



1. Chris Atkin
2. Shaun Robinson
3. Stuart Littler
4. Macaulay Hallett
6. Ben White
7. Matty Beharrell
8. Mike Morrison
9. Anthony Nicholson
10. Jordan Hand
11. Connor Dwyer
12. Andy Thornley
13. Rob Lever
15. Corbyn Kilday
16. Ben Austin
17. Steve Nash
18. Liam Marshall
19. Josh Barlow
20. Mike Butt
21. Andy Bracek
22. Gabriel Fell
23. Rhodri Lloyd
24. Matt Bradley
25. Harry Aaronson
26. Luke Waterworth
27. Vila Halafihi
28. Zach Johnson
29. Dan Fleming
- NN. Jake Emmitt



1. Richard Lepori
2. Adam Clay
4. Jack Holmes
5. Jamel Chisholm
6. Lewis Palfrey
8. Phil Joy
9. Sam Gee
10. Jack Spencer
12. Danny Langtree
13. Liam Thompson
14. Joe Burke
16. Gary Middlehurst
19. Adam Files
20. Gareth Owen
21. Kenny Hughes
22. Danny Grimshaw
23. Craig Briscoe
24. Will Hope
26. Michael Ward
- NN. Scott Turner

2016 Season

£2.50

SWINTON LIONS

Founded 1866

This match day programme has been designed & produced by The Swinton Supporters' Trust



Sunday 14th August 2016



3PM



Heywood Road

Swinton Lions RLFC

105-107 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester, M27 4AA
www.swintonlionsrlfc.com – swintonlions@hotmail.co.uk -
Twitter - @swintonlion - Facebook - Swinton Lions Media

CLUB OFFICIALS

Chairman: John Roddy, **Honorary President:** David Jones, **Directors:** Alan Marshall (Financial Director), Peter Aaronson, Martin Vickers (Commercial Director) **CEO:** Steve Wild

Head Coach: John Duffy, **Team Manager:** Mark Richardson **Assistant Coaches:** Wes Rogers, Stuart Littler, Jay Duffy **Essential Backroom Staff:** Greg Stebbings (Head of Sport Science), Martin Fisher (Assistant Trainer), Lee Marshall (Performance Analysis), Colin Robinson (masseur)

Club Ambassador - Les Holliday **Kitman:** Alan Gibbons, **Assistant Kitman:** Chris Gettins
Sports Therapist: Jenny Richmond **Physio:** Ryan Douglas **Assistant Physio:** Norman Brown,
Commercial & Events Manager: Abbi Roddy - abbi.rodgy@swintonlionsrlfc.com

Media: Ian Rigg - lionsman992000@yahoo.co.uk, **Club Photographer** - Pete Green **Time-keeper:** Alan Dixon **Community** -: foundation@swintonlionsrlfc.com, **Lottery Liaison** - Fred Dyson, **Matchday Operations:** Colin Gettins **Security & Safety** - Rob McGivern

The Board wishes to express its grateful thanks to all our matchday volunteers.

2016 Matchday Programme Produced by: Jeff Tyldesley, Stephen Johnson, Pete Green, Ian Rigg and Toni Tyldesley, on behalf of Swinton Lions Supporters' Trust.

CLUB HONOURS & RECORDS

Rugby League Champions: 1926/27, 1927/28, 1930/31, 1934/35, 1962/63, 1963/64 **Runners Up:** 1924/25, 1932/33, 1939/40 **Challenge Cup Winners:** 1899/1900, 1925/26, 1927/28 **Runners Up:** 1926/27, 1931/32
Lancashire Cup Winners: 1925/26, 1927/28, 1939/40, 1969/70 **Runners Up:** 1910/11, 1923/24, 1931/32, 1960/61, 1961/62, 1962/63, 1964/65, 1972/73 **Lancashire League Winners:** 1924/25, 1927/28, 1928/29, 1930/31, 1939/40, 1960/61 **Runners Up:** 1892/93, 1893/94, (Under RFU), 1897/98, 1900/01, 1922/23, 1926/27, 1934/35, 1938/39, 1965/66 **Second Division Championship Winners:** 1984/85 **Runners Up:** 1986/87, 1996 **Second Division Premiership Winners:** 1986/87 **Runners Up:** 1988/89 **BBC Floodlit Trophy Runners Up:** 1966/67 **West. Div. Champ. Runners Up:** 1963/64 **Championship One Champions:** 2011 **League 1 Play Off Winners:** 2015

Win: 94-0 v Gateshead Thunder Aug 2010 **Loss:** 0-112 v Warrington Wolves May 2011

Appearances: Ken Gowers 602 (Including 8 as Sub) 1954-1973

Points: Career - Ken Gowers 2,105 - 1954-73. **Season:** - Ian Mort 338 - 2011. **Match:** - Ian Mort 48 Vs Oxford, Jul 2015

Tries: **Career** - Jim Valentine 300, 1884-1901. **Season** - Jim Valentine 48 1888/89, John Stopford 42 - 63-64. **Match** - Mark Riley 6 Vs Prescot, Aug 1996. **Goals:** **Career** - Ken Gowers 970. **Season** - Albert Blan 128. **Match** - Ian Mort 14 Vs Oxford, Jul 2015

Ground Record Attendance: 44,621 Warrington v Wigan 07/04/1951

Club Record Attendance: 26,891 Swinton v Wigan 12/02/1964

World Record Kick: 77.75 yards by Martin Hodgson at Rochdale Hornets 13/4/1940

Welcome To The Kingstone Press Championship

With Steve Wild

Welcome to Heywood Road to Chris Hamilton and his staff and players, plus all you loyal Oldham and Swinton supporters. Oldham are a team that we've already met three times in the Championship during the current campaign. We won here 28-18 early on in the season, then of course we saw that remarkable comeback by the Lions at Blackpool where we snatched a 25-24 victory at the death. But Oldham then somewhat turned the tables by pipping us by two points at Bower Fold a few weeks ago, when on that occasion it was the Lions that had got off to a flying start.

I'm writing these notes ahead of last week's opening Super 8s fixtures, but regardless of the result of our game at Dewsbury and Oldham's important clash with Workington, today remains a critical one for both clubs. It would be nice for both of our promoted clubs to consolidate in the Championship and retain the rivalry of our local derby, and hopefully regardless of today's score that will prove to be the case.

Recently our Chairman, John Roddy, issued an impassioned plea for all Swinton fans to get right behind the players for the final run in. Everyone at the club, including the coaching staff and players, recognise that we've had a couple of disappointing results recently, particularly here at Heywood Road. But please remember that we have a largely young team and they need your 100% backing. Rugby League like most sports can be a confidence matter and our young players will thrive on your support - so please stay behind the team and help the Lions reach our goal. It's been a relentlessly tough campaign and we've punched above our weight, so let's keep the faith for our final six games and beyond.

Our newly formed Swinton Lions Community Sports Foundation is already starting to make some good headway with our community objectives. Coach John Duffy, as well as Stuart Littler and Greg Stebbings, are in the process of setting up our own Rugby League Academy. This will enable youngsters to combine an education with professional Rugby League guidance under the umbrella of Swinton Lions, and will lead to the formation in time of our own Academy team and hence provide a player pathway to the Swinton Lions first team.

We are also involved with Edstart, who provide fantastic support to local Primary School children in terms of lifestyle and sporting activities. In addition we are in the process of forming a relationship with the Wood Street Mission, a remarkable local charity who support under privileged children across Salford and Manchester. Hopefully you will have also taken the trouble to pop down to our community event a few weeks ago, which took place at Agecroft on the site of our proposed new stadium. With regard to all of these issues we will continue to keep our supporters updated.

Finally, a couple of dates for your diary. Friday 23 September (at Swinton Park Golf Club) is when we will be holding our special 150th Anniversary Special Dinner and End of Season Presentation. There will be a three-course dinner and live entertainment, plus there are plans to showcase some of our remarkable heritage. There will also be the traditional presentations to the Lions that have excelled this season. Tickets to this one-off and unique event are priced £36, and can be obtained through Abbi at abbi.rodgy@swintonlionsrlfc.com

Also, on the exact date of our 150th birthday, Thursday 20 October 2016, there will be a special service at St Peter's Church of celebration, remembrance and commemoration. The church played a significant part in our formation back in 1866, and this seems the most appropriate place in Swinton to mark the actual day. It will not be an overtly religious occasion and everyone is welcome regardless of religious or non-religious beliefs.

Last but not least look out for the special Heritage Kit that will be worn by the Lions in our game at Halifax on 11 September, plus there will be a superb 150th Anniversary book which is due to be available sometime in the autumn.

Duffy In The Den

With John Duffy

Welcome to Scott Naylor and his Oldham team to today's important Championship match. Games between the two sides have been close this season and this one will probably be no exception. We have to make sure we're fully concentrated from the off because Oldham are a well-coached and motivated team.

Welcome also to our new signing Jake Emmitt who makes his first Heywood Road appearance today. Despite only just stepping off a plane he showed last week what's he capable of and he's bound to feel better for getting that game under his belt.

The support last week at Dewsbury was fantastic. It's going to be a tough run in to the season and it's so important we remain united as a club if we're to achieve our aim of Championship consolidation.

Enjoy the match.

Duffs



Alan Mills

Swinton Lions were saddened recently to learn of the passing of lifelong supporter Alan Mills, aged 91.

Alan was a Lions supporter for over eighty years. All at the club pass on their condolences to the Alan's family and friends at this sad time.

Our Visitors - Oldham

With thanks to www.roughyeds.co.uk

SCOTT Naylor has warned his Oldham players that the 30-16 win against Workington was merely the start of the final push to secure Championship survival. With six games to play, Roughyeds are five points better off than Workington and Whitehaven, the bottom two, and one point up on Swinton Lions, who they play next Sunday at Heywood Road, home of Sale RU Club. Referring to Oldham's latest victory, Naylor said: "The result was everything. In terms of a survival 'four pointer' it was as big as it gets.

The win puts us in a strong position, but that's all it does. "It doesn't guarantee us anything. There's still six games to play and a lot of points to be won. We've a lot of hard work ahead." Back-row forward Craig Briscoe hobbled off with a knee injury, which was due to be investigated over the past week. He saw only a couple of minutes of the action, but Naylor said the other players whom he recalled (Lewis Palfrey, Joe Burke and Sammy Gee) plus debut-boy Scott Turner contributed famously to a fully-deserved win.

Turner, playing full-back, scored two tries for Roughyeds, while others came from Jamel Chisholm, Jack Blagbrough and Danny Langtree. Lewis Palfrey kicked five goals from five attempts. Roughyeds led 24-6 at half-time and then held off a spirited Town fightback which produced two late tries.

Oldham: Turner; Clay, Grimshaw, Chisholm; Palfrey, Hewitt; Burke, Owen, Dickinson, Langtree, Middlehurst, Thompson. Subs: Gee, Briscoe, Hughes, Blagbrough
A GREAT day for the club . . . that was how Scott Naylor summed up his joy and satisfaction when asked to paraphrase his feelings in no more than six words. A comprehensive 30-16 win against Cumbrian opponents who had twice previously this season turned Roughyeds over opened up a five-point gap at the lower end of the Championship table between Naylor's men and the bottom two, Workington and Whitehaven.

Said Naylor: "The biggest difference between this performance and how we played against Workington a fortnight ago (Town won 32-30 at Bower Fold) was how our forwards got stuck in and played with desire and a lot of physicality. Our middle unit was superb. "We made a few changes and the lads who came in were terrific. "I don't normally talk about individuals, but this time I'm going to be because Scott Turner, in his first game for us, was top class at full-back.

After a performance like that on debut he deserves some plaudits. "He scored two tries, had another disallowed, never put a foot wrong in defense and got us out of trouble a few times with his speed and footwork. "The second half wasn't what I was hoping for, but we got across the line because we worked hard to preserve our lead when we were putting ourselves under pressure. It would have been better if we hadn't put ourselves in that position in the first place, but at least we coped with it admirably."

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Chris Atkin, who scored his 500th point for the Lions in the final conversion of the match at Dewsbury.



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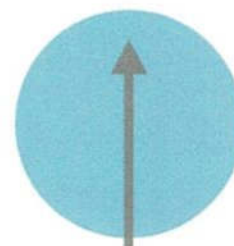
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Championship Action

With Ian Rigg at Tetley's Stadium

Dewsbury took the spoils in this game of two halves as they held on to thwart a late Lions fightback, in which full back Chris Atkin passed the five hundred points mark for the club with his final kick.

Veteran Paul Sykes gave his side the lead in the fifth minute following a short pass from Andy Kain and Sykes added the conversion to his own try. The Lions then had a couple of good chances when Macauley Hallett and Mike Butt both went close but the Rams defence although stretched, managed to hold out and they scored a second try against the run of play midway through the half when Sykes scored again on the right but missed the conversion to this one.

The Lions then had another couple of chances but the last pass went to ground on both occasions and the home side added two more tries in a four minute period before the break with Joel Farrell and Lucas Walshaw both going over from short range and Sykes converted both but the Rams were reduced to twelve men on the stroke of half time when Jason Crookes was sent to the sin bin for a high tackle on Hallett but they held a commanding lead at the break.

Swinton started the second half well with the forwards matching the Rams large pack in the middle and Jake Emmitt had a solid debut for his new team but it was a Rams error that got the Lions on the scoreboard six minutes into the second half when Kain tried to pass to his winger on the right and Hallett intercepted and raced half the length of the field to score on the left and Atkin added the conversion points. Walshaw was placed on report for the Rams on fifty-one minutes for an alleged shoulder charge on Connor Dwyer who had to leave the field with a head injury which could put him out for a few weeks.

The Rams scored another try against the run of play when Josh Guzdek scored by the posts on the hour and Sykes converted and then added a penalty for a high tackle a few minutes later to stretch the lead and then Dom Speakman found his way over for a try by the posts and again Sykes added the conversion before the Lions continued their fightback as firstly with ten minutes left Josh Barlow crashed over by the posts from short range and Atkin converted again.

Four minutes later, Butt scored a good try when Atkin kicked the ball for the left corner and Rams' winger Dale Morton thought it was going to roll dead but the Lions winger had other thoughts and chased it down to touch it down as it was about to run over the dead ball line and Atkin again added the conversion points.

The final try came with a minute left when the Rams were on the attack in the Swinton twenty and Rhodri Lloyd intercepted a pass and raced eighty metres to score on the left and Atkin added the conversion just before the final hooter sounded to claim his club milestone.

Dewsbury 36 Swinton 24



Action from last weekend's defeat
at Dewsbury.

Championship Shield

		P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1	Bradford	24	14	2	8	763	464	30
2	Halifax	24	13	1	10	643	532	27
3	Sheffield	24	9	0	15	631	645	18
4	Dewsbury	24	9	0	15	522	627	18
5	Oldham	24	8	0	16	431	694	16
6	Swinton	24	7	1	16	473	849	15
7	Workington	24	5	1	18	471	786	11
8	Whitehaven	24	5	1	18	385	766	11



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John Duffy's Blue And White Army

By Stephen Johnson

**Sheffield Hallam University Sports Park
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The facility is located in Tinsley, to the North East of the City around halfway between Sheffield and Rotherham

The ground offers covered seating behind both goals, with open (ground level) standing available along one touchline.

Tickets are available on the day from the Ticket Office Portakabin located at the entrance to the sports park.

Prices at SHU Sports Park will be as followed:

- **Adults Seating: £18 Early Bird / £20 Match Day**
- **Adults Standing: £16 Early Bird / £18 Match Day**
- **Concession Seating: £14 Early Bird / £16 Match Day**
- **Concession Standing: £12 Early Bird / £14 Match Day**
- **Child: £5 – Early Bird and Match Day for both seating & standing**

*The Early Bird deadline is the day before each match.

Please note: Concession is classed as Over 60's, Young Adults 17-20, students (with valid I.D) and disabled supporters.

Tickets can be bought in advance online up to 24 hours before a match at

www.sheffieldeaglessshop.co.uk or by calling the Eagles during office hours on 0114 261 0326.

Car – the Sports Park is located on Bawtry Road (A631 towards Bawtry) approximately one mile from M1 Junction 34 at the south end of the Tinsley viaduct. There is plenty of car parking alongside the main building, in addition to ample room to park along the main road.

Bus – take the 69 bus from Sheffield city centre (bus station or Arundel Gate).

Rail - Frequent trains run from Manchester to Sheffield, where you can change trains for Meadowhall Shopping Centre, located around a mile or so from the venue.

Tram – From the city centre it is also possible to travel to the shopping centre by tram, alighting at "Meadowhall South Tinsley"

With thanks to the Eagles & University websites, we advise you confirm any details before travelling.

2016 Swinton Lions Fixtures

Sun 24th Jan Rochdale Hornets (H) - Friendly - L 24-30

Sun 7th Feb Dewsbury (H) - L 24-26

Sun 14th Feb London Broncos (A) - L 18-38

Sat 20th Feb Bradford (H) - L 16-48

Fri 26th Feb Sheffield Eagles (A) - L 26-48

Sat 5th Mar Whitehaven (A) - L 12-18

Sun 13th Mar Featherstone Rovers (H) - L 10-30

Sat 19th Mar Sheffield Eagles (A) - L 28-32

Thu 24th Mar Leigh 8PM (A) - L 12-42

Mon 28th Mar Oldham (H) - W 28-18

Sun 3rd Apr Workington Town (H) - W 26-22

Sun 10th Apr Halifax (A) - W 38-35

Sun 17th Apr Challenge Cup R5

Sun 24th Apr Batley (A) - W 32-24

Sun 1st May Whitehaven (H) - W 32-26

Sun 8th May Challenge Cup R6

Sun 15th May Bradford (A) - L 8-54

Sun 22nd May Leigh (H) - L 6-48

Sun 29th May Oldham (Summer Bash) - W 25-24

Sun 5th Jun Away Featherstone Rovers (A) - L 12-58

Sun 12th Jun Home London Broncos (H) - L 16-42

Sun 19th Jun Home Sheffield Eagles (H) - W 22-18

Sun 26th Jun Away Workington Town (A) - D 10-10

Sun 3rd Jul Home Halifax (H) - L 12-62

Sun 10th Jul Away Oldham (A) - L 24-26

Sun 17th Jul Away Dewsbury (A) - L 16-34

Sun 24th Jul Home Batley (H) - L 24-62

Sun 31st Jul Challenge Cup SF

Sun 7th Aug Away Dewsbury (A) - L 24-36

Sun 14th Aug Home Oldham (H) -

Sun 21st Aug Away Sheffield Eagles (A) -

Mon 29th Aug Home Workington Town (H) -

Sun 4th Sep Away Bradford (A) -

Sun 11th Sep Home Halifax (H)

Sun 18th Sep Away Whitehaven (A) -

Sun 25th Sep Championship Shield SF

Sun 2nd Oct Championship Shield Final

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- Throughout the season, we will be canvassing our loyal Swinton supporters and have membership forms available for potential new members.



The poster features the Swinton Lions RLFC crest at the top, which includes a lion's head and the year 1866. Below the crest, the text reads "SWINTON LIONS RLFC" in large, bold letters, followed by the club's address: "SWINTON LIONS RLFC, 105/107 Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 4AA". The main headline is "GOLDLINE Lottery" in large, bold letters, with "SUPPORT THE CLUBS AMBITIONS" and "Plus your chance to win big prizes." below it. The prize details are listed as "Win £500 Every Weekday" and "Plus win up to £5,000 in the FREE GOLDLINE EXTRA Draw". A large red banner at the bottom says "JOIN TODAY" followed by "Richard Ralphson - 07538 200557". At the very bottom, in small print, it says "Weekly Goldline winners published on www.swintonlionsrlfc.com. In association with Bolton Wanderers Goldline. Bolton Wanderers will donate 10% of your £1 subscription direct to Swinton Lions RLFC. Gambling Commission Licence No. 01 005176. www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk. www.gamcare.co.uk offer care and support to anyone affected by gambling addiction. Members must be 16 years or older. Gambling under the age of 16 is illegal."

Please help by signing up and supporting the club's ambitions.

The Gospel According To Spelly

With John Spellman

Hello again, and welcome to Episode Four of Roughyeds v Lions 2016, in our respective bids to retain Championship status for next term!

Each of the previous three clashes have gone "down to the wire" and much as I'd like us both to survive, I'm sure a certain Mr Naylor won't object if I say I hope it's us that's breathing the easier come 4.45 this afternoon! **COME ON YOU LIONS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

OK, so what can I bore you with today? Well, in (less than) a fortnight, along with about 70,000 others, I'll be heading for that little corner of Middlesex, that'll be forever Rugby League. Yes (yet again) I'm off to Wembley, for the biggest club game that our sport has to offer, the Challenge Cup Final!

Some people (Super League fans particularly) will argue the Grand Final at Old Trafford is now bigger, and whilst I accept that it's huge (and I'll be there as well) Wembley for me, has that atmosphere, that magic, that charisma, that something different, that je ne sais quoi, to set it apart from any other fixture in the calendar of the Greatest Sport on the Planet!

Getting up at daft o'clock on the Saturday morning, wearing my Swinton shirt, hideous shorts, and infamous multi-badged hat, to catch a Richard Branson Special down to Euston, then the Tube to the stadium, where after a short walk, sit down and enjoy a distinctly unhealthy breakfast, then.....

A stroll down Wembley Way, which will be awash with colour, as fans from clubs up and down this sceptred isle of ours mingle together, and I've no doubt at all that along that famous boulevard, I'll bump into (more than) a few people I know, then.....

Into the cauldron of the stadium itself, watch the kids' game, sing "Abide with Me" with tears streaming down my cheeks, just as the players are about to emerge from the tunnel, and similarly belt out the national anthem (which is summat that's not sung at Old Trafford, and I cannot for the life of me understand why) before sitting down to watch the teams battle it out for the top prize that RL can offer!

Why do I love it so much? Well, unlike the OT version, where even before a ball is kicked, there's only a dozen sides who can get there, the Challenge Cup every year offers clubs like the two who'll be out there in front of us this afternoon, the (albeit distant) hope of being there on that afternoon of afternoons at the end of August! We've not won that glittering piece of silverware since 1928 (and before you ask, no, I wasn't at the match) but that doesn't stop me dreaming!

Wembley 2017 - Swinton Lions v Oldham Roughyeds - Remember where you read it first! Bring it on kids, bring it on!

COME ON YOU LIONS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Spelly

Championship Action

With Ian Rigg at Heywood Road

Batley Bulldogs cemented their place in the Middle Eights with an impressive victory over the Lions who themselves were trying to finish as high as they could to gain a reasonable draw in the Championship Eights.

Bulldogs coach John Kear was a happy man "We played some really good stuff today against a good attacking side and we were very near perfect and that is very pleasing to see".

Lions' coach John Duffy was pleased with the Lions start but a couple of penalties put Batley on the attack and the capitalised on the errors: "You can't give sides like Batley good positions on the field because they will make you pay and they played some impressive stuff."

The Lions took the lead in the fifth minute when a good passing movement and a Chris Atkin break sent Shaun Robinson in at the right corner and Atkin added the touchline conversion. Bulldogs levelled on ten minutes when Alistair Leek went over by the post after Keegan Hirst had gone close and Pat Walker converted and it got even better for the visitors who had brought a large following with them when firstly good passing saw Chris Ulugia go over on the left and two minutes afterwards Wayne Reittie latched onto a Dom Brambani kick to score and Walker converted one of them.

The Lions were placed on a team warning on seventeen minutes because of all the penalties they were giving away and a minute later Andy Thornley was sin binned for holding down and Walker kicked a simple penalty goal.

Reittie forced a goal line drop out on twenty minutes and from this pressure Leek went over for his second try and Walker converted. The home side then had a couple of chances but the final pass went to ground and the Bulldogs went further ahead when Shaun Squires scored from another Brambani kick through but Walker missed the conversion.

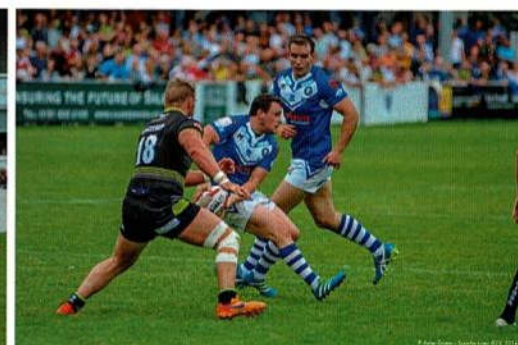
The Lions did hit back with a second try four minutes from the break when Josh Barlow crashed over by the posts and Atkin converted but the Bulldogs were well ahead at the break.

It got better at the start of the second half when Ulugia scored his second after a Lions' handing error and again the conversion was true and four minutes later they were in again when another Lions' error saw Brad Day score by the posts and Walker again made no mistake. Dave Scott made an error fielding the ball in goal on fifty minutes and the goal line drop out was awarded but from this the ball went to ground again and Scott it was who swept it up and put his team on the attack which ended with former Lion James Brown scoring in the right corner but the conversion was missed.

The Lions came back again on sixty-four minutes when Connor Dwyer started a move which ended with Ben White breaking through to feed Thornley who went in for the try and Atkin converted again. Barlow was sent to the sin bin for an alleged punch on Brambani and a couple of minutes later Shaun Ainscough finished off a move on the left and the conversion was again good but Swinton came back again when Atkin broke to feed Matty Beharrell who scored by the posts and Atkin again converted.

The Bulldogs finished the game with two more tries in the final five minutes when Ainscough and Brambani both scored and Walker added another conversion as the hooter sounded.

Swinton 24 Batley 62



Action from Swinton's loss at home to Batley.

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Lions Through The Decades - 1950s

With Ian Jackson

Rugby League enjoyed a post-war boom in popularity that gathered pace in the 1950s as attendances increased. Swinton benefited with better home crowds and also through continuing to stage major games at the spacious Station Road. The Lions competed well throughout the decade and crucially put in place the foundations for future success.

The decade started well enough for Swinton with Frank Osmond being selected for the 1950 Great Britain Tour to Australia and New Zealand. The summer months saw the arrival of key signings including Peter Norburn from Worsley Boys club in Wigan. The team had a modest 1950-51 season after a poor start and eventually finished with the retirement of stalwart forward Jack Stoddart after 19 years with the club.

On 7 April 1951, the record attendance at Station Road was set when 44,621 people watched Wigan beat Warrington in the Challenge Cup semi-final; although the ground was not full. Further work at the Pendlebury Road end meant the capacity was close to 60,000; however, this limit was never put to the test although many big crowds attended future matches.

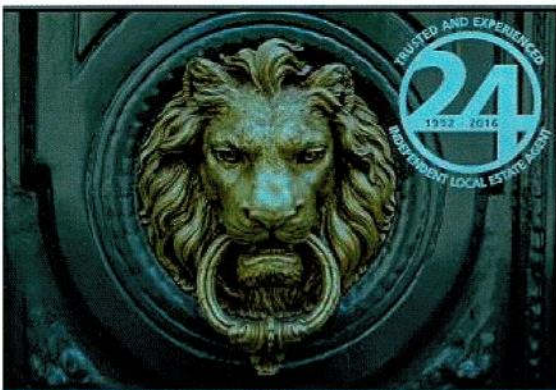
In the autumn of 1951, Station Road staged the Great Britain versus New Zealand Test match which was the first-ever rugby league game screened live on national television by the BBC. The broadcast programme had an estimated 3 million viewers. The 1951-52 season continued the trend of indifferent team form although around this time the club signed an exciting young stand-off named George Parkinson from Whelley Juniors, another club in Wigan. Off the field, Chairman Jack Robertson was replaced by Bill Scholes.

At the end of the 1953-54 season, Cliff Evans replaced Griff Jenkins as coach; and so began one of the most spectacular coaching careers in modern-day rugby league. Cliff was an inspiration figure at the club who specialised in developing young players and advanced training techniques. Incidentally, team selection during this period was often hampered by call-up to National Service as happened to prop-forward Eddie Billington who was posted to Germany.

After an indifferent start as head coach, Cliff Evans worked hard on team fitness as well as signing some promising young players, including Swinton legend Ken Gowers. The start of 1955 saw an upturn in form and the season ended with victory over Salford and an unexpected defeat in the first-ever visit to play Blackpool Borough. Around this time, local adversaries Belle Vue Rangers folded after being formed in 1877.

Throughout the remainder of the decade, the Lions showed signs of improving form. The 1955-56 season ended in a credible tenth place with local players such as Brian Critchley and Peter Smethurst combining well with the Wigan contingent; that now included club captain Albert Blan. The relatively young squad battled well over the next two seasons and even played in the famous "V" shirt for the first time against Rochdale Hornets in the 1957-58 season with a white jersey and single blue chevron design. Also, the cinder running track was extended around the pitch for training purposes and the team finished sixth in the 1958-59 season, which included impressive displays from winger Johnny Stopford.





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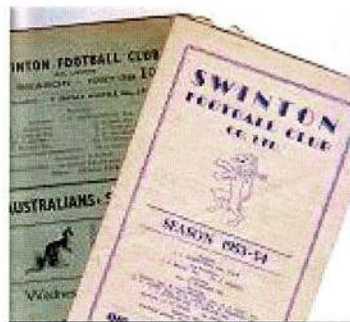


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- To promote links with the Swinton community i.e. through the local authority, the amateur game, schools, businesses and through efficient marketing.
- To provide a long-term vision in an effort to galvanise all Swinton supporters past and present.
- To seek the relocation of the club back to its rightful roots, because the future well-being of the club is dependent upon the realisation of this aim.

Meetings are held at 8pm on the second Tuesday of each month in the Hall of Fame room at the White Lion, Swinton.

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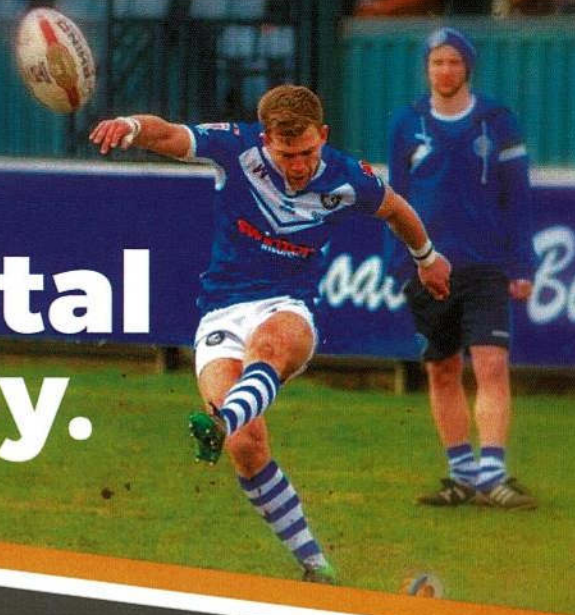
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Lions Through The Decades - 1960s

By Ian Jackson

The 1960s is remembered locally in Swinton as a period of glorious success played-out in a magnificent sporting arena. Under the shrewd coaching of Cliff Evans and the clever captaincy of Albert Blan, the Lions played entertaining and effective rugby league football.

The Lions secured a 12-5 victory over Salford at Station Road on New Year's Day 1960 and a week later, an exciting young player named Alan Buckley made his first-team debut. The scene was now set for a wonderful sporting odyssey for many years ahead with the Swinton back division in particular, considered as one of the most creative in the league.

The 1960-61 season began well enough with winger Johnny Stopford scoring a string of tries assisted ably by his centre partner Alan Buckley. Although the Lions lost the Lancashire Cup Final to St Helens, later in the season another Swinton stalwart made his debut, namely Bob Fleet. Great individual displays from the likes of Peter Smethurst meant the Lions finished third in the league and won the Lancashire League in the process, but the team lost the Championship play-off at Warrington.

During the summer of 1961, the club constructed the iconic goalposts at Station Road standing at over 58 feet tall. The following season, the Lions combined with Salford to form a Manchester XIII against the touring New Zealanders played at White City, Manchester but the Lions then lost the Lancashire Cup final again to St Helens.

In the 1962-63 season, the RFL introduced a two division set-up, but in the early stages of the campaign the Lions lost the Lancashire Cup final against St Helens. The winter months that followed were known as the "big freeze" which delayed fixtures for ten weeks. Then the Lions went on a terrific 18-game unbeaten run and lifted the First Division Championship even though tragically chairman Bill Scholes died during a home game against Widnes.

This magnificent achievement was re-enforced the following season when the Lions won the First Division Championship again in 1963-64 with excellent attacking football in front of huge crowds at Station Road. Forwards such as Derek Clarke, Ron Morgan, Graham Rees and Barry Simpson matched most opposing packs with the Swinton backs including Albert Cartwright, George Parkinson Ken Gowers, John Speed and Graham Williams ripping apart opposing defences.

The Lions reached the Lancashire Cup Final the following season losing once more to St Helens as the RFL reverted back to one division and around this time new star players joined the squad such as Billy Davies and Derek Whitehead. The Lions then lost a Challenge Cup semi-final to Wigan at St Helens. Dave Robinson emerged as a major find at loose forward, who along with Alan Buckley, Ken Gowers and Johnny Stopford were selected to tour with Great Britain in 1966.

The following seasons the team played touring teams from Australia and New Zealand and Station Road hosted Test Matches and Challenge Cup semi-finals as a Wembley appearance eluded the team. The Lions reached the Floodlit Trophy final against Castleford in 1966 after installing floodlights in 1964 and Swinton finally won the Lancashire Cup in 1969 defeating Leigh.



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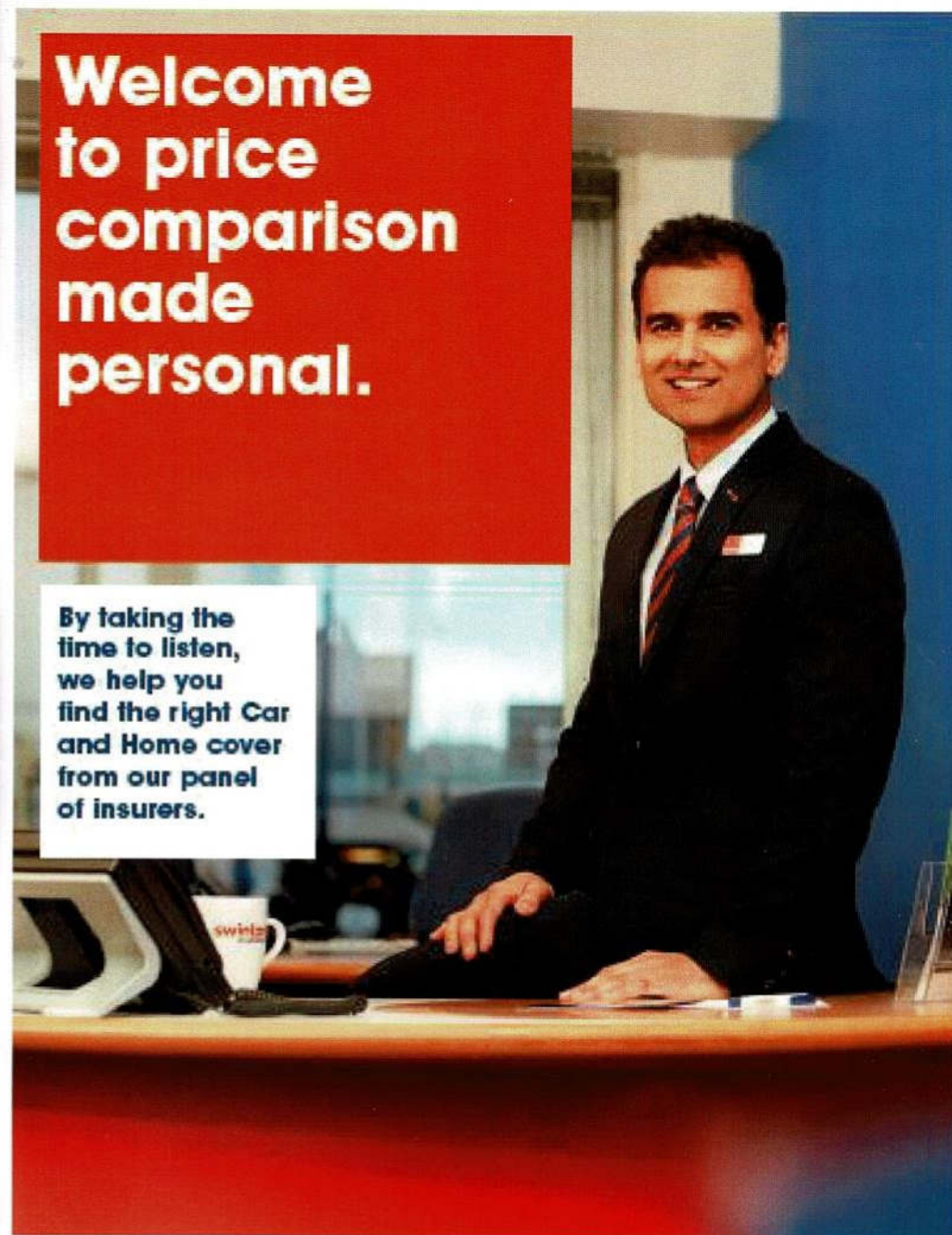
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