

CENTENARY BROCHURE



Sponsored by



THE
GEORGE
HOTEL
HUDDERSFIELD

The Birthplace of Rugby League



IAN THOMAS
1983 - 1995



HAROLD WAGSTAFF
1906 - 1925



DAVE VALENTINE
1947 - 1957



RAY MARKHAM
1933 - 1939



KEN SENIOR
1962 - 1979



LIONEL COOPER
1947 - 1955



ALEX FIDDES
1933 - 1947



ALBERT ROSENFELD
1908 - 1921

CLUB HONOURS

7 Times Championship Winners
1911-12, 1912-13, 1914-15, 1928-29,
1929-30, 1948-49, 1961-62

Beaten Finalists
1913-14, 1919-20, 1922-1923, 1931-32, 1945-46, 1949-50

Division Two Champions
1974-75

Division Two Premiership Finalists
1995

6 Times Challenge Cup Winners
1912-13, 1914-15, 1919-20, 1932-33, 1944-45, 1952-53

Beaten Finalists
1934-35, 1961-62

11 Times Yorkshire League Winners
1911-12, 1912-13, 1913-14, 1914-15, 1919-20, 1921-22,
1928-29, 1929-30, 1948-49, 1949-50, 1951-52

Eastern Division Beaten Finalists
1962-63

12 Times Yorkshire Cup Winners
1909-10, 1911-12, 1913-14, 1914-15, 1918-19, 1919-20,
1926,27, 1931-32, 1938-39, 1950-51, 1952-53, 1957-58

Beaten Finalists
1910-11, 1923-24, 1925-26, 1930-31, 1937-38,
1942-43, 1949-50, 1960-61

Third Division Champions
1991-92

1993 European Cup Winners
(Alex Angle Trophy)

Records
Attendance 35,136
Leeds V. Wakefield (RL Cup Semi-Final) 19th April 1947
Home 32,912 V. Wigan (League) 4th March 1950
Goals (Season) 147 by B Gronow, 1919-20
Tries (Season) 80 by A Rosenfeld, 1913-14
Tries 52 by Greg Austin - record for a Centre 1994-95
Points (Season) 332 by P Devery, 1952-53
Goals (match) 18 by M Holland V. Swinton Park
28th february 1914
Tries (match) 10 by L Cooper V. Keighley
17th November 1951
Points (Match) 39 by M Holland V. Swinton Park
28th february 1914
Highest Score 142-4 V. Blackpool Gladiators 1994-95

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	Alan Lewis	A fan - with claret blood and a heart of gold
	Mick Rhodes	Club Historian - who never ceased to amaze me with his knowledge of Fartown no matter how far we went back
	Chris Roberts	Current Fartown Reporter at the Examiner whose help was invaluable especially with the loan of pictures
	Neil Shuttleworth	Former Director - a more enthusiastic fan would be harder to find.
	Ian & Gwen Thomas	Huddersfield Town Historians - despite busy schedules still found time to help the 'other team'
	Neil Whittaker	Stats Man - whose volumes of figures made sure that most things were right.

To all the above for help, assistance and enthusiasm in producing this Centenary Brochure.

A Sincere Thank You.

Brian Carruthers
Commercial Manager Huddersfield R.L.F.C.

FOREWORD

This brochure has been produced as a tribute to the people who have played for and supported "Fartown" for the last hundred years. It is hoped that this centenary brochure will evoke many memories; the triumphs and the tears of bygone years brought back into focus so that you may share the high's and low's of one of Rugby Leagues Founder Members, present at the meeting in the George Hotel 29th August 1995 and again 100 years later in April 1995 at the Hilton National Hotel, Huddersfield, when the Super League was formed.

Between these dates we have tried to portray the characters, the memorable moments and also the not so memorable.

The Team of all Talents, The Four Wembleys, the leaving of Fartown via Leeds Road to the Alfred McAlpine Stadium.

We apologise in advance for any persons that haven't been mentioned but in the short space of time that was available to produce this brochure it has been impossible to include everything. We hope you understand and that your enjoyment has not been impaired in any way.

IN THE BEGINNING...

Prior to the formation of the Northern Rugby Football Union in 1895 (this later took the name of the Rugby Football League in the early 1920's) the Huddersfield club had an active and honourable life of around thirty years as part of the English Rugby Union.

In November 1864 the Huddersfield Athletic Club was formed.

Although the promotion of gymnasium activities was the prime intention of the formation of the club, several attempts were made to form a Football (Rugby) section, and a few matches were arranged.

By October 1870 the team was well organised and in that year three of its members had the honour of playing for the county team against Lancashire.

By way of encouragement, a promise was made that when funds of the H.A.C. were in a better state, the football club would be provided with a field of its own, and from this time the maintenance of the club was assumed by the parent body.

Matches were played in the Rifle Field (where Greenhead Park now stands) and by the winter of 1872 the influx of members made it necessary for the formation of a first and second team.

The growing popularity of rugby football and the urgent need for better facilities for members prompted Huddersfield Athletic Club to approach St. John's Cricket Club, who played at the Fartown ground, with a proposal for the amalgamation of the two clubs.

The cricket club played on a six-acre ground and had 160 members, compared with the 300 in membership of the Huddersfield Athletic Club.

The Huddersfield
Team of 1881 - 1882



The Huddersfield
Team of 1888 - 1889



Major R.H. Graham, the agent of the Ramsden Estate, promised permission to take in adjoining land for football purposes upon the granting of a new lease in the event of amalgamation.

The first meeting of the new "Huddersfield Cricket and Athletic Club" was held on March 25th 1876, but the rugby football section continued to play on its old field in Trinity Street.

During the same year the five clubs playing Rugby in Yorkshire - Bradford, Huddersfield, Hull, Leeds and York - presented the County Committee with a cup for annual competition.

It soon became known as "T'Owd Tin Pot" and was won by Huddersfield in the season 1889-1890. This was the first trophy to be won by the club, and upon return of the players to the town a torchlight procession was formed and the cup carried in triumph through the streets.

The following week an Easter pantomime was produced at the Theatre Royal and, in honour of the Fartowners, a spirited song entitled "Hurrah for the Claret and Gold" was sung for the first time.

The alterations and additions to the Fartown ground commenced during the summer of 1878, and the first football match was played on Saturday November 2nd 1878 between Huddersfield and Manchester Rangers. Captain Harry Huth was the first member of the club to play for England.

It was during the 1880's and early 1890's that Reverend Frank Marshall began his one-man crusade against "professionalism" in Rugby. Little could he have realised what an effect on the sporting world it

would have.

He had moved to Huddersfield from his native Black Country in 1878 to take up the post of headmaster at Almondbury Grammar School and was soon a leading light in the Yorkshire Rugby Union.

But despite Marshall's successful rise to the top of the county's ladder, he became increasingly concerned by what he saw as the "professionalism" of his beloved game.

While resident in the Midlands he was blissfully unaware of the events "up north" and soon discovered that in Yorkshire and Lancashire sport and industry were inextricably linked.

Major industrialists played a leading role in establishing and controlling rugby clubs and brought their entrepreneurial skills to bear on the running of the sport's organisations. Success on the field of play becoming of paramount importance.

The pressure was on to produce a winning team and, to attract players, employment and other inducements were offered to obtain the services of the "stars" of the day. Such business was affectionately termed "veiled professionalism", and at the heart of this issue was "broken-time" payments. This term, a form of blasphemy to the Corinthian-spirited Marshall, was the name given to the compensation clubs wanted to give workers who sacrificed their working time.

It was widely accepted in the north that there was considerable need to financially compensate the workers who were not in such a privileged position as their southern "colleagues".

IN THE BEGINNING

Pressure was soon being placed on several northern clubs who were reluctant to pay their players for playing but wished to compensate them for their loss of earnings. It was more than the Reverend Marshall could bear.

His "witch hunt" to seek out every hint of professionalism within clubs was soon gaining momentum and, much to the amusement of on-lookers, in 1893 his own Huddersfield club were at the centre of a storm over alleged broken-time payments.

Cummersdale Hornets complained to the English Rugby Union after star players Boak and Forsyth were transferred to Huddersfield under very suspicious circumstances.

Such was the speed at which they left the Cumberland club that they were summoned to appear before Carlisle magistrates for leaving their jobs without giving the proper notice.

And the chief prosecution witness at the subsequent hearing into the way the two players had been persuaded to leave Cumberland was the town's very own Reverend Marshall who, prior to the inquest, had condemned his club for their actions and resigned from the committee. He soon faded away into the distance, but his contribution had not.

At the hearing, Huddersfield were suspended for 8 games as the Rugby Union made their feelings on the matter crystal clear and undoubtedly widened the gap between themselves and the northern clubs.

Other clubs, mainly in the counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire, suffered a similar fate to Huddersfield and at a meeting of the principle clubs from this region at the George Hotel in Huddersfield towards the end of 1894, it was declared that the views of the Rugby Union on professionalism "are not a reasonable and just interpretation, and cannot be accepted by us".

These clubs were seething under what they considered to be gross injustice. After years of persecution, the northern clubs decided to break their chains and to face the future untrammelled by laws which failed to take into account the condition of life of their players and members.

In 1895 it was obvious that a split was going to happen and by August the final plans were being made.

On Tuesday, August 27th a meeting was held between the 12 clubs who formed the Yorkshire Senior Competition at The Mitre Hotel, Commercial Street, Leeds.

Those present were: Mr H.H. Waller (Brighouse) - presiding, Mr T.A. Gorry (Bradford), Mr J. Clifford (Huddersfield), Mr J.L. Whitaker (Hunslet), Mr C.A. Brewer (Hull), Mr J.E. Hampshire (Liversedge), Mr H. Sewell (Leeds), Mr J. Nicholl (Halifax), Mr G. Steele (Wakefield Trinity) and Mr C. Holdsworth (Dewsbury).

At the meeting, concern was expressed at the way the Yorkshire Rugby Union had dismissed an invitation to discuss the current problem with the newly-formed organisation.

A sub-committee of the Senior Competition had wished to meet a sub-committee of the Yorkshire Rugby Union "to place before them a scheme for the settlement of the dispute". This was completely rejected by the RU.

Therefore, at Tuesday's meeting it was decided by the Yorkshire Senior Competition that:-

"The Yorkshire RFU not having seen it advisable to appoint a sub-committee, as decided, to meet a deputation of the late Senior Competition, we decide to make no further applications on this subject to the above Union".

And, not surprisingly, the general feeling of the meeting was that there should be the formation of a Northern Union, "professedly on amateur lines, but with the acceptance of the principle of payment for broken time". It was then agreed to hold a joint meeting of the Yorkshire and Lancashire clubs at Huddersfield on Thursday to take steps for the formation of the Northern Union.

The offer was readily taken up by the Lancashire contingent who, like the Yorkshire clubs, had held a meeting on Tuesday to discuss the growing problem west of the Pennines.

Their meeting held in Manchester at the SpreadEagle Hotel was attended by Oldham, Rochdale Hornets, Tyldesley, Leigh, Wigan, St Helens, Broughton Rangers, Warrington and Widnes.

Everything was in place for the game's most historic meeting.

On Thursday, August 29th the meeting at The George Hotel was held and Rugby League was born.

After three hours of discussion, the first resolution was drafted and stated that:-

"The clubs here represented decided to form a Northern Rugby Union, and pledge themselves to push forward without delay its establishment on the principle of payment for bona fide broken time only."

Mr H.H. Waller of Brighouse was elected the first chairman of the Northern Union, with Mr J. Platt named as secretary.

A sub-committee was also established to draw up rules for the new code and arrange fixtures for the clubs involved.

It was a process that did not take long to complete.

By September 14th, Huddersfield had taken to the field to play their first ever game as a Northern Union club, and

marked the occasion with a 10 - 0 victory over Wakefield in a Yorkshire League Championship clash.

Huddersfield's life as a Rugby League club had begun.