

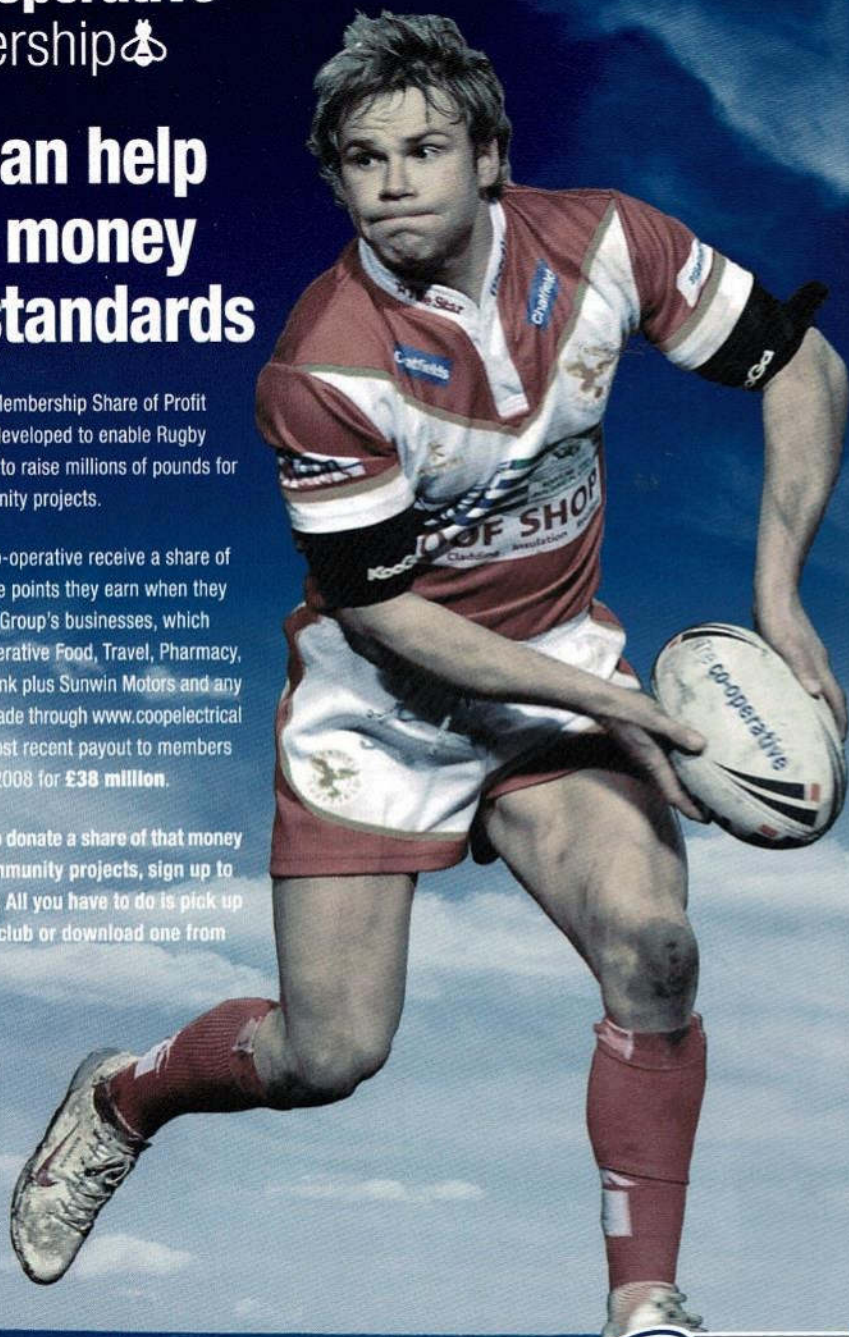
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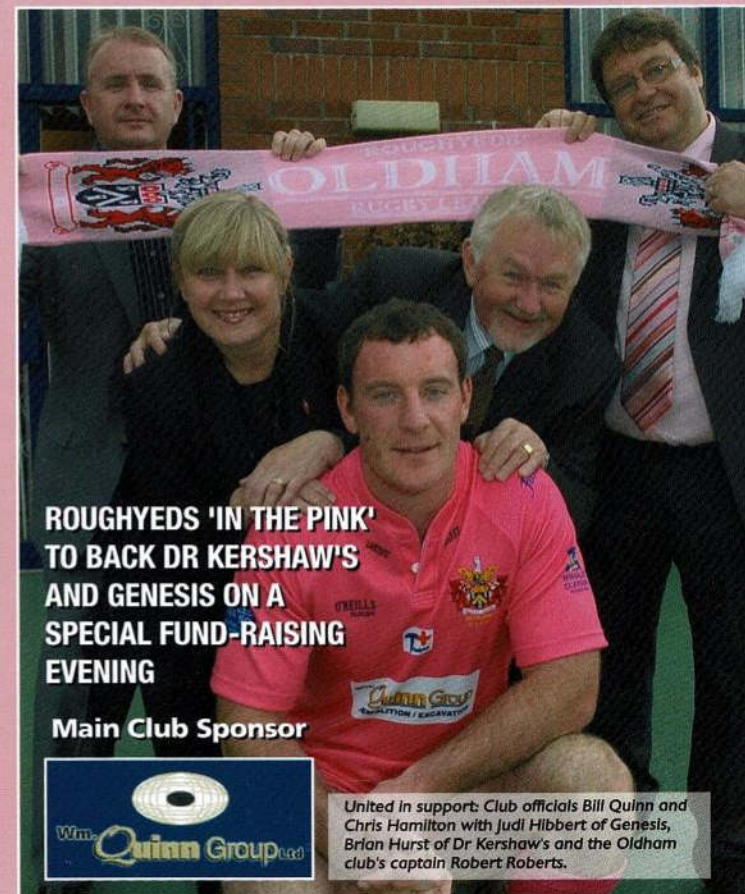
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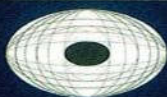
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Co-operative National League 2

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Oldham Rugby League Club (1997) Ltd is pleased to announce that the club's two adopted charities for the next 12 months are Dr Kershaw's Hospice and The Genesis Appeal.

All proceeds from this evening's game will be divided between the two, and the club is proud and privileged to be supporting two such worthy causes, one of them on our doorstep and the other based relatively nearby at Wythenshawe.

In a similar initiative last year we were able, thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and to the 4,327 supporters who attended the game against Celtic Crusaders, to divide £8,000 between Dr Kershaw's and the Rugby League Benevolent Fund and this evening we hope to surpass that crowd figure and be in a position to donate an even bigger sum to this year's beneficiaries, namely Dr Kershaw's and Genesis.

THE GENESIS APPEAL

The Genesis Appeal is the only UK charity dedicated entirely to the prevention of breast cancer. Currently, one in ten women is expected to develop breast cancer. The aim of The Genesis Appeal is to create a future without breast cancer, by making 1 in 10, none in 10.

The Genesis Appeal has helped to fund the Genesis Breast Cancer Prevention Centre, which is Europe's first ever, purpose built centre of its kind. The £14 million state-of-the-art project - based in Manchester - brings together internationally recognised medical experts and houses pioneering work into diagnosis, education and research into the prevention and treatment of breast cancer.

After decades of research into new treatments, breast cancer continues to rise across the western world and has become one of the most devastating health problems of our time. The Genesis mission statement is to create a future without breast cancer and, to this end, the Appeal

will provide a strategic programme of clinical research; create the UK's largest family history clinic; and develop a training centre for specialists in all breast-cancer disciplines. In addition, Genesis will promote breast screening and early diagnosis and research new treatments to stop breast cancer in its early stages.

Join the Genesis fight to make 1 in 10, none in 10. For more information visit www.genesisuk.org

DR KERSHAW'S HOSPICE

Opened in 1989, Dr Kershaw's has recently undergone a major building programme of expansion and refurbishment that offers high-quality patient accommodation that fully complies with all current legislation. The Hospice provides specialist palliative care for adults with non-curable, life-threatening illnesses in a peaceful and homely environment with accommodation for 12 in-patients and 15 day-care places, Monday to Friday. It also provides support for patients' relatives and carers.

The medical and nursing staff are experienced in palliative medicine and are supported by a team of specialist nurses, allied health professionals, social workers, spiritual counsellors and bereavement support workers.

Dr Kershaw's is an independent hospice and a registered charity. It is partially funded by NHS money in the form of annual grants, but the major part of the annual budget is supported by fund-raising activities, donations, legacies, income from hospice shops and revenue from the hospice lottery.

This year alone, as Mr Brian Hurst (fund-raising co-ordinator) pointed out at a recent Roughyeds press conference, the Hospice's fund-raising team will be required to raise £1,500,000 just to keep the Hospice open in order to serve a population of some 230,000 people drawn from Oldham and its surrounding districts.

For more information visit www.drkershawhospice.org.uk



THANKS A MILLION!

THE Oldham Rugby League Club wishes to place on public record its sincere and heartfelt thanks to the following sponsors, without whose generous assistance and backing this very unique sporting occasion would not have been possible.

Our sponsors for the evening, many of whom were represented at our recent media conference attended by television crews, radio reporters and journalists from local and trade newspapers, are as follows:

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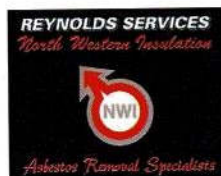
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Thanks to our regular sponsors Greentree and NTS Tyres.

The media conference, held at the Shaw Road, Oldham company headquarters of Mobilis, heard Oldham RLFC's chief executive Christopher Hamilton tell those present: "The club is indebted to all these companies, without whose generous assistance and backing this big event could not have taken place."

Similar sentiments were expressed by the club chairman Bill Quinn. He said: "We are proud and privileged to be backing Dr Kershaw's Hospice and the Genesis Appeal; our team will be proud to play in their all-pink strip; and we are proud to be associated with, and to have the support of, all our sponsors as named above. A huge 'thank-you' goes out to all of them."

With Chris Hamilton...



Welcome back to Boundary Park after an absence of 2 months.

During that time we have had some ups and downs and currently sit third in the table with everything to play for.

Last Friday's game was one of those where nothing went right for us starting with the injury to Neil Roden early on and then with further knocks to Rob Roberts (who was told not to go back on the field) and Chris Baines. The bounce of the ball seemed also to go in Barrow's favour but maybe that is just what happens when you are playing well. We were well in contention for nearly an hour and certainly a couple of the last tries were purely down to tired players who had to be on the pitch longer than they would have had if we had more substitutes available. Keighley did us a favour however by beating Gateshead on Sunday and so the scene is set for tonight's tussle with a Doncaster team who have done remarkably well this season to reach the Northern Rail Final. Although the score and result wasn't what they would have wanted it was nevertheless a great achievement for them to get there.

The knock on effect of that success, however, is the fact that they now are playing catch up in respect of league games and they do not have many blank midweek's between now and the end of the season.

They have maintained a steady promotion challenge throughout all this and although they would rather have had the points in the bag they are still very dangerous opponents. We need to get back to winning habits tonight and we will again be struggling with injuries if the current situation does not ease but again that is part and parcel of the problems encountered by most clubs at this point of the season.

We need to make the most of the home games we have got left and if the effort is as good as it was last Friday we can win this game.

As most of you will already know tonight is a special occasion for the club in more ways than one. We are hoping to put on a good show and our guests from SKY television and hopefully that will be done in front of a record National League Two attendance.

We are also sending out a very important message by wearing our special pink kit tonight and at half time time we will be trying to create a little bit more history by trying to get every one of you into the Guinness Book of Records. If at all possible please join in this world record attempt as a lot of hard work has gone on to make it possible.

If we can top it all with a win weeks of preparation will all have been worthwhile.

A special mention must also go to tonight's sponsors who, through their support tonight, have made everything that is going on possible. A similar event last season against Celtic Crusaders was the pioneer and we hope that they all enjoy their evening with us tonight.

A big thank you to all our fans for your support over the last two months which has been first class and please raise the roof tonight as we try to get back to winning ways.

Thanks also to the players who have simply got on with the obstacles put in front of them over recent months including some long and difficult midweek away trips. Although things have not always gone our way your effort has been fantastic and I for one hope you get your rewards.

Enjoy the game and please get behind the team.

Chris Hamilton



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HELP BREAK A GUINNESS WORLD RECORD

At half time today the whole crowd will be asked to sing and do the actions to Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes for at least 5 minutes.

The rules for breaking such a record are very strict so we ask you to all join in. This will be led by Roary and the words to the song are printed alongside and will also be distributed to everybody as they enter the ground.

HEADS, SHOULDERS, KNEES AND TOES

Head and Shoulders, knees and toes,
Knees and toes,
Head and Shoulders, knees and toes,
Knees and toes.
Eyes and ears and mouth and nose,
Head and Shoulders, knees and toes,
Knees and toes.

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CoachesComments

With Steve Deakin...



Just when you thought that it can't get any worse along comes the injury god again to claim Two Bobs and Rats (Roden).

I know that

injuries are a part and parcel of the game but one can be forgiven for thinking that we must have done something seriously wrong in another life to be getting the amount of bad luck and injuries that we are getting this season. At the moment it seems that we are getting 2 back and losing 2 more and making it difficult to manage the continuity of the team. That said I thought that we put in a mountain of work in the last month in playing 7 games in a 28 day turnaround with trips to Gateshead, London, Workington, Hunslet and Barrow in there and to be in contention for automatic promotion is a big reward for the players efforts.

Tonight we play Doncaster in a game that will go a long way to deciding end of season positions and with it either automatic promotion, a home tie all the way through the play offs or a need to travel at some stage in the play offs. I for one know which I prefer and all the squad are anxious to go the shortest way possible to. So it goes without saying that the fans are going to play a massive part in tonight's game by being positive and loud

in your support for the team and helping us to get a break between the two teams going into the final furlong of the season, so to speak.

In their team tonight is a player that did so much to help us last year in Gareth Morton, someone that will be a handful for us as he is now trying to do for Doncaster what he came so close to doing last year with us (ps hope he gets as close as last year too, means we get closer) We will share a few moments before the game and then a few more after but once kick off comes along there is no room for sentiments. Coaching their side tonight is an icon in the game, a person who proved his qualities as a player both in the UK and also in the hard nosed arena of Oz, was a player that revolutionized training methods and was truly a legend for his country. I am talking about Ellery Hanley of course who then followed up that playing career by coaching Saints to Super league success and world club glory. Makes tonight's game a bit spicy doesn't it.

Lastly as ever enjoy the game, be respectful of the players efforts and get home safely.

Deaks

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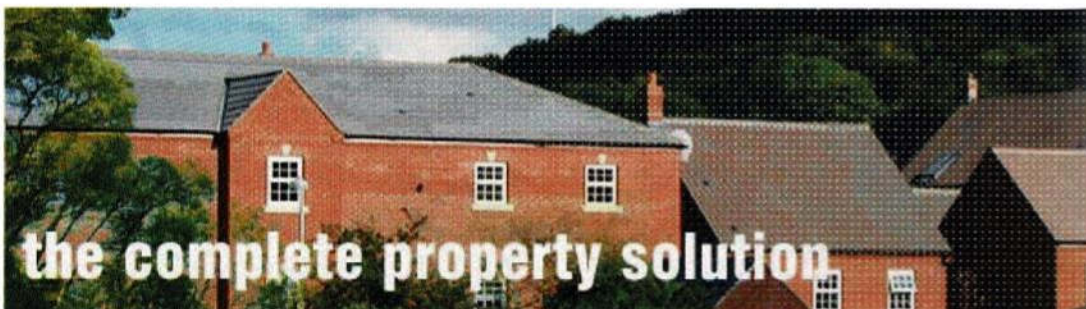
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Good evening everyone and welcome to my first edition of Commercial Corner.

First of all I'd like to thank the board of directors for

giving me this opportunity to work for my hometown club, and secondly I'd like to say a massive thank you to all the supporters for their kind words and their messages of support on me taking this role.

My aims are to get more businesses on board, create a corporate business link and get the companies networking together to give them more value for money and also give them more brand awareness through our website etc.

One of the greatest sponsorship opportunities available is the chance to sponsor our new club mascot Roary the Roughyed. Club mascots are without doubt the best marketing tool at any professional sports club and do provide the ultimate in advertisement.

I'll also be organising high quality events throughout the year for all to attend and enjoy. At the moment I'm out and about introducing myself to all potential investors on a daily basis. In the meantime if there's anyone out there who'd like to get in touch then please don't hesitate to contact me on 0161 628 3677.

Onwards and upwards

MARKETING MATTERS

Hello and welcome to marketing matters. As I'm sure you'll all agree the club has made massive strides on the pitch over the last 18 months, something as a supporter

I'm really positive about. I'm pleased to say the club are just as ambitious off the pitch and we've come up with a great initiative in working very closely with the whole community including the schools and the amateur clubs who we aim to forge very strong links with. There are some very exciting times which lie ahead.

Not forgetting our club mascot ROARY who is proving to be very popular at matches, the Oldham Carnival, rugby league presentations and schools etc. If you would like Roary to make a personal appearance then please get in touch with me and subject to availability he'll certainly be there.

Spread the message "Believe in the Roughyeds".

*Mick (Braddy)
Bradshaw*

0161 628 3677

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Oldham **Fixtures '08**



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Comp	Opp	V	KO	Res	Att
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 Sun 17th	ROCHDALE	A	3:00pm	Postponed	
NRC Fri 22nd	SALFORD	H	8:00pm	18-14	1,350
NRC Fri 29th	ROCHDALE	H	8:00pm	38-8	1,350

March

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	26-12	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	30-20	1,191
NRC Sun 25th	BATLEY	A	3:00pm	16-24	885

June

CCC6 Sun 1st	WAKEFIELD	A	3.30pm	4-46	2,966
NL Wed 4th	GATESHEAD	A	7.30pm	18-32	434
NL Sat 7th	LONDON	H	6:00pm	42-20	644
NL Sun 15th	HUNSLET	A	3:00pm	66-10	887
NL Wed 18th	LONDON	A	7:30pm	40-6	334
NL Sun 22nd	BLACKPOOL	A	3:00pm	44-10	640
NL Sun 29th	GATESHEAD	H	3:00pm	40-16	823

July

NL Sun 6th	WORKINGTON	A	3:00pm	16-14	647
NL Fri 11th	BARROW	A	7:30pm	12-32	1,799
NL Thur 17th	DONCASTER	H	7:30pm		
NL Sun 27th	KEIGHLEY	H	3:00pm		

August

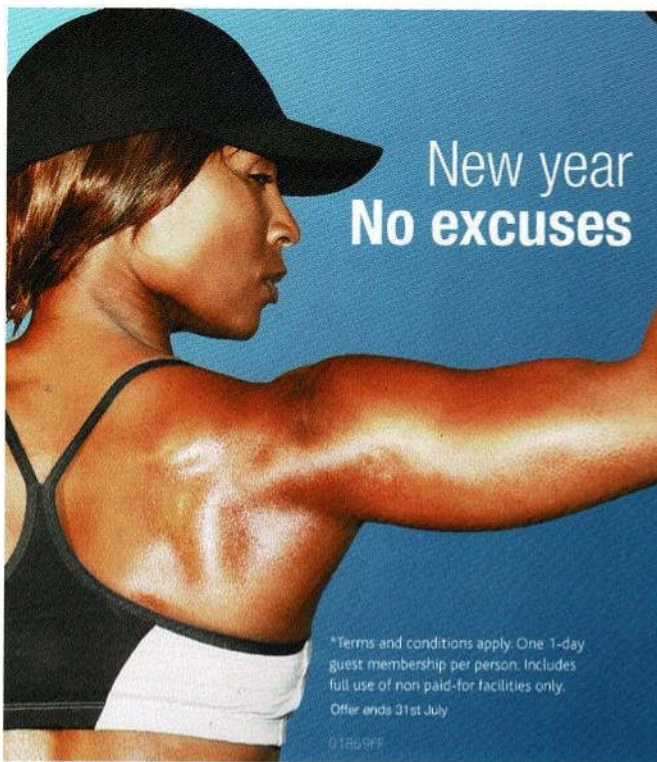
NL Sun 3rd	YORK	A	3:00pm		
NL Wed 6th	DONCASTER	A	8:00pm		
NL Sun 10th	BARROW	H	3:00pm		
NL Sun 17th	SWINTON	A	3:00pm		
NL Sun 24th	WORKINGTON	H	3:00pm		
Sat 30th	CHALLENGE CUP FINAL				

September

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

October

Sat 4th	S L GRAND FINAL				
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GuestWriter..

SUNDAY, BLOODY SUNDAY.

I've got to admit to being a closeted supporter of tonight's visitors whom for many years were the RFL's proverbial strugglers.

One of the 'younger' of our established clubs - not formed until 1951 - basement club Doncaster where the somewhat reluctant subject of a gruesome television documentary 'Sunday, Bloody Sunday' when, during the 70's, the club went some 40 matches without a win. They won me over though - but then I've always been a supporter of the underdog - or maybe it's just that I'm a glutton for punishment - years ago I also had soft spots for association minnows Ayr and Torquay. Being honest I still have.

Mind you, I have wavered. In 1994 the Roughyeds were put to the sword in the Challenge Cup by a resurgent and rampant Doncaster side which by now was pushing hard for promotion to the top flight. Oldham had won only four of their 20 Stones Bitter Championship matches whilst a big and strong Doncaster outfit had lost only once at home all season. On the previous day Shane Tupaea's all-conquering Oldham 'A' team had beaten Doncaster 20-14 in a rough-tough game played in front of a hostile crowd on a quagmire of a Tatters Field pitch to lift the Alliance Second Division Cup. The writing was on the wall in respect of what Oldham's first team could look forward to next day but the large Oldham support didn't expect a Roughyeds side which included the likes of Mike Kuiti, Andy Goodway and Bob Lindner in its pack to be steamrollered quite in the way in which it was. A brace of tries from Audley Pennant with one each from Maxwell Tomlinson and David Evans plus South African and former Watersheddings man Jamie Bloem tagging on two goals buried Oldham deep in the Yorkshire mud - and with it Peter Tunks' future as Oldham coach. Doncaster went out of the cup in the next round losing 40-9 at St Helens but went on to win promotion whilst a rejuvenated Oldham outfit under the leadership of Andy Goodway won an end-of-season clash at Saints 30-26 to hold on to its place in next season's top flight and whilst the Oldham management didn't know it at the time, played a vital role in booking the club's ticket to Super League.

From an Oldham perspective there have, of course, been lighter and brighter moments in their tussles with the South Yorkshire outfit. In 2003 Roughyeds' Chris Campbell scored the fastest try the sport has ever recorded when he crossed the Dons' line after just seven seconds. Home full-back Paul Gledhill fumbled Gareth Barber's kick-off allowing the speedy wingman to scoop up the ball and touch down.

Winding back the clock to 1979 to a match at Doncaster which Oldham won 25-0 a well on top Roughyeds brought off the bench a young trialist listed in the programme as A. N. Other. He turned out to be a rugby union utility-back by the name of Danny Wilson who sadly played just the one match for Oldham but went on to star with Swinton. Author, Steve Wild later wrote of Wilson "Simply a genius. The only reason he remained at Swinton for the next eight years was due to his untamed maverick nature". He went on to captain Wales and is the proud father of Manchester United star Ryan Giggs.

Remember Mick McCone? In 1972 he was on the Donny transfer list at £6,000 but Oldham got their man for just £1050. The talented half-back who had rarely picked up winning pay made the scrum-half berth his own. His partnership with Cliff Hill was one of the best that Watersheddings' fans had seen for some seasons and playing with men up front of the calibre of Frank Foster, Bob Irving, Kevin Taylor, Kevin Ashcroft and Ken Wilson ensured McCone picked up a winning bonus more often than not!

Few players have passed to-and-fro between the clubs but former Oldham 50's pack stars Bryn Goldswain and Don Vines both had stints coaching the Dons. Goldswain had a masters degree in rugby league ball-handling and tactics and played a big part in the success that the club enjoyed during that era whilst Vines, on the other hand, was one fiery player who never took a backward step!

The oval crystal ball says Oldham tonight but Oldham and Donny in first and second spot come the end of the season will do for me!

Brian Walker

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



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OLDHAM chairman Bill Quinn's exploits in the boxing ring, when he outpointed Brad Hepi as part of the Steve Prescott Foundation's 'Legends of League' fight-night at the Reebok Stadium, raised a

magnificent £16,000, to be split between Christie's Hospital in Manchester and the Rugby League Benevolent Fund to aid seriously injured players.

In announcing the figure, Bill thanked everyone who had supported him in his fund-raising efforts. There were too many to name individually, but he wished to acknowledge the backing of people who sponsored him; those who attended on the night; those who acquired tables at the function; all the help he received from the Oldham club; and a thank-you, too, to the companies that sponsored him, such as Frank Elswood of F R Elswood (Ceilings and Partitions) Ltd; Paul Gough and Bob Thompson at Totalplus Communications; and his own Wm. Quinn Group Ltd.

"Lots of people got behind me in many,

many ways and I would like to personally thank everyone of them for helping to make it a great night - with a terrific fund-raising result," said Bill.

He revealed that his fiancée Suzanne's grandad passed away recently and all donations in his memory were also made out to Christie's Hospital to help to swell the fund. "A sincere thank-you to everyone involved in that as well," added Bill.

Going back to the big night at the Reebok, he said the club had also picked up between 15 and 20 new supporters. "They were on adjacent tables and they told me after the fight that they were from various parts of Lancashire. They called me over to congratulate me and said they were really taken on by the fact that a club chairman of my age would go into the ring to do my bit for such good causes.

"They wanted me to know that they were going to be Roughyeds supporters from now on, and that they would try to get to a match and look me up.

"I think the whole night helped to promote the club because it put the name of Oldham Roughyeds about at a show that got some TV coverage - and I know that one or two clients of mine who were there were encouraged to get involved a bit with the club.

"But the main thing was it raised a lot of money for good causes and, for everyone who helped in whatever way, a very big thank-you indeed from me. The help and support was truly appreciated."

Roger Halstead

Oldham R.L.F.C.

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ClubNews



ROARY the Roughyed, our popular mascot, is fast becoming a 'mane about town'.

The Oldham Carnival was just up his street - a chance to mix and mingle with the crowds and help all the club volunteers on the day to collect money for the Genesis Appeal, one of the club's two official charities for the next 12 months.

The club had a lively float in the Carnival, headed by Roary who was assisted in fund collecting by players Gareth Langley, Simeon Hoyle, Will Schofield, Dale Lowe and Chris Clarke.

The girls from Genesis were there, as were numerous Roughyeds fans, among them Janet, who works full time at the club and needs no introduction, George and Adam, Reece and Ellis, Nathan and Samantha, Dave who was

taking the pictures and Larissa and Natalie. Apologies to anyone whose name has been overlooked.

Roughyeds wish to thank all those who helped on the day, including Dave Taylor at TTX for supplying the lorry and driver; Greg's Discount Store for supplying the give-aways; and Dave Murgatroyd for taking the pictures.



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NATIONAL LEAGUE RESERVE FIXTURE LIST 2008

April

NLR	Wed 2nd	LEIGH CENT.	A 7:30pm	L 6-48
NLR	Thurs 10th	ROCHDALE	H 7:30pm	L 6-18
NL	Fri 18th	SALFORD CITY REDS	A 7:30pm	L 8-46
NLR	Thurs 24th	ROCHDALE	A 7:30pm	L 28-38

May

NLR	Thurs 1st	LEIGH CENT.	H 7:30pm	L 6-56
NLR	Thurs 8th	SALFORD CITY REDS	H 7:30pm	L 4-56
NLR	Thurs 29th	WIDNES VIKINGS	A 7:30pm	L 30-36

June

NLR	Sat 7th	WORKINGTON	A 2:30pm	L 14-38
NLR	Thurs 12th	HUNSLET HAWKS	H 7:30pm	L 20-22
NLR	Thurs 19th	FEATHERSTONE ROV	H 7:30pm	W 28-16
NLR	Fri 27th	HUNSLET HAWKS	A 7:30pm	W 22-12

July

NLR	Sat 5th	WORKINGTON	H 2:30pm	Post.
NLR	Sat 12th	BARROW RAIDERS	H 2:30pm	L 16-27
NLR	Thurs 17th	FEATHERSTONE ROV	A 7:30pm	
NLR	Thurs 24th	WIDNES VIKINGS	H 7:30pm	

August

NLR	Sat 9th	BARROW RAIDERS	A 2:30pm	
	Sat 23rd	PLAY-OFF WEEK 1		
	Sat 30th	CARNEGIE CHALLENGE CUP FINAL		

September

	Sat 6th	PLAY-OFF WEEK 2		
	Sat 13th	PLAY-OFF WEEK 3		
	Sat 20th	FIRST DIVISION RESERVE GRAND FINAL		

Roughyeds Reserves put in a sterling second-half performance at the South Leeds Stadium to beat Hunslet 22-12 and pick up their second win in a row.

Centre Steven Fisher scored two tries and full-back Ben Heaton and substitute Gareth Schofield also crossed the Hawks line, while stand-off Mark Smith landed two conversions and a last-minute penalty goal. Oldham had trailed 12-4 early in the second half, but they finished the game significantly stronger than their opponents who were outclassed once Roughyeds hit their best form in the last half hour of the match. By scoring 18 unanswered points from the 55th minute, John Hough's men finished worthy winners.

Daryl Cardiss, beginning his comeback after a four-month absence following shoulder surgery, played the first half hour at right centre and was then taken off in readiness for the first-team game a couple of days later. Simon Baldwin, returning after illness, led from the front and, in his second spell in the second half, led the charge which ultimately took Roughyeds

from 12-4 down to worthy winners. His vast experience came in handy when running off Smith's inside ball and sending in Heaton for the try that put Roughyeds in front for the first time in the 58th minute.

Martin Elwood, playing his first game for two and a half seasons, did well considering he had been out of the game for so long. It was only natural that he should be toiling a little bit in the second half, but he showed plenty of nice touches; he worked hard in defence; and he will clearly go better with each game he plays, there being no real substitute for game time.

Smith and Dale Lowe were influential half-backs, while in the forwards Luke Sutton continued to make progress and there were some eye-catching touches from back-row forwards Phil Jagger, Chris Clarke and David Orwell.

Lowe and Heaton sent in Fisher for the only Oldham try of the first half, but when Hunslet went 12-4 up in the 48th minute with their third try, there was little hint of the transformation that was to come over the game.

Fisher scored his second direct from a scrum and that was the signal for Oldham to get a roll on with Baldwin twice going clear down the middle of Smith's astute distribution. The second time led to Heaton's try, goaled by Smith for a 14-12 lead.

The next try would be crucial and it went to Oldham when Lowe's perhaps fortuitous crosskick landed in the arms of Gareth Schofield, who raced to the corner for a try which Smith goaled beautifully from wide out. In the last minute he added a penalty, and the job was done.

Oldham scorers: goals, Smith (3); tries, Fisher (2), Heaton, G Schofield.

Team: Heaton; Ward, Cardiss, Fisher, Nelson; Smith, Lowe; Baldwin, Mansfield, Sutton, Elwood, Jagger, Clarke. Subs: Jackson, W Schofield, Orwell, G Schofield.

The next scheduled game against Workington was postponed because the Cumbrians couldn't raise a team. Barrow at Sedgley Park was next up, but for various reasons the Roughyeds were short of hands on deck and, despite putting up a brave show, they went down 16-27.

Ethan Langhorn kicked two goals and tries were scored by Ryan Jackson, Mohammed Tanghart (Said's brother) and Michael Ward. All three gave eye-catching performances as did loose-forward Chris Clarke, one of the most consistent members of the squad all season.

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**Rugby
Oldham**
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SUPPORT ROUGHYED RESERVES

KICKING HOMOPHOBIA OUT OF OLDHAM

The last time the colour pink dominated Boundary Park pink rugby balls were liberally distributed to the crowd to celebrate the pre-match "Touch Rugby" contest between Roughyeds Reserves and gay Rugby Union team the Manchester Village Spartans.

Sometimes, it is individuals, rather than events which help to break new ground and alter perceptions....

Ian Roberts distinguished himself as one of Australia's great Rugby League players in the 1990s. He was an International prop forward

known for his uncompromising approach on the field and regarded as one of the "hard men" competing in the one of the toughest sports in the world. In 1995 he made history by becoming the first Australian sportsman to openly declare himself gay. This courageous move surprised many, both because Ian did not fit many stereotypes of a gay man acted and because of the minimal repercussions that

resulted. Ian's playing career continued until the end of the millenium.

He was further warmed by levels of public acceptance when he emerged as a runner up on the hugely popular "Dancing With the Stars" TV program and has forged a new career on screen.

"Roles for someone of my size are rather limited," Roberts says, referring to his 6-foot-5 frame. "I've always been 'the thug,'" he says in regard to appearances that have included Australian TV and roles in Superman Returns (as Riley, one of Lex Luthor's henchmen) and Little Fish, alongside Cate Blanchett. "I don't

mind doing that sort of role either, as long as I work."

Sadly, Ian remains the only professional Australian gay sportsman (and one of very few globally) courageous enough to be open about himself while playing his sport. He remains an inspiration to young men all over the world who see in him a brave, tough role model who stands against the clichés of what gay men can be.

DONATIONS

Residents of a block of privately-owned luxury apartments in Chadderton have donated £45 to the Oldham club's fund for Dr Kershaw's Hospice and Genesis. "What the club is doing is fabulous," said Carol Andrew, general manager of the complex, "and the residents had no hesitation in deciding to make a contribution."

They had raised £90 from a clothes party and they decided to split it between the Children's Society and Oldham Rugby League Club's fund for their two adopted charities.

Mrs Andrew called in at the Roughyeds' office to hand over the £45 - and promptly purchased, for another £45, one of the limited edition all-pink replica jerseys, like those the players will wear with pride in tonight's game here at Boundary Park.

Added Carol: "I'll be wearing the pink jersey and I'll be at the game. Carol (49), a fan for 27 years, celebrated her 30th birthday as the Oldham team's mascot in a match against Wigan at Watersheddings on March 27, 1989. John Holdsworth was the referee and Wigan won 27-21 in front of a crowd of 6,841.

Added Carol: "The game was on my actual birthday. I had a photograph taken with John Cogger and Paul Round.

Another generous fan, David Rigney who lives in Bristol, on hearing of the event has sent £50 to both of the charities and £50 for the club. "Obviously I can't get to matches but still follow the Roughyeds avidly and when I heard of this splendid venture I was determined to do my little bit. Hope it's a great success."

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Today's Squads



Oldham

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☐	Simon BALDWIN
☐	Jason BOULTS
☐	Matty BROOKS
☐	Daryl CARDISS
☐	James COYLE
☐	Tommy GOULDEN
☐	Tommy GRUNDY
☐	Danny HALLIWELL
☐	Ian HODSON
☐	Simeon HOYLE
☐	Phil JOSEPH
☐	Gareth LANGLEY
☐	Craig LITTLER
☐	Richard MERVILL
☐	Mick NANYN
☐	Paul O'CONNOR
☐	Lucas ONYANGO
☐	Rob ROBERTS
☐	Adam ROBINSON
☐	Neil RODEN
☐	Marcus ST HILAIRE
☐	Luke SUTTON
☐	Said TAMGHART
☐	Lee WINGFIELD
☐	



Doncaster RLFC

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☐	Kyle WOOD	☐
☐	Andreas BAUER	☐
☐	Gareth MORTON	☐
☐	Dean COLTON	☐
☐	Paul CROOKS	☐
☐	Luke GALE	☐
☐	Alex BENSON	☐
☐	Chris BUTTERY	☐
☐	Craig LAWTON	☐
☐	Peter GREEN	☐
☐	Mark CASTLE	☐
☐	Corey LAWRIE	☐
☐	Shawn LEAF	☐
☐	Jason HART	☐
☐	Wayne RIETTIE	☐
☐	Graham HORNE	☐
☐	Chris LYTH	☐
☐	Andy SPEAKE	☐
☐	Joe BROWN	☐
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☐	Scott JONES	☐
☐	Wayne GREEN	☐
☐	Craig HOLT	☐
☐	Scott SMITH	☐

OFFICIALS

Referee: J Leahy Touch Judges: S Barrie PWharton

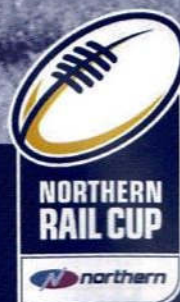


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