

The Dreadnought



The Dreadnought
is the official newsletter of
'Trinity Heritage' ...
... all things Wakefield
Trinity history

Year 4, Volume 3 ... March 2015

Welcome to the March 2016 edition of the 'Dreadnought'.
This edition looks at a single game. It is a personal 'trip down memory lane' as one of my own earliest
personal memories and a special day for a then, nine year old.

Here is a look back at a game 41 years ago

Wakefield Trinity v Hull Kingston Rovers
RL Challenge Cup Third Round
Sunday 9th March 1975



THE TRINITY PROGRAMME



1974-75
7 PENCE

SUNDAY . 9 MARCH 1975
RL CUP 3rd ROUND

HULL K. R.

BACKGROUND

In the 1974-75 season, Hull Kingston Rovers were a second division side, but by March were riding high in second place behind Huddersfield. Trinity were striving for the top eight of Division One. Rovers were having a successful season having already reached one final, another two semi finals and defeating six first division sides along the way.

In the early part of the season Rovers had beaten Trinity, 16-13 in the Yorkshire Cup Final in one of the most entertaining finals in years. They had reached the BBC Floodlit Trophy semi final, having defeated Oldham, Wigan and Halifax before losing at Salford. They had also reached the Players No6 Trophy semi final with victories over Rochdale, York and Salford before falling at Widnes, 14-16. As the Challenge Cup came round, Rovers had only lost three games, one being a shock defeat, 20-21 at perennial cellar-dwellers, Huyton.

In the first round of the cup, Rovers were drawn away at amateurs, Dewsbury Celtic, Neil Fox scoring thirteen points in a 31-15 win at Mount Pleasant, Batley. In the second round over six thousand saw Workington Town defeated 19-7 at Craven Park with Clive Sullivan scoring two tries.

Sixty miles away, Trinity had been having an up-and-down season. Victories over Halifax, Featherstone Rovers and Hull, at the Boulevard, saw them reach their second successive Yorkshire Cup Final. They had also beaten league leaders, St Helens in the BBC Floodlit Trophy but lost overall on aggregate. In the league, Trinity had beaten top four sides, St Helens again, Leeds and Salford, away but also lost to bottom-four clubs, Rochdale, Halifax and Bramley.

As the Challenge Cup came around, Trinity had scraped a 12-12 home draw against bottom of the table, Halifax before welcoming Huyton to Belle Vue in the first round; David Topliss scoring two of the six tries in a 33-5 victory. Trinity then drew league leaders and cup favourites, St Helens in the second round, having already defeated them twice at Belle Vue already. In one of the club's best performances in years, the Saints were defeated again, 13-9 in a classic. After leading 7-2 at half time, Trinity trailed 7-9 before a late second half try gained the lead again. 6,315 saw David Smith, Les Sheard and John Archer score the vital tries in front of the BBC TV *Grandstand* cameras.

As the draw for the quarter final took place, Trinity were looking for one of the three second division sides, Hull KR, New Hunslet or Oldham and avoid the first division 'big guns' of Leeds, Bradford Northern, Warrington or Widnes. Trinity were quietly content when the draw brought the Robins to Belle Vue.

Trinity & Rovers in the Challenge Cup

In 1975, Trinity and Hull KR had only ever met twice in the RL Challenge Cup history, both at Belle Vue. Back in February 1908, Trinity triumphed 19-3 in the first round; with future international half back, Tommy Newbould scoring one of five tries.


The two clubs had to wait another sixty two years before they were drawn out of the hat together, again, in the 1970 first round. Trinity were thirteen places behind Rovers in the league table in February 1970 as the Robins left Belle Vue with a 16-9 win in front of 6,469 crowd. Stuart Carlton had an off-day with the boot as he failed to convert Trinity's three tries by Keith Slater (2) and David Jeanes. John Moore, Roger Millward, Mike Stephenson and Phil Coupland scored Rovers' tries with Millward kicking two goals.

To this day (2016), the 1975 quarter final tie remains the last time the two sides met in the competition.

From a personal point-of-view, one of the many reasons this game sticks in my memory is that we were one of the first people in the ground, but ultimately struggled to gain a vantage point to watch the game in a massive crowd! In the 1970s, my father was chairman of the Wakefield Schoolboys rugby league team and on this day the under 16s were playing St Helens in a curtain raiser. He assisted in looking after the team and we sat behind the dugouts for the game. The two teams changed in the changing rooms in the far corner of the ground and Wakefield ultimately won 19-11, against top of the table, and eventual champions, St Helens. When the game eventually finished and everyone was showered off, it was almost 3.30pm and the ground was 'heaving' with almost 15,000 crammed in. We eventually squeezed into a gap on the west terrace, in front of the supporters club shop and bar.

Before the game started I thought it unusual that both teams wore their dark away kits. Trinity, who usually wore pristine white shirts with their traditional red and blue bands wore blue shirts with three irregular red bands and dark, navy blue shorts with Rovers wearing all red, instead of their all white kit with red band across their chests.

The TEAMS

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<p>WAKEFIELD TRINITY</p> <p>1 SHEARD</p> <p>2 SMITH 3 CROOK 4 WRIGLESWORTH 5 ARCHER</p> <p>6 TOPLISS 7 HUDSON</p> <p>8 TONKS, L. 9 HANDSCOMBE 10 BRATT</p> <p>11 SKERRETT 12 KNOWLES</p> <p>13 MORGAN</p> <p>Substitutes: 14 BUTTERFIELD 15 COOPER</p> <p>REFEREE: A. GIVVONS (Oldham) KICK-OFF 3-30 p.m</p>	<p>HULL K. R. WHITE JERSEYS with RED BAND WHITE SHORTS</p> <p>1 SMITHIES</p> <p>2 DUNN 3 HALL 4 BURWELL 5 SULLIVAN</p> <p>6 TURNER/HARTLEY 7 MILLWARD</p> <p>8 MILLINGTON 9 DICKINSON 10 LYONS</p> <p>11 WALLIS 12 FOX</p> <p>13 MOORE</p> <p>Substitutes: 14 15 HOLDSTOCK</p> <p>TOUCH JUDGES: R. Morton (Yellow) F. Marshall (Red)</p>	
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Trinity were near to full strength for the tie with only George Ballantyne and Neil Goodwin being injury casualties in the forwards, but Roy Bratt returning. Terry Hudson was at scrum half after joining Trinity from Hull KR just two months earlier. Centre, Geoff Wriglesworth was also lining up against a former side.

Former Trinity-favourite, Neil Fox was in the Rovers pack along with another former-Trinity forward, Steve Lyons who had returned from a stint in Australia. They also had former Great Britain captain, Clive Sullivan and current England captain, Roger Millward in their backline. Glynn Turner was selected at stand off with Hartley moving to the substitutes bench in the only change to teams in the programme. Paul Rose and Bernard Watson were the only big name absentees from the Rovers team.

Note: Rovers' David Hall, John Millington and Roy Holdstock would all wear the Trinity shirt ten years later in the 1985-86 season

The GAME

'Rovers buckle to Trinity power' was the headline in the following Friday's *Wakefield Express* as Trinity overpowered the Robins in the last quarter of the game to reach their first RL Challenge Cup semi final in six years.

Even though Hull KR were in the Second Division they came onto the field with ten past, current or future internationals in their XV, with Roger Millward being the current England captain; but Trinity's half backs of David Topliss and Terry Hudson took control of the game early, on a dull, dark Sunday afternoon.

Trinity played towards the South Stand in the first half and within fifteen minutes had scored two tries through Roy Bratt and Terry Crook, to seize the early advantage.

Roy Bratt scored first when he powered over from close range with Terry Crook following up three minutes later to score out wide. A neat Hudson break from the scrum set up Crook. Unfortunately, Crook missed both goal attempts, but on the quarter hour mark, Neil Fox kicked a 35-yard penalty goal following one of many Hudson's 'scrum feeding' infringements.



The two early tries scored by Roy Bratt (left) and Terry Crook (right).

Les Tonks, Mick Morgan, Terry Hudson and David Topliss support Bratt on the left with David Smith 'jumping for joy' on the right with Roger Millward arriving too late

Crook missed a simple penalty shot after Neil Fox was penalised for ball stealing, but minutes later Trinity were in the Rovers quarter again and Topliss dropped a goal, bouncing over after hitting the cross bar, and Trinity led 7-2.

It seemed Trinity would gain a distinct advantage when Millward had to leave the field with a cut eye on twenty seven minutes but two minutes later a Trinity move broke down after a Les Sheard pass went astray; John Moore picked up, handed onto winger, Ged Dunn who raced fifty yards to score a fine try. Fox missed the conversion but kicked a penalty four minutes later after another Hudson scrum infringement to level the scores.

The pace of the game continued with end-to-end attacks and after a fine break by Les Sheard, Roy Bratt blasted over again, by the side of the posts with Crook converting.

Just before half time, Fox missed another long range penalty after another Hudson scrum infringement.

Scoring Progress:

11m: Bratt try ... WT 3 HKR 0
14m: Crook try ... WT 6 HKR 0
20m: Fox goal ... WT 6 HKR 2
25m: Topliss drop goal ... WT 7 HKR 2
29m: Dunn try ... WT 7 HKR 5
33m: Fox goal ... WT 7 HKR 7
36m: Bratt try, Crook goal ... WT 12 HKR 7
Half Time: Wakefield Trinity 12 Hull KR 7
45m: Sullivan try ... WT 12 HKR 10
60m: Crook goal ... WT 14 HKR 10
65m: Cooper try, Crook goal ... WT 19 HKR 10
70m: Smith try ... WT 22 HKR 10
75m: Crook try & goal ... WT 27 HKR 10
Full Time: Wakefield Trinity 27 Hull KR 10