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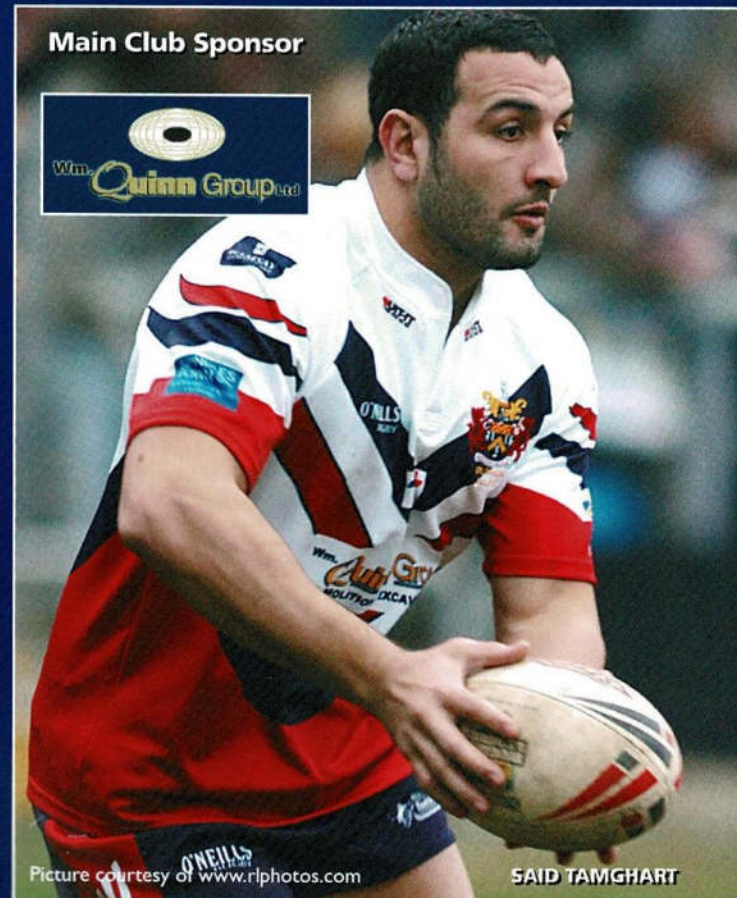
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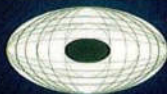
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'OLD FIRM' BACK IN BUSINESS AS LEO LINKS UP WITH HOUGHIE IN CHARGE OF NEW RESERVE TEAM

BY Roger Halstead

LEO Casey, 42 years young and still as rugby daft as he ever was, is turning back the clock to team up once more with his former front-row partner John Hough.

Six years since he retired as a professional player, Leo is back in the Roughyeds camp as assistant coach to the club's new reserve team which will be under the command of John with head coach Steve Deakin holding a watching brief. "You can't keep an old man down," joked Leo when news of his return to the club was released by the Roughyeds yesterday.

'Old man' or not, Leo turned out for St Anne's in a Standard Cup tie only a few weeks ago. Five minutes into the game he took a clout around the head, needed stitches and spent the rest of the afternoon in the casualty department!

"That was the end for me," he said. "From now, I'll stick to coaching -- and I have to say I am delighted to be back helping John out at the Roughyeds. I'll still be coaching St Anne's under-15s. The two jobs will dovetail nicely.



LEO CASEY

PICTURE COURTESY OF THE OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

"John and I are good friends, and have been for years. Also, I worked at St Anne's for a number of years with the current under-18s, as I also did at Service Area level with the current under-18s of Waterhead and Saddleworth Rangers. I have known most of the lads since they were under-14s and under-16s.

"It will also be nice to work again with Deaks. He was my coach at St Anne's when I was 18 or 19 and he had a massive

influence on my career. He's a top coach and I know it will be a learning curve for me to be working with him. I'm really looking forward to it."

Announcing the appointment, Roughyeds chief executive Chris Hamilton said: "We are delighted to have Leo back on board. He has the distinction of having played for both the old club and the new one and in the early years of the new club he played a key role in our development as one of our senior forwards.

"As a player and as a person, he is a man whom Sean Whitehead (fellow director) and I have a lot of time for."

Leo will go down in local RL history as the old club's record outgoing sale, Featherstone paying £100,000 for him when he left Watersheddings in 1989. He made 80 appearances for the new Roughyeds club, including the NFP Grand Final of 2001 against Widnes at Rochdale.

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From the Boardroom

With Chris Hamilton...



Good evening and welcome to Boundary Park. After what seems an eternity from the end of last season here we finally are with the start of

another season and another Northern Rail Cup competition.

It's strange when some clubs don't give the cup the recognition it deserves that we, as a club that treats it very seriously, probably has one of the worst club records in the competition having never qualified from the group stages!

Of course it can be argued that our groups, given our geographical position, have been hard as we have nearly always had decent teams in with us but nevertheless we have certainly been a disappointment to date.

The theory as we start the 2008 season of course is that all of that is about to change and both Steve Deakin and the players know what the expectations of the club are.

The salient point in that statement of course is that it is "theory" and after last Sunday at Rochdale we all know what happens to them!

To say we underperformed at Spotland last week wouldn't come near to describing what happened and it is surprising that given the number of players retained from last season, who found out only too well what happens when you turn up in the wrong frame of mind, that it appeared to be a case of *deja vu* last Sunday.

With our stated aims for the season there

is no time to waste and we must start the season as we mean to go on this year starting tonight.

That statement of course presumes that our opposition, Swinton Lions, will not want to win themselves!

Their close season seems to have seen a major overhauling of their squad with it now having a much more youthful feel about it.

They have been one of the more consistent performers in the second division over the past few seasons and there is no reason to see it being different this year.

We also formally welcome tonight our new players to the club in Marcus St Hilaire, Mick Nanyin, Danny Halliwell, Tommy Grundy, Tommy Goulden, Daryl Cardiss, Phil Joseph and Simon Baldwin. In addition two new key members of our backroom staff "officially" start in Mark Cass our assistant coach and Rachael Johnson our physio. Needless to say we wish them all good luck in their Oldham careers.

After the exploits of last season and the investment in the squad we are hoping to see a rise in attendances this season. The trial of Friday night games in the Northern Rail Cup, therefore allowing people to still have all weekend after the game is another attempt to find a successful formula and is one which is becoming increasingly popular amongst clubs.

As we always ask please get behind the team tonight and let's set the bar high in terms of the noise and encouragement we give to the team.

Enjoy the game

Chris Hamilton

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With Steve Deakin...



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what will**

**be hopefully the first step in a
historic year for the club.**

We were a bit disappointing last week against our old rivals Rochdale who were a bit more enthusiastic than we were and that in the end was the difference between the two sides as we both scored 4 tries each and we could have just sneaked it at the end with a bit more patience but I thought that patience was one of the key elements missing in our game and that it would have papered over a few cracks had we got the result, perhaps the reality check will do us good in the long run.

Looking at tonight's game we welcome Swinton and it has to be said that they are a team that caused us as many problems with their robust style of play as did any team last season and although we won 3 of the 5 games played we were challenged all the way by them in the games we won. This year they have added a fair bit of size and skill to their squad - as has every team in this competition - and will be looking to go further than the opening week of play offs that they achieved last time round.

Knowing Paul Kidd and some of the players there as I do I know that this is a massive fixture for them, one they relish playing in and raise their efforts for and we need to replicate that mentality, not only tonight but also in all our games, if we are to go one step further than last season.

On the injury front we should be looking to get Gareth Langley back into full training in two weeks time and he should be ready to play the week after that, Lee Wingfield has been given the all clear to resume running and Lucas has had his operation and will be back in about two/three months time.

Please give the players your full support, help them raise their game through your vocal efforts and make Boundary Park the sort of place that opposition teams think is a fortress. With you, the players and everybody else having that mentality we can achieve that aim and help in our ultimate objective for the year,
PROMOTION.

Enjoy the game

Deaks

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EIGHT NEW MEN IN A 24-STRONG SQUAD

Roger Halstead looks at the players who carry Oldham hopes into 2008

ROUGHYEDS have assembled a 24-man squad for the 2008 campaign, including eight new signings.

CHRIS BAINES (back-row): Signed on a two-year deal for 2008 and 2009 following the good impression he made on Roughyeds in the previous two seasons. Aged 23, he joined the club originally on loan from Warrington. Toured New Zealand with Great Britain Young Lions in 2003 after representing his country at youth level against Australia and France. A product of Wigan St Pat's.

SIMON BALDWIN (prop): One of the most experienced forwards in the squad, formerly with Leigh, Halifax, Sheffield, Salford, Rochdale Hornets and Whitehaven. Having ended last season at Whitehaven and having had two spells with hometown Leigh, Simon has made his seventh move in a long career to sign a one-year Roughyeds deal. Made 127 Super League appearances, mainly in the second-row, but now widely regarded as a prop.

JASON BOULTS (prop): This 24-year-old former Bradford and Halifax workhorse was a real stalwart of the Oldham pack in 2007. He played in 25 games and for much of the season he was first-choice No 8 after producing an outstanding performance in the win at Celtic Crusaders in May. A wholehearted grafter with a huge engine, Jason never takes a backward step.

MATTY BROOKS (half-back/hooker): Joined Roughyeds last season on loan from Hull KR, scoring two tries in 17 appearances and ending the campaign with a terrific show as a substitute in the NL2 Grand Final against Featherstone at Headingley. Now a fully-fledged Oldham player on a one-year deal he will have to make the adjustment from full-time pro with Rovers to part-time footballer with Roughyeds. Turned pro for Bradford, then on to Hull KR. A native of East Hull.

DARYL CARDISS (utility back): Aged 30, this hugely experienced utility back has played for Wigan, Halifax, Warrington and Widnes. Joined Wigan from Hunslet Boys Club in 1994. Made a total of 142 Super League appearances and scored 46 tries in the elite competition. Enjoyed a fine stay at Halifax, for whom he scored 39 tries in 99 outings.

JAMES COYLE (scrum-half): Now contracted to Roughyeds until November, 2009, this talented 22-year-old joined the club from Wigan midway through last season and made an immediate impact. His 14 appearances yielded six tries, but it was the vast number of tries he made for others that underlined his real potential. Another product of Wigan St Pat's, he was a shooting star in Wigan's academy system before spending the whole of the 2006 season on loan at Widnes.

TOMMY GOULDEN (back-row): Equally at home in the



Inset (top left) Simon Baldwin; others (left to right): Marcus St Hilaire, Danny Halliwell, Phil Joseph, Mick Nany, Daryl Cardiss, Tommy Grundy, Tommy Goulden.

second-row or at loose, 26-year-old Tommy was a key member of the Rochdale Hornets pack in 2006 and 2007, having been signed from amateur rugby in Leigh by Bobbie Goulding in 2005. Leigh born, he picked up every possible honour as an amateur, including captaincy of BARLA Great Britain, before turning pro for Rochdale.

TOMMY GRUNDY (back-row): Aged 22, Leigh-lad Tommy is one of the younger members of the Roughyeds squad. Can play equally well in any of the back-row spots as well as centre. Turned pro for Warrington as an 18-year-old, then played for Leigh and Blackpool before returning to his hometown club, Leigh, for 2006 and 2007. Joined Roughyeds on a two-year deal.

DANNY HALLIWELL (centre): One of eight new signings, 26-year-old Leigh-born Danny was on loan at Leigh, from Salford, last season and he has also worn the colours of Halifax, Warrington and Wakefield. Can play anywhere across the back division and, like many of his Oldham colleagues, has considerable Super League experience. His 43 top-flight outings comprise three for Wakefield, 10 for Wigan, 25 for Halifax and five for Leigh.

SIMEON HOYLE (hooker): Edinburgh-born Simeon is half-way through a two-year contract with Roughyeds. Aged 28, and formerly with Keighley Cougars and Halifax, he is a hooker of the old school, tough in defence but with an ability to make things happen from dummy half. In 2003 he helped Keighley to win promotion to NL1 by beating Sheffield in the NL2 Grand Final.

PHIL JOSEPH (utility): Turned pro with Huddersfield Giants and, as a teenager, played 14 Super League games for the Giants in 2004. Moved to Swinton Lions in 2005, scored 11 tries in 29 games, and was named NL2 player of the year. Suitably impressed, Hull KR signed him on a two-year deal, but after one season at Craven Park he left the Super League-bound Robins to join Halifax, from whom Oldham signed him on a two-year contract.

GARETH LANGLEY (wing): Pacy, and a good finisher, 'Gaz' joined Roughyeds prior to the 2007 season after five seasons 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. In 30 games for Oldham last season, he scored 13 tries and kicked 35 goals for a points haul of 122.

RICHARD MERVILL (prop): Formerly with Halifax and Keighley, Richard had a superb season in his first for the Roughyeds in 2007. Walked off with two major awards at the end-of-year Awards Night and was rewarded with a two-year contract for 2008 and 2009. Suffered a broken hand in one of his early games in 2007 and was similarly unlucky in the build-up to the 2008 campaign when he dislocated an elbow in training. There will be no complaints from the fans if he bounces back this year like he did last.

MICK NANYN (centre): A points machine - one of the best goalkickers in the English game - Mick has starred for Swinton, Rochdale Hornets, Whitehaven and Widnes and has smashed club scoring records wherever he has been. He took the Widnes record off Jonathan Davies in 2006. He played 29 games for Widnes last season, scoring 28 tries and kicking 161 goals for a points haul of 434. Also has the distinction of having played in each of the last four NL1 Grand Finals, two for Whitehaven and two for Widnes.

PAUL O'CONNOR (full-back): A Great Britain Students international, Widnes-born Paul played briefly on loan for Oldham in 2006, then returned in 2007 on contract having let it be known to the club that, in the May, he would be leaving for a pre-arranged sabbatical in the southern hemisphere. He had a great first half of the season but he didn't play again for the club until he reappeared in the first pre-season friendly of 2008 at Leeds. Having signed a new two-year deal he is set fair for a long association with the Roughyeds.

LUCAS ONYANGO (wing): A real flier, aged 26, Lucas grew up in rugby union in his native Kenya. Has played for Sale Sharks, Manchester and Leigh in rugby union, and Widnes Vikings in League. He had a great season for Oldham in 2007 when he scored 18 tries in 23 outings only to damage a shoulder at the end of the year. He entered the 2008 season waiting for an operation on that shoulder and was expected to be sidelined at least until the start of the NL2 campaign at Easter.

ROB ROBERTS (back row): Joined Roughyeds in late July, 2007 and landed a match-winning drop goal at York in a 15-14 win on his debut. Played Super League with Hull, Halifax and Huddersfield and also represented several clubs in the National League. Known as 'Two Bobs' - for obvious reasons - he put his career back on track with Oldham after a difficult time at Leigh and revelled in his new responsibilities as captain.

ADAM ROBINSON (back row): A tough-as-teak young Yorkshireman, Adam played much of his early rugby at Wakefield. Aged 21 he turned down Featherstone in order to sign for the Roughyeds last year from Doncaster. A product of the Stanley Rangers amateur club in Wakefield, Adam thrives on his defensive duties but his first campaign in an Oldham

shirt was cut short by a shoulder injury on which he had an operation. He is determined to bounce back, having signed a new two-year deal.

NEIL RODEN (stand-off): Neil rejoined Oldham from Leigh in 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. He has overtaken Mark Sibson as the 'new' club's leading all-time try scorer. Last season, he was an influential midfield organiser, playing in all 34 games and forming a more-than-useful half-back pairing in the second half of the season with his fellow Wiganer James Coyle.

LEE SANDERSON (half-back): One of the unluckiest players in the game, Lee is currently on extensive rehab after a major knee reconstruction -- and it wasn't the first time he had been under the knife. Extremely talented, and a gifted footballer and goalkicker, his father, Mark, played for Rochdale Hornets and his uncle, Ian, was a hooker at Oldham in Watersheddings days. Lee has previously played for Leigh, London, Rochdale and Barrow.

WARREN STEVENS (prop): Yet another vastly experienced performer with more than a century of Super League outings on his CV. This former Warrington and Leigh stalwart was playing with Blackpool last season on a match-to-match basis when Roughyeds boss Steve Deakin invited him to accept a more permanent arrangement with the Roughyeds. He played only a handful of games at the back end of last season, but Deaks has a load of faith in him as underlined by his new two-year contract.

MARCUS ST HILAIRE (wing/full-back): A star with Leeds Rhinos, Huddersfield Giants and Bradford Bulls, 30-year-old Marcus has joined Oldham on a two-year deal. He played 24 Super League games last season, 2007, representing Bradford 19 times on the wing, once as a substitute and four times as fullback when deputising for Michael Platt. His record speaks for itself -- 39 tries in 111 outings for Leeds; 37 tries in 74 games for Huddersfield; and 14 tries in 39 games for Bradford.

SAID TAMGHART (back row): A French international, Said has represented his country at every level, including full Test matches against Australia and New Zealand. Came under the influence of Oldham coach Steve Deakin when both were at UTC, better known now as Perpignan-based Catalans Dragons. Said was popular with fans in his first season at Oldham when he made 29 appearances, most of them coming off the bench as an impact forward.

LEE WINGFIELD (utility): Played for Great Britain at amateur level in Russia, France and Australia, but desperately unlucky with injuries since he turned pro for Oldham on a two-year deal for 2006 and 2007. In top form early last year until he broke a hand and then suffered a serious knee injury against Swinton in his first game back. Currently on rehab after an operation, but hoping to be fit to make his comeback in the next few weeks.


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Sun 27th ROCHDALE A 3:00pm

February

NRC Fri 1st SWINTON H 8:00pm
NRC Fri 8th SALFORD A 8:00pm
NRC Sun 17th ROCHDALE A 3:00pm
NRC Fri 22nd SALFORD H 8:00pm
NRC Fri 29th ROCHDALE H 8:00pm

March

Sun 9th CHALL CUP 3rd ROUND
NRC Sun 16th SWINTON A 3:00pm
NL Fri 21st ROCHDALE A 3:00pm
NL Mon 24th HUNSLET H 3:00pm
NL Sun 30th YORK H 3:00pm

April

Sun 6th NORTHERN RAIL CUP QR
NL Sun 13th KEIGHLEY A 3:00pm
Sun 20th CHALL CUP 4th ROUND
NL Sun 27th ROCHDALE H 3:00pm

May

NL Mon 5th BLACKPOOL H 3:00pm
NL Sat 10th LONDON A 3:00pm
Sun 11th CHALL CUP 5th ROUND
NL Sun 18th SWINTON H 3:00pm

NL Sat 24th GATESHEAD A 6:30pm
Sun 25th NORTHERN RAIL CUP QF
NL Fri 30th DONCASTER A 8:00pm

June

Sun 1st CHALL CUP QF
NL Sun 8th LONDON H 3:00pm
NL Sun 15th HUNSLET A 3:00pm
Sun 15th NORTHERN RAIL CUP SF
NL Sun 22nd BLACKPOOL A 3:00pm
NL Sun 29th GATESHEAD H 3:00pm

July

NL Sun 6th WORKINGTON A 3:00pm
Sun 6th NORTH RAIL CUP FINAL
NL Fri 11th BARROW A 7:30pm
NL Thur 17th DONCASTER H 7:30pm
NL Sun 27th KEIGHLEY H 3:00pm
Sun 27th CHALLENGE CUP SF

August

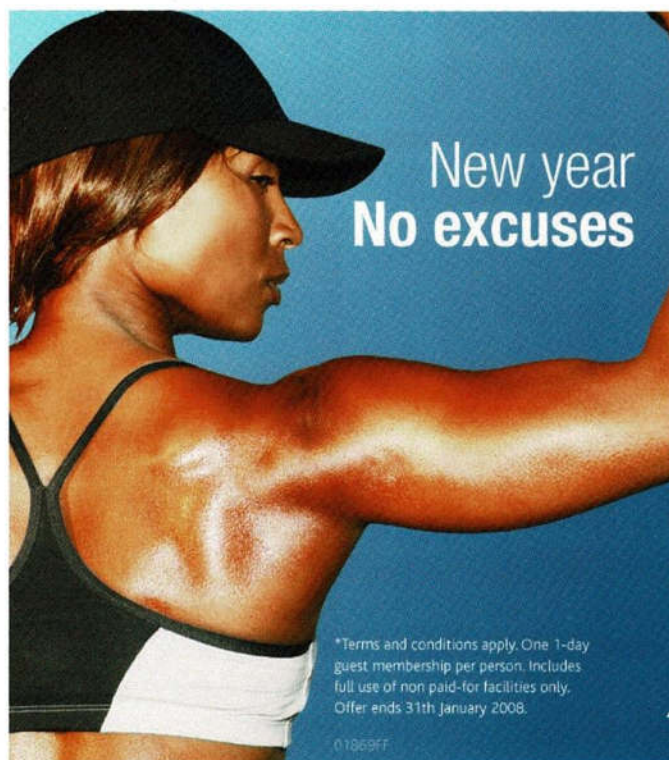
NL Sun 3rd YORK A 3:00pm
NL Sun 10th BARROW H 3:00pm
NL Sun 17th SWINTON A 3:00pm
NL Sun 24th WORKINGTON H 3:00pm
Sat 30th CHALLENGE CUP FINAL

September

Sun 7th ELIMINATION PLAY OFFS
Sun 14th QUALIFYING/
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Sun 21st FINAL ELIMINATOR
Sun 28th N L GRAND FINAL

October

Sat 4th S L GRAND FINAL



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ALL-STAR LINE-UP - THE ROUGHYEDS CLASS OF 2008



Back Row Left to Right: Said Tamghart, Danny Halliwell, Warren Stevens, Mick Nanyin, Simon Baldwin, Jason Boults, Neil Roden
Second Row Left to Right: James Coyle, Tommy Grundy, Phil Joseph, Tommy Goulden, Richard Mervill, Lee Wingfield, Chris Baines, Simeon Hoyle, Lucas Onyango
Front Row Left to Right: Adam Robinson, Gareth Langley, Craig Littler, Robert Roberts, Matty Brooks, Paul O' Connor, Marcus St Hilaire

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GuestWriter..

No 1: GEOFF COOKE

Former editor of our match-day programme

While a tag as favourites to win N. L 2 may be flattering it's something Oldham could do without.

Yes, the club has made some impressive, quality signings but the favourites tag sets you up as a target for every other club in the competition. As if confirmation of that were needed last Sunday Rochdale set out their stall to overturn the Roughyeds and, to be honest, deserved their success. Tonight we welcome Swinton in the Northern Rail Cup, a tournament in which Oldham have a dismal record. However, with more riding on the result, expect Oldham to improve on last Sunday's disjointed and somewhat lethargic display. Of last week's side Heritage Trust Man-of-the Match James Coyle, fullback Paul O'Connor, hooker Phil Joseph, second row and captain Rob Roberts and substitute Said Tamghart all showed glimpses of form but a more sustained and consistent performance all round will be required to take the spoils tonight. And, although Ian Sinfield won the Karl Marriott Memorial Trophy for the Hornets the man who really impressed when he came on as a substitute was another ex- Oldham player, Simon Svabic whose astute direction of the play in the second half was outstanding. What is not in doubt is that, as ever, a Roughyeds-Swinton derby will be a ding-dong battle that should get the season away to a terrific start.

Looking at the Northern Rail Cup as a whole the groups have been well balanced and are open to whoever takes the competition seriously as against using it merely as a warm up to the league season starting in April. The truth is that teams which have won this trophy have historically gone on to have a successful league campaign - just ask Leigh! Let's face it, wins in any competition build confidence. That said, Oldham and Swinton will have their work

cut out to top a group also featuring Salford and Rochdale. In fact, to borrow football terminology, you'd probably nominate this the 'group of death', although common sense says Salford should qualify ahead of their N.L.2 rivals.

A group containing Barrow, Blackpool, Leigh and Widnes favours the latter two with Leigh my favourites to be top, especially given Widnes' well documented financial troubles and with a good proportion of last year's Widnes team now turning out in Leigh colours.

The group containing Halifax, Keighley, Whitehaven and Workington should suit the two N.L.1 sides with Whitehaven in pole position after winning four out of five clashes with Halifax last term, albeit that 'Fax won the crucial play-off fixture.

Celtic Crusaders, hot on the heels of a friendly defeat of Super League Harlequins, should win a group also featuring London Skolars, Doncaster and Sheffield. Doncaster's friendlies have left the N.L.2 second favourites with egg on their face having lost to Keighley and Hunslet. Rest assured, however, that Coach Ellery Hanley (a welcome return this for Great Britain's greatest ever player) will have his side better organised for the Northern Rail Cup.

The other six clubs play games across the groups to make up their fixtures. Dewsbury and Featherstone, two clubs which have recruited extensively and wisely, should lead the way but Batley, York, Hunslet and Gateshead will have something to say about that. The potential for shocks is probably greatest among these sides but, whatever the predictions made now in a competition gaining in credibility year on year, you can be sure there will be plenty of surprises along the way.

Geoff Cooke

ROGER HALSTEAD takes a look at the club's ever-growing business portfolio.

THE Roughyeds' heavy involvement in marketing and commercial activity is reflected in the signing of a dozen or so deals with business partners for the 2008 season and beyond.

The weeks and months since the end of last season have seen a flurry of activity on the club's 'business desk', culminating recently in an official photoshoot for sponsors and club officials in a bustling Spindles Town Square Shopping Centre, courtesy of the Spindles manager, Mike Flanagan.

Spindles shoppers stopped and looked on with interest as representatives of most of the club's sponsors smiled for the camera at a function attended also by the Roughyeds chairman Bill Quinn -- in his dual role as sponsor and club official -- and the club's director and chief executive Chris Hamilton.

"This is a clear indication of the vast forward strides the club is making in its commercial and marketing activities," said Mr Hamilton.

Sponsorship and business deals between Roughyeds and their commercial partners now number around 12 in total ahead of the new season -- and they include six new additions to the portfolio in Mobilis Sport, of the Mobilis Healthcare Group; West Pennine Truck Rental, with its nationwide network of ten depots; Fitness First, claiming to be the biggest health club chain in the world; Oldham Primary Care Trust and its 'Quit-It' anti-smoking campaign; O'Neills Irish Sportswear, of Dublin and Strabane, who will supply playing kit, replicas and other leisure wear for the next three years; and the giant

Ramsay Health Care Group, which has more than 100 hospitals around the world.

The other six, renewing deals, are the club's main sponsors, the Wm. Quinn Group of Manchester; F R Elwood (Partitions and Ceilings) Ltd, of Chadderton; Totalplus Communications of Bury; Wrigley Claydon, solicitors, of Oldham; the Oldham Evening Chronicle; and Spindles Town Square Shopping Centres of Oldham.

THE WM. QUINN GROUP, of Manchester, the demolition and excavation company owned by the club's chairman and majority shareholder Bill Quinn, is starting the second year of a two-year agreement as the club's main sponsors.

On a personal note, Bill has nearly completed his first 12 months at the club and he has stated publicly more than once that he has ambitions to take the club back to the top of the rugby league ladder. He is in this, he says, for the long haul and he hopes to be as successful in sport as he has been in business.

MOBILIS, a national company based in Shaw Road, Oldham, will supply all the club's medical products in a two-year deal in which their 'Vulkan' brand logo will be on the players' shorts and in which the company will also sponsor the Roughyeds' physio Rachael Johnson and her match-day track suits.

Carolyn Holland, sports products manager, and Liz Graham (sports sales manager) represented the company at the launch and spoke enthusiastically about Mobilis's new links with the town's professional rugby league team.

Mobilis Sport, a branch of Mobilis Healthcare, has business links with leading Premiership and Championship football teams and also supplies top Rugby Union and cricket clubs as well as international

squads and local league sides alike. Links have also been developed with the FA, the RFU, England Hockey, Oldham Athletic and, in rugby league, Leeds Rhinos.

THE FITNESS FIRST gym at Sandbrook Park, Rochdale will be the players' indoor training base for the next 12 months, three nights a week if coach Steve Deakin requires it and with use of all facilities, including sauna and steam room.

This multi-national company has 250 health clubs in the UK alone and hundreds more around the world in Australia, South-East Asia and several European countries.

Kate Read, general manager of Fitness First Rochdale, said she was delighted to welcome the Oldham players and hoped the work they did at Fitness First would help them to achieve their goal of promotion to NLI in 2008.

WEST PENNINE TRUCK RENTAL, with its head office and depot on the Stakehill Industrial Estate in Middleton, have sponsored local soccer in the past, but this is their first excursion into professional sport and into rugby league.

Warren Fletcher, a director, has been a friend and business acquaintance of Roughyeds director Sean Whitehead for several years and it was this link which led directly to the new tie-up with the club.

The company has ten depots across the UK and has more than 200 top-of-the-range vehicles on the road.

OLDHAM PRIMARY CARE TRUST'S 'Quit-It' logo will be featured on the collar of the players' jerseys and, during the season, the club will be involved in anti-smoking initiatives in partnership with the PCT.

Added Mr Hamilton: "We are proud of the work we are doing in the commercial and marketing sector and delighted that we have

forged partnerships and links with so many companies, national and local and ranging from one-year deals to three-year deals. We thank them all for their support and we look forward to working with them and, hopefully, developing long and lasting relationships.

"Our link with Oldham Primary Care Trust is rather different to the rest in that it is a 'community' initiative which came about as a direct result of the partnerships forged by our community development manager Sean Mellor.

"We are proud to spearhead the 'Quit-It' anti-smoking campaign in Oldham and if we can help to get across the message of this major social issue we feel we will be playing an important role in community affairs."

RAMSAY HEALTH CARE has more than 100 hospitals and day-surgery facilities across Australia, Indonesia and the UK. It has 22 hospitals and ten other centres in the UK, these including Oaklands Hospital, Salford where the Roughyeds players have gone for treatment and operations for several years now.

Oaklands was formerly owned by Capio, with whom Roughyeds had a sponsorship arrangement last year, which also included funding for a Sportsmatch bid. The fact that new owners Ramsay have agreed a new one-year sponsorship deal is described by club officials as "a real feather in our cap, to be backed by a company of this stature."

The **OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE**, which has backed the club commercially for several seasons, has renewed its partnership for another 12 months. "A successful Roughyeds can only be good for the town," said the company's newspaper sales manager Steve Duthie.

The paper's editor, Jim Williams, was at the launch and would be happy to hear Chris Hamilton describe the Chronicle as "an

(cont. on page 23)

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(cont. from page 19)

institution of this town." As part of the deal, the paper has its name on the players' jerseys.

SPINDLES TOWN SQUARE SHOPPING, who sponsored the club for the first time last year, have extended their backing this year to include player-of-the-month and player-of-the-year awards schemes.

"We were delighted with how our link-up worked out in year one," said Spindles manager Mike Flanagan, "and I had no hesitation in recommending to my board that we did a new, extended deal in 2008. We are working for the community and, in partnership with Roughyeds, we will be fostering community links."

As part of the deal, Roughyeds players will be involved in joint initiatives with Spindles throughout the year.

WRIGLEY CLAYDON, the town's oldest solicitors, have had links with Oldham Rugby going back across the decades. They have sponsored the present club for several years and they had no hesitation in renewing.

Mr Paul Vincent, of Wrigley Claydon, said: "It goes without saying that, as the club's solicitors, we wish Roughyeds the best of luck in the pursuit of their ambitions on and off the field and, especially, in their bid for promotion this season."

TOTALPLUS COMMUNICATIONS, who recently moved base from Ashton-under-Lyne to Bury, have backed the club for several years. Paul Gough and Bob Thompson are keen fans of the club and, like all fans, they have experienced the club's highs and lows.

They were partners as rugby players in the former Tameside Borough team and now they are partners in business --- as well as partners in their support of the Roughyeds.

Totalplus specialises in the design, installation and management of structured cabling systems for all environments, ranging from single outlets to full site cabling and roll-out programmes.

F R ELSWOOD (PARTITIONS AND CEILINGS) LTD, of Chadderton, is another company with two hugely-committed Roughyeds fans on board --- Frank Elswood and his son Martin, the former Roughyeds forward.

The company is entering its third year of sponsorship and Frank has revealed that its commitment is to sponsor for two more years yet, making five in total.

Father and son are usually seen at most games and though Martin chose to quit playing prematurely due to business and family commitments he usually finds time to cheer on his former team mates on game day.

O'NEILLS IRISH SPORTSWEAR will provide playing kit, replicas and leisure wear to the Roughyeds for the next three years. They are heavily tied up with BARLA amateur clubs, but Oldham is the first professional rugby league club with whom they have done business.

Based in Dublin and Strabane, much of their business is tied up with the Irish Rugby Union and with the Gaelic Athletic Association, but their sales manager for this area, Neil Williams, is a keen RL fan from Leigh and he believes Roughyeds will be only the first of several pro rugby league clubs to take a leaf from Oldham's book in the months and years ahead.

Will it be a case of Roughyeds benefiting from the luck of the Irish? Let's hope so.

Roger Halstead

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NEW-LOOK LIONS READY TO ROAR

BY Roger Halstead

SWINTON Lions will come to Boundary Park this evening with many new faces in a side that boasts a nice blend of youth and experience.

Three regulars from last year's side have gone to Rochdale - Paul Alcock, Chris Hough and Mark Brocklehurst - while Lee Marsh has headed to the seaside to play for Martin Crompton's Blackpool Panthers.

Of the new signings, two of the most influential could be half-backs Gary Hulse and Richie Hawkyard - and if you recognise the spelling of 'Hawkyard' so you should: Richie is a nephew of that former Watersheddings workhorse Colin Hawkyard, who is now an active member of the recently-formed Oldham Players' Association.

Hulse, formerly with Warrington, Widnes and Rochdale, is likely to play at scrum-half with Hawkyard operating at stand-off, although coach Paul Kidd seems to have so many half-backs available to him that he might be tempted to do a bit of swapping and changing in his pursuit of the perfect match.

Last season, young Hawkyard was understudy at Bradford Bulls to Paul Deacon. He played in one Super League game against Huddersfield Giants and he was on the bench for about five more. He was well thought of at Odsal, but he wasn't keen on going full-time - despite winning Scottish international honours - hence his move to the Lions.

Other recruits this year include Chris Brad, a goalkicking full-back from Blackpool, and a couple from the Salford City Reds academy set-up, namely full-back Darren Bamford and back-row forward Darren Gibson.

In addition, Chris Hull has signed permanently from Warrington after spending part of last season on loan.

Despite the ins and outs, many stalwarts remain - old faithfuls like Wayne English (in his testimonial year), Chris Morley, Martin Moana, Phil Wood, Marlon Billy, Andy Saywell, Liam McGovern and Craig Ashall.

Winger Saywell was the club's top try scorer with 21 last season, and he has started this year as he intends to go on with a hat-trick of tries - and the match winner seconds from the end - in a 24-20 triumph against the St Helens Academy side last weekend.

Prior to that, the Lions went down 38-8 in a friendly up at Whitehaven, but the score was 16-8 up to the 65th minute mark when a Lions side which included 11 debutants began to tire.

The Lions don't have much to worry about on the injury front, although two props - Gareth Hayes and Adam Bibey - seem set to sit out tonight's clash. That will be particularly disappointing for Hayes, who played for Roughyeds two seasons ago, and no doubt Bibey would also have loved to play here against the side that his elder brother, Ricky, played for back in 2005.

Roger Halstead

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☐	Daryl CARDISS
☐	James COYLE
☐	Tommy GOULDEN
☐	Tommy GRUNDY
☐	Danny HALLIWELL
☐	Simeon HOYLE
☐	Phil JOSEPH
☐	Gareth LANGLEY
☐	Craig LITTLER
☐	Richard MERVILL
☐	Mick NANYN
☐	Paul O'CONNOR
☐	Lucas ONYANGO
☐	Rob ROBERTS
☐	Adam ROBINSON
☐	Neil RODEN
☐	Lee SANDERSON
☐	Warren STEVENS
☐	Marcus ST HILAIRE
☐	Said TAMGHART
☐	Lee WINGFIELD
☐	
☐	

Swinton Lions



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☐	Rob BALL
☐	Darren BAMFORD
☐	Adam BIBEY
☐	Marlon BILLY
☐	Chris BRAND
☐	Wayne ENGLISH
☐	Darren GIBSON
☐	Dean GORTON
☐	Barry HAMILTON
☐	Richie HAWKYARD
☐	Gareth HAYLES
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☐	Gary HULSE
☐	Bruce JOHNSON
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☐	Liam McGOVERN
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