern Rail Cup Player of the Month for April in the Rugby League World magazine. He is also ever present in the squad, having appeared in all ten matches, scoring 6 tries and accumulating 24 points so far this season. Congratulations to him from all at the club.

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# THE OPPOSITION OLDHAM RLFC

**ANDY BAILEY** - Signed during the close-season from Castleford Tigers. At 6' 3" is an ideal build for a second-row forward. Super League experience with Hull who signed him from Featherstone Rovers.

**GARETH BARBER** - A local born player who started his professional career with Warrington Wolves. Primarily a stand-off who can fill most positions in the back-line. In 2005 he was also used effectively at hooker. Represented the National League under 21 side that defeated their Super League counterparts in 2001.

**MIKE CALLAN** - A prop-forward who has had Super League experience with Warrington Wolves. Hoping to make a huge impact this season under the guidance of coach John Pendlebury.

**GED CORCORAN** - 23 year old prop-forward signed for the Roughyeds after spells with Halifax (where he gained Super League experience), Dewsbury Rams and French outfit Limoux. Started his rugby career with Royton Tigers.

**WAYNE CORCORAN** - 20-year-old Irish international forward. Recruited from Halifax where he gained first team experience.

**ANDY GOREY** - A young full-back who is bursting with enthusiasm. He made 8 first team appearances last season albeit on the wing but is hoping to claim the number one jersey this term.

**DEAN GORTON** - Looking for regular first team action after spending two years in the Salford City Reds U21 side, where, in 2004, he picked up their Player of the Year award.

**DANNY GUEST** - A big prop who has just returned to Oldham after retiring at the end of the 2003 season following a serious knee ligament injury. Former Oldham Bear who has had experience with Keighley Cougars and Lancashire Lynx. This will be his fourth spell with Oldham.

**ALAN HADCROFT** - A robust centre who is known for his solid defence and strong running. Signed from Halifax for the 2006 season, Alan's previous club list includes Wests and his hometown

side Leigh Centurions. Played for the National League against New Zealand 'A'.

**GARETH HAYES** - 20 year-old prop-forward signed from Salford City Reds during the close-season. He was voted Salford's U21 Player's Player of the Year in 2004. Leigh born Gareth stands at 6'3" tall and weighs 17 stone.

**IAN HODSON** - Signed initially on loan from Swinton Lions in 2005. After impressing he was given a contract for 2006. A hard worker who can handle the ball and who is equally at home in the second-row or at loose-forward.

**CHRIS HOUGH** - Oldham born half-back who excelled last season forming a great partnership with Marty Turner. A leader who knows how to galvanise his team-mates into action.

**JOHN HOUGH** - The first player to sign for his hometown club when it was reformed in 1997. An hooker who has signed a contract to take him to the end of the 2007 season, which will allow him to complete 10 years with the club.

Signed from Warrington Wolves, he can also play at loose-forward and is excellent at acting half-back.

**JAMES KIRKLAND** - Ex Oldham academy. A young hooker who should go far in the game. Former Waterhead Junior and Wigan Warrior student. A tough tackler and excellent acting half-back.

**CHRIS MAYE** - A 21 year-old second-row or centre signed from Swinton Lions for the 2006 season. Started his pro career at Wigan Warriors before moving to St Helens where he was on the verge of being selected for the England Academy side, but was thwarted by a wrist injury. Had a loan spell at Halifax where he gained Super League experience.

**DANNY NANYN** - Injury brought to a halt this young prop's impressive start to the 2005 season, but then managed to pick up where he left-off. Started well against Rochdale Hornets last week.

**CHRIS PERCIVAL** - Just returned to Oldham after a spell on-loan at the end

of 2003. He played for Leigh Centurions for two seasons. A quick three-quarter who scored 20 tries in 20 games in his first season with Leigh but missed out in 2005 with a broken leg. Will be seeking to rekindle his try scoring feats this year.

**MICK REDFORD** - Signed for the Roughyeds during the close-season from Blackpool Panthers. Originally from the Leigh East amateur club, has also played for Chorley Lynx. Was a crowd-pleaser at Blackpool where he played prop, second-row or centre.

**MARK ROBERTS** - Joined Oldham on loan from Warrington Wolves towards the end of the 2004 season. Initially used as a centre, where he can display a turn of pace. Also has sufficient upper-body strength to enhance the back-row of the pack.

After an injury plagued season in 2005 is keen to put things right in 2006.

**SIMON SVABIC** - Footballing half-back who made a huge impact for the Roughyeds in the second half of the 2005 season at loose-forward. Former Oldham Bear, Salford and Leigh player.

**ALEX WILKINSON** - Local born Alex, toured with Great Britain schoolboys to Australia in 1999 and with the England Academy to New Zealand and Australia in 2001. Had a loan spell with Hull F.C. where he impressed the Humberside high-flyers sufficiently for them to offer him a two year contract. Alex decided he wanted to complete his degree and when part-time rugby was the right option he chose his hometown club. Can play both centre and wing.

**LEE WINGFIELD** - 24 year-old second-row signed from amateur club Leigh Easts. He has been selected for the BARLA Great Britain team for three successive seasons, and toured both Australia and Russia. Signed a two year contract that commences with the start of the 2006 campaign.

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- Acknowledgement in every Match Day programme for the 2006 season.
- A personal letter of thanks from the Head Coach Darren Abram
- Signed AWAY shirt presented at the end of the season.

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**Paul Anderson** (SECOND ROW / CENTRE); Spent the 2005 season bravely fighting his way back from a career threatening knee injury. There were signs at the end of the season that Paul is quite capable of making a full recovery and once more becoming a regular performer. Previous clubs include Leigh, Oldham, St Helens and Sheffield.

**Rob Ball** (PROP); Rob found the consistent level of performance he was looking for during the 2005 season and became first choice prop in the Hornets front row. His no nonsense approach was appreciated by the Hornets fans and his experience was vital at certain times of the season. Rob is another no nonsense model professional. He made 22 appearances in 2005. Previous clubs are Wigan and Leigh.

**Ryan Benjafield** (PROP); Ryan is in his second spell in England having previously played for Hull F.C. and York City Knights. He has been playing in Australia for Asquith Magpies in the Jim Beam Cup but was keen to have another go in England. Can either play in the front or back row and comes very highly rated by the Coaches at both his previous English Clubs.

**James Bunyan** (CENTRE / SECOND ROW); Another player in his second spell at the club after playing the last couple of seasons at Halifax, this was after spending a short but unhappy spell at Oldham. One of James's great assets is his versatility being at home at either centre or back row. James is renowned for his tough tackling and strong running and has always had a good tries to games ratio. James is another player on his way back to full fitness after having closed season surgery. Previous clubs include Doncaster and Huddersfield.

**Sam Butterworth** (STAND OFF); Rochdale born Sam is certain to continue his love affair with Hornets supporters in 2006 having enjoyed a highly successful 2005 season scoring some brilliant tries and displaying excellent individual skills. Sam's pace is electric and he is always willing to try the unorthodox and has pulled Hornets out of many a sticky situation. Sam is now in his third season at the Club and is enjoying every minute

of it. For the record Sam scored 9 tries in 2005.

**Chris Campbell** (WING); Chris has been a consistent performer since joining the Club in 2004. His electric pace always puts him amongst Hornets leading scorers every season and last year he scored 14 in 22 appearances. He previously had spells with Oldham and Whitehaven.

**Phil Cantillon** (HOOKER); Phil showed during the latter stages of the 2005 season that he has not lost his electric pace and quick thinking that have been his trademarks over the years. Hornets fans will be quick to remember his match winning performance off the bench at Doncaster that turned a remarkable game in our favour. He is an Irish International having captained the side in 2004. Phil made 19 appearances in 2005 scoring 12 tries. His previous clubs include Widnes, Keighley and Halifax.

**Dave Cunliffe** (CENTRE / SECOND ROW); David has certainly enjoyed variety during his sporting career, starting off as a Professional Football player then turning to Rugby Union with Liverpool St Helens before turning to Rugby League. A powerful player David has the versatility of being able to play either in the Back row or at Centre. Dave was another player who didn't really enjoy the best of fitness in 2005 but after a good pre-season under his belt he will no doubt soon rediscover the performance that made him one of the stand players of 2004.

**Lee Doran** (SECOND ROW); Lee was voted the Club's player of the year at the end of last season, an award he richly deserved and in doing so quickly became a firm fans' favourite. He frequently busted the opposition's line, with his trademark line breaking busts. Lee was also a solid performer in defence frequently topping the tackle count. He made 28 appearances in 2005 scoring 6 tries. His previous club was Oldham.

**Phil Farrell** (LOOSE FORWARD); Phil was plagued with a knee injury during the 2005 season which he will now hoping to have fully recovered from. A tough back row forward with an exceptional work rate Phil leads from the front at all times and is

a very constructive leader both on and off the pitch. He made 21 appearances in 2005. Phil joined from Oldham in December 2004 having previously played for his hometown club Wigan Warriors.

**Matty Firth** (SCRUM HALF); Matt opted for a move to National League one after enjoying a hugely successful 2005 season with Keighley Cougars. Matt will be hoping to make an immediate impact due to the injury to Lee Sanderson. A classy half back Matt has a great kicking game and scores his fair share of tries. Matt came to Hornets via Keighley, Halifax and Wakefield. In 2005 Matt scored 4 tries in 23 matches for Keighley.

**Chris Giles** (FULL BACK / WING) A real stand out performer for Hornets during 2005 at either Full Back or on the Wing. In certain matches Chris's Super League experience proved invaluable and was a model of consistency. Chris scored some vital tries in the last campaign and will be looking to improve his tally in 2006. For the record he made 27 appearances in 2005 scoring a total of 6 tries. Played Super League for Widnes in 2004.

**Tommy Golden** (LOOSE FORWARD); Joined Hornets in the latter part of the 2005 season from Leigh Miners Rangers amateur side. He captained his side with distinction for many years and was also part of a very successful Great Britain amateur set up touring Australia on more than one occasion. Has come to Hornets with the reputation of being one of the toughest players around and showed immense promise in the limited appearances he made towards the end of last season.

**Andy Gorski** (SECOND ROW); A model professional and a totally consistent performer since his move from Salford City Reds. Andy always leads from the front and is Mr Reliable. His trademark breaks and tough tackling were very evident last season and his performances were recognised in the Club's end of season awards. He scored a very valuable 13 tries in 28 appearances in 2005.

**John Hill** (PROP); After signing from Blackpool in May 2005 John made a

# ROCHDALE HORNETS PLAYING SQUAD CONTINUED

disastrous start to his Hornets career by getting dismissed five minutes into his debut at Featherstone. After that blip John had a really successful season and was a top performer in the Hornets pack. Used mainly off the bench John always had an impact and will again be a major component in the Hornets pack in 2006. John made 12 appearances in 2005

**Casey Mayberry (WING);** In his second spell at Hornets having previously served Halifax twice and Hull KR. Casey's first spell at the club was interrupted by injury and he will be hoping for an injury free 2006. Casey has got pace to burn and will for sure be amongst the division's leading try scorers if he stays injury free. Casey's tries always seem to be of the spectacular variety and Hornets fans will be looking forward to tries such as the one against Workington during the 2003 season.

**Dave McConnell (HOOKER);** Another of Hornets top performers in 2005 after signing in the close season from Leigh. David's work rate is exceptional and is at the hub of most of Hornets attacking play. A very versatile player Dave can play Hooker, back row of half back... Dave made 25 appearances in 2005 scoring 10 tries. David is a full Scottish international.

**Mark McCully (CENTRE);** Another player who enjoyed a really successful 2005 season topping Hornets points scoring chart in the process. Mark also had a very successful season with the kicking boot and was amongst the leading kickers in National League one. In 2005 Mark made 26 appearances scoring 13 tries and 71 goals for a total of 194 points. Mark launched his career at St Helens before moving onto Chorley and then Leigh.

**Paul Norman (PROP)** Paul signed for Hornets from Local rivals Oldham in December 2005. Regarded as one of the most consistent front row forwards in National League one with a huge work rate ethic. A very experienced campaigner Paul's other clubs include Leigh. His tough tackling style and his willingness to do the "hard yards" will quickly make him a fans' favourite.

**Paul Owen (FULL BACK)** Paul will be hoping for a better 2006 after spending the majority of time sidelined in the 2005 season with a foot injury. He is in his second spell at Hornets after having a brief spell away from the club in 2004 at Hull KR. He will be hoping to recapture the form he showed in his first spell at the Club where he was generally regarded as

the best Full Back at National League one level. Paul started his career at Leeds before moving onto Keighley.

**Lee Patterson (CENTRE);** Lee was Swinton's top try scorer in 2005 so it was another coup for Hornets when he signed for the Club in November 2005 having previously been at St Helens and Chorley. Lee's pace and running style is sure to make him a fans' favourite at Hornets and the Club will be hoping he can repeat his try scoring feats this year. For the record Lee scored 21 tries for Swinton last term and he was a nominee for the National League Two Player of the year award.

**John Pickersgill (PROP);** Another of Hornets major moves of the close season when they prised John away from Warrington Wolves. He is a player that Wolves boss Cullen believes will have a major impact on the game in years to come. John is battling his way back to full fitness after having a close season operation and will be hoping to make a huge impact in the second half of the 2006 season.

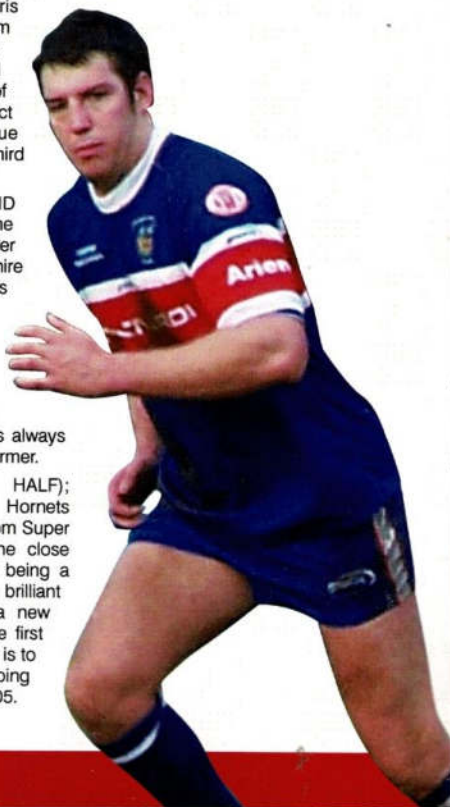
**Kris Ratcliffe (LOOSE FORWARD);** Spent the early part of 2005 on loan to Blackpool which gave Kris some much needed first team experience that helped him to make a really successful contribution to Hornets' end of season run in. Kris was a product of the Student Rugby League network. Kris is now in his third season at Hornets.

**Craig Robinson (SECOND ROW);** Hornets snatched the young second rower from under the noses of a host of Yorkshire teams all after his signature. He is the product of Wakefield's academy and has already played at Super League level. Was spotted by Darren Abram playing for the Wakefield academy a number of times against Leigh and was always recognised as a stand out performer.

**Lee Sanderson (SCRUM HALF);** Eyebrows were raised when Hornets secured the signature of Lee from Super League Club Harlequins in the close season. Lee is recognised as being a very talented Half Back with a brilliant kicking game that will add a new dimension to Hornets play. The first major battle Lee will have to win is to regain full fitness after under going constructive knee surgery in 2005.

**Matt Sturm (PROP);** the popular Kiwi prop forward was another massive close season signing for Hornets. His years of experience gained playing Super League will be vital to Hornets play-off push. There is no doubt that Matt will as ever be leading from the front as he has done all his career. Matt had a loan spell at Hornets in 2004. He has played Super League for Leigh, Warrington and Huddersfield.

**Richard Varkulis (CENTRE);** A major hit with all Hornets fans when he became the major close season signing of 2004 from Warrington Wolves having previously had a loan spell with the Club. His power and pace made him a formidable opponent for all teams in 2005 and he had a really consistent season. He scored 13 tries in 22 appearances and in doing so collected one of the Club's end of season awards



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Once again many thanks Rob for a job well done!  
Yours gratefully.

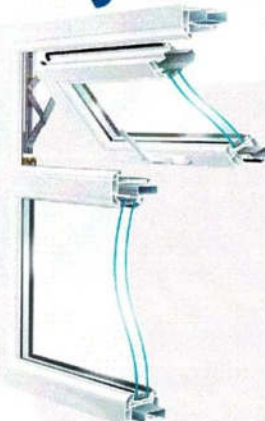
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Rochdale  
**Observer**



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| NAME             | PLAYED | SUB | TRIES | GOALS | DROP GOALS | POINTS |
|------------------|--------|-----|-------|-------|------------|--------|
| Paul Anderson    | 0      | 8   | 2     | 0     | 0          | 8      |
| Rob Ball         | 3      | 3   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Ryan Benjafield  | 7      | 3   | 2     | 0     | 0          | 8      |
| James Bunyan     | 4      | 1   | 2     | 0     | 0          | 8      |
| Sam Butterworth  | 2      | 2   | 3     | 4     | 0          | 20     |
| Chris Campbell   | 0      | 1   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Phil Cantillon   | 0      | 9   | 3     | 0     | 0          | 12     |
| Dave Cunliffe    | 0      | 1   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Lee Doran        | 6      | 0   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Phil Farrell     | 7      | 0   | 1     | 0     | 0          | 4      |
| Matty Firth      | 10     | 0   | 1     | 0     | 0          | 4      |
| Chris Giles      | 10     | 0   | 7     | 0     | 0          | 28     |
| Tommy Golden     | 10     | 0   | 4     | 0     | 0          | 16     |
| Andy Gorski      | 8      | 0   | 2     | 0     | 0          | 8      |
| John Hill        | 1      | 6   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Casey Mayberry   | 3      | 0   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Dave McConnell   | 10     | 0   | 6     | 0     | 0          | 24     |
| Mark McCully     | 10     | 0   | 5     | 38    | 0          | 96     |
| Paul Norman      | 0      | 1   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Paul Owen        | 10     | 0   | 1     | 0     | 0          | 4      |
| Lee Patterson    | 8      | 1   | 6     | 0     | 0          | 24     |
| Kris Ratcliffe   | 0      | 1   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Craig Robinson   | 1      | 7   | 1     | 0     | 0          | 4      |
| Lee Sanderson    | 1      | 1   | 1     | 0     | 0          | 4      |
| Matt Sturm       | 9      | 0   | 0     | 0     | 0          | 0      |
| Richard Varkulis | 9      | 0   | 7     | 0     | 0          | 28     |
| Danny Wood       | 1      | 0   | 0     | 1     | 0          | 2      |

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# COMMERCIAL DIRECTORS UPDATE FORTHCOMING EVENTS AND UPDATES

A very warm welcome to all our supporters also to players, directors and supporters of our guests today of local rivals Oldham Roughyeds.

**R**ochdale Hornets are delighted to have a fully sponsored programme for today's Good Friday clash. We welcome back as Main Match Sponsors, Mark Wynn Fabrications. We are pleased to welcome the Broadfield Hotel who are sponsoring their first match as Associate Match Sponsors. We also have a new name as Match Ball Sponsors Meadows Care. Finally we welcome back Recruitment Solutions (North West) who are today's Champagne Moment Sponsor. We hope that all our sponsors have a terrific day and enjoy the hospitality.

Hornets, are also delighted to welcome the Mayor and Mayoress of Rochdale, Councillor Ashley Dearnley and Councillor Beryl Wright. We hope that they enjoy the pre-match build up and a cracking game.

As always we also thank our invaluable sponsors, supporters and volunteers – we wouldn't have a club without you!

### NEXT HOME MATCH HORNETS V YORK 30th APRIL 2006

We currently have sponsorship opportunities for this match; we are still in need of an Associate Match and Champagne Moment Sponsor. We are also in need of a Mascot for the match.

For further details or to book your place for pre-match dining please call Karen or Sheila on 01706 712388.

### LEEDS V HORNETS – 19th MAY 2006

We are currently consulting with Leeds re a package that will include Match Ticket, Programme, Food and Travel. Please see the Rochdale Observer for further details.

For those supporters making their own way to the match please remember that you can take advantage of discounted prices by purchasing your ticket early from the club shop. The shop will be open on match days and Saturday morning.

### ANNUAL PONTEFRACT RACE TRIP 21st JULY

Further details will follow in the next programme – places are already being booked – don't miss out!!

*Karen*

Karen Reynolds Commercial Director

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TODAY'S  
MASCOTS

NICO  
VANDENBERG



DOB: 15th September 1992  
His hobbies are playing rugby, rock music, playing the guitar, skateboarding and bmxing  
His favourite player is John Hill  
He goes to Claverham Community College in Battle  
Whilst he lives in the south he is a rugby league fan and supports Rochdale Hornets whenever he visits.

MATTHEW  
COLLINS



DOB: 27th September 1993  
His hobbies are swimming, playing rugby, and playing on his PS2  
His favourite player is Andy Gorski  
He goes to St Cuthbert's

Have a great day from all of us at Rochdale Hornets

# Junior Hornets

Good afternoon Kids, welcome to today's game against Oldham Roughyeds. Let's start with the answers from last time.

## CHALLENGE CUP TRIVIA

The three venues used to host the Challenge Cup final since 2000 were:

- Murrayfield (Edinburgh)
- Twickenham (London)
- Millennium Stadium (Cardiff)

The teams who took part in the finals were:

- Bradford Bulls
- Leeds Rhinos
- St Helens
- Wigan Warriors
- Hull FC

## EASTER MESSAGE

Unscramble the tiles to reveal a message.

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| CHD | AT | HO  | ALL | EAS | OM |     |     |

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## Unscramble the club motto

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| NW | OR | O | D | NE | WA | TS | H | AR | RD |
| ON |    |   |   |    |    |    |   |    |    |

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## ON A RUGBY LEAGUE CRUSADE



**Rugby League can be justifiably proud of the fact it has always been an inclusive sport.**

**N**o matter what background, nationality, race or religion players have always been judged first and last on their ability on the field.

Years before England had even selected a black soccer player Great Britain Rugby League had already had a black captain in Clive Sullivan. In Ikram Butt, Rugby League created another first when a person of Asian decent represented England at our sport. A feat soccer has yet to match and Rugby Union with its Old School network probably never will.

Another small but not insignificant first for Rugby League came when Christopher Foster played for Thatto Heath under 7's.

Nothing unusual in that apart from the fact Christopher has the condition of Downs Syndrome.

Christopher eight, plays in an under-7 team because his disability means he is too small to play with boys his own age.

The youngster, known as CJ, is a member of Thatto Heath Crusaders in St Helen's, Merseyside.

He trains twice a week and plays a competitive league game every Sunday. So far, the Crusaders are unbeaten this season.

His father John had to enrol him with the British Amateur Rugby League Association - making Christopher the first Down's syndrome child to be allowed to play the sport.

The Down's syndrome Association believes he

is the first child in the world with the condition to play either Rugby.

A proud Mr Foster said "There are a lot of stereotypes about Down's syndrome that sufferers are weighty and lazy. But Christopher bucks the trend as he is quite athletic, muscular and blessed with energy."

Coach Paul Bretherton added "Rugby League is not for the faint-hearted, yet he throws himself into it."

To carry on the first theme, who said they only play Rugby League "oop north"?

The Royal Air Force rugby league team are to make a ground-breaking visit to play the Russian Space Forces.

The game will be played in Krasnoznamensk, 40km west of Moscow, on April 12 to help celebrate Cosmonaut Day and the 45th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin becoming the first man in space.

Krasnoznamensk, home to Russia's missile defence and space research facility, is a closed city, with access to westerners normally denied.

"It is the first time that any British military sports team has travelled from the UK with the sole purpose of playing a Russian military team," said Fit Lt Mark Fothergill.

*Mark*



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# THE VIEW FROM ROW Z

Despite the return to cold, wet and even snowy British weather, it's good to be back from our Australian Rugby League Odyssey.

**T**he hail storm at Doncaster on Sunday was about as far removed as it's possible to get from our previous game - sitting on the hill at Leichardt Oval in 30 degree sunshine watching NRL wonder boy Benji Marshall steer Clive's beloved Wests Tigers to an unconvincing win over a Melbourne Storm side that would have struggled to take a draw out of Mayfield.

In fact we commented that the standard of RL over in Oz didn't seem to be as good this time. Whether that's because it's early days of the season, we don't know, but having suffered the clueless snooze-athon of Illawarra St George v Souths at Telstra Stadium, it was good to see - and feel - the passion of Hornets at Belle View.

One highlight of the Oz Trip was finally seeing our team down-under - the Newtown Jets - win a game. On the last two occasions I've seen them throw away a lead to lose in the last five minutes and throw a way a lead to see them scramble a draw courtesy of a missed last-kick conversion attempt by Parramatta. Sound eerily familiar?

As it was, we saw the Bluebags run home impressive winners against Canberra Raiders in

the Premier League (the second tier of competition in NSW), with the Roosters new UK signing mark Edmonson turning out for Newtown as part of their strategic development link with the Bondi Junction club. It was quite an emotional afternoon.

The week after the great win against Canberra, a hardy band of Jets fans made the trip to Brookvale Oval to see the Jets play Manly. Needless to say, they were thrashed out of sight in the first half, but mounted a remarkable comeback in the second only to fall short. If they'd played for another hour, they might have won it!

There's no doubt that the attitude and 'feel' of this venerable club - the first RL club established in Australia's foundation year of 1908 - does provide Hornets fans with a 'spiritual home' down-under. And there's already a path to Newtown's Henson Park well trodden by a succession of Rochdale Hornets on tour. When I visited the club shop, the office manager asked "You're not from Rochdale are you?" Indeed, the Sydney Branch of the Hornets Supporters Association was founded by Newtown supporters who recognise the importance of our respective battling clubs, both in the history and the future of our respective competitions.

It is strange having found 'another' team to support, but - like Hornets - Newtown are a battling foundation club that has struggled back from the brink of extinction. And, as the Jets continue to work hard to build strong links with its surrounding community in Sydney's inner West, they provide an inspirational template for developments here at our own club.



If you have any news, comments or opinions that you'd like to see in future programmes, please email [jim@rochdalehornets.com](mailto:jim@rochdalehornets.com) with your articles. Enjoy the game.

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## NATIONAL LEAGUE TALK

with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



### FIRST DAY LESSONS

AFTER an intriguing first round of LHF Healthplan National League fixtures, what have we learnt ahead of the rest of the season?

We've learnt that maybe the bookies were right (no real surprise there then) when they installed Welsh newcomers Celtic Crusaders as second favourite for the NL2 title.

On their league debut, the Crusaders comprehensively beat Workington Town 50-18 at Derwent Park, with Aussie Tony Duggan grabbing a hat trick of tries.

If that doesn't send out a message to the rest of the competition, then little else will.

We learnt that London Skolars will be nobody's easy beats – they pushed title favourites Dewsbury Rams all the way before going down to a 30-34 defeat.

Elsewhere in NL2, Barrow Raiders showed that their eye catching Northern Rail Cup form was no fluke, almost snatching a shock victory at highly-fancied Swinton Lions, who eventually prevailed 22-20.

And Featherstone fought out a tough battle with Gateshead Thunder to win 36-24.

In National League One, we learnt that Rochdale Hornets' status as possible underdogs looks well placed – they recorded the result of the round by thrashing Doncaster Lakers 44-0 at Belle Vue.

The defeat was a major disappointment for the Lakers, who presented their new pre-match

entertainment programme to supporters before kick-off.

But Tony Miller's side simply could not break down the Rochdale defence, the meanest in the National Leagues to date.

Hull KR have been similarly solid in that department, and were far too strong for injury-hit Oldham, the Robins winning 48-8 at Boundary Park.

We also learnt that newly promoted York City Knights are ready for the challenge of NL1 – they led big guns Widnes Vikings in the second half before falling to a creditable 25-18 loss.

Favourites Leigh fought off the challenge of Halifax at the Shay, Paul Rowley scoring two tries against his former club in a 30-10 win.

And another hooker played a key role at the Recreation Ground, where Carl Sice's two tries were crucial in a gritty 26-8 win for Whitehaven against improving Batley.

So plenty to reflect on then. And the Easter weekend will provide an even greater insight, as the predominantly part-time teams prepare for the challenge of two games in the space of four days.

It promises to produce more fascinating action.

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# Rugby Talk

**Danny Lockwood**

Publisher, League Weekly

I'VE just been onto the Met Office for the long range weather forecast. They told me with complete confidence that there's going to be a long hot, sunny, dry spell. Unfortunately I'm not planning a fortnight in the Sahara (and knowing their record, I'm half inclined to go open an umbrella stall in Timbuktu market).

I explained that my concerns were about 'summer' rugby, and when could we expect to go to a match without needing to daub our exposed skin surfaces in seal grease, as those intrepid cross-Channel swimmers are wont to do.

"I'm fully expecting a solid fortnight of hot sunshine in June," replied the girl. Don't tell me, said I, you've booked two weeks half board in Ibiza. "Yeah. Good eh?"

So what advice can you give Paul Sculthorpe, who's keen to start wearing moulded studs on his plates of meat, instead of a pair of waders?

"Is that the fit bloke on the Gillette adverts? Well he can work up a sweat tackling me if he wants. He can even keep his waders on if that twangs his hamstrings."

Yes, thank you, very helpful. But what about the British weather? Those of our finely tuned athletes who haven't already had a knee rebuilt are either suffering from mildew or mild pneumonia. Half time oranges and a cooling Powerade drink? A warm cup of Lemsip and a packet of Tunes more like. Come on darling, you're the Met Office, what's happening with the flaming British weather?

"It's the global warming." Oh, that's why we're freezing our tootsies off in the middle of April? Why players are getting headaches from being hit by hailstones the size of marbles? Because of global warming? "That's right."

But our sport is all about people watching the game on warm, balmy afternoons, and players running about on lush turf and grass. What should we do?

"Well, winters are getting much, much milder these days. We've had our driest December and January since before Maurice Lindsay learned to tick-tack. Have you thought of switching your season...?"

GREAT Britain are going to have a tough time in the Tri-Nations. If Brian Noble wanted a break in the middle of the programme it meant going straight into the first test match without any time to get over jet-lag. They are going to be flip-flopping across the Tasman every week. Short of basing the competition completely around Sydney that too takes some getting round. Noble won't make excuses and, being true Brits, neither should we. It's because of Richard Lewis and GB that it's happening at all. If there are rugby Gods up there, the Lions really do deserve a break this time.



## RFL BENEVOLENT FUND



The Rugby League Benevolent Fund is a charitable trust to support players whose lives are affected by serious injuries sustained while playing Rugby League.

The Fund will seek to generate income from a number of sources such as the President's Ball which was re-introduced in 2005. Significantly, it will also receive £1 from every ticket sold for all future Powergen Challenge Cup Finals and engage Super League Grand Finals from 2006 onwards.

In addition, every professional club and the Community Game has given its support to earmarking Easter as a major fund raising weekend for the Benevolent Fund.

Phil Clarke, Trustee and spokesman believes the Fund to be a most welcome development, stating,

"Although serious life-changing injuries are rare in Rugby League, it is critically important that any players who are affected receive the best support possible. The creation of the Fund will begin the process of delivering this".

Clarke added: "The family and community spirit which exists within Rugby League will greatly assist the growth and development of the fund over the coming seasons and supporters attending the sport's major events can take satisfaction from the fact that they are contributing directly to this important initiative".

The Fund has already provided help and support to injured players in the form of assistance towards purchasing specially adapted cars, holidays, equipment at a Spinal Injuries Gym and also provides help and support to the families of seriously injured players in the form of accommodation and travel expenses.

## GIFT AID

Donations to the fund can be made by cheques payable to the Rugby League Benevolent Fund forwarded to the RFL headquarters at Red Hall, Leeds, LS17 8NB. Please Gift Aid your donations.

*giftaid it*

The Rugby League Benevolent Fund aims to support players whose lives are affected by serious injuries sustained while playing the game. You can help us further by making a donation and using Gift Aid.

Using Gift Aid means that for every pound you give, we get an extra 28 pence from the Inland Revenue, helping your donation go a little further. This means that £10 can be turned into £12.80 just so long as donations are made through Gift Aid. Imagine what a difference that could make, and it doesn't cost you a thing.

So if you want your donation to go further, Gift Aid it. Just complete this form and send it back to us.

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Surname

Address

Postcode

Date

I want the RFL Benevolent Fund to Gift Aid my enclosed donation of £

To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains must at least equal the amount we will claim in the tax year.

Please note that if you wish to cancel Gift Aid you should contact us within 30 days from the above date. After such date, all subsequent donations made will be treated as being subject to Gift Aid unless notified otherwise.

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The offer is open to new members of LHF joining before 31/12/2006. Applicants must be under 65 years of age. Terms and Conditions apply. Please contact us for full details. Promoter: LHF, Riverside House, Leeds.

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# FIXTURE LIST

NORTHERN RAIL CUP, POWERGEN CHALLENGE CUP & LHF HEALTHPLAN NATIONAL LEAGUE ONE 2006

| DATE    | OPPONENTS            | CUP/LEAGUE                       | VENUE | K. O.  | RESULT | W/L | ATT  |
|---------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------|--------|--------|-----|------|
| 12/2/06 | OLDHAM               | NORTHERN RAIL CUP                | H     | 3.00PM | 18-14  | W   | 969  |
| 19/2/06 | KEIGHLEY COUGARS     | NORTHERN RAIL CUP                | A     | 3.00PM | 18-46  | W   | 980  |
| 26/2/06 | HALIFAX              | NORTHERN RAIL CUP                | A     | 3.00PM | 12-16  | W   | 1427 |
| 12/3/06 | LEIGH MINERS         | POWERGEN CHALLENGE CUP (3RD RND) | A     | 3.00PM | 6-34   | W   | 810  |
| 19/3/06 | OLDHAM               | NORTHERN RAIL CUP                | A     | 3.00PM | 10-22  | W   | 756  |
| 22/3/06 | KEIGHLEY COUGARS     | NORTHERN RAIL CUP                | H     | 7.45PM | 32-16  | W   | 604  |
| 26/3/06 | HALIFAX              | NORTHERN RAIL CUP                | H     | 3.00PM | 16-6   | W   | 1016 |
| 1/4/06  | CELTIC CRUSADERS     | POWERGEN CHALLENGE CUP (4TH RND) | H     | 3.00PM | 32-8   | W   | 666  |
| 9/4/06  | DONCASTER LAKERS     | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM | 0-44   | W   | 1031 |
| 14/4/06 | OLDHAM               | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 17/4/06 | WHITEHAVEN           | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 30/4/06 | YORK CITY KNIGHTS    | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 14/5/06 | HALIFAX              | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 19/5/06 | LEEDS RHINOS         | POWERGEN CHALLENGE CUP           | A     | 8.00PM |        |     |      |
| 28/5/06 | WIDNES VIKINGS       | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 4/6/06  | WHITEHAVEN           | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 11/6/06 | LEIGH CENTURIONS     | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 25/6/06 | HULL KINGSTON ROVERS | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 2/7/06  | OLDHAM               | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 9/7/06  | BATLEY BULLDOGS      | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 23/7/06 | DONCASTER LAKERS     | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 30/7/06 | LEIGH CENTURIONS     | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 6/8/06  | WIDNES VIKINGS       | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 13/8/06 | HULL KINGSTON ROVERS | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 20/8/06 | HALIFAX              | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 3/9/06  | YORK CITY KNIGHTS    | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | A     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |
| 10/9/06 | BATLEY BULLDOGS      | LHF NATIONAL HEALTHPLAN LEAGUE 1 | H     | 3.00PM |        |     |      |

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