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Fixtures for the Season

Date	Opponents	Venue	Date	Opponents	Venue
Aug. 9—Rochdale Hornets	Away		25—Swinton	Home	2-30
16—Halifax	Home	3-0	26—Hunslet	Away	
19—Blackpool	Away		27—St. He'ens	Away	
23—Wakefield	Away		1959		
30—Whitehaven (L.C.)	Home	3-0	Jan. 3—Leigh	Home	2-30
Sept. 2—Workington	Home	6-15	10—Barrow	Away	
6—Halifax	Away		17—St. Helens	Home	2-30
13—Wakefield	Home	3-0	24—Salford	Home	3-0
20—Rochdale H.	Away		31—Leeds	Away	
27—Blackpool	Home	3-0	Feb. 7—Warrington	Home	3-0
Oct. 4—Warrington	Away		14—Leigh	Away	
11—Rochdale H.	Home	3-0	21—R.L. Cup		
18—Liverpool	Away		23—Whitehaven	Away	
25—Hunslet	Home	3-0	Mar. 7—R.L. Cup		
Nov. 1—Featherstone	Away		14—Hull	Away	
8—Featherstone	Home	3-0	21—Barrow	Home	3-0
15—Salford	Away		27—Swinton (G.F.)	Away	
22—Leeds	Home	2-30	28—E.S.		
29—Wigan	Away		30—Hull (E.M.)	Home	3-0
Dec. 6—Widnes	Home	2-30	April 4—Liverpool	Home	3-0
13—Workington	Away		11—Widnes	Away	
20—Wigan	Home	2-30	18—Whitehaven	Home	3-0

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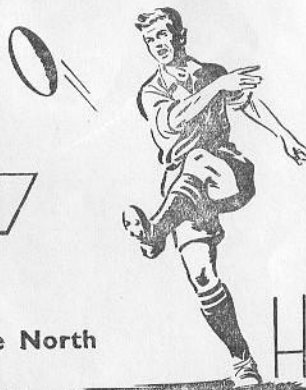
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No. 2 Saturday, August 30th, 1958

kick-off 3-0 p.m.

OLDHAM v. WHITEHAVEN

1st Round of Lancashire Cup

WATERSHEDDINGS NEWS AND VIEWS

The season is now getting under way and surprises there has been many in the League games. Several of the top clubs have had their setbacks due mainly to depleted ranks with players away on the Australian Tour and injuries. At Watersheddings the strength has been well below normal, the list of injured players appears to grow and with the star players Davies and Pitchford unavailable we consider our deputies have done well. Our first match Watersheddings against Halifax was a good victory although the team did not cover itself with glory, they appeared just too good for a strong Halifax team. Tuesday, August 19th, we visited Blackpool, always a difficult ground to play on owing to the narrowness, and we came up against a determined team who evidently went all out in the first half and were leading at half time by seven points to six points, but the opposition were worn down in the second half and we went on to win by 34 points to 12 points. We had a fair following for this match at Blackpool and it is obvious from remarks one hears that the team is not functioning as in the last two seasons, we may possibly agree to a point, but consider the composition of the team when six recognised first team players were not available, it is nearly half a team out, and this requires some replacing from a limited playing strength. Our first two wins did credit to the reserves that played and to score 34 points on an opponents ground is no mean achievement, many clubs will go to Blackpool and know they have been there. On Saturday last we met our first league defeat at Wakefield, a team that on this showing will go far in the league and possible honours. There is no doubt that we were well beaten on the days play and it was obvious that some of our replacements lack the necessary experience. We had our opportunities to score at least three tries but unsteadiness and bad finishing cost us the humiliating score against us of 23 point to 7 points.

OUR VISITORS

Today we give a welcome to visitors from Whitehaven, one of the outposts of the Rugby League. They commenced with the biggest win of the season defeating York at Whitehaven by over fifty points. They have suffered two away defeats at Workington by 17 points to 9 points and last Saturday were defeated by Blackpool by 23 points to 20 points. On

IT'S THE FUNNY BITS THE CROWD ENJOYS

By Cyril Briggs

How a funny incident helps to enliven even the drabest R.L. game, I'm going a long way back, but not as long as some Oldhamers can remember. It was in a Warrington v. Oldham game at Wilderspool, and Wood was the visiting full back. He was quite a sturdy figure if I recall correctly and when he went through a ruck of Warrington players, a try looked possible. But at the very last moment in came the tiny figure of McNulty, the ginger-haired Warrington scrum-half, and not unlike Jackie Edwards the present stand-off.

No diving tackle by Mac, he merely tapped Wood's ankles and the full back took a complete nose dive in the mud. No try and Wood was even too muddied to play the ball. What a laugh it raised! After the McNulty was a legend at Wilderspool even if he did not last very long in the game.

THE REAL FUNNY MAN

But the funny man of Rugby League was the late Laurie Thorpe, the Wakefield referee.

He joked about his deformity saying behind his hand that a big, dirty Yorkshire forward had caused it. Once when Laurie was controlling a certain game, he had occasion to speak to a loose forward who was prone to pack low and leave his feet sprawled out. Once or twice Laurie tripped over the No. 13's feet and was not happy about it. The third time it happened Laurie kicked the loose forward on the shins and didn't the player howl. In due course Laurie was reported to headquarters for kicking a player. Surely that's a record. We have heard of irate players dismissed from the field either having had a punch at the ref's head, or waited for him after the match. But for an official to kick a player was something out of the ordinary. Laughable too when you remember that Laurie was hardly five feet in height.

"HUMPTY" THEY CALLED HIM

"They used to call me humpty" he told me one day, "but I always had my own back." One afternoon Castleford were engaged in a fixture for which Laurie had to control. Suddenly someone made some scathing remarks about referees and Yorkshire ones in general. "Get up," roared Laurie, to the rival packs. Up they came. "Who shouted 'humpty'?" the little referee asked with more than a threat in his voice. There was a silence and then someone muttered "Crossley, sir." "Come out Crossley," yelled Laurie in the loudest Sgt. Major voice he could muster. There was not a flicker of an eyelid from the big brawny forwards. Again Laurie roared the demand, until a voice uttered quietly "Crossley isn't playing today, sir."

NEARLY TRAPPED

On another occasion the rivals packs had upset the little Wakefield fellow. They would not pack correctly; the hookers were across the tunnel before the ball went in; one set of forwards would start shoving before time and there was a struggle going on all the time between the blind side props. Laurie got them up for the last time to lecture them. Suddenly, there was a move by the front row of one team. Laurie seeing the danger skipped out of the way and then yelled, "do that again and I'll have you all off." And he would at that, ticking off or no ticking off at headquarters.

But the funniest incident happened at a ground where there are iron railings at the rear of the posts. One spectator would never let Laurie alone for a moment. As soon as he made an appearance the amateur critic was "cat calling." He gave Laurie a hectic time. Came the occasion when Laurie had to go behind the posts after a try had been scored. Just as the goal kick was being taken, the amateur critic roared to Laurie "Does tha' cum from Halifax?" "No" replied the tiny ref, "but that does." And the ball sailed high above the bar and dead centre between the up-rights. How the crowd at the spot roared. Laurie was never upset by that spectator again and I'm sure that even the spectator's pals ribbed him about the incident for years afterwards.

GAVE HIM IN CHARGE

I can't say whether it was on the same ground or not, but Laurie told me that one barracker always took up his position at the rear of the posts, and usually pushed one of his legs through a gap in the railings. It was a question of "Thorpe this, and Thorpe that." Laurie got tired of it all and again he took up a spot behind the posts after awarding a try—much to the disgust of the chap with the grumble. Unfortunately for the spectator, he made use of an unparliamentary word and quick as lightning Laurie rushed to the spot and caught hold of the onlooker's leg. He could not escape because it was through the gap of the railing. "Police" shouted Laurie and there was a "bobbie" near the spot. Laurie gave way when the policeman arrived and the rowdy one was escorted from the ground. And he never yelled at Laurie again.

To see Laurie in Cumberland was indeed an experience. Returning from a match he would leave his hold-all in charge of a friend and then dash along the platform to the engine driver. It happened scores of times at Whitehaven and Workington railway stations. "Get me to Carlisle in time for the Leeds train and I'll give you half a dollar," he would say to the driver. "Aye, aye sir" was the rejoinder. And believe it or not there were very few times when the train on the Workington-Whitehaven line didn't get to Carlisle in time for Laurie's connection. If he missed that train it meant an all night stay in Cumberland or a three a.m. home coming.

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3—DAVIES 4 T
4—AYRES IT
5—~~CRACKNELL~~ SIMS 2 T
6—KELLETT
7—PITCHFORD STIRRUP
8—LITTLE IT
9—KEITH IT
10—VINES
11—WINSLADE IT
12—McKEOWN
13—TURNER

Referee:

Mr. G. WILSON
Dewsbury

49

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WHITEHAVEN (Chocolate and Royal Blue)

- 1—McKEOWN
2—~~SMITH~~ KING
3—SHEPHERD
4—GIBSON
5—~~KING~~ SMITH
6—HANLEY
7—HADLEY
8—McALONE
9—McKINNELL
10—~~MYNICA~~ MATHEWS 10
11—TEMBY IT
12—ROBINSON
13—GARRETT

Touch Judges:

Mr. J. C. Clapham, Wigan, (Crimson)
Mr. L. Richmond, Salford, (Yellow)

5

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DIED IN HARNESS

And amid all his pals and places where he spent some happy hours, Laurie passed away at Christmas time a few years ago. He almost died with the whistle in his mouth at Whitehaven. He would not have chosen another form of death except to have wished that his loved ones were near him when he passed away. Men like Laurie Thorpe have made R.L. football. You may not have agreed with some of his decisions. I didn't at Central Park when Workington beat Barrow in a Challenge cup semi-final. Laurie was unsighted when Pearson was pulled back after crossing the Town line. I was not in the Press Box at the time, but closer to the line than any other sports writer. I had a perfect view of the incident, and although Laurie did not award a try, and Barrow were unlucky to lose I did not fall out with him. It is surely a happy thing when you can disagree with a pal without losing his friendship.

INJURED PLAYERS

It is a long number of years since we had such a large list of injured and unavailable players but we hope they will be considerably reduced by today's match.

Davies—just returned from Tour.

Pitchford—just returned from Tour.

Little—fluid on the knee, may be available for today's match.

Duffy—recovering from sinus operation, available for today

Etty—operation on nose, available a week today

Carruthers—Flu

Daley—two broken fingers

Hatherall—broken nose

Jackson—recovering from cartilage operation

Noon—shoulder injury

Ogden—knee injury

Nestor—just joined H.M. Forces, stationed at Catterick, will be available after one month's basic training.

LIST OF FIRST TEAM APPEARANCES AND SCORERS

(Up to and including Saturday last)

Player	A.	G.	T.	Player	A.	G.	T.
Ganley	4	18		Winslade	4		
Cracknell	4		2	Little	1		
Nestor	3		1	Daley	1		
Ayres	4			Noon	2		
Etty	1			Edwards	1		
Kellett	4		1	Vines	3		
Jones	2		2	Turner	3		1
Rowbottom	3		1	Stirrup	2		
Keith	4		2	McKeown	3		2
Lomas	2			Sims	1		

LANCASHIRE COUNTY RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE

(Up to and including Saturday last)

	Barrow	Blackpool	Leeds	Leigh	Liverpool	OLDHAM	Rochdale	Salford	St. Helens	Swinton	Warrington	Whitehaven	Widnes	Wigan	Workington
Barrow	.....														
Blackpool	.....	.....				12-34									
Leeds	32-20	.....	.....									23-20			
Leigh			.....	.....			21-5								20-15
Liverpool					.....										
OLDHAM						.....									
Rochdale							.....		5-15						
Salford								.....							
St. Helens									.....						
Swinton	13-6									.....					
Warrington					23-26						.....				
Whitehaven												.....		24-12	
Widnes									25-16				.....		
Wigan														.....	
Workington							19-12					17-9			.....

Home Team on left Away Team on top Home Team's score given first

Monday evening last at Whitehaven they created a big surprise in defeating Wigan by 24 points to 12 points. Our team today will have to be in better form than at Wakefield and show more penetration if we are to overcome tough opponents. Of the result, the players have no doubts and we look forward to going into round number two and another home game in visitors from Swinton or Wigan. What an incentive to win today's match with opponents as above.

"A" TEAM

The "A" team has played two matches so far this season and has a new look, having no fewer than 8 new players in its ranks, all from Junior Football. In the first match at Swinton they lost by 27 points to 5 points and at home last Saturday just lost the match by 19 points to 17 points, in this latter match they lacked a goal kicker otherwise they would have won the match having scored 5 tries to opponents 3 tries. One must give these young boys time to settle down into a unit and time alone will tell as to the possibilities of the players. More attention is being spent on the "A" team as these up and coming youngsters must be the seniors of the future.

TODAYS MATCH

Cup tie football has made an early appearance in the season and today is the first round of the Lancashire Cup and also in Yorkshire the County cup-ties commence.

The draw for the Lancashire Cup is as follows:

Oldham v. Whitehaven
Barrow v. Blackpool
Rochdale v. St. Helens
Swinton v. Wigan
Warrington v. Leigh
Widnes v. Salford
Workington v. Liverpool

The draw for the second round has also been made as follows:

Warrington or Leigh v. Rochdale or St. Helens
Barrow or Blackpool v. Workington or Liverpool
Oldham or Whitehaven v. Swinton or Wigan
Bye, Widnes or Salford

To be played on the ground of the first named club and to be concluded on September 19th.

Since 1945 only six clubs have won the County Cup, Wigan six times in succession starting in 1946, Oldham and Leigh twice and St. Helens, Widnes and Barrow once. We are the present holders having won the cup two years in succession.

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