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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. Helens	.....	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	28—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	Apr. 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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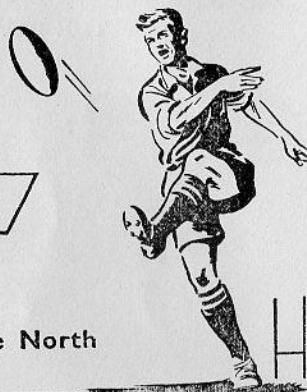


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WATERSHEDDINGS NEWS & VIEWS

To-day sees a welcome return of the first team to Watersheddings and we hope a successful return. This will be our fourth match at home since the year 1959 came in and we may say that up to now it has not been such a happy year for us. Two postponed matches during January, in St. Helens and Salford at home, and our disappointing exit at home in the first round of the Rugby League Challenge Cup by St. Helens by seven points to six, plus the last three league matches we have played away, resulting in losing all three, has not been such a good entry in the year. There is no doubt that we have been up against injuries and ill health of certain players, which is bound to have affected the rhythm of the team, and it is going to be hard work for us to secure a position in the first four of the N.R.F.L. to take part in the play-offs. One thing in our favour, is that we have seven matches to play at home and only three away, but we cannot afford to make any more slip-ups if we are to get into the honours list.

Our league matches at home are as follows: Hunslet, St. Helens, Salford, Barrow, Hull, Liverpool and Whitehaven. Our remaining away games are at Barrow, Swinton and Widnes. This is a formidable lot to face but a win today could give our team the confidence they require to carry on the good work.

In the league, prior to today's match, we have played 28 matches, won 19, drawn 1 and lost 8, and the law of averages proves that a team cannot lose above ten matches with any hope of finishing in the first four of the league, so it is up to our team to show its paces and fight for that honour, which can be accomplished if every man shows of his best.

Since our last appearance at home on February 7th, much activity has been going on in the club. Derek Turner has left us, being transferred to Wakefield, but two newcomers in Len McIntyre, hooker from Barrow and Ike Southward, wing three-quarter from Workington have been signed, which we hope will strengthen the team. Unfortunately, McIntyre secured an injury whilst playing in the "A" team against Leigh "A" on March 7th. His injury being a fracture fibula just above the ankle. This is tough luck on McIntyre and the accident happened in the last few minutes of the game. However there is a possibility of seeing him in action, we hope, before the season closes.

"TWO DIVISIONS MUST COME"

says ... CYRIL BRIGGS

Sooner or later the Rugby League will have to split into two divisions. Take the case of St. Helens. Recently I saw them whack a team with "first four" aspirations—Widnes. And although the "Chemics" were not up to strength, the might of the Saints was much too good for them, so much so, that the margin of 34 points could have been widened.

Why should there be two divisions. Well, St. Helens are making no secret of the fact that they are out to sign more stars. I realise that the Saints directors are in the happy position of having too many players for two positions and that there is a big pool of talented local youngsters to draw from. This season and late last year the St. Helens club parted with star after star because they did not seem to quite fit into the Knowsley Road pattern.

Here are some of the men they unloaded to other clubs: Syd Phillips, Keighley; Nat Silcock and Josh Gaskell, Warrington; Ron Robinson, Walter Delves and Len McIntyre, Barrow; George Parsons and John McGuinness, Salford; Arthur Pimblett, Widnes; and "Todder" Dickenson, Leigh.

SAINTS PICK AND CHOSE

Now those transfers have brought the Saints a lot of money, but it has enabled them to pick and choose the best in this and other lands. When you consider that big fees were paid to induce Tom Van Vollenhoven, Jan Prinsloo and Ted Brophy to leave their native South Africa, and Whitehaven and Huddersfield were persuaded to part with Dick Huddart and Brian Briggs respectively, you will see that the Saints are building up a side which may be almost invincible.

There's plenty of money in St. Helens for Rugby League football these days. For the league game with Widnes there was a gate of 18,000 with receipts nearly £2,000, and 30,000 have watched at least one game. But the Saints directors believe that if a better player is on offer than one they have already got they will make some kind of a bid for him.

The present Saints team must be worth £80,000 or £90,000. How are teams like Workington, Whitehaven and Barrow to compete with such a team, let alone Liverpool City, and the lesser lights in the Lancashire League? Surely this is a point in favour of splitting the unwieldy

Northern League! Many clubs in the league just cannot stand this competition and therefore many matches are more or less a foregone conclusion. While the St. Helens fans are delighted with prolific scoring, it is not a happy situation for supporters of other clubs.

MORE SPRINGBOKS ON THE WAY?

I have it on good authority, that St. Helens will be making more offers to South African stars during the summer and the fact that Van Vollenhoven will be going home for a holiday in the near future bears out my story. Because Vollenhoven has collected a small fortune in a signing-on fee and also big wages and bonuses, he is bound to paint a rosy picture of the professional game in this country when discussing R.L. with his friends at home

Wakefield Trinity, Oldham and Wigan seem to have a bottomless purse, if there is such a thing these days. Wakefield have been spending money like water this season and the signing of Derek Turner from Oldham for £8,000 surely showed the sporting world that the R.L. game which was supposed to be dying a slow death, has a lot of cash left and is still able to attract the crowds should the fare be exciting enough to watch.

I'm reminded by one writer, much older than myself, that no matter how you try, you will always have some poor relations. That's how it is in the Rugby League. Teams like Bramley, Castleford and Doncaster cannot afford to pay big money for internationals. So they carry on season after season just hoping for the best. There will be an end to it some day until they are up against teams where they have a reasonable chance of winning.

HAMMERED UNMERCIFULLY

Many clubs have dropped out of professional rugby in the last half century through lack of funds. But really, the trouble started when the smaller clubs were being hammered unmercifully by the bigger boys. It was like putting a heavyweight into the boxing ring against a bantam-weight. The contest was just as unequal.

R.L. must live with the times. The bigger clubs want a better league. The supporters of the teams in the top half of the Northern League say let us have more games like St. Helens v. Wigan; Wakefield v. Warrington; Hunslet v. Leeds, etc. But that unconstitutional rule—the two-thirds majority—simply will not let the bigger clubs break away.

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- 6—KELLETT, A.
- 7—PITCHFORD, F.
- 8—JACKSON, K.
- 9—KEITH, J.
- 10—LOMAS, H.
- 11—WINSLADE, C.
- 12—LITTLE, S. D.
- 13—PUGSLEY, R.

Referee:

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BARROW

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- 8—ROBINSON, R.
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- 10—DONALDSON, R.
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- 13—GOODWIN, D.

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"Derby" matches could be retained under the new system. But any system than the one now operating would be better than some run-away games. In Australia they have a grading system, so why cannot R.L. who introduced the game "Down Under," follow suit? After all, the bigger clubs are putting more into league and cup pools than they take out. Sooner or later, Oldham, St. Helens, Wigan, Leeds and Wakefield will have the cream of the Rugby world. All that will be left for the poor relations will be sour milk. The money supply will be exhausted by then.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Summerscales,

Some months ago, the O.F.C. Programme issued an invitation to readers to express their opinion on matters concerning Rugby League. I herewith send my opinion on what might soon become a talking (or perhaps action) point in R.L. circles.

I refer to the "Two Division" suggestion which is bound to come up again in the near future. I don't wish to sound ambiguous when I say—to echo more famous words than mine—"it all depends upon how you look at the matter."

Let me make myself perfectly clear, as far as dividing the league in half, I would strongly object to on the grounds that the occupiers of the second division would, by virtue of the type of football expected from such matches, be placed in a similar position to many fourth division F.A. clubs today—on the verge of extinction.

Let us consider some of the top class 'A' teams. I am sure that these 'A' teams could put up a good game against, and in many cases defeat many of the poorer clubs in the main league. Each week we hear the piteful cry—and rightly so—of the 'A' teams who do not get enough matches, and of 'A' team players who are deputies to top-class stars who rarely get a chance.

Let us then think of two division football in the terms of senior sides supplemented by selected 'A' teams—in effect, some clubs having two teams of registered players, restricting to the 2nd team all players who have had six or less appearances with the senior side.

This, sir, in my humble opinion, would be two-fold in benefit. It would provide good and regular match practice to other than 1st teamers and would lengthen the fixtures from the paltry efforts they would be if the league was cut to half the size.

Yours faithfully,

T. EVANS

LIST OF FIRST TEAM APPEARANCES AND SCORERS

(Up to and including Saturday last)

Player	A.	G.	T.	Player	A.	G.	T.
Ganley	31	127	1	Little	24		5
Cracknell	24		13	Daley	2		
Nestor	11		5	Noon	22	16	9
Ayres	12		3	Edwards	2		
Etty	22		6	Turner	22	1	1
Kellett	30	1	13	Stirrup	7		2
Jones	2		2	McKeown	22		2
Rowbottom	20		1	Sims	13		8
Keith	28		10	Hatherall	2		
Lomas	5			Mee	1		
Davies	26		16	Jackson	13		
Pitchford	25		8	Kelly	11		1
Dufty	13		1	Quinlan	3		1
Winslade	32		6	Goddard	3		
McIntyre	1			Lloyd	1		
Pugsley	1			Smith	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	.....	13- 9			21-14			28- 8	5- 7	10-5			2-7	17-23	25-5
Blackpool	9-17	.....	6-19	8- 7		12-34	10-20		19-26	9-17	21-20	23-20	9-21		
Leeds	16-13	32-20	.....		59-20	18-15	12-23		12-11	12-16	17- 47	18- 12		17- 8	
Leigh	27-5	25-26	11-16	.....		11-7	21- 5	15-20	6-10	9-22		20-3	13-7	15-25	20-15
Liverpool	12-11		16-20	20-16	.....	13-28		7-18			8-44	22-16	11-26	18-36	10-32
OLDHAM		44- 3	13-12	19-16		.....	22-18			8-7	19-8		44- 8	21-18	30- 4
Rochdale	7-11	20-10		10-5	19-12	13-14	.....	16-26	5-15		5-13		16-15	16-23	10-18
Salford	19-10			12-16	8- 6	14- 9	16-4	.....	12-28		16-22	19-15			
St. Helens	71-15		38-12			22- 6	42-12		.....	32- 3	15-7	27-3	38-4	13-9	
Swinton	13-6	27-15	3-26	10-18	35-10		23-11			.....		25-10	6-0	7-22	25-3
Warrington		25-8	32-15	15-13	23-26		19- 0		15-29	5-15	.....	42-8		5-18	30-4
Whitehaven			8-0	8-17	24-15	14-3		19-10	2-25		19-2	.....	2-14	24-12	0- 2
Widnes	17- 8	46- 7	5-16				34-11	35-10	25-16	17-5	13-17		.....		21-15
Wigan	49-16	29-11	32-3	26-12	45-7	19-7		31-14		24- 8		39-16	7-11	.....	
Workington	21-2	12-0	16-8	19- 4		0-23		19-12	10-10	9-10	32-15	17-9	14-34	.....	

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

OUR VISITORS

Today we have visitors from Barrow, and we give the Barrow Club a welcome to Watersheddings, knowing well that we shall see a game worthy of the Rugby League. The Barrow team are noted for their open play, and even when the result is going heavy against them, they never close the game up. Barrow have played 31 matches, won 17 and lost 14, point scored 479 for 426 against. The evergreen Billy Horne keeps coming in for a game with the club and if he plays today, we shall give him a special welcome. One of the finest players to grace our game, he was on the verge of becoming an Oldham player when the Barrow club stepped in and signed him from under our noses. Being only a youngster when signed, Horne has given great service to the Barrow club and to the game, to-day he occupies the position as coach to the club.

FRANK DALEY

Before the end of the season, we are holding a testimonial for Frank Daley, who completed 10 years service with the Club on January 31st last. Today on sale inside the ground is a brochure containing the career of Frank and the price is One Shilling. This is a very interesting booklet and we expect a heavy sale. They can also be obtained from the Pavilion and Secretary's office. We hope to make this testimonial a bumper for Frank, who is now on the eve of a great career, a great clubman, one who has given splendid service to this club and the game in general. You can just help a little to make a reward for a great hearted player by purchasing a brochure.

RE-ARRANGED MATCHES

Our arrears of matches have now been fixed as follows:

Tuesday, 7th April, Salford at Oldham — Kick-off 5-45 p.m.

Tuesday, 14th April, Hunslet at Oldham — Kick-off 6-0 p.m.

Monday, 27th April, St. Helens at Oldham — Kick-off 6-30 p.m.

Monday, 20th April, Barrow at Barrow — Kick-off 5-45 p.m.

For your information, Summertime comes into operation on Sunday, April 19th.

BRIEFS

We cannot get a clean bill of health as regards injuries to players. We have previously commented on McIntyre, but the latest is Brian Hatherhall, our reserve scrum half who has broken a toe. Len Mee, our reserve full back is suffering from ill health and will not be fit for some considerable time. Dennis Ayres is out of action with a pulled thigh muscle, which will take time to heal. Dennis has had some bad luck this season with injuries, but we hope next season will see the usual top-form Dennis in action once again.

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