

TODAY'S SQUADS



OLDHAM

1 NIELD Steven	Oldham Self Storage 0161 665 2723
2 CLAY Adam	Fireplace Superstore 0161 488 4991
4 HOLMES, Jack	Oasis Academy Oldham
5 WARD, Jarrod	Beauchamp Properties
6 PALFREY, Lewis	Fireplace Superstore 0161 488 4991
7 ROPER, Steve	Les and Eileen Davison
8 JOY, Phil	Pam Taylor and TTX
9 GEE, Sam	John and Lynda McAndrew
10 NEAL, Adam	ORSA
11 CROWLEY, Josh	John and Lynda McAndrew
12 LANGTREE, Danny	Charlotte Gothard and Daniel Haigh
13 THOMPSON, Liam	ORSA
14 FILES, Adam	Rita Walton
15 OWEN, Gareth	Bev, Kelly and Paul Hulbert
16 HUGHES, Kenny	Rita Walton
17 TYSON, George	Mick Harrop
18 JOY, Richard	Frankie and Benny's, Oldham 0161 624 7745
19 WARD, Michael	Sylvia, David and Margaret
20 DEMPSEY, Tom	WILSCAFF 07855 265071
22 MASON, Nathan	ORLFC Past Players' Association
23 FORD, Jonathan	Oasis Academy Oldham
25 ASHTON, Tom	Oasis Academy Oldham



Joe Martin
Jamie Murphy
Lewis Reece
Phil Cowburn
Callum Mulkeen
Courtney Davies
Matt Bradley
Chris Vitalini
Steve Parry
Izaak Duffy
Ash Haynes
Brad England
Toby Topham
Mark Bowen
Nathan Rainer
Jamie Crowther
Joe McClean
Ryan Pywell
Ollie Purslow
Emmerson Whittel
Brett Scrivens

OLDHAM V **GLOUCESTER**
ALL GOLDS

SUNDAY 3rd
MAY 2015
KICK-OFF 3pm

ISSUE #6/ £2.00
OFFICIAL
MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

ROUGHYEDS



SEASON 2015
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Officials: Ref: Adam Gill TJ: C Hancock
TJ: C Swanson Res: G Evans

Match commissioner: P Crashley

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for the facts

X --- O X O
NATTER WITH NOBBY
(O X --- O X

HELLO everyone and welcome to today's game at the Whitebank Stadium against the University of Gloucestershire All Golds.

Today's opponents are a great example of what Kingstone Press League One is all about and how a new club can enter the division and improve season on season to become a challenge to their opponents in every game they play home and away.

The All Golds have had a mixed start to this campaign with two wins and two losses, but I'm sure they will be looking to make it three wins today here in Oldham so we will have to be ready for a tough encounter.

We must also be prepared to work hard in all aspects of our game to get a victory and continue on our winning ways.

The game last week against London Skolars was a strange one, in my opinion. The scoreboard

looked impressive at the end, but the performance wasn't up to my standards or the standards the lads set themselves.

The players have raised the bar this season and have set themselves a target of reaching a very high level of performance in each game because they understand that it will be the hardest League One campaign for many years.

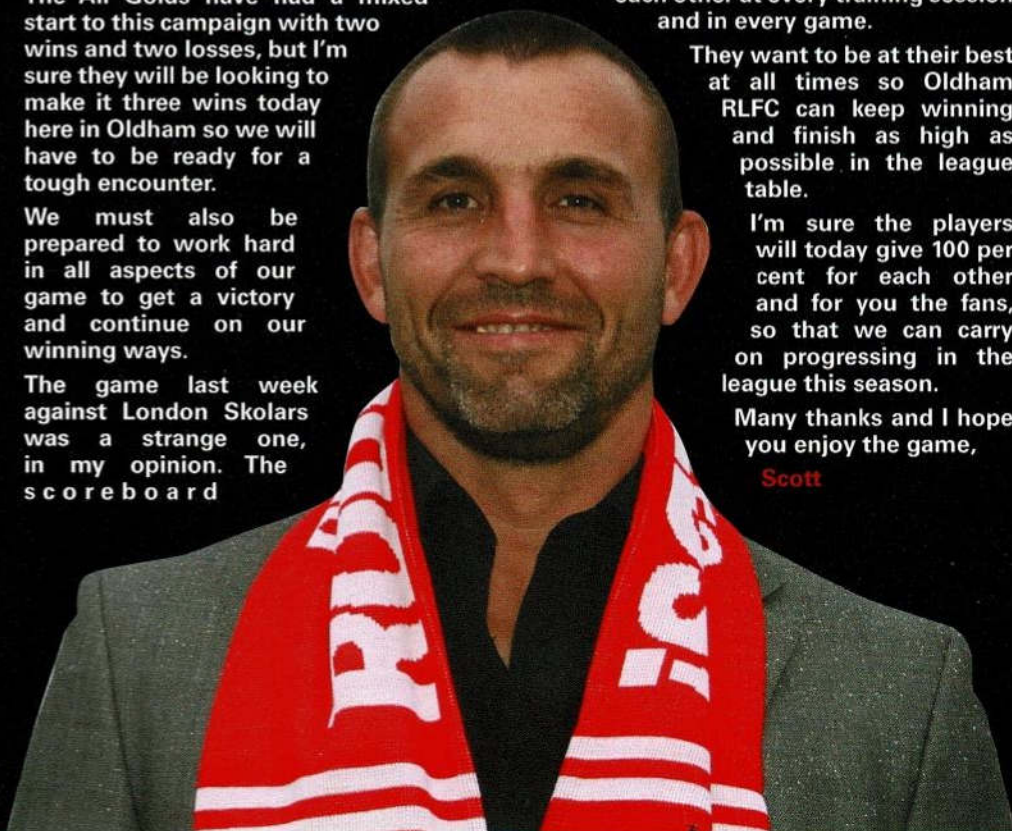
They know what 'Spanner' and I expect of them, but they also put huge pressure on each other at every training session and in every game.

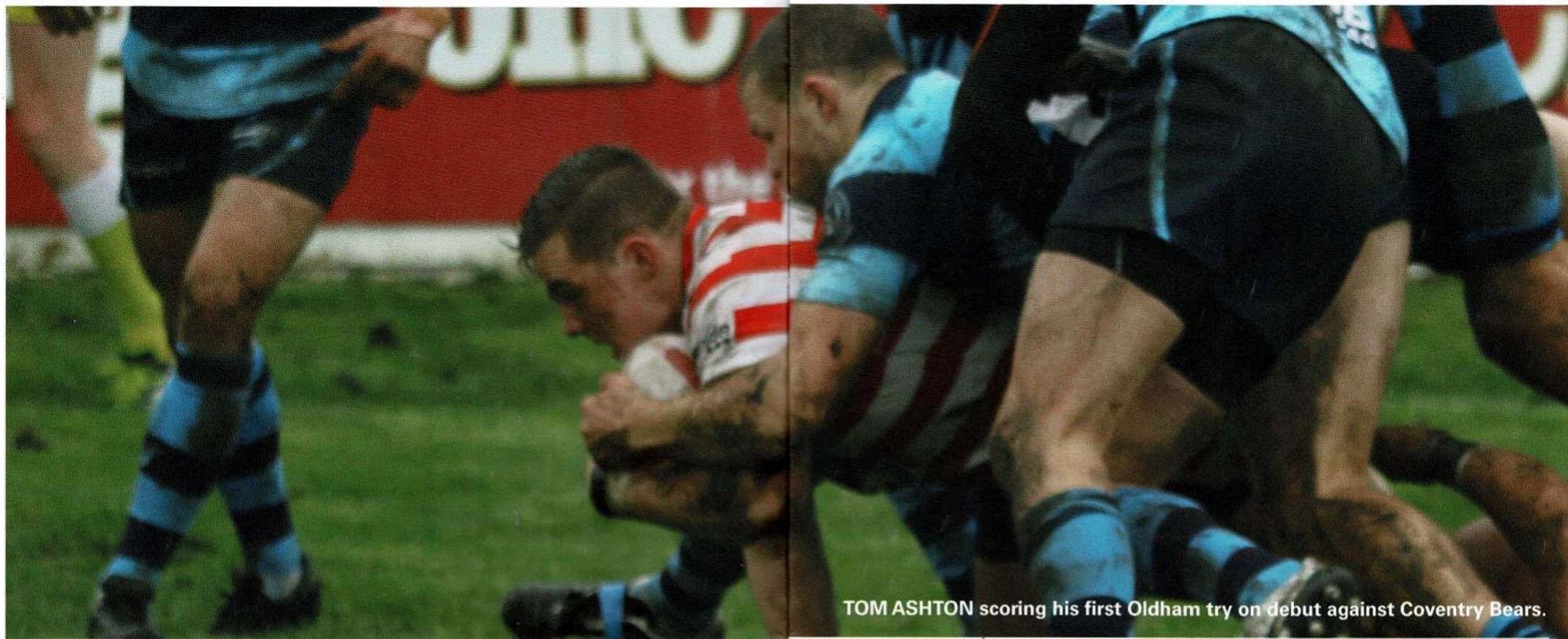
They want to be at their best at all times so Oldham RLFC can keep winning and finish as high as possible in the league table.

I'm sure the players will today give 100 per cent for each other and for you the fans, so that we can carry on progressing in the league this season.

Many thanks and I hope you enjoy the game,

Scott





TOM ASHTON scoring his first Oldham try on debut against Coventry Bears.

Behind Closed Doors with... TOM ASHTON

Who are your heroes or people you look up to ?

My close family. They are always there for me, especially my granddad, who has traipsed me up and down the country since an early age to support me with my rugby.

Do you play any other sports and if so do you excel in them ?

Garden bowls, was once a junior champion.

What is the highlight of your career so far ?

Scoring for Sheffield Eagles in the Challenge Cup against Castleford.

If you could invite two people for dinner, dead or alive, who would they be ?

Peter Kay and Michael Jackson.

If your house was hit by an earthquake what would you save first ?

A tough one. Couldn't honestly say. Hopefully it will never happen.

Who's the funniest of your team mates and why ?

George Tyson, he definitely has a few screws loose.

Which TV programme would you never miss ?

The Simpsons.

What was the last book you read ?

Not a big fan of reading, but I like a look through The Sun.

What's your favourite type of music ?

I like to mix it up --- a bit of this and that.

How do you relax after a match ?

A warm bath followed by a massage from the other half.

Finally . . . tell me a secret.

If I had one to tell you I would.

A CHAT WITH CHRIS



WELCOME once again to what, after last week, will hopefully be another sunny day at Whitebank.

How refreshing were those conditions after the horrendous weather we have had at previous home matches this season?

The lads again kept up their 100 per cent record with a convincing win, but there are still things to work on.

What pleased Scott and me, ironically, was the extent of the lads' disappointment at conceding a late try.

Although that might seem rather petty to some people, reactions like that are a clear indication that we have a group of players who want to improve all the time. That is a priceless attribute.

Today is another opportunity for us to keep our good run going, but to do so we need to play to a high level.

The All Golds come to Whitebank having made a good start to the season themselves although they suffered a heavy defeat at home to Swinton last week.

Results so far among what people are calling the "top" teams

have been close and difficult to predict, which merely underlines everything that has been said about the division this season.

We have a number of tough matches coming up and we want to keep our good form going as we head into a very demanding month.

As I mentioned last week in these notes, there was a meeting last Monday with some fans' representatives which can be described as open and positive.

I think there was some surprise on their part at how 'open' I was, but I repeat what I have said many times over the years — I only want the club to do well.

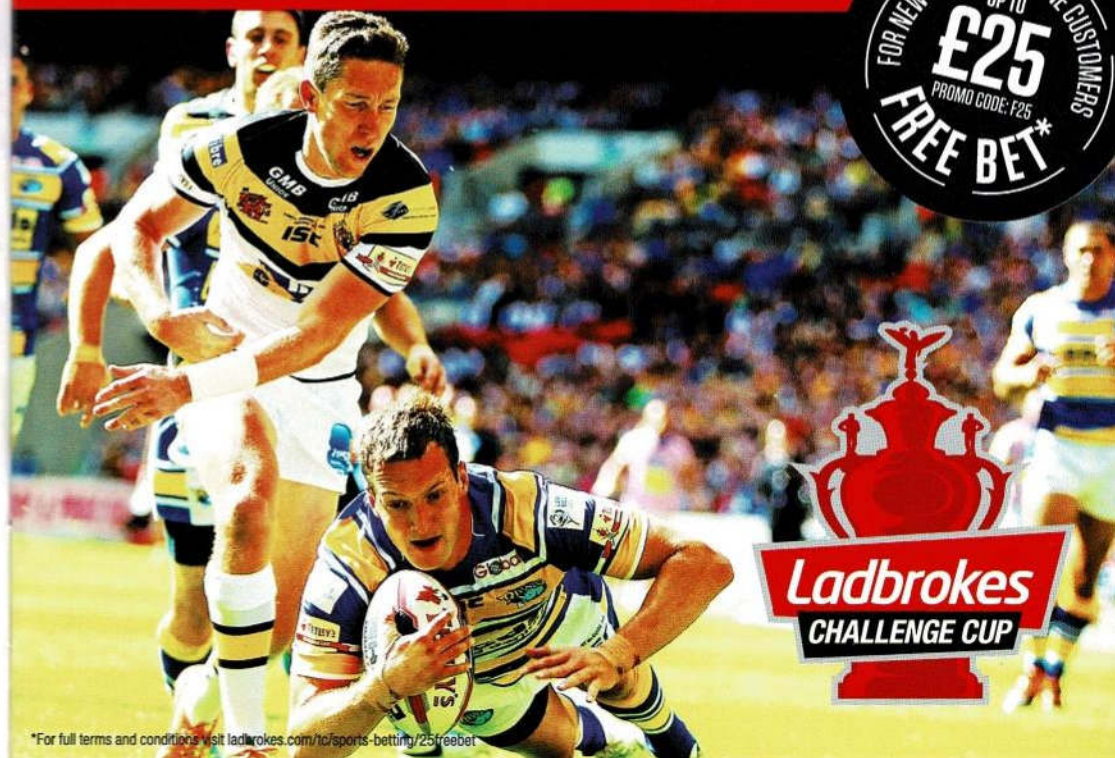
We will be meeting again as we start a process that can hopefully mean everybody pulls in the same direction. Long may that continue!

Please keep up your support for the lads and hopefully they will give us another win today.

Enjoy the game,

Chris

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Club and fans get together in 'open and positive' meeting

OLDHAM Rugby League Club hope that, after talks last Monday night with chairman Chris Hamilton, a group of fans with "concerns" about the Roughyeds' future may have had some of their fears allayed.

Headed by Mark Heywood, five supporters had a 90-minute meeting at Whitebank with the chairman and other club representatives.

It will be the forerunner of a second round of talks in a few weeks which may be attended by other stakeholders with an interest in the club's future success.

Said Chris: "I'm pleased to report that it was a positive and fruitful meeting. I made it clear from the start that this was all about everyone pulling in the same direction, which is how the club will become more successful on and off the field.

"We discussed a range of topics about which the fans had expressed concerns, and in that regard the meeting was set to the fans' agenda rather than anything prepared by the club.

"Hopefully, some of their fears will have been allayed but, realistically, this meeting was always going to be merely the start of a longer process because there are a number of things about which we need to continue our dialogue.

"We have agreed to meet again in a few weeks.

"In the meantime there will be things

happening behind the scenes which will hopefully enable us to make progress together.

"As always there are several topics which, at this stage, have to remain confidential and that was understood by everyone at the meeting.

"However, we aim to update everybody as soon as we can as we bid to build on the fantastic start to the season which we are all enjoying thanks to the efforts of players and staff, headed by Scott Naylor.

"It would be hugely encouraging to see more people at Whitebank on Sunday to watch our top-of-the-table side go for their fifth win in five league matches when we entertain Gloucester All Golds."

On behalf of the fans' group, Mark Heywood said: "In a well-organised meeting we had wide-ranging discussions and explored several issues that were of concern to supporters.

"We asked challenging questions to clarify and address many of the rumours which are surrounding the club.

"While some issues remain, as yet, unresolved it was a very open and positive meeting which had encouraging outcomes. We'll meet again on June 1.

"Supporters and club management alike will be able to map a way forward that will benefit both the club and its fans."



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APPEARANCES AND SCORERS

(Cup and league - 9 possible)

	App	DG	Gls	Tries	Pts
ASHTON, Tom	2	-	-	1	4
BROUGHTON, Jodie	1	-	-	2	8
CLAY, Adam	7	-	-	7	28
CROWLEY, Josh	9	-	-	4	16
DEMPSEY, Tom	2	-	-	1	4
FILES, Adam	7	-	-	-	-
FORD, Jon	5	-	-	7	28
GEE, Sam	8	-	-	2	8
HOLMES, Jack	8	-	-	6	24
HUGHES, Kenny	8	-	-	-	-
JOHNSON, Josh	2	-	-	1	4
JOY, Phil	8	-	-	-	-
JOY, Richard	3	-	-	2	8
LANGTREE, Danny	6	-	-	3	12
LEARMONTH, Micky	2	-	-	2	8
MASON, Nathan	7	-	-	2	8
NEAL, Adam	8	-	-	1	4
NEILD, Steven	4	-	-	-	-
OWEN, Gareth	8	-	-	-	-
PALFREY, Lewis	8	-	37	1	78
ROBERTS, Oliver	1	-	-	-	-
ROPER, Steve	8	1	6	-	13
THOMPSON, Liam	8	-	-	2	8
TYSON, George	8	-	-	6	24
WARD, Jarrod	8	-	-	4	16
WARD, Michael	7	-	-	3	12



Jarrod Ward

Local angles on the All Golds

To give them their posh name they are the University of Gloucestershire All Golds and there are plenty of local connections in the squad that will be coming to Whitebank today.

To start with, our very own Jarrod Ward played 15 games and scored four tries for the All Golds last season while on loan from Halifax.

Jarrod had a tight hamstring last week and missed the home win against London Skolars and at the time of writing it wasn't known whether he would be available for selection today, though no doubt he will have been chomping at the bit this week to get a run against his former club.

Some fans will also recall that the current All Golds boss Lee Greenwood played for us under Tony Benson in 2009 when he scored 12 tries in 21 appearances on the wing.

Coincidentally, the All Golds full-back or centre Phil Cowburn was still very much a keen Oldham fan back then, living at Thornham just outside the Oldham

boundary and playing rugby union at Bamford for Rochdale RUFC.

Two others who will be playing for Gloucester today, Callum Mulkeen and Matt Bradley also played for Rochdale RU in their youth before all three headed off to Hartpury College in Gloucestershire to pursue their education – and their rugby.

Callum and Matt both hail from Bury, but Callum is well known here at Whitebank because he played a few games in our reserve team before his travels took him south.

While Phil has remained with the All Golds from day one, Callum has had a spell at Oxford and Matt at London Skolars, but they are back now where it all began and, by all accounts, doing well in a Gloucester side that will be seeking its third win today, having tasted success in the league this year at home to South Wales and away at London Skolars.

Two defeats, both at home, were inflicted by Rochdale Hornets and Swinton Lions.



George Tyson

Tyson has that choirboy look!

Behind the scenes in the Roughyeds camp

WITH the best defensive figures in League One, the best "difference" and the second best attacking stats, the boys are doing okay.

Had Barrow not put 86 on South Wales last week we would have been top of the 'points for' column as well, but the Raiders are still 39 behind us on the differential and, interestingly, we go up there next weekend to take them on in their own Craven Park backyard.

DON'T FORGET THE GAME IS NEXT SATURDAY, APRIL 9 WITH A 6.30pm KICK-OFF.

Nathan Mossop, Barrow's hooker, ran in four tries against the Scorpions to perhaps underline the fact that, amazingly, Gareth Owen, Kenny Hughes and Adam Files haven't registered a single try between them in our four league games to date.

We've racked up an eyebrow-raising 29 tries in those four outings with Jon Ford (7) and Jack Holmes and George Tyson (4 apiece) leading the way.

Jon's four of the best against Skolars edged him into the lead in our League One try list and took him level on our overall list — that's league AND cup — with Adam Clay, whose seven were all scored in the two cup tournaments.

All but 10 of our 29 league tries were scored by the backs, although fans may be split on whether 'Gorgeous George' is a back or a forward.

It was a topic that was touched on in the post-match hospitality suite last Sunday when Tyson stepped up to receive his man-of-the-match award from club chairman Chris Hamilton.

Chris told the assembled gathering: "George is a fans' favourite and he's doing a really good job because he is not playing in his natural position.

"He's in your face, aggressive, with no small amount of skill and there's always something happening when he has the ball.

"One lady supporter was overheard to say that he



Gareth Owen

has the looks of a choirboy. Enough said !"

Even George had a chuckle at that one before revealing that he's quite liking his switch from back-row forward to centre.

"I like scoring tries — that's the beauty of playing wider out," he said.

Another player in the public spotlight last week was Gareth Owen, who did a great job for us on safari at Salford Quays where he was a studio guest on BBC Radio Manchester's Thursday evening 'Rugby League Hour' with Jack Dearden and Trevor Hunt.

Also in the studio, for a general debate on life in League One, were Wayne English of Rochdale Hornets and Tommy Gallagher of Swinton Lions.

English, who was in the Championship with Rochdale last year, said League One was every bit as intense and competitive as the higher division.

Gareth said he was 'knocked for six' when Salford

released him as a full-time pro, but he was now getting accustomed to life in the real world and had got an HGV licence to take up work as a driver.

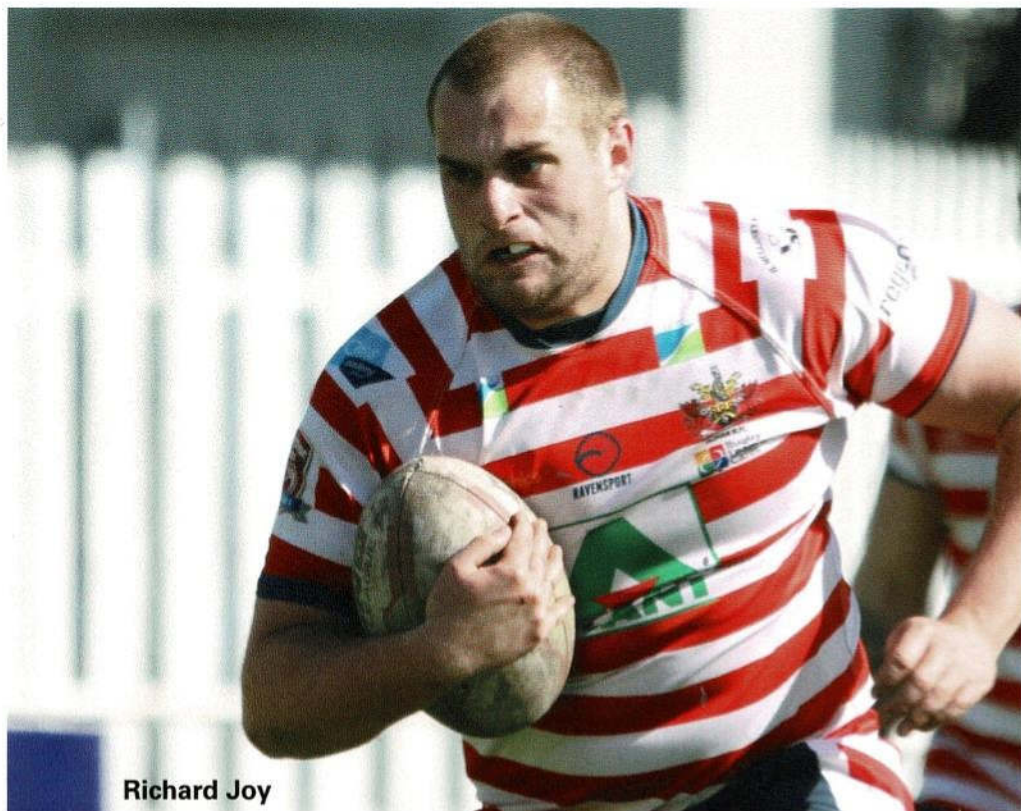
He added: "I'm loving my rugby again at Oldham, my home-town club. We're playing some good stuff and we're top of the league, so things couldn't be better.

"League One is one of those divisions in which you can easily come unstuck if you don't turn up with the right mental attitude or you're not focused 100 per cent on the job in hand."

Then Gaz showed why he plays in a creative, decision-making role where quick thinking and speed of thought and movement is an essential.

Jack D: "So who should people look out for in the Oldham side if they come to Whitebank on Sunday to watch the London Skolars game?"

Owen (without a split-second's hesitation): "Me !"



Richard Joy

Oh, Brother! A Joy to behold!

They come in pairs to make it a family affair

WE are indebted to lifelong Oldham fan George Cowburn --- yes, that's Phil's dad --- for reminding us of how many pairs of brothers have taken to the field in the Roughyeds' jersey and of the contributions they have made in terms of appearances, tries, goals etc.

George is a meticulous keeper of our club records and although his loyalties will be split today, given that his son Phil will be playing for the All Golds, he took time out this week to delve into his archives, encouraged by the recent appearances in the Oldham side of both Phil Joy and his younger brother Richard.

His records cover only the new club and, on his behalf, we apologise in advance if any two brothers have been overlooked. If that is the case perhaps somebody out there will put us right and we will put

the record straight in a future programme.

As for the Joys, of course, there were three of them playing for us last season — Phil in the first team and both Richard and Andrew in the under-20s.

While Richard ultimately signed professional forms here to join big brother Phil in the first-team squad, Andrew signed for North Wales Crusaders and has now joined South Wales Scorpions on a month's loan in order to get invaluable experience.

So how many pairs of brothers can you remember turning out in the Oldham side since the new club was formed for the start of the 1998 season?

Here are some of them at least:

+ David and Anthony Gibbons (twins): David 95 appearances, 37 tries; Anthony 88 appearances, 36 tries, one drop goal. Played together 73 times.



Phil Joy

+ Phil and Chris Farrell (twins): Phil 124 appearances, 29 tries; Chris 27 appearances, two tries. Played together 27 times.

+ Gavin and Nicky Johnson: Gavin 21 appearances, one try; Nicky 60 appearances, 41 tries, including 25 in 2004, a club record for tries in a season. Played together six times.

+ Wayne and Ged Corcoran: Wayne 17 appearances, three tries, five goals; Ged 14 appearances, one try. Played together 10 times.

+ David and Jason Best (twins): David 14 appearances; Jason one appearance. Played together once.

+ James and Thomas Coyle: James 71 appearances, 37 tries, eight drop goals; Thomas 26 appearances, 15 tries. Played together 17 times.

+ Adam and Craig Robinson: Adam 35 appearances, five tries; Craig 29 appearances, three tries. Never played together in the same Oldham team.

+ Paul and Andy Ballard: Paul five appearances, two tries; Andy 18 appearances, 93 goals, 17 tries. Never played together in the same Oldham team.

+ Phil and Richard Joy: (to date), Phil 55 appearances, six tries; Richard 3 appearances, two tries. Played together twice, but no doubt many more to come.

Older fans, of course, will recall brothers who played for the former club in Watersheddings days such as Terry and Kevin Flanagan, Cliff and David Hill, Des and Martin Foy, Mark and John Fairbank, Paul and Gary Lord and David and Glen Liddiard.

Oh, Brother!



Tom receives his Magic Moment award for scoring his first try in senior rugby on his starting debut against London Skolars.

A red-letter day for our 'baby' of the squad, Tom Dempsey

.....
It was a day to remember for Tom Dempsey, the 'baby' of our squad at the tender age of 18, when he was named at full-back in the starting line-up for last Sunday's game against London Skolars here at Whitebank.

He had made his debut off the bench when we beat Coventry Bears 38-10, but it was quite something for this teenager from Widnes when he found himself as first name on the team sheet with Steven Nield switched to the wing.

He gave a very workmanlike performance, too, recovering well from taking one huge clattering early on when he and Skolars second-row man Will Lovell, a former Super League player with the Broncos, went up for the same high ball.

Shortly after that, and then later in the second half,

his razor-sharp backing up and anticipation to be in the right place at the right time could easily have produced his first try in senior rugby, only for the final pass in both instances to be a poor one.

Coach Scott Naylor was to observe in his post-match media summary that the youngster might easily have crowned his first full game with a try hat-trick had his support play earned a better service, and one which it deserved, from his team mates.

In actual fact, he made no mistake in the dying minutes when his instincts as a half-back (his natural position) enabled him to get on the outside of a left-to-right passing move which allowed him to collect the final pass this time and dive over in the corner for his 'Magic Moment'

In presenting the award in the hospitality suite after



Tom Dempsey

the game, chairman Chris Hamilton said: "Tom is a young man who is coming along nicely and everyone at the club is delighted for him.

"He impressed Scott and 'Spanner' while playing for the under-20s last year and he showed his commitment to the club by signing pro forms for us this year even though he knew there was no second team for him this season.

"He stuck with it through a big pre-season and now he's having to make the massive step-up to first-team rugby while still a young fella.

"It's not the easiest scenario for him, but I think he appreciates where we are as a club and why we do things the way we do."

Scott also spoke highly of the youngster, who played

for West Bank and Widnes Tigers before joining the Wigan Warriors academy on the recommendation of scout Jack Roden, Neil's dad.

Jack had a lot of time for young Tom and when he was released by the Warriors he pushed him in the direction of Neil, who was then building an under-20s squad here in his first position as a coach.

So that's how Tom arrived at Whitebank in the first place and he and his parents have now put their faith in the club, in Chris, and particularly in Scott and 'Spanner' to look after his best interests and to provide an environment in which he will develop his skills and make the major transition from age-group rugby to semi-pro competition against men.

So its over to you Tom, and every good wish for the future.



LIAM Thompson scores an early try against London Chronicle.

News from HQ



George Burgess in action for England during the 2013 World Cup quarter-final against France. Picture by SWpix.

Warming up for Kiwis with a game against the French

ENGLAND will kick-start their preparations for the autumn international series with a game against France at Leigh Sports Village on Saturday, October 24 (2.00pm).

The match will give fans an opportunity to see the England squad take on France for the first time since their victory over them in the Rugby League World Cup quarter-final in 2013.

England coach Steve McNamara will be looking to get the best out of his players before the three-game series against New Zealand starts in Hull on Sunday, November 1 at the KC Stadium.

"Games like these are extremely important and give us the opportunity to go through our plans before meeting New Zealand," said McNamara.

"Playing the French has a special place in my heart as they were the first side I faced when I was appointed England coach back in 2010 which was also at Leigh Sports Village, so this will bring back some memories for me.

"We won't be treating this as a friendly. France are a strong side and have some very talented players

competing in Super League on a weekly basis so the squad will be looking to impress ahead of that first game against the Kiwis."

Tickets for England v France at Leigh Sports Village on Saturday October 24 (2.00pm) cost from as little as £10 for adults, £5 for concessions and £22.50 for a family ticket. Please visit www.rugbyleaguetickets.co.uk or call the Rugby League Ticket Hotline on 0844 856 1113.

The England vs New Zealand autumn international series kicks off at the KC Stadium in Hull on Sunday, November 1 (5.00pm) before attention turns to the former Olympic Stadium at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London on Saturday, November 7 (2.30pm). The series concludes at the DW Stadium, Wigan on Saturday, November 14 (1.00pm).

Tickets to autumn international series cost from £22 for adults and £10 for concessions per game. A three-match package costing just £45 for adults and £22.50 for concessions is also available. To purchase tickets please visit www.rugbyleaguetickets.co.uk or call the Rugby League Ticket Hotline on 0844 856 1113.



FIXTURES & RESULTS

2015 March

L1Cup	Sunday 1st	COVENTRY	H	W 42 - 6
LCC(3)	Sunday 8th	COVENTRY	H	W 46 - 6
L1Cup	Sunday 15th	Barrow	A	W 32 - 10
LCC(4)	Sunday 22nd	Sheffield	A	L 20 - 44

2015 April

KPL1	Friday 3rd	ROCHDALE	A	W 23 - 16
L1Cup	Wednesday 8th	NW Crusaders	H	L 18 - 16
KPL1	Sunday 12th	COVENTRY	H	W 38 - 10
KPL1	Sunday 19th	SOUTH WALES	A	W 50 - 12
KPL1	Sunday 26th	LONDON SKOLARS	H	W 48 - 6

2015 May

KPL1	Sunday 3rd	GLOUCESTER	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Saturday 9th	BARROW	A	6:30pm
KPL1	Sunday 17th	NEWCASTLE	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 31st	KEIGHLEY	A	3:00pm

2015 June

KPL1	Sunday 7th	NORTH WALES	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 14th	OXFORD	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 21st	SWINTON	A	3:00pm
KPL1	Saturday 27th	GLOUCESTER	A	3:00pm

2015 July

KPL1	Sunday 5th	YORK	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 12th	ROCHDALE	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 19th	LONDON	A	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 26th	NORTH WALES	A	2:30pm

2015 August

KPL1	Sunday 2nd	KEIGHLEY	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 9th	HEMEL	A	2:30pm
KPL1	Sunday 16th	NEWCASTLE	A	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 23rd	BARROW	H	3:00pm

2015 September

KPL1	Sunday 6th	SWINTON	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Sunday 13th	OXFORD	A	3:00pm

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HOW WE STAND Kingstone Press League One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
OLDHAM	4	4	0	0	159	44	115	8
Keighley Cougars	4	4	0	0	141	70	71	8
Newcastle Thunder	4	3	0	1	90	91	-1	6
Barrow Raiders	4	2	0	2	170	94	76	4
Rochdale Hornets	4	2	0	2	117	69	48	4
York City Knights	3	2	0	1	98	58	40	4
Coventry Bears	4	2	0	2	104	106	-2	4
Gloucester All Golds	4	2	0	2	108	114	-6	4
Swinton Lions	3	1	1	1	86	82	4	3
Oxford	3	1	0	2	61	104	-43	2
Hemel Stags	4	1	0	3	98	149	-51	2
London Skolars	4	1	0	3	58	130	-72	2
North Wales	3	0	1	2	54	61	-7	1
South Wales	4	0	0	4	30	202	-172	0

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

IGNORE the scare-mongering and let the doom-and-gloom merchants wallow in their negativity. Like every club in League One we could do with bigger crowds and more support.

We would, I've no doubt, attract more people through the turnstiles if Whitebank had cover against the elements and some terracing to make for better and easier viewing.

But we're here, we're alive, we've got what we've got . . . and we've got a young squad that's top of the table, playing good rugby (29 tries in four league games thus far) and coached by a man who's clearly got a lot to offer in Scott Naylor, backed up by his more-than-able lieutenant in Lee 'Spanner' Spencer.

I make a point of saying we're alive and kicking because people have short memories. It's less than 20 years ago that the old club passed into voluntary liquidation and effectively died, yet I am constantly being asked how far have we slipped from the happy, all-singing, all-winning days up at Watersheddings.

So let's compare by all means. The Oldham Bears club had seen some great days, make no mistake about that, and we all have fond memories which can easily bring a tear or two to the eye when nostalgia takes over round the fire on a winter's night when there isn't much on the telly.

That's usually when the rose-coloured specs come into play. For the truth is that when the Watersheddings gates

were locked up for the last time the old ground was in an absolutely dreadful state of repair. The popular side stand had long gone; most of the main stand was condemned as unfit for purpose; and the general fabric of the place was old, weary and virtually beyond repair.

A year later, or thereabouts, the club and the team went the same way. We were there one day and, in a matter of weeks from shareholders receiving official notification, the club had gone on a 75 per cent majority vote of shareholders who backed the board's recommendation.

So no, it does get the hackles up a bit when people look down their noses at what Oldham RLFC (1997) Ltd is striving to achieve against all the odds and which, in many ways, is constantly punching above its weight at the top end of the third-tier division.

Thanks largely to one man's guts, determination, single-mindedness and refusal to hoist the club's white flag when at times it must have seemed like the whole world was against him and his beloved Roughyeds, we're still around and kicking.

So compare all you like . . . but when you recall life up there on the hill don't forget the bulldozers, players who were left jobless and owed money, the broken hearts of thousands of Oldhamers and the vote of the shareholders to back the proposal to call a halt.

Roger Halstead