

ROUGHYED REVIEW

2021 PROGRAMME NO.1

SATURDAY MARCH 20

KICK OFF

12.45PM

**NELMES TAKES
THE LEAD**



**OLDHAM
RLFC**

V



**BARROW
RAIDERS**



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Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm

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BETFRED CHALLENGE CUP



CDX SECURITY



A CHAT WITH THE CHAIRMAN

CHRIS HAMILTON

Welcome to the first edition of the new "normal" programme, online and adapted to the strange times we find ourselves having lived in for the last year and for who knows how long yet?

Thank you to everybody who has worked to make this happen.

As you are all aware, we start the 2021 season today with our first competitive match against a Barrow Raiders side which will come full of confidence.

This is the Betfred Challenge Cup, of course, but they have made no secret of their desire to win promotion from League One this season and that shows their intention to move up in the world.

They are one of only three sides from that division which will be taking part in this year's Betfred Challenge Cup because of Covid restrictions but there is no doubt they will come with all guns blazing.

For us, it is all about improving again after a much better performance against a strong Halifax side last Saturday.

We deliberately gave ourselves two tough friendlies as that was the best way to see where we are at and to give the players a taste of what the top sides will be about this season in the Championship.

With so many new players in the squad this year it will take a little bit longer than usual for everybody to bed in, but come kick-off today we will be raring to go!

We were disrupted last week with injuries and then the late withdrawals of Phil Joy and Ryan Ince, which had a knock-on effect. Those things, however, are going to hit every club this season and the impact of Covid on players and staff is another factor that will, inevitably, come into play at different times.

Playing matches behind closed doors is very strange and we all want to see fans back in

stadiums as soon as possible. Everybody wants that, but in the meantime can I thank you all for your support of the club during the last 12 months.

This has been mentioned before, but it has been amazing what you have all done. We are very grateful.

I hope you will all be following the games on OurLeague, which at least enables you to see the action, and hopefully you will be cheering us on today to our first victory of the season.

Enjoy the game.

Christopher Hamilton
Chairman



DISKIN'S DIARY

A peep behind the scenes with head coach Matt Diskin

Following an arduous 12 months we have finally returned to competitive Rugby League.

The cancellation of last year's fixtures, although frustrating, presented an opportunity to address the lack of depth within our squad. With the support of the chairman, Chris Hamilton, we recruited heavily, specifically focusing on bolstering our pack.

The additions of experienced Championship players have been complemented with young, talented individuals acquired from Super League clubs.

The new squad has ventured through a training regime hampered by COVID protocols and the players have conducted themselves in a professional manner which exceeded our expectations.

The hard work the squad delivered, while rolling around in the freezing cold and six inches of mud, created a group that is willing to roll up sleeves and work hard no matter what the circumstances.

Although pre-season results didn't reflect kindly, what you did see were glimpses of a team that won't give up.

This group of players has learned tough lessons following the pre-season games. They have also learned that when they consistently deliver what we practice, they can trouble some of the best teams in the competition.

Heading into the first round of the Betfred Challenge Cup, we have concentrated on delivering a game plan focused on our strengths.

Barrow are steeped in tradition and always produce competitive performances, but unfortunately we have not had an opportunity to preview their current squad.

Our focus, therefore, is to produce a strong, disciplined performance centred around what WE do well.

Fingers crossed, we progress to the next round of this prestigious competition.

We are under no illusion, however, that the task at hand today will be one thwart with potential danger.

**Kind regards,
Matt Diskin**



YOUR CAPTAIN CALLING

Gareth Owen on the ball

We were disappointed to lose 30-18 against Halifax but, the result apart, I thought we showed major improvement in performance and attitude.

Disco told us to turn up with a better attitude towards our energy and our aggression and I think we did that.

It wasn't perfect and there were stages when we made it easy for them, but for the most part we met them front on and gave as good as we got.

With better decision-making and better ends to our sets we would have been in a good position to go on and win.

There were lots of positives and we need to step up another gear because we know Barrow will come out firing.

If you are watching on Our League, give us a wave and a cheer!

**Enjoy.
Gaz**

In two games, but especially against Halifax at Bower Fold, we really missed the support of our fans inside the ground.

As Matty Fletcher has said, the first time we experienced the "silence", at Featherstone, it was eerie.

A week later, at Bower Fold, we had an idea of what to expect, but even so we missed you a lot. The sooner you can all get back the better it will be for players, fans, the club, our sport and the RFL so here's hoping that it won't be long before you are out there cheering us on.

A lot of fans have said how much they miss their rugby. Take it from me, we are missing YOU as much as you are missing US. You can watch us on Our League, of course, and it's comforting to know lots of you are doing that.

The coverage is good and it's great you can watch us, but I'm sure you'll agree the sooner we're back to normal the better for everyone.

Player Focus

Cameron Leeming



CAMERON LEEMING IN ACTION

Q: Tell us about your day job.

A: I work as a personal trainer. I've been doing it for almost four years and I've loved every minute.

Q: What was the worst thing you ever did at school?

A: For a couple of years I was a bit "gobby" to teachers. I used to chat during lessons and I didn't take kindly to teachers interrupting! Generally, though, I didn't think I was too bad.

Q: If you won the lottery what would you buy first?

A: I've always had a desire to see the world. I would go travelling everywhere and anywhere with the missus and our baby daughter Lotte, who was born last October.

Q: Which sports star do you most admire and why?

A: As you get a bit older you find the players at the highest level are those you grew up playing with or against. When I was a lad, though, Keith Senior was always my idol -- a big, strong centre at Leeds. I always tried to be like Keith.

Q: How do you think your team mates would describe you?

A: I like to think I'm quite a likeable character, hard-working and honest. But you'd have to ask the others, haha!

Q: What's your biggest professional achievement to date?

A: I've only been playing first-team rugby in England for the last four years. I won the League 1 shield at Hunslet, but without doubt my most enjoyable achievement was our Promotion Final win against Newcastle Thunder in 2019. Couldn't have won it with a better set of lads.

Q: What's your biggest professional disappointment to date?

A: That was at Wakefield in the under-19s. I thought I was in with a decent chance of getting a full-time contract. but then I had two serious knee injuries. I was out for 18 months.

Q: Outside your day job and rugby, what do you do most?

A: I follow Leeds United home and away. It's a love/hate relationship. They've given me great memories and a lot of disappointments. I go to most games with my dad and my sister and it's always a good day out with them.

Q: What's the best thing about being in the Oldham squad?

A: The lads make it for me. I've been in squads previously, dreaded going to training and didn't really get along. Since I came to Oldham though, I've enjoyed every session because we have a top group of lads.

Q: What would be your dream in life?

A: I enjoy what I'm doing now, to be honest. I would carry on doing the same, but with a lot less hours and a lot more money.



AWAY FROM THE GYM, AWAY FROM RUGBY...
MY FIANCE STEPH AND YOURS TRULY ON
A NIGHT OUT.



Past players | Mark Sibson

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

In the first three features in this series we talked to John Hough, now living in Australia; to Neil Roden in Leigh; and to Steve Molloy nearer to home in Moorside. We pick up where we left off with . . .

No 4: Mark Sibson, the flying full-back who raced in for 60 tries in 91 games during the Mike Ford era.



CENTRE PICTURE: The Sibson family . . . Mark, his wife Nicki and children Emily and Ben.

Q: When were you at Oldham RLFC and where are you now ?

A: I was a 'Roughyed' between 2000 and 2003. I played in my favourite position of fullback most of the time and I also had a few games on the wing.

Q: What was your most memorable game and why?

A: There were a few. Definitely those in which we experienced adversity.

The play-off comeback win in 2001 against old rivals Rochdale was fantastic. To win such an important game by coming back from such a big deficit was unbelievable. It was typical of the team that year. We would never give in and anything was possible. I also remember the play-off win at Leigh where I scored the winner in the last ten minutes. Nobody expected us to

win, but we were such a tight team we went there and did a job on them.

Q: Which sports star do you most admire and why?

A: I'm a big Everton FC fan, so I could pick a few there. However, I most admire people who come back year after year and retain their intensity and passion; people like Kevin Sinfield or Jamie Jones-Buchanan at Leeds Rhinos, who admit to not being the most talented, but are always among the the hardest working.

Of sports stars who are currently playing, I'd go for England cricket all-rounder Ben Stokes, whose late father was a Rugby League coach. Ben's skill level is out of this world and he thrives on adversity. He can be phenomenal under pressure!

Q: What would you consider to be your biggest professional achievement?

A: Playing In Super League. I signed on loan for Huddersfield Giants at the end of a season so I only played twice. I scored a try in both games and I was very proud to have achieved what was a major goal for me after just half a season in the professional game. It was the year Huddersfield and Sheffield merged. I didn't make the cut, but that meant I could sign for Oldham, which was a great move for me.

Q: And your biggest disappointment?

A: Not winning a trophy. The closest I came was in the Grand Final for Oldham against Widnes in 2001. We put everything into that but just came up short to a very good Vikings team.

Q: How would your Oldham teammates have described you?

A: They would probably say I was quiet but determined. I was never the loudest on the pitch but I hope they would have recognised the commitment and honesty in my game. They'd probably say I was quite quick too!

Q: What did you like most about being in the Oldham squad?

A: I loved the team spirit and togetherness we had, especially in the early years under Mike Ford. That was my favourite time in rugby. I made lifelong friends, some of whom I went on to play with at other clubs. We had the 'us against the world' mindset. I'll remember that for ever.

Q: What prompted your decision to leave Oldham ?

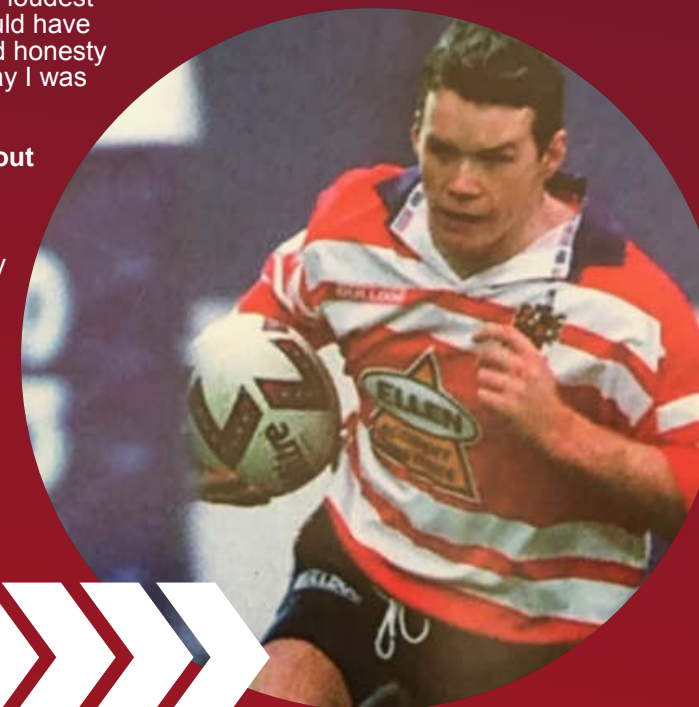
A: It was a tough decision but it was mostly about being closer to home and work. I was living in Leeds and working in Sheffield so when I was offered the chance to sign at Batley it made a lot of sense for my life circumstances at the time. Travelling across the Pennines four or five times a week takes it toll after three years.

Q: What is your current day job?

A: I'm a Director of Technology at HSBC. It's very different to Rugby League but I really enjoy it and I get to meet lots of people from different parts of the world.

Q: What would be your dream role in life?

A: I'd like to manage Everton FC and introduce some Rugby League attitudes and principles.



BARROW RAIDERS

Paul Carey and his Barrow Raiders side pay their first ever visit to Bower Fold this afternoon in the opening round of the Betfred Challenge Cup.

The game represents a return to competitive rugby league for both Barrow and Oldham after an enforced break of over a year.

Oldham may have a distinct advantage after completing back to back warm-up games against top Championship sides Featherstone Rovers and Halifax Panthers. It will be interesting to see just how prepared the Raiders side will be but after such a lengthy period of time off the field the Barrow players must be champing at the bit to cross the whitewash and get stuck in.

The comparative league status of our two clubs has meant that today's fixture is the first meaningful game between Oldham and Barrow since August 2015. Back then Oldham were in the final thrust of a title and promotion chasing season whereas Barrow hoped to upset the Roughyeds' apple cart and grab valuable end-of-season points.

Oldham ran out eventual winners 28-12 but the Raiders had led at half-time and were still in front deep into the second-half.

Oldham went on to spend two seasons in the Championship before trading places with Barrow who then spent a similar period of time at the higher level.

Barrow suffered relegation in 2019 just as the Roughyeds' were again promotion winners.

The curtailed 2020 season meant that Barrow's aim of a return to the Championship has been on hold until now and their promotion challenge will start next month. A win against Matt Diskin's promising team will send

a signal to the other League 1 clubs that the men from Craven Park mean business.

Coach Carey has made his promotion aim clear with the recruitment of Super League talent. Local boys Ryan Shaw and Ben Harrison made names for themselves at Hull KR and Warrington Wolves respectively and brothers Jordan and Adam Walne are no strangers to playing at the highest level.

Former Bradford and London Broncos man Callum Bustin has been added into the mix to join a talented squad that will surely feature in the League 1 promotion pack throughout 2021.

An incredible statistic to note is that Barrow have not won a competitive game away to Oldham in over 40 years, stretching all the way back to February 1981. A new season, a first visit to a new ground and a new promotion hungry squad. What better way to kick-off 2021 with a stat-busting win.

Matt Diskin and his Oldham team will do well to be on their guard this afternoon and we should be in for an entertaining tussle between the two old clubs.



Three To Watch



BEN HARRISON

Barrow-born wing, centre or loose-forward, Harrison is a former Warrington Wolves star.

He played in two Super League Grand Finals for Warrington, won a League Leaders' Shield in 2011 and claimed three Challenge Cup winners' medals during his time with the Wolves.

Stepped away from the game after spending a period of loan time with Wakefield but now returns to play for his home-town club and is looking forward to bringing Super League standards to the production line of young talent that Barrow have on their books.



CARL FORSTER

A big St Helens born prop-forward who started his rugby league career at his home town club. He enjoyed Grand Final success with the St Helens academy side before signing a 2 year professional deal with the club.

Spent periods of time playing on loan at Swinton, Rochdale, Whitehaven and London before signing for Salford Red Devils in 2015.

Moved on to Whitehaven in 2017 where he would become player-coach.

Left Whitehaven for Rochdale Hornets, again in a player-coach capacity but has now found his way to Barrow on a one year deal.



RYAN SHAW

Barrow born wing, centre or full-back and a product of the Warrington Wolves academy.

Spent various periods of time on loan or through dual registration with Castleford Tigers, Leigh Centurions, Swinton Lions, London Broncos and Barrow themselves.

Signed a permanent deal with Bradford Bulls in 2015 before moving on to Hull Kingston Rovers in 2016 where he spent four seasons and amassed 46 tries and 138 goals in 82 appearances.

Signed for his home-town club for the 2021 season, following in the footsteps of his father and former Barrow captain Neil Shaw.

Luke Nelmes shines in Halifax friendly



LEWIS CHARNOCK



MARTYN REILLY



TOMMY BRIERLEY



CALLUM GREEN



DANNY BRIDGE



LEWIS CHARNOCK



DAN ABRAM



LUKE NELMES



MATT AND GAZ



GARETH OWEN

14 NEW BOYS IN YOUR CLASS OF 2021



NEW SIGNING

#3 BEN HEATON

(Centre): Age 31. DOB 12/3/90.

Back 'home' after nearly a decade away, mainly at Halifax where he became one of the best backs in the Championship.

Sponsor: Stephen Butterfield.



NEW SIGNING

#27 BEN HOLCROFT

(Wing): Age 20. DOB 29/11/2000.

Yet another youngster from Wigan. He and Roberts played alongside each other many times in Wigan's academy team.

Sponsor: Available.



NEW SIGNING

#23 CALLUM GREEN

(Half-back/full-back): Age 21. DOB 27/9/99.

Nephew of Neil Roden. Noted for his speed. Came through the youth systems at Wigan and Warrington.

Sponsor: Available.



NEW SIGNING

#21 SHAUN PICK

(Second row): Age 27. DOB 21/9/93.

Formerly played for Toronto Wolfpack, Sheffield and Batley. Played for Sheffield in the 2019 1895 Cup final at Wembley.

Sponsor: Available.



NEW SIGNING

#2 TOMMY BRIERLEY

(Wing): Age 24. DOB 8/9/96.

One of three newcomers from Dewsbury Rams. Played in both our pre-season warm-up games against Featherstone and Halifax.

Sponsor: David and Val Webster.



NEW SIGNING

#26 JAMES BARRAN

(Half-back): Age 22. DOB 24/10/98.

Another local lad, who signed for Wigan from Waterhead and had a few years with the Super League side. Lives in Lees and back with his home-town club.

Sponsor: Available.



#4 CAMERON LEEMING

(Centre): Age 25. DOB 3/7/95.

Played ten games at the end of the 2019 promotion season and enjoyed nine wins. Played previously for Hunslet, Keighley, Dewsbury.

Sponsor: Anne Kearns.



#1 DAN ABRAM

(Full-back): Darren's lad. Age 25. DOB 11/11/95.

Previously played at St Helens, Barrow, Whitehaven, Rochdale. Played in all six games at the start of last season.

Sponsor: Rugby Oldham



#25 DANNY BRIDGE

(Second-row): Age 28. DOB 4/1/93.

Oldham-born, played in the academy squads at Warrington and Bradford, then Rochdale, a spell in Australia, then 'home' to Oldham.

Strong, try-scoring forward.
Sponsor: Gerald Brierley.



NEW SIGNING

#30 DECLAN GREGORY

(Hooker): Age 24. DOB 18/1/97.

Like, Hartley also trained with us all pre-season. Nippy from dummy half. Played previously at Rochdale, North Wales Crusaders and Castleford.

Sponsor: John and Lynda McAndrew.



NEW SIGNING

#28 JOE HARTLEY

(Centre/wing): Age 22. DOB 2/5/98.

Signed from Oldham St Anne's after training all pre-season with Roughyeds. Oldham-born, but lives in Huddersfield.

Sponsor: Available.



#22 KYRAN JOHNSON

(Wing): Age 26. DOB 23/3/94.

Ready to start his fourth season at Oldham, having signed from Featherstone Rovers ahead of the 2018 League 1 campaign. Can also play full-back.

Sponsor: Mick Harrop



#11 DANNY LANGTREE

(Second-row): Age 30. DOB 18/2/91.

In 2019, he was League 1's top forward try scorer with 17 in 17 games. Overall at Oldham, he has scored 89 tries in 172 games. Of the current squad, he leads in both tries and appearances.

Sponsor: David and Val Webster.



NEW SIGNING

#15 LUKE NELMES

(Prop): Age 27. DOB 7/6/93.

Tough, aggressive front-row forward who's in his second spell with Oldham, having been at Dewsbury in-between. One of three signed from Dewsbury for this season.

Sponsor: Gareth Hughes.



#20 JODE SHERIFFE

(Prop): Age 34. DOB 4/7/86.

Signed a year ago from Dewsbury Rams, but damaged a knee in training and didn't play until the recent friendlies. The 'daddy' of the squad, he has now joined the backroom team as an assistant coach.

Sponsor: Property Buying Company.



#12 LIAM BENT

(second-row): Age 23. DOB 11/10/97.

Tackling machine. Fans' player of the year in the last two years. Fitness fanatic. Rarely makes fewer than 50 tackles in a game.

Sponsor: Pam Taylor/LTS.



NEW SIGNING

#17 LIAM KIRK

(Prop): Age 23. DOB 26/3/97.

Joined Bradford Bulls Academy when he was 16 and played 82 senior games for the Bulls before signing for Oldham 'for a new challenge'.

Sponsor: Fab-Tec Installations Ltd.



#7 DAVE HEWITT

(Scrum-half): Age 25. DOB 4/11/95.

Ex-St Helens. In 101 Oldham games he's scored 34 tries, 83 goals, two drop goals, 304 points.

Quick off the mark with a big left-foot step.

Sponsor: Gordon Sedgwick.

(cont. on next page)



#13 MARTYN REILLY

(Prop): Age 25, DOB 5/1/96.

One of several experienced forwards recruited for this year. His journey to Oldham started at Wakefield under-9s, then Halifax, then Dewsbury. Sponsor: Dynesty Denture Solutions.



#19 MATTY FLETCHER

(Second-row): Age 21, DOB 15/2/2000.

Went to Bradford from Waterhead at the age of 16, then out to Australia playing for a Melbourne Storm feeder club. Signed for Oldham on his return. Sponsor: Waterhead under-13s.



#24 MAX ROBERTS

(Centre/hooker): Age 20, DOB 8/9/2000.

Another up-and-coming youngster from Wigan. Can play in a variety of positions. Sponsor: Available.



#6 LEWIS CHARNOCK

(Stand-off): Age 26, DOB 2/9/94.

Starting the second year of a two-year deal, but has made only six appearances because the 2020 season was curtailed. Worked with Matt Diskin at Bradford. Another ex-Bradford player. Sponsor: Available.



#14 MATTY WILKINSON

(Hooker): Age 24, DOB 13/6/96.

Broke a leg in pre-season training -- a blow for player and club. Since had surgery. Usually starts on the bench, then replaces Gareth Owen. Explosive from dummy half.



#31 JOHN HUTCHINGS

(Wing or centre): Age 21, DOB 8/9/99.

Signed a year ago from St Helens and made his debut at Barrow in a friendly -- at prop! Sponsor: Available.



#8 PHIL JOY

(Prop): Age 29, DOB 4/9/91.

Oldham-born, one of the longest-serving players at the club. Will soon have completed ten years at Roughyeds, having been a first-team prop since 2012. Sponsor: Past Players' Association.



#5 RYAN INCE

(Centre/wing): Age 24, DOB 16/9/96.

Played twice on loan before the 2020 season was curtailed and has since signed fully from Leigh. Scored 19 tries in 22 games for Widnes before moving to LSV. Sponsor: Oldham RL Heritage Trust.



#9 GARETH OWEN

(Hooker): Age 28, DOB 3/7/92.

Starting his fifth season as club captain, having succeeded Lewis Palfrey in 2017. Another ex-Waterhead player, he had 38 Super League games with Salford before joining his home-town club. Sponsor: Available.



#10 JACK SPENCER

(Prop): Age 30, DOB 21/12/90.

Joined us in 2016 when his dad, Lee, was assistant boss. Formerly with Salford, Halifax, Barrow and also having played in France and Australia. One more game for 100 in the Oldham jersey. Sponsor: Graeme Lee.



#16 TYLER DUPREE

(Prop): Age 21, DOB 8/2/2000.

Young prop signed from Leeds Rhinos. Was in the Rhinos first-team squad in 2019, having worked through the Academy system. Sponsor: Available.



#18 THE FANS

Dedicated to our 18th man for their awesome support both on and off the field. Players and management truly appreciate the contributions of our fans, who fully deserve a mythical No 18 shirt.

WE'LL TACKLE IT -- NO DANGER!

We at Oldham RLFC are playing our part in delivering the TACKLE-IT campaign in order to make a positive and lasting difference.

We are doing it because Black Lives Matter and Rugby League stands in solidarity with players, coaches, match officials, fans, volunteers, staff and supporters in the fight against racism and, indeed, discrimination of any kind in sport and in society generally.

Our commitment includes having a 13-second window at all league and cup games, starting today (Sat) with the visit of Barrow Raiders in the

Challenge Cup, in which the teams will line-up pre-match. It will then be up to the players themselves how they choose to approach it.

Increasing inclusion and diversity, while tackling all forms of discrimination, is key to the growth and success of Rugby League.

The TACKLE-IT action plan is sport-wide and sets out specific measures which the sport is taking together to deliver real change.

We'll TACKLE IT all right, you can count on that !

SPENCER SET TO JOIN TON-UP CLUB

Jack Spencer had two special reasons for hoping he was in the 17 for today's cup-tie.

Jolly Jack, as he is popularly known around the club, has 99 Roughyeds' appearances under his belt -- friendlies don't count -- and he's been waiting to hit the ton-up milestone since the home game against Dewsbury Rams on March 8 last year.

He's also a former Barrow player and players always like turning out against former employers.

"I've had to be patient, but when I finally hit the milestone and run out for my 100th game I'll be a proud man,"

Said Jack (30), son of a former assistant coach at the club.

He added:

"I've been at a few clubs, but when I arrived at Oldham in 2016, ahead of the club's step-up to the Championship, I quickly realised it was the club for me to put down my roots and settle in for the long stay."

"I've never wanted to move and now, five years on, I feel just the same."

The former Salford, Barrow and Halifax forward, who has also played in Australia and in France, didn't play in this year's first friendly at Featherstone because he was carrying a knock.

He had his first run-out for a year in the Halifax friendly and he came through unscathed.

"We're all just a little bit off the pace yet because we've been out so long,"

he added.

"That's the same for all clubs, of course, and, also like other clubs, we'll get up there the more matches we play."

"It will take a few weeks for us to get up to speed, but everyone is working really hard to get there."



CDX come up trumps again

CDX Security, our chief sponsors, were awarded 'The most trusted Security Provider in England' by the SME News Business Awards 2020.

Nearer to home, they've helped us out again in these difficult times by sponsoring our away-game travel during the 2021 Betfred Championship season, which starts with the visit of derby rivals Swinton Lions to Bower Fold on Good Friday, April 2, kick-off 5.15pm for live streaming on Our League.

Among our 11 away trips during the regular Championship season will be those to London Broncos, Newcastle Thunder, Toulouse Olympique and Whitehaven so we've a fair bit of travelling to do and CDX Security will be backing us over every mile.

Said managing director John Roddy: **"Given the current circumstances especially, we fully appreciate how difficult it must be for clubs to manage without fans through the turnstiles, so I met Chris (Hamilton) the other day to see if there was anything extra we could do to help."**

"As a result of that meeting, we will be sponsoring the coach for away travel in the hope that it will help."

On behalf of the club, chairman Chris Hamilton said:

"CDX have again come up trumps. It goes without saying that my personal thanks and those of Oldham RLFC go to CDX Security and to John and his management team."

"They're with us in spirit all the time, but this year especially so when we are burning up the miles on the motorways."

The company continues to expand across the country from its base and head office in Warrington.

Said John:

"We've always done a lot of work in the South of England, but we've got so much business down there now that we've had to open an office and an operational base in London."



Fletch goes back to his roots



ROUGHYEDS forward Matthew Fletcher has taken on the challenge of coaching Waterhead under-13s.

As a thank-you, parents and officials have had a whip-round to raise the £375 required to sponsor the young Oldham second-rower for the 2021 Betfred Championship season.

Fletcher (21), himself a product of a Waterhead youth system that has produced scores of professionals, headed by Kevin Sinfield and Barrie McDermott, said:

“I didn’t think twice when Jon Perks asked me to help out.”

“I moved to Waterhead from Saddleworth when I was 11 and I was at the club until I was 16, when I signed for Bradford.”

“I watch most of the first team’s home games because a few of my mates are in it. It’s a very closely knit club. We all look after each other.”

“I’ve never done any coaching before but people have been coaching me at all levels since I was nine and now it’s brilliant to be given the opportunity to put something back into the local community game, to which I owe so much to Waterhead.”

Matthew Taylor, a youth coach at Waterhead for several years, said the club was delighted to welcome ‘Fletch’ back on board.

He added:

“He’s one of our own and he’s sure to be instilling into the lads the good habits and principles that he himself was taught only a few years ago.”

“It helps when you’ve come through the system yourself. We’re looking forward to Matthew doing a great job for us with the under-13s.”

“We’re grateful too. That’s why we’ve raised the £375 to sponsor him at Roughyeds.”

Of the Roughyeds’ 29-man squad plus three coaches -- Matt Diskin, Brendan Sheridan and Jode Sheriffe -- only ten are still available to be sponsored.

They are stand-off Lewis Charnock, club captain and hooker Gareth Owen (another Waterhead product), young prop Tyler Dupree, experienced second-row man Shaun Pick and youngsters Callum Green, Max Roberts, James Barran, Ben Holcroft, Joe Hartley and John Hutchings.



Fletcher (left) and Gaz Owen on defensive duty in the Halifax game

Sponsored already are:

Dan Abram (Rugby Oldham)
Tommy Brierley (David and Val Webster)
Ben Heaton (Stephen Butterfield)
Cam Leeming (Anne Kearns)
Ryan Ince (Oldham RL Heritage Trust)
Dave Hewitt (Gordon Sedgwick)
Phil Joy (Past Players’ Assn)
Jack Spencer (Graeme Lee)
Danny Langtree (David and Val Webster)
Liam Bent (Pam Taylor/LTS)
Martyn Reilly (Dynesty Denture Solutions)
Matty Wilkinson (John and Lynda McAndrew)

Luke Nelmes (Gareth Hughes)
Liam Kirk (Fab-Tec Installations Ltd)
Matthew Fletcher (Waterhead under-13s)
Kyran Johnson (Mick Harrop)
Danny Bridge (Gerald Brierley)
Declan Gregory (John and Lynda McAndrew).

Matt Diskin (Property Buying Company)
Brendan Sheridan (Property Buying Company)
Jode Sheriffe (Property Buying Company)

Roughyeds offer their heartiest and grateful thanks to all sponsors, many of whom have been backing players for years and, at the same time, giving the club a massive financial boost.

To sponsor any of the ten who are still available please ring the club on 07904 898177, preferably Monday to Friday in normal office hours.

WILKY AIMS TO BE BACK BEFORE END OF SEASON **by ROGER HALSTEAD**

MATTY Wilkinson, who broke his left leg in pre-season training, is preparing himself mentally for tough times ahead and for the thought of watching Roughyeds either from the Bower Fold seats or on Our League.

He has set himself a target for getting back on the field --- by the end of the season --- but he knows that, for him, the summer of 2021 will be one to forget.

The 24-year-old Leigh lad is currently confined to barracks and waiting for a consultation with his surgical team at Wigan Infirmary following an operation to put a plate in his leg.



An MRI scan revealed not only a fracture but snapped ligaments as well or, as Matty himself put it:

“The worst possible scenario.”

He can now look forward to the hospital consultation on Monday; to further surgery eventually to remove the plate; and then to months of rehab and general fitness work before he can even contemplate the thought of re-joining all his Roughyeds mates in squad training.

“It’s a sickener, for sure, but these things happen,” he said, philosophically.

“I’m not the first rugby player to break a leg and I won’t be the last. I’ve just got to come to terms with it mentally, be prepared to work hard on my rehab and put my faith in the medical people.”

“We’ve got a baby boy, Charlie, who’s just one year old, so my partner Molly has her hands full in looking after all three of us. I can’t get to work on the railways for three or four months, but luckily I’ve got insurance so that will take care of that.”

“I can’t do much right now other than sit on the couch and watch TV. I’m watching any sport I can find, even cricket, to pass time, but the one good thing to come out of it is that I see a lot more of Molly and Charlie. I think Charlie is going to play rugby and be a Roughyed in years to come.”

“I think back to the night it happened and I can’t believe how simple it was. I was just carrying the ball in, as I’ve done many thousands of times over the years. and two of the big lads tackled me.”

“I’ve been tackled like that thousands of times, but this time one of the lads fell across my leg. It was as simple as that.”

Dave Hewitt and Danny Langtree, close friends who both live in St Helens, had travelled to training together in Danny’s car, so Dave drove Wilky in Wilky’s car back home to Leigh and Danny followed in his car so that he and Dave could then complete the journey to St Helens.

Wilky’s Dad then drove him to Wigan Infirmary, but the hospital sent him home because the leg was too badly swollen at that stage for the medics to do anything with it.

The best wishes of all fans and everyone at the club are sent to Wilky as he starts the long haul back.





OLDHAM RLFC



BARROW RAIDERS



01	Dan Abram	Rugby Oldham
02	Tommy Brierley	David and Val Webster
03	Ben Heaton	Stephen Butterfield
04	Cameron Leeming	Anne Kearns
05	Ryan Ince	Oldham RL Heritage Trust
06	Lewis Charnock	-
07	Dave Hewitt	Gordon Sedgwick
08	Phil Joy	Past Players Association
09	Gareth Owen	-
10	Jack Spencer	Graeme Lee
11	Danny Langtree	David and Val Webster
12	Liam Bent	Pam Taylor/ LTS
13	Martyn Reilly	Dynasty Denture Solutions
14	Matty Wilkinson	John & Lynda McAndrew
15	Luke Nelmes	Gareth Hughes
16	Tyler Dupree	-
17	Liam Kirk	Fab-tek Installations Limited
19	Matthew Fletcher	Waterhead under 13s
20	Jode Sheriffe	The Property Buying Co
21	Shaun Pick	-
22	Kyran Johnson	Mick Harrop
23	Callum Green	-
24	Max Roberts	-
25	Danny Bridge	Gerald Brierley
26	James Barran	-
27	Ben Holcroft	-
28	Joe Hartley	-
30	Dec Gregory	John and Lynda McAndrew
31	John Hutchings	-

Matt Diskin	Property Buying Company
Brendan Sheridan	Property Buying Company
Jode Sheriffe	Property Buying Company

01	Luke Cresswell
02	Tee Riston
03	Declan Hulme
04	Mark Tyson
05	Shane Toal
06	Jamie Dallimore
07	Ryan Johnson
08	Ryan Duffy
09	Nathan Mossop
10	Car Forster
11	Danny Morrow
12	Jarrad Stack
13	Jordan Walne
14	Jake Carter
15	Dan Toal
16	Tom Hopkins
17	Adam Walne
19	Bran Crellin
20	Connor Terrill
21	Adam Ford
22	Carl McBain
23	Joe Sharratt
25	Calllum Bustin
26	Ryan Shaw

Coach: Paul Crarey

Referee: M. Griffiths	Reserve Referee: A. Sweet
Touch Judge 1: P. Brooke	M Com: R. Connolly
Touch Judge 2: A. Smith	Time Keeper: P. Taberner

