

History of York Railway Institute – Phill Gray

Some adapted content from *The History of York Railway Institute Rugby Union Football Club*, B J Emmel and P S Fowler. A full version of the history of the club is available in that publication, available from York RI.

The rugby club, now known as York RI, can date their history back to December 1883 at a meeting held at Baron's Cocoa House at 14 Micklegate York, when a set of rules and a general meeting convened for the 'North Eastern Railway Football Club'. The first match against 'York White Rose' was played on January 12 1884 under the Rugby Football Union rules by the employees of the North Eastern Railway who worked at the Carriage and Wagon works, the Loco works, the Foundry and other departments. Various teams included the NER Clerks, P-Way Joiners, NER Loco, Boilersmiths Apprentices, and York NER – the forerunner to the present Club.

The term 'York Railway Insititute' first appeared on 4 July 1889 when the new HQ building in Queen Street was opened

<http://www.historyofyork.org.uk/timeline/victorian/the-railway-institute>

The London and North Eastern Railway was formed in 1923 (the precursor to the LNER of today!), and on 21 March 1925 at a meeting at Queen Street HQ it was decided to form the LNER (NE Area) Rugby Union Football Club. Between this formation and 1932, home matches were played on Acomb Priory Field, not far from the current ground at New Lane.

1932 was an auspicious year for York RI as they're known now. Not only did the Rugby Club move to the current New Lane site, but amongst other things, the Railway Institute Council meeting on July 15 1932 established the current name **The York Railway Institute Rugby Union Football Club** and that the playing colours to be adopted be blue with alternate white hoops – the same colours we still use now!

As you might expect for a team formed from the railway industry, the first buildings and pavilions at New Lane were converted

passenger coaches (see below for an example image from the 1925-26 season at Acomb Priory) with long covered verandas. At New Lane this tradition continued, with the installation of two concrete baths for football and rugby (6ft sq x 18 inches deep).

FIXTURES 1925-26.				
Date.	Name of Club.	Res.	Points for	Points against
Aug. 29	Practice
Sept. 5	Practice
12	Goole ...	H	15	11
18	Old Crossleyans ...	A	12	11
26	York Nomads ...	A	12	11
Oct. 3	2nd Battn. Cheshires ...	H	12	11
10	Rotherham ...	H	12	11
17	Leeds Y.M.C.A. ...	H	12	11
24	2nd Battn. Cheshires ...	A	12	11
31	Featherstone P.C. ...	A	12	11
Nov. 7	Featherstone P.C. ...	H	12	11
14	York and North Riding ...	H	12	11
21	Harrogate ...	A	12	11
Dec. 5	Doncaster ...	A	12	11
12	York Nomads ...	H	12	11
19	Darlington Rly. Ath. ...	A	12	11
26	Goole ...	A	12	11
Jan. 2	Hornsea ...	A	12	11
9	Leeds Y.M.C.A. ...	A	12	11
16	Rotherham ...	A	12	11
23	Doncaster ...	H	12	11
30	St. John's College ...	H	12	11
Feb. 6	York and North Riding ...	H	12	11
13	Darlington Rly. Ath. ...	H	12	11
20	Bridlington ...	H	12	11
27	York Spartans ...	H	12	11
March 6	York and North Riding ...	A	12	11
13	York Spartans ...	A	12	11
20	St. John's College ...	A	12	11
27	Ripon and District ...	A	12	11
April 3	Hornsea ...	A	12	11
10	Harrogate ...	H	12	11
17	Bridlington ...	A	12	11
24	York Nomads ...	A	12	11



OPENING OF THE PAVILION - 1925-26 SEASON
PODDLETON ROAD

The current clubhouse building at New Lane was opened in 1970, replacing a late 1950s pre-fab building. Whilst offering much improved social spaces (dedicated bar, kitchen, clubroom and important changing rooms), there are some who reminisce about the lost charm and originality of the old railway carriages and the huge verandas. During these years membership expanded to include non-railway members, and still does today.

Having developed a second pitch at New Lane, and through several senior railway members' connections, the club contrived to move and install flood lights at the ground, in a progressive move to rehome redundant lights from a marshalling yard. This proved invaluable to ensure training could continue over the winter and being the first rugby union club in Yorkshire to enjoy such a facility (with the possible exception of the old Headingley club), floodlit matches became possible, and soon other clubs, some of the senior, were trying to arrange mid-week matches and competition to become popular, attracting "better" clubs.

Fast forward to 2021, and despite the current pandemic, York RI continues to grow. Between lockdowns, rugby teams have been training at New Lane under covid-safe guidance, welcoming new players (we'd love more players to join York RI Templars) and longing for the day when we can host and play rugby games again.

The last few years at York RI continue that progressive spirit and motivation engrained in the club since its formation in the early 20th century. Welcoming an inclusive rugby team alongside the first, second, ladies and mixed ability team have shown York RI to adapt to change, and we're really lucky at York RI Templars to be part of such an iconic York rugby club, with a rich history and a bright future.

If you're interested in joining our team, or finding out more about York RI, get in touch via social media 'York RI Templars' and we'll connect you.



The 1935 team against Southern Railway in 1935. "Deaner" Pennicard with the ball who played for British Railways against French Railways on a number of occasions.

Scots own

first-winnings total of 207, the Commonwealth rattled up 414 for seven declared. Australia's Bobby Simpson led the way with 167, followed by Tom Graveney, of England (94), and Roy McLean (South Africa) with 51.

At the close the New Zealand side had made 102 for three in their

Y GAMES ENDED

Hullfax	43	Morley	6
Harrogate A.	3	Bury	9
Headingley W.	25	Hull Univ.	6
Headingley A.	13	Old Roddions	15
Hull & ER	8	Oldley	14
Leeds YMCA	8	Roundhegians A.	16
Moortown	14	Doncaster	6
O. Brodieians	11	O. Pomfretians	8
O. Lendiansians	22	Leeds TC	16
O. Otlensians	3	Scarborough	14
O. Roundhegians	8	Bradford Tech.	6
Roundhay A.	28	Warrington	3
Sandall	12	Carnegie College	0
Wakefield	6	Cleckheaton	11
West Leeds OB	6	O. Hymersians	5
Selby OB	11	Calder Vale	6
N. Ribblesdale	3	Roundtrees	3
Leeds Chirons	9	Mansfield	13
Barnsley	3	Cranwell Cadets	17
Boston	5	Rochdale	21
Chesterfield	0	Rotherham	6
Hessle	11	Malton & Norton	9
Ionians	13	Longcroft OB	12
Marist OB	13	Sheffield TC A	13
O. Hillmans	3	Scunthorpe	3
O. Thornensians	6	Heath OB	6
Sheffield Tigers	11	Grimsby	6
Workshop	5	Bretton Hall	3
Doncaster B.	8	Hull & ER Colts	6
Thorn GS	25	Sandall B.	3
Whetley Hills OB	8	O. Crossleyans	3
Castleford	21		

YORKSHIRE R.U. CUP

Bradford Salem	0	Bramley OB	5
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School Results

Royal High Sch	24	Hillhead H.S.	11
Boroughmoir Sch.	3	Trinity Academy	12
Hutchesons G.S.	3	Rohit, Gordon's C.	6
Holy Cross Acad.	9	Leith Academy	10
Moray House Sch.	10	Morgan Academy	3
Aberdeen G.S.F.P.	3	Hutchesons' GSFP	0
Mutton G.S.	0	Aldershaw G.S.	3
Colts 30, Fulwood County	11	0—Repton L.	
Cheltenham I.			

there were a few incidents better forgotten. In general the brothers

and craft under identical conditions for the benefit of handicap committees and the boat-buying public.

YORK R.I. BACKS WERE SUPERIOR

Redcar 0 York R.I. 28pts.

The vastly superior play of the York R.I. backs earned their side one of its biggest victories of the season and inflicted on Redcar their fifth successive defeat.

Earlier in the season Redcar had won 6-5 at York. But five late changes in the Redcar team proved too much of a handicap yesterday.

Although the Redcar forwards fought valiantly they had little support behind the scrum.

York R.I. with hard-running wingers in G. Smith and Sollitt, and a sprightly scrum-half in Mannion always looked dangerous, and they were aided by some appalling defensive errors by the home side which gave York too much room in which to manoeuvre. Indeed the tackling of both sides was poor.

York opened well with a try by G. Smith within five minutes. Redcar rallied and their fly-half and best back, B. Smith, was just caught as he tried to burst over the York line.

and the home side might have scored on two or three occasions. Once B. Smith punted ahead, but although several forwards were up the chance was wasted. Later Kerr kicked parallel to the touch line, but was just beaten to the touchdown.

York, however, had a habit of turning defence into attack, and G. Smith chased a colleague's clearance kicked from his own "25" and beat two slow Redcar defenders to the ball to score.

Sollitt added another try, and G. Smith jinked his way through to put Maw across for the best try of the match.

Full-back Bond kicked four out of five conversions.

Rugby Colts Team

The Devon Rugby Union Colts team to meet Somerset Colts next Saturday at Crediton, Devon, will be: C. R. Scourfield (Torquay A.); R. Marshall (Plymouth A.); G. Jenkins (Torquay A.); B. C. Swabey (Plymouth A.); P. Pansy (Exmouth); J. Marshall (Kingsbridge) (capt.); P. Dennis (Plymouth A.); R. J. Mather (Exeter); C. Bright (Exmouth); D. Greenaway (Exmouth); P. A. Woodhead (Devon Police); R. D. Combe (Torquay A.); M. Yeoman (Barnstaple); C. W. Winger (Torquay A.) and P. Luxon (Withycombe).

Scrappy Interlude

After a scrappy interlude the last five minutes before half-time brought two more tries—from Sollitt and G. Smith, the latter following an interception.

The Redcar pack continued to fight to good effect in the second half,



1955 and in the current strip.

Back Row: Peter Sellers, Alan Nicholson, John Sykes, John Bradley, Gordon Hubble, Ted Newby, Derek Debenham, Ken Reed, and the Referee.

Front Row: Peter Mowbray, Moggie Green, Twiggie Hunter, Scrog Smith, Alan Reed, George Layton, and John Maw.



A colourful bunch, including Mac (Ref), Monty White (front left), Bernard Emmel (with the ball) and Billy Moore (standing right). Note the hockey goalposts in the background, One of two pitches provided following the extension of the ground.