

# OLDHAM

# RUGBY NEWS

Volume 1 No. 6  
 OLDHAM v WIGAN  
 Saturday, November 25th, 1972 (3.00 p.m.)



# POOLS PEP-UP IN NEW YEAR CASH BONANZA

A glittering, cash-laden new array of weekly prizes awaits Oldham Rugby Club's lucky pools punters in the New Year. The club's whole pools scene will be transformed and up-dated with the introduction of a brand new guaranteed 147 prize a week pool, with £100 first prize jackpot, £40 second and £20 third.

Apart from giving far better value to the ticket customers and more incentive to the pools agents, the new plan will bring much more badly needed revenue for the club. And already research has shown that the big guaranteed top weekly prize will prove much more of a loot lure to pull in thousands of extra punters than the old bingo style draw.

top of the big prizes of £100, £40 and £20. Results will be announced each Monday in the Oldham Chronicle to back up the Weekly Result Sheet issued the same day.

Prize distribution is the highest percentage payout of any pool operating. This means that the customer's chance of winning a prize is higher than it could possibly be with any other pool. This is achieved by selling more chances for less money per chance.

Some 15 years ago, members paid 5p, or a shilling each, for one chance. Today, in spite of huge rises in costs of wages, lighting, heating, postage, printing, it has been possible under the new scheme to reduce the PRICE PER ENTRY.

This is done by fixing the minimum subscription at 10p for three separate and distinct chances. Any one of these three chances can win and one of the 150 prizes, giving each member an unprecedented 450 chances of winning each week for 10p.

Mr. Taylor comments "So what it really boils down to is the giving of increased chances of winning, better prizes, better distribution, quicker and more efficient pay out to winners".

The whole new set-up will be explained to agents at a special meeting to be held in December. They will be able to question the inventors of the scheme and talk to those involved in running similar promotions at other clubs.

Obviously, this is a fine time to jump on the money-rolling bandwagon. In factory, shop, office, or among personal friends there is tremendous scope for earning extra cash. A call at the Watersheddings Pools office could be the first step to lots of lovely extra lolly.

Pools organiser Alan Taylor, Club Secretary Kevin Wilkinson and the Pools Committee have streamlined and modernised the type of pool in highly successful operation at clubs such as Wigan, Widnes, Wakefield Trinity and many leading soccer clubs. Last week Mr. Taylor and Mr. Wilkinson spent many hours with Wigan Pools organiser Mr. Eric Broome sifting through the administrative techniques which might be of benefit to the Oldham Club.

Mr Taylor said last night "Very many hours of research and study have gone into our decision. We decided to switch pools after talking to directors and fund raising committees of other clubs.

"They were able to point to rapidly expanding pools with increased cash for the clubs, delighted agents, more and happier ticket customers, bigger and better prizes, and smoother running systems."

"Many clubs changed over from bingo type tickets like ourselves. Each and everyone of these were way out over the moon at the fantastic results achieved".

Weekly prize money in the new pools plan will be well over £300 a week. There will be consolation prizes of £1 each for the 150 or so near misses on



DOUG LAUGHTON, captain of today's visitors, Wigan, in full pelt against the Australian tourists at the weekend. Jim Nulty is close up in support.



Who says there's no glamour left in Rugby League? Today's visitors, Wigan, celebrated the club's 100th anniversary with a special Centenary Ball. And our sister paper THE WIGAN WORLD laid on there a world class beauty contest. In our picture, Kathleen Winstanley, former Miss United Kingdom, presented a voucher for a free holiday in Portugal to 'Miss Wigan World' - Jean Arnold, 22, with the runner-up looking on.

## QUICK FLASHES

### PROGRESS

The proposed alteration to the Oldham Social Club moved a step nearer last week when the plans were approved by the local magistrates.

### CUP HEROES

Bob Irving was on parade before Oldham's match at Hull. Together with World Cup skipper Clive Sullivan, he did a lap of honour around the Boulevard with the World Cup, which Great Britain won in France for the first time since 1960.

### On the way

Norman Hodgkinson's try at Hull was his 15th of the season for Oldham. But he still has a long way to crack the club's individual scoring record in a season, set up by winger Reg Farrar, who scored FORTY-NINE tries in season 1921-2.

### WONDER WHITMORE

OLDHAM'S 'B' team lads seem at last to have sorted out their early season problems and at the weekend pointed this up total with a fine 16pts to 14pts victory over the strong St. Helens youngsters.

Whitmore, the Oldham skipper, scored 13 of his side's points, and was just as outstanding in the whole game as this feat indicates. Molloy got the other try.

The score was level with minutes to go, but after a sparkling seven piece, Whitmore raced over for the winning try.

### JOE FACES THE MUSIC

Out of hospital after his nose operation is Oldham centre Joe Collins, who hopes to be back in training before Christmas.

He will soon be back at work... but hardly relishing the prospect of a trip to his firm's headquarters in Weston-super-Mare.

Explains Joe. "They don't know much about Rugby League down there, and most of them think I am pulling their legs when I tell them I play for Oldham". "Just to convince them I told them to watch the Castleford match on the television...and then I was whipped into hospital and missed the match!"

At Joe's request, Oldham tried to get him a mention on the television broadcast, but it never came over.

"Not to worry", sighs Joe, "I shall just have to face the music next time I go to HQ."

## COME INSIDE WITH RUGBY NEWS

The wonderful world of Oldham Rugby comes right into close-up for you today through the pages of the club's own OLDHAM RUGBY NEWS - the Official Club Newspaper.

Your very own rugby newspaper is prepared and edited INSIDE the club, and so gives you the INSIDE INFO long before it hits the other papers.

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# Oldham Rugby League Club

Ground: Watersheddings, Oldham.  
Colours: Red and white hooped jerseys, blue shorts.  
Chairman: A. Walker.  
Vice-chairman: R. Hatton.  
Treasurer: R. Hartley.  
Committee: J. Bowden, B. Day, J. Higgins, D. Hulme, C. Farnworth, W. Jinks.  
Rugby League Council: A. Walker.  
Deputy: R. Hatton.  
Lancashire County: J. Bowden.  
Club Secretary: K. Wilkinson.  
Club Doctor: Dr. D. S. Preston.  
Physiotherapist: D. Wright.  
Coach: G. Starkey.  
Promotions Manager: A. Taylor.

## WIGAN STATISTICS

Colours: Red & white hoops, white shorts  
Ground: Central Park  
Nicknames: The 'Colliers' or the 'Riversiders'  
Founder members of Rugby League in 1895  
Attendance record: 47,747 v Saint Helens (League) 1958-59  
Goal Kicking Record 178 by Fred Griffiths in 1961-62  
Try scoring record 64 by Brian Nordgren in 1949-50  
Point scoring record 396 by Colin Tyrer in 1959-70  
Record win: 116-0 v Flimby and Fothergill (Cup Rd1) 1924-25  
Record Defeat 3-58 v Leeds (League) 1972-73  
Championship Winners 1908-09, 1921-22, 1925-26, 1933-34, 1943-44, 1945-46, 1946-67, 1949-50, 1951-52, & 1959-60  
Runners Up 1909-10, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1912-13, 1923-24, 1940-41, 1963-64, & 1970-71  
Challenge Cup Winners: 1923-24, 1928-29, 1947-48, 1950-51, 1957-58 1958-59 & 1964-65  
Runners Up 1910-11, 1919-20, 1943-44, 1945-46, 1960-61, 1962-63, 1965-66 & 1969-70  
Lancashire Cup Winners 1905-06, 1908-09, 1909-10, 1912-13, 1922-23, 1928-29, 1938-39, 1946-47, 1947-48, 1948-49, 1949-50, 1950-51, 1951-52, 1966-67, & 1971-72  
Runners Up 1913-14, 1914-15, 1925-26, 1927-28, 1930-31, 1934-35, 1935-36, 1936-37, 1945-46, 1953-54 & 1957-58  
Lancashire Championship Winners 1908-09, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1912-13, 1913-14, 1914-15, 1920-21, 1922-23, 1923-24, 1925-26, 1940-41, 1945-46, 1946-47, 1949-50, 1951-52, 1958-59, 1961-62 & 1969-70  
Runners Up 1909-10, 1921-22, 1924-25, 1928-29, 1930-31, 1933-34, 1947-48, 1948-49, 1959-60 & 1968-69  
Floodlit Cup Winners 1968-69 Runners Up 1969-70  
League Leaders Trophy Winners 1970-71



"Are you sure your name is Percy Thrower?"

## CLIVE GIVES SYD A DUSTY ANSWER IN FRANCE

Clive Sullivan's service to Rugby League has never been fully appreciated in the past but his leadership of the World Cup winning side should now present a truer picture of this dedicated sportsman.

Clive has spent many seasons on the Great Britain scene - he visited Australia in 1968 with the World Cup side and again in 1970 with the record breaking tour team.

He has been a favourite with Hull fans since 1961 but his popularity had reached a new level following his feats in France.

It is fitting that his benefit season at The Boulevard should coincide with what he describes 'as the proudest playing spell of my career in being able to skipper such a fine British side'.

When he was named as skipper that bitter Australian critic Sydney Barnes took a typical swipe from Down Under by claiming his appointment as an indication of Britain's feeble chances in the World Cup.

'What hope have Britain get when they name a winger as captain' asked Barnes. He has got his answer now.

Sullivan's personal reply was contained in those four matches when he began with a first minute try against Australian in Perpignan.

He then scored against France and New Zealand but saved his most spectacular effort for the final - that memorable 90-yard run that was more like an Olympic slow-motion race.

'I thought it was never going to end but I knew I had to make that line to shake the Aussies at that stage of the game,' he recalled.

It was a try that ranked with another Sullivan scoring effort that I will treasure for years to come.

The other moment was in Carcassonne in 1967 when Sullivan took a Neil Fox pass and after a glorious touchline run curved inside to give Britain a last minute 16-13 success.

But Sullivan's best work in the World Cup was not merely in attack cover tackling was supreme throughout and he drove and inspired his team mates in every game.

He was the perfect leader off the field, lending his experience to keep the side in the best of spirits - and not merely because of his World Cup feats.

The game and its followers are indebted to the Clive Sullivans of this world and I only wish there were a few more to follow in his footsteps in future years.

Mick Naughton will probably remember his World Cup trip more for a single remark than the two matches he refereed.

It was after he had controlled the Australia-New Zealand game and the France-Australia game that his career as an official suddenly turned full circle.

'I would say Naughton is the best referee to come out of Britain since George Phillips,' declared Bill Buckley, the president of the Australian Board of Control.

He made the point to me in the corridor of the Toulouse Municipal Stadium where Naughton had acquitted himself commendably in the face of another French farce.

Now whether Buckley is in the position to make such a statement, considering how rarely he sees British referees, I would not like to say.

But it still ranks as a compliment that Mick Naughton will treasure for the rest of his sporting days.

The significance is that it was George Phillips who set the 36-yr-old Widnes officials on the refereeing path and helped his progress in later years.

'When George started a school for refs I decided to have go,' explains Naughton. 'I had to pack in my playing career as a hooker because of a knee injury'.

'After a while George took me on one side and said he thought I would make the grade. Then when I made Grade Two he cut off of St. Helens-Huddersfield Wembley badge from his blazer and gave it to me.

'Later on I went to Joe Manley's school and have had a lot of help from officials like Eric Lawrinson, Dennis Davies, and Eric Clay.'

Proof that Naughton's heart is in the game is shown by his role as coach of the talented Liverpool University side and his handling of schoolboy sides every week.

These are facts we tend to forget at times when referees get under our skin but Naughton is an official well equipped to accept criticism and get on with the job.

'I took a lot of stick at work after that business with the French touch judge but I didn't let it bother me,' he says. 'I don't mind it but what does upset me is people constantly knocking the game when they don't go and watch from the terraces or stands'.

Mick's wife Wendy sees less of her husband during the week than most wives with sporting families but she has adopted a simple attitude 'If you can't beat them - join them. I now go along with Mick to most matches and I enjoy it.'

## IN MY VIEW

by Brian Batty  
Daily Mail



# SUPPORTERS CLUB NEWS

As Oldham's gates continue to rise, so, too, does the demand for seats on the Supporters' Club coaches which are run to away games. To avoid disappointment, book early for the trip to St. Helens on Friday December 1 which promises to be a great game.

We will also be running buses to the semi-final of the Floodlight Trophy, though at this stage we don't know whether our opponents will be Wigan, today's visitors in the Northern League, or Leigh.

Whatever happens in the Wigan-Leigh second-round clash, an interesting semi-final is anticipated. If we go to Wigan, we will again have the added bit of Cliff Hill pitting his skills against his brother David at outside-half.

If we go to Leigh, we will be up against former Oldham forwards in Alan Ogden, Geoff Fletcher and Peter Smethurst.

NEED WE SAY MORE - so don't forget to book your trip to the match with the Supporters' Club.

On Tuesday we are holding a jumble sale in the social club, starting at 6.30. This sort of event brings in much-needed

revenue and if any supporter has any jumble that can be put to use, we would be grateful if he would contact any official of the club, and arrangements will be made to pick it up.

The Year Book, always popular among supporters, will be on sale soon. Packed with pictures and facts and figures about our team, it is good value for money and, of course, the cash it brings in is ploughed back either directly or indirectly into the Watersheddings set-up.

We always have in the back of our minds our responsibilities as supporters club towards looking after the comfort of spectators, both our own and those travelling from other clubs, and with this in mind the canteen behind the main stand will be open for the 'A' team match next Saturday.



Grünhülle  
Lager

Brewed in the Bavarian Way

the

GREEN FINAL

FOR ALL LOCAL SPORT

After a long struggle for the payment of "broken time", i.e. payment for time taken off work in order to play Rugby, the bulk of the leading clubs in Lancashire, Cheshire and Yorkshire broke away from the Rugby Union in the summer of 1895 to form the Northern Rugby Union, normally known as the Northern Union.

The Oldham Club played a leading part in this struggle which had begun in the late 1880s with Joseph Platt, the Oldham treasurer taking on the onerous job of secretary.

After many secret meetings the 22 clubs finally set up their own competition and several of the leading Midland clubs promised to join in the following season, but this development did not arise.

The Oldham club had arranged home and away fixtures with Swansea, Edinburgh Wanderers and Hartlepool Rovers plus one fixture each with Rockcliffe and Watsonians.

#### First Season

During the first season of the Northern Union all the 22 clubs met each other twice, the games with Lancashire and Cheshire clubs counting in the Lancashire Senior Competition with the Yorkshire clubs having a similar organisation.

Oldham finished third in the combined competition and tied with Runcorn for the Lancashire competition, losing the play-off at Broughton by six points to five.

During the fateful 1895-6 season Oldham spent £1000 on improving the stands and

finished with a profit of £1,148. The club president was Ernest Kempsey, a cotton mill owner of Chadderton and Sam Taylor of Derker and John C. Buckley of Barker Street were joint secretaries with Harry Varley acting as first team captain.

Jack Hirst with 28 tries was top scorer for the whole of the Northern Union and with three goals totted up 94 points to give him third place among the points scorers with Sammy Lees on 90 points finishing in fourth place. W. Harry Eagland with 11 goals was second among the Oldham goal kickers, Sammy Lees landing 28. The team played 42 league games, winning 27, losing 13 and drawing 2, scoring 44 goals and 88 tries against 27 goals and 23 tries.

#### What a try

In the match against Halifax on February 1 1896 Jack Hurst intercepted a pass by a Halifax player near the Oldham line and ran almost the length of the field to score a try. This remarkable feat would be even more meritorious in those days when we still played 15 a side.

During the next season, 1896-7 both Bill McCutcheon

and Harry Varley ended their playing connection with the club during March. Harry Varley returned to his native Yorkshire and Bill McCutcheon became one of our leading referees.

In those more primitive days officials of the Northern Union would either referee matches or run the touch line. Clubs also nominated their own referees and it was common in match reports to see the name of the referee's club appearing after his name.

The advent of new recruits during this season caused the main competition to be cancelled as there were 14 clubs in the Lancashire section and 16 in Yorkshire. Friendly games were played with clubs in the county and Oldham played what was described as "ordinary" games with Halifax, Huddersfield and Manningham.

This time Oldham were runners up in the Lancashire Senior Competition with 20 wins, 4 defeats and 2 draws in the 26 scheduled matches. In all 40 games were played including one Northern Union Challenge Cup tie with Bradford who won at Bradford Park Avenue by 7-3. The cup was intended to provide an official connection between the Lancashire and Yorkshire clubs Stockport and Runcorn being deemed for this purpose to be Lancashire clubs.

#### Huge Gate

On Christmas Day the crowd broke in the ground for Oldham's home match with

Stockport and the attendance was estimated at 20,000. George Frater had joined the Oldham club from Melrose, Scotland, and shortly afterwards he was followed by Jim Moffat who made his debut in the home game with Stockport.

Councillor Kempsey was re-elected president and Sam Taylor after 15 years resigned as club secretary, Councillor Buckley taking over the full duties. The profit this time was £1,039.



## Season's fixtures and Results

### SEASON 1972-73

#### First Team Fixtures

##### AUGUST

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Sat 19—HUDDERSFIELD      | 25-7 A  |
| Wed 23—WHITEHAVEN (7-30) | 30-13 H |
| Sat 26—WORKINGTON        | 19-5 H  |
| Mon 28—YORK              | 32-8 A  |

##### SEPTEMBER

|                           |         |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Fri 1—SALFORD (Lancs Cup) | 17-41 A |
| Sun 10—HULL               | 27-2 H  |
| Sun 17—HUYTON             | 25-13 A |
| Sat 23—PLAYERS CUP, HULL  | 10-17 A |
| Fri 29—WIGAN              | 12-9    |

##### OCTOBER

|                                |         |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| Tue 3—SALFORD (Floodlight Cup) | 12-8 H  |
| Sat 7—ST. HELENS               | 12-12 H |
| Sat 14—WORKINGTON              | 10-17 A |
| Wed 18—GT. BRITAIN             | 18-15 H |
| Sun 22—WIDNES                  | 17-18 H |

##### NOVEMBER

|                                    |         |
|------------------------------------|---------|
| Sat 4—HUDDERSFIELD                 | 7-7 H   |
| Tues 7—CASTLEFORD (Floodlight Cup) | 9-7 H   |
| Sun 12—HUYTON                      | 22-0 H  |
| Fri 17—HULL                        | 17-14 A |
| Sat 25—WIGAN                       | 11-6 H  |

##### DECEMBER

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Fri 1—ST. HELENS  | A |
| Sun 10—SALFORD    | H |
| Sun 17—DEWSBURY   | A |
| Sun 24—LEIGH      | H |
| Tues 26—ROCHDALE  | A |
| Sun 31—WARRINGTON | A |

##### JANUARY

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Sat 6—WHITEHAVEN         | A |
| Sun 14—YORK              | H |
| Fri 19—BARROW            | A |
| Sat 27—CHALLENGE CUP (1) |   |

##### FEBRUARY

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Sun 4—LEIGH              | A |
| Sun 11—BLACKPOOL         | H |
| Sat 17—CHALLENGE CUP (2) |   |
| Sun 25—WIDNES            | A |

##### MARCH

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Sun 4—WARRINGTON | H |
| Sun 11—BARROW    | H |
| Sun 18—BLACKPOOL | A |

##### APRIL

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Sun 1—DEWSBURY  | H |
| Sun 8—SWINTON   | H |
| Sat 21—SWINTON  | A |
| Mon 23—ROCHDALE | H |

#### 'A' Team Fixtures

##### OCTOBER

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Fri 6—ST. HELENS  | A |
| Sat 14—WORKINGTON | H |
| Fri 20—WIDNES     | A |
| Sat 28—SALFORD    | H |

##### NOVEMBER

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Sat 4—BARROW    | A |
| Sat 11—HUYTON   | A |
| Sat 18—ROCHDALE | H |
| Sat 25—WIGAN    | A |

##### DECEMBER

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Sat 2—ST. HELENS | H |
|------------------|---|

##### Fri 8—SALFORD

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Sat 16—SWINTON    | A |
| Sat 23—LEIGH      | A |
| Sat 30—WARRINGTON | H |

##### JANUARY

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Sat 6—BARROW   | H |
| Sat 20—BARROW  | H |
| Sat 27—SWINTON | H |

##### FEBRUARY

|                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| Sat 3—LEIGH     | H |
| Sat 17—ROCHDALE | A |
| Sat 24—WIDNES   | H |

##### MARCH

|                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| Sat 3—WARRINGTON | A |
| Sat 10—BARROW    | A |
| Sat 17—WIGAN     | A |

##### APRIL

|                |   |
|----------------|---|
| Sat 7—ROCHDALE | A |
| Sat 14—WIGAN   | H |
| Sat 21—SWINTON | H |



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# Rugby league missed big chance for full time pro s

KEITH ASHCROFT fervently believes that Rugby League missed the boat ten years ago. At the time, there was talk in the league circles of making the code a full-time profession — and that's exactly what they should have done, says the much-travelled Oldham prop who is now with his fifth senior club.

"It would probably have meant that the league would have been whittled down to about 16 or 18 senior clubs, but I think they could have really gone on to expand from there," says Keith. "As things stand at present, it is asking a lot of the game's part-timers to carry out their normal work, train twice a week — often travelling involved — and then perform miracles on Saturdays".

Performing miracles is something that Ashcroft, 32 last month, should know something about, for that's just what the medical profession thought about his miraculous recovery from a badly broken ankle which he received while making a typically determined down-the-middle dash against Halifax 18 months ago.

The ankle was so shattered that the bone was at 45 degrees to his leg and though no one told Keith at the time, everyone believed he had played his last game as he lay in Oldham Royal Infirmary.

Not so the player. And it was his sincere conviction that he WOULD, eventually, put on a rugby jersey again that played a big part in his comeback.

The Oldham club is indebted to the staff at the local infirmary who did a great job, say physiotherapist Dennis Wright, in re-aligning the ankle bone and making it possible for Keith to begin the long process of building up his strength and confidence.

"The first I knew we had won" says Dennis, "Was when I asked Keith to jump off the boundary wall on to his ankle ... and he did it without flinching."

So, 13 years after first signing on as a professional with St. Helens Wigan-born Keith is still packing down in Rugby League scrums — "and going strong too", he laughs.

The recent signing by Oldham of "A" team player-coach Terry Gorman re-produced an old partnership which began when he and Keith worked at the same Wigan factory all those years ago.

Keith was 18 at the time — and a soccer player of some potential.

At Wigan Grammar School, he was a big bustling centre-forward whose goalscoring talents earned him a place in the Lancashire Schoolboys' team.

It was only after he left school and went to work alongside his mates who were

later to make names for themselves in the RL code — Joe Hoskin, Terry Gorman, Derek Hurt, for instance — that Keith even gave a thought to turning to Rugby League.

In his first game he was persuaded by his mates to play in a charity match organised by Gorman. He went in at loose-forward — and was later described as a natural — "though I still wasn't really interested", he reflects.

Shortly afterwards, Gorman, who then had connections at Huddersfield, took his protege along to Fartown. He played two trials in the "A" team and was told to go back and play in the amateur league and then return the following season.

So off Keith went, back to Leigh Spinners ... and only six games later St. Helens officials knocked on the door of his home late one night.

"They had brought the forms with them, and I signed on the spot. It was a big surprise



Keith Ashcroft in full-blooded action

## All for the Good of the Game!

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to me, though I knew that Leigh had been watching me because I had actually had tentative talks with their board of directors".

Ashcroft made a name for himself at Knowsley Road as a utility man. His weight on the one hand and his speed on the other enabled him to switch without much effort from pack to backs, and back again, whenever needed.

After five years at Knowsley Road, during which he picked up a Lancashire Cup winners' Medal, Keith started his travels ... a year at Bradford Northern, four years at Warrington, 18 months at Wigan, and then on to Watersheddings.

While at Wigan, he played in the front-row of the Cherry and Whites' pack against Castleford at Wembley. The Wigan Substitute on that occasion, and a star performer, when he went on for the injured Colin Tyrer, was Cliff Hill, now Oldham's skipper.

Keith has had his share of the limelight, and testimony to it are the six medals that he keeps polished up at his home in Wigan — A Lancs Cup winners' medal with Saints, a winners and a losers with Warrington, a Lancashire League medal with Wigan and, of course, the losers medal from Wigan's Wembley trip.

He has the distinction, Graham Starkey apart, of being the first player signed by the present Oldham committee when they took office 2½ years ago.

He quickly established himself as Oldham's regular blind-side prop, though his speed always enabled him to step into the second-row, whenever required.

His bad injury produced a big blank in his career, and the arrival at Watersheddings of Frank Foster looked at one stage like dooming him to "A" team football for the rest of his career.

But Keith kept bouncing back ... first as a substitute and then, when Foster was suspended, he got his big chance and took it with both hands ... at Central Park no less.

Since then, he has always been on the fringe of first-team selection and is



KEITH ASHCROFT

making a name for himself as he did so many years ago at St. Helens, as a player who can slot into either prop position, or the second-row, as the occasion demands.

An administrative assistant with the education department

of Lancashire County Council, Keith lives in Wigan with his wife Sheila.

# The old dog teaches 'em all new tricks

TERRY GORMAN, the Leigh lad Oldham snapped up in the twilight of his career to teach the tricks of the trade to the Watersheddings youngsters, is proving just as adept as "putting one over" on the code's seasoned professionals. Stepping in as deputy for the injured Mick McCone against Castleford and Huyton, 32 year old Terry produced slick displays and played a major role in the two wins.

## Into semi-finals

OLDHAM 9 pts. CASTLEFORD 7 pts.

CASTLEFORD, traditionally successful in the BBC2 Floodlight Trophy, were vanquished at Watersheddings on the night Terry Gorman banked on his experience — and his left foot — to send the Yorkshiremen skidding out of this season's competition and earn Oldham a place in the semi-finals, in which they visit either Wigan or Leigh.

The big Gorman gamble was made by coach Graham Starke before the kick-off when McCone failed a late fitness test. He banked on the "A" team player-coach's experience and lethal left foot — and that's just how it worked out.

For with the scores level at 7-7 and 15 minutes to go up stepped Gorman to put that left foot to the ball on the

Castleford 25 and send the ball shooting fairly and squarely between the sticks.

He had all the time in the world to tee up the kick ... and because of his experience Gorman KNEW he would have even before he went to acting half back after a powerful run by Cliff Hill.

He later told the News: "Most players kick with their

right foot, and when a side on the defence is anticipating my kicking from acting half-back they invariably move their left to block the right-foot shot. But because I am a natural left-foot kicker, I went the other way, and there wasn't a finger laid upon me as I put the ball over the bar".

Down 7-2 at half-time, Oldham made a remarkable second-half fight back, Phil Larder tacking on a penalty, and then Mike Elliott scoring in the corner to equalise before Gorman popped up with the winner.

It was a night of controversy too, for most supporters believed that the Castleford try, scored by outside half Phil Johnson after what appeared to be a blatant knock on, should never have been.

But what a transformation in the last few minutes!

Aided by a second-half scrum monopoly, and with most of the penalties dished out by Prestbury referee Harry Hunt going their way, Hull stormed right back to score three late tries and came out of the match with four tries to Oldham's three.

Nevertheless, Oldham's hard-earned victory was well-deserved and it was their first win at the Boulevard since August, 1966 when Harry Hunt also officiated in Oldham's 24-12 triumph.

The victory also meant that Oldham have now lost only SIX of their last THIRTY-ONE games — a truly remarkable record and one which should give the team a lot of confidence for the tough few weeks that lie ahead, kicking off with the visit of Wigan to Watersheddings this week-end.

Because of an accident involving a Supporters' Club Coach en route to Humberside, and the fact that the team coach stopped to pick up the

supporters — what a wonderful public relations job! — there was a pre-match rush in the dressing room, and the match began five minutes late.

Referee Hunt said later that he would have to include the facts about the late start in his match report to league headquarters.

But because of the very good reason for the players' late arrival at the Boulevard it is anticipated that the Rugby League will look favourably on the club.

One player never stopped rushing from the moment he stepped off the team bus until the final hooter was Martin Murphy. What a wonderful game he had!

Both on defence and attack, Murphy played a blinder. When Oldham were under pressure — and it was often enough in the second half — Murphy reliably pulled off try-saving tackles.

When Oldham were on attack, the movements always gained in direction and momentum whenever he joined up with the threequarters.

Norman Hodgkinson began the first half rout of Hull with an early try after good work by Frank Foster, Bob Irving and, in particular, Ken Wilson.

Two minutes later, the wonderful Murphy sliced through to kick ahead for Mike Elliott to touch down, and on the half hour Tommy Davies slipped in behind the sticks after a cute pass by Jimmy Reynolds.

When Foster popped over a couple of early second-half drop goals to make the score 17-3 in Oldham's favour — Phil Larder having improved two of the three tries — it looked all over bar the shouting.

But Oldham, by now well beaten in the scrums and having lost the injured Jim Reynolds, surrendered their territorial advantage and allowed Hull in for three tries in the final 15 minutes.

In the end it was a close thing — but so long did Oldham command things that victory went to the deserving side.



A tense moment at Wigan during the match with Australia at the weekend



## Match Analysis by Ron Smith

# REVENGE FOR CUP DEFEAT

HULL 14pts OLDHAM 17pts

A TERRIFIC first-half display at the Boulevard on Friday night enabled Oldham to avenge their John Player Cup defeat by Hull and at the same time move back into the Northern League's top four.

Three spanking tries in the first half hour rocked mis-handling Hull back on their heels, and with 15 minutes remaining, Oldham sat comfortably on a 17-3 lead

## WHITEWASH FOR HUYTON

OLDHAM 22 pts. HUYTON 0

SIX tries in dreadful conditions put Oldham back on the winning road in the Northern League — and took them back to fifth place in the table. Huyton were outclassed in all facets of the game and it was good to see Oldham showing up well in conditions which have previously proved alien to their normal style of play.

On a skidpan of a pitch, when it was impossible for defenders to turn quickly, Oldham scored three of their tries from kicks.

And it was the kicking of Frank Foster, who found touch beautifully on numerous occasions, allied to Kevin Taylor's monopoly of the scrums, which kept Oldham on the attacking boil virtually from start to finish.

Gorman, taking a cute pass from Foster, set Oldham on the right way when grubber-kicking for the corner thus allowing Norman Hodgkinson to follow up quickly and score.

Then Gorman himself went in, straight from acting

half-back, before Cliff Hill kicked ahead for Mike Elliott to win the touchdown chase and record try number three.

The fourth was a beauty. It followed a tremendous touch-finding kick by Foster. Huyton were penalised at the scrum and by feinting one way and passing the other from the tap, Foster made it all so easy for Ken Wilson to run through a huge gap to score.

Credit Phil Larder with the fifth. He wisely kicked on a wide but low Foster pass, beat fullback Bennett for speed, and again kicked twice in a soccer-style dribble that took him over the line where he touched down.

The sixth was a fitting

finale. For it featured the player whose handling and catching throughout was an eye-opener in these wet, windslippy conditions — Martin Murphy.

Murphy's collection of a kick out enabled him to set up a promising attack in which he put Tony Wainwright away for the former Leeds player to send Hodgkinson hurtling away for the former Leeds player to send Hodgkinson hurtling in at a corner.

It was Norman's 14th try of the season for Oldham as he continues to stay right there with the league's leading scorers.

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# AUSSIE BOYS FOR OLDHAM

THE AUSSIES will be in the Oldham area next month - not the men who wear the green and gold of their country but a team of BOYS who are coming 12,000 miles from the other side of the world to help in the determined bid to keep the code ticking over on the playing fields of England.

They arrive on December 16 and for part of their stay will be housed at Castleshaw Camp, Saddleworth as they prepare for matches against East Lancashire on December 20, South West Lancashire on December 23, Lancashire on December 26, Englands on December 30, West Cumberland on January 1, Barrow on January 3, Cumberland on January 6, Castleford Leeds and Hunslet on January 9, England again on January 13, (at Wakefield), Huddersfield, Halifax, Dewsbury and Bradford on January 17, Yorkshire on January 20, York and Hull on January 23, and England again - the third "Test" - on January 26.

This match will be played in London as the authorities once more make a move to encourage the growth of the 13-a-side code in the south.

The tour by the Australian lads is hoped to be the forerunner of a

return trip down under by the English Schoolboys in the summer 1973 and what a wonderful boost this is not only for the lucky lads who will be chosen for the trip but for schoolboy Rugby League as a whole.

Mr P.V. Morris, chairman of the English Schools Rugby League says in his annual report: "I hope that all followers of the code will take this unique opportunity to support schoolboy Rugby League and see these stars of the future from both countries in action".

One must appreciate how vital it is that Rugby League thrives at schoolboy level if the constant flow of talent is to be made available for the senior clubs.

In the schools, a small band of League-minded teachers are striving might and main to keep the flag flying despite the obvious attractions of soccer and the ever-increasing threat of competition from Rugby Union.

They deserve every possible backing, and it is good to see Oldham this season doing their bit by encouraging the interest of the boys by throwing open the Watersheddings turnstiles on a couple of occasions.

One of the best sights of the season at Watersheddings was provided by the hundreds of lads who invaded the pitch after the defeat of Great Britain, and there was a similar response when Castleford were dismissed from the second round of the Floodlight Trophy.

This sort of gesture by Oldham goes further than giving the lads a free night out - it surely proves to the members of the local Schools' Association that the seniors of the game really do care.

It is tremendously encouraging, too, to hear that, in the local junior schools, more matches have been played this season already than were played during the WHOLE of last season.

For the game's sake, let's hope the trend continues.

## NORTHERN RUGBY LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE (up to and including 18th November)

|                                    |    |    |   |    |    |                      |
|------------------------------------|----|----|---|----|----|----------------------|
| Warrington                         | 14 | 13 | 0 | 1  | 26 |                      |
| Leeds                              | 12 | 11 | 0 | 1  | 22 |                      |
| Saint Helens                       | 12 | 10 | 1 | 1  | 21 | Home 12-12           |
| OLDHAM                             | 13 | 9  | 2 | 2  | 20 |                      |
| Widnes                             | 14 | 10 | 0 | 4  | 20 | Home 17-18           |
| Wakefield Trinity                  | 14 | 10 | 0 | 4  | 20 |                      |
| Featherstone Rovers                | 13 | 10 | 0 | 3  | 20 |                      |
| Batley                             | 14 | 9  | 0 | 5  | 18 |                      |
| Castleford                         | 14 | 9  | 0 | 5  | 18 |                      |
| York                               | 14 | 8  | 0 | 6  | 16 | Away 32-8            |
| Salford                            | 12 | 7  | 0 | 5  | 14 |                      |
| Dewsbury                           | 12 | 7  | 0 | 5  | 14 |                      |
| Hull Kingston Rovers               | 13 | 7  | 0 | 6  | 14 |                      |
| Bramley                            | 13 | 7  | 0 | 6  | 14 |                      |
| Halifax                            | 14 | 6  | 0 | 8  | 12 |                      |
| WIGAN                              | 13 | 6  | 0 | 7  | 12 | Away 12-9            |
| Huddersfield                       | 13 | 5  | 1 | 7  | 11 | Home 7-7 Away 25-7   |
| Bradford Northern                  | 13 | 5  | 0 | 8  | 10 |                      |
| Swinton                            | 12 | 5  | 0 | 7  | 10 |                      |
| Leigh                              | 12 | 5  | 0 | 7  | 10 |                      |
| Hull                               | 14 | 5  | 0 | 9  | 10 | Home 27-2 Away 17-14 |
| Rochdale Hornets                   | 11 | 5  | 0 | 6  | 10 |                      |
| Keighley                           | 13 | 5  | 0 | 8  | 10 |                      |
| Workington Town                    | 13 | 4  | 0 | 9  | 8  | Home 19-5 Away 10-17 |
| Whitehaven                         | 14 | 4  | 0 | 10 | 8  | Home 30-13           |
| Doncaster                          | 13 | 4  | 0 | 9  | 8  |                      |
| Hunslet                            | 14 | 3  | 0 | 11 | 6  |                      |
| Blackpool Borough                  | 13 | 2  | 0 | 11 | 4  |                      |
| Barrow                             | 13 | 2  | 0 | 11 | 4  |                      |
| Huyton                             | 13 | 1  | 0 | 12 | 2  | Home 22-0 Away 25-13 |
| Lancashire Cup Salford away 17-41  |    |    |   |    |    |                      |
| John Player Trophy Hull away 10-17 |    |    |   |    |    |                      |
| Floodlit Cup Salford home 12-8     |    |    |   |    |    |                      |
| Castleford home 9-7                |    |    |   |    |    |                      |

### ATTENDANCES

| HOME                   |       | AWAY                 |       |
|------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| v Saint Helens, league | 6,574 | v Salford, Lancs Cup | 5,815 |
| v Widnes, league       | 4,644 | v Wigan, league      | 3,000 |
| v Salford, Floodlit    | 4,507 | v Hull, Players      | 2,700 |
| v Gt Britain, friendly | 3,829 | v Huddersfield       | 2,352 |
| v Workington, league   | 2,702 | v Hull, league       | 2,000 |
| v Whitehaven, league   | 2,701 | v York, league       | 1,719 |
| v Hull, league         | 2,372 | v Huyton, league     | 900   |
| v Castleford, Floodlit | 2,212 | v Workington, league | 823   |
| v Rochdale, friendly   | 2,060 |                      |       |
| v Huyton, league       | 1,941 |                      |       |
| v Huddersfield, league | 1,922 |                      |       |

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# LOOKING ROUND THE LEAGUE

**WIDNES** ARE in the rather pleasant but embarrassing position of having 19 first team pool forwards for selection. Coach Vince Karalius has the job of keeping them all happy, but last week he did have a slightly easier task with selection when World Cup loose forward George Nicholls, prop John Warlow and second rowers Barry Sheridan and John Foran had to report unfit for the inter-county clash at Wakefield.

**CHAIRMAN JIM** Davies informs me that his club are to fix former Halifax, Bradford N., Salford and North Sydney prop or second rower with a job and permanent accommodation in the town following his decision not to return to Australia.

**TWO PROMINENT** Lancashire clubs have enquired for the services of Widnes' transfer-listed former Great Britain fullback Ray Dutton, but their offers feel far short of the £12,000 the Chemics board are asking.

**MANLY** and Australian World Cup scrum half Dennis Ward, who played in his younger days with Widnes, has been back to his old club while the party were stationed in Manchester, and was quite impressed with the team's performance against Warrington. Dennis has two more seasons with Manly to fulfil, and if he then decided to come back to England he would be 28, and regarded most likely over the hill.

**HALIFAX** have made enquiries to Wakefield Trinity with a regard to signing Bantu winger David Barends, on the Belle Vue transfer list at £3,000. They will take less than that figure just to get the South African settled in his domestic affairs, which precipitated his request for a move away from the Wakefield area.

**HULL K.R.** prop Jim Neal has met the Hull K.R. board in the past few days to discuss his future at Craven Park, following reports that his knee troubles are not clearing up as quickly as he and the club anticipated.

**LEIGH** would have offered Australian skipper and St. George player-coach Graeme Langlands a £5,000 per season contract plus playing terms had he decided to join them. Langlands still has two seasons to play with the "Saints" and in warmer climates, Queensland to be exact, he is wanted by Senator Aucliffe to take over the Queensland State Side from Bobby Bax, and also play for a leading Brisbane side at a £6,000 per season fee.

**AUSSIE WINGER** John Grant, the only player on the 19-man squad from the Sunshine State, Queensland, told his manager Clancy Kingston, after the match at Central Park, Wigan, that he had never been so cold in his life before, and felt that it would be a full 24 hours before he thawed out. John is used to playing in temperatures hovering around the 70s, and in summer 90-110F.

**BARGAIN BUY** for some club, that's Leigh's Wembley try-scoring centre Stan Dorrington, on the Hilton Park Transfer list at £1,000. The return of Barry Briggs from his two year stint with Newtown, during which time their former coach Harry Bath made him captain, to Widnespool, where he remained on their register, was a chief factor in manager-coach Alex Murphy's decision to list Wakefield-based forward Geoff Clarkson for £6,000.

## WIGAN'S AUSSIE DRAW EARNED £30 A HEAD

**WAKEFIELD'S** stay-away former Bradford Northern second rower Bob Oswald could be on his way to Castleford in exchange for the Wheldon's Road club's goalkicking prop Alan Ackroyd. Trinity originally wanted Cliff Wallis, the former Hull K.R. second rower, but he is regarded the number one forward in the Castleford side.

**HUDDERSFIELD'S** players received £8 for their match with the New Zealand tourists. They agreed this prior to the match, win, lose or draw. Wigan's squad for the match with the Australians must regard themselves as well off compared with their Fartown counterparts for they picked up £30 for their efforts.

**FINISHED** with his playing career for the second time at the Athletic Grounds is winger Tom Pimblett. He informed coach Frank Myler and the Hornets board of his decision at the beginning of the week. Better news is that £1,500 transfer-listed second rower Kevin Flannagan is back in training after staying away.

Huddersfield will let Bob Irving's younger brother, 21 year old hooker John, go for a modest £250 fee now that they have four hookers on their books.

**ROUGH LUCK** on Eastern Suburbs and Australian World Cup star second forward Arthur Beeton whenever he plays. When Arthur guested for Hull K.R. two seasons ago he had the misfortune to break a leg, and then last week at Wigan he badly damaged an eye, which needed four stitches, and it feared also that he had fractured his jaw.

**WHEN** I asked Harry Bath what he thought of £22,000 Bill Ashurst after his star performance against the Kangaroos, he was quite enthusiastic and admitted the Wigan second rower was on that match worth every penny.



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## RUGBY NEWS

FROM YOUR  
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# Wigan run into their true form after lean spell

After an uncharacteristic opening to the season Wigan have returned to something like their normal form and they are sure to provide Oldham with a rousing match this afternoon.

At full-back Wigan have Colin Tyrer who, in addition to kicking 60 odd goals this season, has also crossed for seven tries.

Whilst at Wigan he has appeared for Lancashire and is a prolific points scorer. Three seasons ago Colin scored 396 points for Wigan and judging by form in the 46-8 away win at Blackpool when he scored a try and 8 goals he continues to be a dangerous opponent.

On the wings Wigan will probably field the O'Loughlin brothers. Keiron was signed from Wigan junior football, Keiron from Warrington Colts.

Kevin is a most versatile player who has represented England U24 and last season he played for Lancashire.

Another set of brothers may well be seen in action this afternoon, but unlike the O'Loughlins, the Hill boys will be on opposite sides.

Dave Hill, the 25 years old brother of Cliff, joined Wigan in October 1967 from Liverpool RUFC and made his debut in the 35-6 league win over Batley. He has represented Lancashire and two seasons ago visited Toulouse as a member of the Great Britain team.

Although an excellent stand-off he has been playing recently at centre with Bill Francis as his partner.

Francis is a product of Featherstone Juniors Football from where Wigan signed him in 1964. He has won both Yorkshire county and Great Britain honours and is a very speedy player.

At stand-off Wigan may select Billy 'Daz' Davies the 24 years old Leigh born star. Before joining Swinton in May 1964 from Saint Thomas's juniors, Davies had shown his potential by representing Lancashire at both schoolboy and U17 level. In 1968 he represented both England and Great Britain but despite being one of the stars in Britain's 34-10 hammering of the French, Davies's only other representative appearances have been with the Lancashire X111.

Last January Wigan signed Davies for £5,000 and he made a try scoring debut against Batley. A few months later he scored 4 tries when Wigan beat Hull 48-5 and he ended the season with 22 tries to his credit. Obviously Bill is a man to be watched this afternoon.

Currently occupying the scrum-half berth is 19 years old Jim Nulty, signed two months ago from Widnes RUFC, although Warren Ayres, the former Warrington ace, is also pressing for inclusion into the first team. Last month Wigan were experiencing problems in their pack but they quickly solved these by signing Alan Bence and Laurie Hinchliffe, two well

made and solid scrummers, for £4,000 each. Both players are former Yorkshire juniors. Bence joined Leeds from Shaw Cross Boys Club and Hinchliffe was signed by Bradford Northern from Boothstown juniors.

Hooking for Wigan is the reliable Colin Clarke, a player Wigan signed from Orrell RUFC. Clarke is an extremely mobile player and as well as representing Lancashire on several occasions he was a member of the British Touring Team for the Australasian Tour in 1966.

Wigan have a wealth of talent for the back rows of the scrum including the Players No 6, 1971-71, player of the Season, Bill Ashurst. Wigan signed Ashurst 4 years ago from local junior football and he was an immediate success. Last season he represented Lancashire as well as Great Britain against both New Zealand and France. In the 45-10 victory over France he scored 2 tries. This season injuries and other upsets have affected his game but Bill still managed to play for Lancashire and at 23 years of age there are still many years of international football ahead for him.

Terry Crammatt the former Folly Lane junior, joined Wigan from Swinton at the same time as the Daz Davies transfer for £3,000. Another Lancashire representative, Crammatt is a player who thrives on hard work.

Dave Robinson made a meteoric rise to fame after joining Swinton from Folly

Lane juniors in May 1963. His first representative honour was when he represented England U24 against France in 1965 in a match which marked the opening of the Watersheddings floodlights. Great Britain recognition quickly followed and Robinson also played in all 5 test matches when he visited Australasia with the 1966 Tourists. In January 1970 he transferred to Wigan for £10,000 and the following summer he again toured Australasia. It was not such a happy tour for Robinson, however, for injury restricted his appearances to six.

However he now seems to have recovered from the troublesome injuries sustained on that tour and is back to his devastating best form.

Another 1970 tourist is loose-forward Doug Laughton who Wigan signed in 1967 from Saint Helens. While at Saint Helens, Laughton made the first of his 10 Lancashire appearances. Doug played in 15 matches during that 1970 tour, including 4 tests and in all matches he scored 8 tries. On returning from Australasia he played in all Britain's matches in the 1970 World Cup and skippered the team against New Zealand. Later that season he also represented Britain in the two French tests but since then injuries have ruled out any further representative honours, although before long we may see him back in a British jersey if recent form is any guide.



Laurie Hinchliffe



Alan Bence

## LINE-UP

### OLDHAM 11

1. MARTIN MURPHY
2. MIKE ELLIOTT
3. PHIL LARDER *try 3 goals*
4. TONY WAINWRIGHT *T Davies*
5. NORMAN HODGKINSON
6. CLIFF HILL *T Wainwright*
7. MICK McCONE
8. KEN WILSON
9. KEVIN TAYLOR
10. FRANK FOSTER *goal*
11. BOB IRVING
12. ARTHUR DALEY
13. JIMMY REYNOLDS
14. TOMMY DAVIES *C O'Brien*
15. KEITH ASHCROFT

### WIGAN 6

1. COLIN TYRER *2 goals*
2. KEVIN O'LOUGHLIN
3. DAVE HILL
4. BILL FRANCIS
5. KEIRON O'LOUGHLIN
6. BILL DAVIES
7. JIM NULTY
8. ALAN BENCE
9. COLIN CLARKE
10. LAURIE HINCHLIFFE
11. BILL ASHURST *goal*
12. DAVE ROBINSON
13. DOUG LAUGHTON
14. WHITTLE
15. WATTS

Referee: Mr K. Allatt (Huddersfield)  
Touch Judges: Mr T. Clayton, Mr J. A. Unsworth

## Your Scorecard

### OLDHAM

| TRIES  | GOALS              |
|--------|--------------------|
| Larder | Larder 3<br>Foster |

### WIGAN

| TRIES | GOALS              |
|-------|--------------------|
| -     | Tyrer 2<br>Ashurst |

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