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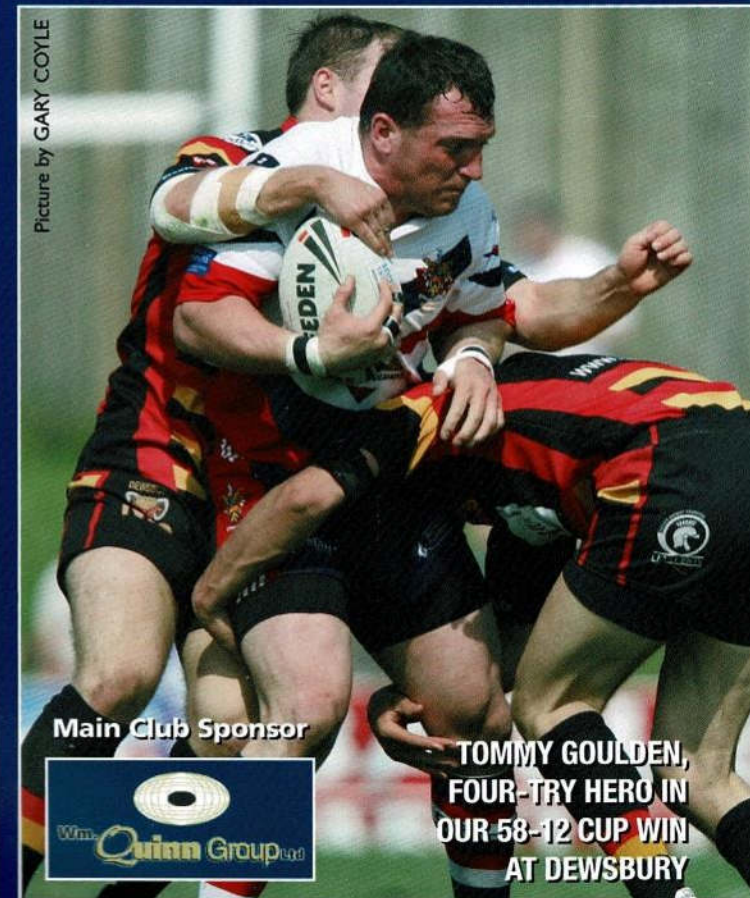
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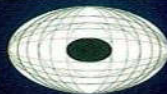
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## KEAR AND DEAKS DON'T NEED REMINDING OF CUP SHOCKS

by Roger Halstead

### OUR sixth-round Carnegie Challenge Cup tie at Wakefield will bring back memories of one of the biggest Wembley upsets in the competition's history.

Ten years ago this month Sheffield Eagles beat mighty Wigan in the final of rugby league's most prestigious knock-out competition to take the cup back to the South Yorkshire city of steel, leaving the sport bemused if not exactly stunned.

John Kear, now boss at Wakefield, was Sheffield's head coach at that time, while the right-hand man who helped him to plot and plan a game that will forever command a place in Wembley folklore was none other than the present-day Oldham boss and current coach of the month, Steve Deakin.

As you would have expected, the draw was only minutes old before John phoned his old mate in Oldham to discuss the forthcoming quarter-final tie at Belle Vue and no doubt to reminisce about that never-to-be-forgotten Spring day at Wembley a decade ago when Eagles, 17-1 outsiders in a two-horse race, turned the form book upside down, and Mark Aston carried off the Lance Todd Trophy.

Then comrades, now rivals, Kear and Deaks will go head to head in a tie that gives Roughyeds one of their biggest days since the new club was founded just a few months before that Wembley epic.

If nothing else, those memories will remind both Kear and Deaks of what outsiders are capable of in a sudden-death tie when nerves can kick in and emotions are running high.

Said Deaks: "John was on the phone soon after the draw was made. He said they took between 1,200 and 1,500 fans to Barrow and that there was a resurgence of interest in the town on the back of the good football they were playing. He was confident the Trinity fans would turn out for this one."

"From our point of view I fully expect us to take the equivalent of our average home gates. In fact, I would be disappointed if we didn't have between 1,200 and 1,500 backing us at Belle Vue."

"The club, directors, players, diehard fans and everyone connected with Oldham RL Club deserves recognition for the advances we have made in recent times and I am sure the town won't disappoint us. If we can get 5,000 on Belle Vue it will match what Bradford Bulls got against Catalans Dragons in the last round."

The Roughyeds' chief executive Chris Hamilton said: "With all due respect to Wakefield it wasn't the draw we would have asked for... so we'll have to wait for the semi-final for that! Apparently, there is a lot of cup fever in Wakefield and they are expecting a good crowd."

"We know they have quality players and they are a good Super League side, but we want to make sure that we go there and give a good account of ourselves. Upsets in ties like this are more of a rarity these days, but we will be going to Belle Vue with plenty of confidence and in the hope that we can cause one."

"We have a few league games now to be played in midweek, but that's the price you pay for relative success and we are delighted to be where we are. It is going to be a difficult spell for us, but that's where the squad system will come into play."

"The very fact that we are still in the Challenge Cup and the Northern Rail Cup shows that we are not a bad side, and the hope is that we can take that cup form into the league programme as well."

The full draw, ties to be played on the weekend of May 30 to June 1, is: Wakefield v OLDHAM; Leeds v Wigan; Hull KR v St Helens; Bradford v Hull.

Our 58-12 fifth-round win at Dewsbury was memorable for many things, but did you know that if Mick Nannyn had converted his own second try near the end to make it ten goals out of ten attempts, he would have set a points-in-a-match record for the new Oldham club.

As it was, his points haul of 26 -- nine goals and two tries -- equalled the previous best set by Gareth Barber, who kicked seven goals and scored three tries on April 2, 2002 at Hurst Cross, also against Dewsbury.

In the entire history of rugby league in Oldham only one man has ever scored more than 26 points in a game and that was Abe Johnson, who kicked 12 goals and scored two tries against Widnes at Watersheddings on April 9, 1928 to collect 30 points. Tries in those days were worth three points.

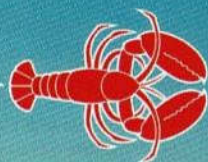
**So its 31 for an all-time club record... over to you Mick!**

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# From the Boardroom

With Chris Hamilton...



## CRISIS, WHAT CRISIS?

If ever a situation got out of hand it was events following our last home game against Blackpool when Deaks implied that he may be looking at his position.

To be honest it was nothing more than a "from the heart" comment following what he had perceived as a poor performance from the team and looking back I have no doubt that he would have handled things differently.

The fall out from those events meant that the build up to the Dewsbury cup tie, in terms of the club, was spent re-iterating what a good start we have had to the season given our results in three competitions.

It was, therefore, very pleasing, to go to Dewsbury last week and to do "a job" on them - a very comprehensive one at that!

For the club to have progressed to the last eight of the Carnegie Challenge Cup for the first time is a great achievement and although the draw of Wakefield away in the next round is certainly not what we would have picked we must make sure we do not waste the opportunity and although it is a long shot there is still the chance of an upset - no matter how remote.

Today though its back to the league and we will be playing a Swinton team who always manages to raise its game when playing us. They have had more than a few injuries recently and a poor result last week against York at home will only serve to ensure that Paul Kidd and his players are more determined than ever to come here and get a result.

From our point of view I know that the players want to get a high level of consistency into their game and we will all be hoping that we can get near to what was on show last week.

This will be our last home game in Oldham for 2 months and in that respect it is important that we keep this good run of home results going and just as importantly we hope that we will be attempting it with an increase in the number of fans watching.

These are exciting times for the club and the current crop of players is as good as has been at Oldham for a long time - old and new club - and as Bill Quinn has recently stated we need more of the so called supporters of the club to get down to matches and to physically show their support.

**As ever enjoy the game and get behind the team.**

*Chris Hamilton*

## DEAKS TOPS POLL IN MONTHLY RANKINGS

**OLDHAM boss Steve Deakin was the Rugby League World magazine's NL2 coach of the month for April, nudging Doncaster's Ellery Hanley into second place**

The citation read: "Oldham continue to fight on three fronts after a hectic April. Wins over Whitehaven and Swinton saw Roughyeds progress to the latter stages of the Northern Rail Cup and the Challenge Cup respectively -- that and the home win over Rochdale makes Steve Deakin our coach of the month."

Dave Clark (Barrow) is in third place; Paul Kidd (Swinton) fourth; and Barry Eaton (Keighley) fifth, but pride of place goes to Deaks, whose Oldham team also had two players in the NL2 team of the month --- James Coyle at scrum-half and Robert 'Two Bobs' Roberts at loose-forward.

Among other Oldham players who were considered, but failed to make the final 13 were Neil Roden (ranked fifth at stand-off); Said Tamghart (fourth at prop); and Phil Joseph (fifth at hooker).

Team: Stuart Kain (Gateshead); James Nixon (Barrow), James Mossop (Workington), Carl Sneyd (Rochdale), Dean Colton (Doncaster); Danny Jones (Keighley), **James Coyle (OLDHAM)**; Dean Burgess (Workington), Corey Lawrie (Doncaster), Brendan Rawlins (Keighley), Mick Cassidy (Barrow), Michael Knowles (Gateshead), **Robert Roberts (OLDHAM)**.

Doncaster hooker Corey Lawrie, a 28-year-old Kiwi who played in the NRL with New Zealand Warriors last season, scored a double hit, winning both the RLW NL2 player-of-the-month award and what is described in League Weekly as the 'Official' NL2 player-of-the-month award.

Oldham can boast two forwards in this team, namely Tamghart at prop and Tommy Goulden in the second-row. Hanley's Doncaster, currently top of the table, have no fewer than five players in the side.

Team: Lee Mapals (York); Austen Aggrey (London Skolars), Andreas Bauer (Doncaster), Namila Davui (London Skolars), Gavin Duffy (Keighley); Kyle Briggs (Doncaster), Luke Gale (Doncaster); Craig Lawton (Doncaster), Corey Lawrie (Doncaster), **Said Tamghart (OLDHAM)**, Ross Divorty (York), **Tommy Goulden (OLDHAM)**, David March (York).

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# CoachesComments

With Steve Deakin...



**A big hello to Paul Kidd and all at Swinton, today's visitors, to what will be our last game at Boundary Park for six weeks due to work on**

## the pitch.

We come into today's game on a massive high as a result of what I believe to be the best team performance in my time at the club, in beating Dewsbury on their own ground 58 - 12, and so earn a place in the quarter finals of the Challenge Cup.

The challenge now is not to get distracted with the success of that, or indeed our NR cup run, and to focus on the task in hand of playing to our potential week in and week out and hopefully getting a crack at promotion in good form. I am firmly of the belief that the factors in any dip or rise in form are never black and white but do believe that a major part in the performance was the re-emergence during the week of Baldwin, Brooks and Grundy and hence the competition for places started to hot up again. That coupled with a positive reaction by the players to what was a substandard showing the previous week and we came up with what was very close to a perfect game. Certainly the quality of some of the tries we scored were as good as any you will see this year and it was good to see our outside backs

getting some chances too. Nannyn scoring 26 points (a player with enormous talent who, when he gets it right, is the match of anyone outside of SL) and Lucas also getting in on the act (ps I love his little dance whenever he scores a try)

Looking forward we need to be on top of our game today if we are to continue our winning run. Swinton know as much about us as anyone and they will be looking for a reaction to last week's loss to get their own promotion bid back on track. From previous games we know that they raise their game for us so please stay patient with us, derby games are never easy.

Finally please get behind the chairman and sponsor him in his upcoming bout against Brad Hepi, an event that will raise money for charity ---as well as raise his insurance premium no doubt---and for a man to do what he does for this club he deserves all the support and respect that we can give.

**Lastly, as always please enjoy the game, get behind the team and be positive**

*Deaks*

## HEAD OFFICE

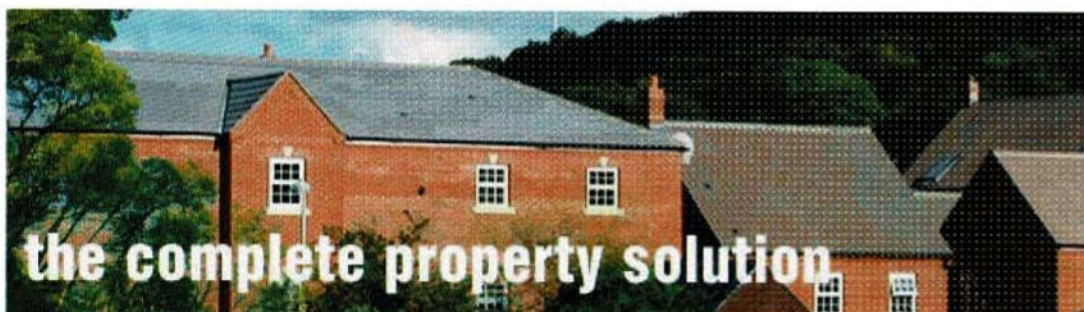
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**Chris Frodsham** Son of former Lions legend Tommy, Chris is a utility back who has been with the Saints Academy for many seasons. Played in the pre-season friendly for Saints at Park Lane early this year.

**Barry Hamilton** Local lad who played his amateur rugby with Eccles before signing for Salford Academy. Played alongside Gareth Hayes and Dean Gorton while with the Reds.

**Chris Brand** Full-back and goal-kicker who played his first rugby league season with Blackpool last year. Previously played in the other rugby code with Orrell.

**Ben Williamson** Formerly with Langworthy Reds who joined the new Lions Academy for 2006 and was one of the four to be awarded a first-team contract for the 2007 season. Resigned for the Lions mid 2008 while playing for East Lancs Lions.

**Marlon Billy** Had two seasons with Swinton at the turn of the century and re-joined in 2005 after spells at Rochdale and Doncaster. The fans favourite has was in the NL2 allstar team for 2005 and 2006 and has now topped 50 tries in his second spell.

**Richie Hawkyard** Signed from Bradford Bulls Academy at the end of the 2007 season. A former Scottish Students and A international who has already been called-up into the senior squad for the matches this Autumn.

**Gary Hulse** New signing for 2007 from Rochdale Hornets. A player with plenty of Super League experience during a four year stint with Warrington, leaving to spend a season with Widnes in 2005. Joined Warrington in 1999 from local amateur side Crosfields.

**Bruce Johnson** Had a storming season debut season in 2006 while on-loan from Widnes and Swinton fans were glad to know that he signed a two-year deal starting from 2007. A former England U18 International.

**Gary Sykes** A product of Wigan St. Judes who signed for Wigan Academy. Spent a year gaining first-team action at Leigh in 2006 before returning back to Wigan. A loose-forward who has been played at hooker while at Wigan.

**Gareth Hayes** Former Salford Academy player who signed for Oldham for the 2006 season. In 2004 was voted Academy player of the year for the Reds. Toured Australia in 2001 with the North-West Counties Under 16 squad while playing at Leigh East

**Darren Gibson** The fifth player in the Swinton squad from their local rivals academy, although he played his amateur rugby with Wigan St. Judes. Can play in either second row or loose forward.

**Neil Rigby** Signed from Saints Academy at the end of the 2007 season, where he won the Senior Academy player of the year in 2006. His first-team chances was restricted to a substitute appearance against Catalan Dragons in 2006. Played his amateur rugby with Blackburn.

**Craig Ashall** Signed for 2007 from the Saints Academy. Was originally part of the Warrington Academy set-up playing alongside Dave Ashton, Matty Bryers and Danny Aboushakra before moving onto Saints. Played one match in SL in 2006 scoring a try on his debut at Catalan Dragons.

**Phil Wood** A product of Widnes St Maries, Phil signed for St Helens in 1999 before joining Widnes, making his Super League debut in 2004. Came on-loan to Swinton in June 2006 and soon became a fans favourite. Swept the board in 2007 end of season awards.

**Mike Smith** Nephew of former Lion Kris Smith who signed on for 2007 after a successful season with the Academy. Broke through into the first-team early on with some impressive performances. Played his amateur rugby at Folly Lane

**Martin Moana** A player with plenty of Super League experience who signed for Halifax for the 1996 season when he left the Auckland Warriors. Played over five years with Fax before short spells with Doncaster and Huddersfield in 2001. Had a season with Wakefield before re-joining Halifax in 2003 but left midway through the season to join Salford. Spent last year in National League 1 with Doncaster. Played for the NZ Maoris in the 2000 World Cup. Was voted Swinton player of the year for 2006.

**Adam Bibey** Former England Under-18s international who was at Barrow last season. Had two spells with Leigh sandwiched by a season at Widnes making a Super League appearance against Wigan in 2004 alongside Phil Wood.

  
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# OldhamFixtures '08



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|------|-----|---|----|-----|-----|
|------|-----|---|----|-----|-----|

January

|          |              |   |        |           |       |
|----------|--------------|---|--------|-----------|-------|
| Sun 13th | LEEDS RHINOS | A | 3:00pm | 4-50      | 6,340 |
| Sun 20th | HULL KR      | H | 3:00pm | Postponed |       |
| Sun 27th | ROCHDALE     | A | 3:00pm | 20-26     | 1,108 |

February

|              |          |   |        |       |       |
|--------------|----------|---|--------|-------|-------|
| NRC Fri 1st  | SWINTON  | H | 8:00pm | 22-20 | 848   |
| NRC Fri 8th  | SALFORD  | A | 8:00pm | 12-40 | 4,224 |
| NRC Fri 22nd | SALFORD  | H | 8:00pm | 18-14 | 1,350 |
| NRC Fri 29th | ROCHDALE | H | 8:00pm | 38-8  | 1,024 |

March

|              |              |   |        |       |       |
|--------------|--------------|---|--------|-------|-------|
| NRC Weds 5th | ROCHDALE     | A | 3:00pm | 22-32 | 682   |
| CCC3 Sun 9th | BRITISH ARMY | A | 1.30pm | 56-10 | 500   |
| NRC Sun 16th | SWINTON      | A | 3:00pm | 52-10 | 549   |
| NL Fri 21st  | ROCHDALE     | A | 3:00pm | 46-32 | 1,003 |
| NL Mon 24th  | HUNSLET      | H | 3:00pm | 40-12 | 1,168 |
| NL Sun 30th  | YORK         | H | 3:00pm | 36-26 | 1,049 |

April

|               |            |   |        |       |       |
|---------------|------------|---|--------|-------|-------|
| NRC Sun 6th   | WHITEHAVEN | H | 3:00pm | 16-6  | 966   |
| NL Sun 13th   | KEIGHLEY   | A | 3:00pm | 12-26 | 1,276 |
| CCC4 Sun 20th | SWINTON    | A | 3:00pm | 20-8  | 591   |
| NL Sun 27th   | ROCHDALE   | H | 3:00pm | 24-14 | 1,107 |

May

|               |           |   |        |       |       |
|---------------|-----------|---|--------|-------|-------|
| NL Mon 5th    | BLACKPOOL | H | 3:00pm | 38-26 | 1,115 |
| CCC4 Sun 11th | DEWSBURY  | A | 3:00pm | 58-12 | 1,103 |
| NL Sun 18th   | SWINTON   | H | 3:00pm |       |       |

NRC Sun 25th BATLEY A 3:00pm

June

|              |                      |   |        |  |  |
|--------------|----------------------|---|--------|--|--|
| CCC6 Sun 1st | WAKEFIELD            | A | 3:00pm |  |  |
| NL Wed 4th   | GATESHEAD            | A | 7:30pm |  |  |
| NL Sun 8th   | LONDON               | H | 3:00pm |  |  |
| NL Sun 15th  | HUNSLET              | A | 3:00pm |  |  |
| Sun 15th     | NORTHERN RAIL CUP SF |   |        |  |  |
| NL Suny 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

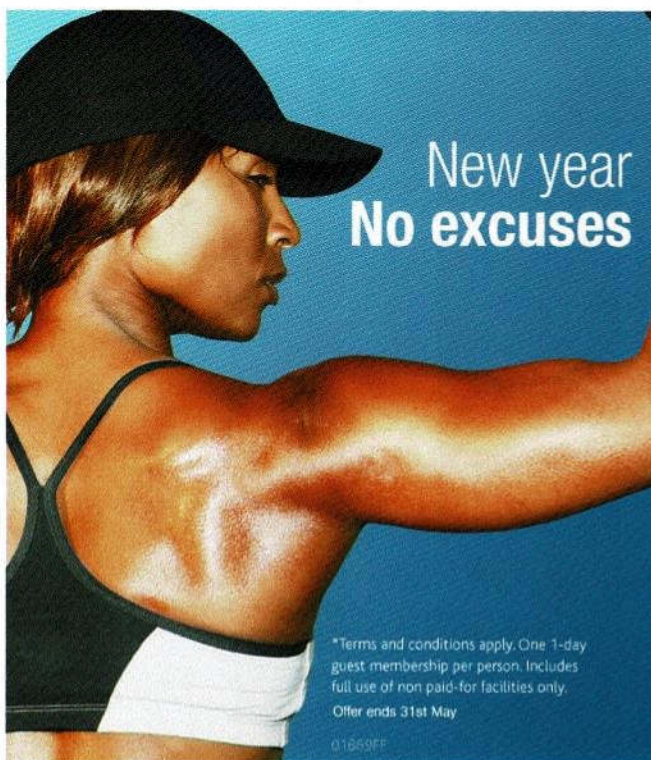
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|----------|----------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Sun 7th  | ELIMINATION PLAY OFFS                  |  |  |  |  |
| Sun 14th | QUALIFYING/<br>ELIMINATION SEMI-FINALS |  |  |  |  |
| Sun 21st | FINAL ELIMINATOR                       |  |  |  |  |
| Sun 28th | N L GRAND FINAL                        |  |  |  |  |

October

|         |                 |  |  |  |  |
|---------|-----------------|--|--|--|--|
| Sat 4th | S L GRAND FINAL |  |  |  |  |
|---------|-----------------|--|--|--|--|

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### MR RELIABLE' KEEN TO PICK UP WHERE HE LEFT OFF

*Ian is back on old, familiar territory*

### Player Profile: IAN HODSON

by ROGER HALSTEAD

How very appropriate that on the day we welcome Swinton Lions to Boundary Park we feature Ian Hodson in our match-day magazine's Player Profile slot

In the past few seasons, the versatile, 26-year-old back-row man has hopped to and fro between the Lions and the Roughyeds, so it hardly came as a major surprise when, a week or two ago, Oldham announced that Hodson had signed for Roughyeds for the FOURTH time in three years.

He has played for the club both on loan and under contract; in a variety of positions, including prop, second-row, loose-forward and stand-off; and under the guidance of three coaches in Gary Mercer, John Pendlebury and Steve Deakin.

He has seen the lows, like making 23 appearances in a side that lost every game in NL1 in the relegation year of 2006, and the highs, like playing in the 2007 NL2 Grand Final against Featherstone at Headingley, and that will remain a highlight of Ian's career despite Oldham's 24-6 defeat.

Oldham lined up in that final like this: Langley; Ford, Littler, Hughes, Onyango; Roden, Coyle; Tonks, Hoyle, Mervill, Sinfield, Roberts, Costin. Subs: Hodson, Wilkinson, Tamghart, Brooks.

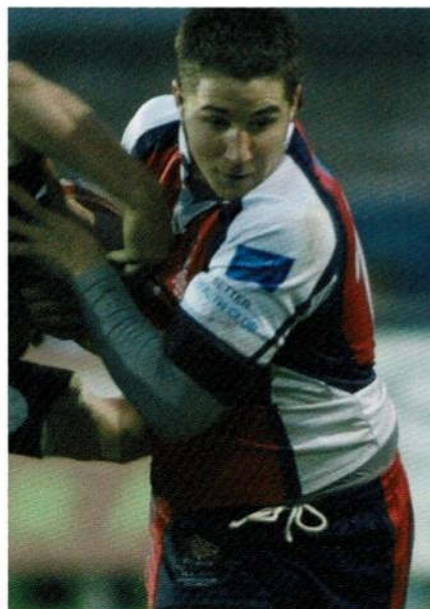
Though he didn't have a place in the starting line-up, and he was on the bench also in each of the three sudden-death play-off games

against Swinton, Workington and Barrow that preceded it, there was no doubt that Leigh-born Ian played a major part in last season's success. He played a total of 23 games in 2007 and built himself a reputation as a creative, left-side second-row forward with the hands and the vision to make sure the free-scoring left-wing pair of Adam Hughes and Lucas Onyango had plenty of running opportunities.

"It was probably the best season of my career," recalled Ian this week, "though it was bitterly disappointing to be beaten in the manner we were in the final after we played so strongly and so well in the run-up to the big day."

Hodson has never tugged a Roughyeds first-team jersey over his head since that October day last year, although he has played a handful of games for Swinton in the interim.

Nevertheless, the first person he contacted when he was given the option of leaving the Lions a few weeks ago was Oldham boss Steve Deakin -- and just as much as Ian was keen to



PICTURE BY DARREN ROBINSON, OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

return to his old stomping ground, Steve was delighted to welcome him home.

He has signed a deal to the end of the season and he is currently awaiting his chance to hit the first team again after being denied it by injury when Blackpool Panthers were here a fortnight ago. Ian had played in the Reserves against Leigh on the previous Thursday evening at Sedgley Park and had picked up a dead leg. He was down to play at stand-off in the first team against the Panthers so Neil Roden could be given a rest. "I was absolutely gutted to miss out," he said, "but it was a very painful dead leg and there was no way I could have played in the first team three days later. My chance went begging and I was really sick about that."

"I've just got to be patient now and wait for my chance, but I am really keen to pick up where I left off last season because I enjoyed it such a lot."

You've only to look at the structure of the Oldham side when Hodson made his debut for the club on April 10, 2005 in a 44-22 loss to Doncaster at Boundary Park to see the extent of the changes that have taken place since. True, Ian hasn't been here all that time since then, but whenever he has left he has always wanted to come back -- and it says much for the measure of the man that Oldham have always been glad to have him back.

Anyway, who can recall Hodson's debut team? It was: Goddard; Dodd, Cowell, Wilkinson, Munro; Svabic, Turner; Wilson, Barber, D Nanyn, Haughton, Glassie, Hodson. Subs: Gorey, Mataora, Kirkland, J Hough.

For the rest of that season, Hodson was to play mainly in the second-row with loose-forward duties mainly shared equally between John Hough and Simon Svabic.

All told, Hodson has played 61 senior games for the Roughyeds -- 15 in 2005; 23 in 2006; and 23 also in 2007, scoring a total of nine tries, but fashioning loads more with his ability

to unlock defences out wide. We wait to see if and when he will be given the opportunity to do for Mick Nanyn and Onyango what he did for Hughes and Onyango last year.

His move back to Swinton at the end of last year came as something of a surprise to a lot of Roughyeds fans. "I talked to Blackpool as well because I know Martin Crompton," said Ian, "but Swinton looked the better option for me, considering the demands of my full time job as well, so I signed for the Lions for a third time."

"I played five games early season, but things did not work out for me there and coach Paul Kidd gave me the option of staying and fighting for my place or moving on. I chose the latter. I rang Deaks and as it happened Roughyeds were toiling just then, with a lot of players on the injured list. I signed, and here I am -- again."

As a boy, Hodson played for Leigh East and then Leigh Miners Rangers. He was always happier at Miners and it was from there that he was picked to play for Great Britain under-18s in France before signing a three-year deal with Leigh Centurions, his hometown club. Paul Terzis was head coach at Hilton Park at that time, but the man who had the biggest influence on the young Hodson was Academy coach Darren Abram.

Ian did enough to win a place in a National League under-21 rep side, managed by Chris Hamilton, to go on tour to France. About the same time Abram left Leigh to take over as head coach at Chorley, and Hodson followed him to Victory Park where Chorley had a great season, reaching the NL2 play-off semi-finals before going down to Keighley Cougars. Swinton was next port of call and then to Oldham on loan to start a relationship with a club with which Hodson has always seemed to have a close affinity.

*Roger Halstead*



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# GuestWriter...

## No 8: MATTHEW CHAMBERS

of the Oldham Evening Chronicle

### MARTIN Offiah got a little bit muddled when asked to comment on the Challenge Cup draw on Monday night.

Despite Oldham having been drawn away to Wakefield Trinity Wildcats, a clearly nervous 'Chariots' couldn't get over the fear of his former club Wigan drawing the Roughyeds at home and proceeded to discuss that game instead.

Perhaps Offiah had inadvertently tuned in to the brain activity of Roughyeds officials, desperate to finally land a big pay day at one of the game's giants.

But in the end, it is irrelevant. A trip to the environs of Belle Vue awaits Steve Deakin and his swashbuckling squad and, though there is only a small chance of making the sort of cash a visit to, say, Leeds, would bring, the irony of Deaks reuniting with John Kear is delicious.

The pair famously worked in tandem when Sheffield Eagles shocked a nation by beating all-conquering Wigan at Wembley 10 years ago.

That a Wildcats triumph in 2008 wouldn't cause nearly as much of a stir this year is testament to the job that Kear has done in bringing together a very capable squad, and one that has continued to flourish despite a horrendous injuries list.

With an artful scrum-half as capable as Danny Brough directing the team around the park, anything is possible; particularly when Brough, along with Kear, knows so much about winning the Challenge Cup.

Oldham's ambitions are on a smaller scale, at least for now. But promotion to National League One isn't going to be anything resembling an easy task, if anyone was ever in confusion about that.

Along with the Roughyeds, current table-toppers Keighley, Doncaster, Barrow and, unlikeliest of all, Gateshead, have set a furious pace at the top of the division.

Even given the complex nature of how the number of promotion places there are to be this year (nobody knows the score on that until the licenses situation is clarified in July) it is clear that not all of those sides will go up.

And there are still plenty of clashes between all those sides which will help sort out the real contenders from the pretenders.

The Roughyeds will hope that the pile-up of fixtures which will soon hit them doesn't damage the hopes of promotion too much.

The season is clearly not designed to cater for a NL2 side which ends up doing well in the two cup competitions, as Oldham have found to their cost.

But while midweek trips to Gateshead, Doncaster and London Skolars will test the mental and physical strength of the Oldham team, they will also put a severe strain on the loyal fans who travel to cheer them on. Sadly, sometimes that factor can be forgotten.

*Matthew Chambers*

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



## DR KERSHAW'S AND GENESIS ADOPTED BY ROUGHYEDS' AS OFFICIAL CLUB CHARITIES

by ROGER HALSTEAD



**OLDHAM Rugby League Club has launched a 12-months initiative to raise funds for Dr Kershaw's Hospice and for the Genesis Appeal for the prevention of breast cancer.**

The club has previously handed over many thousands of pounds to aid Breakthrough's fight against breast cancer -- and last August it donated nearly £4,000 each to Dr Kershaw's and to the Rugby League Benevolent Fund, for seriously injured players, from the proceeds of a £1-to-enter National League Two game against Celtic Crusaders at Boundary Park.

Roughyeds have now taken their community fund-raising to a new level by adopting Dr Kershaw's Hospice and the Genesis Appeal as official club charities.

Special fund-raising events will be held, while part of the club's player-of-the-month and player-of-the-year sponsorship package from Spindles Town Square Shopping will also be donated.

Links were forged when Brian Hurst of Dr Kershaw's and Judi Hibbert of Genesis drew up plans with Roughyeds chairman Bill Quinn and the club's chief executive Chris Hamilton.

Said Judi: "This is a first for Genesis. We are

delighted to be associated with Oldham RL Club because we are keen that men should be aware of the risks of breast cancer as well as women.

"We are the only charity dealing with the prevention of breast cancer and our Centre at Wythenshawe, which opened last July, is the first of its kind in Europe. One in ten women and one in 1,000 men suffer from breast cancer.

"Wigan Athletic Ladies football team support us, but this is the first time we have been adopted by a professional sporting organisation."

Mr Hurst thanked Roughyeds for their support; described the initiative as "brilliant news"; and said he was sure that both charities and the club would derive mutual benefit.

Speaking for Roughyeds, Mr Hamilton said the club was keen to support two charities with whom the community at large -- not just rugby supporters -- would have an affinity.

"Dr Kershaw's provides a fantastic facility for the town," he added, "and the fight against breast cancer has been close to my heart for several years.

"The Genesis Research Centre at Wythenshawe Hospital opened only last year and is the only one of its kind in Europe. It's on our doorstep and it deserves our support."

Lester Barr, chairman of the Genesis Appeal, was the surgeon who operated on Mr Hamilton's partner, Gillian Holt, at the height of Gillian's fight against breast cancer.

Later, Chris and Gillian visited the Centre and it was from what they saw there that the wheels were put in motion for the link-up between Genesis and the Roughyeds.

Added Chris: "Charity work, and awareness of it, is becoming very much part of modern life and, increasingly, part of our country's sporting life. Genesis does fantastic research work into the prevention of breast cancer, looking at all sort of issues such as diet, family history, life-style etc.

"Dr Kershaw's has to raise vast sums of money each year to provide care for people who are seriously ill, and we are keen to help them all we can."

It will cost £1,750,000 to run the hospice this year and, of that, the hospice itself has to raise £1,300,000 from donations, special efforts and fund-raising events.



Said Mr Hurst, the hospice's Appeals Manager: "We are delighted to be adopted by Roughyeds. And I am sure the year will be just as successful as last year's one-off initiative when the hospice and the RFL Benevolent Fund shared the proceeds of a match at Boundary Park which set a crowd record for National League Two of 4,327.

"To be adopted by a professional club like Roughyeds as one of their official club charities is a first for Dr Kershaw's and we look forward to working alongside the club."

Bill Quinn, chairman, majority shareholder and owner of the Roughyeds, said he was "proud and privileged" to be associated with a club that was backing two such worthy causes in this way.

He added: "My mother died of cancer -- and in a hospice. So on a personal note I have a lot of reasons for supporting these two charities.

"As far as the club is concerned I think we have shown that we are looking at and giving consideration to the community at large. We are a community club. Dr Kershaw's and Genesis do fantastic work and the club is keen to assist in terms of raising funds and raising public awareness."

## BILL WILL GO HEAD TO HEAD WITH KIWI HARD MAN HEPI

**BATTLING Bill Quinn, our club chairman, will be going into the ring with former New Zealand Test star Brad Hepi in the Legends of League big-fight night at the Reebok Stadium on June 14 to raise funds in the fight against cancer for the Steve Prescott Foundation.**

Bill will wear pink in recognition of the club's adoption of the Genesis Appeal as one of its two charities for the next 12 months.

An amateur boxer in his youth, 42-year-old Bill expected to be squaring up to either Hornets coach Bobbie Goulding or former RL referee Karl Kirkpatrick.

It has now emerged though that he will be in the ring with the former Kiwi hard-man, who in his rugby league days was reputed to be one of the toughest men in the sport.

Bill was among a clutch of prospective boxers who were invited to Ricky Hatton's gym recently to meet the famous fighter and to pick up tips for their big night in Bolton in mid-June. The Sky Sports cameras were there and the event was featured on the Boots 'N All programme.

Said Bill: "I now know my opponent will be Hepi. He was there the other night and I have to say he looked one strong, mean Kiwi. He didn't say much, he just kept staring at me.

"According to Deaks, who knew Hepi well in his playing days, he reckons I have definitely drawn the short straw.

"The general view is I will have a tougher fight on my hands than I would have done against either Goulding or Kirkpatrick, but we'll just have to see what happens on the night. I will have a very strong test in this one, but to be honest I would rather go into the fight as an underdog and I have certainly got what I wanted -- a challenge.

"I said I wanted a fight and I've got one. I can promise this -- there will be no turning back. Let's see what happens on the night and in the ring. There ain't no hiding place there."

The whole evening, which includes several bouts of boxing, a four-course meal, other entertainment and the presence of a galaxy of sporting stars and icons, is to raise funds for the Steve Prescott Foundation, the organisation set up to work on fund-raising in the fight against cancer.

Steve, the former RL star, is currently battling against a rare form of stomach cancer and much of the money raised goes to Christie's Hospital in Manchester and cancer charities.

Bill is seeking to raise money for the cause from sponsorship and forms are available from the Roughyeds office in Lansdowne Road, Chadderton (tel: 0161 628 3677). For a donation of £250 companies can have their names on Bill's boxing shorts.

Seats are priced at £70 per head, this including four-course meal, various bouts of boxing involving Legends of League, singers, other entertainment, a turn-out of the stars and a unique sporting occasion, all in a very good cause.

Anyone interested in sponsoring Bill is asked to pick up a form at the Roughyeds office or to ring Janet at the club on 0161 628 3677. Similarly, if any companies wish to participate they, too, are asked to ring Janet on that number.

Oldham R.L.F.C.

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**AFTER 11 weeks sidelined by knee injuries and operations, Matty Brooks and Simon Baldwin began their comebacks in the Reserves' 56-4 defeat by Salford City Reds at Sedgley Park on May 8. Tommy Grundy was also back after two weeks out with a back injury**

Brooks, Baldwin and Grundy started the game - Brooks at hooker, Baldwin at No 10 and Grundy in the second-row - but they were all withdrawn shortly before half time. Grundy and Baldwin did not reappear, but Brooks returned to the field midway through the second half and saw out the remainder of the game.

Head coach Steve Deakin looked on as Oldham got off to a flier with the opening try by new boy Jack Burns from Waterhead, on his debut.

After that, Roughyeds were overrun by a faster, more experienced City Reds side which included several players with considerable first-team experience including stand-off Stefan Ratchford, whose lively running cut the Roughyeds defence to pieces, Lee Jewitt, Chris Borgese and Stephen Bannister.

"They were a lot more experienced than us," said Roughyeds coach John Hough. "but my lads were enthusiastic and passionate in all they did and, despite the score, I am pleased. We kept working to the end and the lads did all that could have been expected of them."

It had not gone unnoticed by Hough that, although his new side had lost each of their six league games to date, they had been beaten home and away by the top three teams in the division -- Salford, Leigh and Rochdale Hornets.

"We've played the top three home and away," added John, "but now we've got a three-week break before we go to Widnes. The lads will welcome that break because most of them have been playing non-stop for the past eight months and some of them have clocked up more than 40 games.

"We are bottom of the league right now, but we've finished with the top three and we've still to play home and away against Widnes, Workington, Hunslet, Featherstone and Barrow. I'll judge my lads when we have played these teams -- we've already won at Featherstone in pre-season -- and when we see where we finish up in the table."

Oldham: Dale Lowe; Dwaine Nelson, Adam Jeffries, David Orwell, Jack Burns; Ethan Langhorn, Pat Toft; Alex Eyres, Matty Brooks, Simon Baldwin, Tommy Grundy, Chris Clark, Scot Mansfield. Subs: Martyn Sarsfield, Ben Eaton, Will Schofield, Andy Taylor.

**NOTHING went right for Roughyeds Reserves in a 56-6 defeat by a bigger, faster, stronger and far more experienced Leigh Centurions side at Sedgley Park.**

Ashley Wildman, who was due to play on the wing, broke down with a knee injury in the pre-match warm-up - and the game was only two minutes old when centre Gareth Schofield was taken to hospital with a shoulder injury.

Oldham could have done without those setbacks against one of the strongest teams in the division but, despite the score, they did enough to earn the plaudits of coach John Hough, who was full of admiration for the way his young side battled against the odds.

He said: "I was pleased. I asked them to improve on what they served up at Rochdale, and they certainly did. The scoreboard doesn't always tell the full story and, as I have said before, I am not a scoreboard coach. We had to change the side around at the last minute and then alter things again when Gareth was injured so early in the match.

"We then picked up other injuries with the result that we ran out of subs and we finished up with half-backs and second-row forwards on the wings.

"Despite the score we competed for 90 to 95 per cent of the game, and emerged with credit for the way we kept battling."

On the back of four penalties in a row, Oldham totally dominated possession and field position in the first 20 to 25 minutes. They forced back-to-back sets on FOUR occasions by putting the ball into the in-goal, chasing well and forcing the Centurions to drop outs.

Leigh defended well, but something had to give and Oldham opened the scoring in the 20th minute when Ian Hodson went close before Chris Baines won the race to touch down another grubber. Ethan Langhorn, who had been off target with a

12th-minute penalty attempt from long range, made no mistake with the angled conversion.

Not for the first time this season, the young Oldham team had more than matched more experienced and bigger opponents for half an hour only to concede a couple of tries in the last ten minutes before half time, at which point they trailed 18-6.

They had given their all, and they continued to do their best in the second half, but they couldn't contain Leigh's stronger forwards and pacier backs any longer, with the result that Leigh piled on the pressure relentlessly to score seven second-half tries -- several of them from long range.

In the Oldham side Ethan Langhorn and Patrick Toft, at half-back, strove hard to hold the midfield together despite massive odds. Phil Jaggeer worked himself to a standstill in the second-row and props Alex Eyres and Chris Clarke caught the eye while battling against a strong Leigh pack, Clarke doing particularly well in his first spell.

### Next Reserve Fixtures

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NLR Sat 7th June WORKINGTON A 2:30pm

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# KICKING HOMOPHOBIA OUT OF OLDHAM



"Rugby League history was made in the build-up to the recent Cooperative National League game between the Roughyeds and Blackpool Panthers as the Roughyeds Reserves took on the Manchester Village Spartans in a game Of Touch Rugby to celebrate the forthcoming IDAHO day and to help "Kick Homophobia out of Oldham".

to work the main game were disappointingly turned down, it is understood that Sky Sports, always keen to expand their audience, may be looking to replace one follicular-challenged summariser for another and that, unless Stevo is willing to put the PVC hotpants back in his wardrobe, he may yet find himself at a loose end."

Sean Mellor  
Community Development Manager  
Oldham Roughyeds  
0161-628-3677



In the presence of the Mayor of Oldham and assorted dignitaries, this was the first time a gay team had played at an established professional Rugby League venue. The match was competitive and entertaining, while the unique match commentary provided by "The only Gay in the village" ensured that the event remained light-hearted. The game was played with a commemorative pink ball and miniature replicas of this unique piece of equipment were gleefully received by the crowd at half-time.

While the offers from the prematch announcer



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# Today's Squads



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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gareth LANGLEY    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Craig LITTLER     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Richard MERVILL   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mick NANYN        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Paul O'CONNOR     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lucas ONYANGO     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rob ROBERTS       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adam ROBINSON     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Neil RODEN        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lee SANDERSON     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Warren STEVENS    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Marcus ST HILAIRE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Said TAMGHART     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lee WINGFIELD     |

## Swinton Lions



|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Craig ASHALL    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rob BALL        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Darren BAMFORD  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Adam BIBEY      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Marlon BILLY    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chris BRAND     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Wayne ENGLISH   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Darren GIBSON   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Dean GORTON     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Barry HAMILTON  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Richie HAWKYARD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gareth HAYLES   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chris HULL      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gary HULSE      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bruce JOHNSON   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Richard JONES   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rob LINE        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Liam MCGOVERN   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Ryan MIRFIELD   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Martin MOANA    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chris MORLEY    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Neil RIGBY      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lee SALISBURY   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Andrew SAYWELL  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Mike SMITH      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gary SYKES      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Chris TYRER     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Phil WOOD       |

## OFFICIALS

Referee: C Halloran Touch Judges: S Davis A Sweet



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