

## FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome once again to Trust members. The main purpose of this newsletter is to give formal notification of our Annual General Meeting, and there is a letter to that effect enclosed. Geoff Cooke has also provided an update for you on what has recently been going on in terms of the Trust's community-related activities. I should also update you on the latest state of play with regard to the ground and the Trust's involvement in its future development.

Since we last contacted you, there has unfortunately been, as I write, no further progress in connection with the club's long-term arrangements with regard to its basis for playing fixtures at Whitebank. It must be immensely frustrating for all directly concerned. Those of you who are regular attendees at matches will have seen that there has been no significant work done on the ground this season yet, and with the league season now well under way, and the issue of the club's league status for season 2012 becoming increasingly a vital live one, the lack of improvement work is becoming more and more of a concern. However, given lack of certainty about the basis of the club's status at the ground, it is of course entirely understandable that no significant expenditure can be sensibly undertaken until the position is properly established.

The frustration about our own position with regard to committing help to the club with regard to the development of the ground is, therefore, still also as it was. We are, of course, still ready to meet with Chris Hamilton as soon as it is deemed worthwhile to do so.

The only positive factor currently on the horizon was contained in Chris' notes in the club's match programme for the game v Doncaster on May 1<sup>st</sup> : 'we expect to be able to make some significant announcements about the ground and the future development of the club, during the six-week gap before the next home game, on June 12<sup>th</sup>'. Let us hope, therefore, that we are able to report some worthwhile progress direct to you at the Trust's AGM, which is of course to be held before the June 12<sup>th</sup> home game v South Wales Scorpions.

Regards,

Iain Taylor, Chairman

## RUGBY OLDHAM CHALLENGE 2010-2011

The Rugby Oldham Senior Club Challenge was quite different to the competitions of previous years. This stemmed from the fact that both Saddleworth Rangers and St. Annes had been promoted and were therefore less likely to produce the stunning results of previous years at a higher level of competition. This opened up the Challenge to the Oldham amateur Leagues other member clubs which is just what it was designed to do.

Two clubs in particular took advantage and it became clear fairly early that Rochdale Cobras and Hollinwood were going to enjoy good seasons. The lead in the Challenge changed hands several times and was a ding-dong tussle until the last few games when Hollinwood finally ran out of steam. Although Hollinwood outscored Cobras in the points for column the situation was reversed in the points against. So in the end it could be said that '*it was the defence wot won it*'. Hollinwood perhaps succumbed to a good cup run and injuries that depleted their resources.

However in a season that fell into two distinct phases because of the winter weather Rochdale Cobras showed the consistency required to carry off the trophy. Our congratulations on their achievement and thanks to all our amateur clubs for the sterling work they do to keep the game alive and well in the town.

The table below indicates the position as at May 8<sup>th</sup>. There is still one fixture to be completed, Waterhead v Egremont on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Rugby Oldham Amateur Club Challenge									
Team	P	W	D	L	L (u12)	ABP	DBP	Tot	%
Rochdale Cobras	18	11	1	6	3	46	33	117	6.5%
Hollinwood	20	11	2	6	3	55	28	123	6.2%
St Annes	22	9	-	13	5	47	18	97	4.4%
Saddleworth	26	11	1	14	6	46	23	110	4.2%
Higginshaw	20	7	-	13	6	24	15	66	3.3%
Waterhead	21	7	-	14	3	28	16	68	3.2%
Fitton Hill & Hathershaw	26	6	-	19	2	18	12	52	2.0%
<small>ABP = Attacking Bonus Points            DBP = Defensive Bonus Points            Table after games on 8/5/11</small>									

# RUGBY OLDHAM JUNIOR CLUB CHALLENGE

# ROUND-UP

The Junior Club Challenge in 2010-11 was a close fought affair right through the season. All four competing clubs were in with a chance of taking the honours at some point during the campaign. This was particularly gratifying for newcomers Milnrow Cobras whose two sides at U14 and U13 levels acquitted themselves well and whose results promise a bright future.

In the end Oldham St. Annes were worthy winners because consistency accumulates points. Not only were St. Annes consistent in their results and scores but they did it across three different age groups and were in fact the only club with teams at each of the qualifying age ranges. To have three good sides at each of U15, U14 and U13 levels is a tribute to a well structured club with good coaches and commitment.

Of course similar sentiments apply to all the competitors because it takes great dedication and organisation to provide the facilities and training our youngsters enjoy. Everyone involved is deserving of the highest praise. The final table is attached.

Rugby Oldham once again sponsored the Ben Powell man-of-the-match trophy at the Standard Cup final held at Oldham RUFC's Manor Park ground on Good Friday. After a competitive first half Saddleworth Rangers ran away with the game to win 62-12 against a game Folly Lane who were making their first ever appearance in the final. Rugby Oldham media and community relations officer Geoff Cooke was on hand to present the trophy to Saddleworth prop HAYDEN JEANS whose barnstorming display did so much to lay the platform for victory. Congratulations to Ray Hicks, Phil Bradbury and the Oldham Amateur League officials who staged such a well organised day.

Rugby Oldham also sponsored the medals at Junior Finals Day held at Waterhead on Sunday May 8<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to our members' continued support we are able to assist the town's juniors through the excellent Service Area whose officials do so much to develop talent in the town.

The Joseph Parr (ALCO Ltd.) sponsored Rugby Oldham Man of Steel competition has been fiercely contested this season. As Saddleworth Rangers began their campaign earlier than anyone else it was one of their players setting the early pace. Shaun Robinson was the man in question but his mid season elevation to the professional ranks with Oldham RLFC put paid to his challenge. By that time Jo Qanuici of Rochdale Cobras had emerged as competition leader but also in the frame were Dave Sweeney of Higginshaw, Andy Gorey of Hollinwood, Mick Coates of Saddleworth and Mark Fitton of newcomers Fitton Hill and Hathershaw. After the enforced winter break both Eric Johnson and Jordan White of St. Annes started picking up regular nominations, though unfortunately for Johnson some of his were in cup competitions which are not eligible for inclusion. The winner will be announced at the OARL end of season dinner.

Rugby Oldham Junior Club Challenge

Team	P	W	D	L	L (u12)	ABP	DBP	Tot	%
St Annes	55	32	1	22	12	94	100	304	5.5%
Saddleworth	37	22	1	14	4	46	66	181	4.9%
Waterhead	35	17	2	15	7	53	53	168	4.8%
Milnrow Cobras	42	21	2	19	8	55	55	197	4.7%

ABP = Attacking Bonus Points  
DBP = Defensive Bonus Points

The matches played column indicates the combined number of U13, U14 and U15's games.

OLDHAM EVENING  
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