

# game line-up

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| OLDHAM SQUAD    | Played | SWINTON LIONS     |
|-----------------|--------|-------------------|
| CHRIS BAINES    |        | WAYNE ENGLISH     |
| MATTY BROOKS    |        | ANDY SAYWELL      |
| JASON BOULTS    |        | ADAM BOWMAN       |
| GENO COSTIN     |        | MARK BROCKLEHURST |
| JAMES COYLE     |        | MARLON BILLY      |
| ANDY CRABTREE   |        | CRAIG ASHALL      |
| BYRON FORD      |        | LIAM MCGOVERN     |
| ANDY GOREY      |        | BRUCE JOHNSON     |
| IAN HODSON      |        | PHIL WOOD         |
| JOHN HOUGH      |        | ROB LINE          |
| DREW HOUSTON    |        | ROB DRAPER        |
| SIMEON HOYLE    |        | MARTIN MOANA      |
| GARETH LANGLEY  |        | LEE MARSH         |
| CRAIG LITTLER   |        | JAY DUFFY         |
| RICHARD MERVILL |        | MATTY BRYERS      |
| LUCAS ONYANGO   |        | DAVE NEWTON       |
| NEIL RODEN      |        | GARETH HAYES      |
| IAN SINFIELD    |        | DEAN GORTON       |
| KRIS SMITH      |        | PAUL ALCOCK       |
| SAID TAMGHART   |        | DAVID BATES       |
| TONY TONKS      |        | DESI WILLIAMS     |
| ALEX WILKINSON  |        | MIKE SMITH        |
| ADAM HUGHES     |        |                   |
| ADAM ROBINSON   |        |                   |
| ROB ROBERTS     |        |                   |
| IAN GORDON      |        |                   |
| GARETH MORTON   |        |                   |
| WARREN STEVENS  |        |                   |

SWINTON LIONS

## match officials

REFEREE: C Halloran TOUCH JUDGES: P Ward, J Page

4TH OFFICIAL: P Taberner

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# ROUGHYEDS

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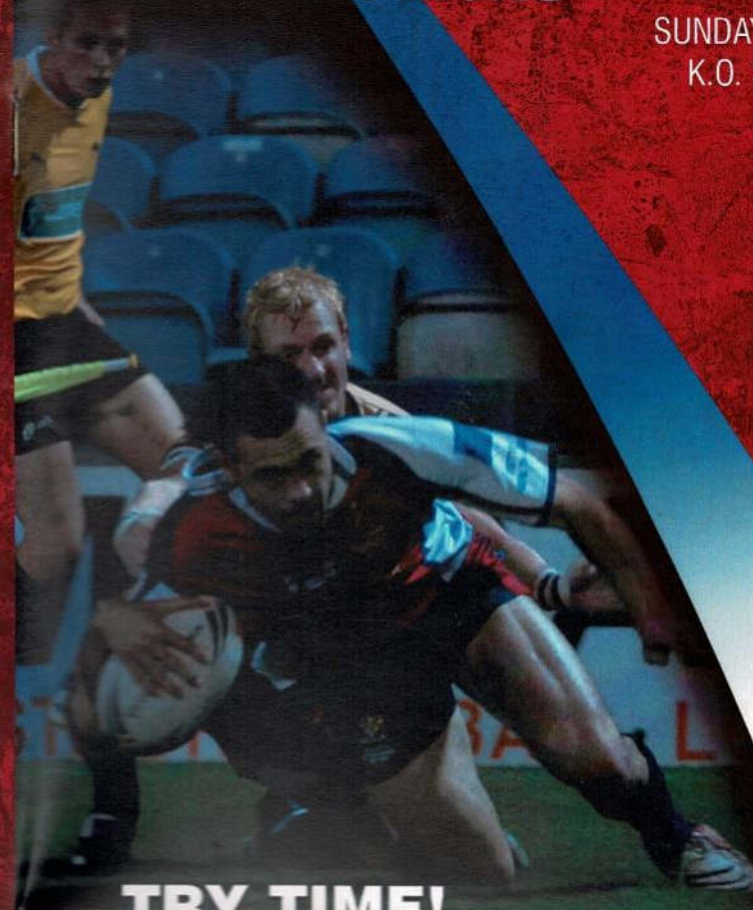
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# CONTENTS

Oldham RLFC v Swinton Lions

## FEATURES

- 4 **Boardroom View** with Chris Hamilton
- 6 **Deeks's Coach Approach** A look at the preparation for today's game
- 9 **Focus on the Service Area**
- 10 **Cooke-ability**
- 12 **Player Profile** ADAM HUGHES
- 14 **Heritage Trust** with Brian Walker
- 17 **The Boys and their backers**
- 18 **Picture Parade**
- 20 **Roughyeds Roar** by Ian Wilson
- 23 **Chance to meet Ricky Hatton**
- 24 **Our Visitors - Swinton Lions**
- 25 **Win a GB mascot prize**
- 27 **National League Talk**
- 29 **Keeping the dream alive**
- 31 **Journalistic license** by Matthew Chambers
- 33 **Player statistics**
- 34 **Fixtures and sponsors**
- 35 **Merchandise on offer**
- 36 **Today's Teams** View both of today's teams in full, plus match officials

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**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, 145 - 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:** Neil Roden 77 - 2000-2004; 2007-7

**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 A 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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Bob Irving 1964-74

Martin Murphy 1966-82

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# boardroom **view**

with Chris Hamilton



**After a long and eventful season in National League Two so far we have reached the point now where its do or die and isnt it great!**

We have not been involved in Play Off

football for two years and whilst a move straight up to National League One would have been a dream for everybody we still have everything to play for starting today.

With the recent league clash still fresh in our minds we know exactly what our opponents are about and how difficult a match today will be but in a sense that is a good thing because there is absolutely no excuse for any kind of complacency.

We know that our performances have not been brilliant over the past few weeks but having said that it is always an easy game from the stands and regardless of that it is now that really counts.

We have effectively got a mini season of four games and its quite simple - win four games and you get to National League One - lose and your season is over for another year.

The Play Offs have been the scene of some of the clubs greatest moments over the last few years and there is no better feeling than winning a sudden death match but no worse feeling than losing one and enough of the lads have sampled both of those emotions to know which one they want to taste today.

We are very much aware of the threat that Swinton will pose and both teams have

played each other enough times this season to know what to expect. Dont forget the Lions were grand Finalists last year having beaten Celtic Crusaders away in the semi final.

The one thing we must make sure we focus on today is US and we have enough quality in the squad to make sure that we can achieve our goal. There has been eleven months of graft by everybody to get this far and the players must make sure they remember all the knocks, all the pain, all the rain, all the sacrifices, the highs, the lows, the inbetweens and everything else that has had to put on one side to commit themselves to the club - in Play Off rugby there are no second chances, no times for any "sorries" or "if onlys" - its now or never and its time to stand up and be counted.

Having finished with 20 league points more than Swinton - and with a better points difference of 285 - we have shown our strengths over the course of the normal league season and that should give us confidence, but not arrogance.

With the tv cameras at the game filming for Rugby League Raw this is again another chance for the club to send out a message.

Your support all season has been great and we and the players would ask you to get behind the lads not only when things are going right, but also if they are not. I am sure you will respond.

Enjoy the game and hopefully see us on to a victory.

*Chris*

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# deaks's coach approach

with Steve Deakin

## WELCOME to Boundary Park for the first home play-off game against Swinton Lions.

Having played each other four times this season --- two wins each --- it is fair to say there is nothing we don't know about them or they don't know about us.

In these circumstances it may well turn out to be a low-scoring game with each side looking to cancel out the other.

However, we do feel that with a full squad and with everyone available we should have enough strike power to cause the Lions problems.

We are quietly confident that if we play to our potential we can get the win and move on to another home tie here at Boundary Park next Sunday against the winners of the Workington v York tussle.

Without wanting to look backwards too much, the general feeling among players and coaching staff is that we have had a good season. A success rate of 74 per cent is pretty good and higher than a lot of people would have anticipated at the start of the season.

There have been plenty of highs and lows along the way. Among the highs I count the following:

- THE outstanding football we produced in beating Barrow 50-18 and Workington 44-18 here at Boundary Park.
- THE two televised games against Celtic Crusaders in which we showcased our abilities on national TV and were twice involved in games attracting record NL2 crowds. To be on live national television for the first time -- and then a second time -- perhaps gives an indication of the sort of profile we are perceived to have as a team and as a club. The record crowd of 4,327 at Boundary Park produced a fabulous atmosphere of the sort that most people associate with Oldham RLFC. It was a great game of football played by two good teams in front of a big crowd. It was a fabulous night, the only

disappointment from our point of view being the result.

- NEIL Roden's winning of a player-of-the-round award in the Northern Rail Cup - a first for a player from this club.
- OLDHAM awarded team-of-the-week accolades in League Express on two separate occasions - more firsts for the club.
- THE inclusion of Kris Smith, Alex Wilkinson, Gareth Langley, Richard Mervill, Neil Roden (twice), Adam Hughes and Byron Ford in Rugby League World magazine's NL2 teams-of-the-month.
- NEIL Roden lifting a player-of-the-month prize in the same set of awards, judged by the magazine's specialist rugby league writers and reporters.

These awards underline what an outstanding contribution the players have made to Oldham's cause this year, not merely those mentioned individually but all the players in the squad without whose support and comradeship the award winners could not have surfaced.

Anyway, that's more than enough of looking back and preening ourselves. More important is to look forward and to do all we can to make sure we continue our progress and our development. Of immediate priority is the play-off in which we find ourselves today... sudden death, no second chance and a scenario in which mistakes are invariably punished even more than usual.

This inevitably produces a different mindset, but we have plenty of people in our squad with play-off experience so, hopefully, this will not produce too many problems.

Finally, mention once more of the support we get from YOU, the fans. Your backing has been fantastic this year and I am sure you will be here again in numbers today and doing your best to give us the sort of vocal support that does make a difference - that's one of the advantages of having a home tie.

Swinton will have good support, too, and I know the Lions fans will make themselves heard, but not as much, I hope, as the Roughyeds supporters.

As I commented on earlier in this piece, it was super to see such a large crowd for the Celtic Crusaders match and, you know, if we could get those fans back on a week-in, week-out basis that would go a long, long way in helping the club to regain its position as one of the leading rugby league clubs in the country.

Stick with us, and if you can encourage others to get involved, too, that will be extremely helpful.

Enjoy today,

Deaks.

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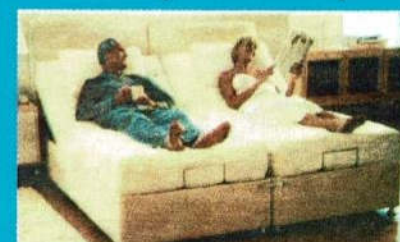
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# FOCUS ON THE OLDHAM SERVICE AREA

(all you need to know about local rugby league at grass-roots level)

## HAROLD, LEE GOING UP IN THE WORLD by ROGER HALSTEAD

YOU can keep your half-backs and your centre-wing pairings... the word around town is that the best rugby twosome in Oldham is to be found in the partnership of Harold Dawes and Lee Charlesworth.

Harold doesn't do any tackling and Lee hasn't put on his scrum cap for quite a while, but as manager and coach respectively they are branching out from Waterhead and are moving up in the world.

"We've been together for about three years now," explained 53-year-old Harold, "and we like to think we do well together as a team, not only as manager and coach of Waterhead under-18s, but in the wider rugby league arena as well."

Lee is perhaps better known as the former Mayfield, St Anne's and Waterhead scrum-half, now making a name for himself as a top coach at under-18s level.

Harold, self-employed in the building game, has had a managerial role at Waterhead for several years and has now been elevated to manager of the soon-to-be-picked Oldham Service Area town-team under-18s squad, coached by... right first time... Lee Charlesworth. And the rise through the ranks of Harold and Lee doesn't end there.

Lee will coach the North-West regional under-18s squad, to be named next month, and Harold was initially named as NW manager, but he has had to withdraw because he will now accept the invitation to manage England under-14s instead.

"Dates clash, so one of them had to go and I opted to take the England post," revealed Harold, who has submitted also an application for the vacant position of manager of the BARLA Great Britain under-18s international squad.

And if he were to get it you could put your money on Lee being involved somewhere in the Great Britain set-up because Harold believes he is simply the best!

In the meantime Lee is going to get the assistance at club (Waterhead) level of Peach Road old boy Lee Jewitt, the young

Salford City Reds star, whose 2007 season is now over and who has a bit of time on his hands to help out at the club that spawned him.

At town-team level the Dawes-Charlesworth double act will supervise under-18s training on Wednesday evenings at Couthill until a 20-strong Oldham squad is named soon for the North-West regional carnival at Hopwood Hall, Middleton on Saturday, October 6.

Oldham will compete with Wigan/Leigh, Halton (Widnes), Warrington, Lancashire, Rochdale, St Helens and Salford in a series of 12 round robin matches, each of 30 minutes duration. First up for Oldham in round one will be a derby clash with Rochdale.

From what they see at Hopwood Hall, selectors will pick a North-West regional squad for the National carnival in West Yorkshire on Saturday, October 27 and eventually that will lead to the naming of a Great Britain under-18s side.

With three under-18s teams in the town -- two of them in the National Youth League -- Oldham are hoping they will be represented not only in the North-West side, but also in the Great Britain squad.

On day one of the National Youth League, Waterhead beat Saddleworth 11-8 in a very competitive game, Ashley Wildman scoring Waterhead's try and Joe Ford chipping in with three goals and a drop goal.

Harold Dawes, meanwhile, is looking ahead eagerly to his role as England under-14s manager, an appointment which stemmed directly from his work with Garry Highton on a regional camp at Rossall and on a national camp in Sheffield.

It was at Spink Hill, Sheffield that camp co-ordinator Kate Yule put forward Harold's name and backed his appointment with the national under-14s side.

Said Harold: "Following on from that I got a phone call from the RFL offering me the position and I was delighted to accept it. Basically, I will be there to support the coaching staff in an administrative role and to be the focal point for the boys and/or their parents if problems arise or if they wish to speak to a team official."

Roughyeds stars of the future? The under-8s hopefuls of St Anne's and Fitton Hill/Hathershaw Bulldogs go head to head in Boundary Park curtain-raisers.



(READ THIS PAGE IN FUTURE MATCH-DAY MAGAZINES FOR SERVICE AREA NEWS AND UPDATES)

with Geoff Cooke

# cooke-ability!

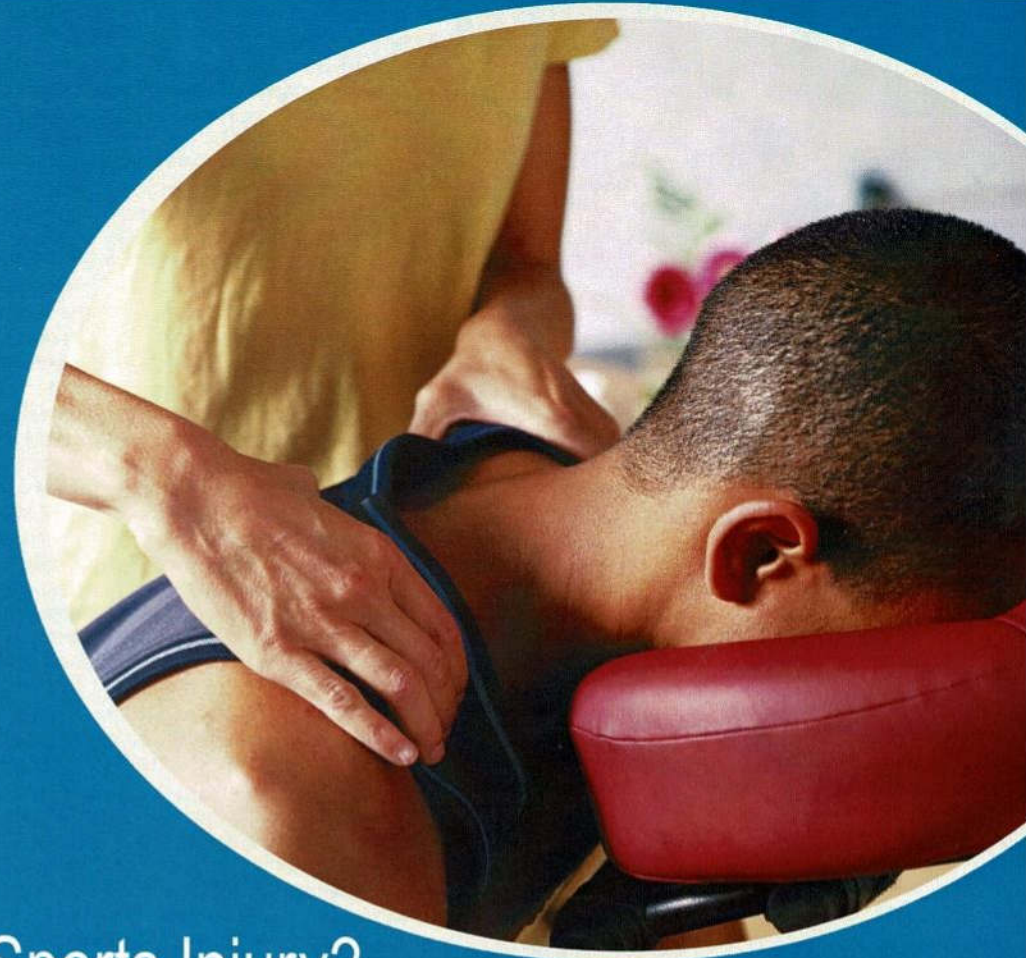
## From here on in it's cup-tie football all the way. No excuses: do the business or you're out.

From an Oldham perspective (and, no doubt, a Swinton perspective as well) we now face a mini tournament of four matches to gain promotion. And the key to winning a tournament is to peak at the right time. In 2001 Mike Ford's team reached their peak in the semi-final against Rochdale at Spotland. Although that game will live long in the memory, ultimately it was to no avail as the side was unable to lift itself sufficiently to complete the job in the final against Widnes. Swinton Coach Paul Kidd will have similar feelings as his side last year probably played their best game in eliminating Celtic Crusaders in the semi-final only to fall at the last hurdle against Sheffield Eagles. Kidd will be crucially aware of this and, as Swinton have been arguably the toughest opponents Oldham have faced on four separate occasions already this season, Steve Deakin and his players must be aware that today's fixture will be a hard fought affair. The important question to answer is should Oldham fight fire with fire or do we think we have the better footballers and should play them off the park? The latter approach has its risks but when you have quality threequarters there is a case for letting the ball do the work. Of course you have to establish a platform through the forwards but a quick play-the-ball and a willingness to drag the opposition round the park can pay dividends. I watched Halifax recently, a team which has really hit form when it matters, and in four of their last five matches they have been around the fifty point mark by throwing caution to the winds and moving the ball at every opportunity. In modern rugby league once you get on a roll momentum can be hard to stop as we saw last week when London Skolars gave us a real fright. In the circumstances of such a game the crucial elements are ball control and discipline. Swinton's plan will be to draw us into an arm wrestle and Oldham's players must be acutely aware that not conceding penalties will be a key factor. If Oldham can take on board all the lessons of the season so far they have the squad capable of landing promotion. No-one expects it to be easy but the encouraging thing is that Oldham's best displays have come when the chips are down. Let's hope that today the side get it together for the beginning of the big push for N.L.1

In other big fixtures this weekend as the season reaches its climax Warrington, Wakefield and Harlequins will all be looking to displace Wigan in Super League's top six. These teams are so close it's almost impossible to call, though I think Warrington and Wakefield's injury situation may ultimately cause them to miss out.

In N.L.1 Whitehaven accounted for Leigh on Thursday, as I expected, and I'm taking Halifax to send Sheffield packing. If that sets up a contest between Halifax and Whitehaven to meet Widnes in the play-off final the Cumbrians must start favourites having turned Halifax over four times already this year. But, interestingly Halifax have a win against Widnes to their name, something Whitehaven can't boast.

N.L.2 form suggests Workington should beat York. However, I was impressed with the way York tackled Oldham when we won in only the last minute thanks to Rob Roberts' drop goal. I wouldn't be at all surprised to be hosting York next week should Oldham account for Swinton today.



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# halstead's choice

## TRY-MACHINE ADAM AIMS FOR WORLD CUP 'GLORY' WITH HIS ADOPTED WELSH SQUAD

by ROGER HALSTEAD

ADAM Hughes has two ambitions in rugby league for the remainder of 2007 --- to help Oldham to win promotion and to assist Wales to qualify for a place in the 2008 World Cup to be held in Australia.

Qualifying thanks to a grandfather's Welsh ancestry, Adam has worn the red jersey of the Principality since 2002 and his dream is to play for Wales in the World Cup on the other side of the globe next year against the big guns of Australia, New Zealand and, of course, England.

Achievable? Make up your own mind. Nineteen nations are, or have been, competing, but only ten will play in the finals of the tournament between October 25 and November 22 next year.

Seven have already secured a place --- holders and Tri-Nations champions Australia are joined by New Zealand, England, France and Papua New Guinea, all of whom have gained automatic entry, plus Fiji and Tonga, who have qualified via the Pacific Cup.

Another seven nations, Ireland, Lebanon, Russia, Scotland, Wales, USA and Samoa are vying for the remaining three places.

The final round of European qualifying matches will be played on November 4 with Ireland, Lebanon and Russia (pool 1) and Scotland and Wales (pool 2) in competition. The top team in each of those groups will go through to the finals, while the runner-up in each pool will join Samoa and USA in another play-off in mid-November for the right to fill the tenth and final place.

"We've got to beat Scotland by more than seven points to top the group and go through," explained Adam, "and if we fail to do that we'll have to do it the hard way with matches against Samoa, USA and whichever team finishes as runner-up in pool 1.

"We play PNG in a friendly at the back end of October and then go up to Scotland to play the Scots.

"To play in the World Cup in Australia would be a fabulous experience, made even more special because it's in Australia and my favourite all-time player and role model is Mal Meninga. His defence was awesome and he scored lots of tries.

"I like to score a few myself, but since I've been out injured others are catching me up, so the sooner I get back the better."

Realistically, Wales would have reason to celebrate a glorious World Cup merely by doing enough to be on a

plane to Sydney for the finals, and that doesn't seem beyond a squad that includes Oldham-born Iestyn Harris and Paul Highton; Adam's Roughyeds team mate Robert 'Two Bobs' Roberts; and former Oldham players Chris Morley and Ian Watson.

A possible starting line-up, given on the Welsh RFL website, names Hughes at left centre, Harris at stand-off, Highton in the second row and 'Two Bobs' at loose-forward --- and that's not bad for starters.

But that's all a couple of months away for Oldham's free-scoring centre, whose more immediate task is to get back into the Roughyeds side after injury, pick up the rich seam of form that saw him scoring loads of tries before he was laid off five games ago and assist the team to reach its season-long goal of promotion to NL1.

He began his Oldham career back in May and made a blistering start with four tries in his first three outings. He crossed for two on his debut in a 50-18 win against Barrow at Boundary Park, added another at London Skolars and scored an absolute gem at Workington --- one of the best centre's tries seen from an Oldham player in many years.

He has continued to score regularly and his total currently stands at 15 tries in 12 outings for Roughyeds to share leading try scorer status with his winger, Lucas Onyango, who has 15 in 18 outings.

Alex Wilkinson is coming up on the rails with 12, but if Roughyeds perform well enough to go through to the Grand Final at Headingley on October 7 what odds against Byron Ford (11 tries in six games) edging out the current leaders?

You can bet best tickets to the Eisteddfod to a rotten leek that Yorkshire's most famous 'Welshman' with a Leeds accent will be determined to keep Lucas, Wilko and Byron at arm's length in the try-scoring charts once he gets back in the Roughyeds line-up.

You see, he's been scoring tries ever since he first laced up a pair of rugby boots and with a record of 78 Super League tries in 162 appearances in the elite competition --- one every other game on average --- he has nothing to prove when it comes to getting over the whitewash.

He made nine Super League appearances with Leeds; 46 with Wakefield; 16 with Halifax; and 91 with Widnes.

His 78 Super League tries were scored for Leeds (4), Wakefield (21), Halifax (8) and Widnes (45) and it is interesting to see that at each of those Super League clubs he was consistent in scoring, on average, once every two games.

He also kicked 34 goals for Wakefield and 51 for Widnes to record a total Super League points haul of 482.

So where did it all begin, this journey which was to carry Adam to Sheffield, Leeds, Wakefield, Halifax, Widnes, Leigh and then Oldham on his treks through rugby league land?

Well, he was only six years of age when he and his brother, Ian, started playing for Penders Panthers on the outskirts of Leeds. He was there for five years, then it was East Leeds and Milford before he signed professional for Sheffield when he was 15.

It isn't widely known that 29-year-old Adam, who lives in Leeds with his wife Charlotte, little girls Phoebe (5) and Alanna (8) and baby boy Rory (2), signed his first pro forms for the then Eagles boss Gary Hetherington, but was there for only a couple of weeks before he realised he had made a terrible mistake.

"I was only a young lad," he recalled, "and I hated the travelling to Sheffield. I had made a mistake, so I gave them the money back, and signed for Leeds."

He was to serve a two-and-a-half-year apprenticeship at Headingley before moving down the road to Belle Vue where he enjoyed one of the highlights of his career --- a 1998 first division Grand Final win against Featherstone Rovers at Headingley which took Wakefield into Super League for the first time.

Another season to take pride of place in Adam's memory bank was 2002 when Widnes, in Super League by courtesy of their Northern Ford Premiership Grand Final defeat of Oldham at Rochdale, surpassed expectations by holding their own in the top flight.

They won 14 and drew one of their 28 games to finish one place outside the top six and to look down on London, Halifax, Warrington, Wakefield and relegated Salford.

"Everyone wrote us off before the season started, but we made lots of people eat their words," recalled Adam, who played in 27 of the 28 Super League games; top-scored with 18 tries (four more than Stuart Spruce); finished as top points scorer with 160 (50 more than Barry Eaton); and made more clean breaks than any other Vikings player, 33 in total.

In that same season he scored four tries against his former club, Leeds Rhinos, in a superb 34-28 win at the Halton Stadium. He also ran in two hat-tricks --- again against former clubs, first Wakefield and then, on the last day of the season, Halifax.

Leigh Centurions was next stop for Adam and then, as Spring turned to Summer this year, he came to Oldham on a permanent deal to the end of this season after rejecting a chance to come on loan, at least initially.

Was it the right decision? "Certainly was," said Adam. "I'm really enjoying life at the Roughyeds, apart from being out injured this past month. I'm hoping I'll be back for Sunday's play-off with Swinton.

"People often ask me how I think we'll do in the play-offs and I always tell them the same --- I think we can win through to the Grand Final and then win that, too. That's no disrespect to all the other teams in it.

"Swinton will be tough, competitive opponents today, but if we play to our potential they will have to play extremely well to beat us. We tend to play better against the stronger sides. I think there is only one team who would have put us seriously to the test and that's Celtic Crusaders, and they are not in it."



PLAYER PROFILE

ADAM HUGHES

(picture by Graham Lynch)

# AROUND & ABOUT

By Brian Walker

with The Heritage Trust

One of the two faces of Sky Sports' rugby league programmes Mike 'Stevo' Stephenson has just had published his autobiography and, unlike those of many modern day sports stars it's just that – self written and well written.

Mike's been appearing on UK TV screens for almost twenty years. Co-commentating with his on-screen partner Eddie Hemmings he has developed a reputation for straight talking without pulling punches! Stevo tells his story from growing up in a Yorkshire slum, to how he embarked on a successful rugby league career highlighted by winning the World Cup with Great Britain, about his record breaking transfer to Australian club Penrith and then recounts many amusing incidents whilst working as both a journalist and as a commentator at Sky TV.

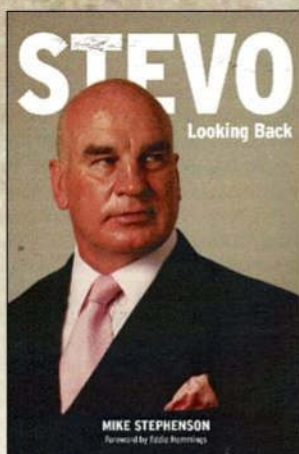
A rugby league hooker from a time when hookers actually hooked the ball – a time when a good number nine was worth his weight in gold and often the difference between a team of pot-hunters and pot-winners! I remember Stevo best from season 1972-73. Great Britain lifted the World Cup in which he'd played a leading role. Staged in France, Britain had beaten Australia, New Zealand and the French in the opening rounds and faced Australia in the play-off for the trophy. Stevo scored one of Great Britain's only two tries. After 80 minutes the score was level at 10-10 and remained unchanged after extra-time. The Brits (including Oldham's second-row star Bobby Irving) were awarded the match on the basis of their superior record in the earlier matches. That same season Stevos' club side Dewsbury won the Rugby League Championship after finishing the season in eighth position in the league just one spot above the Roughyeds. We'd beaten them away 16-12 but had lost the return at Watersheddings 13-4. The two sides were evenly matched. Believe it or not in those days the Championship was decided by a top 16 play-off and therefore Oldham had to face Dewsbury on their old Crown Flat ground. It was a period in time when Oldham had a decent side with players of the quality of international hard-man Frank Foster, Great Britain forward Bob Irving, ball-handling out-half Cliff Hill, the tricky Mick McCone at the base of the scrum, county winger Norman Hodgkinson and Martin Murphy at full-back. A full of confidence Oldham side lost 29-14 in a match not reflected by the final score. Stephenson edged Oldham's former England player Kevin Taylor in the scrums and had a blinder in the loose – proving to be the difference between the well matched sides.

Dewsbury went on lift the cup by producing a shock 22-13 win against Leeds in the final played at Odsal. After a non-stop performance providing Dewsbury with a lion's share of the ball Mike Stevenson won the Harry Sunderland Trophy presented to the man-of-the-match.

Leeds and former Oldham international prop-forward Terry Clawson said in his own autobiography "All the Wrong Moves" that "His (Stephenson's) play in the 1972 World Cup in France and the 1973 Championship final for Dewsbury at Odsal was the best I've ever witnessed from a hooker". Unfortunately, (for Dewsbury) the Championship final was Stevo's swan-song signing for Australian side Penrith a few weeks later.

Buy the book it's excellent. Available from the Oldham Evening Chronicle at £17.99 (hardback). 304 pages, 30 photographs. For details of book signings: [www.verticaleditions.com](http://www.verticaleditions.com) and click on to 'news'. ISBN 978 1 904091 23 3.

REMEMBER: Mike Turner's new book "Kangaroos, Kiwis and Roughyeds" will be available late autumn at £20. Don't be disappointed reserve a copy. Phone 0161 620 6005



Passionate about the history of the game and an avid collector of memorabilia Mike founded the Gillette Rugby League Heritage Centre at the George Hotel, Huddersfield the birthplace of rugby league. That passion is reflected here in article **Boots 'n' All** written by Mike Stevenson for the Rugby League Centenary Brochure.

## Boots 'n' All

Former Great Britain World Cup hooker **MIKE STEPHENSON** now a top broadcaster with **BSkyB**, recounts the pain and pleasure of collecting Rugby League history...

The first time I heard the word memorabilia I was nine years old... and it proved to be a painful incident in more ways than one! One of my mates proudly informed me that his Uncle in the next street had a rugby ball perched proudly on, of all things, a side-board in the front room.

"Funny place for a ball... balls are for passing and kicking," I said... his nod of approval giving us the green light to borrow the article. After several hours of sheer delight in kicking the living daylight out of this superb leather specimen we were suddenly clipped round the ear and booted fair and square up the backside by Uncle George who rushed away ranting and raving. "Bloody ruined... don't they realise it's memorabilia!!!"

Ignorance is often bliss... in this case it was hurting like hell... and not even the realisation that each kick and bounce of his memorabilia was slowly removing the immortal signatures of Jim Sullivan, Gus Ritsman and the rest of Britain's heroes of the day, helped ease the pain in the backside. Today, of course, that ball would be priceless, a dream item for any Rugby League collector. Sadly, such incidents have robbed us of many jewels of our game's history. Little did I know that several years later I would become an avid collector of League memorabilia. Having amassed probably one of the world's largest private collections, I can speak with authority about the hazards and hassles that collectors endure. I was fortunate enough to unearth an old scrapbook - in a bookshop in Oxford of all places - which contained the signature on a newspaper photo of the great Albert Goldthorpe, a legend for Hunslet at the turn of the century. Few players have had as much impact on our game and he was treated like a god by the Hunslet fans of the day. Another find came whilst rummaging through a market bookstall close to Tower Bridge in London four years ago - two good condition sepia postcards of the first Australian tour in 1908. Seek and ye shall find, that's my motto!

I shudder to think of the amount of hours I've spent wading through cobwebs and dust in my quest for remnants of Rugby League's past glory but, there is no better feeling than to unearth some relic, be absorbed by its character and to dream of bygone adventures. It's amazing where memorabilia crops up. Whilst visiting friends in Jakarta, Indonesia, I noticed one ex-patriot guest at a party wearing a British jumper. After much debate and



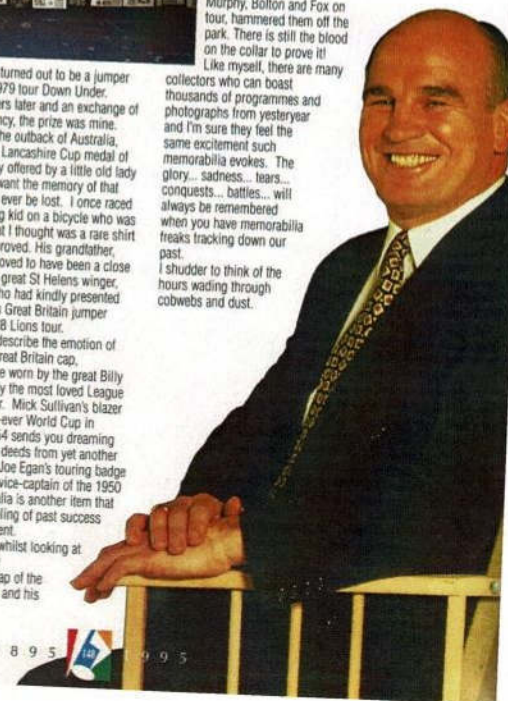
research it turned out to be a jumper from the 1979 tour Down Under. Several beers later and an exchange of local currency, the prize was mine. Dubbo, in the outback of Australia, produced a Lancashire Cup medal of 1927, kindly offered by a little old lady who didn't want the memory of that occasion to ever be lost. I once raced after a young kid on a bicycle who was wearing what I thought was a rare shirt - and so it proved. His grandfather, evidently, proved to have been a close friend of the great St Helens winger, Ait Elaby, who had kindly presented him with this Great Britain jumper from the 1928 Lions tour.

It is hard to describe the emotion of touching a Great Britain cap, especially one worn by the great Billy Boston, surely the most loved League character ever. Mick Sullivan's blazer from the first-ever World Cup in France in 1954 sends you dreaming away of great deeds from yet another great winger. Joe Egan's touring badge when he was vice-captain of the 1950 Tour to Australia is another item that evokes the feeling of past success and achievement. One wonders whilst looking at the Daily Messenger's cap of the tribulations he and his

fellows inaugural 1908 Kangaroo tourists had to endure before reaching these climes. And to reveal at the blazer badge of the first-ever All Golds touring side that created international history by crossing the world a year earlier.

And what joy I've experienced in holding the NSW State and Sydney representative jumpers worn by Reg Gasnier, who to many fans was the best centre ever to tread a Rugby League pitch. Or the smug feeling I get when holding the jumper and telling the story of that famous red-and-white hooped jersey worn at the SCG in 1962 by the great St George side who took on the touring British Lions. The Saints were classed as unbeatable, but our boys, with the likes of Ashton, Murphy, Bolton and Fox on tour, hammered them off the park. There is still the blood on the collar to prove it! Like myself, there are many

collectors who can boast thousands of programmes and photographs from yesteryear and I'm sure they feel the same excitement such memorabilia evokes. The glory... sadness... tears... conquests... battles... will always be remembered when you have memorabilia freaks tracking down our past. I shudder to think of the hours wading through cobwebs and dust.



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# OLDHAM 2 SWINTON 2

FEBRUARY 18TH (NRC) OLDHAM 18 V SWINTON 28

MARCH 25TH (NRC) SWINTON 18 V OLDHAM 42

JULY 8TH (NL2) SWINTON 17 V OLDHAM 10

SEPTEMBER 5 (NL2) OLDHAM 30, SWINTON 22

SEPTEMBER 16 (PLAY OFF) OLDHAM \_\_ V SWINTON \_\_

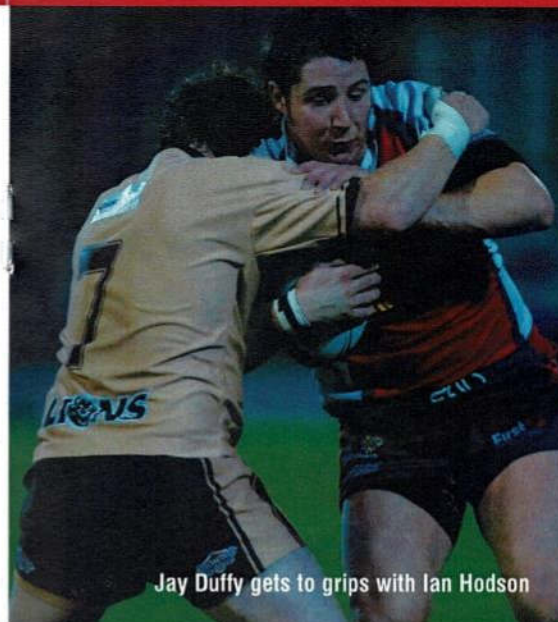
TWO apiece - and all to play for. That's the situation as derby rivals Oldham and Swinton Lions get ready to do battle today in the Co-operative NL2 end-of-season play-off.

For the winner there awaits another sudden death game next week against the winners of Workington v York: here at Boundary Park if it involves the Roughyeds, but at Workington or York if it's the Lions who go through.

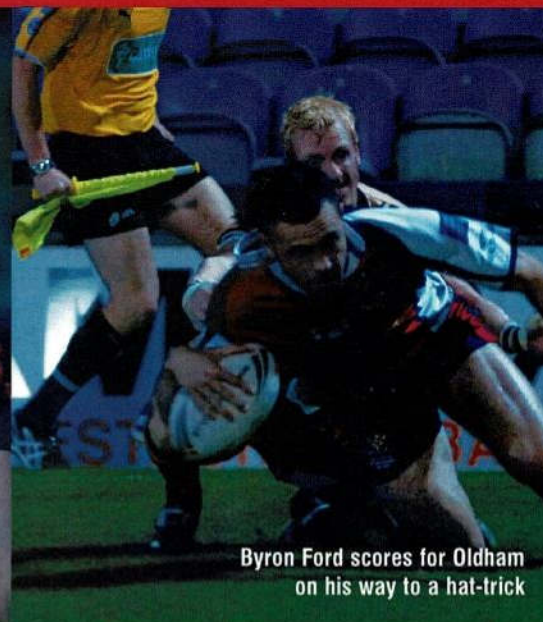
In four previous clashes this season, Roughyeds and Lions have each won twice . . . and in 320 minutes of rugby league --- more than FIVE hours --- only 15 points separate the two teams on aggregate totals.

It's as close as that!

Alex Wilkinson puts the Lions defence to the test in Oldham's 30-22 NL2 win at Boundary Park 11 days ago.



Jay Duffy gets to grips with Ian Hodson



Byron Ford scores for Oldham on his way to a hat-trick



Taking the strain French style . . . Said Tamghart smashes into a three-man Lions reception committee.

'Picture parade courtesy of Oldham Evening Chronicle'

with Ian Wilson

roughyeds'

# roar!

## So phase one objective has been achieved; we have reached the NL2 play-off series.

Further, we have reached it in fourth place, which means potentially two consecutive home play-off games before having, hopefully, to travel in the final eliminator before the Grand Final.

It would, of course, have been good to finish top of the league, and so not to need the play-off series to qualify for promotion to NL1 next season. And, failing that, it would have been good to finish second, or third, to give preferable possible routes to Headingley on October 7. But, for all that, we are still in the competition, which is what matters most. And promotion is still in our own hands.

The record for the season overall so far is 19 wins and 12 defeats, which reads like only a middling season. Significantly, though, 5 of those defeats came in the early season NR cup games, when we were bedding in a new side, and of course one was to Super League Harlequins. Most importantly, only one of them has been during the last nine NL2 fixtures. So huge credit must go to the way the club has structured its approach to the season, I feel. There can be no doubt, whatever we may feel about the quality of the actual performances in the two most recent victories - and respectively 8- and 2-point margins against very brave and committed Swinton and London Skolars sides need little further comment - we go into the play-off series with the overall momentum of a winning side. And I have no doubt that four more two-point victories in the next four games

will do us fine - even if we may lose the odd supporter to heart attacks along the way!

As the player statistics later in this match programme show, no fewer than 36 players have turned out for Oldham this season. Historically, this is quite a high number; for example, even last year only saw 37, with 29 in 2005, and most other years around that figure. In general, the more successful a season, the fewer the number of players who have played, so that on that principle, this season has been something of an anomaly. The reason, though, is clear - and this is what I meant above when I referred to the structured approach which the club has taken. Of the 36, 11 have been signed since the NL2 season began and 6 of these during its second half. Most of these more recent signings are now part of our regular side, too - and who can deny how important some of them have been in securing our 24 league points in the final 9 fixtures. So whilst we have much to be grateful for to the players such as Neil Roden and Richard Mervill - ten players have recorded 24 or more appearances out of a possible 31 so far - who have been the backbone of the side, we must also express appreciation to the Quinn / Hamilton / Whitehead / Deakin leadership for boosting our promotion prospects as they have through the mid-season signings. And we shall soon know whether their efforts are to be crowned with ultimate success!

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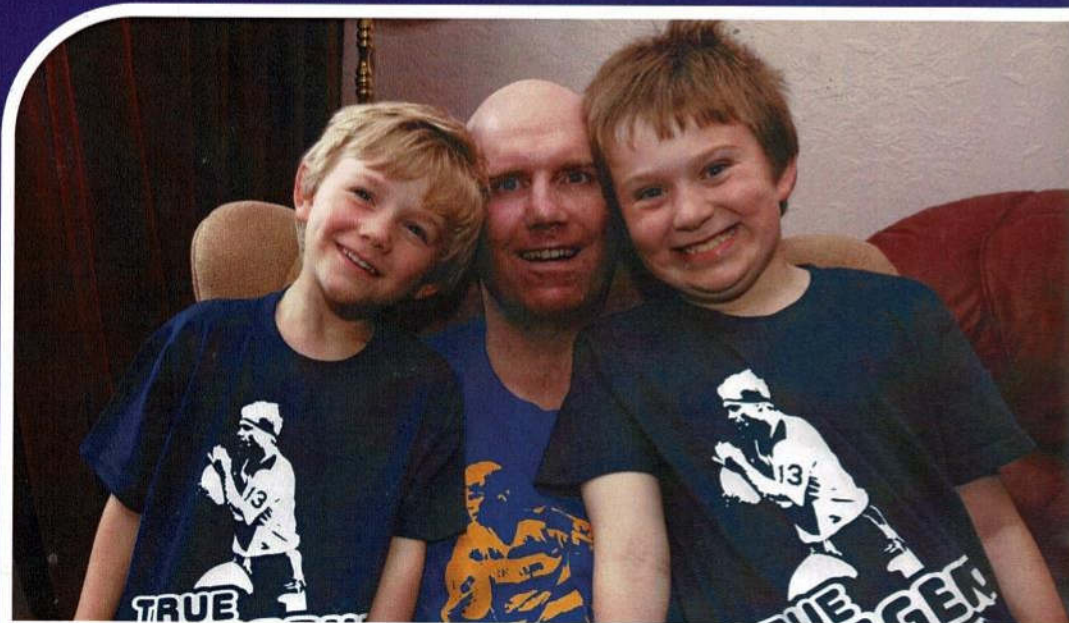
When Leeds Met launched the Carnegie Great Student Run 2007, leading the way was former Widnes, Wigan and GB star Joe Lydon. Joe declared his intention to run the 5km race to raise money for the Mike Gregory Trust Fund. Mike is one of rugby league's most popular, respected and courageous stars who captained 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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# A YEAR ON, AND LIONS CAN LOOK BACK WITH PRIDE ON THEIR 2006 PLAY-OFF ADVENTURE

by ROGER HALSTEAD

**As Swinton Lions prepare to set out on their NL2 play-off journey 2007 today, they will gain inspiration from memories of what they achieved a year ago.**

It is interesting to look at the final table for 2006. Clubs finished, from the top, in this order: Dewsbury, Sheffield, Celtic Crusaders, Featherstone, Swinton, Barrow, Gateshead, Workington, London Skolars, Hunslet, Keighley, Blackpool.

Dewsbury went up automatically, and Sheffield ultimately joined them as winners of the Grand Final. Does that make Featherstone favourites to go up with Celtic Crusaders this year? Time will tell.

As for the Lions, they finished in fifth place -- two places higher than this year ---- but if you take their six-point deduction into account this time and the changes in the points system their overall results over the two seasons were very similar.

If their play-off feats are to stand up to comparison they will have to do even better than last year when they at least got one home game, against Barrow. Steve McCurrie's late try clinched a 26-20 win over the Cumbrians at Sedgley Park to begin a sensational march all the way to the final.

Darren Woods scored two tries, but Barrow battled back to within two points before McCurrie's late try sealed a thriller.

Next up for the Lions was a trip to Featherstone, and their march to the final continued with a 27-14 win, despite being down to 11 men at one stage with two in the sin-bin.

Nevertheless, the Lions produced an inspirational backs-to-the-wall fight in which winger Andy Saywell scored twice and loose-forward Lee Marsh took the man-of-the-match award.

This set up a final eliminator at Celtic Crusaders. And what a game that was! A late try by Marsh forced extra time at 26-26 and two further periods of ten minutes each way couldn't separate the sides.

For the first time in the history of the pro game in Britain a game edged into golden-point territory and with 91 seconds on the clock scrum-half Chris Hough --- a familiar name here at the Roughyeds --- stepped up to drop a goal, create some sporting history, and send the Lions into the Grand Final to the utter dejection of everyone at Brewery Field.

Sadly for the Lions, this great win in South Wales was to prove a game too far. They were beaten 35-10 by Sheffield Eagles in the final at the Halliwell Jones Stadium in Warrington, and

there could be few complaints about the outcome as Eagles won promotion to NL1.

Three tries in five minutes either side of half time took the final out of the Lions' reach. "They were killers," Lions coach Paul Kidd was to remark afterwards.

I am indebted to the work of Tim Butcher and Daniel Spencer in their excellent 'Gillette Rugby League Yearbook 2006-2007' for this run-down on the Lions' fortunes.

They wrote: "Up until the killer scores that Kidd referred to, the Lions were fully in the contest at 4-4 after Andy Saywell's try had cancelled out Rob Worrincey's early effort. That was when they imploded, first allowing Eagles stand-off Brendon Lindsay to cross from close range in the 38th minute.

Moments later Saywell had the ball pinched from him by the outstanding Johnny Woodcock near his own line and the Sheffield full-back crossed under the posts.

"Soon after half time Worrincey sprinted the length of the field after he collected a Swinton kick, and further tries from Jimmy Walker and Andy Hay sealed matters, despite Dave Alstead's late consolation."

Lions lined up for the final like this: English; Saywell, Woods, Alstead, Billy; Moana, Hough; Johnson, Wood, Newton, Smith, Sinfield, Marsh. Subs: McGovern, Morley, Aboushakra, Parry.

Interesting to note that the second-row was formed by Kris Smith and Ian Sinfield, now Oldham players, and that four other players, Hough, Newton, Marsh and Morley had all played previously with the Roughyeds.

In today's contest several players on rival teams will be operating against their former clubs as Roughyeds and Lions go head to head to get the all-important decider in the fifth game between the clubs this year.

Swinton won 28-18 at Boundary Park in the Northern Rail Cup in February and followed up with a 17-10 victory at Sedgley Park in NL2 in July.

Oldham won 42-18 at Sedgley Park in the Northern Rail Cup in March and 30-22 here at Boundary Park in NL2 just 11 days ago.

Two apiece... one to go, with a season's work riding on this one. It makes for what should be a fascinating and gripping encounter.



The Oldham club has teamed up with the RFL to offer one lucky person an opportunity to be part of Rugby League history.

This autumn Great Britain will play for the final time on home soil before the team switches to playing as England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland in time for next year's World Cup in Australia. As a result the three match Gillette Fusion Test Series against New Zealand will be a historic occasion.

The third of the three Tests will be staged at Wigan's JJB Stadium on Saturday, November 10. That is why the Oldham club, together with the RFL, is looking for a school child aged eight to 10 years to be one of the team mascots and walk out alongside the players of Great Britain and New Zealand just before the big match kicks off.

This superb prize also includes three tickets for each winner, one for the mascot and two for their parents or guardian.

As you would expect tickets for the final Great Britain games on home soil are in huge demand and can be purchased from the RFL Box Office on 0871 226 1313 or by visiting [www.rugbyleaguetickets.co.uk](http://www.rugbyleaguetickets.co.uk). Tickets prices start from just £15.

To be in with a chance of being a mascot simply answer the following question.

**What is the Great Britain team's nickname?**

1. The Panthers
2. The Tigers
3. The Lions

The child who answers correctly will be selected at random to be the mascot winners.

**Send your completed entries to GB Mascot Comp, Oldham Rugby League Club, Lansdowne Road, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 9EF;**

**entries in by September 20, 2007.**

**Terms and conditions**

- Neither the RFL nor the Oldham club can enter into correspondence about this competition
- The decision of the Oldham club is final.
- The winners will receive details of their prize from the RFL
- The winner can be a boy or girl aged between 8 and 10 years old.
- After mascot duty, each child will be escorted back to their seats to join their parents/guardian to enjoy the match
- Prizes cannot be exchanged, transferred or sold



**HEAD TO HEAD...**

rival captains Robert Roberts (Oldham) and Martin Moana (Swinton)



**CHEQUE mate...** at half-time in the London Skolars game last Sunday, Roughyeds chairman Bill Quinn presented Dr Kershaw's Hospice and the RFL Benevolent Fund each with cheques of £3,927.59. The money was raised by the club's free-admission initiative to the Celtic Crusaders game, subject to a £1 donation to the two charities, and by extra donations made outside the ground. The co-operative set the ball rolling with a donation of £500, while bookmakers Corals raised money in their shops with a guess-the-crowd competition as well as giving the club a £100 free bet on the outcome of the game, this or the money it generated on the bet also to be donated to the charities. Pictured (left to right): Stephen Ball (RFL Benevolent Fund), Paul Howard (Coral's), Bill Quinn, Joanne Moore (co-operative), Brian Hurst (Dr Kershaw's).

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## Make or Break Time

THE Cooperative National League play-offs get underway this weekend, with the seasons of eight clubs on the line.

After almost eight months' hard work, the entire campaign comes down to one match in the first round of elimination semi-finals.

The first of those was played on Thursday night, when Whitehaven beat Leigh Centurions at the Recreation Ground.

Haven had been widely expected to finish third, up until their final day defeat at Sheffield, they had to regroup quickly against the Centurions.

Leigh's campaign has been the archetypal rollercoaster ride, with probably more downs than ups.

They had the chance on Thursday to repeat arguably their major high, an outstanding 28-12 win at Whitehaven in June, but it wasn't to be.

The other NL1 play-off game sees two of the success stories of the season meet at The Shay, when Halifax entertain Sheffield Eagles.

Fax have improved steadily over the course of the season and pipped Haven to third place, maintaining coach Martin Hall's remarkable record.

In five seasons coaching Rochdale, Hull KR and now Fax, he has finished third on each occasion.

Sheffield have exceeded just about everybody's expectations in surviving in NL1, never mind making the play-offs, a position that was secured with an excellent late season run.

They also pushed Fax incredibly close two weeks ago, ensuring Sunday's meeting should

hold plenty of intrigue.

Another club that has made a stunning late season push is Swinton Lions, who travel to neighbours Oldham in NL2.

Not many people would have batted an eyelid had the Lions slipped towards the bottom end of the table following their mid-campaign six point deduction for briefly entering administration.

But Paul Kidd's team have regrouped superbly, and have given themselves a chance of emulating last season's Grand Final appearance.

They will have it tough though, having to play away all the time and starting with a trip to an Oldham side that have made some eye-catching recruits in recent months and who will start as favourites.

The final match takes place at Derwent Park, where Workington Town take on York City Knights.

Both clubs have had hurdles to overcome in 2007, with Town sacking coach Ged Stokes in controversial circumstances early on, and the Knights battling almost constant injury problems, and more recently, financial uncertainty.

Injuries have also hit Town hard of late, but they have maintain a high level of performance under coaches Les Ashe and Craig Barker.

That match looks as close to call as any, though don't rule out a shock or two in the others games either.

It should be a terrific weekend for National League rugby.

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# Keeping the dream **ALIVE** --- **FIVE ALIVE!**

(Roll call of members -- fancy joining them?)

|                            |                                  |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| John McAndrew              | Moorside Electrical Contractors  |
| Saddleworth Sports         | (Neil Haughton)                  |
| FR Elsworth                | Valerie Wynn                     |
| Eddie Luckraft             | Brian Tranter                    |
| David Webster              | Thomas Joyce                     |
| JFS Mortgage Services      | Mick Harrop                      |
| (John Smith)               | Terry Bailey                     |
| Sean Whitehead             | John Barrie Gallagher            |
| Chris Broadbent            | Terry Kelly                      |
| Dorothy M Johnston         | Cheshire Telecom Ltd             |
| Mortgage Solutions         | (Sean Lynch)                     |
| (Dave Bassett)             | Robert Nixon                     |
| Lansdowne Trading Services | Derek King                       |
| (Chris Stanley)            | Frank Taylor                     |
| Clifford Bardsley          | Colin Pyke                       |
| David Whitehead            | I and C Kershaw                  |
| David Lord                 | Personal Tyres and Exhausts      |
| Janet Yewdale              | (Pete Beswick)                   |
| Nigel Marland              | Savvas Eletheriou                |
| Christopher Hamilton       | Total Plus Communications        |
| Jeffrey Bates              | Total Plus Communications        |
| Iain Ashworth              | Clarice Stevens                  |
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| Steve Deakin               | William Hannen                   |
| Nick Henry                 | The Bs                           |
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| Gareth Owen                | Keith Mullaney                   |
| Roy Wood                   | John Barrett                     |
| Denise Buckley             | Raymond Sankey                   |

|                                |
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| Hans Bateson                   |
| John Kettleton                 |
| Keith Egerton                  |
| Karen Marrie                   |
| Bill Quinn                     |
| Suzanne Kettleton              |

CALLING all Five Alive members . . . the next quarterly lunch will be in the social club on Friday, October 5. Make a note in your diary. Details of guest speaker will be provided later --- and don't forget that any member can take a guest, or guests, at a cost of £15 per person.

At our three previous Five Alive lunches in this the first year of operation we have been entertained by first Colin Morris, the former rugby league referee; then by much-travelled former Super League star Jamie Bloem, a South African who played the early part of his career at Watersheddings; and thirdly by the Lancashire Hawks and Owls Sanctuary from Blackburn.

The quarterly lunch is one of the main features of Five Alive membership, and is proving extremely popular among members, starting as it does at noon and finishing around 2.15pm, in time for those who must go back to work for two or three hours in the afternoon.

Incidentally, the hawks and owls from the Blackburn-based sanctuary were very well received at the last luncheon and members generally agreed that it was something different and a nice surprise. We await with interest what, or who, will be set before us on October 5.

Another highlight of the £5-a-week Five Alive scheme is the monthly draw, made on the last Friday of each month.

Latest winner of the first prize, £500, was Rob Nixon of Middleton and he joins a long list of previous monthly £500 winners who include Jeffrey Bates, Keith Mullaney, Mark Harrington, Roy Wood, Michael Bradshaw, Janet Yewdale, Dorothy Johnstone, Martin Hunter and John McAndrew.

Second prize in the latest Five Alive draw went to Colin Pike (two places in the hospitality suite at a home game) and third prize (a £25 voucher for the club shop) was won by Michael Bradshaw.

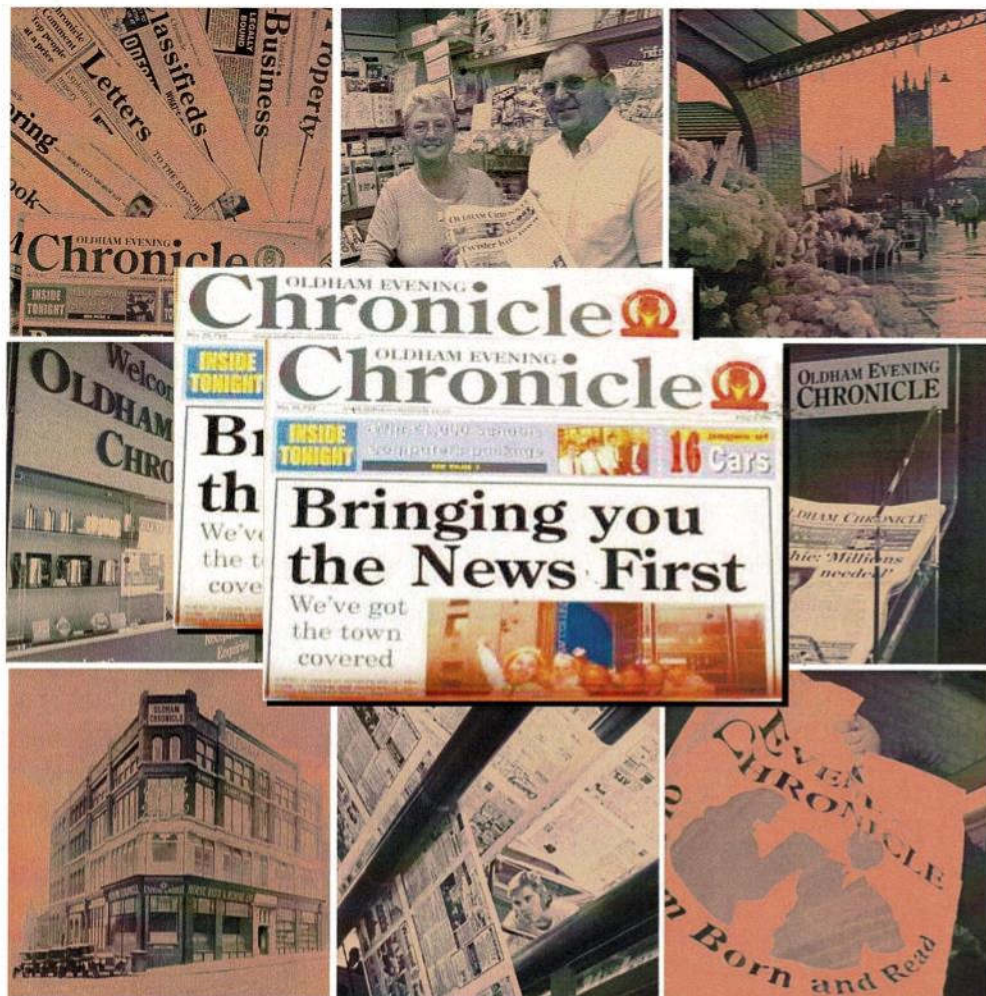
In the two latest Club Cash draws, which are done weekly, Mrs E Gregg of High Crompton and K Knox of Oldham each carried off the first prize of £300, while the second prizes of £100 went to Mr Flynn of Chadderton and to Peter Wild of Oldham.

The Club Cash draw held on the last Friday of August also carried two monthly jackpot prizes, won by Mrs Dronsfield of Chadderton (a mini European break courtesy of Travelcare) and by Joe Finnerty, c/o the Boltmakers, Rock Street, Oldham (meal for two at Clayton Green).

The two lotteries have a crucial role to play in the funding of the club. Not everyone can afford £5 a week in Five Alive, but Club Cash costs only £1 a week and a collector will call on you once a fortnight to pick up £2. See facing page for details of how to join, of how to help your club and of how to give yourself a chance of winning good prizes.

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# journalistic license

by Matthew Chambers

## SWINTON more than gave Oldham a fright the last time these two teams met.

With players of the calibre of Phil Wood, Lee Marsh, Wayne English and Martin Moana at the disposal of Lions coach Paul Kidd, perhaps that shouldn't be so surprising. But it is fair to say the Roughyeds' 30-22 victory was a little harsh on his sparky, enthusiastic and resolute side.

Despite being shorn of six points by way of breaking RFL financial rules, this Swinton team looks right at home in the play-offs.

Having said that, though, Oldham arguably have more class within their ranks than any other side heading in to this six-team end-of-season competition.

If the team plays as it can, improving in ball control, discipline and concentration for longer spells, there is no reason why the Roughyeds shouldn't go all the way to the Grand Final.

Having added to the squad at regular intervals throughout the year, coach Steve Deakin now has quite a task ahead of him selecting his best side.

Will Byron Ford, switched to full-back for last week's Skolars game, continue to wear the number one shirt? Where to play ace kicker Gareth Morton (in his final game for the club) to get the most from him? Andy Crabtree or Simeon Hoyle at hooker? Is Alex Wilkinson better from the bench or does he deserve a start? What is Geno Costin's best position?

All these are problems for Deakin. But, given the travails of last season, they aren't problems he will be inclined to moan about.

\* I'm not one to bleat about unfair treatment of rugby league in the national media.

Yes, there isn't enough coverage, and no, there isn't enough appreciation of the support the game enjoys both in and out of the 'heartlands'. But there's no danger that whining about it will change the status quo and to do so makes the sport seem needy and insecure.

Having said that... the Rugby World Cup has already proved — with 27 days still to go — to be a magnet for commentators rushing to condemn the malign influence of league types in the game our Stevo likes to refer to as 'kick-and-clap'.

The argument goes that union players are becoming increasingly alike, whatever position they happen to play in. Huge, massively powerful, and more interested in dietary supplements than set moves, subtlety and jinking runs.

It is the fault of rugby league coaches, the masses are told, who are turning union into a brutal battle of attrition — like league, which is not how it is supposed to be.

Anyway, I have a solution. Why not cut down the number of players from 15 to, say, 13, to create extra space for creativity in among the six-packs and bulging biceps? After that, you could get to work on rucks, mauls and lineouts, and maybe downgrade penalty kicks from three points to two. Just a thought.

*Matthew*

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Oldham RLFC Appearances and Scorers, 2007

# players statistics

[up to and including September 9th]

| NAME        | PLAYED | TRIES | GOALS | POINTS |
|-------------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
| P Ashton    | 11     | 3     | 27    | 66     |
| C Baines    | 22     | 2     |       | 8      |
| J Boults    | 25     |       |       |        |
| M Brooks    | 13     | 1     |       | 4      |
| G Costin    | 21     | 6     |       | 24     |
| J Coyle     | 10     | 4     |       | 16     |
| A Crabtree  | 24     | 1     |       | 4      |
| B Ford      | 6      | 11    |       | 44     |
| I Gordon    | 5      |       |       |        |
| A Gorey     | 10     | 2     |       | 8      |
| I Hodson    | 19     | 5     |       | 20     |
| J Hough     | 2      |       |       |        |
| D Houston   | 25     | 6     |       | 24     |
| S Hoyle     | 24     | 2     |       | 8      |
| A Hughes    | 12     | 15    | 9     | 78     |
| G Langley   | 26     | 10    | 27    | 94     |
| C Littler   | 24     | 6     |       | 24     |
| R Mervill   | 27     | 3     |       | 12     |
| G Morton    | 6      | 4     | 25    | 66     |
| P O'Connor  | 14     | 4     |       | 16     |
| M Ogden     | 5      | 1     | 10    | 24     |
| S Oldham    | 1      |       |       |        |
| L Onyango   | 19     | 15    |       | 60     |
| R Roberts   | 8      | 3     | 1dg   | 13     |
| A Robinson  | 10     | 3     |       | 12     |
| N Roden     | 30     | 10    | 2dg   | 42     |
| W Rogers    | 10     |       |       |        |
| L Sanderson | 8      | 1     | 20    | 44     |
| I Sinfield  | 20     | 2     |       | 8      |
| K Smith     | 10     | 5     |       | 20     |
| W Stevens   | 5      |       |       |        |
| M Stout     | 4      | 1     |       | 4      |
| S Tamghart  | 25     | 4     |       | 16     |
| T Tonks     | 16     | 3     |       | 12     |
| A Wilkinson | 26     | 12    |       | 48     |
| L Wingfield | 4      | 1     |       | 4      |

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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  | 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  | 32-20          | W   | 847   |
| 04/05/07 | Celtic Crusaders    | NL2      | Away  | 7.35pm  | 34-26          | W   | 3441  |
| 13/05/07 | Harlequins          | CCC5     | Home  | 12.30pm | 6-66           | L   | 559   |
| 20/05/07 | Barrow Raiders      | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 50-18          | W   | 848   |
| 26/05/07 | London Skolars      | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 34-6           | W   | 636   |
| 03/06/07 | Workington Town     | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 27-18          | W   | 1,231 |
| 10/06/07 | York City Knights   | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 21-10          | W   | 1,024 |
| 17/06/07 | Featherstone Rovers | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 18-24          | L   | 1,587 |
| 24/06/07 | Keighley Cougars    | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 18-26          | L   | 969   |
| 01/07/07 | Gateshead Thunder   | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 36-12          | W   | 847   |
| 08/07/07 | Swinton Lions       | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 10-17          | L   | 956   |
| 15/07/07 | Barrow Raiders      | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 34-26          | L   | 1,348 |
| 22/07/07 | Hunslet Hawks       | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 52-22          | W   | 1,024 |
| 29/07/07 | York City Knights   | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 15-14          | W   | 1,064 |
| 05/08/07 | Blackpool Panthers  | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 46-12          | W   | 858   |
| 12/08/07 | Workington Town     | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 44-18          | W   | 1,034 |
| 19/08/07 | Gateshead Thunder   | NL2      | Away  | 3.00pm  | 28-14          | W   | 407   |
| 22/08/07 | Hunslet Hawks       | NL2      | Away  | 7.30pm  | 42-6           | W   | 587   |
| 30/08/07 | Celtic Crusaders    | NL2      | Home  | 7.35pm  | 18-32          | L   | 4,327 |
| 05/09/07 | Swinton Lions       | NL2      | Home  | 7.45pm  | 30-22          | W   | 950   |
| 09/09/07 | London Skolars      | NL2      | Home  | 3.00pm  | 28-26          | W   | 918   |

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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Allow everyone to enjoy the game.

## THE FINAL TABLE

| TEAM             | P  | W  | D | L  | F   | A   | BP | PTS |
|------------------|----|----|---|----|-----|-----|----|-----|
| Celtic Crusaders | 22 | 19 | 0 | 3  | 918 | 345 | 3  | 60  |
| Featherstone     | 22 | 18 | 0 | 4  | 819 | 366 | 2  | 56  |
| Barrow           | 22 | 17 | 0 | 5  | 769 | 387 | 4  | 55  |
| Oldham           | 22 | 16 | 0 | 6  | 661 | 420 | 5  | 53  |
| Workington       | 22 | 12 | 0 | 10 | 655 | 515 | 7  | 43  |
| York             | 22 | 10 | 0 | 12 | 488 | 470 | 6  | 36  |
| Swinton          | 22 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 605 | 649 | 6  | 33  |
| Hunslet          | 22 | 8  | 0 | 14 | 368 | 591 | 7  | 31  |
| London Skolars   | 22 | 8  | 1 | 13 | 448 | 610 | 4  | 30  |
| Keighley         | 22 | 6  | 1 | 15 | 407 | 692 | 4  | 24  |
| Gateshead        | 22 | 6  | 0 | 16 | 381 | 822 | 3  | 21  |
| Blackpool        | 22 | 0  | 0 | 22 | 332 | 984 | 6  | 6   |

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