

FROM THE CHAIR

Included in this Newsletter are details of the 2012 AGM of the Trust, as well as information about the composition of the Trust's board. It is also, though, appropriate that we update you on what we have been doing in recent months, in particular with regard to the development of the ground, which has always been our primary reason for existing.

In the Newsletter which we sent out to members 18 months ago, we informed you about the positive and constructive meeting which two of our board members had held with Chris Hamilton in February, 2010. Sadly, that was the last meeting which took place between Rugby Oldham board members and the club. Prior to that, of course, the Trust had sponsored the then newly-formed Reserves U23 side, in 2008, followed in 2009 by a financial contribution to sponsor 13 named local players - a total amount of £8,369.

At the time of our last meeting Whitebank was just coming into use and it was anticipated that further meetings would be held once legal issues surrounding the stadium had been sorted out. Despite our best efforts, however, we have been unable to persuade Chris Hamilton to agree to an update meeting.

Thus in September of last year representatives from the Rugby Oldham board attended a forum held in the social club at Whitebank at which the club's chairman presented development plans that should ensure that the ground would be accepted into the Championship should promotion from Championship 1 be achieved in 2012.

At this public meeting the Trust's development officer, Geoff Cooke, made an offer to help fund the cost of terracing planned for the Whitebank Rd. side of the ground. Since then the Trust has again been unsuccessful in arranging a meeting with Chris Hamilton, the last effort being via a letter hand-delivered to the club's offices on February 20 this year. Despite several prompts there has again been no response.

We can only conclude that the club does not wish to get into any relationship with the Trust, for some reason. If this is because it has no need for any funds that we might be able to help to generate, then we can only express our delight at it being in such a happy position, particularly given the aim - which, of course, we share completely - of promotion at the end of the 2012 season, and a ground which is suitable/acceptable for Championship RL in season 2013. In reality, of course, this is pretty unlikely. We should also point out that the Trust has more than once in the past made an offer of making a financial contribution in return for some involvement in decision-making : an offer to join with the club in establishing a Ground Development Fund, in 2010, and, much earlier, an offer to contribute funds gradually over time in return for a proportionate share in the club's capital. These offers too were either rejected or ignored.

The obvious question, given the circumstances which currently pertain, is how the Trust should now react to the situation which we find ourselves in. The current board has thought long and hard about this, and has come to the conclusion that, at least for a while, we should operate on a 'watching brief' basis. We would continue with the activities which we currently engage in, in terms of giving support and some financial help to amateur and youth rugby league in the town, whilst also keeping ourselves available to enter into discussions with the club aimed at seeing how and to what extent we might be able to help with regard to ground development, in case it should have a change of heart and choose to resume communication with us. At the same time, we feel that it is important that the board should inform you, the membership, of what has been happening over recent months and years.

FROM THE CHAIR (CONT)

We hope that you agree that this is the most appropriate policy for the Trust to follow at the present time. IF YOU DO NOT, it would be very much appreciated if you could let someone on the board know – or indeed come to the forthcoming AGM to express your view.

We continue to aim to be a completely open and democratic organisation, and are very well aware that we only exist to represent the views of a significant part of the town's rugby league community. The vast majority of people who have joined the Trust over the years have chosen to renew their annual membership each year, and we have so far taken this to mean that they are in broad agreement with what we have been doing; we hope that this will continue to be the case.

Regards,

Iain Taylor, Chairman

OLDHAM'S SPORTING HEROES

In this Olympic year Gallery Oldham will be celebrating local sporting achievements with the *Oldham Sporting Heroes* exhibition which has been selected as one of the North West Cultural Olympiad projects.

Joining in the celebration, and to mark Gallery Oldham's 10th birthday, Oldham R.L. Heritage Trust will be exhibiting in the adjacent Community Gallery a fabulous array of paintings and photographs from the Trust's *Art in Rugby* collection. The exhibition, which runs from the 14th of July through to the 20th of October, will be sure to prove as popular as the Trust's last show at the Gallery which produced a record attendance. Keep an eye out for further details through the local press. Admission is free.



Watercolour of former Oldham forward Jason Clegg painted by Steve Bennett.

NOTICE OF AGM

Notice of Annual General Meeting, Sunday May 20 2012

The meeting will be held at the Famous King George (Hollins Rd), in the upstairs room, beginning at 1pm, to conduct the following business:

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Minutes of the 2011 AGM
3. Board Membership
4. Financial / Membership Summary
5. Proposal to approve the accounts for the period ended 31 December 2011
6. Proposal to replace the audit by an annual review of accounts for 2013
7. Proposal to make changes to Trust's Rules
8. Report on Trust Activities
9. AOB

Note: it is worth adding a brief note here which relates to two of the above agenda items; this should help to shorten the formal business of the meeting and so make more time available for item 8 and broader discussion amongst those present.

Re: item 3, there were four nominations received for the four vacant positions on the Trust's board. Accordingly, there was no necessity to conduct an election.

Re: item 7, Supporters Direct, under whose overall auspices we operate, has recently introduced a new, revised set out rules for supporters' trusts like ours. They differ from our existing rules – themselves exactly as recommended by Supporters Direct when we were founded – largely in that they represent a tidying up and simplifying of some clauses, though there are a couple of additional issues covered which were not relevant in the past. These will be explained at the AGM, a copy of the new proposed rules having been lodged on the Trust's website two weeks before the meeting.

Ian Wilson

Secretary

RUGBY OLDHAM AMATEUR CLUB CHALLENGE

Rugby Oldham Amateur Club Challenge									
Team	P	W	D	L	L (u12)	ABP	DBP	Tot	%
Waterhead	5	4	-	1	1	15	12	40	8.0%
Hollinwood	18	7	-	11	3	18	16	58	3.2%
St Annes	6	1	-	5	3	6	6	18	3.0%
Fitton Hill	21	7	-	14	4	17	18	60	2.9%
Saddleworth	6	1	-	5	2	7	3	15	2.5%
Higginshaw	18	3	-	15	2	11	6	28	1.6%

ABP = Attacking Bonus Points
DBP = Defensive Bonus Points
Table after games on 16/04/12

RUGBY OLDHAM JUNIOR CLUB CHALLENGE

Rugby Oldham Junior Club Challenge									
Team	P	W	D	L	L (u12)	ABP	DBP	Tot	%
St Annes	45	21	3	21	10	68	73	220	4.9%
Waterhead	26	7	1	18	8	27	30	88	3.4%
Rochdale Cobras	32	13	-	19	2	32	34	107	3.3%
Saddleworth	16	4	-	12	1	14	11	38	2.4%

ABP = Attacking Bonus Points
DBP = Defensive Bonus Points
The matches played column indicates the combined number of U13, U14 and U15's games.
Table after games on 16/04/12

The Rugby Oldham Amateur Club Challenge for 2011-2012 is complicated by the move to Summer rugby so this year needs to be extended into the Autumn before a winner can be decided.

The Winter competition was contested by Higginshaw, Hollinwood and Fitton Hill & Hathershaw with the latter establishing a lead in the table for the first time in their short history.

However, the onset of the new Summer season has changed the picture dramatically largely because of the fantastic start to the season made by Waterhead.

The attached table shows the latest position with Waterhead having a commanding lead from the highest percentage of points to games played ever seen in the history of the competition so far. Although there is a long way to go, this suggests that this year's competition is Waterhead's to lose unless St. Annes or Saddleworth can improve their results significantly.

The Junior Club Challenge covering the age groups U13, U14 and U15 has been dominated by St. Annes from the outset which is no mean feat as they are the only club to be fielding sides at each of the age groups mentioned.

MAN OF STEEL

The Man of Steel competition will no doubt be closely contested all season.

Because of the Winter league, Higginshaw's Jordan Hanley is the early pacesetter with 5 nominations as man-of-the-match. Peter Davies of Hollinwood has 3 but with the Summer season only just into its stride Matthew Bottom of Saddleworth Rangers is already on a score of 3 with plenty of games to come.

GET TOGETHER

Officials of Rugby Oldham, the Oldham Rugby Amateur League and the Oldham RLFC Former Players' Association recently attended a joint meeting held at St. Annes Rugby League Club to discuss ways in which each of the three organisations could be of further benefit to the game in the town and to each other. A number of topics will be pursued.

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ROUGHYEDS & KANGAROOS

A dinner organised by the Trust to celebrate the 25th and 100th anniversary of two tremendous Oldham vs. Australia matches was a great success.

Terry Flanagan, Mick Worrall, Hussein M'Barki, Stuart Raper Colin Hawkyard plus coach Frank Myler turned out to represent the Oldham side of '86 and Australia's tour vice-captain Royce Simmons was on hand to make sure the green & gold's at least had a say on the night! The '86 Aussies rightly earned the title *Unbeatables* but it was the Watersheddings lads who came closest to lowering their standard losing by the margin of just one converted try.

The match itself was a light the blue touch-paper sort of affair but to ensure that there was no fireworks on the night GMR commentator and former Oldham and Saddleworth Rangers' player Kevin Fitzpatrick along with British Lion Brian Noble were brought in to manage events!



From left: Mick Worrall, Hussein M'Barki, Frank Myler, Terry Flanagan, Iain Taylor (Rugby Oldham), Ray Hicks, Kevin Fitzpatrick

Photo provided by the Saddleworth Independent

STANDARD CHALLENGE CUP MAN-OF-MATCH SPONSORED BY TRUST

The Ben Powell Memorial Trophy, annually awarded to the outstanding player in the Oldham Standard Challenge Cup Final is the most prized individual trophy on the local amateur rugby league scene.

Rugby Oldham was again pleased to sponsor the man-of-the-match award for this season's final played out between Rochdale Mayfield and Saddleworth Rangers at Oldham Rugby Union's Manor Park on Easter Monday.

The Rochdale side ran out worthy 50-24 winners. The decision concerning the award of the Ben Powell Trophy was made by former Oldham RLFC and Lancashire star Ray Clark who rightly selected Mayfield's stand out scrum-half Taureen Sheehan.



Brian Walker (Rugby Oldham) presents the Ben Powell Trophy to man-of-the-match, Taureen Sheehan.

(Photo' courtesy of the Oldham Chronicle)

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