

TODAY'S SQUADS



1 NIELD, Steven	Oldham Self Storage 0161 665 2723
2 CLAY, Adam	Fireplace Superstore 0161 488 4991
4 HOLMES Jack	Oasis Academy Oldham
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 Neil 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
23 FORD, Jonathan	Oasis Academy Oldham
25 ASHTON, Tom	Oasis Academy Oldham
21. LEPORI, Richard	ORSA
27 HEWITT, David	ORSA
HOPE, Will	ORSA
LIKU, Elliot	ORSA



SWINTON LIONS

1 Richie Hawkyard
2 Shaun Robinson
3 Stuart Littler
22 Chris Rothwell
28 Ian Mort
6 Ben White
7 Chris Atkin
8 Mike Morrison
9 Andy Ackers
24 Jordan James
14 Mike Butt
31 Rob Lever
30 Josh Barlow
11 Grant Beecham
23 Connor Dwyer
13 Tommy Gallagher
17 Andy Thornley
10 Ben Austin
18 Aaron Lloyd
29 Rhodri Lloyd
25 Harry Aaronson
27 Tom Thackeray
15 Mick Govin

Officials: Referee, Chris Campbell
Reserve, P Cromer; TJ, J Woodman,
TJ, T Owen

Match Commissioner, D Milburn
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OLDHAM V **SWINTON LIONS**

SUNDAY 6th
SEPTEMBER
KICK-OFF 3pm

ISSUE#14 / £2.00
OFFICIAL
MATCHDAY PROGRAMME

ROUGHYEDS



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KINGSTONE PRESS LEAGUE ONE

Match sponsored by
SWANS TRAVEL
who have carried our team to away
games for the past two seasons.
(see page 12)

Action shot of Liam Thompson by David Murgatroyd



the regenda
group



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

HELLO everyone and welcome to today's game against Swinton Lions at the Whitebank Stadium.

Our opponents today come to us in great form, having not lost a match for more than two months.

We have won the last 11, the Lions have won the last nine, so we are expecting a very tough and challenging game and nothing short of our best will do if we are to get the win.

We are slowly reaching the end of a very long and hard season so now is the time when we need to be at our best.

We have just had a week off and hopefully that will have refreshed the lads and put them in good shape for the remaining two league games.

It was a huge block of games we played before the break and, physically and mentally, it took a lot out of the players.

Our performances in the three games against

Hemel, Newcastle and Barrow were a little below the standard we had set during the middle part of the league campaign, but I'm sure the break will have done us good and we will be back to our best and keen to finish the season on top form.

Today's opponents will give us the biggest challenge we have faced in the last ten games and, in my opinion, they will be the other team to get promoted, hopefully along with us.

Swinton play the game the way it should be played. They are well coached with top quality players throughout their squad, so we expect them to test us all over the field today from start to finish.

Thank you for your continued support this season. I know the players would like to thank you because they really appreciate the effort you make to support them home and away.

Enjoy the game,

Scott





George 'Typhoon' Tyson in action against Barrow



Ever-present Josh battles on...and on...and on

by ROGER HALSTEAD

YOU'VE got to admire the resilience and consistency of Josh Crowley in going nearly three full seasons without missing a single game.

He's the only ever-present across 25 cup and league games so far this year, taking his appearance stats to 74 out of 74, going all the way back to his Roughyeds debut in a Northern Rail Cup tie at North Wales Crusaders on March 3, 2013.

"I spoke of his phenomenal work rate after the Barrow game," said Oldham boss Scott Naylor of the 23-year-old former Warrington and Widnes youngster, whose career was at the crossroads when Widnes released him and he quickly became Naylor's first signing for the Roughyeds.

He played in all 24 games in 2013, all 25 in 2014 and this year he's within a minimum of three games and a maximum of five of a 100 per cent appearance record in three consecutive seasons.

With the support and financial backing of Chris Hamilton, Naylor and his No 2 Lee Spencer have worked wonders this season in putting together and supervising a squad that has taken League One by storm.

Relative new boys like Adam Clay, Adam Neal, George Tyson, Gareth Owen and Jack Holmes have been to the fore, but so have no fewer than 11 of Naylor's 'originals' who have been with him since he first walked into Whitebank in the autumn of 2012.

Crowley arrived first, to be quickly followed by Liam

Thompson, Sammy Gee, Lewis Palfrey, Richard Lepori and two on-loan youngsters from Salford in Jon Ford and Adam Files.

Reserve-team youngsters who were busting a gut to be given a senior chance, but hitherto had been kept in the background, didn't have long to wait once Naylor and Spencer got their feet under the table.

Danny Langtree, Phil Joy, Kenny Hughes, Michael Ward and Steven Nield were quickly elevated to senior status and have never looked back.

The 'originals' still form the backbone of a side that has lost only one of the last 26 normal league games at Whitebank, stretching back to April, 2013.

To underpin the consistency and stability of Naylor's regime, seven of his men from year one have played in 60 or more of the 74 games under his command, namely Crowley (74), Langtree (69), Joy (69), Palfrey (68), Ward (67), Hughes (62) and Gee (60).

Naylor has worked hard to develop team spirit and comradeship in the Oldham dressing room and that united front will form a key element of the side's psyche against Swinton Lions today in arguably the biggest and most important league game in the last three years.

Swinton have won nine games in a row, Oldham 11 so something will have to give on the day Roughyeds can get within touching distance of finishing as league leaders with the advantages that provides in terms of going on and clinching promotion.

A CHAT WITH CHRIS

HELLO and welcome to Whitebank for the latest match in this remarkable season.

After the Barrow game it was almost a case of "school's out" with the coaches and players having a week off to recharge the batteries.

The gruelling schedule can take its toll, mentally and physically, so it was good for the lads to put rugby on the back-burner for a few days.

A few of them took the opportunity to get away, which will have pleased their wives and girlfriends too!

There will have been a big week of preparation going into today's match against a Swinton Lions team which is also on a great run of form.

We can take a big step towards the league title with a win today, but we are aware of just how big a task that will be. Our win at Sedgley Park earlier this season will make them additionally motivated and in terms of where both teams will finish in the league table the stakes couldn't be higher.

We know we have to play to our full potential to get a win but, as ever, I'm sure Scott will have the right game plan to deliver a victory if the lads stick to it.

Just to be in with a chance of winning the league at this stage of the season, in a division that has been as tough as it ever has been, is a great achievement in itself, but there is no way we want to let anything slip now and I'm sure, like us, you have been through all the permutations of what can happen.

It's still feasible that we could lose today but still win the league if we win at Oxford next Saturday, but that's not in our thinking.



We want to break the club record for the most consecutive wins and we are focusing on nothing else.

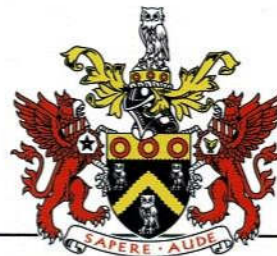
As we approach the climax of the season, we have worked extremely hard to get where we are when many people outside the club thought we wouldn't even make the top five, such was the ferocity of the competition when the Rugby Football League delivered what they promised with a new format and with five teams coming down into League One. We can endorse our credentials once again today and we should also have a decent turn out, weather permitting.

In the last match against Barrow we had to dig deep and work very hard to eventually get on top and get the win and, once again, the team demonstrated their collective desire and commitment in securing the league points.

As always you, the fans, played your part in that - even in the rain - and, as I have always said, your support does make a difference to the lads. Keep it up today as we strive to take another step towards a home fixture on September 20.

Enjoy the game!

Chris



APPEARANCES AND SCORERS

(Cup and league, 25 possible)

	App	DG	Gls	Tries	Pts
ASHTON, Tom	5	-	-	3	12
BROUGHTON, Jodie	1	-	-	2	8
CLAY, Adam	20	-	-	19	76
CONNOR, Jake	2	-	-	1	4
CROWLEY, Josh	25	-	-	11	44
DEMPSEY, Tom	7	1	2	1	9
FAIRBANK, Jacob	1	-	-	1	4
FILES, Adam	21	-	-	1	4
FORD, Jon	13	-	-	9	36
GEE, Sam	22	-	-	7	28
HEWITT, David	5	-	-	5	20
HOLMES, Jack	19	-	-	14	56
HUGHES, Kenny	21	-	-	1	4
JOHNSON, Josh	5	-	-	2	8
JOY, Phil	24	-	-	3	12
JOY, Richard	5	-	-	2	8
LANGTREE, Danny	22	-	-	10	40
LEARMONTH, Micky	2	-	-	2	8
LEPORI, Richard	5	-	-	1	4
LIKU, Elliott	2	-	-	1	4
MASON, Nathan	16	-	-	2	8
NEAL, Adam	23	-	-	2	8
NIELD, Steven	8	-	-	4	16
OWEN, Gareth	22	-	-	5	20
PALFREY, Lewis	24	1	120	11	285
ROBERTS, Oliver	8	-	-	2	8
ROPER, Steve	18	2	6	3	26
THOMPSON, Liam	24	-	-	8	32
TYSON, George	21	-	-	11	44
WARD, Jarrod	12	-	-	4	16
WARD, Michael	22	-	-	10	40

ORSA NEWS and THANKS

Oldham Roughyeds Supporters Association (ORSA) officials wish to express their appreciation for the support they have received at their match day fund-raising events this season. In doing so, they also wish it to be known that a considerable amount of the funds they have raised, have directly supported the playing squad with the provision of match day nutrition. They have done this in conjunction with the club's very knowledgeable backroom staff who have ensured that the whole squad have attained an exceptionally high level of fitness this season. By allocating funds in this way, fans have assisted in maintaining the needs of the squad at home and away matches in a very important way. Most recently, funds have also been allocated to provide training kit for the players recently added to the squad for the end of season push for promotion. So once again, many thanks for your support.

Fund raising continues during the close season whenever possible and occasional events take place then in conjunction with Higginshaw ARLFC, at their headquarters in Oldham. Proceeds from these events are shared equally between ORSA and the Higginshaw club, so benefiting both the amateur and professional game in the town.

The next of these events will be a Race Night in October and it promises to be another fun event. If you can support the event with sponsorship, raffle prizes or by being there on the night, your help will be much appreciated.

ORSA and HIGGINSHAW ARLFC PRESENT A...



RACE NIGHT



FRIDAY, 16TH OCTOBER

7.30pm FOR A FIRST RACE AT 8pm

AT HIGGINSHAW SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB,
St Stephens Street, Oldham, OL1 3QT

FREE ENTRY

RAFFLE

FOOD AVAILABLE

If you can help with Race Sponsorship (£30) or Horse Sponsorship (£3 per horse), please speak to Bernard Ward at Higginshaw ARLFC or Phil Ward/Sheila Somerville at ORLFC match days or tel. 01706 844810.

ORSA's second hospitality function at the Barrow game was another resounding success, prompting the organisers to look forward to more events of a similar nature next season.

There was another full house in the sponsors' lounge and the general feeling, expressed by many, was that it was every bit as enjoyable as the inaugural 'do' a few weeks earlier.

The splendid buffet was both delicious and plentiful; the result on the field was exactly what everyone wanted; and fans who

were there listened intently pre-match as first Scott and then Chris were interviewed by Roger Halstead.

After the game Chris and the Barrow representative each had a few words to say before Chris introduced man-of-the-match Michael Ward and champagne-moment winner David Hewitt, who posed for pictures with the guess-the-crowd and guess-the-score winners.

Bill Hannen and Vera Hough were also among the winners, picking up prizes in the ORSA raffle.

Special thanks to Bev, Linda and Kelly - oh, and not forgetting peerless Paul - for producing the lovely buffet.

Said ORSA chairman John McAndrew: "It was well attended, everyone enjoyed it and we raised a bit of money for the club so it was a winner all the way."



PRIZE GUY...
Bill Hannen
with his raffle
rewards

To become a member of ORSA, which is only £10 a year, telephone 01706 844810 or see John McAndrew, Phil Ward or Sheila Somerville at Whitebank on match days.

LUCKY LADY...
Vera Hough has
good reason to
smile too.



Luke Senior receives his prize from Danny Newall



Now it's Peter Glover's turn – Wembley beckoned

Luke, Peter figure in a winning double-up

LUKE Senior and Peter Glover, regulars at our weekly touch-rugby sessions, have won Oldham RLFC prizes.

Luke won a £20 Frankie and Benny's voucher for a fantastic effort in which he beat five defenders to score a great try – a 'magic moment' if ever there was one.

Peter won two tickets for the Ladbrokes Challenge Cup final at Wembley for his overall commitment to the Oldham touch-rugby project, travelling from Widnes as he does every week with our community coach Danny Newall.

Matty Clarke, another Widnes-based player, has been assisting Newall this year and sharing some of his responsibilities, helping with warm ups, coaching and refereeing.

Female participation has also been on the up and it was good to welcome the Roughyeds' sports therapist Beth Pankiv, who was awesome on her debut and scored two fabulous tries. Although she's an integral part of Scott's backroom staff, touch rugby was

completely new to her, but she quickly excelled at it and thoroughly enjoyed it.

Said Newall: "This year has been the best yet. We are getting good numbers every week, as a result of which we are planning to run the sessions to the end of September.

"It's one of the best activities there is for anyone who wants to play rugby without contact or anyone who wants to try something new to help them to get fit or lose weight."

Our touch-rugby players have also had an opportunity to acquire free tickets for today's top-of-the-table clash with Swinton Lions.

Added Danny: "The club is continuing to support us splendidly and on behalf of all our players I would like to thank the chairman, Chris Hamilton, for all his continued backing and encouragement."

Players can send their selfies and join in any discussions regarding touch on social media by tagging the club's official Facebook and Twitter page @Roughyeds, the @PlayTouchRL and using the hashtag #HiitThePitch



OLDHAM RLFC

PLAY TOUCH RUGBY LEAGUE

ARE YOU OVER 14?

**WANT TO KEEP FIT AND
HAVE FUN?**

**COME AND TRY TOUCH
RUGBY LEAGUE WITH
OLDHAM RLFC**



Every Wednesday 7.00pm to 9.00pm

Oasis Academy, Oldham

£20 PER TEAM/£3 PER INDIVIDUAL

To book go to www.playtouchrugbyteague.co.uk

For more information

call 0161 624 9630 ext. 70552

Email oldhamrlfc@btconnect.com

Bring on the girls to play at Oasis

IN association with Sport England's #ThisGirlCan initiative and the RFL's Play Touch Rugby League programme, Oldham RLFC offered a FREE touch-rugby taster session for females at Oasis Academy Oldham, Hollins Road and we are hoping to build on that by attracting more girls and women to our regular Wednesday night sessions over the rest of the summer and into the autumn.

Said Danny Newall, our community coach: "We are inviting women to give touch-rugby a try. It's great fun and a fantastic way of keeping fit. We are asking all our existing players to bring a female friend with them."

'This Girl Can' is a national campaign developed by Sport England and a wide range of partnership organisations. It's a celebration of active women

who are doing 'their thing' in sport, no matter how well they do it, how they look, or even how red their faces get.

The RFL, and we at Oldham, are looking to embrace the current marketing campaign by trying to encourage more women to get involved with our touch-rugby sessions. All you need to do is turn up on the night (each Wednesday at 7pm) and speak to Danny, who will welcome you to the fold and introduce you to the others. The charge per individual per night is £3.

Added Danny: "Already, new friendships have been forged among a great bunch of people, who all enjoy a bit of banter and a few laughs as well as their touch rugby."

"New players are always welcome. All they need to do is turn up. What can be easier than that."

FOCUS ON TODAY'S MATCH SPONSOR

SWANS TRAVEL are proud to have carried the Oldham RL team to many parts of the country over the last two seasons in our luxury, executive-class 'Star Liner' coach which provides VIP facilities to give the players maximum comfort and relaxation.

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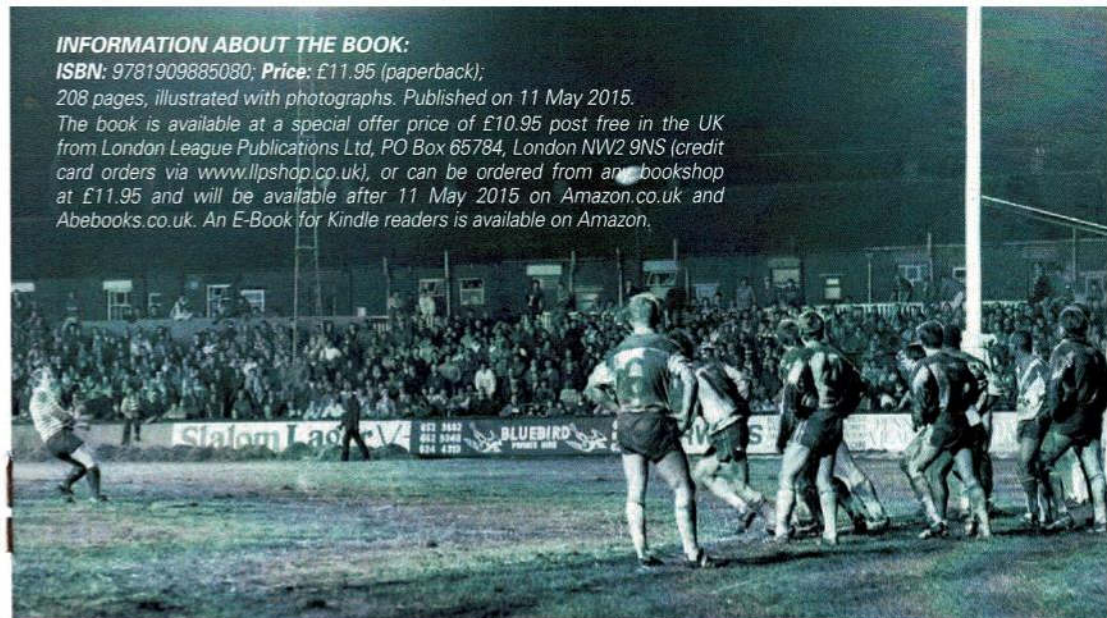


INFORMATION ABOUT THE BOOK:

ISBN: 9781909885080; Price: £11.95 (paperback);

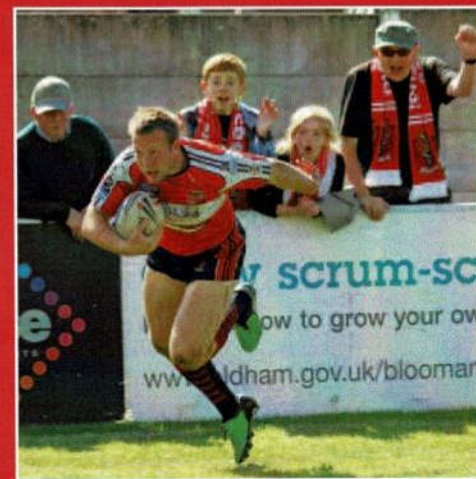
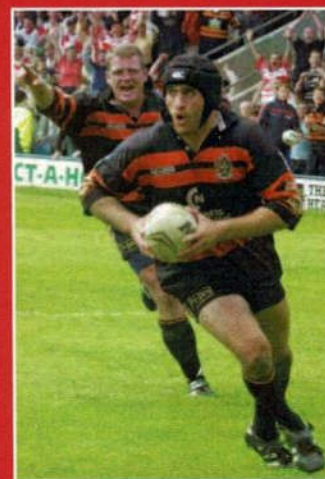
208 pages, illustrated with photographs. Published on 11 May 2015.

The book is available at a special offer price of £10.95 post free in the UK from London League Publications Ltd, PO Box 65784, London NW2 9NS (credit card orders via www.llpshop.co.uk), or can be ordered from any bookshop at £11.95 and will be available after 11 May 2015 on Amazon.co.uk and Abebooks.co.uk. An E-Book for Kindle readers is available on Amazon.



from Watersheddings to Whitebank

An Oldham Rugby League Memoir



Craig Halstead

Foreword by Chris Hamilton

Life with the Lions...

IAN RIGG gives his verdict on the men who roar in blue and white

SWINTON Lions are in a rich vein of form for the run-in to the play-offs, coach John Duffy and his staff having worked miracles this season, with the backing of the board, to sign good players and to get the best out of them.

However, one of the stand-outs, full-back and captain Richie Hawkyard, has been a Lion for several years and has used his experience to help the younger players to flourish. He is a Yorkshireman, from the same family stock as former Watersheddings favourite Colin Hawkyard, who had a testimonial for his sterling service to Oldham for more than ten years in the 1970s and 80s.

The Lions have a fast back division with pacy wingers in ex-Oldham man Shaun Robinson and Mike Butt, who was signed after attracting interest while playing for Manchester Met University. Harry Aaronson and the experienced Ian Mort can also play on the wings.

Irish international Stuart Littler and former Ashton Bears amateur Chris Rothwell are likely to fill the centre spots.

Former Saddleworth Rangers junior Ben White joined from Leeds Rhinos to make the stand-off job his own, while the very pacy Chris Atkin has recently been playing at scrum-half.

Moving on to the pack, the prop positions are usually shared between quality performers like Jordan James, Mike Morrison, Tommy Gallagher, Ben Austin and Tom Thackery, on loan from Batley Bulldogs.

Andy Ackers, a fans' favourite, has had two good seasons at hooker, where he's a constant threat from short range. When he needs a rest, he is normally replaced by former Barrow Raider Aaron Lloyd, a very creative player.

There's a mix of youth and experience in the back-row where two players on loan from Wigan Warriors, Rhodri Lloyd and Rob Lever, have had great seasons.

Also available for those spots are former Wigan academy player Grant Beecham; ex-Saint Connor Dwyer, son of the Saints' renowned hooker of yesteryear, Bernard Dwyer; Darren Hawkyard and Josh Barlow.

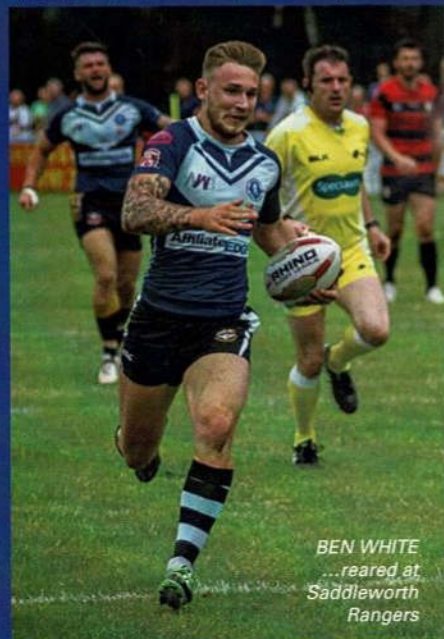
Others in the squad include Matt Gardner, currently playing for Brazil in Rugby Union nines; Mick Govin and Keith Holden, who can both cover the hooking and half back roles; Andy Ball, another

former Ashton Bears player who can play centre or back row; and half-back Jimmy Rowland, who is currently recovering from a shoulder operation.

Whoever plays today, we should be treated to some exciting rugby from two teams who, in recent weeks, have surpassed all expectations.



RITCHIE HAWKYARD...Captain Courageous



BEN WHITE
...reared at
Saddleworth
Rangers



JORDAN JAMES...
looks like he means
business



SHAUN ROBINSON...needs no
introduction to Oldham fans

Pictures by Pete Green, Swinton RLFC

What a game at Sedgley Park!

IF today's game is half as good as the one at Sedgley Park in June it will be a cracker.

It was one of those occasions when we started like a house on fire, going 20-0 up inside the first half hour but then having to defend desperately in the dying seconds after the Lions got it back to 26-32 and threw everything at us in a bid to retain their unbeaten league record on home soil.

We led 22-4 at half-time, only to be rocked by a Lions fightback which pulled them back to 20-22 inside the first seven minutes of the new half. We then went out to 32-20 before the home side kept fans on tenterhooks with Andy Thornley's converted try in the last minute.

Gareth Owen and Adam Files both had top games from dummy half, while Danny Langtree scored the first of our five tries as early as minute two. The others came from George Tyson (2), Josh Crowley and Adam Clay, while Lewis Palfrey added six goals, including two late penalties.

The teams lined up like this:
SWINTON: Atkins; Robinson, Rothwell, Littler, Butt; White, A Lloyd; James, Ackers, Austin, Thornley, Beecham, Lever. Subs: Morrison, D Hawkyard, Gallagher, Govin.

OLDHAM: Gee; Clay, Tyson, Ford, Holmes; Palfrey, Roper; Neal, Owen, P Joy, Crowley, Langtree, Thompson. Subs: Mason, Wzard, Files, Roberts.



DANNY LANGTREE...opening try



ADAM FILES...sound as ever



SAMMY GEE



ADAM NEAL

Gee, Neal each out for two matches

IT has been widely publicised, but in case anyone is still wondering why we don't have the services of Sammy Gee and Adam Neal today it is because each player is starting a two-match suspension for offences in separate matches for which they each entered an Early Guilty Plea.

It needs to be stated at the outset that Sammy, our vice-captain, and Adam, our most experienced prop, have had superb disciplinary records throughout their time in the sport which, in each case, covers a significant number of seasons.

It was the first time Sammy had been sent off when he was shown the red card at Newcastle for punching. Suffice to report that the Thunder player who was sent off with him was given a five-match ban.

Sammy was ultimately charged with a grade C offence, but he was eligible to enter an Early Guilty Plea which provided him with a two-match ban. The recommended sanction for grade C is two to three games.

Like Adam, he will miss today's game and next Saturday's final game of the regular season at Oxford, but both players will be available for whatever comes our way in terms of play-off rugby beyond next weekend.

Adam, who has played more than 40 Super League games for Salford, has never been sent off. In this case he was given a yellow

card for a high tackle in the Barrow game, but subsequently the Match Review Panel charged him with a grade C reckless tackle which again carried with it a recommended sanction of two to three games.

The Barrow player wasn't injured and quickly got to his feet. Any reaction from other players was minimal to say the least. Play resumed with a penalty to Barrow and with Neal walking off to spend ten minutes in the sin-bin.

Initially, the player and club chairman Chris Hamilton were planning to make representations to the disciplinary committee, but on further consideration it was decided the best course of action was to submit an Early Guilty Plea.

Said Chris: "Adam didn't want to run the risk of picking up a three-match ban and missing out on the promotion game, if we are in it.

"We weren't necessarily happy with his C grading, but he was always going to get one match at least, which would have ruled him out of the Swinton game anyway.

"We ultimately felt that going down the EGP route was the best course of action.

"At any other time of the season it might have been different, but we are where we are and it is what it is so we have to take it on the chin and get on with it."

For the record, players are only allowed one Early Guilty Plea in any 12-month period.

Oldham RL shirt takes pride of place at Sam's 100th birthday bash

AN Oldham RLFC shirt, signed by the players, was a special present for lifelong Roughyeds fan Sam Bradley when he celebrated his 100th birthday.

As an RAF ground crew engineer with Bomber Command in the Battle of Britain, he was thrilled to get a telegram from The Queen — and delighted also to receive the Oldham Rugby jersey as a present from his son Ian (65) and daughter-in-law Angela.

Said Ian: "It's difficult to know what to get a man for his 100th birthday, but we knew he would love the signed shirt because he's supported Oldham for most of his life.

"Even now, from a distance, he's aware of how well the team is doing and how they are going all out for promotion. He's desperate for them to achieve it this year, after all their recent near-misses, and he makes sure I keep him up to date.

"He watches Super League games on television, but his heart is with the Roughyeds, whom he first watched as a small boy with his father.

"Every Sunday, I have to tell him how they've gone on and he often wants to talk about all the great games and the great players he had the pleasure of watching over many years at Watersheddings.

"He was made up when we gave him the shirt, signed by Lewis Palfrey, the captain, and the rest of the present-day squad.

"He's anxious that we keep him informed of what happens on the promotion trail over the next two or three weeks."

Sam lived most of his life on Honeywell Lane, Oldham but, having survived his first wife Louie and then his second wife Amy, he moved south 11 years ago to live in sheltered accommodation close to his family in Wellesbourne between Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon.

For most of his working life he was an engineer for Stone-Wallwork at their works on Bleasby Street,

close to Hill Stores.

As an RAF engineer he was stationed during the early part of the war at North Weald in Essex, one of Britain's most strategic World War 2 airfields and on the front line during the Battle of Britain.

He also served at Kirmington (now Humberside airport) with 150 Sqn as well as in North Africa, the Middle East, Malta, Sicily and many other regions in that particular theatre of war.

Said Ian: "Like so many of his generation, he has had an incredible life. During his war service, for instance, he survived three air crashes and also escaped unharmed from a train that was blown up in the Sinai Desert.

"Back in Oldham after the war, he picked up where he had left off in terms of watching Oldham Rugby and I started to go to Watersheddings with him when I was six or seven.

"I left Oldham when I was a young man so I never had the connection with Roughyeds that my Dad had, but rugby league is a fantastic game.

"I have always said, 'Once a rugby league fan, always a rugby league fan and I think my Dad is a shining example of that.

"He loves the TV games, loves to talk about the stars of the past and loves to keep an eye on the fortunes of today's Oldham team."

Said club chairman Chris Hamilton: "It isn't every day we are asked to get a shirt signed for a fan's 100th birthday.

"It goes without saying that congratulations and best wishes go to Sam from everybody at the club, including myself, coach Scott Naylor and his staff, all the players and all Sam's fellow Oldham fans.

"His is a remarkable life story, especially concerning his war years with the RAF. What an incredible debt we owe to people like Sam and his generation."



A SMILING Sam on his big day, surrounded by his family and proudly wearing his Oldham RL jersey, signed by the players.

Said his son Ian: "He was thrilled to receive the jersey. 'How on earth did you get it?', he asked."

Back row (left to right): Elizabeth Welch (granddaughter), Ian Bradley (son), Catherine McCormick (granddaughter).

Front: Maisie Welch (great-granddaughter), birthday-boy Sam, Isabella McCormick (great-granddaughter).



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	W 33 - 30
KPL1	Saturday 9th	BARROW	A	L 18 - 30
KPL1	Sunday 17th	NEWCASTLE	H	W 45 - 20
KPL1	Sunday 31st	KEIGHLEY	A	L 24 - 32

2015 June

KPL1	Sunday 7th	NORTH WALES	H	L 28 - 38
KPL1	Sunday 14th	OXFORD	H	W 64 - 0
KPL1	Sunday 21st	SWINTON	A	W 32 - 26
KPL1	Saturday 27th	GLOUCESTER	A	W 42 - 30

2015 July

KPL1	Sunday 5th	YORK	H	W 34 - 12
KPL1	Sunday 12th	ROCHDALE	H	W 38 - 18
KPL1	Sunday 19th	LONDON	A	W 32 - 6
KPL1	Sunday 26th	NORTH WALES	A	W 23 - 6

2015 August

KPL1	Sunday 2nd	KEIGHLEY	H	W 38 - 8
KPL1	Sunday 9th	HEMEL	A	W 70 - 6
KPL1	Sunday 16th	NEWCASTLE	A	W 28 - 16
KPL1	Sunday 23rd	BARROW	H	W 28 - 12

2015 September

KPL1	Sunday 6th	SWINTON	H	3:00pm
KPL1	Saturday 12th	OXFORD	A	3:00pm

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It's all building up to a rousing finale...

SO who's going to finish in the top five, and in what order? The jostle for supremacy at the top of Kingstone Press League One is certain to produce a thrilling end-of-season finale for fans of all the club involved, from our situation at the top to the challenge facing Barrow, Rochdale and North Wales Crusaders to squeeze into the play-off qualifiers.

With two games to play, it looks like those three are chasing the fifth and final spot, with a lot riding on yesterday's Barrow v Rochdale clash and today's North Wales v York game.

At Oldham we mustn't count our chickens, but with a two-point lead and a significantly superior for-and-against difference to Keighley's, most impartial observers would make us favourites to finish top.

The positive angle is that the fight for pole position, and the huge advantages it offers in terms of winning promotion, is in our own hands. Two wins,

or even a win and a draw, and nobody can catch us.

The flip side is that nothing can be taken for granted and, going into today's game, Keighley, Swinton and York could all climb above us if we were to come away pointless from our last two games against the Lions and then at Oxford next Saturday.

.....
Remaining games for the top seven clubs are as follows:

OLDHAM: Swinton (h), Oxford (a).

KEIGHLEY: Gloucester (a), Hemel Stags (h).

SWINTON: Oldham (a), South Wales (h).

YORK: North Wales (a), Barrow (h).

NORTH WALES: York (h), Newcastle (a).

ROCHDALE: Barrow (a), London Skolars (h).

BARROW: Rochdale (h), York (a).

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HOW WE STAND Kingstone Press League One

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Diff	Pts
OLDHAM	20	17	0	3	736	334	402	34
Keighley Cougars	20	16	0	4	643	360	283	32
Swinton Lions	20	15	1	4	789	368	421	31
York City Knights	20	15	0	5	770	336	434	30
North Wales Crusaders	20	13	1	6	599	339	260	27
Rochdale Hornets	20	13	0	7	677	391	286	26
Barrow Raiders	20	12	0	8	597	379	218	24
Newcastle Thunder	20	10	0	10	483	486	-3	20
Gloucester All Golds	20	7	0	13	490	607	-117	14
Oxford	20	6	0	14	403	856	-453	12
Coventry Bears	20	5	0	15	390	699	-309	10
Hemel Stags	20	5	0	15	390	797	-407	10
London Skolars	20	4	0	16	338	627	-289	8
South Wales Scorpions	20	1	0	19	252	978	-726	2

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

SO who was your Wembley hero?

Tom Briscoe, whose record-breaking five-try haul won him the Lance Todd Trophy as man of the match?

Kevin Sinfield, one of our own from up the road, who now holds the record for most captaincies in a Challenge Cup final?

Jamie Peacock perhaps?

Mine didn't make a tackle, throw a pass or defuse a bomb. But with a remarkable solo performance she stole the hearts of 80,000 people inside Wembley and brought a tear to the eyes of millions more watching on television around the country and across the world.

Lizzie Jones is a remarkable young lady. She sang Abide With Me beautifully (to this untrained ear at least as well as the many big-name soloists who had preceded her down the years), but who would have cared had there been a few wobbles along the way?

She sang superbly, looked stunning and had the whole stadium in tears, or close to it, especially when the big screen flashed up an image of Lizzie with her

late husband Danny and their baby twins Bobby and Phoebe.

Later she tweeted: "One of the best days of my life! Felt like I walked out to a huge cuddle. The support and love was overwhelming. Did it for my love."

Danny would have been so proud of her and of a stunning performance that made us all proud; proud of Lizzie and her family, but proud also to be involved, in no matter how small a way, with a sport that overflows with love, support and compassion whenever and wherever tragedy strikes within its parameters.

Wasn't the whole moving experience so typical of Rugby League's ability to open its arms in times of trouble or sadness and to demonstrate unequivocally that it is a sport with high values and standards and, most of all, with heaps of heart and compassion. A family sport if ever there was one. And doesn't it feel good to be part of that family.

Out of the most tragic of personal circumstances, Lizzie Jones has proved an inspiration to us all.

Roger Halstead