ROUGHYED REVIEW

PROGRAMME No.6
Sunday, 6th May, 2018
KICK-OFF 3PM
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Turning back the clock
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OLDHAM VS NEWCASTLE THUNDER

BETFRED LEAGUE 1

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PASSIONATE ABOUT RUGBY LEAGUE

HOW CHRIS SEES IT

WELCOME back to the Vestacare Stadium after an excellent win up in Workington last week.

After a valiant effort the week before against Hull KR we returned to league action at Derwent Park and the build-up to the game was dominated by Town talking about going through the season unbeaten at home. After beating the Bulls up there recently they were certainly confident.

We won, however, with a very determined display and the 22-point winning margin wasn't flattering to us in any way.

Post game Leon Pryce was very complimentary to us, as were other Workington officials and that hasn't happened a lot because we haven't won there very often.

To have already chalked up wins at both Whitehaven and Workington is testament to the character of the lads and it's now important that we use that result as a springboard to kick-on and hopefully chalk up more league points.

Today's visitors, Newcastle Thunder, are dangerous opponents and we must not underestimate them or take them lightly in any way.

We have to make home advantage count and with two matches in succession here at the Vestacare Stadium we need to get maximum points.

This will be my last match for a while as I will be going into hospital for heart surgery and, as some of you will know, recovery can take quite a long time.

It's not something I am looking forward to for sure, but hopefully during my absence the team will continue to gain the points needed to move us up the table.

Of that I have no doubt and I genuinely think you will see us move steadily up the table as we seek to get more wins on the board.

Enjoy the match and thanks for your support of the team,

Christopher Hamilton,
Chairman,
Oldham Rugby League Football League

VIEW FROM DRESSING ROOM AND DUG-OUT . . .

this week head coach SCOTT NAYLOR

HELLO everyone and welcome to today's game against Newcastle Thunder at the Vestacare Stadium.

Our opponents today come to us in a strong fifth position in the league and with plenty of confidence, having run Doncaster and York close in two home games.

Their head coach, Jason Payne, has had a strong start to the season and you can see why when you watch them play with speed in the ruck and with an open, attacking game whenever they have good ball.

They make very few mistakes in yardage, so they give little field position away. Add to that a great attitude and a belief that they can match it with anyone and you realise why Newcastle are a much different challenge this year than they have been in recent seasons.

Our game at Workington was extremely pleasing to be involved with as a head coach.

We showed lots of grit and determination, especially in defence, but for long periods we were also much calmer with the ball than we have been in earlier games.

We didn't give Workington much opportunity to put pressure on us, which is something we've been guilty of in certain other games this season.

We looked strong and quick and when we got chances we looked much more composed. To sum up, it was a very mature performance which earned a win on a ground where not many clubs will succeed this year.

On a personal note it was the first time I had tasted victory at Derwent Park in 30 years of trying (see page 14), so the beer tasted a little nicer on the way home.

Many thanks,

Scott

Muse Developments Ltd are sponsors of head coach Scott Naylor and his assistant Peter Carey

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STATISTICS

Betfred League 1 Table

	P	W	L	D	PF	PA	PD	PTS
York City Knights	7	6	1	0	322	92	230	12
Bradford Bulls	7	6	1	0	238	79	159	12
Doncaster RLFC	7	5	2	0	244	104	140	10
Whitehaven RLFC	7	5	2	0	208	118	90	10
Newcastle Thunder	7	4	3	0	200	136	64	8
Workington Town	8	4	4	0	229	177	52	8
Oldham RLFC	7	4	3	0	158	108	50	8
Keighley Cougars	8	4	4	0	256	222	34	8
Hunslet RLFC	7	4	3	0	149	158	-9	8
London Skolars	7	3	3	1	194	232	-38	7
North Wales Crusaders	8	2	5	1	172	180	-8	5
Coventry Bears	6	1	5	0	88	242	-154	2
Hemel Stags	7	0	7	0	74	278	-204	0
West Wales Raiders	5	0	5	0	26	432	-406	0

Oldham RLFC Player Stats 2018

Squad No.	Player	Total App	Appearance	Interchange App	Tries	Goals	Drop Goals	Points
1	Kyran Johnson	5	5	0	1	0	0	4
2	Dave Eccleston	10	10	0	2	0	0	8
3	Matt Reid	7	7	0	3	0	0	12
4	Jack Holmes	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
5	Steven Nield	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
6	Paul Crook	10	10	0	1	37	0	78
7	Dave Hewitt	10	10	0	3	0	1	13
8	Phil Joy	8	8	0	3	0	0	12
9	Gareth Owen	4	2	2	0	0	0	0
10	Adam Neal	7	7	0	0	0	0	0
11	Craig Briscoe	6	0	6	1	0	0	4
12	Danny Langtree	10	10	0	6	0	0	24
13	Jack Spencer	9	5	4	0	0	0	0
18	Ben Davies	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19	Adam Jones	5	0	5	0	0	0	0
20	Matty Wilkinson	8	4	4	1	0	0	4
21	Kenny Hughes	9	4	5	0	0	0	0
22	Danny Rasool	2	0	2	0	0	0	0
23	Luke Nelmes	10	0	10	0	0	0	0
24	Liam Bent	8	6	2	2	0	0	8
25	Danny Bridge	10	10	0	3	0	0	12
27	Joe Martin	2	2	0	2	0	0	8
29	Zack McComb	4	4	0	2	0	0	8
30	Ben West	5	5	0	3	0	0	12
DR	Ryan Lannon	2	2	0	0	0	0	0
DR	Levy Nzoungou	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
LO	Luke Hooley	3	3	0	1	0	0	4
LO	Kieran Gill	2	2	0	1	0	0	4
DR	Daniel Murray	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
LO	Lee Kershaw	3	3	0	3	0	0	12

* DR (Dual Registered Player) LO (Player on Loan)

Oldham WILL be at Wembley . . . !

ROUGHYEDS are delighted to announce a fantastic deal for fans built around the Ladbrokes Challenge Cup final at Wembley on Saturday, August 25.

We have on offer, for only £55, Club Wembley tickets plus FREE executive coach travel from the Vestacare Stadium to Wembley and back, leaving at 8.30am and setting off back at 5.30pm.

Moreover, the first 50 Oldham fans to book tickets will be invited to take part in the pre-match Wembley Parade around the world-famous arena and thus be actively involved in one of the biggest events on the Rugby League calendar.

ONE OF THE 50 WILL EVEN HAVE THE CHANCE TO PROUDLY CARRY THE OLDHAM RLFC FLAG AROUND WEMBLEY.

So despite our fifth-round defeat by Betfred Super League side Hull KR, the Oldham club WILL be going to Wembley and you can be there with us as part of Rugby League's big day.

To book ring 07904 898177 or go to the club website at roughyeds.co.uk and don't delay because tickets are limited and will go on a first come, first served basis.

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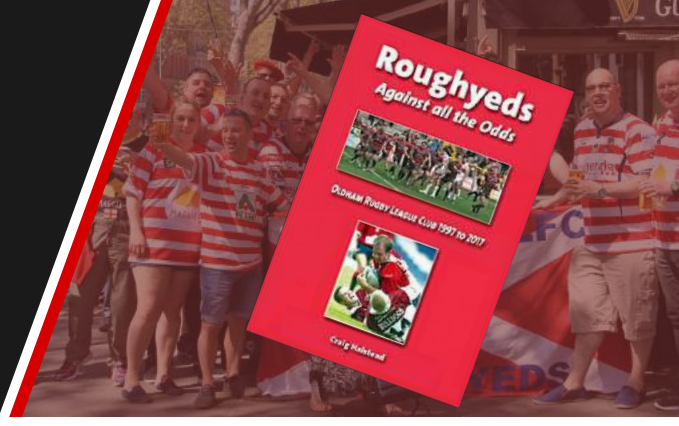
ROUGHYEDS
AGAINST ALL THE ODDS

Oldham Rugby League Club 1997 to 2017

Available at the Oldham Website
roughyeds.co.uk



DEBBIE Abrahams, MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth, has helped the club to mark its 20th anniversary by writing an introductory article in a new book titled, 'Roughyeds - Against All The Odds', that chronicles the club's history.

Debbie, who attended a special gala dinner held at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, Oldham in November, said: "It was such a pleasure to rub shoulders with many great people who've been part of the Roughyeds' story over the last 20 years.

"The atmosphere at the dinner was amazing and it was so much fun listening to the many stories being shared between supporters past and present, who all share a common bond; an absolute love of rugby league.

"As I said in the book, Rugby League is interwoven into Oldham life and adds to our rich history. It is a part of our community and I very much look forward to the next 20 years and beyond."

Club chairman Chris Hamilton said: "This latest book by Craig Halstead is another cracker. The title underlines the obstacles the club has had to overcome just to exist. And the tales, reminiscences and memories of so many people who have been directly involved with the club will bring our adventure against all the odds back to life for all Oldham RLFC fans.

"It's a great read and a must for Roughyeds fans young and old."

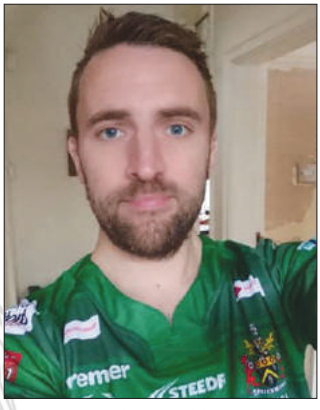
A fascinating insight into the launch of the 'new' club, and its early days, is provided by former director Sean Whitehead, who also has some revealing things to say about Chris, who has had an official and unbroken connection with the club from day one and is still its chairman and owner.

The book's author, Craig Halstead, said: "It was with great pleasure that I accepted an invitation by Chris Hamilton to tell the story of the club's fortunes over the last 20 years. I thoroughly enjoyed talking, among others, to past and present Oldham players who have worn the jersey with pride and passion.

"Through them, I have attempted to give an insight into what the club has achieved and what it has had to overcome since it was launched in 1997. My thanks to everyone who has contributed and best wishes to the club for the next 20 years. Happy reading. Hope you enjoy the memories!"

'Roughyeds -- Against All The Odds' costs £12.95 and can be purchased at the club (tel: 07904 898177) or on match days or on line via the club website at www.roughyeds.co.uk

Roughyed Fan Focus: Howard Mayers



Q How long have you been watching Oldham?

I've been watching the Roughyeds about 30 years, on and off. I don't think I can count my first few visits to Watersheddings as I was only eighteen months old! I started watching properly in the 86/87 season.

Back then it was very much a family affair with my Dad, Mum and younger sister meeting up with extended family in the social club before the game and also after the game. As a youngster I would eagerly get autographs from both Oldham players and their opponents particularly if we were playing one of the bigger teams.

Q Any favourite players past and present?

There have been so many over the years. I was always a huge fan of John Cogger in the eighties, he was a real handful for any opposition. I was also a fan of Hugh Waddell, Charlie McAlister and Paddy Kirwan. I think my all-time favourite from back then would have to be Mick Worrall; I thought he was absolutely outstanding and very exciting to watch.

Notable players from recent seasons are Michael Ward (it's been nice to see him at a few games this season), fans-favourite Sam Gee, Danny Langtree and of course the return of Gilly.

Q Do any games stand out in your memory?

I suppose one memorable game for all the wrong reasons was the Challenge Cup semi-final at Central Park. I remember being so excited at the prospect of the team finally getting to Wembley made even more poignant with Oldham Athletic making it to Wembley on the same weekend (I still live in hope), If only Paul Lord's try had been allowed.

Another memorable game was Oldham's first season in Super League and particularly the trip to France to see Oldham take on Paris St-Germain. We didn't get the result but it was a fantastic weekend away to Paris setting off from 'sheddings on a coach and going on Le Shuttle for the first time.

Q Do you have any favourite away grounds?

Favourite away ground of yesteryear was a toss-up between Wilderspool, Central Park or Thrum Hall. Current favourite away ground is a visit to NW Crusaders which I think is a cracking little setup.

Q Can you recall any funny moments watching Oldham?

I think one of my favourite moments was the night at Watersheddings when Oldham played Warrington although I can't remember the exact year. A fan ran onto the pitch and tackled the bear (our mascot at the time) he then saluted all his mates in the Watersheddings stand and got a cheer. What he didn't bargain for was the mascot tackling him back and then a Benny Hill style chase took place all over the pitch.

Q Any thoughts on this season?

I think a lot of people underestimated some of the quality in this league and whilst we had some early successes notably the performance at Halifax, we then had a couple of disappointing performances getting beaten by Hunslet, Bradford Bulls and narrowly by York

I'm really buoyed by recent performances though and I believe we have the right squad to get us where we need to be with promotion being the end result.

1904 . . . and we had Ferguson and five more players in the sport's first-ever international

GEORGE COWBURN continues his series in which he looks at Oldham's contribution to big events in RL history

RUGBY Union had its Four Nations and at football England were playing the other home nations, so what about the Northern Union?

Despite having a parochial attitude (the clue is in the name) the Northern Union decided it needed an international match too.

So on April 5, 1904 England lined up to play an Other Nationalities side consisting of ten Welshmen and two Scots.

Hang on, that only makes 12 . . . what happened to the others ?

Conscious of the need to counter the growing popularity of association football, the Northern Union were looking for ways to make the game more open and spectator friendly.

One idea was to reduce the number of players in a team from 15 to 12 or 13, so it was decided to play the international as an experimental 12-a-side match.

The game was hardly a classic. Even so, if a couple of clubs had voted differently at a subsequent meeting of the Northern Union we could have been watching a 12-a-side game for the past 114 years or so.

In the England side were two players from Oldham - Joe Ferguson and Frank Spottiswoode. A third member of the side, James "Jumbo" Lomas, would become an Oldham player a few years later in 1911.

The Other Nationalities side was captained by Oldham's George Frater, a Scotsman, and also included two Welshmen from the Oldham club in Dai "Ginger" Thomas and David Lewis plus a Scotsman, Jim Moffat, who played for Oldham from 1896 to 1901 before moving to Leeds.

Joe Ferguson had an incredible career with Oldham, playing in 627 games for the club in a 24-year period.

A hooker or prop forward, he won every honour available with Oldham apart from a Challenge Cup winners medal and he held the record for many years of being the game's oldest player.

He also shared, with James Lomas, the distinction of playing international Rugby League at 12, 13 and 15-a-side.

First he played an international under the old rules (15-a-side), then he played against Other Nationalities in the 1904 12-a-side match and then he played in two 13-a-side internationals, including one in which he captained England to victory over the 1907 New Zealand All

JOE FERGUSON . . . a colossus of a man in Oldham RL history

Golds.

Frank Spottiswoode made his debut for Oldham in September, 1901, playing in 112 games and scoring 45 tries. A winger, he was signed from Carlisle Rugby Union club and played for Cumberland in both codes.

A record fee of £300 secured the services of James Lomas for Oldham when he transferred from Salford in January, 1911.

The powerful well-built centre or stand off (hence the nickname 'Jumbo') was a superstar of his era, captaining the ground-breaking 1910 Great Britain tour to Australia and New Zealand.

Other Nationalities captain George Frater signed for Oldham from the Melrose club in Scotland in time for the start of the 1896-7 season.

He made 262 appearances before retiring after the last game of the 1904-5 season. A tough, hard-working forward, he later emigrated to New Zealand.

Dai Thomas, one of two players in the Other Nationalities side with the same name, played 61 times for Oldham, missing only one game in his last season of 1904-5. A back-row forward, he was signed from the Cardiff Rugby Union club.

David Lewis, signed from Swansea RU, appeared only 26 times for Oldham, playing either in the centre or at scrum half.

Jim Moffat, also from Melrose, played 96 times for the club, making his debut on Christmas Day, 1896 before leaving for the Leeds club. A versatile forward, he also played for Lancashire, as did Frater and Dai Thomas.

The match was originally due to be played at Watersheddings on New Year's Day, 1904 but it was

FRANK SPOTTISWOODE . . . played alongside Ferguson for England in 1904.

postponed due to severe frost and played instead at Wigan's Central Park ground in the April.

Unfortunately, due to incessant rain, the pitch was heavy and the weather kept the crowd down to 6,000.

The score was 9-3 in the Other Nationalities favour. England's try was scored by Warrington winger Jack Fish and the Other Nationalities tries went to David Harris and one apiece for each Dai Thomas. Neither side was able to kick a goal in this first-ever international.

'Pictures courtesy of Oldham RL Heritage Trust

MATCH PICTURES

LEE KERSHAW

LUKE NELM

KIERAN GILL

LUKE HOOLEY

WORKINGTON TOWN 10 OLDHAM 32

DERWENT PARK
SUNDAY APRIL 29, 2018

MES

LIAM BENT

JACK SPENCER

DANNY LANGTREE

PAUL CROOK

Turning back the clock . . .

OUR 32-10 win at Workington was special for Scott Naylor in more ways than one.

In more than 30 years of going to Derwent Park as player and coach -- and that's with Bradford, Salford and Oldham - it was the first time he had ever sampled the satisfaction of ending up on the celebrating side.

"A first . . . it's a good feeling," he said, with a smile on his face, as the Roughyeds players belted out their victory song in the dressing room.

"I deliberately didn't mention it before the game, for obvious reasons, but it won't be a secret any more !"

Then off he went to enjoy the moment after handing over the duties of dealing with the post-game media interviews to his right-hand man and close friend Peter Carey.

Chairman Chris Hamilton, meanwhile, was savouring the extremely sporting and complimentary comments that were being made about the Roughyeds by Town officials and by their young coach Leon Pryce.

"We looked a League 1 side," he said. "Oldham looked like a Championship outfit."

On the long journey home the question was asked: When did we last win at both Workington and Whitehaven in the same season ?

Answer: Not as long ago as you might think, the 2000/2001 Northern Ford Premiership season when we won 22-6 at Workington on December 17, 2000 and 16-15 at Whitehaven on June 17, 2001.

Team at Workington: Sibson; Cross, A Gibbons, Rich, Lacy; D Gibbons, Roden; Procter, Hough, Casey, P Farrell, Norton, Sinfield. Subs: Ford, Clegg, Guest, C Farrell. M-O-M, Roden.

At Whitehaven: Sibson; McNicholas, A Gibbons, Rich, Lacy; D Gibbons, Roden; Casey, Brennan, Norton, P Farrell, Henare, Mannion. Subs: Ford, Clegg, C Farrell, Guest. M-O-M, Brennan.

In Scott's tenure as coach we had played only once at Workington, prior to last Sunday, and that was a 23-12 defeat in the 2016 Championship season.

A glance at the team that day, which includes only six players who are still at the club, shows the extent of the turnover on the playing roster in the last two years.

Lepori; Clay, Bibby, Holmes, Chisholm; Palfrey, Grimshaw; Joy, Owen, Spencer, Middlehurst, Langtree, Hope. Subs: Ward, Thompson, Files, Hughes.

Gary Middlehurst and Phil Joy scored our tries and Lewis Palfrey kicked a couple of goals.

So to last Sunday and our third win at Derwent Park in the last six visits, going back to September, 2011.

Workington 10 (goal, Foster; tries, Gregson, Miller), Oldham 32 (goals, Crook 4; tries, Bent, Langtree, Kershaw, Hooley, Joy, Hewitt).

Team: Hooley; Eccleston, Gill, Reid, Kershaw; Crook, Hewitt; Joy, Hughes, Spencer, Bridge, Langtree, Bent. Subs: Owen, Wilkinson, Jones, Nelmes.

Credited with assists for the try scorers were Jack Spencer (Bent); Luke Nelmes (Langtree); Luke Hooley (Kershaw); Gareth Owen (Hooley); Matty Wilkinson (Joy); Matt Reid (Hewitt).

Our three loan men all did well, Kershaw and Hooley each scoring an impressive try and Kieran Gill looking a class act at right-centre.

Home sweet home in May and June

SOMETHING that separates us from rivals in Betfred League 1 is the fact that each of our seven games has been against a team from the 'northern powerhouse'.

Four have been away - at Whitehaven, North Wales, Bradford Bulls and Workington -- and we've won three, including two in Cumbria.

Of our three home games - York, Hunslet and Keighley - we were beaten by York and Hunslet, but we redeemed ourselves by defeating the Cougars.

Two things are set to change. Starting today, four of our next six league games are here at the Vestacare Stadium and all but two of the six will be against teams we can loosely describe as 'southern' sides.

GO TO PAGE 22 FOR UPDATED FIXTURES BUT NOTE THAT THE HOME GAME AGAINST HEMEL STAGS, POSTPONED BECAUSE OF SNOW IN MARCH, WILL BE HERE NEXT SUNDAY, MAY 13 (3pm).

Note, too, that we then travel to Llanelli for the West Wales Raiders game on SATURDAY, May 19 (3pm) and that the home game with Doncaster -- a potential cracker -- has been moved from Sunday, May 27 to Sunday, June 3 (3pm) because the Vestacare is unavailable on the weekend of May 26 and 27.

After today we've got Hemel, West Wales, Coventry and London Skolars in our next five, but the immediate focus is on today's opponents, Newcastle Thunder, who are above us in the table and lie in the play-off group with Bradford, Doncaster and Whitehaven.

Only two points separate Hunslet (9th) and Doncaster (3rd) and Doncaster chief executive Carl Hall has said publicly that Super League has gone backwards while the Championship and League 1 have kicked-on.

He told League Express that the progression of Championship and League 1 under the current system was there for all to see, adding: "League 1 now is where the Championship was four years ago.

"League 1 is stronger than its ever been. The Championship has kicked on too and I honestly believe the game is progressing fantastically well outside of Super League, which has gone backwards.

"Super League clubs are scared stiff about the Super 8s this year because there could be three, or even four, Championship clubs who could take their spots at the big table. They're terrified."

Oldham Rugby League Heritage Trust Through the Years… Oldham v Gateshead Thunder/ Newcastle Thunder

Left: Mark Sibson breaks clear at Boundary Park.
18.02.2001.

Below: Dave Ellison is caught in a two man tackle at Sedgeley Park.
23.04.2010.

Left: Paul O'Connor in action at Gateshead. **04.07.2010.**

Below: George Tyson breaks clear at Whitebank.
17.05.2015.

Below: A try for Mo Agoro at Filtrona Park, South Shields.
30.06.2013

Oldham Rugby League Heritage Trust

"The Roughyeds' Kitbag"

OLDHAM RLFC

During World War One 1914 - 1918

Due for release in October 2018, this is the latest and arguably the greatest publication from the Oldham Rugby League Heritage Trust.

190 A4 pages - Packed with facts, figures and images, the book, hardback and in full colour, deals with the running of the club during one of the darkest periods in the history of the country.

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Dedication: ……..…….....

Maximum: 15 words.

Examples: *In memory of John Boardman, Oldham FC (Grenadier Guards).*
St. Annes ARLFC
W. Howard - for all the Saddleworth lads lost in the wars.
In memory of Thomas Steele, John Hogan and Walter Mills - The Oldham VCs.

(Dedications for inclusion must be received by May 28th 2018)

Sgt-Maj Fred Wise DCM

Lieut. J.S. Parkinson

Private D. Shannon
Killed in Action

Our Visitors
Newcastle Thunder

We welcome Newcastle Thunder to the Vestacare Stadium today for our first encounter with the men from Kingston Park since August 2015. That fixture was played up on Tyneside when Oldham were in the midst of an unbeaten run that would ultimately lead to promotion.

A tough encounter saw the two sides fight tooth and nail for the two points with Oldham's Sam Gee enjoying an early bath in the 62nd minute. The result could have swung either way with Thunder taking full advantage of their extra numbers. The luck stayed with Oldham though and a late try for centre Tom Ashton sealed the win for the Roughyeds.

Newcastle finished in eighth place in 2015 and so sought a higher finish in the 2016 season. Seven wins from 14 games saw them finish in ninth place, one position short of the newly introduced League 1 Super 8s competition. That meant they contested the League 1 Shield which they went on to win, beating North Wales Crusaders 27-20 in the final.

Last season in 2017, Newcastle finished sixth in the regular season, winning nine out of 15 games. That meant a place in the Super 8s which led to a semi-final contest with Barrow Raiders. The Cumbrian side comprehensively defeated Thunder at Craven Park by 60-0 but nevertheless the club had rallied in the latter stages of the season under interim coach Jason Payne who would go on to take-up the position permanently.

For this season's promotion push, coach Payne has signed Theerapol Ritson and Connor Fitzsimmons from Workington Town and Castleford respectively whilst managing to hold-on to key players in his squad such as hooker Evan Simons and second-row Harry Aldous.

This season Newcastle started off with a trip to South Wales but due to an absence of necessary medical supplies, the game at Stebonheath park was abandoned and Thunder had to make the 367 mile trip back to the North East without throwing a pass.

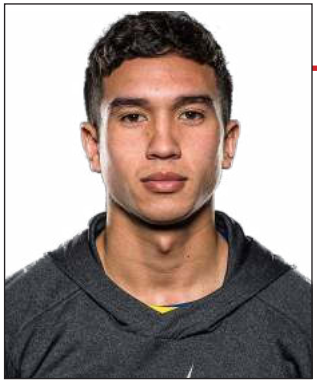
London Skolars were to provide the first competitive opposition for Newcastle at their New River Stadium. The Thunder team must have been raring to go since they turned over the North London side 60-16.

Since that resounding victory in the south the rest of the season has seen mixed fortune for Jason Payne's side. A narrow loss at home to Doncaster was followed by an away victory at Coventry Bears. Further wins against North Wales Crusaders and most recently Hunslet Hawks are set against losses to York City Knights and Keighley Cougars.

Newcastle and Oldham have eight points each from seven games and are level in the table. Our visitors sit in fifth place compared to Oldham's seventh due a 14 point superior points difference. A Thunder win today would advance them towards the play-off places whereas an Oldham win would see the Roughyeds leap-frog our opponents in a similar quest for the end of season promotion challenge.

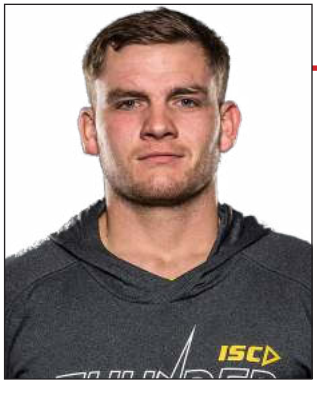
There's much at stake then for both teams and today's game should be another good spectacle in this year's competitive League 1.

Three to watch
Newcastle Thunder



Theerapol Ritson

Former fan-favourite of Workington Town supporters, this classy full-back or winger signed for Newcastle in time for this 2018 season. More commonly known as Tee, Ritson earned himself a formidable reputation at Derwent Park, operating alongside players such as half-back Jarrod Sammutt. Pacey and dangerous on the break.



Tyler Craig

A former Heworth ARLFC junior who joined the professional ranks at York City Knights, making his debut in 2012. A tall and quick three-quarter, Craig was labelled a fitness freak by the Knights coaching staff. Moved on to Newcastle Thunder in 2017 and is now in his second season on Tyneside.

Rhys Clarke

Club stalwart and vice-captain, Clarke is enjoying his second spell with the Newcastle Club, having spent periods with York City Knights and Whitehaven.

A Gateshead lad, the player has signed a new two-year contract at Kingston Park and his experience and second-row presence adds stablity to the Thunder pack.

Neal blow as specialist gives his verdict

PROP Adam Neal could be out of action for several weeks following the blow to his head in the home game against Keighley Cougars on April 15 which Roughyeds won 32-18.

He was knocked out in a 65th-minute tackle that was placed on report with Oldham 24-18 ahead in a thrilling game that was very much in the balance at that stage.

He was led from the field, never to return, and Roughyeds went on to seal victory with a Liam Bent try and two goals by Paul Crook.

The RFL's match review panel later concluded there was nothing wrong with the tackle, but indicated there may have been a clash of heads.

Neal has already missed two games, against Hull KR in the Challenge Cup and Workington in Betfred League 1, and after a specialist's consultation last Monday he's likely to miss a few more.

Said coach Scott Naylor: "It wasn't good news. He won't be available for the Newcastle Thunder game. He's to have more tests and he's been told it's not possible at this stage to know how long his recovery will take.

"It could be one week, four weeks or even eight weeks --- we just don't know."

The unlucky Neal was also out for several weeks last season with a broken jaw.

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RESULTS

* OLDHAM have made two changes to the fixture list involving home games against Hemel Stags and Doncaster.
* The Hemel game, postponed on March 4 because of snow, will be played at the Vestacare Stadium next Sunday, May 13 (3pm).
* The home game against Doncaster, originally on Sunday, May 27, has been put back seven days to Sunday, June 3 (3pm) because the Vestacare Stadium is unavailable on May 26 and 27.

Date	Time	Opponents		Result	Attn.
FEBRUARY					
Sunday 18	3.00pm	Whitehaven RLFC	A	14—0 (won)	785
Sunday 25	3.00pm	Featherstone Lions (Challenge Cup Round 3)	H	42—0 (won)	364
MARCH					
Sunday 11	3.00pm	York City Knights	H	22-24 (lost)	703
Tuesday 20	7.30pm	Halifax (LCC, rd 4)	A	27-6 (won)	688
Sunday 25	2.30pm	North Wales Crusaders	A	30-2 (won)	449
Friday 30	6.00pm	Bradford Bulls	A	12-30 (lost)	4,036
APRIL					
Sunday 8	3.00pm	Hunslet RLFC	H	16-24 (lost)	544
Sunday 15	3.00pm	Keighley Cougars	H	32-18 (won)	530
Sunday 22	3.00pm	Hull KR (LCC) at Bower Fold	H	0-32 (lost)	1,064
Sunday 29	3.00pm	Workington Town	A	32-10 (won)	712
MAY					
Sunday 6	3.00pm	Newcastle Thunder	H		
Sunday 13	3.00pm	Hemel Stags	H		
Saturday 19	3.00pm	West Wales Raiders	A		
JUNE					
Sunday 3	3.00pm	Doncaster RLFC	H		
Sunday 10	3.00pm	Coventry Bears	A		
Sunday 17	3.00pm	London Skolars	H		
Sunday 24	3.30pm	Hunslet RLFC	A		
JULY					
Sunday 1	3.00pm	Workington Town	H		
Sunday 8	3.00pm	West Wales Raiders	H		
Sunday 15	3.00pm	Keighley Cougars	A		
Sunday 22	3.00pm	North Wales Crusaders	H		
Sunday 29	3.00pm	Doncaster RLFC	A		
AUGUST					
Sunday 5	2.00pm	Hemel Stags	A		
Sunday 12	3.00pm	Whitehaven RLFC	H		
Sunday 19	3.00pm	Newcastle Thunder	A		
SEPTEMBER					
Sunday 2	3.00pm	Coventry Bears	H		
Sunday 9	3.00pm	York City Knights	A		
Sunday 16	3.00pm	Bradford Bulls	H		
Sunday 22	3.00pm	London Skolars	A		

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OLDHAM RLFC

1. Kyran Johnson	Mick Harrop
2. Dave Eccleston	Les and Eileen Davison
3. Matt Reid	Les and Eileen Davison
4. Jack Holmes	David and Val Webster
5. Steven Nield	Clarice Stevens
6. Paul Crook	Rita Walton
7. Dave Hewitt	Chris Noble MBE
8. Phil Joy	Oldham Past Players Association
9. Gareth Owen	Purpose Business and Marketing Ltd 07765407840
10. Adam Neal	Mike, Viv and Jenny Travis
11. Craig Briscoe	Neil Gibbison
12. Danny Langtree	Neil, Charlotte and Rosie Haigh
13. Jack Spencer	Graeme Lee
18. Ben Davies	Sponsorship available. Ring 07904 898177
19. Adam Jones	Anne Kearns
20. Matty Wilkinson	John and Lynda McAndrew
21. Kenny Hughes	Rita Walton
22. Danny Rasool	Sponsorship available. Ring 07904 898177
23. Luke Nelmes	John and Lynda McAndrew
24. Liam Bent	ORSA
25. Danny Bridge	Pam Taylor and LTS
29. Zack McComb	David and Val Webster
30. Ben West	Rugby Oldham, the Supporters' Trust
Luke Hooley	Sponsorship available. Ring 07904 898177
Lee Kershaw	Sponsorship available. Ring 07904 898177
Kieran Gill	Sponsorship available. Ring 07904 898177
SCOTT NAYLOR - Head Coach	Muse Developments Ltd
PETER CAREY - Assistant Coach	Muse Developments Ltd

NEWCASTLE THUNDER

1. Tee Ritson
2. Ali Blair
3. Tyler Craig
4. Joe Brown
5. Mo Agoro
8. Liam McAvoy
9. Evan Simons
10. Rhys Clarke
11. Harry Aldous
12. Aaron Ollett
13. Jack Aldous
14. Vincent Rennie
15. Sam Luckley
16. Tom Shaw
20. Conor Fitzsimmons
21. Ben Pointer
22. Tom Capper
23. Ben Dent
24. Ben Calland
25. Sam Blake
26. Ryan Lloyd
27. David Weetman
28. Niall Sidney
29. Scott Derrick
30. Sandy Rae
31. Jake Woods
** Dan Turland
** Danny Nicklas
** Lewis Young
** Liam Scott
JASON PAYNE - Coach

Referee:	N. Bennett
Touch Judge 1:	G. Melling
Touch Judge 2:	J. Woodman
Reserve Ref:	E. Barnett

Scan the QR code for today's Oldham team