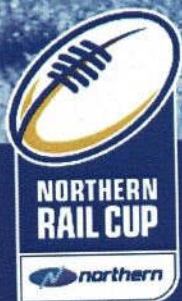




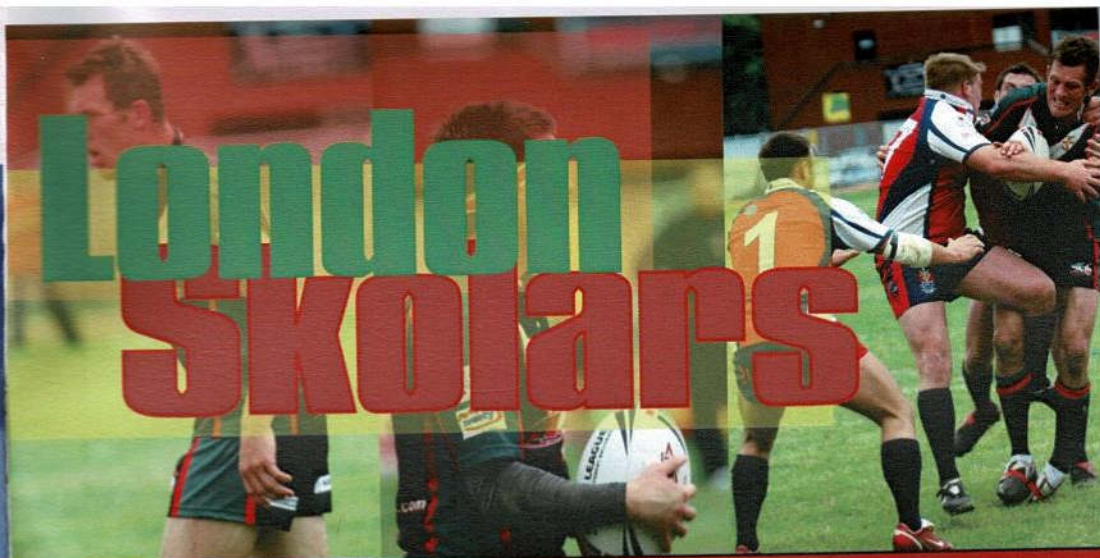
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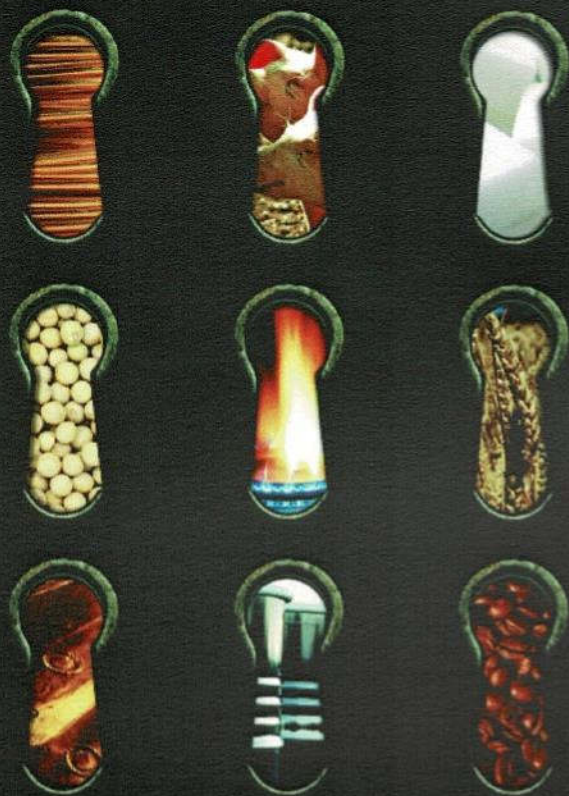
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Welcome to everyone today for tonight's National League game, especially the players, officials and supporters from Oldham.

This edition of the match day programme goes to print before our weekend game against Barrow. Saturday saw the club playing at totally opposite ends of the country, with the reserves playing down at Portsmouth, whilst the first were up in Cumbria. Our visitors today will also have done more than their fair share of travelling in the last fortnight, with a midweek trip to Gateshead a fortnight ago preceding this re-arranged fixture.

It's the first time we've played Wednesday night football at New River and we will be breaking new ground next month as well with a Monday night trip to Hunslet.

On the field it's been quite frustrating recently, with several game seeing us push the opposition for most of the game, only to miss out at the end. With several home games to come after a break this weekend, it should give us chance to start to build on that base. With some of the pre-season favourites for promotion not dominating the league as expected, it's still a wide open competition for play-off spots.

Terry Browne
Chairman, London Skolars RLFC

Cover: Top - Richard Louw (left and right), Gareth Honor (centre)
Bottom - Austen Aggrey scoring in the corner, Chris Shears in action
(both against Oldham last season)

Club Information

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Telephone: 0208 888 8488 Fax: 0208 881 8983
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Club Chairman: Hector McNeil
Directors: Mark Croston, Andrew Jackson, John Piercy, Kevin Milne
Presidents Club: Harold Nass, Tim Harvey, Mark Foster
Office Manager: Ben Araud
Office Assistant: Amanda Campbell
Community Sports Coaches: Dave Roberson, Paul Thorman
Public Relations Officer: Gavin Willacy
Coaching team: Tony Benson, Callum Irving, Dan Stocks, Dave Roberson
Video: Jonathan Jackson
Programme Editor: Andrew Jackson
Contributors: Dave Farrar, Callum Irving
Photographs: David West, Jonathan Jackson



Up Front



Skolars' Statistics

Skolars' Statistics 2008

	2008 Season					Career				
	App	Sub	Tries	Goals	DG	App	Sub	Tries	Goals	DG
Austen Aggrey	16		7			88	2	35		
Alan Barker	9	2	1			46	21	6		
Dwayne Barker	1					1				
Keir Bell		1				10	19	2		
Joe Brown		2	2				2	2		
Mike Castle	1					46	21	8		
Jermaine Coleman	18		5			115	2	22	15	
Michael Chan	5	1				5	1			
Tony Clubb	1					1				
Liam Daly	5	3				5	3			
Namila Davui	17		6			17		6		
Jim Doyle		1					1			
Mario DuToit						13	7	1		
Dave Ellison	14	1				26	14	4		
Stevie Gibbons	3	4	1			3	4	1		
Farid Goutta	3	3				3	3			
Eimhin Griffiths	3	1				3	1			
Warren Hellig	2	4	1			2	12	1		
Gareth Honor	11	4	2			94	27	20		1
Rubert Jonker	2	4	1			66	13	27		
Wayne Kerr	3	10	4			3	10	4		
Richard Louw	4	13	2			31	22	5		
Jordan Macey	1					11				
Dene Miller	14	1	8			21	2	10		
Leigh Nissen	6					6				
Jamie Nowland	12		3		1	26	1	11	15	3
Glenn Osborn	6	3	1			39	12	2	25	
Chris Pomfret		1					1			
Puna Rasaubale	10	2				10	2			
Frank Reid		1				24	28	9		
Travis Ribot	4	1				4	1			
Chris Shears	10	3	3			55	16	14		
Corey Simms	15		5			73	5	20		
Callan Siphthorp	2	1				3	1			
Tane Taitoko	3					13	7	1		
Paul Thorman	18		3	41		48		6	84	2
Matt Thomas	10		1			10		1		
Ashley Tozer	5		2			60	4	29		
Paul Trainer		1					1			

Skolars' last home game saw a record for the highest number of points scored by the club whilst losing a game. The 36-43 defeat by Workington Town beat (if that is the correct phrase) the previous highest losing score, 33 points against away at Dewsbury Rams in 2003.

Assuming he played up at Barrow on Saturday evening, Paul Thorman is set to make his 50th appearance for the club tonight.

With so many long term injuries, it's been good to make a new signing. Mark Meredith will add a lot to us in the forwards. Mark joins us from Erina Eagles, the top competition in New South Wales. A 26 year old Samoan he was part of the Penrith Panthers NRL squad in 2007. Before that played for Easts Tigers in Brisbane, where he played in the second row alongside Mark Cantoni, a Skolars' favourite from a few seasons ago.

It's also been good to have Stevie Gibbons back after he completed his studies back in Ireland. That's given us a lot more options at half-back and hooker. Another player joining us in the last few weeks is Joe Brown, a Londoner who comes to the club on loan from Doncaster, after spells at London Broncos and Salford City Reds. He caused Oldham a lot of problems up at Sedgley Park and I'm looking for the same again tonight.

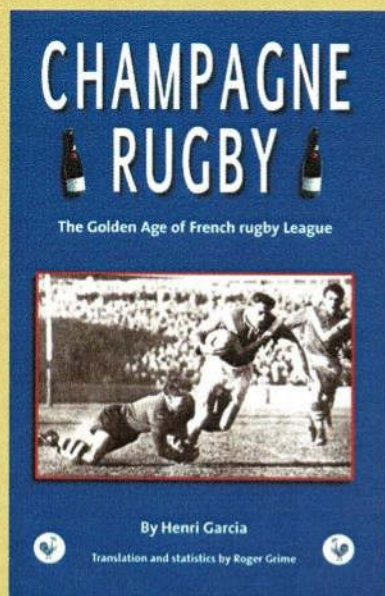
What we do need to change is our consistency. We've had some periods of dominance in both our last two games, but lost the initiative too often through our own errors. This week is a tough one, playing Barrow on Saturday, followed by Oldham tonight, but I know Oldham have had a very busy last few weeks because of their involvement in the Carnegie Challenge Cup. Great that a side from NL2 could make it to the quarter finals and with two sides from NL2 in the semi-finals of the Northern Rail Cup (one of which we beat in the group stages), it just shows the quality of this league.

Enjoy The Game

Tony



The Benson Beat



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Welcome to the newest section of the matchday magazine, in it we will look at upcoming events, review previous events and generally have a look at the inner workings of Rugby League's hardest working club.

This week it seems prudent to talk about the future, not only in terms of the first team but especially in terms of what is rolling around the corner from the club. This winter will see several new developments in youth rugby league at the club. These are not only based on producing players for the first team's of the future but also and just as importantly to get children playing rugby league for the sake of playing rugby league.

This winter will see the commencement of the London Skolars Junior League, this will be a brand new concept and will be aimed at allowing the hundreds of children who take up the game in school an opportunity to represent a local club. Wood Green Warriors, Edmonton Eagles, Highgate Hawks and the Arnos Grove Gladiators will be doing battle for the cup in early 2009.

The best players from these clubs will then have the honour of pulling on a Skolars jersey in both the London Junior League and in a groundbreaking scholarship scheme which will see North London become the hub of Rugby League excellence in the area.

Even sooner than the Skolars Junior League will be the participation in the Gillette National Youth League by a combined Skolars/Hemel Stags Under 18s team. The Gillette National Youth League is home to some of the most famous names in the sport's history and includes Keighley Cougars, Kells, West Hull, Hensingham and Leigh Miners Rangers among others.

The competition will be high quality and a massive step up from the local competitions. However the Skolars boys have all the talent in the world and will now have an opportunity to showcase it on a national stage. Finally there will be a bridge between Under 16s and first team football, more details will follow but keep in mind that the rugby league is a year round sport at New River and plenty of entertainment will be on hand during the colder months.

A lot is talked about our neighbours from the Stoop producing home grown talent and how refreshing it is to see. Within these new systems the Skolars now also have a massive opportunity to produce a North London team for North London. With the revelations regarding a possible new long term future home coming out in the last two weeks now is the time to get these structures into place.

If any of these points have conjured up a question or two, find someone at the club, ask, get involved we need all or supporters to be on board to ensure the success of these schemes.

Let's go forward together.

Callum Irving



Callum's Column



Rules of the game - the basics

Starting the Game

The team that wins the coin toss has the option to kick or which end of the pitch to defend. In the event of choosing to kick, the opposing captain will have choice of which way to play. At the kick off the ball must travel at least 10 metres forward and bounce in the field of play. If it doesn't do this the team kicking off will be penalised. Also when a team concedes a score it has to restart with same type of kick from the half-way line.

Play-the-Ball

Every time a player is tackled, all defenders, apart from a maximum of two markers, have to retreat 10 metres from the play-the-ball area. This will be marked by the referee (in other words the defending side retire back to the referee). The defending side may advance when the ball is rolled back by the foot. If they move forward early, or don't, retire far enough back, a penalty will be awarded.

Six Tackles

A tackle is completed when the ball or the ball-carrying arm of the player has touched the ground and a tackler is touching him. After six tackles the ball must be handed over.

Offside

If a player is in front of a teammate who kicks the ball forward, he is offside. He is back onside if the receiver who gets the ball runs 10 metres, or fumbles the ball, or the kicker overtakes him.

Foul Play

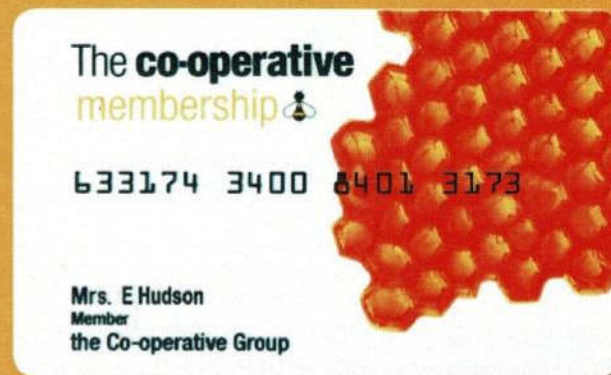
High tackles (contact above the shoulders) are not allowed, and incur a penalty (a kick for goal, a kick to touch followed by a fresh set of six, tackles, or - if the team wishes, just a set of six, tackles. Stealing the ball from a player when there is more than one player involved in the tackle, or impeding a man when he hasn't got the ball is also illegal.

40/20 Rule

If a player standing no more than 40 metres away from his own try line manages to kick a ball in general play which bounces in the field of play then goes into touch inside his opponents' 20-metre area, his side gets the head and feed at the scrum, almost certainly giving them possession again and six more tackles in an attacking position.

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Southern Fried Rugby League

Would you Adam and Eve it?

It is quite possible that three teams from outside the heartlands could make the Grand Finals this year; I wonder what odds you would have got on that at the start of the season.

The big surprise is in NL2 where Gateshead Thunder lead the table after finishing second bottom last season. Coach Dave Woods has turned the side round on a smallish budget and the expected front runners of Doncaster, Oldham and Rochdale have not yet fulfilled their promise.

In NL1 promoted Celtic Crusaders sit third in the table and are also in the semi-finals of the Northern Rail Cup. I bet the RFL officials will not look forward to a possible Celtic-Batley final in Blackpool.

To continue the trend the Catalan Dragons are also third in the table after finishing third bottom in Super League last year. Following their Wembley debut last year St Helens bound coach Mick Potter has surprised a few experts with a tough and determined squad. I think this is all good for the game, unpredictability is the essence of sport and if the same suspects ended up at the top of the table each year it would be poor fare.

Whilst on the subject of betting I see Brian McDermott was not the first coach sacked in Super League this year as touted by one bookie. Indeed he is no doubt on the shopping lists of Hull, Huddersfield and Warrington, I hope he stays in London as he has brought new young talent through as well as turning round the careers of a few players discounted by other clubs.

Enjoy the game.

DAVE FARRAR (visit my blog: *The crazy world of London Rugby League* at: <http://myspace.com/poplarpanther>)

"Rugby League in London is a crusade or it is nothing" -Ross Strudwick

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The Friends were formed in 1986 with the aim of keeping professional rugby league alive in the capital.

During the early 90s they broadened their support to include the amateur game in the South, with increasing emphasis on youth development.

Today, income from this lottery is split between support for the London Amateur Rugby League and youth development in the south, with increasing requests from Women's teams.

The London League is a development league, working at one level below the Rugby League Conference. In recent years, LARL has allowed clubs such as Greenwich Admirals, Luton Vipers, St Ives, Bedford

Tigers and Kent Ravens to establish themselves before moving into the higher leagues. The Womens' League now runs four teams.

Rugby League sponsors are not easy to find for the amateur game.

The Friends seek to fill this gap by helping clubs with some of their financial burden, particularly at school, junior and youth levels.

You too can help with the development of the game by joining the Friends and participating in their weekly Lottery.

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June 2008 Issue 5
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Fixture List 2008

Northern Rail Cup

Day	Date	Versus		Time		
Friday	February 1	Doncaster	A	20:00	L	32-10
Sunday	February 10	Celtic	H	15:00	L	10-26
Sunday	February 17	Doncaster	H	15:00	L	22-36
Friday	February 22	Sheffield	A	20:00	W	32-50
Saturday	March 1	Celtic	A	17:30	W	14-18
Saturday	March 15	Sheffield	H	15:00	L	13-34

Carnegie Challenge Cup

Saturday	March 8	Queens	H	15:00	W	20-8
Sunday	April 20	St Helens	A	15:00	L	56-0

The Co-Operative National League 2

Day	Date	Versus		Time		
Friday	March 21	Doncaster	A	20:00	L	56-0
Monday	March 24	Rochdale	H	15:00	L	4-54
Saturday	March 29	Barrow	H	16:30	L	4-54
Sunday	April 13	Swinton	A	15:00	L	34-24
Saturday	April 26	Hunslet	H	15:00	W	31-24
Monday	May 5	Keighley	A	15:00	L	58-12
Saturday	May 17	Gateshead	A	18:30	L	52-22
Sunday	May 25	York	A	15:00	D	20-20
Saturday	May 31	Workington	H	15:00	L	38-45
Saturday	June 8	Oldham	A	15:00	L	42-20
Saturday	June 14	Barrow	A	16:30		
Wednesday	June 18	Oldham	H	19:30		
Saturday	June 28	York	H	15:00		
Saturday	July 5	Blackpool	A	18:00		
Saturday	July 12	Swinton	H	15:00		
Monday	July 21	Hunslet	A	15:00		
Saturday	July 26	Gateshead	H	15:00		
Sunday	August 3	Workington	A	15:00		
Saturday	August 9	Doncaster	H	15:00		
Sunday	August 17	Rochdale	A	15:00		
Saturday	August 23	Blackpool	H	15:00		
Friday	August 29	Keighley	H	18:15		

Our away games against Hunslet Hawks and Blackpool Panthers have been re-arranged, with the former breaking new ground for Skolars with a Monday night game.

Skolars have no game this weekend, our next game is at home against York City Knights on Saturday 28 June.



Skolars - Fixtures 2008



Farid Goutta	1	Full Back	1	Paul O'Connor
Corey Simms	2	Right Wing	2	Gareth Langley
Namila Davui	3	Right Centre	3	Danny Halliwell
Chris Shears	4	Left Centre	4	Mick Nanyn
Austen Aggrey	5	Left Wing	5	Lucas Onyango
Jermaine Coleman	6	Stand Off	6	Neil Roden
Paul Thorman	7	Scrum Half	7	James Coyle
Richard Louw	8	Prop Forward	8	Jason Boults
Gareth Honor	9	Hooker	9	Simeon Hoyle
Puna Rasaubale	10	Prop Forward	10	Richard Mervill
Matt Thomas	11	Second Row	11	Tommy Goulden
Rubert Jonker	12	Second Row	12	Adam Robinson
Alan Barker	13	Loose Forward	13	Rob Roberts
Wayne Kerr	14	Sub	14	Matty Brooks
Dave Ellison	15	Sub	15	Ian Hodson
Dene Miller	16	Sub	16	Simon Baldwin
Michael Chan	17	Sub	17	Said Tamghart
Tony Benson		Coach		Steve Deakin

Scoring Sequence

[illegible]

Today's officials:
Referee: TBC
Touch judges: TBC

Roughyeds To Watch

It's only 11 days since Skolars took on Oldham and the top points scorer that day was Mick Nanny, who joined the club this season, having previously played for Swinton, Rochdale, Whitehaven and Widnes, where last season he scored 28 tries and kicking 161 goals for a points haul of 434. He also has the distinction of having played in each of the last four NLI Grand Finals, two for Whitehaven and two for Widnes.

With last season's leading try scorer Adam Hughes no longer with the club, the second highest try scorer in 2007 was Lucas Onyango who racked up 18 touchdowns. He is one of two of tonight's players to have represented their country in the Commonwealth Games, being part of the Kenyan squad in the RU sevens for the 2002 Commonwealth Games in Manchester. A move to Sale Sharks RU followed, before starting his RL career with Widnes Vikings in 2005.

Half back Neil Roden is fast approaching his 200th game for the Roughyeds. He is in his second spell at the club, having also played for Batley Bulldogs and Leigh Centurions. He also has the distinction of having played in each of his club's two Grand Finals - the defeat by Widnes in the Northern Ford Premiership Grand Final of 2001 and the loss to Featherstone Rovers in the NL2 Grand Final of 2007.

Joining Roden in the half-backs is James Coyle. The 22 year old Wiganer joined the club last season and quickly made a big impression. He comes from a family with a strong tradition in the game with both his father and grandfather having played for their hometown club, also as halfbacks. His quality was recognised at an early age when he was picked for the North-West Counties under-16s tour of Fiji, New Zealand and Australia in 2001 alongside James Roby and Harrison Hansen.

Challenging these two for a half-back place, but also being able to play at hooker is Matty Brooks, who played against Skolars for Bradford in Dublin in 2005. A period at Hull KR followed, with loan spells at York and Oldham, with the loan becoming permanent after impressing last season.

Another member of the Oldham squad to have played against Skolars at Dublin is Gareth Langley, who made his Super League debut for St Helens soon afterwards in 2006. Despite hailing from St Helens, it wasn't until he was 15 that he took up the oval ball, previously having been on the books at Wigan Athletic.

Making a strong contribution in their victory against Skolars was Oldham's Welsh international and club captain Rob Roberts. 'Two Bobs' has added some vital experience to the pack since joining midway through the 2007 season. Leeds-born Roberts has played at Super League level for Hull, Huddersfield and Halifax and has also played for Keighley and Leigh as well as having a stint in Australia.

Another international is French winger Said Tamghart, who played for UTC (now Catalans Dragons) under current Roughyeds coach Steve Deakin. Apart from his impressive pace, Tamghart is also recognisable by his distinctive footwear (or rather lack of one part of it).

Steve Deakin will be a familiar name to many London RL fans, having been assistant coach at the Broncos. Now in charge of his home town club, the capital will also bring back memories of one of his greatest successes, winning the Challenge Cup with Sheffield Eagles in 1998 at Wembley, whilst assistant to John Kear.

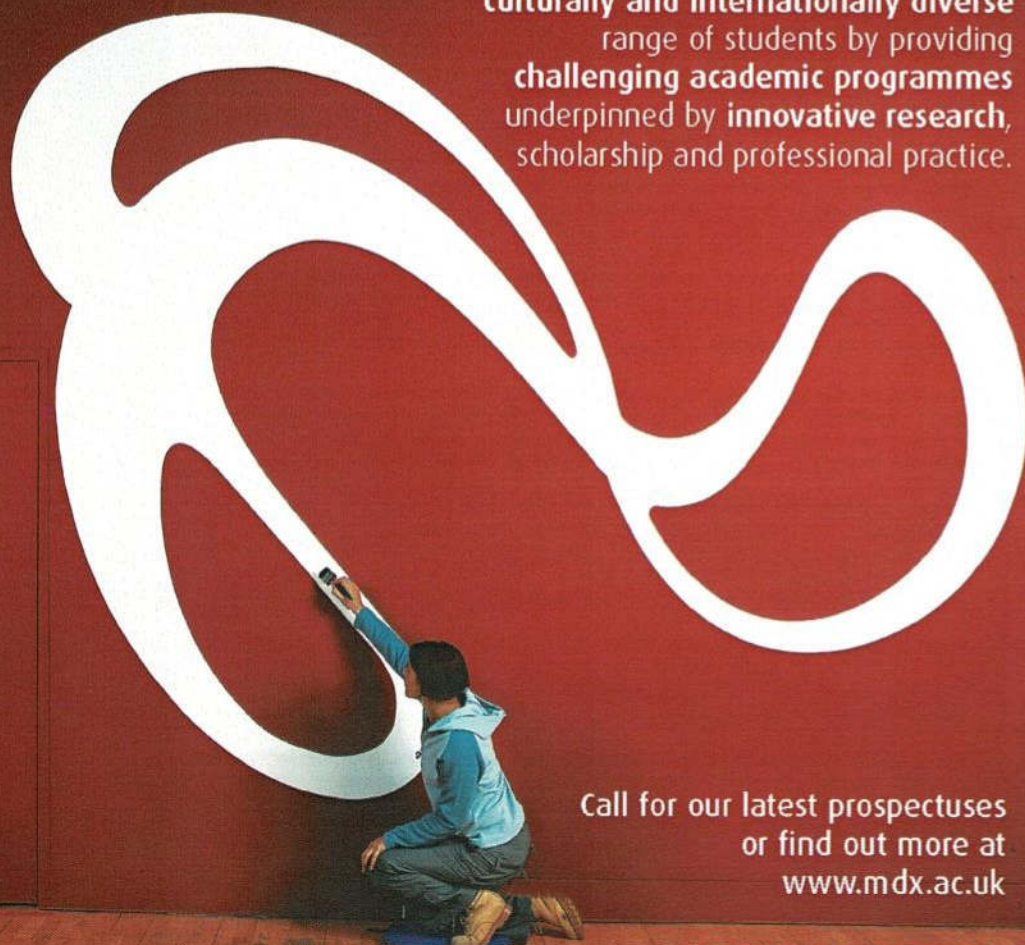


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West London Sharks have moved clear of the pack in recent weeks. With the top 3 sides qualifying for the play-offs, the half-way stage of the league sees the champions of the whole Premier competition languishing in 5th and 6th place in the Southern Division.

Skolars gained a valuable away point at Ipswich, but will need to displace the Suffolk side or Portsmouth if they are to progress past the group stages.

Elsewhere in the Premier League, Carlise Centurions and Jarrow Vikings head up the Northern Group, whilst Nottingham Outlaws and Coventry Bears fight it out for top spot in the Midlands. It's close in the Welsh division, with Valley Cougars and Blackwood Bulldogs just pushing their noses ahead of the rest.

Fixtures 2008

Round 1 (April 26th)	London Skolars	V	Portsmouth	20-36
Round 3 (May 10th)	London Skolars	V	Elmbridge	36-34
Round 4 (May 17th)	London Skolars	V	South London	12-30
Round 5 (May 24th)	St Albans	V	London Skolars	20-36
Round 6 (May 31st)	London Skolars	V	West London	18-52
Round 7 (June 7th)	Ipswich	V	London Skolars	18-18
Round 8 (June 14th)	Portsmouth	V	London Skolars	2 30pm
Round 10 (June 28th)	Elmbridge	V	London Skolars	2 30pm
Round 11 (July 5th)	South London	V	London Skolars	2 30pm
Round 12 (July 12th)	London Skolars	V	St Albans	1.00pm
Round 13 (July 19th)	West London	V	London Skolars	2 30pm
Round 14 (July 26th)	London Skolars	V	Ipswich	1.00pm

Play-offs start on 2 August with the Grand Final on 7 September.

League Table

Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	Diff	Pts
West London Sharks	6	6	0	0	326	94	232	12
Ipswich Rhinos	6	4	1	1	166	134	32	9
Portsmouth NS	6	4	0	2	218	178	40	8
London Skolars A	6	2	1	3	154	208	-54	5
South London Storm	6	2	0	4	162	154	8	4
St Albans Centurions	6	2	0	4	142	210	-68	4
Elmbridge Warriors	6	0	0	6	118	208	-190	0

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London Skolars Tag Rugby

Skolars Tag Rugby will be held at Finsbury Park on Tuesday nights for 8 weeks throughout summer.

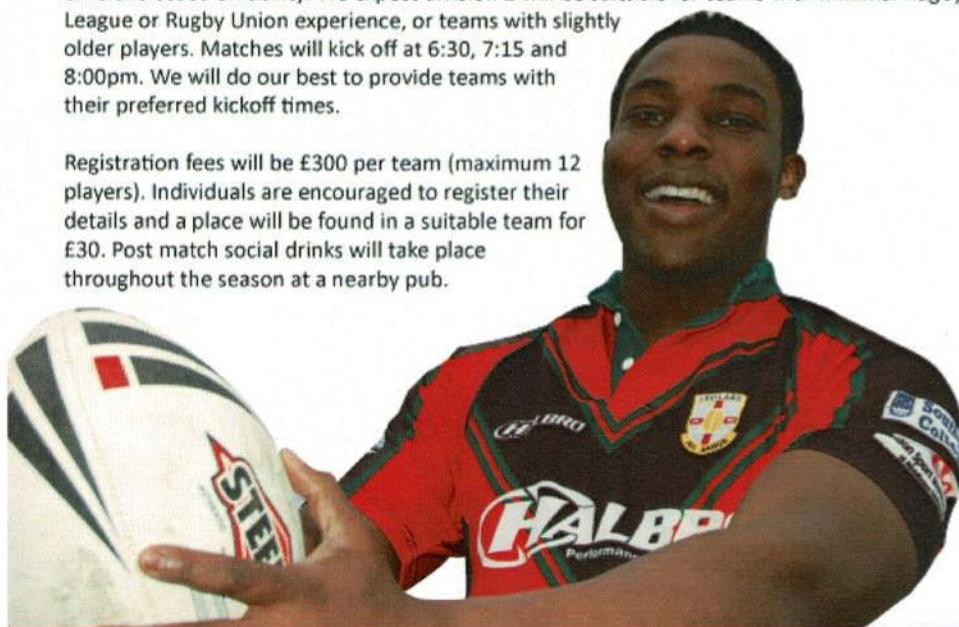
The competition will begin on Tuesday the 24th of June and culminate with finals on Tuesday the 12th of August.

Prizes will be awarded to the winners of each division. The prize for the winning teams will include tickets to the 2008 Carnegie Challenge Cup final at Wembley

In season 1, the competition will be run for open age Men's teams only. Tag rugby is a non contact version of rugby. It is a fun and social way to keep fit over summer.

Skolars Tag Rugby will feature 2 weeks of grading after which teams will be split into 2 divisions based on ability. We expect division 2 will be suitable for teams with minimal Rugby League or Rugby Union experience, or teams with slightly older players. Matches will kick off at 6:30, 7:15 and 8:00pm. We will do our best to provide teams with their preferred kickoff times.

Registration fees will be £300 per team (maximum 12 players). Individuals are encouraged to register their details and a place will be found in a suitable team for £30. Post match social drinks will take place throughout the season at a nearby pub.



If you like to enter a team in Skolars Tag Rugby, or would like to sign up as an individual, please visit www.skolars.com email skolarstag@yahoo.co.uk or call Alistair Davis on 07780880893 or Ian Howe on 07876175309.

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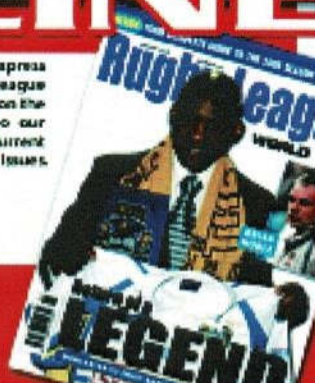
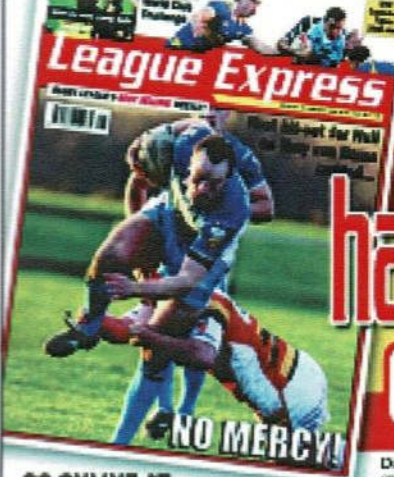
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The Co-operative National League 2

Team	P	W	D	L	PF	PA	Diff	Bns	Pts
Gateshead Thunder	11	10	0	1	428	197	231	1	31
Barrow Raiders	9	9	0	0	344	100	244	0	27
Keighley Cougars	11	7	0	4	295	266	29	2	23
Oldham	9	7	0	2	286	208	78	0	21
Doncaster	8	6	0	2	238	125	113	1	19
York City Knights	11	4	1	6	292	275	17	4	18
Swinton Lions	11	5	0	6	284	307	-23	3	18
Workington Town	11	3	0	8	241	323	-82	6	15
Rochdale Hornets	10	3	1	6	293	309	-16	3	14
Blackpool Panthers	10	3	1	6	238	360	-122	2	13
Hunslet Hawks	11	1	0	10	169	374	-205	4	7
London Skolars	10	1	1	8	175	439	-264	2	7

Correct to 13 June

This week's Fixtures

Wednesday 18 June

Barrow Raiders v Blackpool Panthers
London Skolars v Oldham

Sunday 22 June

Blackpool Panthers v Oldham
Rochdale Hornets v Doncaster
Workington Town v Hunslet Hawks
Gateshead Thunder v Swinton Lions
York City Knights v Barrow Raiders



Visit the Skolar Pub after the post match presentations, on White Hart Lane, 4 minutes walk from the ground

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PRESIDENTS' CLUB

London Skolars has always been a progressive club and long may this continue!



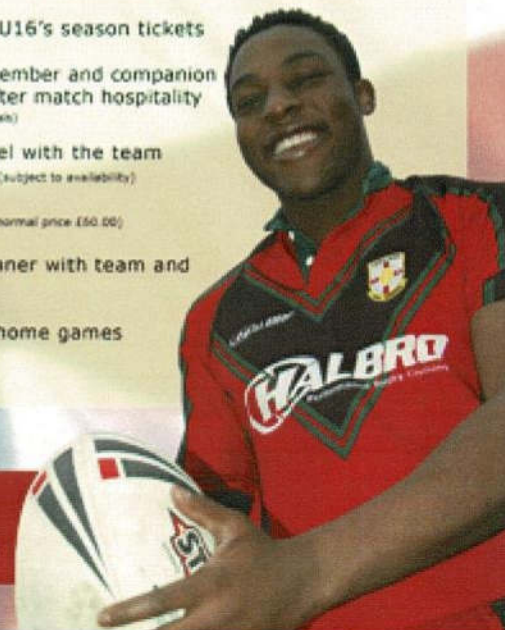
To develop further we would like to develop a more proactive relationship with key supporters, old boys and stakeholders. The 'Presidents' Club' is an important response to this. The aims are to create a strong lobby group to widen consensus on how to move the club forward, on and off the field, and to the next level.

Presidents' Club membership will not be onerous or time consuming just simply a valuable constituent group to help the club make the right decisions for the future. It will also provide a valuable source of on going capital to help fund on and off field developments.

Membership of the Presidents' Club will provide the following benefits:

- Involvement in two meetings together with the Chairman and coach of the Club, one pre season to review strategies and targets and one mid season to monitor progress
- Equal priorities with existing shareholders to subscribe to new shares issues
- Two annual season tickets and two free U16's season tickets
- One free away trip with team coach for member and companion including admission to away match and after match hospitality (If an overnight stay a charge will be made for accommodation and meals)
- Right of member and companion to travel with the team at other away trips at discounted prices (subject to availability)
- Two free pre match hospitality lunches (normal price £50.00)
- Two free tickets to the end of season dinner with team and management
- Right to nominate man of the match at home games
- Skolars Presidents Club polo shirt

READ OVERLEAF TO SEE HOW
TO JOIN THE PRESIDENTS' CLUB



LONDON SKOLARS: A BRIEF HISTORY

London Skolars were founded during the Centenary Season of the Rugby Football League in 1995.

1997 - Founding members of the Southern Conference winning the competition during its inaugural season.

1997 - BARLA National Conference League

1999 - Skolars toured Tatarstan and Russia, the first time that an amateur club had toured the former Soviet Union

2003 - Joined the National Leagues the following year was accepted, the first club in 80 years to make the jump from the amateur ranks to the professional leagues.

The appointment of Latham Tawhai as a full-time coach at the end of the 2005 season marks another step forward in this progressive club's progress. Latham's ongoing development with the team during 2006 and 2007 helped the club develop on and off the field and earned Latham the title of National League 2 coach of the year in 2007.

IF PAYING BY CHEQUE:

Please make cheques payable to: **London Skolars**

IF PAYING BY STANDING ORDER PLEASE FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW:

Please pay: **Natwest Bank Chancery Lane & Holborn Branch**

Account: **London Skolars**

Account Number: **16105567** Sort Code: **604004**

The sum of

☐ £125 Quarterly ☐ £250 Semi-annual ☐ £500 Annual

Payment commences on the day received at the bank until further notice.

1. Your Bank _____ 2. Your Branch _____

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7. Signature _____ 8. Date _____

www.skolars.com

London Skolars Limited, New River Sports Stadium, White Hart Lane, Wood Green, London, N22 5QW



London International MX9s Goes Big As Skolars Launch Friday Night Lights

The London International MX9s will be re-launched as a major event in central London next year. The organisers of the tournament – host club London Skolars and the RLEF – have decided to postpone this August's proposed event and focus activities on finding a new location for the tournament for 2009 which will see it make huge strides towards becoming one of the capital's main sporting carnivals.

"The fact that the event has become the leading international nines tournament globally, we feel it needs to be staged at a high profile, central London, venue in future," said Hector McNeil. "Most European countries with Rugby League national teams have already participated or want to participate in the MX9s. Therefore a long term, high profile stage with top class media support is needed if we are to grow the event in the way it deserves to grow."

Several venues including central London park areas, such as Regents Park, Hyde Park, Old Street and Green Park to name but a few, are being considered and an announcement will be made soon.

It is also expected that the media coverage of the tournament will rise due to the location change, with the aim of getting one of the major broadcasters to cover this unique event.

Event Organiser Ben Araud said: "We are very excited about a central London venue for the MX9s. It's the most prestigious annual 9s tournament and is the largest gathering of international teams annually. The timing for 2008 is too short to move the event so we are looking to plan ambitiously for a superb 2009 tournament. Our overseas friends will be disappointed but I am sure they will be excited by the proposed upgrades in the future."

In previous years the MX9s has taken place on the day after the Carnegie Challenge Cup Final and the day before a Bank Holiday: perfect for fans returning home from the capital. But this year's final is not being held on the Bank Holiday weekend, making the event less viable on that date.

Rugby League European Federation Executive Officer Kevin Rudd commented 'The London International MX9s tournament has become a popular event with all European RL Federations and Associations wanting to participate. We also expect more quality applications for 2009 and this may mean we need to consider expanding the number of teams taking part and looking at other format options. The extra time will allow us to plan for this accordingly. This reflects the rising popularity of the game internationally'

The main event at White Hart Lane CSC that weekend will be the now traditional annual FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS match as Skolars take on Keighley Cougars in co-operative National League Two on Friday 29 August at 6.15pm. The previous two years' matches on Cup Final Eve have drawn record crowds to New River.

The game will be organised in conjunction with the North London Mini Olympics and promises to be another sell out crowd and a fantastic promotion for the fastest growing sport in London. We would encourage all fans of Rugby League who will attend the Challenge Cup Final to make their way to North London on the Friday night.

For more information visit www.skolars.com or call 020 8888 8



Community & Development