

Jimmy Breen on Rugby League.

In the world of Rugby League reporting the name of Jimmy Breen needs no introduction. Once again throughout the season his knowledgeable reports will be a regular feature in the FOOTBALL FINAL of the



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CLUB COMMENTARY

For our final match of season 1952/53 we have pleasure in welcoming our friends from Oldham.

Oldham were playing well and looked all set for honours early in January but then a series of injuries to their players took its effect and consequently lost them a top four place. Recently they have regained something like their top form and although this match has no bearing on the league championship we should see a game worthy of the two Clubs.

Cup Final.

The Rugby League Council decided on Monday last, by a majority vote, not to allow the Cup Final to be televised. We voted in favour of televising the match believing it to be in the best interest of our game and also a wonderful opportunity for publicity in the areas not yet served by Rugby League.

Review of the Season

In reviewing the season 1952/53 the most marked event and one that created Club history was the winning of the Lancashire Cup for the first time ever. Also our first major success since our reformation in 1946, the convincing manner in which it was achieved was a credit to all who contributed to the effort and our final display at Swinton will go down as our finest hour.

In the League Championship and Rugby League Challenge Cup we failed at the vital stages in each competition but then we suffered, in the all important matches in March, a series of serious injuries to our leading players on the field of play, misfortunes but for which we may have had a further success to record.

Our general standard of play throughout the season we feel has improved and has been far more consistent than in previous seasons. Emphasis, when the occasion warranted it, has been placed on attack and this has resulted in the highest number of tries being scored than in any previous season.

This month we have been team selecting with a view to next season and the players introduced have shown distinctive promise.

Our "A" team have not enjoyed as good a season as in the immediate past two seasons but last August we decided on a policy of introducing trialists on every available occasion, in view of the need to strengthen

our reserves, which no doubt affected the team's performance in several matches. Their record is still quite a good one, twenty-three matches having been won out of a total of thirty-six.

Total gate receipts for the season have again topped £30,000, but the average league attendance has fallen by over 1,500 per match as compared with last season. Entertainment duty paid is more than £6,000 and well over double of that of last season. That the Chancellor of the Exchequer should give no relief to this heavy burden Rugby League Clubs are having to carry is very regrettable and may have serious consequences. We find it hard to understand why cricket should receive such preferential treatment. Doesn't Rugby League also foster Commonwealth relations? Rugby League is recognised as Australia's national game.

The Ground has had many improvements made to it and in this sphere we must praise the Supporters' Club Committee and the many voluntary workers. The Supporters' Club had the distinction of seeing their President, Eustace Collier, Esq., J.P., officially open the new Supporters' Club Stand which cost over £7,000. This fine body are planning further improvements in the near future.

Remaining Matches.

The season will come to a close on Saturday, May 2nd and the remaining amateur fixtures to be played on Kirkhall Lane are as follows:—

27th April ...	Holden Cup ...	2 semi-finals
28th April ...	Holgate Cup—Intermediate—	2 semi-finals
30th April ...	Holgate Cup ...	Final
1st May ...	Lancashire Junior Cup Final	
	Wigan Road W.M.C. v. Clock Face, St. Helens	
2nd May ...	Holden Cup ...	Final

The Schoolboys have an attractive match on our ground tomorrow evening, Thursday, when XII Apostles, Leigh play St. Mary's, Wigan, in the 2nd Round of the Daily Dispatch Shield, kick-off 7-00 p.m. The Wigan team come with an excellent reputation, winners of the Wigan Town Championship and Wood Cup, and we should see a fine exhibition of rugby. In the XII Apostles' side will be Flannery and Fenn, who both played for Lancashire against Cumberland at Widnes last Saturday.

SUPPORTERS' CLUB NOTES

As we approach the end of 1952/53 Season, let us look back awhile and refresh our memories. In spite of our setbacks and recent disappoint-

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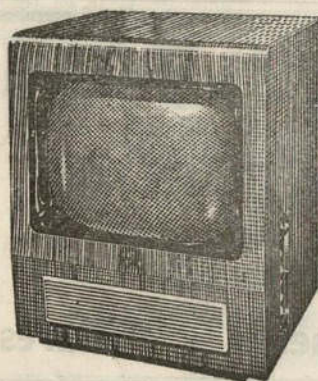
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ments I feel that the past Season has been a momentous one, not only for our own Club, but for our game in general. Yes, to many Clubs, 1952/3 Season will be remembered for many years to come, and perhaps some will want to forget by the passage of time.

To our supporters I can only say that no-one can be more disappointed than myself by the recent setbacks that have befallen our own boys. Throughout in these notes, I have been confident that this could have been OUR Season, and after that never-to-be-forgotten day at Swinton in November, I felt that at last, we were capable of achieving the objects which we have looked at so wistfully for so many years. But it was not to be, and I feel I cannot dwell on the recent form displayed nor attempt to minimise the handicap we were under at the loss through injury of such our key players. And so the Season commenced in triumph, departs in silence as a stranger.

What else shall be able to remember for 1952? Will it be St. Helens amazing record of going through the Season without an away defeat? Will it be a St. Helens or a Huddersfield double? I haven't the answers now, but whatever comes, it will still be a Season to remember.

Can we forget our rivals from Wigan in these memories? I cannot remember a Season offhand where the name of the "Central Parkers" did not appear on at least one trophy, yet Season 1952/53 will be ever remembered as the declining year of the Wigan of old. But let us not even for a second, cast them out as a team one can ignore. They have had a wonderful record, and one that I feel will never be equalled, and I am confident that before long they will be Wigan again and formidable opponents wherever they go.

What of our own personal memories? It would not be right for each and everyone of us to feel and think the same. No doubt, whoever I asked, I should receive a different answer, but to me, one moment of 1952/3 stands out as a moment ever to be remembered—2-45 p.m. on 31st January, 1953. Why?

In the olden almanacs, all Saints Days and Holidays were printed in RED ink to remind all who were interested, that the day in question was in fact a very special day—or as it came to be known in modern times—a RED LETTER DAY.

And to me, the 31st January, 1953, should be remembered as the RED LETTER DAY of The Leigh Supporters' Club, because on that day as the plaque was unveiled on the Leigh Supporters' Stand, we were proud that in some small way, we had been responsible for the erection of such a tribute to goodwill.

On that day, our many critics had been silenced, not by words or promises, but by deeds.

And so whatever your particular memory may be, whether it be for a happy one or otherwise, let us look forward to the future of our game.

May our game progress not only in our town, but in County, Country and the World. And who knows, our memories of today may become realities of the future.

The Collection to be taken at half-time today is for The Royal Life Boat Institution.

Happy watching,
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