



1923 - 2012

South Lancashire/Cheshire League 1

Welcome to Ashton-on-Mersey RUFC from Warrington RUFC

A warm welcome to our visitors for today's game – Ashton-on-Mersey RUFC. We feel sure that a hard and close game will take place today, despite the fact that both sides are five places apart in the league table – Ashton 7th versus Warrington 12th. However, we have recently seen off Wigan, Hoyle, Tyldesley at home and New Brighton away.

Enjoy yourselves ladies and gentlemen, put as much money as possible behind the bar and buy a ticket or two for the post-match raffle.

Ashton-on-Mersey RUFC Contacts and Information:

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Today's Game Sponsor :

Today's Referee : Kevin Warwick, Manchester Referees Society

Next Home Game : vs Winnington Park on Saturday 21st April 2012
(*Last game of the season*)

Regards,

Dave Broadbent, *President, Warrington RUFC*

Welcome to Ashton-on-Mersey RUFC

Welcome to Ashton on Mersey for today's important League fixture. Ashton are in a comfortable mid-table position and last weekend gave a very good showing of themselves in the Cheshire Bowl Final losing eventually to the all-conquering Sale by the relatively close margin of 24pts-3. Let's hope they used up all their energies for the week on Easter Monday!

At the game at Banky Lane back in December we narrowly lost out by 12pts-5 having led on a very heavy pitch by Haydn Fraser's early try. That game signalled the comeback of Eddie Fields and Kieran Hughes to the team after long absences. That game also marked the debut appearance of Damien Turner – who is now with Rochdale Hornets RL – and the last appearances of the season for the 1st XV of Matt Hennessey and Mark Robinson.

Games between the two clubs have historically been close and here's a few you may care to remember:

28 March 2009

Warrington secure promotion in a 22pts-15 win at Ashton. Almond, Rickard, Rockey and Mackay scored the tries

29 November 2008

Warrington edge it 15pts-8 on a foggy day with the Past Players Association looking on. This was Pete Cannon's penultimate 1st XV game.

8 March 2008

Warrington lose at home by the odd point in 47 as the visitors snatch a late win. Andy Almond dropped a rare goal

15 September 2007

Warrington triumph by 24pts - 13 at Banky Lane – Anton Fields scoring twice and Mark Godwin (remember him!) played his only 1st XV game for us.

31 March 2007

Warrington win at home 17pts to 8. Neil Jackson scored his last ever 1st XV try

2 December 2006

Warrington sneak it at Ashton under the leadership of Neil Sullivan with the captain himself scoring the only try.

13 January 2001

With AoM's ground being rebuilt tries by Andy Bennett and Dave Nicholls put Warrington 24 points ahead by half time

28 October 2000

Hamish Potts appeared on the wing scoring a try but it was John Welsh who took the headlines making his only ever start at prop forward. Other notable players this day in a 33pts-13 home win were Andy James, Gary Tees, Terry Blohm, Peter Holce, John Callander, Matt Drinkwater and Andy Walker

So the bookies would say it will be close.....we don't mind as long as we end up on the right side of close.....

by Peter Riley (who also completes and maintains the 'appearances' table on page 4).

Warrington RUFC**1st XV Fixtures and Results (*) 2011-2012**

Date	Opposition	Result (*)
2011		
3 Sept	Winnington Park (A)	L 31 - 17
10 Sept	Orrell (A)	L 30 - 3
17 Sept	Ormskirk (A)	L 21 - 7
24 Sept	West Park (H)	L 9 - 34
1 Oct	Bowdon (A)	L 43 - 3
8 Oct	Glossop (H)	L 14 - 15
15 Oct	Hoylake (A)	L 26 - 21
22 Oct	Liverpool Collegiate (H)	L 14 - 17
29 Oct	Wigan (A)	L 22 - 20
5 Nov	Sale (H)	L 6 - 27
12 Nov	Tyldesley (A)	L 17 - 12
19 Nov	New Brighton (H)	L 15 - 24
26 Nov		
3 Dec	Ashton-on-Mersey (A)	L 12 - 5
10 Dec	Orrell (H)	W 33 - 23
17 Dec	Ormskirk (H)	W 10 - 6
24 Dec		
27 Dec	Thorn Cross (H) Friendly	W 50 - 26
2012		
7 Jan	West Park (A)	L 22 - 3
14 Jan	Bowdon (H)	L 17 - 37
21 Jan		
28 Jan	Glossop (A)	L 19 - 11
4 Feb	Hoylake (H) (see 25th Feb)	Postponed
11 Feb		
18 Feb	Liverpool Collegiate (A)	W 10 - 28
25 Feb	Hoylake (H)	W 13 - 10
3 Mar	Wigan (H)	W 17 - 6
10 Mar	Sale (A)	L 54 - 7
17 Mar		
24 Mar	Tyldesley (H)	W 29 - 0
31 Mar	New Brighton (A)	W 5 - 36
7 April		
14 April	Ashton-on-Mersey (H)	
21 April	Winnington Park (H)	

(*) Home team score first

Question: Which of the following is NOT a senior dual RL/RU International: Wendell Sailor, Andy Farrell, Jonathan Davies, Alan Langer, Henry Paul, Sonny Bill Williams ?

Answer: See bottom of page 6.

WARRINGTON RUFC 1ST XV APPEARANCES 2011/2012 SEASON to 31/3/2012 (New Brighton)

NAME	CAREER	THIS YEAR + AS SUB	TRIES	CONS + PENS + DROPS	POINTS
A ALMOND	114	17 + 2	6		30
T ARNOLD	2	0 + 2			
J BRAZENDALE	1	0 + 1			
M BRAZIER-KOBUS	2	1 + 1			
C BYRNE	11	5 + 1	2		10
S COOMBES	70	1			
M DRINKWATER	194	6			
JA FARRELL	24	1			
JO FARRELL	19	5 + 1			
E FIELDS	147	12			
D FLEMING	22	20 + 1			
D FLOYD	4	3 + 1			
H FRASER	18	17 + 1	9		45
O GILES	1	1			
L GILLET	2	0 + 2			
L GRAHAM	219	0 + 1			
P GRANT	199	18 + 4			
T GREEN	1	0 + 1			
E GYIMA	1	1			
M HADDON	86	21 + 1			
M HENNESSEY	63	8			
P HENNESSEY	62	4 + 10			
T HOCKENHULL	3	2			
G HOWSON	30	10 + 1			
A HUGHES	64	1	1		5
J HUGHES	27	1			
K HUGHES	16	8 + 2	6		30
S HUGHES	40	3 + 1			
E JOHNSTON	16	15 + 1			
I JONES	7	6 + 1			
K JONES	188	13 + 7	5		25
J KERA	34	4 + 1			
P LYNCH	7	3 + 4			
Z LYTHGOE	62	20 + 2	2		10
S MCDERMOTT	72	1			
S MELVIN	13	13	2		10
D NEWENS	44	18 + 1	7	13 + 20	121
N PENNINGTON	4	2			
M RANDLE	2	1 + 1			
A RICHARDSON	14	6 + 2			
D RICKARD	136	21 + 1			
J RILEY	14	9 + 2			
A ROBERTS	5	5		3	6
M ROBINSON	15	5 + 2			
M ROCKEY	121	7		8 + 6 + 2	40
J SHAW	109	2 + 1			
P THOMPSON	190	13			
S TICKLE	47	0 + 1			
D TURNER	6	6 + 1		1 + 2	8
C WHITE	5	1 + 3			
T WOOD	9	9	2		10
S YOXALL	45	14 + 4			
TOTAL		52	36	28+31+2	350

Peter Riley

SLC1 Results and League Tables➤ *Saturday 7th April 2012*

Bowdon	22 - 15	Winnington Park
Glossop	20 - 20	Orrell

➤ *Saturday 31st March 2012*

Ashton-on-Mersey	50 - 0	Ormskirk
New Brighton	5 - 36	Warrington
Sale	69 - 5	Glossop
Tyldesley	21 - 27	Bowdon
West Park (St Helens)	20 - 13	Liverpool Collegiate
Wigan	25 - 12	Hoylake
Winnington Park	5 - 11	Orrell

➤ *Saturday 24th March 2012*

Bowdon	0 - 83	Sale
Glossop	21 - 25	Wigan
Hoylake	10 - 6	Liverpool Collegiate
Ormskirk	12 - 38	New Brighton
Orrell	27 - 20	Ashton-on-Mersey
Warrington	29 - 0	Tyldesley
Winnington Park	14 - 28	West Park (St Helens)

SLC 1 League Table➤ *Saturday 14th April 2012 (a.m)*

<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>B Pts</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>Adjus t</i>
Sale	24	24	0	0	1333	219	1114	24	120	0
New Brighton	24	17	1	6	589	411	178	12	82	0
Bowdon	24	16	0	8	512	450	62	10	74	0
Tyldesley	24	14	2	8	470	453	17	11	71	0
Wigan	24	14	0	10	516	507	9	13	69	0
Hoylake	24	14	1	9	380	381	-1	5	63	0
Ashton-on-Mersey	24	10	1	13	459	485	-26	12	54	0
West Park (St Helens)	24	11	1	12	432	484	-52	13	49	-10
Glossop	24	9	1	14	411	487	-76	13	46	-5
Orrell	24	8	2	14	362	571	-209	7	43	0
Winnington Park	24	8	0	16	405	613	-208	9	41	0
Warrington	24	7	0	17	350	514	-164	8	36	0
Liverpool Collegiate	24	7	1	16	348	561	-213	6	36	0
Ormskirk	24	4	0	20	276	707	-431	6	17	-5

University of Salford: Division 3 South➤ *Saturday 14th April 2012 (a.m)*

	<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Wo</i>	<i>Co</i>	<i>Nfw</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Agst</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>+/-</i>
1	Warrington 2	22	20	0	2	0	0	0	0	827	269	558	82	0
2	Caldy 3	21	18	0	2	0	1	0	0	830	232	598	78	0
3	Liverpool Collegiate 2	21	16	0	4	0	1	0	0	620	208	412	72	0
4	Chester 3	23	14	1	8	0	0	0	0	725	534	191	66	0
5	Burnage 3	22	14	0	8	1	0	0	0	532	528	4	64	0
6	Hope Valley 1	20	12	0	8	1	0	0	0	516	427	89	56	0
7	Bowdon 2	22	10	0	12	0	0	0	0	584	480	104	52	0
8	Lymm 3	22	9	1	12	0	0	0	0	442	502	-60	50	0
9	Marple 2	22	9	0	13	0	0	0	0	408	471	-63	49	0
10	Broughton Park 4	23	5	0	18	0	0	0	1	401	932	-531	36	0
11	Wirral 3	22	4	0	18	0	0	0	0	404	799	-395	34	0
12	Winnington Park 2	22	4	0	18	0	0	0	0	353	849	-496	34	0
13	Altrincham Kersal 3	22	4	0	16	0	0	2	0	315	726	-411	32	0

➤ **Next Fixture:** *Saturday 21st April*

Warrington 2nds v Winnington Park 2nds

University of Salford: Division 4 West➤ *Saturday 14th April 2012 (a.m)*

	<i>Team</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>L</i>	<i>CC</i>	<i>Wo</i>	<i>Co</i>	<i>Nfw</i>	<i>For</i>	<i>Agst</i>	<i>Diff</i>	<i>Pts</i>	<i>+/-</i>
1	Moore 2	20	13	1	2	0	4	0	0	588	216	372	72	0
2	Warrington 3	22	14	0	7	0	1	0	0	570	319	251	67	0
3	Liverpool Vet School 1	22	15	0	6	0	0	1	0	726	336	390	66	0
4	Merseyside Police 1	21	13	0	7	0	1	0	0	523	316	207	63	0
5	Widnes 3	22	12	0	8	0	1	1	0	552	342	210	60	0
6	Waterloo 4	22	10	0	10	1	1	1	0	561	405	156	54	0
7	Liverpool St. Helens 3	22	11	0	9	0	0	2	0	509	563	-54	53	0
8	Sefton 3	22	10	1	11	0	0	0	0	418	567	-149	53	0
9	Christleton 1	22	9	0	12	0	1	0	0	477	620	-143	52	0
10	Waterloo 3	22	7	2	13	0	0	0	0	499	593	-94	48	3
11	Southport 3	23	7	0	16	0	0	0	0	431	691	-260	44	0
12	Crosby St. Marys 2	22	5	0	14	0	1	2	0	210	780	-570	32	-6
13	West Park 3	22	4	0	15	0	0	3	1	300	616	-316	29	0

➤ **Next Fixture:** *Saturday 21st April*

Warrington 3rds v Waterloo 3rds

✓ **Page 4 Quiz Answer:** Alan Langer – Kangaroos RL only.

Warrington RUFC v Ashton-on-Mersey RUFC**Teams for Saturday 14th April 2012 at Walton Lea****WARRINGTON RUFC****Colours:** Red, White and Green**ASHTON-ON-MERSEY RUFC****Colours:** Maroon and Gold**TEAMS**

Haddon, Mike	1	Auden, Mike
Thompson, Paul	2	Barker, Dave (C)
Floyd, Daffyd	3	Devine, Danny
Riley, Josh	4	Lineham, Pete
Yoxhall, Sean	5	O'Neil, Phil
Melvin, Stuart	6	Morrison, Rob
Randle, Mike	7	Tames, Rory
Flemming, Danny	8	Billinge, Danny
Wood, Tom	9	McCarthy, Mike
Roberts, Andy	10	Nicholson, Tim
Newans, Danny	11	O' Driscoll, Joe
Rickard, Duncan	12	Mills, Mike
Hughes, Kieran	13	Appleby, Steve
Fraser, Haydn	14	Tyson, Dave
Jones, Kevin	15	Dore, Joel
	<i>Bench</i>	
Lythgoe, Zak	16	Stainton, Matt
Rockey, Matt	17	Tames, Kieron
Hennessey, Paul	18	Watts, Chris

Red Cardski ...

More than 100 people were detained in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don after police mistook an innocent game of rugby for a mass brawl. The Russian news agency RIA said police had received a tip-off about a mass fracas at an empty sports ground on the city's outskirts on Sunday afternoon.

More than 70 officers arrived to find dozens of cars parked around a grassy field and around 60 people watching what appeared to be a fight between two criminal gangs. The police broke up proceedings and detained some 100 people before determining that they were engaged in a bizarre sport instead of brawling.

All the detainees were released several hours later, but not before being scolded for not alerting authorities ahead of time.

Warrington RUFC News, Results and Match Reports

Mini & Junior Update

➤ **Lancashire Plate Final Sunday 1st April 2012 at Blackburn RUFC**

Warrington U14s 5

Manchester U14s 24

Warrington Under14's took on Manchester in the Plate final of the Blacksticks blue Lancashire cup competition at Blackburn. In fine conditions and facing a moderate breeze Manchester received the kick off from Warrington. Warrington took advantage of their pack superiority and under pressure Manchester knocked on, the resulting scrum was easily won and Warrington can count themselves unlucky not to have scored. Some brave Manchester defending preventing the grounding of the ball.

For the next five minutes Warrington camped on the Manchester line, going over another 4 times, each time being judged not to have grounded the ball. Some days things just don't go your way, but credit to Manchester they defended well and put their bodies on the line. Warrington frustration at the scrum resulted in turnover ball, Manchester's first piece of possession, and with quick hands moved the ball wide. Excellent inter-play between the forwards and backs saw them progress through several phase up field to score a try in the corner (0-5).

Warrington restarted and normal service resumed, the Warrington pack regained possession and drove towards the Manchester line. With Manchester on the back foot it would have been better to move the ball out wide, with the ball kept in the pack, Manchester had time to regroup, and eventually turned over the ball and exerted pressure back on a retreating Warrington defence. The stretched Warrington defence left too much space mid-field and with a well-judged angled run near halfway, Manchester broke through. Showing a fast turn of pace, Manchester sprinted through the gap to streak away from the cover and score under the posts. With a straight-forward conversion Manchester led 0-12.

Warrington heads dropped, Manchester gained confidence and after some excellent approach work Manchester broke through some lack lustre Warrington tackling and sprinting to within 10 meters of the Warrington line before being hauled down. Some good Manchester rucking and support play Manchester scored again near the posts for an easy conversion (0-19).

Manchester again moved the ball left, right, left and right again to find their winger on the over-lap to finish the move with a try in the corner (0-24).

Half time, Warrington came out of the blocks with renewed purpose, this game was not over, Warrington pressure was soon rewarded with a try under the posts by A signature barnstorming run from Tom Brown, (5-24), Warrington sadly were unable to convert. In many respects the second half was like the first – but the critical difference was that Manchester thought they could score with every piece of possession rather than manipulating position and executing overlaps. Wayward passing and over-exuberance played into the hands of Warrington who to their credit showed both spirit and character in driving at Manchester. With some strong forward surges and backs weaving through the Manchester defence. Matthew Clarkson, Warrington second row drove for the line but was unable to ground the ball. Warrington's back line flourished

late on when some quick recycling led to scoring opportunities not present in the first half, Tom Morse and Liam Horrocks combined well to cause Manchester some problems in defence, both boys were unlucky not to break away from Manchester's desperate tackling, but Manchester should be congratulated for hanging on for the win.

Head coach Andy Morse summed it up;

' We came here to win, but didn't have enough in the tank, ours heads dropped in the first half when we failed to convert pressure into points, the game was for the taking, sometimes it's just not your day, the second half performance showed how much the boys have matured over the last 12 months, and we were very unlucky to score only one try. I have no doubt that we will have our revenge. I'm incredibly proud to be coaching these lads, and bitterly disappointed for them today, but the future's bright and we can't wait for next season.'

➤ **Lancashire Cup Final: Sunday 29th April 2012 at Vale of Lune RUFC**

Warrington U13 vs. Waterloo U13

Warrington U16 vs. Vale of Lune U16

- Well done U14s and best of luck U13/U16. Dave Broadbent, President, WRUFC
-

➤ *Saturday 24th March 2012*

Warrington 1st XV 29

Tyldesley 1st XV 0

A disinterested spectator could have been forgiven for mistaking who was 3rd and who was 13th in the league in this match in which Warrington played with flair and determination in one of their best displays of the season.

Warrington's commitment to open rugby nearly brought its rewards within 2 minutes when winger Haydn Fraser was edged into touch just 5 yards short of the line after an electric 40 yard sprint. From the lineout some slick interpassing in the backs cut the Tyldesley defence to shreds but with the line at his mercy Duncan Rickard could not control the pass. Warrington continued to press, however, and Matt Rockey opened the scoring with a penalty after 5 minutes. Almost from the restart, clever passing in the Warrington backs manufactured another scoring opportunity but the last pass again went astray. Winger Kieron Hughes finally opened the try scoring with a dazzling individual effort when a quick penalty taken by Tyldesley in their own 22 resulted in an interception. Rockey converted.

Tyldesley gradually got back into the game and threatened the Warrington line with good use of the driving maul, almost their only attacking ploy, but well marshalled defence kept the visitors at bay.

When their kicks to the corners did not go to touch, Tyldesley were severely punished by Warrington's willingness to counterattack with ball in hand. In the 30th minute Kevin Jones exemplified Warrington's attacking spirit, bringing the ball up to half way from his own 22. The ball was then whisked down the line and a well-timed pass from

Matt Rockey put Haydn Fraser in at the corner for Warrington's second try. Twice more before the interval Warrington were pulled back from try scoring when the last pass was adjudged forward but the hard running Kevin Jones made no mistake when he collected a loose clearance kick on half way, kept the ball to himself and powered over under the posts. Again Matt Rockey converted.

Warrington weathered some severe early pressure at the start of the second half including a great steal from Elliot Johnstone as Tyldesley drove strongly for the line with one of their trademark mauls. Although Warrington began to feel the absence of injured veteran Paul Grant, who has been the cornerstone of the pack throughout the season, they were well compensated by the confidence exuded by the unhurried no 10 Andy Roberts which led to their fourth try. With the pack going backwards on its own 5-metre line the new slimline No. 8 Danny Fleming scrambled the ball away and with great aplomb the back division fed the ball to winger Kieron Hughes, still on the 5-metre line, who raced the length of the park for a score between the posts and a bonus point. Matt Rockey converted.

After the match, an ebullient coach, Steve Riley, commented, "What do they say about fat ladies and singing? It looks like our struggle to avoid relegation is going to go right to the wire. We are four points adrift from Liverpool Collegiate with three games to play. However, if we keep on playing like we did today, anything is possible."

Warrington 2nd 25 Lymm 3rd 3

Warrington retained their top of the table position with this comfortable win over their local rivals. In a fairly even first half, centre Andy Jackman opened the scoring with a try for Warrington and Lymm responded with a penalty. Warrington began to dominate in the second half with winger Tickle latching on to beautifully weighted kick from stand off Danny Newens for their second try. Prop Kevin Floyd muscled over from short range for Warrington's third try to secure an excellent win. Captain Sean McDermott and veteran Matty Drinkwater shared kicking spoils with a conversion and a penalty apiece.

An up-beat Stu Coleman, the Warrington coach, enthused, "We have now opened up a 14 point gap over the third-placed side in the league and we seem well on course for a deserved promotion. However, the lads are keeping their feet firmly on the ground and treating every game with respect."

Warrington 3rd 29 Liverpool Vets 10

On a roll from their defeat of league leaders Moore last week, Warrington put second placed Liverpool Veterinarians to the sword to maintain a strong challenge for promotion, with just three points separating the three contenders for the second spot.

First half tries from winger Dave Nichol, second row John Morris and centre Tom Arnold with two conversions added by Marek Kobus to two tries from the visitors gave Warrington a useful 19-10 lead at the interval. A penalty from Kobus and try from Rhian Mullen, converted by Kobus, completed the scoring. Winger Liam Ferguson, an Arnold protégé, was impressive throughout and counter attacked with some determined and elusive running.

➤ *Saturday 31st March 2012*

New Brighton 1st XV 5 Warrington 1st XV 36

If, three weeks ago, following the trouncing by Sale, any seemingly-demented Warrington supporter had suggested that the side would beat both the second and third placed teams in the league on consecutive weekends and even gain a bonus point in both matches for scoring more than four tries, they would either have been laughed out of the clubhouse or compulsorily sectioned under the Mental Health Act (1983). But often truth is stranger than fiction. As coach Steve Riley explains, "We, the coaching team, have always had great faith in the bunch of players in our squad. They have shown great defensive capabilities and excellent spirit even when we had such a bad losing run in the early part of the season. We have known that we have always had all the playing elements which make up a good team, just as an orchestra is made up of good musicians. But, like every orchestra, every Rugby team also needs a good conductor to make the most of all the talents of the players. I think we have found our conductor in Andy Roberts, a stand-off who knows when to run, when to pass, when to kick and when to prod. We now have a superb attacking element to our game, realising much of the vision of Darren Abram, my fellow coach, and some of the rugby we played today brought gasps of astonishment from Warrington and New Brighton supporters alike. We now have two games to play and our future is now very much in our own hands."

Warrington began this fixture at 100 miles an hour and even seemed to speed up as the game went on. The opening try when it inevitably came saw the ball flash through at least seven pairs of hands, after a signature break from Kieron Hughes, before Tom Wood slipped the ball to Zak Lythgoe and the mobile second row took route one to touch down under the posts. Andy Roberts converted.

Ten minutes later a beautiful 30 yard break from Josh Riley, where he beat at least five tackles, gave Warrington the space to fling the ball out wide and Haydn Frazer once again showed his electric pace to touch down in the corner. Warrington rattled the scoreboard tins again before half time when Andy Roberts took advantage of clean possession won by his pack, feinted to go but fed Haydn Frazer and the speedster touched down for his second try. Andy Roberts converted from the touchline to make the half time score 19-0.

Warrington waited just 3 minutes of the second half to score again when slick handling allowed Kieron Hughes to demonstrate his clinical finishing skills and scuttle over in the corner.

New Brighton started to stage a mini recovery but the Warrington defence once again proved itself more than able to meet the challenge, with superb hits from Boris Melvin, Josh Riley, Duncan Rickard and Kieron Hughes. The introduction into the fray of Mike Randall saw Warrington step up a gear, as the diminutive back rower contrived to turn over ball five times within ten minutes of coming on. His fifth steal was put to good effect when Kieron Hughes made the initial break before feeding Andy Almond and the winger crossed in the corner. New Brighton gained a consolation try through their heavyweight pack but Warrington had the last word when scrum half Tom Wood dummied his way over from 20 yards for a much deserved try.

Coach Steve Riley added after the game, "Before the match, some New Brighton supporters informed us that they had a weakened team as their best player was attending the funeral of the King of Tonga. As excuses go, that is the best I have ever heard. However, I doubt if even the inclusion of the whole of the Liverpool and Wirral Tongan Society would have had any significant effect on the eventual result."

Warrington 2nd 86 Hope Valley 24

With promotion assured with this emphatic win, the only point of contention now is who finishes top of the league. At the moment, Warrington are four points clear of Caldy but the Wirral side have a game in hand and a better points difference.

Saturday's game eventually proved a total mismatch with Warrington clocking up 15 tries. The visitors managed three converted tries and a penalty but these were probably the result of Warrington generosity and lack of concentration rather than Hope creativity.

The Warrington try fest began with a typical explosive effort from Craig Byrne, as the centre exposed the visitors' defensive weakness to break through tackles and score. Hope struck back with a well-taken try but then the flood gates opened when Gaz Jackman sped through for the first of his four tries before Craig Byrne added two more to his account. Skipper Sean McDermott then produced his Lee Briers impersonation by intercepting in his own 22 and sprinting 80 yards for a try which he converted.

Lazy defence on the stroke of half time saw Hope score again but the second half became a procession with three tries from Gaz Jackman, the usual three tries from TJ Gordon, two tries from Mark Tickle, a bulldozing touchdown from Christian White and a superb solo effort from Tom Hockenhull, the man of the match.

A happy, interim coach, Steve West, said after the game, "This was a good one to win and improve our points difference. However, I know that we still have to perform right up to the end of the season, as it would be good to finish first after all the effort the lads have put in. It would also be good for coach Stu Coleman who is currently enjoying the sunshine of Egypt."

Warrington 3rd 58 West Park 3rd 6

Warrington's third string convincingly disposed of their visitors from St Helens with a performance which saw their strong pack, led by the iconic Tom Wray at prop and the ageless Mick Mullen at number 8, pave the way by monopolising virtually all the possession in set piece and loose. They now lie in second position in their league, 5 points behind leaders Moore 2nd but just one point ahead of Liverpool Veterinary School.

Warrington's backs took full advantage of the plethora of possession afforded by their hard working pack. This resulted in hat tricks for Dave Nichols and Ryan Carter, with one of Dave Nichols' tries being an inspired solo effort on the wing. Further tries came from Brian Hayes and Tom Arnold, while Dan Griffiths made immediate impact when he came on in the second half and was rewarded with two touch downs.

As captain Tom Wray said after the match, "Although this was very much a game focused on attack, one of the game's highlights was a superb tackle from Tom Arnold, who tracked his man after being beaten to eventually bring him down just short of the line. With this kind of never-say-die spirit, promotion at the end of the season looks a very real prospect."

Moore 2nd 22 Warrington Vets 7

Moore's second string, who are currently just edging Warrington's third team out of top position in their league, proved just too slick for a scratch Warrington Vets side, having only their fourth outing of the season.

Warrington took the field carrying a couple of injured players, notably winger Phil Jackson who had ankle ligament problems. Moore quickly realised this and attacked on his side of the field, eventually scoring three tries in the corner. Warrington stuck to it gamely throughout and were well marshalled by Anton Fields. It was the veteran stand-off who created the opening for Warrington's only try when he showed all his old guile by putting in a well-judged kick for winger Matt Williams to chase and touch down. However, Moore put the result beyond all contention with a try which was acclaimed as being of sheer brilliance by players of both sides.

➤ *Saturday 7th April 2012* **There were no First, Second or Third XV games today**

Rugby Trivia

International Rugby Union Statistics

Total number of countries indexed:	148
Total number of games indexed:	6,403
Total number of points scored:	242,849
Average points per game:	37.93
Most games played by a team:	664 (by France)
Highest percentage of wins:	100.00% (by Cyprus, Lebanon, Macau)

Highest score:	164 (by Hong Kong)
Largest winning margin:	152 (by Argentina, Japan)
Largest joint score:	177 (Hong Kong 164 - 13 Singapore)

Most wins in a row:	20 (by Argentina, Lithuania)
Most losses in a row:	18 (by France)

Oldest game:	27 Mar 1871 (Scotland 4 - 1 England)
Most boring game:	Fill in your favourite yawn game below



Ashton on Mersey RUFC 1930 – 2012

➤ **Club History (*)**

Ashton on Mersey Rugby Club was formed in 1930 by disgruntled members of other local sides, namely Sale, Bowdon, Kersal and Metrovicks, who weren't getting games elsewhere.

Meetings were held in 'Bostocks' sweet shop situated in Ashton Village opposite St. Martins School. By the start of 1930/31 the first fixture list had been prepared and the use of a field acquired on Whiteleggs farm on Harboro Road. Teams changed in the barn at Litherlands farm on Carrington Lane and bathed in tin baths using water heated by an outside boiler.

As the club expanded Browns the builders let the club use their land on Kenilworth Road in 1933. The old coach house to the rear of the Buck Inn became the changing rooms. T. Bowen who played in the inaugural season was a son of the landlord at the time.

The premises were shared with the Ashton Silver Prize Band who used to parade and practice on the rugby ground as a prelude to matches. After three years at Kenilworth Road the land was required for building and from 1936 the club used grounds off Glebelands Road, near St Martins Church, now known as Romford Road estate. One constant embarrassment was the public footpath running across the second team pitch, when unsuspecting members of the public would stroll across the pitch. The club was now running four teams playing the likes of Winnington Park and Macclesfield. One of the more prominent members of the playing staff, F. Derrick, went on to play for England in the first Calcutta Cup match then played in India.

It was decided in 1939, due to the imminent outbreak of war and absence of members who were with HM forces, to suspend operations. It was six and half years later in 1946 before Ashton reformed. With no clubhouse or ground and with very little money, times were very difficult. Ground sufficient for one pitch was eventually rented from Sale Corporation which is now the site of the existing grounds, then known as Barracks Lane. An ex RAF hut from Stafford was acquired. This wooden and corrugated iron structure served as bathhouse and changing rooms for many years. No mains services existed. Water was hand pumped from a nearby well and heated in a coke fired boiler. When the old baths were replaced by brick baths and storm lamps replaced by electricity from an unreliable generator, it was perceived to be an achievement of great importance.

During the erection of the corrugated building one club member on the roof was caught short and relieved himself, subsequently filling another member's shopping bag draped across the handlebars of his Mum's bike!

The club badge was first designed and adopted in 1954. The club colours, maroon and white, were overlaid by the unicorn, the family crest of the Trafford family, and three wheat sheaves, representing Cheshire.

A second pitch was leased from Sale Corporation. A wooden ex-army building was purchased and rebuilt giving Ashton its first clubhouse in its history. By then ground for a third pitch was made available by dynamiting a very large tree stump out of the ground. The work was carried out by a friend of a club member. The explosion did not impress the local fire brigades who thought an accident had occurred at the nearby chemical works. Meetings were held at the Brooklands Hotel and the Little 'B' – a tradition that lasted for many years.

Mains water, electricity and a licence were first brought to the club in 1956. 1961 brought back four sides again and a very successful colts side including Roy Maddock who went on to play for Sale 1st XV and was capped several times for Cheshire. The success of the colts team was largely due to the drive and determination of Peter Whiting. A new personality arrived at the club in the form of Andy Gormally in 1959 who was instrumental in taking the lead in social ventures including marquee balls attracting in excess of 2000 people.

In the early 1960s the club received some very unwelcome publicity when one of its members, being the son of a Knight of the realm was involved in divorce proceedings. One of those involved alleged that infidelity and wife swapping was rife at the club, resulting in half a page in the Daily Express's gossip column, referring to Ashton as the 'Old Canoodlians'.

A new clubhouse was eventually built in October 1967 at a time when Ashton were fielding seven teams every week. This was built on the current site of the existing clubhouse, which was doubled in size by building over and around on all four sides of the old clubhouse in 2002/2003 – giving us what we have today.

Ashton were the first club to start junior rugby in 1972. When leagues were first established in 1988 Ashton won their respective division four years on the trot. Various restructuring of the leagues left Ashton where they were even after being champions on those four consecutive occasions. We eventually got promoted to North West One in 1994, the highest position in the club's history.

A major landfill exercise started in July 2000 and was completed in August 2001 culminating in the raised pitches becoming some of the best in the area. The early noughties saw the senior teams struggle with the 1st XV relegated and at times the club scraping to put a 2nd XV out. Conversely the junior/colts section thrived at this time. The latter half of the decade saw a rebuilding of the senior squads with three teams playing every week, resulting in a stable 3rd XV, two promotions for the 2nd XV and the 1st XV winning the Cheshire Plate in 2009 and promotion in season 2009/10 to South Lancs/Cheshire 1, where they currently (season 2011-2012) reside.

(*) Provided by Ashton on Mersey RUFC

Rugby Profile

Thomas Mervyn "Merv the Swerve" Davies (9 December 1946 –15 March 2012) was a Welsh rugby union player who won 38 caps for Wales as a No. 8. Davies was born in Swansea, where he attended Penlan County School.



Thomas Mervyn Davies

December 1946 – 15 March 2012

Davies joined London Welsh in 1968, later moving to Swansea. He won his first cap for Wales in 1969 against Scotland, going on to play 38 consecutive matches for Wales and scoring two tries. During this period Wales won two Grand Slams and three Triple Crowns. He went on the British and Irish Lions tours to New Zealand in 1971 and to South Africa in 1974, playing in eight tests. In a total of 46 international appearances for Wales and the Lions he only ended on the losing side nine times.

Tall and slight of frame, he grew a Mexican moustache to make himself appear more aggressive on the rugby field. He was nicknamed "Merv the Swerve" and is considered by some to be the greatest Number 8 that Wales has ever produced and one of its greatest at any position.

His career was ended by an intra-cranial haemorrhage suffered when captaining Swansea against Pontypool in 1976. He had collapsed during a game on another occasion, four years earlier, and had been wrongly diagnosed with meningitis.

Following the second incident he was a patient in the University Hospital of Wales for several months, and received goodwill messages from all over the world.

In a poll of Welsh rugby fans in 2002, Davies was voted both Greatest Ever Welsh Captain and Greatest Ever Welsh Number 8. In 2001 he was inducted into the International Rugby Hall of Fame.

Davies had a son and daughter by his first wife Shirley; the marriage ended in divorce. He was a smoker and was diagnosed with lung cancer in November 2011. He is survived by his second wife Jeni and his two children.

➤ **We hope to see you all here again on Saturday 21st April for the last game of the season (against Winnington Park).**