

game line-up

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KEIGHLEY

OLDHAM SQUAD	Played	Keighley SQUAD
PAUL ASHTON		GAVIN DUFFY
CHRIS BAINES		GARETH HOLMES
JASON BOULTS		MATT FOSTER
GENO COSTIN		MICHAEL FOGERTY
ANDY CRABTREE		KARL SMITH
ANDY GOREY		CRAIG FAWCETT
IAN HODSON		BARRY EATON
JOHN HOUGH		SIMON BISSELL
DREW HOUSTON		JAMES FEATHER
SIMEON HOYLE		TOM PALMER
GARETH LANGLEY		WAYNE SUTCLIFE
CRAIG LITTLER		BRIAN SUTTON
RICHARD MERVILL		CHRIS REDFEARN
PAUL O'CONNOR		ADAM MITCHELL
STUART OLDHAM		JASON DUBOIS-FISHER
LUCAS ONYANGO		BRENDAN RAWLINGS
NEIL RODEN		LUKE SUTTON
WES ROGERS		SAM GARDNER
LEE SANDERSON		GARETH ENGLISH
IAN SINFIELD		RYAN SMITH
KRIS SMITH		GREG NICHOLSON
MICHAEL STOUT		RICHARD KNIGHT
SAID TAMGHART		MIKE HASTINGS
TONY TONKS		ALEX BROWN
ALEX WILKINSON		
LEE WINGFIELD		

match officials

REFEREE: Mr D Merrick TOUCH JUDGES: S Williams, D Gundry
4TH OFFICIAL: Mr G Phillips

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K.O. 3.00pm

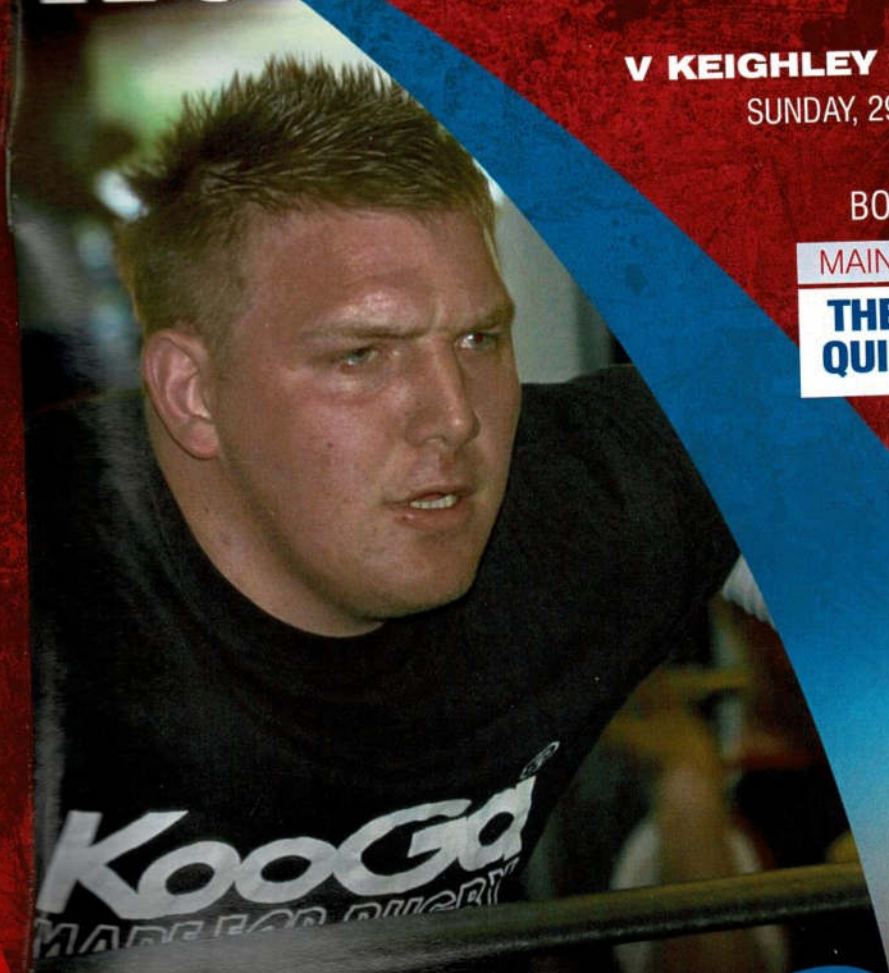
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Trans-Penine Cup
Finalists - 1998

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

MOST APPEARANCES: John Hough, 228 - Jan 1998 - Sep 2006

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. Jude's, 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 Bradish 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 (amtl), 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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Alan Davies 1950-62

Frank Stirrup 1950-62

Bernard Ganley 1950-61

Sid Little OBE 1951-59

John Ety 1954-59

Derek Turner 1955-59

Kevin Taylor 1962-77

Mike Elliott 1962-79

Bob Irving 1964-74

Martin Murphy 1966-82

Terry Flanagan 1979-89

Andy Goodway 1979-85 & 1993-94

We would like to express our thanks to the
Oldham Evening Chronicle, League Publications
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boardroom **view**

with Chris Hamilton



WELCOME back to Boundary Park for our second home league game of the season. Having played Keighley in the Carnegie Challenge Cup a few weeks ago we know that today's game will provide us with a difficult challenge.

That win at Cougar Park on April 1st put us through to the fifth round of the Cup

which ultimately gave us a home tie against Harlequins on May 13th. Although not the tie we would have chosen, in terms of Super League opposition, it will, nevertheless, give us the opportunity to test ourselves against some world class players.

Before that, however, we have two very important league matches, the first today against the Cougars, who have been there or thereabouts in all the matches they have played this season.

Results so far in the second division have clearly demonstrated that nobody is going to run away with this division and have provided a timely reminder that we must be focused and disciplined for every game we play.

Following today's game we have a very important date in South Wales on Friday night when the club will be featured, for the first time since the Grand Final in 2001, in a live televised game on Sky Sports.

Prior to that Grand Final, you have to go back to the days of the old club for the last time Oldham Rugby were featured in a live TV game.

Friday night then provides us with a tremendous opportunity to show what we are all about to a

wider audience --- and if we were to come back from South Wales with three league points it would certainly make a few people sit up and take notice.

The game, against one of the fancied teams in the division, gives the players a chance to show their skills to a much wider audience and although it won't be easy it is a game we are capable of winning.

It is unfortunate that, because of the timing of the game, probably not as many Oldham fans will be able to attend as we would normally expect.

Those who do go, however, will -- I am sure -- make plenty of noise as usual. The support so far this season has been good both in terms of numbers and noise as was demonstrated once again at Blackpool when the majority of the crowd was from Oldham. You can rest assured that, as ever, we will be doing our utmost to give you something to shout about.

Your support today is as important as ever, so please try to get behind the lads as we strive for three more important points this afternoon.

Enjoy the game

Chris

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deek's coach approach

with Steve Deakin



ONLY two games into the Co-Operative National League Two campaign and I have to say things are going okay. It is too early - far too early --- to start over emphasising what we have achieved, or how well we have played, although I was highly satisfied with our performances against Featherstone and Blackpool.

On the Fylde RU ground last time out we scored seven tries and had a few more disallowed for forward-pass decisions. The game was a little bit stop-start but whenever there was any fluidity we looked okay.

Another pleasing feature was that we had the man-power to rest one or two of the forwards who have shouldered a lot of the heavy work for us so far this year --- players such as Jason Boults, Simeon Hoyle, Ian Sinfield and Wes Rogers --- and bring in Geno Costin after six weeks on the sidelines with shoulder trouble, give a debut to Tony Tonks and call on John Hough for the first time this season now that he has fully recovered from his toe injury.

Lucas Onyango also got his first run-out for us on the wing and it was pleasing for him that he should mark his debut by scoring one try and preventing another when he turned and caught Phil Cantillon with a try-saving tackle.

In some respects it was disappointing that we didn't have a game last weekend to keep the momentum going, but on the other hand we have a real demanding few weeks coming up with Keighley today, Celtic Crusaders away next Friday night, Harlequins here in the Carnegie Challenge Cup on May 13 and then Barrow Raiders here only seven days after that.

A long season stretches ahead of us and during what could well be a long, hot and extremely interesting summer of 2007 many things will remain outside our control.

What we must do is stay focused on the things we can control and continue to work hard so that we can make improvements both individually as players and collectively as a team and as a squad.

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Suffice to say I feel confident that, should we stay relatively injury free, the squad is capable of getting into the play-offs and for all those teams that make it anything can happen in the cut and thrust of one-off football.

We now welcome Keighley Cougars to Boundary Park and the one thing I am sure of regarding today's fixture is that our win on their ground in the Carnegie Challenge Cup a few weeks ago will have no bearing whatsoever on what happens in the league clash in the next couple of hours or so.

In Peter Roe (Director of rugby) and Barry Eaton (player-coach), Keighley have two very experienced and accomplished leaders and knowing them as I do, I can tell you with assurance that they will have undertaken an in-depth study of our performance in the cup tie and they will have been working hard with their squad in a bid to reverse that earlier result.

We won 26-16, but it was a very competitive cup tie and we trailed 8-0 at half-time. We performed better in the second half but, as I have stated already, that game and that result will count for absolutely nothing, zero, when the same teams leave the tunnel this afternoon to do battle all over again.

From Oldham's point of view it is up to us to make sure we are as well prepared for this game as we would be for any other and that, mentally and physically, we are ready to execute the game plan.

Finally, I want to talk directly to YOU, the fan who is reading this match-day magazine. The support we got at Blackpool, both in numbers and in vocal backing, was absolutely superb. To each and every supporter who made the effort to travel with us to Blackpool I speak on behalf of all the lads in the dressing room when I say THANK-YOU BIG STYLE.

We almost felt we were playing a home game, such was the extent of your backing. I would estimate Oldham fans outnumbered theirs three to one and that sort of support away from home makes a huge difference.

It helps players with their confidence and self-belief, and it promotes a feel-good factor generally in the club. It's a two-way street, and I feel sure that by working together we can all have a successful season.

The message from the dressing room is this: keep supporting us (I can assure you that support is really appreciated) and if possible persuade a friend or a workmate to come along and have a look at us as well. We look forward again today, and all season, to hearing you all in full voice.

Enjoy the game, Deaks.



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news desk

by Roger Halstead

TOWN-TEAM LADS CAN WATCH FOR FREE



Roughyeds chairman Bill Quinn seals the free-tickets deal with Service Area chief Garry Hepworth. Picture courtesy of Oldham Evening Chronicle.

was forced to unload one of its three Australians and after a lot of soul-searching it was decided Mark was the one to leave, largely because Geno Costin is a forward and Drew Houston prefers back-row to centre and it was felt by coach Steve Deakin that under no circumstances could he consider weakening his forwards.

Deaks has since stated publicly that this was an awful decision to have to make, that he has the highest regard for Mark as a player and as a man; but that pack strength is of paramount importance if the club is to be successful in the tough league campaign that lies ahead.

The problem arose because Roughyeds had been led to believe that Costin would be exempt from the quota. This was subsequently discovered not to be the case.

Both Deaks and chief executive Chris Hamilton, on behalf of the board, expressed their regret at what this 'unfortunate and difficult' situation meant in terms of Ogden's departure. "He has handled it with dignity -- that's the sort of bloke he is," said Deaks.

Added Mr Hamilton: "We have nothing but praise and admiration for the way Mark has conducted himself in England on and off the field, from last Boxing Day when he arrived until when all this was sorted out. He has been a credit to himself. We were only too pleased to help him as much as we could in terms of getting him fixed up elsewhere.

"He is happy with the move to Swinton. It isn't far away and it enables him to stay with his mate Geno in the house they share in Shaw. We wish Mark all the luck in the world."

Mark said: "I have no grudges. I am just happy my mate Geno can get to stay. As for the club, they have done everything possible in the situation. Chris (Hamilton) has been very good. I class him as a mate."

UNLUCKY Lee Wingfield has finally come to terms with the fact that his shattered right knee is going to keep him sidelined for many months to come. "I'm gutted," he said, "but this time I won't be coming back until I am 100 per cent fit and ready -- I don't care how long it takes."

The best wishes of everyone at the club go to the likeable and popular Leigh lad, who gets married in mid-July in Atherton. He is just hoping that if his knee is placed in a brace post-surgery he will still be able to walk down the aisle.

Lee damaged the cruciate and medial ligaments in his knee during the 42-18 Northern Rail Cup win at Swinton on March 25.

He said: "The incident was something and nothing -- that's what makes it all the harder to take. I stuck out my right leg to get to a loose ball. A Swinton player was trying to dive on the ball, but he ended up tackling my fully outstretched leg. That's all there was to it.

"These things happen in rugby league, but they seem to happen to me more than most."

ROUGHYEDS have supplied the local Service Area with 100 free season tickets for distribution among town-team players at various age groups.

The scheme, a move designed to further foster links with the sport locally at grassroots level, kicked in when Featherstone came to Boundary Park for the opening game in the Co-Operative National League Two campaign and it will cover each of Oldham's 11 home league games.

Said Chris Hamilton, chief executive: "We would like nothing better than to see these tickets used extensively at every home league game.

"Roughyeds are delighted to show their appreciation of the excellent work the Service Area does and to give a pat on the back to the many players who have worked hard to achieve town-team recognition. It is a great honour to play for your town.

"Hopefully, we can encourage the town-team lads to watch us on a regular basis; to become interested in the club and the team; and maybe to convince them, if and when they get the opportunity to turn pro, that Oldham is a good club to sign for."

This new move follows the club's decision taken before the start of the Northern Rail Cup in February to encourage more young people to watch by cutting admission prices for under-16s to £5 for a seat anywhere in the main stand and to introduce a concessionary rate of £8 and £9 for students under the age of 18 and in full-time education.

AFTER only a handful of games in the Oldham jersey, Aussie stand-off Mark Ogden has joined Swinton Lions and he goes with the very best wishes of everyone at the Roughyeds.

Due to a problem involving overseas quota regulations the club

LATE FLASH . . . Law Cup ten-year reunion dinner, social club, Friday, June 22. Guest speaker, ex-Liverpool soccer star David Fairclough. Tickets £25, ring Janet on 0161 628 3677.

LATE FLASH . . . Kris Smith named in RLW's Co-op NL2 team of the month.

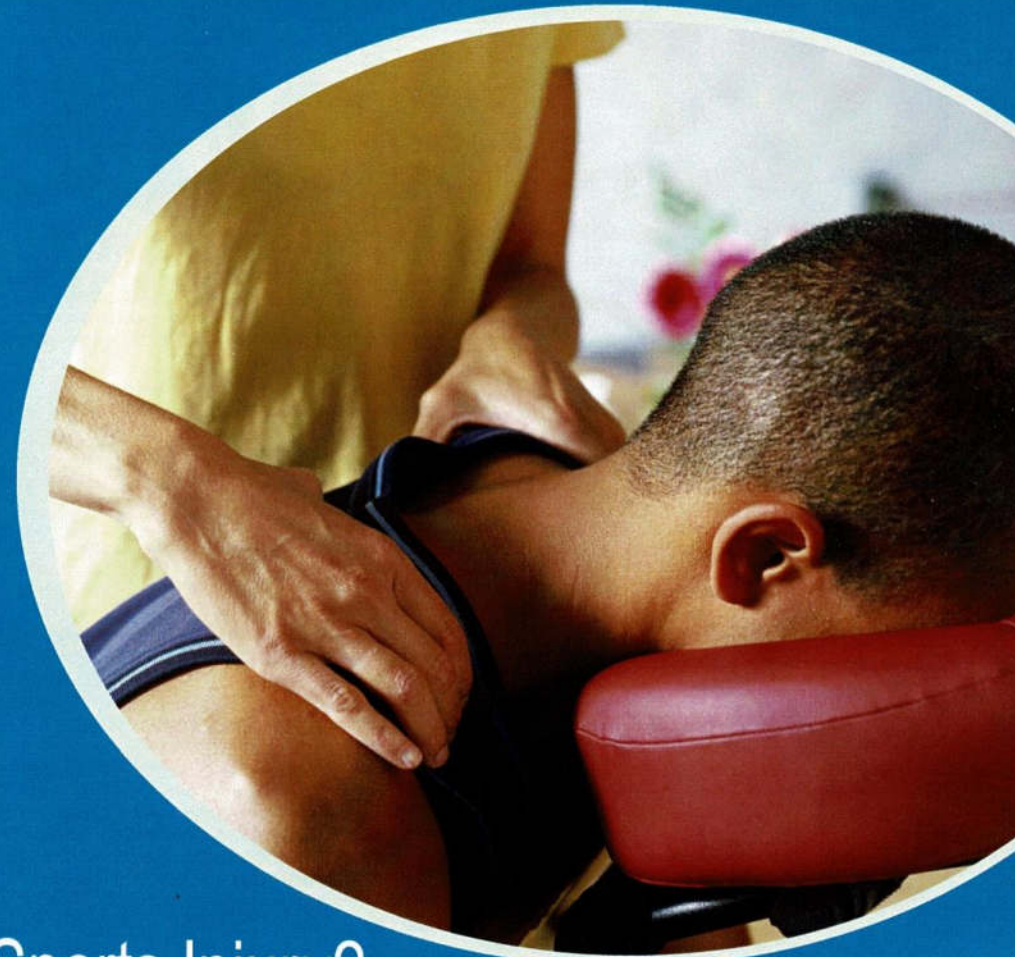
with Geoff Cooke

cooke-ability!

All those Giants fans calling for the head of Jon Sharp should now be writing letters of apology to the Galpharm stadium after Huddersfield have racked up four victories to lift them off the foot of the Super League table.

It never ceases to amaze me how impatient and fickle so-called fans can be : it's instant success or nothing. Well, I'm afraid sport isn't like that : it's like life itself - there are good days and there are bad days. Expect little and any win is a pleasure but take winning for granted and you soon get kicked in the teeth. Nearly all examples of sporting success point up the same moral, that continuity, planning and application will eventually bring their own reward. I have no doubt that Oldham and today's visitors, Keighley, see the wisdom of that. I have the feeling that both are planning for long term success and I hope that each can avoid the destructive effect that lowly status inevitably entails when it becomes almost impossible to prevent the loss of talented players to richer clubs waving chequebooks. Even so if the right structures are in place success eventually follows because the right structures produce a conveyor belt of talent to keep feeding an ambitious professional club. Whatever the final outcome of their season we have a magnificent example of that right here on our own doorstep in Oldham Athletic. As their motto has it " Keep the Faith".

I have no doubt Coaches know what they mean when they speak to the press but have you ever read something and had to re-read it several times over to try to make sense of it? For example, Leigh Coach Darren Shaw : " His attacking ability is second to none. He runs great lines on the edges." Just what does that second sentence mean? Doesn't everyone run in a line? And on the edges of what exactly? Or, Brian Noble on Great Britain : " If we had two decent halfbacks who could play at the line rather than through the line we would do better." Excuse me, does that mean we don't want halfbacks who can make a break ,because that's how it reads? Then, how about Castleford Coach Terry Matterson after beating Workington Town 50-24 last week : " There's not a lot for us to gain from these games to be honest.....It's hard to get up when these big scores are happening." Well, I'm sorry I thought the idea was you took the fixture and played the game to the best of your ability. St. Helens certainly do. If you don't want to play Workington , don't enter the competition. Apart from which I thought you tended to get demoralised when you lost not when you've won! Of course, it's easy to be picky because these days the Coach is expected to come up with some instant pearl of wisdom. Which leads me to question the whole ethos of modern journalism: do we really need to know what the Coach thinks a minute after the final whistle? Wouldn't it be better for the match reporter to give us his match report telling us just what happened in the game -especially useful to the reader who didn't attend but might be tempted next match - and leave the Coach to have his say a couple of days later when he's had time to reflect? Just a thought.



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by ROGER HALSTEAD

'I TURNED MY BACK ON SOCCER TO FOLLOW A DREAM IN RUGBY LEAGUE'

Richard Mervill tells of the big decision that was to shape his sporting life

LIVES are often shaped by decisions taken at the proverbial cross-roads. Do I go this way? Or do I go that? Do I follow my heart? Or do I follow my head? Which path will suit me better?

Richard Mervill, the Oldham prop, had not even reached his 16th birthday when he came to that mythical junction, facing the biggest decision of his young life. In the case of sporting all-rounder Richard he had to choose between the sport into which he was born --- football --- or the one which he adopted "purely by accident" --- rugby league.

The story of his early sporting life is a remarkable one given that, while still a pupil at Brighouse High School, he had Huddersfield Town soccer club and Halifax Blue Sox rugby league club chasing him and until a couple of years before that he had never handled a rugby ball in his life.

The youngest of three --- he has two elder sisters, Helen and Rachel --- Richard was born in Halifax on June 24, 1981.

Rugby league had no place in his early boyhood. He was hooked on soccer. But though he didn't know it at the time the safe hands that enabled him to be one of the best schoolboy goalkeepers in and around Halifax and Huddersfield in the late 1980s and early 1990s would prove a more than useful ally when the day dawned on which, for the first time, he would pick up the ball and run.

Soccer-mad Richard won town-team honours in Huddersfield schoolboy football at every age group and hoped he might one day become a professional.

Then came the incident that was to turn his sporting life on its head. Recalled Richard: "Two mates in the third year at Brighouse High played rugby league for the school. One night after school I went along to watch. Another member of the team didn't turn up and I was asked to take his place in the front-row of the pack."

The up-and-coming goalkeeper had never played rugby before; had never even handled an oval-shaped ball. But on that memorable day on a Brighouse sports field he picked up the ball and ran for the first time... AND SCORED FOUR TRIES!

He took to the sport immediately and was soon devoting every Sunday to sport --- rugby in the mornings, football in the afternoons.

Let Richard take up the story. "I kept my interest in football, but my love of rugby was growing all the time.

"Then, three months before my 16th birthday, Huddersfield Town got in touch and offered me a goalkeeping apprenticeship and while I was still

thinking about that the Blue Sox came in with the offer a full-time rugby league apprenticeship with them."

Richard, still a schoolboy, stood at the crossroads; weighed up both routes; and chose to take the path into rugby league.

"It wasn't an easy decision," he said, "and I sought advice. But in the end I opted for the Blue Sox because I thought there was perhaps a better chance of my succeeding in rugby league than in a huge sport like football."

His sporting destiny decided, Richard signed for Fax in the summer of 1997 at the age of 16 and spent the next two years there, learning his trade in academy rugby and then adding to his experience with a four-month spell on loan with French club Tonniers, situated not far from Bordeaux.

Aged 19, he got an offer to extend his full-time stay at Fax "for next to nothing" but with first-team rugby in mind he opted instead to spend a year up in the North-East with Gateshead. It was the season which started in December, 2000 and ran to the late summer of 2001, well remembered by Roughyeds fans, of course, because it was the year the club reached the Grand Final only to be beaten by Widnes.

In a 19-club Northern Ford Premiership, Oldham launched their Grand Final bid from fourth spot, while Gateshead finished third from bottom with only two wins from 28 games.

It was a tough year for rookie prop Mervill who, at the age of 20, got the wanderlust and headed for Australia with his Gateshead team mate Wes McGibbon. They played for Grafton Ghosts, a club situated near Byron Bay in northern New South Wales and coached by a man who was to play a significant role in Richard's career progress, Dean Callaway.

Returning to England in time for the 2003 season, Mervill signed for Keighley Cougars, mainly because the Cougars coach at that time, Gary Moorby, had coached him previously in the second team at Halifax.

It proved to be a good decision. The summer of 2003 was a good one for Cougars, who finished third in division two and went on to beat Sheffield Eagles in the Grand Final with a team that included Mervill and his current Roughyeds team mates Simeon Hoyle, Ian Sinfield and Paul Ashton.

Richard was to tough it out at Cougar Park for two more seasons --- Cougars were relegated again in 2004 --- before again getting itchy feet and heading off for a second trip to Australia at the end of the 2005 English season.

By this time the coach with whom he had enjoyed a divisional championship win in Grafton four years earlier, Dean Callaway, had moved south to the Wollongong area to join Dapto in the Illawarra competition -- recognised as the third or fourth strongest in the whole of Australia.

Richard was delighted to get the chance to link up once more with Callaway, and it was at Dapto also that he first met his now firm friend and fellow Roughyed, Drew Houston.

The lad from Calderdale settled easily into the Aussie lifestyle and he had a couple of willing helpers in Drew and his brother Chris (now a St George Illawarra player in the NRL) with whom he shared a house.

Mervill and Drew Houston helped Dapto to win the title and in so doing formed a lasting friendship which led to Drew accompanying Richard back to England early this year.

Said Richard: "When we knew we were coming over here, I spoke to a lot of my mates in rugby league in England and one of them was Simeon Hoyle. He said he had signed for Oldham and things were looking good.

"Drew and I were left with the same impression when we spoke to the club and to Deaks (coach Steve Deakin). The club had signed some good players and everyone seemed very ambitious. So we signed, and we're glad we did.

"Results were a bit ordinary at the start of the season, but with so many new players in the squad that was to be expected. Apart from anything else, we had to get used to the systems Deaks wanted to put in place and we had to learn how to play to them.

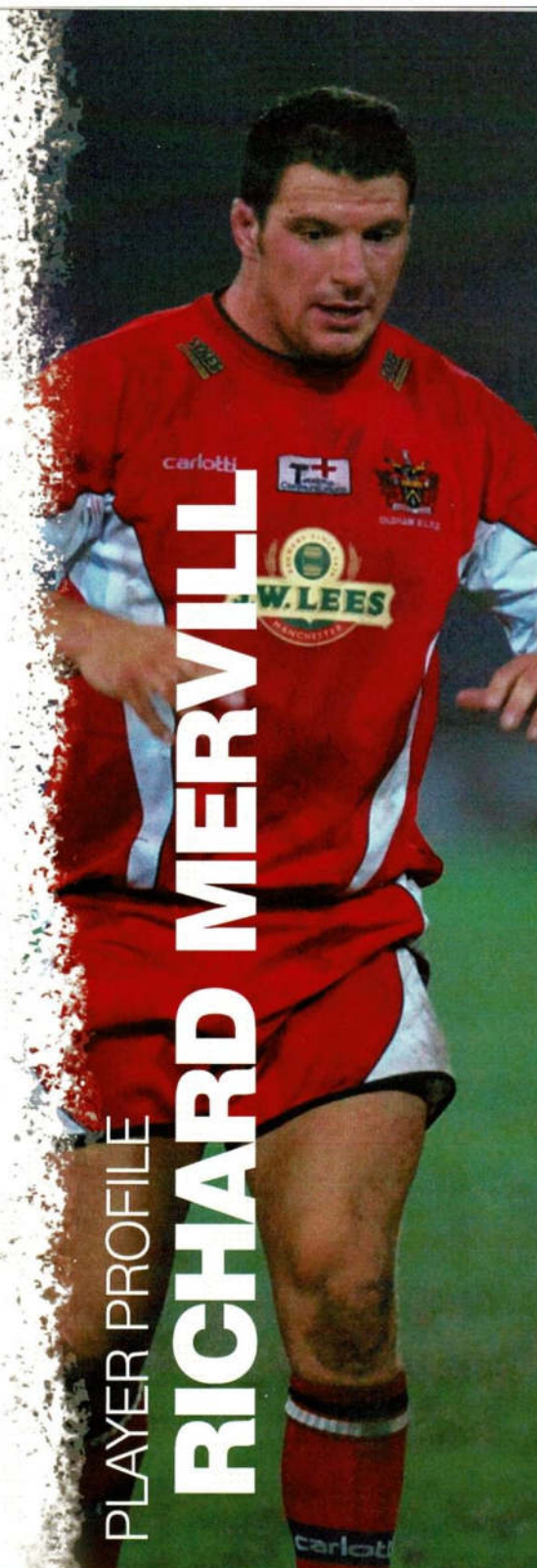
"We've made big strides forwards in recent weeks, but we are still nowhere near to fulfilling our potential. We still have a lot of progress to make, but we are all confident we will make it. We are improving all the time, and the club have been signing new players who are also keen to do well so the future is full of promise.

"Promotion has to be the ultimate goal, but it's going to be a hugely competitive division. Some clubs, like Celtic Crusaders, Featherstone and Barrow, are throwing a load of money at it. We have to live with that and endeavour to be up there with them as one of the strongest teams in the competition.

"We must also aim to hit the business end of the season running and in the sort of form that will stand us in good stead to face up to whatever the competition throws at us."

Away from rugby, 25-year-old Richard likes nothing better than to relax with his partner Danielle when he isn't training or playing and when he gets time off from his full-time occupation.

He works in Halifax at a pupil reference centre, helping to shape the young lives of 14 to 16-year-olds who have run into problems and who have been excluded from mainstream education --- a rewarding and satisfying job for a man who knows what it's like to stand at the crossroads as a teenager faced with a life-shaping decision.



AROUND & ABOUT

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THAT MAGNIFICENT SEASON 1956-57 50-YEAR CELEBRATIONS!!

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ALAN DAVIES (LANCASHIRE CUP) AND CHARLIE WINSLADE (LAW CUP)

OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE Monday, October 22, 1956

Oldham win back Cup again after 23 years SAINTS' PACK BEATEN AT OWN GAME

OLDHAM 2 - 2 - 10, ST. HELENS 0 - 1 - 3

Remember the names Jackson, Keith, Vines, Little, Winslade and Turner, for they will go into rugby history books as the combination of forwards who played the greatest part in bringing the Lancashire Cup back to Oldham after a 23 year absence. In the bashing, crashing second half at Wigan on Saturday, the Oldham six not only kept the team's lead intact, but (apart from one spell) completely overwhelmed the St. Helens pack.

What a fiery outfit the Oldham forwards were. In the first half they gave a classic display of fast moving attacking play, and in the second, they showed that if bullocking tactics were the order of the day they were again a shade better than the Saints.

The back division's real chances came only in the first half when Oldham were swinging the ball about brilliantly. Wingers Dick Cracknell and John Etty, during this period turned in some fine attacking displays and on a couple of occasions were unlucky not to score tries.



Stirrup carried shoulder high by enthusiastic Oldham supporters after receiving the trophy at Wigan on Saturday.

- Oldham scored 214 tries and kicked 217 goals during the campaign. The left flank partnership of Dennis Ayres and John Etty, between them, scored a remarkable 70 tries.
- No Oldham player was sent off during the whole of the season!
- The average home attendance was 11,923 with the match against Halifax attracting the largest crowd of 21,449
- 62,217 attended the Championship final against Hull whilst the Lancashire Cup final vs. St Helens attracted 39,544.
- Lancashire won the County Championship by beating both Cumberland & Yorkshire. Oldham winger Terry O'Grady, centre Alan Davies and scrum-half Frank Pitchford represented Lancashire, forward Sid Little was selected for Cumberland and winger Dick Cracknell for Yorkshire.
- The Roughyeds slaughtered the touring Australians 21-2 at Watersheddings.
- Frank Pitchford, Jack Keith (hooker) and Derek Turner (loose-forward) played for the Rugby League 13 against the Australians at Leigh.
- Great Britain won the Ashes by two Tests to one. Alan Davies played in all three and Derek Turner in the second and third. Davies took on the unusual role (for him) of goal kicker in the third and deciding Test at Station Rd.
- The Lions also played a three match international series against the French. Derek Turner and Sid Little played in all three matches - two of which were won by Great Britain - with one (played in Toulouse) drawn.
- Roughyeds' prop-forward Ken Jackson played for the Rest of the League vs. Great Britain.
- Alan Davies, Sid Little and Derek Turner - after a gruelling season - then played in the World Cup series in Australia which was won by the Kangaroos. Little played in 58 matches that season and Turner 56!
- Biggest disappointment, Oldham, Challenge Cup favourites, lost 5-0 in atrocious conditions away to Leigh - the only trophy to elude the Roughyeds during this fabulous season.

NORTHERN RUGBY LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	Pts	F	A
1 Oldham	38	33	0	5	66	893	365
2 Hull	38	29	2	7	60	764	432
3 Barrow	38	29	0	9	58	702	481
4 Leeds	38	28	0	10	56	818	490
5 St Helens	38	25	3	10	53	902	355
6 Wigan	38	26	0	12	52	750	417
7 Hunslet	38	26	0	12	52	688	417
8 Wakefield Trinity	38	23	1	14	47	747	545
9 Huddersfield	38	23	0	15	46	667	533
10 Warrington	38	21	1	16	43	571	565
11 York	38	21	0	17	42	641	538
12 Halifax	38	21	0	17	42	559	514
13 Salford	38	19	2	17	40	518	499
14 Workington Town	38	20	0	18	40	494	516
15 Featherstone Rovers	38	19	0	19	38	612	504
16 Rochdale Hornets	38	19	0	19	38	510	611
17 Leigh	38	18	1	19	37	684	608
18 Whitehaven	38	18	1	19	37	598	646
19 Swinton	38	18	0	20	36	576	594
20 Keighley	38	17	1	20	35	494	534
21 Bradford Northern	38	17	0	21	34	479	672
22 Bramley	38	14	2	22	30	558	632
23 Widnes	38	15	0	23	30	439	526
24 Blackpool Borough	38	14	0	24	28	470	872
25 Castleford	38	11	2	25	24	488	739
26 Hull Kingston Rovers	38	11	2	25	24	395	672
27 Liverpool City	38	9	1	28	19	356	854
28 Batley	38	8	0	30	16	399	700
29 Dewsbury	38	5	1	32	11	391	818
30 Doncaster	38	3	0	35	6	321	835

LANCASHIRE LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	Pts	F	A
1 Oldham	28	24	0	4	48	681	241
2 Barrow	28	22	0	6	44	523	358
3 Wigan	28	21	0	7	42	584	302
4 St Helens	28	19	2	7	40	687	247
5 Halifax	28	17	0	11	34	442	361
6 Warrington	28	16	1	11	33	422	378
7 Workington Town	28	14	0	14	28	343	371
8 Leigh	28	13	1	14	27	489	433
9 Whitehaven	28	12	1	15	25	393	449
10 Swinton	28	11	0	17	22	407	463
11 Salford	28	12	0	17	22	322	418
12 Rochdale Hornets	28	11	0	17	22	327	497
13 Widnes	28	6	0	22	12	263	467



RUGBY OLDHAM is hosting a CHAMPIONSHIP DINNER & SOCIAL EVENT at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on Friday the 18th of May to celebrate 50 years to the day since Oldham lifted the Championship Trophy when they beat Hull 15-14 at Odsal. Alan Davies, Bernard Ganley, John Etty, Frank Stirrup, Johnny Noon, Sid Little, Vince Nestor and many more will be back in town to join in the celebrations. BBC's Ian Cheesman will MC the evening, the four cups will be on display and rare footage of the final will be shown. There will be much, much more including two live bands for dancing.

Tickets are £25 and are available by 'phoning 016 620 9583, 07921 367759 or 01457 875084.

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OR ALTERNATIVELY VISIT VIA THE CLUB'S WEBSITE WWW.ROUGHYEDS.CO.UK CLICKING THE HERITAGE TRUST BUTTON.

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men and matters

by Roger Halstead

'Well done, Chris,' says Neil Barker of the Manchester Evening News

CHRIS HAMILTON, take a bow!



Neil Barker had this to say in an opinion piece in the Manchester Evening News.

"Chris Hamilton stand up and take a bow! Thank heavens a year-long wait to see his team win is finally over for the crusading Oldham boss. The Roughyeds famous 42-18 win over Swinton came on the day when Salford boss Karl Harrison maintained his team's victory at Huddersfield had removed a monkey from his back. In Oldham's case they must have felt as if King Kong had been booted into touch.

"Oldham's victory followed a takeover of the club. Could it be the dawn of a new era? Hamilton was soldier on as the CEO. It's a fancy title for the local lad made good, but what this man has endured during the past year should serve as a timely reminder to many in the game who can learn from his commitment, passion and perseverance.

"Hamilton deserves a medal for showing strength in the face of adversity and thankfully he has no grey hairs to report for his pains among the pitfalls. So smiles all round then in a town where the fortunes of the rugby league team still act as an accurate barometer when judging the mood of a community.

"The good folk of Oldham can rightly feel proud of the heroic Hamilton. In a game that is changing, and unfortunately seeing the emergence of agents and massive contracts, it's a breath of fresh air to see a team at the bread and butter level feasting on the rarity of a victory."

***ROBERT GOODINSON, alias the Roughyeds mascot, is getting ready to run the BUPA Great Manchester Run 2007 for the British Red Cross, which takes place on Sunday, May 20.

Running alongside other sporting mascots from the North-West, Robert is looking to raise at least £500 in sponsorship.

Money raised will go towards the funding of Red Cross projects and services across the region, such as responding to emergencies and providing fire-victim support; offering help to those in crisis; and many more such projects.

For further information call Kate at the Red Cross on 0161 888 8914;

email kthomas@red-cross.org.uk or visit the Red Cross web page at www.justgiving.com/mascots and follow the links.

***GERALD AND NANCY FITZGERALD, of Mossley, lifelong Roughyeds supporters, were hospitality suite guests of the club at the Featherstone match on April 4 to celebrate their diamond wedding anniversary. The next day they completed 60 years of marriage. Best wishes and congratulations from everyone at the Roughyeds.

Both in their 80s, Gerald has followed the club all his life and Nancy has been a keen and active fan since they married in 1947. She didn't have a choice in the matter! Both support most of the events put on by the club, both are in Club Cash and Five Alive and even now, turned 80, Gerald is a Club Cash lottery agent in Mossley. A retired plumber he was still doing jobs in the social club, on a voluntary basis, only a few months ago.

Chris Hamilton, speaking in the hospitality suite after the game, paid tribute to Gerald and Nancy's loyalty and commitment to the Roughyeds over a lifetime --- and never was that tribute more fittingly deserved!

***NIGEL MARLAND, another sterling worker for the club, goes into hospital tomorrow (Monday) for major heart surgery. Only those close to the club know the extent to which Nigel, a retired school teacher, has assisted the club in various capacities over the past few years. He is editor of this match-day magazine and, as you all know, he has done a great job in recent seasons as the match-day public address announcer.

Those are merely the tip of the iceberg in terms of what Nigel has done for the Roughyeds. He has been greatly missed during his illness, and he will continue to be missed during his period of recovery after the operation. The sincere best wishes of all at the club go out to this sterling Roughyeds fanatic. Get well soon, Nigel --- sentiments that will be expressed by everyone who knows this dedicated fan and loveable panto dame!

***STEVE DEAKIN's men will earn a play-off spot in NL2 this season. Who says so? The bookies.

Odds to win the league: Featherstone 11-8; Celtic Crusaders 7-4; Barrow 9-2; York 8-1; OLDHAM 20-1; Swinton 25-1; Workington 33-1; Gateshead 50-1; Hunslet 50-1; Keighley 66-1; London Skolars 200-1; Blackpool 250-1.

Odds to win the play-off final: Celtic Crusaders 7-4; Barrow 11-4; Featherstone 10-3; York 5-1; OLDHAM 16-1; Swinton 20-1; Workington 33-1; Hunslet 50-1; Gateshead 50-1; Keighley 100-1; London 250-1; Blackpool 500-1.

the bootroom

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

ASHTON, Paul (half-back): Aged 27, Paul learned his trade at Saddleworth before playing for Halifax, Rochdale, Keighley and Swinton. 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. Can play at scrum-half or stand-off.

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 the latter part of 2006 and then for 2007. Toured New Zealand with Great Britain Young Lions in 2003. Product of Chorley Panthers and Wigan St Pat's.

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. Spent four years as a young pro with Bradford and then had two seasons at The Shay, missing only a handful of games.

COSTIN, Geno (prop or back-row): A 22-year-old Aussie, Geno first established himself in the Queensland Cup with Wynnum-Manly, but last year played in the same comp for Logan Souths. A rugby workaholic, he puts in overtime on defence and, in possession, always runs strong and straight.

CRABTREE, Andy (hooker): Won Great Britain academy honours in his Wigan Warriors days. Came from Swinton this year. A tidy footballer with good hands and game awareness, he can also play loose-forward. Alert and alive at dummy half.

GOREY, Andy (winger): A scrum-half in his Royton Tigers days, Andy became a good full-back in the former Roughyeds academy side. It was as a winger, however, that he finished 2006 as the club's top try scorer with ten --- no mean feat in a losing side.

HADCROFT, Alan (centre): A robust middle back, 29-year-old Alan signed from Halifax for the 2006 season, but his campaign was marred by a series of shoulder injuries, notably at Barrow and Whitehaven. Future as a player in some doubt, but highly regarded as coach Steve Deakin's acting No 2.

HODSON, Ian (back-row): Initially rejected new offer for 2007 due to work commitments, but the Roughyeds door remained open and he re-signed in March after playing the odd game or two for Tyldesley RU Club. One of the club's better performers in 2006, he always gave maximum input, even when asked to play at stand-off.

HOUGH, John (hooker): First player to sign for the 'new' Roughyeds club. Still here nearly ten years later --- that's loyalty with a capital L. Joined Warrington from Waterhead as a boy, but carved himself a niche in the annals of the new Oldham club when he signed as a free agent on December 2, 1997. Has played more than 230 games.

HOUSTON, Drew (second-row or centre): Once a youngster linked with Melbourne Storm, Drew had two seasons in the Queensland Cup with Storm feeder club Brisbane Norths before heading south to join

Dapto whom he helped to become champions of the Illawarra competition last year.

HOYLE, Simeon (hooker): Formerly with Keighley and Halifax, Simeon is a hooker of the old school --- tough in defence yet able to make things happen from dummy half. Helped Keighley to win promotion in 2003 in the same team as Paul Ashton, Richard Mervill and Ian Sinfield.

LANGLEY, Gareth (winger): Pacy, and a good finisher, 'Gaz' joined Roughyeds this year after five years at St Helens. He was Saints academy player of the year in 2005 and runner-up in 2006. Played at Salford as a teenager before joining his hometown club at Knowsley Road.

LITTLER, Craig (centre): Another Saints old boy, Craig was Langley's centre for four years at Knowsley Road. A year younger, he had the chance of another year with St Helens academy, but opted to sign for Roughyeds and continue his centre-wing partnership with Langley.

MERVILL, Richard (prop): Formerly with Halifax and Keighley, Richard joined Roughyeds for 2007 after playing Down Under in the same Dapto side as Drew Houston. Suffered a broken hand in one of his early games for Roughyeds, but goes into Co-Operative NL2 action in a good seam of form.

O'CONNOR, Paul (full-back): Signed for hometown Widnes after winning students' international honours for Ireland and for Great Britain. Looked good in three loan games for Roughyeds in 2006 and returned on a more permanent basis in 2007, although he will be away for 14 weeks on a pre-arranged trip Down Under.

OLDHAM, Stuart (winger): Formerly with St Helens and Swinton, Stuart played his first serious rugby with Sedgley Park and Liverpool St Helens RU clubs before switching codes to join Saints. Had two seasons with Swinton and became one of six Lions to sign for Roughyeds for 2007.

ONYANGO, Lucas (winger): A real flier, aged 25, Lucas grew up in rugby union in his native Kenya. Has played for Sale Sharks, Manchester and Leigh in Union, and also Widnes Vikings in League. Did well at Vikings before damaging a knee. Over that now and keen to make the most of his chance at Oldham.

RODEN, Neil (half-back): Neil rejoined Roughyeds from Leigh for 2007 after leaving the club initially to go to Batley in 2004. In his first stint here he scored 290 points (68 tries and 18 drop goals) in 142 games over four and a half seasons. Has overtaken Mark Sibson as the 'new' club's leading all-time try scorer.

ROGERS, Wes (prop): Aged 29, and club captain. Like Neil Roden and Ian Sinfield, has rejoined Roughyeds for a second spell. Signed for Widnes as a 15-year-old, then had three years at Swinton, one here, three at Rochdale and three more at Swinton before coming 'home' for 2007.

SANDERSON, Lee (halfback, hooker): Signed in March after a difficult period with Barrow. Roughyeds paid an undisclosed transfer fee for the Leigh lad, whose uncle, Ian, was an accomplished Oldham hooker in Watersheddings days. Lee has previously played for Leigh, London Broncos, Rochdale and Barrow.

SINFIELD, Ian (back-row): Another experienced forward who has returned to his hometown club for a second stint. Brother of Leeds captain, Kevin Sinfield, Ian played in the first ever Roughyeds game at Rochdale on New Year's Day, 1998. Had four years here, then moved on to Rochdale, Keighley and Swinton.

SMITH, Kris (back-row or centre): Kris, aged 28, has been on the books of four Super League clubs, namely Leeds, Salford, London and Halifax. A product of the Eccles amateur club, he was snapped up by Leeds while still a teenager. Joined Roughyeds after four seasons at Swinton.

STOUT, Michael (second-row or centre): Signed from Swinton, Michael has a good turn of speed for a forward and likes to use it while breaking wide out. Played at academy level for both Warrington and Widnes. Chose to join Oldham after rejecting a Swinton offer for 2007.

TAMGHART, Said (utility): A French international, Said has represented his country at every level, including full Test matches against Australia and New Zealand. Came under Steve Deakin's influence when both were at UTC, better known now as Perpignan-based Catalans Dragons.

TONKS, Tony (prop): Roughyeds have high hopes of the 22-year-old Yorkshireman, signed from Bradford Bulls just prior to the start of the Co-Operative NL2 season. One year at Wakefield academy, then six at Bulls as a full-time pro, including last season on loan at Doncaster.

WILKINSON, Alex (centre, wing): 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. While a young pro at Bradford Bulls, he had loan spells with London Broncos, Huddersfield and Hull before going part-time with Roughyeds to continue his studies.

WINGFIELD, Lee (second-row): Played for GB at amateur level in Russia, France and Australia, but desperately unlucky with injuries since he turned pro for Roughyeds on a two-year deal covering 2006 and 2007. In top form early this year, but then broke a hand before suffering a serious knee injury against Swinton on his first game back.

with Ian Wilson

roughyeds'

roar!

What a superb Easter programme of RL we had available to us - assuming of course that one had access to Sky! [I shall not even speak about Setanta, except to say that I am currently missing hugely my weekly fix of Aussie RL!] And what was best about it, I would submit, was that it was quality, not just quantity.

Taking the four televised Super League games, Bradford v Leeds and Hull v Hull KR were good games - competitive, well-matched sides, with committed defence and some well-created tries. Bradford must still be wondering how they lost, but they were at a decent level, and Hull KR, even if they have been unable to sustain their marvellous start, still looked to me like a team which would be able to compete in Super League over the full season.

The other two games involved Wigan - and what contrasting fortunes for the pie-eaters. On Good Friday, they were simply outclassed by Saints, again. However, they then got out of jail at Leeds four days later; credit to them for resilience, certainly, but Leeds must be kicking themselves, as they should have won by at least two clear scores.

One fairly obvious lesson to come out of the games, I thought, was the need for clubs to do rather more homework before they sign overseas so-called "stars". For Leeds, if Toopi had been a solid no-nonsense ex-Leeds academy player, I am sure they would have thrashed Wigan. And Brian Noble surely cannot be very proud of being in charge of a Wigan seventeen with no fewer than NINE overseas players in it, most of them not fit to

lace the boots of such as Kenny, Miles and Ferguson of not so long ago. How can anyone defend - Mr. Lindsay? - watching players such as Aspinwall, Robinson, Melling, and shortly Ashton playing for other sides when his unbelievably loyal supporters have to put up with the mediocre offerings they get from such as Bailey, Vaealiki, Withers and Fletcher.

Back to Super League, I am delighted to see the return to winning ways of Huddersfield. After ten rounds, they have 6 points, though a positive points difference of 47, which is remarkable; in contrast, Salford, only one league point lower, have -124, and Wakefield and Wigan, in the top six, are also negative on net points aggregate. Although the "big boys" may have moved towards taking over the very top of the table, the Huddersfield case surely confirms that the overall standard is indeed more genuinely competitive than ever before; it remains the case that anyone [except maybe Salford!] can beat anyone on their day.

And what of the start of the National Leagues? It is still very early days, of course - but I would hazard a guess that our division will prove to be more closely contested than NL1. Widnes and Cas seem way out in front, with only Whitehaven, thank goodness, as realistic challengers. Whereas NL2 seems likely to be much less predictable. We shall see!

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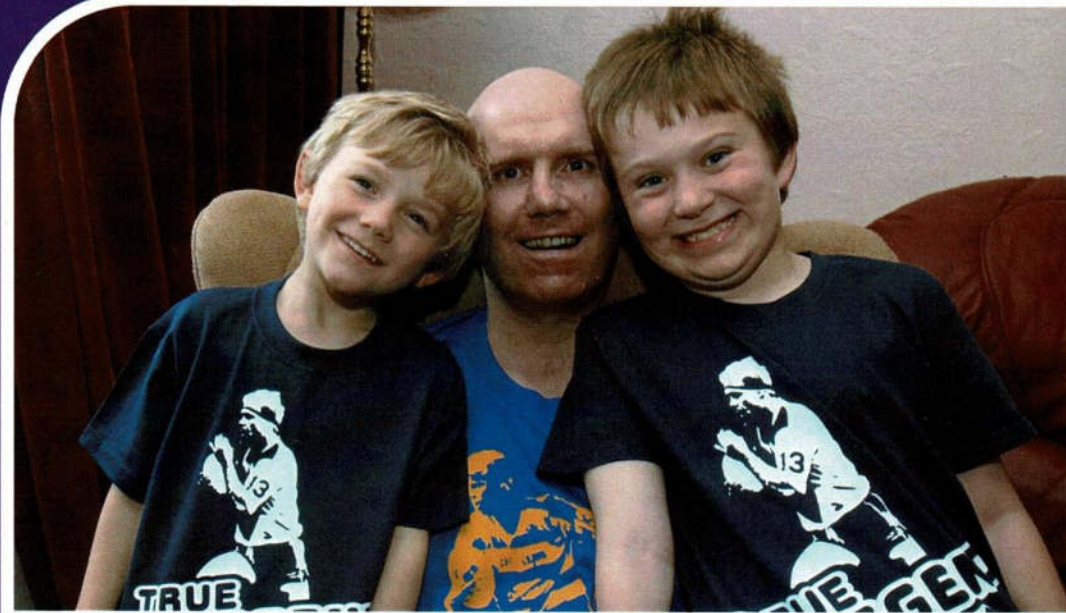
When Leeds Met launched the Carnegie Great Student Run 2007, leading the way was former Widnes, Wigan and GB star Joe Lydon. Joe declared his intention to run the 5km race to raise money for the Mike Gregory Trust Fund. Mike is one of rugby league's most popular, respected and courageous stars who captained Warrington and his country with such distinction.

The Mike Gregory Trust Fund was formed by friends and supporters from the rugby league community who knew

of Mike's battle against Motor Neurone Disease and felt compelled to do something to help.

It is Mike and his family's intention that the trust's funds will be used to cover his ongoing medical expenses and help raise awareness about the effects of Borrelia/Lymes Disease.

Through the Carnegie Great Student Run and the Carnegie Challenge Cup, Leeds Met Carnegie provides a unique opportunity for the whole of the rugby league community to participate and support the Mike Gregory Trust Fund.



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Entry forms and the Mike Gregory Trust Fund sponsorship forms are available from Leeds Met at www.leedsmet.ac.uk/greatstudentrun or by calling 0113 283 8686

For more information on the Mike Gregory Trust please visit www.mikegregorytrust.co.uk

BE PART OF IT - RUB SHOULDERS WITH CHAMPIONS - SUPPORT A GOOD CAUSE

carnegie challenge cup

by ROGER HALSTEAD

SUPER LEAGUE STARS TO GRACE BOUNDARY PARK

THE Harlequins of London, placed fifth in Super League at the time of writing, will bring their big-name stars to Boundary Park in the fifth round of the Carnegie Challenge Cup on Sunday, May 13 (3pm kick off).

It will be a huge day for Roughyeds, given that Quins are more than capable of cementing their place in the elite competition's top six and that they can call on classy top-line performers such as Mark McLinden, Scott Hill, Danny Orr, Rob Purdham, Lee Hopkins and Henry Paul, to name but a few.

It isn't every day that rugby league fans in Oldham get the opportunity to watch stars of Super League pitting their wits and their skills against local favourites, the Roughyeds, here at Boundary Park.

It has happened only twice previously in recent years --- in 2001 when John Harbin's Wakefield came here in a Challenge Cup fifth-round tie and won 26-6 and in 2004 when Warrington knocked us out of the last 16 with a 44-10 triumph.

On the only other occasion we reached the last 16 (since the 'new' club was formed ten years ago, that is) we went down 18-2 at Whitehaven in 1999, although fans will recall that we were beaten 40-6 by St Helens at Stalybridge in a fourth-round clash in 2002 before going down 42-12 a year later to London Broncos at Griffin Park at the same stage of the competition.

The team that day was: Dodd; Irwin, Anderson, Marsh, Cowell; Barber, Roden; Molloy, Hough, McLoughlin, Doran, Stazicker, Farrell. Subs: Shaw, Svabic, Morley, Murray. Tries were scored by Dodd and Stazicker, while Barber and Svabic each kicked a goal.

Neil Roden was placed in the sin-bin by referee Michael Dawber midway through the second half for allegedly slowing down a restart. Four years later we are again paired with the London club --- Broncos no more, now Harlequins --- and irrespective of the result we hope to make it a big day for Roughyeds on and off the field, hopefully with the support, both at the turnstiles and on the corporate front, of the town's rugby league community.

Normal league-match prices will be charged --- namely £13 for adults in the upper stand and £12 in the lower stand; £9 and £8 for pensioners and students under 18 in full time education; and £5 in both sections for children under 16.

Bill Quinn and the directors are also hopeful that there will be demand

for hospitality suite places at a cost of £35 a head, this to include pre-match meal with wine, use of the pay bar, seats from the comfort of the boxes if so required, the opportunity for a small additional outlay to win prizes in competitions, and inclusion after the match in the official man-of-the-match and champagne moment presentations.

So make a note in your diary. It's our next home game, two weeks today, Sunday, May 13. The Swinton league game scheduled for that day is to be rearranged and, instead, we have the visit from the capital of a Super League side that began the current campaign with a performance that shocked the whole of the sport --- a win at St Helens.

More recently, they took maximum points over Easter with wins against Hull FC at the Stoop and Catalans Dragons in the south of France, followed by a 22-22 home draw with Wakefield Trinity Wildcats.

Had Quins snatched it, they would have pulled off their fourth straight win, but it was interesting after that match to hear what coach Brian McDermott had to say about the possible after-effects of a tight 22-22 draw in searing heat on the back of the crowded Easter programme.

Expressing the view that the demands of the busy schedule could be felt well into May, McDermott told League Express: "When you are playing a week-in, week-out sport you can't give someone a dig in the ribs and expect the bruising to go within ten days."

"It isn't as if we put the players on drips during the week and then they are ready to go for the next game. How I handle coaching in the next four weeks will be very important."

It all makes for an interesting build-up to the tie, Roughyeds also having a tough run-in with today's game against Keighley and then a visit to South Wales next Friday night to play Celtic Crusaders in a match to be televised live by Sky.

They don't come much tougher in Co-Operative National League Two than Celtic Crusaders away in a night match after a potentially tiring coach trip on busy roads to South Wales on the worst day of the week for traffic. Next up it's Harlequins and then, on Sunday, May 20, fancied Barrow Raiders are here in another big game.

The next two Boundary Park matches should be crackers. Try to get here --- and bring a friend.

SUPPORT GROUP NEWS

QUIZ NIGHT

Tuesday, 8th May, 8.30pm in the social club lounge

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SUPPORT THE ROUGHYEDS

LOCAL LAD 'FOGGY' FACES BIG TEST ON HOME SOIL

The pressure is on me,' says Higgy, Waterhead old boy

by ROGER HALSTEAD

MICHAEL Fogerty faces the biggest game of his season today --- against hometown club Oldham here at Boundary Park with his family and mates from the local amateur game cheering him on in the stands.

Pride of place in the Foggy fan club will go to girl friend Tracey, daughter of former Oldham prop Tony Ogden, and their four-month old baby boy Harrison, born on New Year's Day, 2007.

"It's going to be a family day out," said Michael this week, "and Tracey is making a point of taking Harrison along so that in years to come we can tell him he was there on the day his dad played for Keighley against Oldham on Boundary Park.

"All my family will be there plus a lot of people from Waterhead. They will all be rooting for me, so I guess that puts me under a lot of pressure to perform."

Foggy, a distant relative of the Oldham-born former Halifax, Wigan, Rochdale and Great Britain star Terry Fogerty, lives in Watersheddings --- no more than a couple of hundred yards from the old ground --- and

second and that's something the boys will be out to rectify at Boundary Park.

"We have a few injuries at present, but some of the injured will be fit by Sunday and the club is also trying to bring in a couple of additions to the squad.

"On a personal note, I love to play well against Oldham, like anybody would in my position. I thought I did okay in the first game, but I could have done better in certain areas and I'll be looking to do that on Sunday."

Two great stalwarts of the game, Roe and Eaton, are the main men on the playing side at Keighley, Peter in his position as director of rugby and Barry as club captain, player-coach and one of the shrewdest and most experienced half-backs in the National Leagues.

Eaton, now in the twilight of an accomplished career which has seen him give great service to Dewsbury, Widnes and Batley, works for the club as a schools' development officer, and he can still hand out a few lessons on the pitch too!

Peter, who has coached several clubs, including Keighley, Featherstone and Barrow, will always be fondly remembered in Oldham because he was the man who brought Charlie McAlister to Watersheddings from rugby union in West Yorkshire --- and we all recall what an exciting player Charlie was.

Cougars have been strengthened in the past couple of weeks by the signing of Featherstone centre or back-row forward Brian Sutton and by the return to fitness from a long absence with a broken leg of stand-off Adam Mitchell.

Injuries have hit hard, though, and Cougars were glad of a Sunday off last weekend while they took stock and stepped up their search for new blood.

Centre Mike Hastings (shoulder) and back-row forward Greg Nicholson (wrist) were the latest of 13 senior players on the casualty list, but with welcome relief from last week's day off Eaton hoped to have wingers Sam Gardner, Ryan Smith and Alex Brown, as well as Nicholson, fit for today's trip to Oldham.

Among Eaton's other key men are prop Simon Bissell, who has returned 'home' after spells with Wigan and Batley; hooker James Feather, who has risen through the ranks from Keighley Albion and the Cougar Cubs; loose-forward Chris Redfern, recruited this season from Hunslet Hawks; full-back Gavin Duffy, another home-produced product; and stand-off Craig Fawcett, signed this year from Featherstone, who forms a more than useful half-back combination with the boss.

Add to the aforementioned, prop Gareth English, long-serving utility back Matt Foster, Aussie forward Brendan Rawlings and back-rowers Tom Palmer and Richard Knight and you have a useful-looking Cougars squad who will be determined today to reverse the result at Cougar Park on April Fools' Day.

FLASHBACK... 'FOGGY' IN HIS WATERHEAD DAYS. PICTURE COURTESY OF OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE



works for a locally-based storage equipment installation firm. He played his early rugby with Higginshaw and then moved on to Waterhead before turning pro with the Cougars in January, 2006. Now established as a big centre in the Cougars back division, 26-year-old Foggy is enjoying life in Bronte country.

"It's a big step up from amateur to semi-pro," he said, "but I've learned a lot at Keighley and for that I have to thank people like Peter Roe, Barry Eaton and Glen Barraclough. We did okay in the first half when Oldham won 26-16 at Cougar Park a month ago, but we let it slip a bit in the

Oldham RLFC Appearances and Scorers, 2007

players statistics

[up to and including APRIL 15]

NAME	PLAYED	TRIES	GOALS	POINTS
P.Ashton	8	1	17	38
C.Baines	7	1		4
J.Boults	8			
G.Costin	4	1		4
A.Crabtree	8	1		4
A.Gorey	4			
I.Hodson	4	1		4
J.Hough	1			
D.Houston	10			
S.Hoyle	9	1		4
G.Langley	10	5		20
C.Littler	9	1		4
R.Mervill	6	1		4
P.O'Connor	10	3		12
M.Ogden	5	1	10	24
S.Oldham	1			
L.Onyango	1	1		4
N.Roden	9	3		12
W.Rogers	8			
L.Sanderson	2		1	2
I.Sinfield	9	1		12
K.Smith	9	5		20
M.Stout	4	1		4
S.Tamghart	10	2		8
T.Tonks	1			
A.Wilkinson	9	7		28
L.Wingfield	4	1		1

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with GARETH WALKER of RUGBY LEAGUER & LEAGUE EXPRESS



TOWN SHOW THE WAY

JUST as some people were starting to worry that Castleford Tigers would blow away all the opposition put in front of them this season, inspiration arrived from an unlikely source last weekend.

Workington Town have endured a tumultuous start to the year, struggling in the Northern Rail Cup group stages and then suspending their coach Ged Stokes.

But last Sunday they came closer than any National League side so far to toppling the Tigers, as they trailed by just four points 47 minutes into their clash at the Jungle.

Castleford eventually raised their game again to finish with a comfortable 50-24 scoreline.

But Workington have probably given teams extra hope.

It's not that the likes of Widnes and Whitehaven would have been writing off their own chances just yet.

But the ease with which the Tigers had been dismantling their opposition had raised fears in some quarters that they could repeat the domination of past relegated sides Huddersfield Giants and Salford City Reds.

Terry Matterson's team still may do that, and the next month or so will go a long way to deciding their league campaign.

This weekend they host Rochdale Hornets, who have yet to hit their best form, but who were the first team to beat Castleford in the league during their last NL1 season in 2005.

Cas then travel to Leigh Centurions, take on

fellow promotion hopefuls Widnes Vikings at the Jungle, and then entertain Leigh in the NRC.

The run of fixtures ends with a trip to improving Halifax, who also beat the Tigers' 2005 vintage, in the Challenge Cup.

You can't go as far as to say the next five weeks will entirely shape Castleford's season - but it should certainly reveal more about NL1 as a competition.

The week cannot go by without mention of Darren Holt's superb achievement in breaking Willie Horne's all-time points scoring record for Barrow last weekend.

Holt's fifth minute try away at York saw him surpass the figure of 1,814 set by the legendary Horne.

The two men played in vastly different eras for the famous old club, with Horne leading them to a Challenge Cup win, and Holt playing in a number of sides that have struggled.

But Holt has showed tremendous longevity and commitment for Raiders, and fully deserves his place in history.

And it was entirely fitting that he put on a sparkling man of the match display against the Knights. Holt looks set to be a key player - yet again - as Barrow mount a promotion push.

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Lansdowne Trading Services
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Clifford Bardsley
David Whitehead
David Lord
Janet Yewdale
Nigel Marland
Christopher Hamilton
Jeffrey Bates
Iain Ashworth
Roger Halstead
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Nick Henry
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Hans Bateson
John Kettleton

THIS programme had already gone to press when the latest of the Five Alive monthly draws took place on Friday. However, we can tell you that the next of the quarterly all-inclusive luncheons in the social club will take place on Friday, June 29.

At this stage we cannot tell you who the guest speaker will be, but if he or she is half as good as our first two speakers, Colin Morris and Jamie Bloem, the luncheon for Five Alive members will indeed be a very enjoyable social get-together.

Members please note that guests can be taken along to the meal for the very reasonable cost of £15 per head.

Might we just stress at this juncture that the growth and development of our two lotteries -- Five Alive and Club Cash -- is absolutely paramount to the expansion of our club as part of our avowed intent to take it upwards and onwards.

On the facing page you can read all about each lottery, what each has to offer and how to make contact in order to join if you are not already involved.

Please be advised also that John McAndrew, our Club Cash administrator, is always on the look-out for new agents and collectors. Five Alive is rather different in that members pay by cheque periodically or by standing order, but a large

percentage of Club Cash income is generated by door-to-door collections.

Man power is needed to make this work well. The bigger the collection team, the more successful is the lottery. More canvassing can also be done if the club has the man-power available to make an ever-increasing number of collections.

Now that summer is on its way, with warm days and long, light evenings in prospect there is no better time for anyone with a bit of spare time and a desire to be directly involved in the promotion and development of our club to consider joining our lottery team.

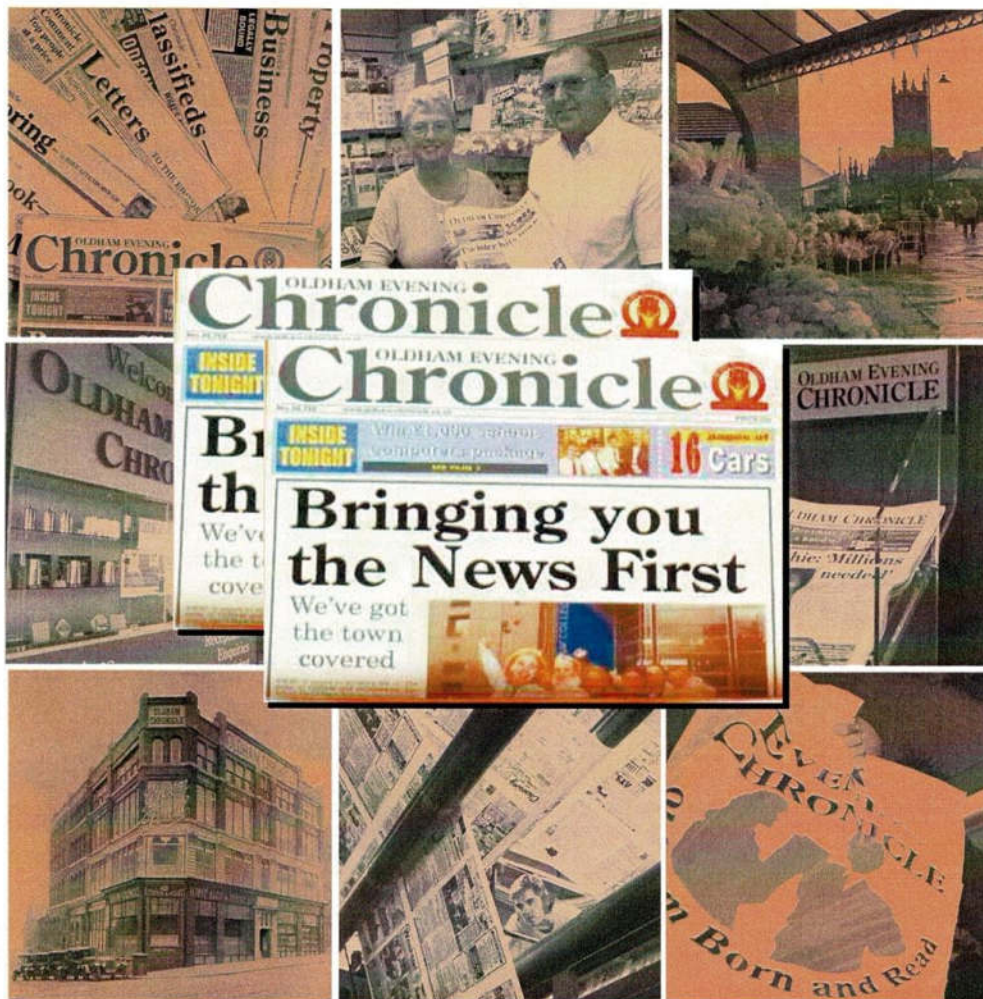
We can promise you plenty of fresh air, exercise and fun to say nothing of the feel-good factor you'll get from helping your favourite club to go the extra mile.

There are other benefits, too, so if you're fit, active, comfortable when meeting the public and promoting the club, YOU are just the man or woman who could play your part in helping the Roughyeds to go places.

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journalistic license

by Matthew Chambers

ON the completion of today's game, Oldham find themselves in the middle of what is the toughest section of the season this side of the play-offs.

First there is Celtic Crusaders in Bridgend next Friday. Hardly the easiest of games, but a picnic compared to what is to follow the following week as Harlequins visit Boundary Park in the Carnegie Challenge Cup.

To round off this testing triumverate, Barrow Raiders — replete with recent Super League signings Michael Smith and Pat Weisner — travel down to meet Steve Deakin's side.

While few of even the most optimistic supporters expect the Roughyeds to turn over Harlequins, the other two games have to be classed as must-wins.

Why? Because every point in this league is going to be absolutely vital.

It would be easy to look upon such games as 'bonus' encounters — have a go at picking up a point or two from them and bank on the easier gains from the league's also-rans.

I won't mention the sides I'm referring to there. Because as well as being massively disrespectful, such talk has a habit of coming back to take a bite at one's rear end.

The point is, very little can be taken for granted in a division as competitive as Co-operative National League Two. Supporters of one or two sides were brass-necked enough to brag on the internet about remaining unbeaten throughout the season — before a tackle had been made in anger.

Now, to today's deliberate mistake. Notice that first line of this piece?

"After today's game". Fatal, should thoughts ever begin to spin along this line out on the pitch.

Keighley, ably marshalled by the wily Barry Eaton, will certainly be sensing blood after outplaying the Roughyeds for 40 minutes at Cougar Park earlier in the season.

Double that effort and the Roughyeds could be in trouble. They certainly will be if not fully focused on the task at hand today, rather than that of practising their best grimaces before going in front of the Sky cameras in five days' time.

THERE is a saying in sport that a contract is not worth the paper it is written on.

Paul Cooke may have taken that as literal truth. Did he sign a three-year contract? Did he refuse to sign a three-year contract? Did he have a bust-up with a team-mate? Does he simply want to play for his boyhood idols?

In engineering a move across the River Hull to the bobbing Robins of Hull KR, Cooke's actions have caused meltdown at local radio station switchboards whenever the issue has been raised.

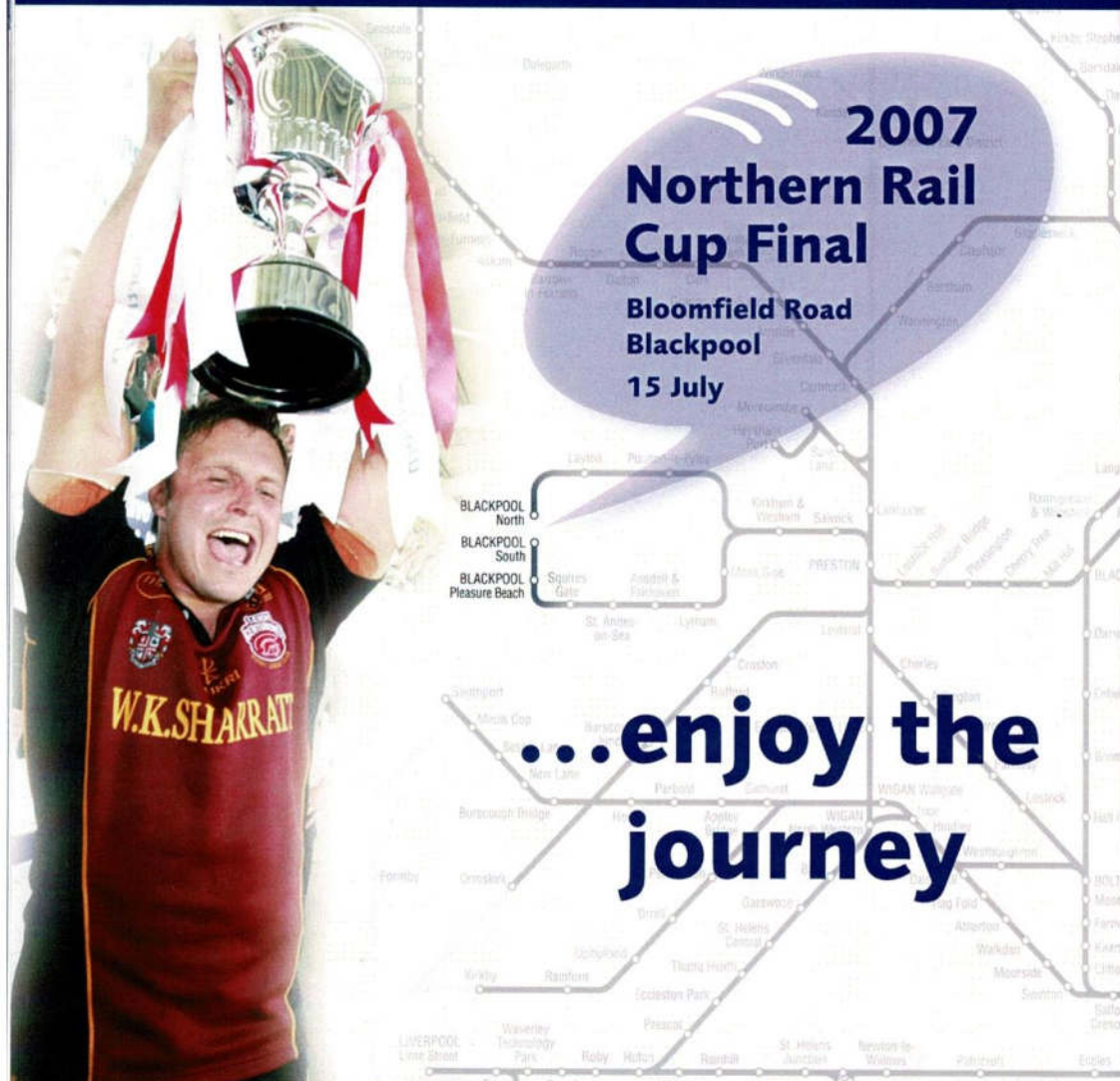
It will probably all end up being resolved one way or another at a tribunal next week. Until then, stay tuned for the best soap opera this side of Weatherfield.

Matthew

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down memory lane

with Murph



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'MURPH' LAUNCHES A STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE FOR FORMER PLAYERS

MARTIN Murphy, who played more post-war games for Oldham than any other player, is "proud and privileged" to become the first member of a new Oldham RL ex-players' association to be launched soon.

Now aged 58, and living in Moorside, the lion-hearted full-back spent 15 years at Watersheddings and clocked up 462 first-team appearances to boast the third highest number of games for the club in more than 100 years of pro rugby league in Oldham.

Only Joe Ferguson (627 between 1899 and 1922) and Jack Read (463 between 1925 and 1939) played in more games than 'Murph', who was No 1 in the post-war record books; who wore No 1 on his full-back's shirt during his long service to Oldham; and who now becomes member No 1 in the club's new association for former players.

It is being set up in conjunction with Roughyeds and is open to anyone who has played professionally for either the current club or the previous Oldham club, which was liquidated in 1997.

"An active ex-players association in Oldham is long overdue and I am honoured to give it a kick-start," said Martin, who had the distinction of captaining the former club in its centenary season of 1976-77.

Still a window cleaner in the town after nearly 30 years in the job, he added: "I have wonderful memories of my rugby days and I would love to share them with the blokes who played for Oldham at the same time.

"In those days we spent years at one club and built up friendships which shouldn't be allowed to

fade as we get older. I still see some of my old team mates around town, but I would love to meet up again with out-of-towners like Tommy Davies, Tommy Warburton, Tommy Canning and Wilf Briggs, just to name four.

"An organised association will enable former players from various decades to renew old friendships. The years are rolling on. If we are going to do it there is no better time than now."

On behalf of the Roughyeds, former Oldham Chronicle reporter Roger Halstead, who covered

Oldham RL for the paper for more than 40 years, will work alongside Murphy in getting the new body up and running.

The plan is to hold an initial meeting in the Roughyeds social club on May 29 to be attended by Roughyeds, interested ex-players and particularly those who might wish to become involved in the setting up and administering of the association.

From that meeting, it is planned to launch the association publicly at the Oldham v Hunslet game at Boundary Park on Sunday, July 22.

In the meantime, all ex-players interested in joining Murphy on his trip down Memory Lane are

asked to ring Janet at the Roughyeds office on 0161 628 3677 or email to chris@oldhamrugbyleague.fsnet.co.uk providing name and contact details.

For the record, only eight players have recorded more than 400 senior games for Oldham, going back to 1876, and two of them played for years in the same team as Murphy — winger Mike Elliott (446 games) and hooker Kevin Taylor (429 games).

All three are included in the club's Hall of Fame



2007 fixtures

DATE	OPPONENTS	CUP	VENUE	K. O.	RESULT	W/L	ATT
31/01/07	Warrington Wolves	Friendly	Home	7.45pm	42-6	W	789
11/02/07	Rochdale Hornets	NRC	Home	3.00pm	8-24	L	1,145
18/02/07	Swinton Lions	NRC	Home	3.00pm	18-28	L	1,017
25/02/07	Dewsbury Rams	NRC	Away	3.00pm	22-32	L	819
04/03/07	Rochdale Hornets	NRC	Away	3.00pm	6-16	L	816
10/03/07	East Hull	CCC 3	Away	2.00pm	26-10	W	214
18/03/07	Dewsbury Rams	NRC	Home	3.00pm	8-32	L	622
25/03/07	Swinton Lions	NRC	Away	3.00pm	42-18	W	555
01/04/07	Keighley Cougars	CCC4	Away	3.00pm	26-16	W	1039
04/04/07	Featherstone Rovers	NL2	Home	7.45pm	12-23	L	1,162
09/04/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Away	3.30pm	NEW DATE BELOW		
15/04/07	Blackpool Panthers	NL2	Away	3.00pm	40-20	W	501
29/04/07	Keighley Cougars	NL2	Home	3.00pm			
04/05/07	Celtic Crusaders	NL2	Away	7.35pm			
13/05/07	Swinton Lions	NL2	Home	3.00pm	TO BE REARRANGED		
13/05/07	Harlequins	CCC5	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			
22/08/07	Hunslet Hawks	NL2	Away	7.30pm			
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
CCC - Carnegie Challenge Cup

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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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FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

ANDREW : 07912842767