

game line-up

OLDHAM R.L.F.C

OLDHAM SQUAD	Played	WARRINGTON WOLVES SQUAD
PAUL ASHTON		1. STUART REARDON
CHRIS BAINES		2. HENRY FA'AFILI
JASON BOULTS		3. MARTIN GLEESON
GENO COSTIN		4. PAUL JOHNSON
ANDY CRABTREE		5. BRENT GROSE
ANDY GOREY		6. CHRIS BRIDGE
ALAN HADCROFT		7. LEE BRIERS
JOHN HOUGH		8. CHRIS LEIKVOLL
DREW HOUSTON		9. JON CLARKE
SIMEON HOYLE		10. PAUL RAUHIHI
GARETH LANGLEY		11. ADRIAN MORLEY
CRAIG LITTLER		12. BEN WESTWOOD
RICHARD MERVILL		13. VINNIE ANDERSON
PAUL O'CONNOR		14. MARK GLEESON
MARK OGDEN		15. ROB PARKER
STUART OLDHAM		16. PAUL WOOD
NEIL RODEN		17. MICHAEL SULLIVAN
WES ROGERS		18. RICHIE BARNETT
IAN SINFIELD		19. STEVE PICKERSGILL
KRIS SMITH		20. SIMON GRIX
MICHAEL STOUT		21. ANDY BRACEK
SAID TAMGHART		22. BEN HARRISON
ALEX WILKINSON		23. MIKE WAINWRIGHT
LEE WINGFIELD		24. CHRIS RILEY
		25. MIKE COOPER
		26. KEVIN PENNY

WARRINGTON

match officials

REFEREE: Ian Smith **TOUCH JUDGES:** A T Smith, C Neilson
4TH OFFICIAL: To be announced

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ROUGHYEDS



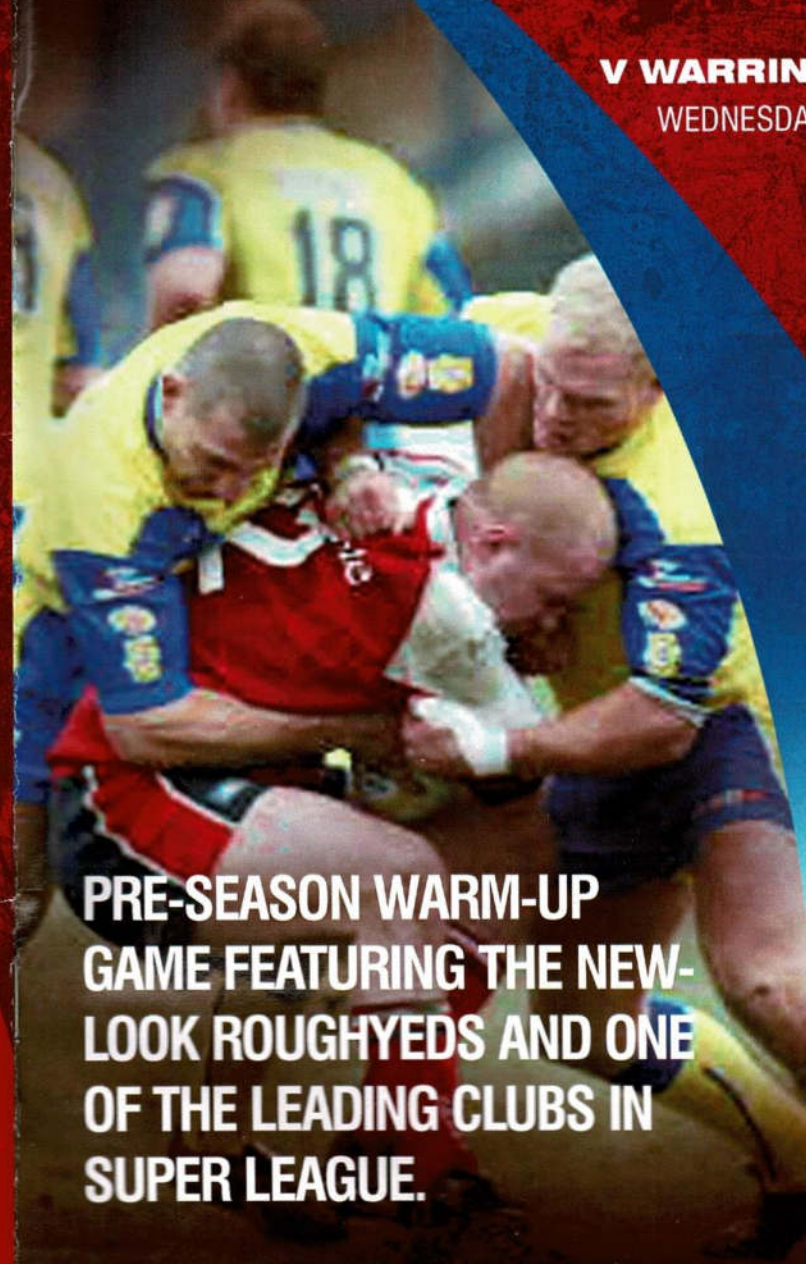
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MOST APPEARANCES: John Hough, 209 - Jan 1998 - September 2005

CONSECUTIVE APPEARANCES: Phil Farrel, 67 - *April 2nd 2000 - March 15th 2002

*John Hough was on the team for every match February 1st 1999 - April 16th 2001 (82)

TRIES IN A SEASON: Nick Johnson, 25 - 2004

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

TRIES IN MATCH: Mark Sibson v Wigan St. Judes, 4 - Feb 8th 2000 at Boundary Park

Mark Sibson v Queensbury, 4 - Jan 28th 2001 at Boundary Park

David Gibbons v Chorley Lynx, 4 - Jan 30th 2001 at Boundary Park

James Bunyan v Featherstone Rovers, 4 - Apr 12th 2004 at Boundary Park

GOALS IN A MATCH: Simon Svabic v Swinton Lions, 10 - Apr 6th 2003 at Boundary Park

POINTS IN A MATCH: Gareth Barber v Dewsbury Rams, 26 - Apr 2nd 2002 at Hurst Cross

(7 goals, 3 tries)

DROP GOALS IN A MATCH: Neil Roden v Workington Town, 2 - Dec 17th 2000 at Derwent Park

John Braddish v Hull KR, 2 - Dec 16th 2001 at New Craven Park

HIGHEST SCORE/WINNING MARGIN: v Yorks Wasps, 70-6 - Apr 1st 2001 at Huntington Stadium

v Queensbury (amt), 64-0 - Jan 28th 2001 RLCC 3rd Rnd at Boundary Park

The views expressed in this matchday magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the management and staff of Oldham RLFC (1997) Ltd.

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Mike Elliott 1962-79

Bob Irving 1964-74

Martin Murphy 1966-82

Terry Flanagan 1979-89

Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

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in the chair

with Chris Hamilton



Welcome to Boundary Park for our first game of the season.

We are delighted to welcome Super League opposition tonight in Warrington Wolves who I am sure will be among the leading contenders for trophies this year.

With the big names they have signed this close season added to an already impressive playing squad this will certainly be a big test for our players and in Paul Cullen they have a coach who will drive them on with his own desire to succeed.

A big thank you from myself and Sean must go to Simon Moran, who is the majority shareholder at Warrington, for helping to arrange this game for us which we hope will attract a crowd similar to the one we had last year against Leeds. The monies generated from this game (with Warrington not even claiming their expenses) are part of an RFL initiative to help National League Clubs and is one that we at Oldham are certainly behind.

Most of you will have read about Steve Deakin's unfortunate injury a fortnight ago and it just about sums things up when we are the only club who can manage to get a coach injured as well as players!

Seriously though, Steve has worked very hard to get the pre season training schedule right and to make the sessions as varied and beneficial as possible and hopefully we will see the first rewards from that in this game.

With a whole number of new players coming to the club during the close season this game will take on even more importance as the team looks to gel

and it will of course give all of us the first opportunity to see the players in an Oldham shirt for what we hope will be a successful season.

The group of players we have at the club now are hard working and we feel have the right blend of youth and experience to take the club forward after what was undoubtedly an horrendous season last time on the pitch.

Off the pitch the situation with the Crown authorities will have finally been completed as the final payment of £10,000 will have been made by kick off time tonight and I can think of no bigger incentive for us all to do well going into the start of a new season to have got the whole of the debt off our back ready for a new start.

To have got to this point is no mean feat - as people keep telling me - and we are, without question, the first club that has had to do this so we are full of optimism and despite the pressures we have faced we have worked hard with Steve Deakin over the last few months to assemble a squad that we feel can make an impression on National League two.

We would also like to place on record our thanks to all of you who have continued to support the club through these difficult times and rest assured that we continue to strive to try and get the club back to winning ways as soon as possible. Enjoy the game.

Chris

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deeks's coach approach

with Steve Deakin



I am delighted to welcome a leading Super League club like Warrington to Boundary Park tonight but, in truth, whatever happens over 80 minutes of rugby league football in this warm-up match to the season will give no indication whatsoever of where we are up to in terms of our preparation for the Northern Rail Cup and, more importantly, for NL2.

With 17 new players in our squad we are going to need seven or eight games before we can say we have gelled properly, so we must not make the mistake of reading too much into tonight's match, one way or the other.

What the game will do will provide us with an opportunity to work on some of the things we have been doing in training, as well as test our general fitness and skills levels against a team of full-time Super League professionals.

Such a high-quality side as the Wolves are going to get at least 50 per cent of the game. They will provide us with a good pre-season challenge and the lads are relishing it, but as I say let's not get carried away with the outcome whether it be a good night for us or one that we would have preferred to be a little different.

If we were to get a good result it wouldn't mean we were suddenly not far off being a Super League team; similarly, if things were to go the other way it wouldn't mean we couldn't be competitive in NL2.

You've only to look at what happened when Roughyeds played Leeds Rhinos in a similar game this time last year, and then look at what happened over the course of the NL1 season that ended in relegation to see what I mean.

So many players have been brought in --- and they are

good players, too --- that I can't honestly say what the best 13 will be at this stage. What I can say is that everyone has the chance to make a claim in an important season in which our objective has to be to win promotion from NL2 at the first attempt.

It isn't to beat Warrington in a pre-season game or even to do well in the Northern Rail Cup and then let it all go wrong after that. Our priority for this season is simple --- it is to win promotion to NL1.

Some people, I know, insist that we want to do well in the Northern Rail Cup, and you can count me among them. However, the objective that stretches before us is to get out of NL2 as quickly as possible and as a team and as a squad we will never lose sight of that.

Anyway, back to tonight. It's an opportunity for us to get combinations going and to see whether people are happy in certain roles. As I say, my lads are really looking forward to playing against some of the best players in the elite competition, and why shouldn't they?

I would like to use every member of the squad, but that will depend on what has been decided by Paul Cullen and I. Paul might have some different thoughts. Whatever has been decided you can guarantee that there will be a lot of players on the field, on both teams, who will want to make an impact with the start of the season proper just around the corner.

Warrington are expected to make a serious challenge for honours this year and with players on board like Adrian Morley, Paul Johnson and Vinny Anderson you can see why they are being tipped to do well.

At a different level, I am confident we can do well, too, and on behalf of the players and the club I would urge the rugby league followers of the town to get behind us in a very important season --- and stay behind us every inch of the way.

Enjoy the game,
Deaks

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with Ian Wilson

roughyeds'

roar!

Not surprisingly, over the years, Oldham and Warrington have clashed in many important and momentous games.

As we embark on a season in NL2, our opponents tonight are preparing for what they hope will be a further consolidation of their position as a regular Super League play-off side. What a contrast in fortunes! Perhaps, as we are reduced to meeting in a pre-season friendly such as tonight's, it is worth remembering one or two of those famous clashes when the two clubs were of equal status.

For this writer, in the modern era, the first great clash between Oldham and the club which was then universally known as Wire was in the championship final of 1955. We had finished second in the league table to Warrington, after 36 fixtures, only on points difference, although since we had lost to them in both regular games, we went into the final as underdogs. And, on a very heavy pitch, which was expected to nullify our potential advantages in terms of being committed to fast, open rugby, so it was to prove. An early try by the wizened Aussie flier Brian Bevan was matched by one by young scrum-half Frank Pitchford, but try as we might, we were unable to score again, and lost to 2 second-half penalty goals by Harry Bath. Of course, the disappointment was considerable - but at least there turned out to be the consolation of the championship victory over Hull two years later, the fiftieth anniversary of which we are celebrating on May 18 later this year. And no doubt the experience of the big occasion gained by such as Cracknell and Davies, and Winslade and Little, did no harm when it came to the successful final in 1957. The great thing about that side was the quality of attacking rugby that, under coach Griff

Jenkins, they never compromised; the approach may have cost one or two winning medals - but it was fantastic to watch.

My second major memory of Oldham v Warrington was also a losing one, and in many ways very much sadder. In 1986, the next top quality Oldham side, of Ashton, Foy, Worrall, Flanagan, etc., had in fact beaten Wire on the way to the tragic cup semi-final loss to Cas at Wigan; it was a fairly comfortable 13 - 6 score, with Des Foy and Mick Worrall getting the tries, and father Ashton making sure with a drop goal. Four years later, though, the outcome was not so happy. Oldham were by then in the Second Division, and on the way down towards our present predicament - even though with one or two better years in between. However, this was a fantastic season on the field - but yet again the Wembley hoodoo struck. No-one ever really denied that we were the better side when meeting Warrington in the semi-final of the cup - we had already beaten top side Widnes to get there - but it was a refereeing decision which finally put the nail in our coffin. Paul Lord touched down a Mick Ford kick, a planned move which had worked many times previously - but offside was ruled, and Warrington scored two late tries to deny us our final appearance by 10 points to 6. One wonders whether Oldham will ever come as close again! But it would be good to see Warrington at Wembley later this year.

You might have thought relegation would have reduced Oldham supporters to a state of doom and gloom and no doubt for some it did.

But four months on prospects look a lot brighter. Chris and Sean have worked wonders to pay off a £280,000 debt and the continued backing of sponsors old and new provides great encouragement for the season to come. Read through your programme to see who's backing Oldham and if you are able support them in turn. Meanwhile Chris and Roger Halstead have worked hard in launching the new Five Alive Lottery to generate funds which can be used to strengthen the team. Steve Deakin appears to have made some astute signings and has had the majority of his players in training for some time, something not possible at the start of the last two seasons. O.K. it's not going to be NL1 rugby but don't be fooled into thinking the standard will be poor. In recent years the Northern Rail Cup has demonstrated that NL2 clubs can defeat their supposedly superior brethren and I would go so far as to say that but for some clubs being fulltime the gap would not be all that great. As well as Oldham, Featherstone, Celtic Crusaders, York and Swinton have recruited heavily and will have to be taken seriously. So, all that's needed now is that those who profess to be Oldham rugby supporters get out in numbers to cheer their side on. Every entrance fee counts if we want to progress the club. With Latics putting a smile on more than a few faces perhaps 2007 is the year to begin the climb back to the top.

with Geoff Cooke

cooke-ability!



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THE MEN WHO CARRY ROUGHYEDS' HOPES AND AMBITIONS INTO 2007.

ASHTON, Paul (half-back): Son of former Watersheddings scrum-half star Ray Ashton, Paul is fulfilling a lifetime's ambition to play for his hometown club. Though born in Widnes, he was only a few months old when his parents moved to Oldham where his father carved out a career that earned him GB tour honours in 1984 during 212 club appearances which reaped him 72 tries.

Aged 27, Paul learned his trade at Saddleworth before playing for Halifax, Rochdale, Keighley and Swinton. He was in the Cougars side, with his new Roughyeds team mates Simeon Hoyle and Richard Mervill, that won promotion to NL1 in 2003.

He got his big chance at Oldham in 2006, initially on a week-to-week basis, and did enough to earn a full contract for 2007. Will be challenging for both half-back spots as he feels equally comfortable with both No 6 or No 7 on his back.

BAINES, Chris (back-row): A young forward who also did enough for coach Steve Deakin last year, while on loan from Warrington, to win a contract for 2007. He proved to be a good, hard-working forward in his first season with the Roughyeds and the experience he gained will serve him and the club well in NL2.

He was in his third season of under-21s rugby at Warrington when he first got the chance to move on loan to Roughyeds. He had three separate and continuous one-month loan spells and when the Wolves said they would release him he had no hesitation in grabbing the chance to commit himself to Oldham for the remainder of 2006 and then 2007.

A product of Chorley Panthers, where he played until he was 13, and then Wigan St Pats, he toured New Zealand with Great Britain Young Lions in 2003, also representing his country at youth level against Australia and France.

BOULTS, Jason (prop): One of many new boys in the Roughyeds squad for 2007, 23-year-old Jason arrived on the recommendation of two of his former Halifax team mates, Jamie Bloem and Alan Hadcroft.

Alan, already established here as one of coach Steve Deakin's senior men, wasted no time in tipping off the boss when he learned from Bloem that Boult was ready to leave The Shay to take up a new challenge.

At 16 stone and 6ft 2in, Jason can play his weight in the front-row, as he proved in his two seasons at Fax where he was an ever-present with 30 appearances in 2005 and then added 27 more in 2006 — statistics which show he is as durable as he is consistent.

Started off at Siddal under-16s, spent four years as a young pro with Bradford Bulls and signed for Halifax in November, 2004.

COSTIN, Geno (prop or back-row): A non-quota Aussie, 22-year-old Geno is in England for the first time and hoping to make an impact in NL2. Former Halifax stand-off Carl Briggs, lined up originally to become Gateshead Thunder's new coach, planned to take Geno to the North-East with him. When that move broke down, Briggs pointed Geno in Oldham's direction, much to the delight of coach Steve Deakin.

Geno first established himself in the Queensland Cup competition with Wynnum-Manly, alongside another Roughyeds recruit Mark Ogden, but last year played in the same comp for Logan Souths. Has long had a yearning to embark on an adventure to England and now that opportunity knocks he intend to make the most of it. Arrived in Oldham with his mate Mark Ogden on Boxing Day — just in time for his first training session on freezing Oldham Edge two days later.

CRABTREE, Andy (hooker): One of half a dozen players signed by Roughyeds from Swinton Lions for 2007, Andy is eager to fulfil the early promise that earned him not only a spot on the books of Wigan Warriors but also a place in a talented Great Britain academy side that boasted several players who have gone on to big things at the highest level.

At Swinton in 2006 he faced immense competition for the specialist No 9 role, but he made nine appearances, three starts and six off the bench.

A tidy footballer with good hands and a rugby brain, the youngster has the attributes to play loose-forward as well as hooker, but it is with No 9 on his back that he has accomplished most of his achievements so far. He can also kick goals.

GOREY, Andy (winger): A scrum-half in his Royton Tigers days, local lad Andy became a good full-back in the former Roughyeds academy side. He was under contract on the break-up of the academy side, but he pledged to fight for a place in the first team rather than go elsewhere.

In 2006 he became a fans' favourite with gutsy performances, capped off with a couple of length-of-the-field tries. Diminutive, but pacy, he established himself as a regular on the wing, making more than 20 appearances and taking his try tally into double figures to finish the season as the club's top try scorer.

Not many of last year's squad were offered new contracts, but Gorey was and he quickly put pen to paper as he looked to further develop his career with his hometown club.

HADCROFT, Alan (centre): Robust, and renowned for solid defence and strong running, 29-year-old Alan is also vastly experienced. He signed from Halifax for the 2006 season, but his campaign was marred by a series of shoulder injuries. He was the first player, not already on a longer contract, to sign for 2007, but then he dislocated his shoulder again in the final match of the season at Whitehaven.

While on the injured list earlier in the campaign, he served the club well as coach Steve Deakin's No 2, a position he may take up again if it is decided his playing days are over.

Earlier in his career he played many seasons for his hometown club, Leigh Centurions, and it was while he was at Hiltion Park that he represented the National League against the touring New Zealand 'A' side.

HOUGH, John (hooker): Cut 'Houghie' in two and you will find 'Roughyeds' running right through him. He was the first player to sign for the 'new' Roughyeds club when it was formed by Chris Hamilton and his fellow directors in the autumn of 1997, following the demise of Oldham Bears.

Currently two seasons into a three-year contract, 29-year-old Oldham-born John will have completed ten years with the club at the end of the 2007 season and will thus qualify for a testimonial.

A product of the Waterhead club, he signed for Warrington Wolves while still a boy, but he carved himself a niche in the history of the new Oldham club when he signed as a free agent on December 2, 1997.

It was the beginning of a long-term relationship in which John has played more than 230 games for the Roughyeds — most of them at hooker.

HOUSTON, Drew (second-row or centre): One of the two overseas quota men for 2007, 23-year-old Drew comes highly recommended by another new Roughyeds recruit, Simeon Hoyle.

Hoyle played in Australia in 2005 and liked what he saw of the Dapto pair, Houston and a former Keighley colleague Richard Mervill. Houston, once a youngster linked with Melbourne Storm, had two seasons with a Storm feeder club, Norths in the

Queensland Cup, before heading south for Dapto, champions of the Illawarra competition.

Drew comes to Oldham with a reputation as a good line runner and a big hitter on the edges of the rucks in defence.

He helped Dapto to the championship of the Illawarra competition last year and he also earned selection in the competition's representative side.

HOYLE, Simeon (hooker): Formerly with Keighley Cougars and Halifax, hooker Simeon was one of the first of the new boys to be signed up by Roughyeds for 2007. He is a hooker of the old school — a tough and industrious operator in defence while having enough know-how to make things happen from dummy half.

It was while he was at Keighley that, in 2003, he helped the Cougars to win promotion to NL1 from a third-place finish in the league. Sheffield, Chorley and Keighley finished neck and neck on 26 points, with Cougars third on points difference.

However, with Hoyle at hooker, Paul Ashton at stand-off and Richard Mervill on the bench, Cougars won through to the final, beating Sheffield 13-11 at Widnes with Hoyle winning the League Express man-of-the-match award.

He later headed Down Under for a spell before returning to Halifax, from where he opted to sign for the Roughyeds.

O'CONNOR, Paul (full-back): Had three games for Roughyeds while on loan from Widnes Vikings last season and made such an impression on coach Steve Deakin that the boss didn't hesitate to go for him again when he learned he might be available. His signing takes into account that he will miss June, July and August due to a pre-arranged trip to Australia and New Zealand.

A former Ireland and Great Britain international at Students' level, 22-year-old Paul spent two seasons with Widnes, his hometown club, operating mainly in the under-21s at full-back or on the wing.

He played his early rugby at Widnes Tigers and Widnes St Maries and later, while at university in Liverpool, he earned his Students' international honours, highlighted by his appearance for GF Students against Australia in 2004.

Pacy, and with an eye for a gap, Paul enjoyed his spell with Roughyeds last year and he went back to the Vikings only because he wanted 'one last go' at bidding to get into the Widnes first team.

He should be fit and ready for anything the rugby league world throws at him, given that away from his chosen sport he is a consultant for a company specialising in promoting and advising on health and lifestyle.

LANGLEY, Gareth (winger): Pacy, and a good finisher, 'Gaz' Langley comes to the Roughyeds after five years in one of the most professional learning and development schools in rugby league — the youth and academy set-up at St Helens.

Born in the well-known rugby league district of Parr, near St Helens, 22-year-old Gareth didn't take up the sport with Blackburn until he was 15. By the time he was 16 he was playing for Salford under-18s, having been headhunted by the then Salford academy coach Steve McCormack.

He wasn't on contract and it didn't take long for hometown St Helens to take him to Knowsley Road.

He was the Saints senior academy player of the year in 2005 and runner up to player of the year in 2006, a season in which he made his Super League debut in a young Saints side that took on Catalans Dragons in Perpignan.

LITTLER, Craig (centre): How appropriate that Littler comes next Langley in alphabetical order ...

for that's exactly how they have lined up, as centre and wing partners, in the Saints academy teams of the past four years. A year younger than 'Gaz' at 21, Craig was offered the chance to have another year at Knowsley Road, but he opted to sign for Roughyeds instead — and one of the reasons was that he could continue his partnership with Langley.

They are said to have built up a good partnership and a good understanding of each other's style of play — and Roughyeds boss Steve Deakin hopes they will put that understanding to good use in NL2.

A scorer of tries, as well as a try provider, Littler also played in France at Super League level for the Saints in the 2006 campaign.

He didn't rush into putting pen to paper for Oldham but, having sought advice from various quarters, he took the view that there was much to be gained from playing in NL2 under an experienced boss like Deaks.

MERVILL, Richard (prop): Formerly with Halifax and then Keighley, Richard comes to the Roughyeds for 2007 from Australia — a similar route to that taken by his former Cougars team mate, Simeon Hoyle.

Mervill played in the 2003 Keighley side that won promotion to NL1, alongside hooker Hoyle and stand-off Paul Ashton, and later jetted off Down Under, where he has been playing for Dapto in the Illawarra competition.

Hoyle, who had also played out there, alerted Roughyeds to the availability of both Mervill and his Dapto team mate Drew Houston and it was thanks largely to Hoyle that Oldham got their names on contracts.

Said to have a high work rate and a good offload, Mervill has experience of the game in both hemispheres and, with Wes Rogers and Jason Boult, he will provide much of the Roughyeds' go-forward from the front-row.

OGDEN, Mark (stand-off): A 23-year-old from Queensland, Mark also occupies a spot on the Roughyeds overseas quota. An accomplished play-maker, he is said to have the ability to guide the side around the park from outside-half.

He was in the Brisbane Broncos development squad as a teenager and in 2000, aged 17, he represented Queensland Schoolboys. Like his mate, Geno Costin, he represented Wynnum-Manly at various levels, building a reputation as a reliable goalkicker and a clever half-back in the modern mould.

As he worked his way up the Wynnum ladder, he picked up several awards as player of the year and leading points scorer, but last year he transferred to Logan Souths.

He has never previously been outside Queensland, so his move to Oldham is an adventure in every sense of the word.

OLDHAM, Stuart (winger): Formerly with St Helens and Swinton, Stuart has good pace and also has experience of the full-back position. While at Saints, he impressed the then academy coach Dave Rotherham, who spoke highly of him to Oldham boss Steve Deakin. He lives at Eccles and played his first serious rugby with Sedgley Park RU club before moving up the ladder in union with Liverpool St Helens.

From there, he was spotted by Saints and it was from Knowsley Road that he moved on to Swinton two years ago.

He comes with a reputation for producing excellent speed on the break with a good kick return — qualities that Oldham will need in NL2 if they are to challenge for promotion at the first time of asking.

RODEN, Neil (half-back): Neil has rejoined Roughyeds from Leigh after leaving the club initially

to go to Batley in 2004. In his first stint with Oldham, after joining from Wigan Academy, he amassed 290 points (68 tries and 18 drop goals) in 142 appearances over four and a half seasons.

No other player in the nine-year history of the 'new' Roughyeds club has tallied more tries than Roden, whose 68 pushed Mark Sibson (61) into second place.

Neil also has the distinction of having played for the Roughyeds in the 2001 Grand Final against Widnes at Spotland.

A competent and highly-skilled half-back, whether at No 6 or No 7, he shows all the know-how required for these two highly-specialised positions.

ROGERS, Wes (prop): At the age of 29 — and appointed as club captain for 2007 — Wes brings experience, a cool head and stability to Oldham's front-row. Oldham-born, he first played for the Roughyeds in the club's early days, but he returns, from Swinton, as a much more experienced and matured front-row forward, who is delighted to be coming back for a second chance with his hometown club.

On leaving the Roughyeds last time, he spent three years with Rochdale, followed by three more seasons with Swinton, and he is one of six ex-Lions who will be wearing Roughyeds colours in 2007, the others being Kris Smith, Stuart Oldham, Michael Stout, Andy Crabtree, and Ian Sinfield.

SINFIELD, Ian (back-row): Another vastly experienced forward who is returning to his hometown club. The brother of Leeds Rhinos captain, Kevin Sinfield, Ian played in the first ever Roughyeds game at Rochdale on New Year's Day, 1998. He had come initially on loan from Salford, but soon afterwards he was signed on a permanent basis, with Roughyeds paying out an undisclosed fee for his services.

'Sinny' had four seasons at Oldham, making more than 70 appearances, before moving to Rochdale, then to Keighley, and on to Swinton. While at Keighley he played in the NL2 Grand Final alongside Simeon Hoyle, Paul Ashton and Richard Mervill.

He was club captain for much of his time at Swinton Lions, for whom he appeared in his second NL2 Grand Final against Sheffield Eagles last October.

SMITH, Kris (back-row or centre): Another vastly-experienced player, this 28-year-old has been on the books of four Super League clubs, namely Leeds, Salford, London and Halifax. He has also played in France with Pia and Carpentras and it was while he was briefly at Carpentras that he was a club mate of the Roughyeds' new French signing, Said Tamghart.

He is a big man of 6ft 4in and 15 and a half stones and he has had brief experience of Super League with both London and Halifax. A product of the Eccles amateur club, he was snapped up by Leeds Rhinos while still a teenager.

He then moved to Salford where a knee injury hampered his progress. His French excursion followed before he returned to England to play with London and Halifax before enjoying a four-year stint with Swinton.

He showed his versatility with Swinton last season when he played 14 times in the second-row, five at loose-forward and once at stand-off, coming into prominence with outstanding displays in the second-row as the Lions beat Featherstone Rovers and Celtic Crusaders, both away, to earn their Grand Final appearance against Sheffield.

STOUT, Michael (second-row or centre): Another Roughyeds signing from Swinton, Michael has a good turn of speed for a forward and likes to use it while breaking wide out — a quality that also enables him to do a stint in the centre.

This Warrington-born school teacher played in the academy squads of both Warrington Wolves and Widnes Vikings before joining Swinton Lions a year ago. In his one season with the Lions he made 19 appearances and scored seven tries. He played four times at centre, once on the wing, four times in the second row, once at loose-forward and nine times as a substitute.

Swinton wanted to keep hold of him and made him an offer for 2007, but he chose instead to sign a one-year deal with the Roughyeds.

Like many other players brought to the Roughyeds this season by Steve Deakin, he will be regarded as a versatile player who can offer much to the squad and to the team in a variety of positions.

TAMGHART, Said (utility): The description 'utility' perhaps fails to do justice to this French international, who has represented his country at every level, including fully-fledged Test matches against Australia and New Zealand. He played prop against the Aussies and second-row against the Kiwis, but both he and coach Steve Deakin have confirmed that he can operate equally well at loose-forward and also in the backs at centre or wing.

On his way up the ladder to full French international honours, he played for Carpentras, Avignon and UTC (better known now as Perpignan-based Catalans Dragons) and it was while he was at UTC that he came under the wing of Deaks, who holds him in the highest regard.

He reached the pinnacle of his career two years ago when he played against Australia and New Zealand, but he has long had an ambition to play in England and he didn't hesitate to take the opportunity when Deaks invited him to come to Oldham.

WILKINSON, Alex (centre, wing): Oldham-born Alex played his early rugby with Royton Tigers and toured with GB schoolboys to Australia in 1999 and with England academy to New Zealand and Australia in 2001. Super League giants Bradford Bulls snapped him up and, while at Odsal, he had a loan spell with London Broncos, where he played six times in Super League. He then moved on loan to Huddersfield, where he added another 13 Super League games to his tally.

He played a similar number while on loan to Hull FC, who offered him a two-year contract. However, Alex wanted to complete his degree and with part-time rugby the only option he chose his hometown club.

Injuries dealt him some cruel blows in 2006, but Roughyeds didn't hesitate to offer him another deal for 2007 and he will hoping the New Year brings new luck.

WINGFIELD, Lee (second-row): This 24-year-old second-row forward, signed last year from amateurs Leigh East, can also operate equally well at centre. He won many honours in the amateur game and played on numerous occasions for Great Britain. He played against France and Russia in Russia in 2003 and kept his place for international appearances against France at Carcassonne and then for the return game at Whitehaven.

Perhaps the pinnacle of his achievements in the amateur game came in 2004 when he toured Australia with GB amateurs and played in every game. He signed a contract to cover 2006 and 2007 and he proved to be one of Oldham's top performers in the early part of the 2006 season until first a ban and then an injury at work kept him out of the side. Although he prefers to play in three pack, he has also operated well in the threequarters.

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A WEEKLY FLUTTER CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE

INCOME from our lotteries is vital to the future well-being of the club and we are encouraged to report that there has been a good response to our new Five Alive lottery while the longer-established Club Cash scheme is also holding up well.

More than 80 supporters have joined the £5-a-week Five Alive scheme which is now up and running successfully. We want to take the membership up to 100 as quickly as possible and we feel confident we will do that now that the season is about to start.

For those who are not familiar with Five Alive it works like this. The subscription is £5 a week (£260 per annum) and members are asked to pay by cheque (quarterly in advance) or by standing order (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly or annually).

A draw will be held monthly. The first prize is £500, the second prize is two places in the hospitality suite for the forthcoming home game and the third prize is a £25 voucher for the club shop.

In addition, each member will get a car park pass for the season; a club tie (for men); a voucher for the Tymbuktu beauty salon (for ladies); a mention in the match programme under the Five Alive heading; one place at four three-course lunches to be held throughout the year in the social club with guest speaker; use of the vice-presidents' lounge and pay bar at Boundary Park pre match and post match; and a ten per cent discount on sponsorship packages.

The first lunch, with referee Colin Morris as guest speaker, was successful and enjoyed by all --- and the next one will be on Friday, February 23.

We have had two monthly draws and all future draws will take place on the first Friday of each month. Results will be published in the local press and on the club's official website www.roughyeds.co.uk and all winners will

be informed in writing.

Starting with the programme for our opening Northern Rail Cup clash with Rochdale Hornets on Sunday, February 11, a full list of Five Alive subscribers will be published in each programme throughout the season and updated as and when appropriate.

Club Cash, at £1 a week, is also holding up well and we hope it will go from strength to strength on the back of a new prize structure which is now in place. The guaranteed weekly prizes stay the same, namely £300, £100 and five £10 prizes, but the jackpot accumulator of £50 each week has been replaced with a new set of prizes which we believe will prove extremely popular.

A jackpot draw will be held on the last Friday of each month and two prizes will be up for grabs --- a European holiday mini-break courtesy of Travelcare, Henshaw Street, Oldham and a meal for two at the Clayton Green, near Boundary Park.

In June we will offer a £500 voucher for Mann's Furniture Store; in July somebody will win a Dream Holiday courtesy of Travelcare; and in December there will be a £500 voucher, this time for Mann's Bed Store.

All this for a weekly flutter of £1. Again, you can pay by standing order periodically; by cheque; or even arrange for a collector to call on you fortnightly to pick up £2.

Please bear in mind that by joining one of these lotteries you are actively helping your club to achieve its goals and ambitions while at the same time having a bit of fun and a chance to win cash or other prizes.

For further information, or to join either of the lotteries, sound out a club official today or ring the Roughyeds on 0161 628 3677. Offices are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

OLDHAM RLFC

LOTTERIES

FLASHBACK...

DO YOU REMEMBER THE LAST TIME ROUGHYEDS PLAYED WARRINGTON WOLVES HERE AT BOUNDARY PARK?

It was a fifth-round Challenge Cup tie on March 14, 2004. Roughyeds had reached that stage of the competition by beating Castleford Panthers 16-8 and Sharlston Rovers 24-4, but they then drew the Wolves at Boundary Park and were beaten 44-10 in front of a crowd of 2,859.

Steve Ganson refereed the game and Oldham, who trailed 26-6 at half time, lined up like this:

Gavin Dodd; Will Cowell, James Bunyan, Jon Goddard, Nick Johnson; Neil Roden, Ian Watson; Steve Molloy, Keith Brennan, Paul Southern, Lee Doran, Dane Morgan, Lee Marsh. Subs: Gareth Barber, Simon Svabic, Martin Elsworth, Martin McLoughlin.

Of those, only Neil Roden is with the Roughyeds now and he has recently returned after two seasons away as a clear indication of the sweeping changes in the playing staff over the past two years.

Wingers Cowell and Johnson scored the Oldham tries and Lee Marsh kicked the

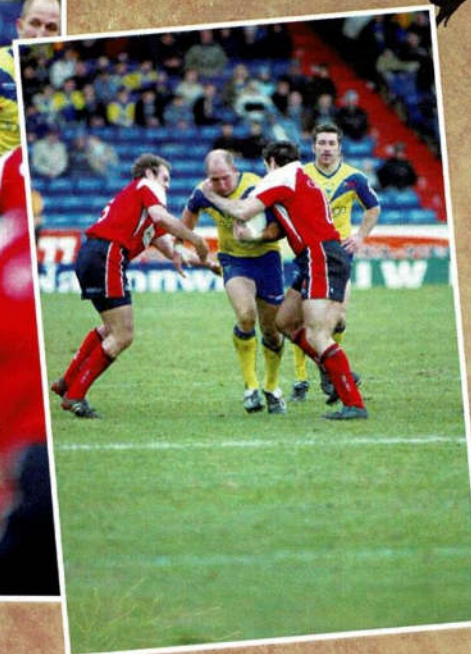
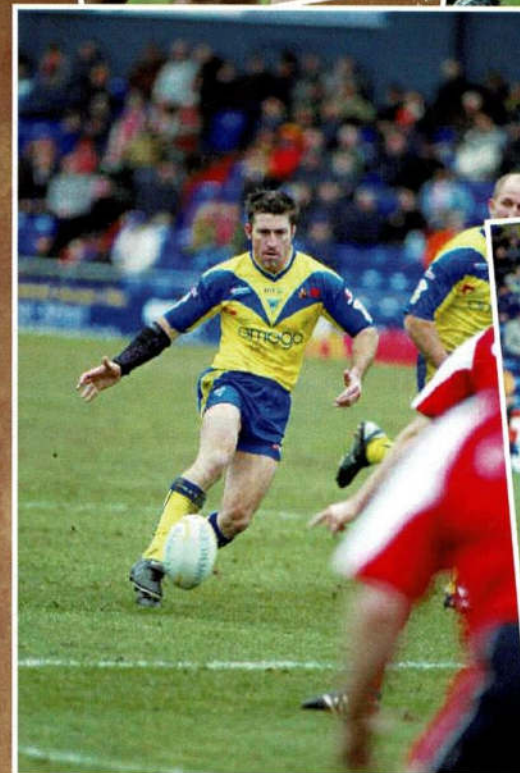
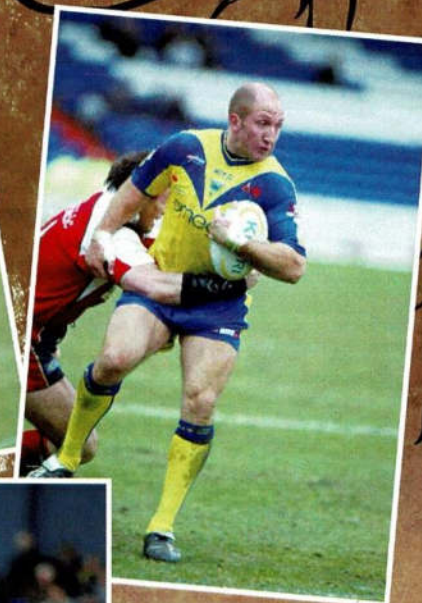
goal as the Roughyeds produced a spirited performance which resulted in the fans applauding them off the field at the end.

That season Roughyeds finished fourth, behind Leigh, Whitehaven and Hull KR, in what was then the LHF Healthplan NL1 with ever-present contributions from Lee Doran and Nick Johnson and 32 appearances from a possible 33 by Jon Goddard, Martin McLoughlin and Dane Morgan.

Johnson was top try scorer with 26, followed by Neil Roden (18) and Gavin Dodd and Lee Marsh, each with 15.

Goalkicking was shared by the briefly-returning Pat Rich (49), Simon Svabic (25), Lee Marsh (20), Jon Roper (20), Gareth Barber (18) and Ian Watson (7), with Rich, who made only 14 appearances, finishing top points scorer with 106, ahead of Johnson (104) and Lee Marsh (101).

The season ended in disappointment, however, with a 33-28 home defeat by high-placed Featherstone in the first round of the play-offs.



WOLVES



PEN PICS

STUART REARDON: Scored four tries in five Tests with Great Britain in 2004. Won the Harry Sunderland Trophy as Bradford's man of the match in the Super League Grand Final against Wigan in 2003 and in the following year broke into the Great Britain squad for the Tri-Nations series.

HENRY FA'AFILI: Kiwi international whose 22 tries in 2006 placed him fifth in the Super League scoring charts. Born in Samoa, he played for New Zealand Warriors before signing for the Wolves near the end of the 2004 season. Scored five tries in eight Tests for New Zealand after celebrating his recall by the Kiwis for last year's mid-season Test against GB.

MARTIN GLEESON: Most expensive signing in Warrington's history at a fee reported in the region of £250,000 from St Helens in July, 2004. A centre with 'class' written all over him, he has scored 68 tries in Super League and three more in his 16 Tests for GB.

PAUL JOHNSON: Hugely consistent and multi-talented, Paul had seven seasons with Wigan and three with Bradford before moving to the Wolves this year. Has 13 Test caps and will be remembered for his hat-trick for the Lions against New Zealand at Loftus Road in 2005.

BRENT GROSE: Has missed only a handful of games in four seasons at Warrington. Player of the season in 2005. Played for Cronulla and South Sydney before turning to England to become one of the most successful overseas imports of the Super League era.

CHRIS BRIDGE: Oldham born and a former Royton Tiger, Chris is set to start 2007 as the Wolves first-choice stand-off. Won the Dave Valentine Memorial Trophy as man of the match in Bradford's Senior Academy Grand Final defeat by Wigan in 2003. The Wolves paid £30,000 to take him to the Halliwell Jones Stadium in 2005.

LEE BRIERS: A class act, Lee is the Wolves captain and chief play-maker. A world-class tactical kicker with a creative brain and the skill to match, Lee made his international debut for Wales in 1998. Many reputable pundits question the wisdom of a Test selection policy which has seen one of the most accomplished all-round half-backs in Super League make only one Test appearance for Great Britain.

CHRIS LEIKVOLL: Made more than 100 first-grade appearances in Australia before

joining the Wolves for the 2004 season. A key member of the St George-Illawarra pack which finished runners-up in the 1999 NRL competition and played in the Grand Final at Stadium Australia.

JON CLARKE: Fighting back from a shoulder reconstruction, this specialist hooker came through the junior ranks at Wigan. Joined London Broncos in 2000, but returned north in 2001 when the Wolves were forced to sign a hooker on loan to solve an injury crisis. Made an immediate impact to earn a permanent deal at the club.

PAUL RAUHIHI: One of the world's top props, he joined Warrington from North Queensland Cowboys at the end of the 2005 season. His 2006 season was marred by injury. Also played for Melbourne Storm, Newcastle Knights and Canterbury Bulldogs, and won the Dally M prop-of-the-year award in 2004. Captained New Zealand in the Tri-Nations later that year.

ADRIAN MORLEY: Needs no introduction on either side of the RL-playing world. Six years in the NRL and the driving force behind the Roosters' pack that blasted the club into three consecutive Grand Finals between 2002 and 2004. It was a far cry from downtown Salford, where he grew up, and the Eccles amateur club. In 2005 he returned to the UK on a short-term contract with Bradford and the rest, as they say, is history.

BEN WESTWOOD: Wolves top tackler in 2006 with 718, he has been top tackler out of marker for the past two seasons. Joined the Wolves from Wakefield for £60,000 in 2002.

VINNIE ANDERSON: A £50,000 signing from St Helens. Wonderfully gifted, he made his NRL debut with New Zealand Warriors in 2002 and by 2003 he was celebrating his Test debut --- a win over Australia in Auckland. Paul Cullen will be using him as a ball-playing No 13.

MARK GLEESON: Younger brother of Martin. Made his England debut v France at Leeds in 2005. Usually comes off the bench to utilise his speed and up the tempo of the Warrington attack against tiring defences.

ROB PARKER: Contributed much in 2006 despite several injuries. Won Super League medals with Bradford in 2003 and 2005 and has appeared in several major finals.

PAUL WOOD: This mobile prop was Wolves player of the year in 2006, and is now on the verge of becoming a fully-fledged Test front-rower.

MICHAEL SULLIVAN: Former half-back, now settled at hooker. An Aussie with good skills and electric speed from dummy half.

RICHIE BARNETT: Quick winger, who numbers Huddersfield Giants, Gateshead and Hull FC among his former clubs. Superb runner with great balance.

STEVE PICKERSGILL: Played eight times in Super League last season and won the Senior Academy player of the year award. A rugged prop, and Warrington born.

SIMON GRIX: Made his long-awaited debut in 2006 after missing out in his first season at the Wolves due to a serious injury. Immediately looked a natural on the Super League stage.

ANDY BRACEK: Made 11 Super League appearances last year. Product of Leigh Miners, joined the Wolves from St Helens for £22,500 in 2005.

BEN HARRISON: A Cumbrian, from Barrow Island, Ben is an emerging prop or second-row. Has yet to make his Super League bow.

MIKE WAINWRIGHT: Earned a testimonial in 2006. Has carried the standard for Warrington rugby league for more than a decade. A fan of the club since he was a boy.

CHRIS RILEY: England Academy full-back who had a fine season at No 1 in 2006 for the Wolves Senior Academy side. Won the Wolfpack under-21 player of the year award.

MIKE COOPER: Three Super League appearances last year. Tough teenage front-rower who signed from local amateurs Latchford Albion.

KEVIN PENNY: Winger with express pace. Made his Super League debut v St Helens in the final home game of 2006. Wolfpack under-18 player of the year.



VIEW FROM THE WOLVES DEN

This will almost certainly be Warrington's last run-out before their mouth-watering Super League opener against derby rivals Wigan Warriors.

A planned run-out against Rochdale Hornets for a young Wolves side which would have been mainly built around under-21s and under-18s was postponed due to a waterlogged Spotland pitch. If everything has gone according to plan, Paul Cullen's men will have played Salford by now on returning from warm-weather training at Club La Santa in Lanzarote, so this evening's game will be an important one for the Wolves in terms of putting the final nuts and bolts into place before they go into battle in their Super League opener against the Warriors.

What a contest that promises to be --- and that's why head coach Cullen and his right-hand men will be keen to pick up plenty of positives from the performance their side puts on here at Boundary Park this evening.

One of those right-hand men, Gary Chambers, gave an insight into the Warrington mindset while Paul Cullen and the senior squad were sweating in the sun overseas.

Said assistant boss Gary: "The team Paul plays this evening will depend on several factors, among them how things went in the warm-weather training camp and in the match against Salford. Super League will soon be upon us and these games are very important to us as, indeed, they are to Oldham as well.

"It's been a long pre-season and in matches like we will see tonight you are looking for the coming together of everything you have been doing in the close season.

"You run some options, try out one or two things and look at how certain players perform. It would have been interesting to see how our young blokes went against a very good NL1 side like Rochdale, but the matches against Salford and Oldham are perhaps a different kettle of fish, given that we are now at the business end of the close season. Super League is

round the corner and it's all about getting some game time in and, for a lot of the players, staking a claim.

"We had the young lads in first for pre-season training, followed by the bulk of the squad about a month after that. The international lads, like Adrian Morley and Martin Gleeson, joined us a bit later and now we are coming towards the end of what has been a very good and intensive pre-season build-up.

"We like to think we will be really competitive this year and, to that end, Paul (Cullen) will be looking tonight at various plans, systems and strategies he would like to implement.

"As far as the attendance goes, I think we will have a good following of Wolves fans. They are hungry for rugby after the break and, like Oldham supporters, they know their rugby inside out. They'll turn up tonight, I'm sure."

Many pundits are tipping Wolves to be major contenders for honours, particularly so following their captures of Adrian Morley, Paul Johnson and Vinny Anderson.

Simon Grix will be out for 12 weeks or so after surgery, but the general feeling in Super League is that Warrington will be there or thereabouts when the 2007 honours list is compiled at the end of the year.

They really hit the headlines when they announced the signing of Great Britain star Morley, who has already made a massive impact in the Wolves camp.

"He is a champion bloke, a really nice guy, and he has loads of time for the young kids at the club," said Chambers. "Couple those things with a wealth of talent, experience and rugby league knowledge and you have a top player who is going to be make a big impact on the British game this year."

journalistic license

by Matthew Chambers

AS another season approaches and the juices begin to flow again in league folk, optimism around the country is at as high a level as it will reach all season.

At this stage, every team has the potential to be champions. It is a reverse of the old adage, with every game played out on paper.

Soon, though, it will be time to test out the bar-room theories for real.

Some supporters will have their hopes reinforced as their teams soar, others will have them dashed as they sink. Bring it on.

As far as Oldham are concerned, their chances of making a quick getaway from National League Two depend very much on how well a new-look team can bind itself together.

The play-offs should be within the grasp of the Roughyeds given a good run in terms of avoiding injuries. The most recent man to be struck down, coach Steve Deakin, will no doubt hope that his is the only ankle that will be compromised this year.

A clean bill of health will allow the more experienced men in the squad to bolster the team effectively, to which the added spice of the Australian and French contingent can hopefully provide a little of the 'X-Factor' that was missing last season.

Oldham players and officials have been careful not to talk up promotion chances too much for fear of imposing the burden of over-ripe expectation.

With the well-documented financial pressures still pressing hard, well-heeled clubs like Featherstone Rovers and Celtic Crusaders are the favourites to be battling it out at the top of NL2 come September — rightly so.

It goes without saying that a few wins would be very welcome, given the batterings endured by the Roughyeds over the course of the previous, traumatic season. Starting, ideally, with today's game.

But whatever happens over the next nine months, the bottom line is that Oldham supporters still have a team to cheer on.

* ON initial examination, the proposal by Featherstone Rovers to change the name of their home ground was slightly surreal.

The vast majority of stadium naming rights details follow a familiar template: company hands cash to club, club insists everyone start referring to their home ground as The Acme Industrial Cleaning Products Stadium.

In this case, though, garrulous Radio One DJ Chris Moyles was bestowed with the honour of having the old Post Office Road ground named after him with no cash changing hands.

Still, you can't put a price on publicity on this scale. Moyles' unique brand of comedy may not be to everyone's tastes but he is extremely popular.

Though the deal will serve to further inflate the Leeds man's ego, it will surely be of greater benefit to Featherstone Rovers than a few quid and half a pound of sausages per player from the local butchers would.

Clubs at National League Two level need all the exposure they can get. The brave, bold and imaginative step of getting Moyles on board is a great example of the sort of 'out of the box' mindset that struggling clubs can adopt to bring in a new audience.

Matthew



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2007 fixtures

DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
31/01/07	Warrington Wolves	Friendly	Home	7.45pm			
11/02/07	Rochdale Hornets	NRC	Home	3.00pm			
18/02/07	Swinton Lions	NRC	Home	3.00pm			
25/02/07	Dewsbury Rams	NRC	Away	3.00pm			
04/03/07	Rochdale Hornets	NRC	Away	3.00pm			
11/03/07	Carnegie Challenge Cup 3						
18/03/07	Dewsbury Rams	NRC	Home	3.00pm			
25/03/07	Swinton Lions	NRC	Away	3.00pm			
01/04/07	Carnegie Challenge Cup 4						
06/04/07	Featherstone Rovers	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
09/04/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Away	3.30pm			
15/04/07	Blackpool Panthers	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
22/04/07	NRC quarter finals						
29/04/07	Keighley Cougars	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
04/05/07	Celtic Crusaders	NL2	Away	7.30pm			
13/05/07	Swinton Lions	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
20/05/07	Barrow Raiders	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
26/05/07	London Skolars	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
03/06/07	Workington Town	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
10/06/07	York City Knights	NL2	Home*	3.00pm			
17/06/07	Featherstone Rovers	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
24/06/07	Keighley Cougars	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
01/07/07	Gateshead Thunder	NL2	Home*	3.00pm			
08/07/07	Swinton Lions	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
15/07/07	Barrow Raiders	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
22/07/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
29/07/07	York City Knights	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
05/08/07	Blackpool Panthers	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
12/08/07	Workington Town	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
19/08/07	Gateshead Thunder	NL2	Away	3.00pm			
02/09/07	Celtic Crusaders	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
09/09/07	London Skolars	NL2	Home	3.00pm			

Play offs will take place on Sundays, September 16, 23 and 30 with the Grand Final on Sunday 7th October.
Home* venue to be arranged.

Key

NRC – Northern Rail Cup
NL2 – National League Division 2

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(OLDHAM MARKET) AND
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Oldham RLFC fully support the Let's tackle Racism in Rugby League campaign and welcomes all players and spectators irrespective of their ethnic or racial origins. Racism has no place in our game and racist chants are totally unacceptable.

Allow everyone to enjoy the game.

Impact

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