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FROM THE CHAIR

It seems a while since the last Newsletter but I can assure all Rugby Oldham members that we have not been resting on our laurels. Far from it.

The curtain has just come down on the first season of the Rugby Oldham backed Roughyeds' Reserves which I'm sure will now move from strength-to-strength eventually providing that first step of opportunity for each and every local rugby league playing youngster who wishes to progress in the professional code. The Rugby Oldham Tri-Team Challenge has been voted a sparkling success, the cup being lifted by Saddleworth Rangers. And finally, but by no means least, we have given assistance to the Oldham Service Area by getting involved with both the Oldham junior and youth cup finals and the U12 and U13 inter-town finals.

You will go on to read in this Newsletter about an exciting new Rugby Oldham instigated competition involving all six clubs that currently make up the Oldham Amateur RL... Higginshaw, Hollinwood, Rochdale Cobras, St Annes, Saddleworth Rangers and Waterhead and - in conjunction with the Oldham Service Area - about a new Under 14 Tri-Team Challenge Trophy competition. You will read too about the Trust's intention to sit down with the directors of Oldham RLFC to discuss the Reserves' second season.

I hope that all of the above might have contributed to raise the profile of the sport of rugby league in our town. Rugby Oldham is fast becoming a local "brand name" which is something in which we can all be proud.

Your continued support is a vital cog in our continuing success. Without it we can't move forward. Please ensure that you renew your membership and if at all possible persuade a friend, colleague or member of your family to also join the Trust.

Yours Iain Taylor Chairman.

RESERVES

In the March edition of the Rugby Oldham **Newsletter** the Trust's Community & Media Relation's man Geoff Cooke wrote

"Rugby Oldham has been negotiating with the directors of Oldham RLFC in an effort to establish pathways for the future development of rugby league in the town. On the back of a highly successful Tri-Team Challenge promoting the amateur game, Rugby Oldham was keen to aid the development of a different sort. To that end cordial talks were entered into with the Board of the professional club which resulted in Rugby Oldham agreeing to become the principle backer of the club's new Reserve team.

The intention behind Rugby Oldham's initiative is to provide a ladder of opportunity for Oldham boys to progress to professional rugby with their home town team and to stop the drain of talent out of town to the likes of Salford and Rochdale (amongst others)."

Congratulations then to the Oldham club and in particular to both John Hough and Leo Casey who've done an excellent job in guiding the Rugby Oldham backed youngsters through the 2008 campaign.



It's been a tough first season - nobody was promising anything else - and whilst I'm sure that the lads would have liked to have won a few more matches they have played some excellent and exciting rugby league. A resounding 'well done' to each and every one of those youngsters who decided to grasp the first rung of the Roughyeds' ladder of opportunity - each will have gained from the experience. It's now time for an end-of-season review and for some, if not all, to take the next step in what surely will turn out to be an exciting sporting career.

I'm sure that Rugby Oldham will be looking to sit-down with the club's directors to discuss the 2009 season.

OLDHAM RL SERVICE AREA

Elsewhere in the Newsletter Geoff Cooke explains the details of the new Junior Tri-Team Challenge competition to be run in conjunction with the Service Area and since the last Newsletter was circulated Rugby Oldham has also backed the **Oldham Junior & Youth Finals** staged at Saddleworth Rangers' Shaw Hall Bank Road ground and the **Oldham RL Service Area U12 and U13 finals day** played at Counthill. Ultimately, the intention is to stimulate the setting up of a scholarship scheme involving Oldham RLFC and the Oldham RL Service Area.

2008-2009 RUGBY OLDHAM CHALLENGE

Rugby Oldham is proud to announce a replacement competition for our local amateur clubs following the success of last season's Tri-Team Challenge which cannot be continued because of the unfortunate relegation of Waterhead from National Conference Division 1.

The advantage of the new competition is that it incorporates all five local clubs, namely Higginshaw, Hollinwood, St. Annes, Saddleworth Rangers and Waterhead plus a sixth club—the newly formed Rochdale Cobras. The competition will last the whole season and involve league matches only. Three points will be awarded for a win, two for a draw and one for a defeat by a margin of 12 points or less. In addition, one bonus point will be awarded for every ten points scored in a match and three bonus points for conceding less than ten, two for less than twenty and one for less than thirty. The format takes no account of the level at which a club plays and so all have a chance of winning if they have a successful season.

We will compile a league table which will be updated weekly and printed in the local press and possibly the trade newspapers. A percentage system will operate should clubs fulfil an unequal number of fixtures. The winners will be awarded the Rugby Oldham Cup, won last year by Saddleworth Rangers.

The Oldham Evening Chronicle has included a four page feature in Wednesday the 4th of September's paper which will serve a dual purpose of both promoting the new competition and celebrating the opening of the 2008-09 season.

To further promote the local scene, Rugby Oldham will place an advert in the Oldham Evening Chronicle each Thursday publicising the forthcoming weekend's fixtures.

Builder's Merchants Jos. Parr (Alco) will once again be sponsoring a man-of-steel competition.

JUNIOR TRI-TEAM CHALLENGE

At junior level Rugby Oldham is pleased to announce a Tri-Team Challenge for the Under 14's as the St. Annes, Saddleworth Rangers and Higginshaw clubs will all compete in the same division. A new trophy will be awarded - the Rugby Oldham Junior Cup. Man-of-the-match and man-of-the-series awards will also be made.

The format has been agreed with Oldham Service Area officials and we hope that, as with the seniors, the competition will stimulate interest in and attendance at the various fixtures.

RUGBY LEAGUE WORLD CUP

On the occasion of the Australia v. England World Cup fixture in Melbourne on Sunday 2nd November which kicks off at approx. 9am UK time we are proposing to stage a World Cup breakfast (full English breakfast plus pay bar facilities) at a venue yet to be decided but which will obviously be local. Tickets can be booked in advance priced at £10 each on 07885 277396, 07801 705982 or 01457 875084.

We hope this will prove a popular attraction and, if so, repeat breakfasts could possibly be arranged for the game against New Zealand on Saturday 8th November and/or for a semi-final on either Saturday or Sunday 15th and 16th November or for the final on Saturday 22nd November should England qualify. We hope as many people as possible will support this venture: once again a unique initiative on the part of Rugby Oldham.

AGM / ELECTIONS

We have not sent you a Newsletter since Spring, so we should update you on what happened at the 2008 AGM. Most importantly, Geoff Cooke gave a short presentation which brought those members present up to date on what we had been doing over the previous year - more of this elsewhere - but there were also changes in the make-up of the board, which I should outline to you.

In particular, Michael Ackroyd, who has been the Trust's Treasurer since we began, has been forced to stand down as a result of new work and family commitments. It would be remiss of us not to thank him hugely for the devoted work he has done on behalf of the Trust in this important role, as well as to wish him well on your behalf for the future. Like the others who have left the board over the past couple of years, Michael remains a Trust member, and has offered to continue to support us in whatever way he can in the future - for which we are very grateful.

This, of course, leaves a vacancy on the board for a Treasurer. Although the existing board members are covering the duties pro tem, we are very keen to recruit a proper replacement for Michael as soon as possible. So if there is a member who is willing to fill the position, it would be much appreciated if he/she would make initial contact with one of the existing board members; we would then obviously get back in touch to arrange an appropriate meeting.

With the changes which were finalised at the May '08 AGM, the full Rugby Oldham board is now :

Elected Members: Iain Taylor (Chair), Iain Ashworth, Dave Blackburn, Steve Brown, Geoff Cooke, Charlotte Deakin, Brian Walker.

Co-opted Members: Michael Turner (Heritage Trust), Roger Halstead (Oldham RLFC), Alun Goodwin (Oldham Amateur League), Garry Hepworth (Oldham Service Area).

Ian Wilson (Secretary)

WEBSITE RE-LAUNCH

The Rugby Oldham website has a new look. With all the new activities and competitions going on, we decided to redesign the site to complement all that was happening.

Now, thanks to the great work by one of our Trust members, Mark Wadsworth, we have a website which has both a fresh feel, and an up-to-date look. The navigation around the site is easier too and **Latest News** will be updated much more frequently. There are new sections dedicated to major projects in which Rugby Oldham is involved - particularly **Oldham Reserves** and two brand new competitions for the **Oldham Amateur RL** and the **Oldham Service Area** for the forthcoming 2008 / 2009 season. In addition, all the existing sections are still there, but with much more in-depth information.



Visit the Web-Shop. By shopping on-line Rugby Oldham can benefit by between 1% & 10% of the purchase value and it doesn't cost you a penny more! Many of the big names are there so if you are buying that CD from Amazon or Play - or booking your next holiday - we would ask you do so to via our web-shop and help the trust help the rugby community of Oldham.

WHERE ARE THOSE SHIRTS?

The stand-out red-and-white-hooped Roughyeds' shirt has been spotted far and wide over the last few months. Seen on TV worn by a member of the barmy-army whilst supporting England's cricket team in New Zealand, snapped in Toronto by an Oldham fan over there on holiday, again on TV - but this time worn by a mud-splattered young lady at the Glastonbury festival and so-on-and-so-forth. Have you spotted Oldham's trade mark colours in any 'unexpected' locations?



Ruby and Elsa Lawrence were both born and bred in California, near San Francisco, although their mother was brought up an Oldham fan from the Goodway, Foy, Worrall, Flanagan, Ashton days at Watersheddings. They saw their first ever game this year - in the dramatic winds at Blackpool, not something they had ever experienced before!



It's Not Unusual!!

Spotted at a Tom Jones concert in New Zealand

NEW SHIRTS



TOP: HARRY MAJOR, STUART WHITEHEAD, BRIAN LORD, CHARLIE BOTT, JOHN NOON, GEOFF ROBINSON, TUG WILSON, DAVE PARKER, LEN MCINTYRE

SEATED: JOHN DONOVAN, GEOFF SIMS, FRANK DYSON, PETER SMETHURST, TREVOR SIMMS. KNEELING: JACK PYCROFT, VINCE NESTOR

The 1964 Challenge Cup semi-final Oldham RLFC Squad

A new retro shirt will be launched in October with a view to the Christmas market. The shirt will be all white and will carry the Oldham town crest and the legend "Lancashire Cup Winners 1956-1957-1958". Oldham played in all white in each of these Finals against St. Helens, Wigan and St. Helens respectively.

Incidentally, Oldham first wore the all white strip as far back as the early 1900's when they were never far away from the honours and some of us will fondly remember the Roughyeds playing in this strip during the 1964 Challenge Cup semi-final matches against Hull Kingston Rovers. The shirt will also carry the Rugby Oldham and Oldham Rugby League Heritage Trust motifs on the back. This will be a limited edition of 100 shirts manufactured in 100% cotton so we advise early orders to avoid disappointment. The shirt will sell at £35 and will be available in sizes 36" (small), 38/40" (medium), 42/44" (large), 46/48" (XL) and 50/52" (XXL).

The Shirts can be pre-ordered on one of the following numbers:
0161 620 9583, 01457 875084 or 07900 260295



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