

CORNWALL RLFC VS ROCHDALE MAYFIELD - 1.00PM
OFFICIAL SOUVENIR PROGRAMME - BETFRED CHALLENGE CUP ROUND TWO

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Head Coach: Mike Abbott

Club Captain: Jack Ray

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HISTORY MAKERS

Cornwall make history at the Memorial Ground today in this, the club's first ever appearance in the Challenge Cup. We would like to extend a warm Cornish welcome to the fans, players and directors of Rochdale Mayfield to the Duchy this afternoon.

For those of you that can't be here in person today, the match is being broadcast live by the BBC - the first time a club rugby match involving a Cornish team of either code has feature on free-to-air television. A wonderful occasion awaits!

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HEAD COACH



MIKE ABBOTT

Welcome to the Memorial Ground for what is a landmark day for our club, in only our second season.

It gives me great pleasure to write my very first set of programme notes as head coach of this club, It is both an honour and a privilege to lead the team both in the League 1 season and the Challenge Cup. Growing up in St Helens, I know exactly what this competition means for rugby league and every one of the lads knows that this competition is steeped in tradition. We are pleased to welcome Rochdale Mayfield to the Mem for what is their first competitive game of the 2023 season.

Our season opener at Midlands last Sunday has quite rightly been described as a game of two halves and despite the opening 40 nit going our way, for reasons that were very apparent, I was really pleased with the way we performed after half-time.

We were worthy of more than just one try - the best of the game too - and Midlands knew they were in a game.

Today will bring a different type of challenge from a Mayfield team that contains good players like Penky who has been a class act for many years.

Some may look at this as a banana skin for us and the tie has got that written all over it for us. I actually think that if you were previewing this game, you would be foolish not to mention those words.

Mayfield will 100 per cent realise what they can achieve if they win today so our lads will have to be good, really good in fact to progress into round three.

We have spoken at length about the challenge that faces us and we know that there will be no easy pickings.

Players will need to take ownership of their actions and that has not been pushed upon them by me. They know that's how we need to go about our business this year and that is positive from a very young bunch of lads.

Thanks for your support - Mike.



ROCHDALE MAYFIELD

Mayfield ARLFC was formed on June 24, 1958 at the Mayfield Hotel on Albert Royd Street, Rochdale.

The club's first game was played on September 6, 1958 against Underbank of Huddersfield, in what was then the Halifax League.

A move to the Old Bridge Inn on Oldham Road, while using Balderstone Park and Springhill as their playing bases, sparked a remarkable period of domination of the community game.

In the 70's, Mayfield won all trophies available outside the pro game, including the Pennine League seven years on the trot.

In 1986, Mayfield again moved to bigger and better facilities at Castleton Moor, Keswick Street, and they entered the National Conference League in 1988, changing their name to Rochdale Mayfield.

A decade later, the junior section, the Mayfield Mustangs, was founded, helping

provide a solid grounding for life and Rugby League for many youngsters, many of whom have played professionally.

The club moved to Mayfield Sports Centre in 2006 and the NCL Division 1 Championship was won the same year, under coaches Matt Calland and the late Steve Gartland.

Promotion back to the Premier Division of the National Conference League was won in season 2014 under Calland and current first team coach Sam Butterworth.

The have been a permanent fixture in the NCL Premier Division ever since.

ONE TO WATCH

Mayfield will be hoping that the experience and guile of former Super League star Sean Penkywicz can help cause an upset this afternoon.



The 2002 Challenge Cup Final saw Wigan full-back Kris Radlinski lift the Lance Todd Trophy

CHALLENGE CUP FEVER

Much has changed for rugby league over the years.

From summer to winter, super 8s, qualifiers, promotion and relegation.

For a sport that continues to search for a magic formula to grow and expand, to give its players the national and global exposure they richly deserve, one thing has perhaps surprisingly remained constant: The Challenge Cup.

It's the reason this game is the first club rugby match in Cornwall to be broadcast on a free-to-air platform, because just like football's FA Cup, those that support the greatest game are encapsulated by magic, romance and potential upset.

Of course Cornwall will be hoping that isn't the case today, but history has told us in this wonderful competition to expect the unexpected.

It's why the name Don Fox, or Sheffield Eagles will forever be associated with notable acts on the grandest of stages,

under the famous Twin Towers at Wembley Stadium.

Even when Wembley was rebuilt and the Challenge Cup was forced on the road for six years, heroes were still made by this wonderful knock-out competition. Kris Radlinski at Murrayfield in 2002, Kevin Sinfield a year later in Wales while 2005, saw John Kear's penchant for upsetting the apple-cart continue when Hull FC toppled Leeds Rhinos.

Back to a different looking Wembley, but the Challenge Cup magic remains. Joel Tomkins matches the feat of Martin Offiah in 2012 as Catalans Dragons become the first team from France to lift the trophy six years later.

Even a year out at Tottenham hasn't done anything to diminish the grandeur of the Challenge Cup and whatever happens to rugby league in the future, its premier knock-out competition continues to be held in the highest esteem.

2023

MIDLANDS HURRICANES 40 CORNWALL RLFC 6



In an archetypal game of two halves, Cornwall began the 2023 Betfred League 1 season with defeat away to fellow expansion club Midlands Hurricanes. The home side, who rebranded from the Coventry Bears last term, moved from Solihull to Birmingham over the winter and although the intention of the club is play at the main Alexander Stadium, this round one clash took place at the Birmingham venue's warm-up arena.

Cornwall made the trip to the Second City after a full-pre-season schedule which has included friendly matches against London Skolars and Exeter University. However, those games came at a cost for new Cornwall head coach Mike Abbott with Aaron Jones-Bishop (knee) and Reece Boase (ankle) ruled out through injury. Josh Hartshorne (arm) also failed a pre-match fitness test which saw Kaine Dimech take the former Thornhill man's place on the interchange bench.

Dimech was joined amongst the substitutes by recent capture Harry Boots whilst Abbott handed full, competitive debuts to Errol Carter, Nick Slaney and Australian import Cam Brown.

Under clear skies and in spring-like temperatures, the home side raced out of the traps and scored five tries inside the opening 21 minutes with Castleford winger Elliot Wallis, playing for the Hurricanes on dual registration, bagging an impressive brace.

But a shell-shocked Cornish side dug in well to only concede twice more and after a spirited second half showing, should have gleaned more than six points for their efforts.

On four occasions after the break, Cornwall were ruled to have been held up over the line by merry whistle blower Kevin Moore with debutant Dimech, who along with Boots caught the eye, appearing to score but the man in the middle ruled otherwise.



Slaney scored the visitors' consolation eight minutes from time, shortly after Wallis went from hero to villain when he was sent off for a below-the-belt punch on Charley Bodman.

Despite the Hurricanes playing the final stages a man light, they still managed to finish off the scoring through powerhouse centre Matty Welham.

The game began with Cornwall almost finding touch with the kick-off but Midlands kept the ball in play and built their first attack which resulted in an opening try. A powerful set saw Macauley Hallett dance his way over and Ben Stead knocked over the extras.

Midlands' second score had an element of luck which deserted the Choughs on the day when Stead's grubber hit Jake Lloyd, found Brad Martin's arms, and another of the home side's Castleford contingent had scored.

The game was as good as up for Cornwall with the clock barely reaching double figures as Dominic Flanagan powered his way through a number of tackles to cross the whitewash. With Stead finding the mark again, Midlands were 18-0 ahead.

Wallis then bagged the first off his two scores out wide before hooker Elliott Windley picked up a Stead kick and Midlands were out of sight.

Credit to Cornwall, though, as they didn't fold and although Mike Abbott's side never threatened the Midlands line during the opening 40, they only shipped one further try before the break.

Wallis, who demonstrated his Super League pedigree again, was the man to score a converted try and Midlands had a 34-0 interval lead.

The second half was a totally different story for both sides as Cornwall were the team in the ascendency for long periods and last-ditch Midlands defence prevented the Penryn based side, in their second professional season, crossing more than once.

Midlands were perhaps the architects of their own downfall at times as they shipped a string of penalties and coughed up possession several times in dangerous positions but held firm until the last 10.

After Wallis pressed the self-destruct button and punched Bodman, Cornwall built out wide and interchange Coby Nichol drew the cover defence to send Slaney in the corner. Adam Rusling landed a magnificent touchline conversion before Welham finished off a flowing move involving Balami Qareare – the third Castleford dual-registered member of the Midlands side selected by head coach Richard Squires and last year's Super League Try of the Season winner.

The full time siren perhaps came as something of a relief to Midlands, who only completed one set of six tackles in the second half whilst for Cornwall, they will be hoping to take inspiration from an encouraging second half showing into next week's Challenge Cup tie against Rochdale Mayfield.

Cornwall: Whitton, Slaney, Carter, Ashton, Aaronson, Brown, Rusling, Ray, Singleton, Bolger, Cullen, Bodman, Lloyd. Interchange: Boots, Dimech, Prisk, Nichol

Tries: Slaney (72) Goals: Rusling 1/1

Hurricanes:, Hill, Wallis, Welham, Hallett, Qareqare, Coates, Stead, Moran, Windley, Clavering, Dawson, Flanagan, Martin. Interchange: Bailey, Cullimore, Dawson, Gilbey

Tries: Hallett (2), Martin (8), Flanagan (11), Wallis (15, 30, Windley (21), Welham (75) Goals: Stead 7/8

Red card: Wallis (71) punching

Referee: Kevin Moore
Attendance: 453

THE VERDICT

In a repeat of the match in the Midlands between the two sides last year, the game was ultimately won and lost during the first 40 minutes.

But Cornwall can take heart from their showing in the second stanza when they more than matched the hosts.

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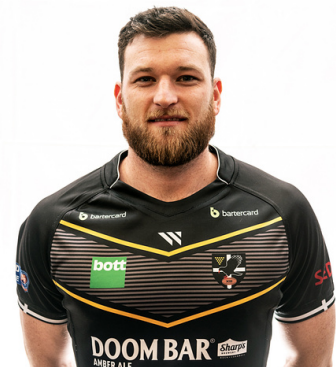
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JOSH HARTSHORNE 



CHARLEY BODMAN 



GEORGE MITCHELL AVAILABLE

TODAY'S SQUADS



Betfred Challenge Cup Round 2
Saturday, February 25
Memorial Ground 1.00pm

CORNWALL RLFC

Coach: Mike ABBOTT

Harry AARONSON
Tom ASHTON
Charley BODMAN
Paul BOLGER
Harry BOOTS
Cam BROWN
Errol CARTER
Jermarie CHATHAM
Luke COLLINS
Nathan CULLEN
Kaine DIMECH
Josh HARTSHORNE
Brad HOWE
Jake LLOYD
George MITCHELL
Coby NICHOL
Jamie PRISK
Adam RUSLING
Louis SINGLETON
Decarlo TRERISE
Liam WHITTON

ROCHDALE MAYFIELD

Coach: Sam BUTTERWORTH

Lewis BUTTERWORTH
Jordan PARR
James MCDAID
Dakota TOLHURST
Kristian MCVEIGH
Sam WRIGHT
Devlin LONG
Jarred DASH
Sean PENKYWICZ
David MILLS
Travis LONG
Ben METCALFE
Seta TALATOKA
Declan SHERIDAN
Nicholas HARGREAVES
Joe TAIRA
Wayne ENGLISH
Harry SHERIDAN
George KINNAIRD

Referee: MATTHEW ROSSLEIGH
Touch Judges: GUY PALLETT & PETER WROE
Reserve Referee: PHIL JOHNSON

CHALLENGE CUP PREVIEW

The road to Wembley continues this weekend as round two of the 2023 Betfred Challenge Cup officially gets underway. From Edinburgh to a historic first Irish victory, round one of this year's tournament created some fascinating stories and broke new ground across a host of different regions. That will continue this Saturday when a Challenge Cup tie takes place in Cornwall for the first-time ever, with the match being shown live on BBC Sport and BBC iPlayer. The Choughs will welcome National Conference League outfit Rochdale Mayfield to the Memorial Ground in Penryn, for what promises to be a thrilling cup tie. Elsewhere, Ashton Bears have been rewarded for their round one exploits with a mouth-watering home fixture against Cornwall's Betfred League One peers Dewsbury Rams.

The Bears, who defeated the British Army 28-12 in the first round of the competition, will be looking to cause an upset when the third tier promotion hopefuls arrive in town. Dewsbury have made a bright start to the season themselves however after defeating North Wales Crusaders 38-18 in their opening League One fixture, and currently sit third in the division, meaning they will be confident of progressing.

Saddleworth Rangers' Challenge Cup journey continues as Thatto Heath Crusaders make the journey to Greenfield. Rangers earned a place in round two after their opening round 30-20 away victory at Edinburgh Eagles.

One of the biggest stories of round one was Wests Warriors' shock 26-12 triumph at Skirlaugh. As a result of their heroics, the Warriors set up an all-London affair against the London Chargers.

Away from the capital, Dublin City Exiles made history in the opening round of the competition as their 42-8 win at Hammersmith Hills Hoists meant that the Exiles became the first Irish side ever to win a Challenge Cup fixture.

The Exiles will be aiming for another impressive display to reach the third round, but standing in their way is a tricky away trip to Orrell St James.

On Sunday, Rochdale Hornets will open their 2023 campaign with an all-League One affair against London Skolars. The Skolars suffered a 58-16 opening day defeat at the hands of Workington last weekend and will be looking to bounce back against the Hornets.

Elsewhere, Ince Rose Bridge will travel to take on Anthony Murray's Town, fresh from their capital gains last weekend.

Ince Rose produced one of the performances of round One when they defeated local rivals Wigan St. Patricks in front of a bumper crowd, and The Sportsman television cameras.

The Sportsman's coverage of the competition will continue on Sunday afternoon when Hull Dockers entertain Midlands Hurricanes at Hull Kingston Rovers' Sewell Group Craven Park Stadium. Hunslet will face Heworth in an interesting tie; Hunslet chairman Kenny Sykes has links to both sides thanks to his playing spells at both clubs, and is also the current President of Heworth.

Finally, Oldham will make their long-awaited return to competitive action as they travel to fellow League One side Doncaster. Stuart Littler's side will be hoping to avoid another second round defeat this year, after losing at home to Lock Lane at the same stage last season.

The draw for the third round of the men's Betfred Challenge Cup will take place at Featherstone Rovers on Monday, February, 27 – and will be streamed live on BBC iPlayer and BBC Sport Online from 6.00pm. Rovers are one of 13 Betfred Championship clubs entering the competition at this stage, and this year celebrate the anniversaries of Challenge Cup Final successes in 1973 and 1983.

LEAGUE 1 RESULTS & FIXTURES

DATE	OPPOSITION	V	SCORE	ATT	REFEREE	FULL BACK	WING	CENTRE	CENTRE	WING	STAND OFF	SCRUM HALF
FEB												
Sun 19	Midlands Hurricanes	A	L 6-40	453	K Moore	Whitton	Slaney 1T	Carter	Ashton	Aaronson	Brown	Rusling 1G
Sat 25	Rochdale Mayfield	H										
MAR												
Sun 26	London Skolars	H										
APRIL												
Sat 08	Doncaster	H										
Sun 16	Dewsbury Rams	A										
MAY												
Sun 07	Oldham	A										
Sat 13	Hunslet	H										
Sun 21	Rochdale Hornets	A										
Sun 28	North Wales Crusaders	H										
JUNE												
Sun 04	Workington Town	A										
Sun 11	Dewsbury Rams	H										
Sun 18	Hunslet	A										
JULY												
Sat 08	London Skolars	A										
Sun 16	Midlands Hurricanes	H										
Sun 23	Workington Town	A										
Sun 30	North Wales Crusaders	A										
AUGUST												
Sat 06	Oldhan	H										
Sun 20	Doncaster	A										
Sun 27	Rochdale Hornets	H										

CORNWALL RLFC STATS 2022

TOP TRY SCORERS

- 1 Harry Aaronson (8) →
- 2 Liam Whitton (7)
- 3 Aaron Jones-Bishop (4)
- = Jamie Prisk(4)

MOST SUCCESSFUL GOALS

- 1 Joe Purcell (13)
- 2 Adam Rusling (11)
- 3 Kyle Johns (9)
- 4 Jamie Prisk (5)

TOP POINTS SCORERS

- 1 Joe Purcell (46)
- 2 Adam Rusling (38)
- 3 Harry Aaronson (32)
- 4 Liam Whitton (28)



BETFRED



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