

20 Years of Trinity's Boxing Day Clashes with Leeds, at Headingley (1959-78)

26 th Dec 1959	Won	39-5	T: A.Skene (2), F.Smith (2), N.Fox (2), D.Turner, S.Smith, M.Sampson. G: N.Fox (8)	Att: 14,490
26 th Dec 1960	Won	14-9	T: D.Turner, H.Poynton, K.Hirst, B.Briggs. G: N.Fox	Att: 30,514
26 th Dec 1963	Won	32-8	T: N.Fox (4), B.Haigh, D.Sampson, D.Turner, C.Greenwood G: N.Fox (3)	Att: 11,262
26 th Dec 1964	Won	29-6	T: T.Hopwood (2), B.Haigh, N.Fox, G.Coetzer G: N.Fox (7)	Att: ?
27 th Dec 1965	Lost	9-11	T: D.Garthwaite G: N.Fox (3)	Att: 21,343
26 th Dec 1966	Lost	6-28	T: - G: N.Fox (3)	Att: 16,000
26 th Dec 1967	Lost	4-21	T: - G: N.Fox (2)	Att: 13,401
27 th Dec 1971	Lost	2-13	T: - G: N.Fox (1)	Att: 15,380
26 th Dec 1972	Lost	7-20	T: D.Smith G: N.Fox (2)	Att: 11,082
26 th Dec 1973	Lost	14-19	T: B.Lumb, T.Langton G: N.Fox (3), I.Ellis (1)	Att: 10,390
26 th Dec 1974	Draw	13-13	T: D.Topliss, M.Morgan G: I.Ellis (3, 1dg)	Att: ?
27 th Dec 1976	Won	18-8	T: J.Archer, G.Gerard, B.Lockwood, D.Topliss G: W.Oulton (3)	Att: 9,416
26 th Dec 1977	Lost	6-22	T: - G: K.Smith (3)	Att: 7,448
26 th Dec 1978	Lost	6-22	T: S.Diamond G: D.Wandless (1, 1dg)	Att: 10,785

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4—L. D. 18	Left Centre
5—SMITH, D. 19	Left Wing
6—HAGUE	Stand Off
7—BANNER	Scrum Half
8—HARRISON	Field Prop
9—WARD, M. 20	Hooker
10—DICKINSON	Blind Prop
11—ECCLES	Second Row
12—DICKENS 21	Second Row
13—COOKSON	Loose Forward
14—	
15—S. D. 22	

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4—LOULTON 18
5—ARCHER 19
6—TOPLISS 20
7—SANDERSON
8—BALLANTYNE 21
9—INGHAM
10—LOCKWOOD (Capt.) 22
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Two substitutes can be allowed at any time in the game and may themselves be replaced, but once only
Referee: Mr. D. G. KERSHAW (Easingwold)
Touch Judges: (Red Flag) Mr. J. SHACKLETON (White Flag) Mr. N. CLARK

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Boxing Day Classic

Featherstone Rovers 14 Wakefield Trinity 15
Monday 26th December 1988

The 1988-89 season had started in great style and after three games, Trinity were top of the league after victories over Warrington, Wigan and Hull but four months, and nine games later, they found themselves second from bottom of the league with a draw and eight defeats from their next nine games. They had just lost 12-40 at Widnes and the two most recent newspaper headlines were 'Todd returns to Australia' and 'Mark Graham quits Belle Vue'. Things were not good.

But team spirit rose to the top at Post Office Road on that mild, Monday morning with John Thompson having 'the game of his life'. He returned to the front row, to replace Todd to join other locals, Billy Conway, John Glancy, Paul Mallinder, veteran Steve Norton and Nigel Bell. Steve Ella captained the side at stand off with Mark Conway at scrum half, Kiwi legend, James Leuluai at full back and three quarters of Fletcher, Eden, Mason and Wilson. As well as the overseas departures, Kevin Harcombe, Keith Rayne, Andy Kelly, Gary Price and Richard Slater were all out injured.

The score was only 2-0 to Rovers at half time but Ella scored within a minute after the break, through sheer class, 6-2. An Alan Banks try gave Rovers the lead again shortly followed by an Andy Wilson 'kick and chase' special, 10-8 up. John Thompson scored the decisive try on 66 minutes with Conway adding the extras followed by a drop goal but a Graham Steadman try and goal came too late for Rovers.

ROVERS -v- WAKEFIELD			
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ALAN BANKS	Diamond Seal, 8 The Promenade, Farnthorpe	4	ANDREW MASON
IAN SMALES	D & S White Mobile Catering	5	ANDREW WILSON
<i>Half Backs</i>			
GRAHAM STEADMAN	Terry Hudson, Station Hotel, Streethouse	6	STEVE ELLA
DERYCK FOX	Featherstone Carpet & Furnishings	7	MARK CONWAY
<i>Forwards</i>			
JEFF GRAYSHON	Brian's Sweets, Wakefield	8	JOHN THOMPSON
TREVOR CLARK	Brian Palmer, Joiner/Builder	9	BILLY CONWAY
GLEN BELL	Andrew Wray	10	JOHN GLANCY
JOHN BASTIAN	John Hill, Asquith's Butchers, F'stone	11	STEVE NORTON
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PETER SMITH	Sun Inn, North Featherstone	13	NIGEL BELL
<i>Subs</i>			
	Roy Barker, Station Lane, Featherstone	14	
	Barrows Pub, Pontefract	15	

Referee: Mr. S. W. CROSS (Hesle)

Touch Judges: Mr. J. EASTER, Hull (Cerule flag) Mr. S. CHESTNEY, Hull (Amber flag)

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Christmas Debuts

Christmas time is not the ideal time to make your debut as festivities are put on hold for a day or two but it can be quite common as the busy Christmas schedules gave rise to many team changes in the early days.

Billy Beattie has a story to himself in the history of the club but his debut came on 23rd December 1911 when the young Scotsman was drafted in for the 5-3 victory over Bradford Northern. He would become a pack regular and progress to such an extent that he became Trinity's youngest ever captain in 1914 and being selected for the Northern Union's tour to Australia and New Zealand. Unfortunately, he had to decline the tour due to work reasons but was then killed in action during the First World War. He is one of first true club heroes.

Christmas Eve 1955 saw the debut of a player that would be a corner stone of the pack in the early 'Glory Years' of the 1960s, Les Chamberlain. He had just signed from Leeds & District junior rugby and was drafted into loose forward after Colin Clifft was injured, for the 20-8 victory over Dewsbury.

Only two players hold the distinction of making Christmas Day debuts in the last seventy years, both South Africans in the same game. Alan Skene and Jan Lotriet both started in the three quarters in a 19-7 victory at Castleford in 1958, with Lotriet scoring. Lotriet only stayed for three games whereas Skene (pictured right) became a club legend scoring 69 tries in 136 appearances over the next four years.



Boxing Day 1978 was a day when two of the games stars made their debuts at different times in their careers. John Thompson was drafted into the pack at Headingley for the first of his 302 appearances that would see a nineteen year Trinity career. It also saw the debut of Terry Clawson who joined from Featherstone Rovers, making his debut at 38 years of age, the club's oldest ever debutant. He had already had a legendary career with six other clubs aswell as Yorkshire and Great Britain recognition, having initially debuted for Featherstone in 1957.

3

NORTHERN RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE

★

WAKEFIELD TRINITY

v. HUNSLET

37th Season No. 12 FRIDAY, 22 DECEMBER 1967

Christmas

Greetings

to players, officials, supporters, and press

Three Games in Three Days

Three games in three days would send the modern day players into 'social media meltdown' these days, but it was another common occurrence in days gone by with local derbies spread over three Christmas days.

The first time it occurred, in 1913, the players may have suffered a little when only eleven players turned up for the third game! A 16-2 Christmas Day victory over Dewsbury was followed by an 8-31 defeat at Huddersfield on Boxing Day, but on the third day (27th) the team were due to travel to Keighley. Unfortunately travel arrangements changed at the last minute and Ernest Bennett and Leonard Land missed the train. Internationals, Tommy Newbould and Tommy Poynton then pulled out just before the kicking off, 'feeling ill'. So Trinity entered the field with a second rower at full back and only four forwards, eventually losing 5-19. Seven players played in all three games.

Six years later, just after the war had finished, the same three fixtures landed on the same Christmas dates. A 4-19 home loss to Dewsbury on Christmas Day was followed by a 12-51 thrashing at Huddersfield, but a full turn out of personnel saw a 16-0 home win over Keighley on the 27th. The club officials looked forward to the home Christmas games as, weather depending, the crowds flocked to the holiday games; 10,000 attending the Dewsbury game. Only six players played in all three 1919 holiday games.

1924 saw three losses in the three holiday games; a 2-4 loss at Dewsbury on Christmas Day, a 5-10 home defeat to Featherstone on Boxing Day and a 0-3 loss at Headingley on the 27th. Six players played in all three, including 'Hall of Famers' Jonathan Parkin and Bill Horton. A bumper 23,000 turned up at Crown Flatt on Christmas Day.

Fortunes changed in 1930 when Trinity picked up three holiday victories in three successive days. A 12-0 victory at Dewsbury was followed by a 10-6 home win over Leeds in the Belle Vue snow, and a 20-9 victory at Bradford Northern. These wins saw Trinity top the league at Christmas 1930. Consistency showed and eleven players played in all three, including the whole pack backing up three days running (Bill Hudson, Bob White, Harry Field, Mick Exley, Bill Horton and Charlie Glossop).

The fixture format did not give Trinity another three successive Christmas games until 1947. Castleford were the Christmas Day visitors to Belle Vue, Trinity winning 13-4. But, a day later, Trinity ran out of steam when Leeds triumphed 31-0 at Headingley and on the 27th Trinity had to cross the Pennines, scraping a 5-5 draw at St Helens. Only three players managed to turn out in all three games, winger Dennis Baddeley and international forwards Harry Murphy and Len Bratley.

The same three fixtures of Castleford, Leeds and St Helens were repeated in 1952, with Trinity, this time losing all three. A 14-17 loss at Castleford was a shock result but this was followed by 9-27 and 11-20 home losses to Leeds and Saints respectively.

Only full back Ernest Luckman, centre Frank Mortimer, scrum half, Ron 'Curly' Evans, prop Jack Booth and second rower, Bob Kelly played in all three.

The seventh and last time these three-games-in-three days affected Trinity was in 1958, at the start of the 'Glory Years'. As noted earlier, Alan Skene debuted in a 19-7 victory at Castleford on Christmas Day, followed by a 12-5 home win over Hull on Boxing Day but a 9-18 home loss to Halifax halted Trinity's progress. Eight players played in all three; Stan Smith, Skene, Neil Fox and Keith Holliday, along with forwards Wilf Adams, Sam Evans, John Lindley and David Lamming

