

OLDHAM

RUGBY NEWS

Volume 1 Number 8

OLDHAM v. LEIGH

Sunday, December 24th, 1972 (3.00 p.m.)



NEW YEAR KICK OFF FOR CASH POOLS DRAW

MUDDY PANORAMA



Here's Bob Irving on the move, looking for the gap between Salford defenders Eric Prescott and Alan Grice.

THIRTEEN may be unlucky for some, but for 150 Oldham folk it's going to prove very lucky indeed next month. For on January 13, Watersheddings pools organiser Alan Taylor and his band of workers will conduct the first draw in the club's new three-in-one pool... and 48 hours later the lolly will be rolling out of Watersheddings to the lucky winners.

News of the pool's big kick-off was released to scores of agents and other interested parties at a special meeting in the social club. And so thrilled was Alan Taylor with the response from the agents, and the way they accepted the new set-up, that further public relations plans are in the pipeline.

It is hoped to land a top personality to make the first draw with a cheese and wine party for agents and prospective agents shortly before the pool is launched.

"We feel this will help to keep interest bobbing along" says Alan who is staying PR exercise number three at today's match against Leigh.

He has planned another get-together of agents, with refreshments provided, in the new pools office in the pavilion - the office that will become the nerve centre of the new organisation.

BUT THERE ARE ALSO BIG PLANS AFOOT TO ASSIST AGENTS BY FINDING A TOWN-CENTRE BASE FOR THE WEEKLY FRIDAY NIGHT OR SATURDAY MORNING PAY-IN OPERATIONS.

Says Alan "A lot of men these days spend some time on Saturday mornings in the town, either for shopping or other purposes, and we feel it would help a lot, and also encourage the recruitment of more agents, if there was a pay-in spot in the town centre".

The new pool is a membership scheme in which patrons pay 10p weekly and receive, in turn, three separate code numbers.

The numbers go into the weekly draw, which will initially be made on Saturday afternoon at Watersheddings, though later it may be held at other places in the town, and there will be 150 cash prizes per week.

The first prize will be £100, the second £40, the third £20, plus 147 consolation prizes of £1 each - fabulous value for money.

The pool will be run on similar lines to the cash-raising efforts at Wigan, Widnes, and Wakefield, and many Football League Clubs, and Mr Taylor, who has a tremendous amount of experience in this sort of work, is confident not only of its success but of

its popularity with the public.

He told the News "The meeting we had recently with agents was a fabulous success. The pool was unanimously accepted with great enthusiasm by all those present, the meeting was very well attended, and several new agents were recruited."

"The workings of the pool were outlined to agents by Mr Ken Broome, a director of the Wigan club, whose firm in Wigan holds the copyright."

"It will be called the Oldham Rugby Development Association,

agents perks like a free season ticket, agents' social evenings, commission on wins, and the running of coaches to away matches when the army of agents is built up.

In many respects, the pool is an up-to-date version of the highly-successful pool run by Oldham in the fifties and early sixties.

Early indications show that the club is going to have more agents than ever it did under the former bingo scheme.

"Whereas the emphasis previously was on making money for the club, the

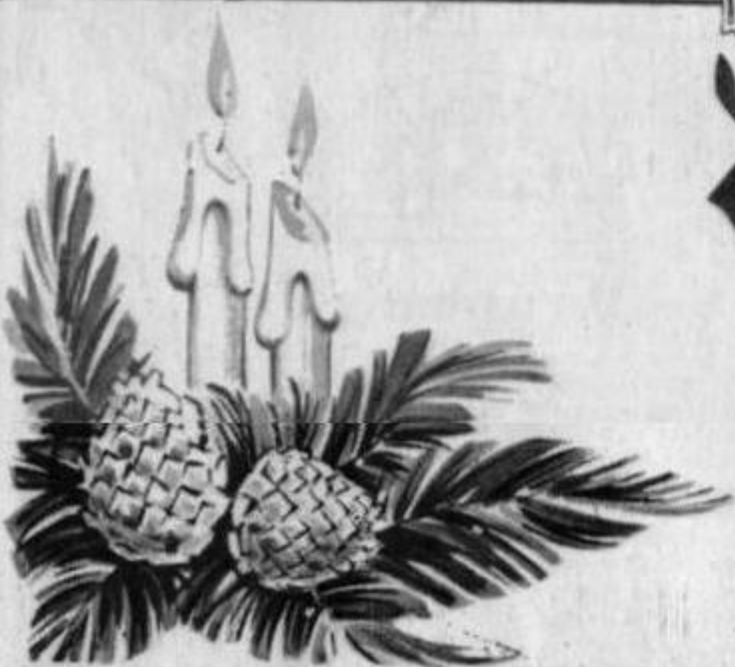
MERRY CHRISTMAS

Here's wishing you a VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS and a contented prosperous healthy NEW YEAR from the OLDHAM RUGBY NEWS, the Directors and staff of OLDHAM RUGBY CLUB, and in fact everyone at WATERSHEDDINGS, to all our thousands of loyal readers.

This coming year will be a great one for Oldham rugby. There are big, far reaching moves planned on both the playing and spectator-comfort sides of the game at Watersheddings.

And a Christmas thought for YOU. Oldham rugby has advanced a long way in the past two or three seasons. Make sure YOU help to keep it that way by showing up at every home match at Watersheddings, and by travelling to as many away matches as you can to give the lads those all important cheers of encouragement.

And finally - if you're drinking over Christmas (and who isn't?) - leave the car at home and take a taxi. Our friends in the police don't want to see your name on the charge sheet early next year. So please, lads, DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE.



Phil Larder is currently enjoying a great spell of form and is pictured here on the burst against Salford. Coming in to tackle from behind is Colin Dixon.

and anyone is welcome to watch the draw each week, which will be made initially in the public bar of the pavilion."

"I know it will be a good venture and once it gets going I think the public are really going to like it".

Each week an agents draw will be held for a valuable wrist watch - "They will be good class watches about £30 in the shops", says Alan and the club will see that agents' expenses are covered.

There will be, in addition, all the usual

emphasis now is on giving the punter a better deal.

"IT WILL BE BUILT ON THE BELIEF THAT IF YOU LOOK AFTER THE PUNTER, EVERYTHING ELSE WILL AUTOMATICALLY FALL INTO SHAPE". SAYS ALAN.

He added "When the membership rises to a certain level, the prize money will be increased accordingly, and in this pool the punter gets a higher percentage paid out in prizes than in any other pool - that is the secret of success".

2 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. Prentice.
Physiotherapist: D. Wright.
Coach: G. Starkey.
Promotions Manager: A. Taylor.

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LOOK BACK WITH TOM...

SEASON 1900-1 USHERED in the new century for Oldham with notable successes. The first team won the Lancashire Senior Competition and the "A" team also topped the Lancashire Combination. The first team had to win the last match of the competition at Millom and the Cumbrians put up such terrific opposition that Oldham only won by a try to nil.

In the annual match, Champions versus Rest, five Swinton players failed to put in an appearance for the Rest side, and Oldham, although only winning by 9-5 took things quite comfortably under the easier circumstances. In the match with Swinton on January 12, 1901 at home, the crowd broke in but in spite of this the receipts of £710-10s were record takings, and the highest price charged was three shillings. The match was ordered to be replayed and the second game had receipts of £554.

Friendly games with Yorkshire clubs supplemented the Lancashire Senior Competition fixtures and for the two games with Halifax, the clubs played 12 a side which provided quite a change from the

normal 15 a side which was played at that time.

Williams once again topped the try scorers. His 33 followed 37 the previous season and 39 the season before that, making 109 in three seasons. Sammy Lees was again top goal scorer with 31 but H.V.P. Huzzey and Joe Ferguson were on the mark eleven times each.

A new set up had been conceived for 1901-2 when the Northern Rugby League was formed from the leading clubs of Lancashire and Yorkshire, which left the Lancashire and Yorkshire Senior Competitions as lesser affairs, indeed ending them at the end of the season. As Stockport and Rochdale Hornets were left out of the Northern League, a South East Lancashire was formed to keep their fixtures with

Oldham, Broughton Rangers, Salford and Swinton intact. This only lasted for one season.

The redoubtable Jimmy Leytham appeared for Oldham in a friendly match with South Shields. He was a player with the Lancaster club but migrated to Wigan where he helped to develop that club into one of the leading ones in the game.

The local club Werneth, opened their new ground at Sheepfoot Lane in a match with Oldham "A". Werneth had previously played at the "Track". Block Lane and were members of the Lancashire Combination, meeting the "A" teams of the senior clubs. Oldham "A" at one time also played some games at Sheepfoot Lane, which is now the Boundary Park, home of Oldham Athletic A.F.C., a year after Werneth had used the ground.

Salford beat Batley 8-0 at Oldham in the semifinal of the Northern Union Challenge Cup this season, Oldham having been beaten in the second round by Runcorn after easily accounting for

BY
TOM
WEBB



Maryport in the first one.

In the Lancashire County trial game played during October, Oldham were represented by S. Williams, A. Lees, J. Ferguson and G.H. Wilkinson in the "Probables" while C. Civil, J.R. Lawton and J.B. Wilkinson were in the "Possibles".

Players who did appear in the county side were Williams, Lawton, Ferguson, G. Wilkinson and Thomas, Joe "Fergy" playing in all three games in the county championship versus Yorkshire, Cheshire and Cumberland and in the one friendly game against

the combined Northumberland and Durham side.

On the books were two players named S. Lees, one always being referred to as S. Lees, senior and the other as S. Lees junior.

Broughton Rangers ran away with the new league and writers often said that the title was won before Christmas. This is not true, however, for Oldham were well in the running until an astonishing collapse in which only two matches were won and one drawn of the last twelve games. Oldham thus slumped to ninth place amongst the fourteen clubs.

Welcome to giant Albert

ALL BEING well, the majority of Oldham fans will get their first view of the club's new forward signing, Albert Halsall, against Leigh today.

Thirty-years-old and a hard Rugby League man in the true tradition of our code, Halsall was signed last week from Swinton for £1,500 - a snip of a buy at the price.

He was signed for two main reasons - to provide cover for Frank Foster should our pack leader be suspended when his case is heard by the Disciplinary Committee next Thursday and to help build up the club's pool of forwards with the Challenge Cup ties only a matter of weeks away.

The Oldham committee, always on the look-out for players within their price range who can strengthen their team, felt they could afford to let slip the chance of such an experienced forward at such a bargain price.

It is all a question of price and availability. Halsall slotted into both categories, and the club moved quickly to sign him, the forms actually being signed within 48 hours of the big decision to go for him being made.

Club chairman Arthur Walker went down to Swinton, agreed to pay the full fee with Station Road officials, and within minutes saw the signing completed in the Swinton boardroom.

He then returned to Watersheddings with the forms and Halsall was included in a panel of seven forwards for the Dewsbury match last Sunday.

At 17 stones and standing six feet, he is a big man in the mould of the forwards the Oldham public have been wanting for some time, and he will help to provide the club with what the committee is striving to achieve - a

solid pack foundation for the Challenge Cup and the run-in to the end-of-season championship play-off.

Halsall will also have a case heard by the disciplinary committee on Thursday, for he was dismissed by Widnes referee Mick Naughton in his last game in the blue and white shirt of Swinton at Hull Kingston Rovers on the night before his transfer.

But he has a good disciplinary record in his many years in the game with Salford, St Helens, and Swinton, and has been dismissed only three times - the last occasion way back in 1966.

That was the year when Halsall really hit his pack. Despite his bulk, he is a tremendously fast man over a short distance and it was his speed, allied to power, that gave him three tries against Halifax at St Helens lifted the Northern League championship at Swinton.

His performance that day was sufficient to give him the Harry Sunderland memorial award, voted upon by members of the Rugby League Writers' Association, as the outstanding player of the match.

But Halsall is a far cry from those old forwards who go on for longer than they should. He is still a solid scrummager and a powerful man in the loose - as borne out by the fact that he twice represented Lancashire in the county championship only a few weeks ago.

It will be interesting to see how Albert slots into the Oldham scheme of things, but club officials are confident he can add fire and strength to the

pack.

And there could be another signing, too, before the Challenge Cup

deadline, next month.

The News understands that the club is still on the look-out for more pack

strength, and secretary Kevin Wilkinson says "We are on the look-out all the time".

Seaside Fred

THERE was a new player in training at Watersheddings last week - Fred Hall of Blackpool, who is on the Borough Park transfer list at £1,250.

An Oldham lad, Hall was originally a centre who switched to the pack at Blackpool and has been a regular member of the Borough second-row for several seasons.

Aged 25, he is free to go on trial, Borough presumably thinking that this will put him in the shop-window.

V.I.P. 100

AS THE new VIP lounge in the upper room of the Oldham pavilion nears completion, exclusive membership is rapidly filling up. With a limit of 100 imposed, popularity of the new lounge was proved after the Salford match when secretary Kevin Wilkinson signed up TEN new members within minutes.



Grünhülle
Lager

Brewed in the Bavarian Way

IN MY VIEW

by Brian Batty
Daily Mail



Rugby league can ill afford to lose star players, particularly when they have still to reach their prime.

That is why I am keeping my fingers tightly crossed that next season we will see Bernard Watson back in the colours of Bradford Northern.

At the moment Bernard is living in a sort of no man's land - waiting and wondering about his future.

His promising career has already been seriously interrupted by injury and he is now stuck on the sidelines for the rest of the season.

The former Great Britain Under 23 centre has been struck down by the groin trouble he has tried to overcome for the last 12 months.

I have been to see two specialists and one has advised me to give up the game' says Bernard.

'But I can't do that without having another go. I shall wait until the start of next season and have another try.

'I have not been right for two seasons and toward the end of last season, I had to have pain-killing injections before I could play.

'It was alright for the game, but afterwards I was left depressed by the injections. I have been on a calcium diet to build up things but felt no better after six weeks rest.

'The specialists say my

right hip is worn and after I thought I had come through two 'A' team game a fortnight ago the pain returned.

'It is sickening really for with my wife and son I have built my life around rugby.

'All my friends are in the game and naturally I do not want to give it up. If I should have to finish playing them I hope to try my hand at coaching.'

At 25 Bernard was approaching his peak after five seasons with Leeds and two with Bradford Northern.

He is a talented footballer and has produced the consistent displays with both clubs that stamp him as international material.

I sincerely hope that we have not seen the last of him striding across the Odsal turf.

For he has a lot to offer a game which needs his courage and dedicated approach.



Oldham's threequarters, bang on form at present, cracked the Salford cover here as Tony Wainwright moved out to the flank, taking Dixon with him, before slipping an inside pass to Phil Larder. The huge gap is there for all to see, but Phil couldn't hold the pass.



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SUPPORTERS' CLUB NOTES

COACHES - The supporters club coach will be running to the next three away matches at Rochdale (December 26th), Warrington (December 31st) and Whitehaven (January 6th). The coach to Whitehaven will be stopping for refreshments on the return

journey.

The supporter's club are running a Grand National Draw with very good cash prizes and if any of our members would like to help by selling a few tickets, please call in at the canteen and see any of the committee who will be glad to give you a few tickets.

We are holding a dance in the social club on Wednesday January 24th featuring 'Yakkity Brass' and later - a disco. Tickets

are priced 30p, and are on sale in the canteens, and also in the social club lounge.

The canteen will be open for the next 'A' team home game against Warrington 'A'.

If you still haven't bought our year book for this season, there are still a few on sale in the canteens or the bar behind the scoreboard.

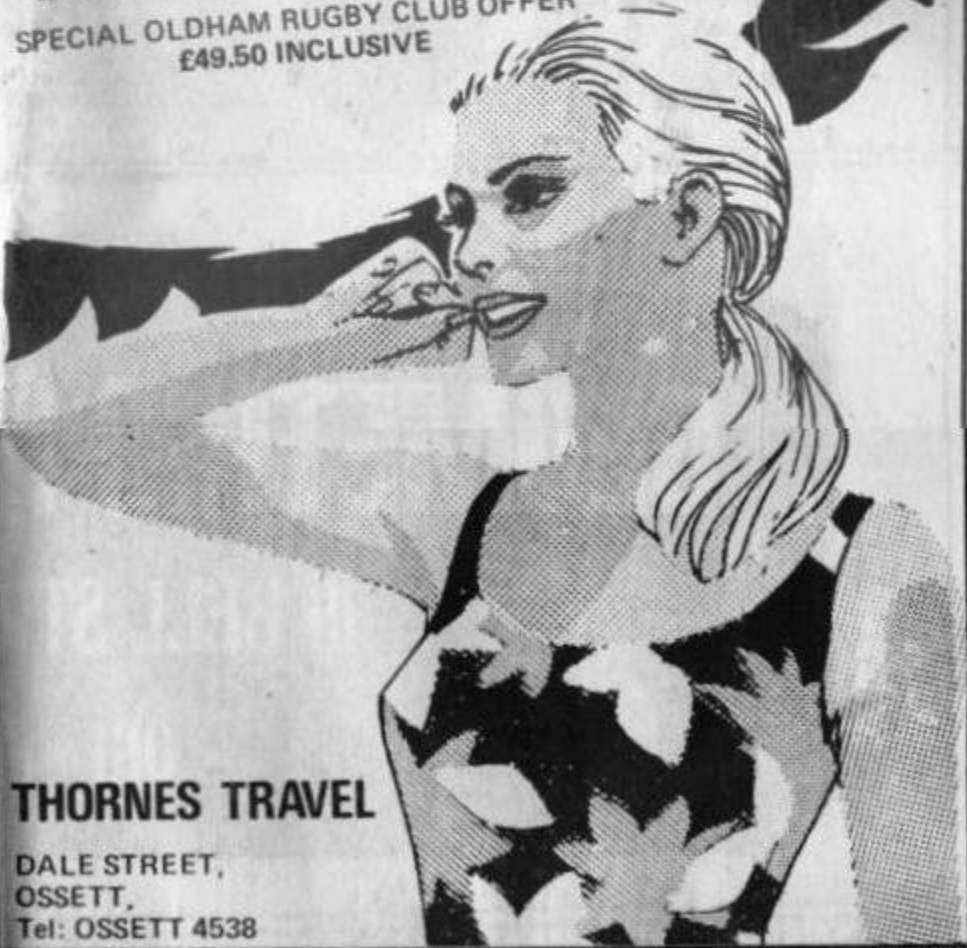
Finally, a Merry Christmas to all members of the supporters club.

OLDHAM HOLIDAYS - 1973

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THORNES TRAVEL

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IN HIS EIGHT SEASONS at Wigan, Oldham's current club skipper Cliff Hill thrilled many thousands of Central Park fans with his wonderful and spontaneous football talents . . . but right at the top of the list in the Hill fan club was coach Eric Ashton. "The work 'class' was written all over him . . . and still is", says coach Ashton who has never ceased to marvel at the terrific impact Hill made on the demanding Wigan public as a 19-year-old.

Only the memories remain now for Ashton, who told the 'News' that Cliff Hill, reared on rugby in the west Lancashire stronghold, had only one fault - HE WAS TOO GOOD TOO SOON!

Says Eric 'He set too high a standard in his very first season in 1964-5. He was so utterly brilliant that he couldn't possibly improve. He had either to retain his form, or drop below it, and I have never known any young player make such a fantastic impact so early as did Cliff'.

On our way to Wembley in 1965, he scored two tries that I rank as the best I've seen from any three quarter anywhere in the world, and that includes wingers'.

"The first was in the third round at Workington when he won the match for Wigan with an 80-yard scoring break, and in the semi-final against Swinton at St Helens he repeated the hammer blow again, this time by going in from 70 yards".

"The standard he set was so good that it couldn't be bettered.

Sadly, he was judged on it by the demanding public and sensations were expected of him every week'.

From the first time he put on a Wigan jersey he was class through and through - and he had to be to keep David Bolton out

made his every move in a classy manner."

"In addition to that, he was a player of such natural ability that we could work things around him and he could always be relied upon to put into practice the things we rehearsed on training

BOY WONDER STILL RIGHT ON TOP

of the limelight for four matches before David emigrated to Australia.'

'In that memorable 64-5 season, Cliff turned in some magnificent performances, and I will always remember him not only as a player who did things well but as one who always looked the part and

nights.'

"At the finish, I'm afraid it was a sad ending to his Central Park career. A lot of things happened all at once - he got married, got promotion at work, had to study a lot, and his brother David was signed so that the two brothers were fighting for one

position.

"The two lads are very close to each other, and it was proved that blood is thicker than water".

In the end came the parting of the ways, in January 1971, when Oldham paid out a £2,000 cheque to bring Cliff to Watersheddings, but not before the Newton-le-Willows lad had played in THREE Wembley finals.

Most players dream of the day they play ONCE at Wembley but Cliff has had a hat-trick of appearances in the Empire Stadium, first in that never-to-be-forgotten '65 final against Hunslet, then again St Helens the following year, and finally against Castleford in 1970. The first will always be remembered as the best, for Wigan defied a terrific challenge from Geoff Shelton's Hunslet to lift the Challenge Cup 20-16 and Cliff will never forget the magic moments when he and his halfback partner, Frankie Parr, carried the trophy around the stadium in a lap of honour.

A year later was the turn of Alex Murphy's Saints to grab the glory, and in 1970 Castleford carried off the cup with a 7-2 triumph after that first-half incident which robbed Wigan of full back Colin Tyrer with a smashed jaw.

The injury meant the introduction of substitute Cliff as full back - and he showed his versatility with a tremendous show against all the odds.

A few months later, he was Oldham bound - and so began the second half of the Cliff Hill story. It took him some time to

settle at Watersheddings. He wasn't over-enamoured with the left-centre berth, but in his second match, at Keighley, he showed what was to come with a wonderful piece of attacking rugby that left three defenders diving into the corner flag, as he slipped Terry Garrett over for a try on the inside.

It was last season, when he was switched to his favourite outside-half spot, that it all began to happen at Watersheddings. Ultimately, he was handed the side's leadership, and with more responsibility both from leading the side and from being in the very thick of things, the flair began to come through again.

This time, it was a new-look Hill who thrilled Oldham fans - an older, more mature player now past his physical peak but possessing a brain that produced the openings for others.

Sadly, Cliff hasn't been blessed with the best of good fortunes since he came to Watersheddings. Chest trouble was followed by a broken thumb towards the end of last term, and this season he has been troubled by first a groin strain and now hamstring complications.

The sooner he is back the better, for many supporters and not without justification - argue that Oldham are now never quite the same without his ball-playing skills, his quiet but effective leadership, and his ability to read any situation.

During Oldham's terrific run of success early this year, and the steady

progress they are making against better-class opponents this time, Cliff has produced many moments to savour.

But the one that will stand out in the minds of most Oldham supporters will be the fabulous try he set up for Tony Wainwright in the 7-7 home draw against Huddersfield.

His sudden acceleration between the Fartown centres - shades of yesteryear! - and his beautifully-timed and executed overhead pass to Norman Hodgkinson on the inside was Rugby League football at its most entertaining best, and the fans showed their appreciation marvellously.

With his wife Irene and daughter Sharon, only 2½ but already a rugby fan, Cliff still lives in west Lancashire, only a few miles from his childhood haunts where he first learned how to pass a rugby ball.

He has a top job at Bold power station, not far from St Helens, and as one might expect from a player of his calibre and from such a rugby background to see a try worth a least two more points than a goal.

IF HE POSSESSED A SAY WHERE IT MATTERS, HE WOULD PRESS FOR EITHER THE ABOLITION OF THE DROP GOAL OR ITS REDUCTION IN VALUE TO ONE POINT, BUT IS FULL OF PRAISE, LIKE MOST PLAYERS, FOR THE SIX-TACKLE RULE, AS OPPOSED TO THE FOUR-TACKLE LAW.

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EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR OLDHAM

CHRISTMAS came early for Oldham at Crown Platt on Sunday when missed goal chances by the home team made Graham Starkey's boys a real festive season gift of a couple of vital Northern League points which keeps Oldham on the threshold of the league's top four.

While Phil Larder landed four beauties from four shots - two of them from a position only just inside the Dewsbury half - the Yorkshiremen fluffed six goal chances, three by winger Terry Day and another three by prop-forward Trevor Lowe.

And though Dewsbury romped in for four tries to Oldham's two, it was the Oldham lads who picked up a welcome pre-Christmas winning wage packet on Thursday night.

Nine points in the last ten minutes, in a match in which the lead changed hands three times, gave Oldham a win they had rarely looked like pulling off.

Winning the toss and electing to play up the notorious Crown Platt slope Oldham had conceded two tries in 28 minutes, were getting well beaten for possession, and were struggling to contain an eager homeside that backed up and moved the ball at speed.

Yet amazingly they went in at the interval with a

7-6 lead under their belts.

The big turn around followed a snap try by Tony Wainwright, always a lively attacker, under the sticks and a Larder goal, followed right on the hooter by a terrific 50-yard effort by the Oldham marksman.

Dewsbury, however, again hit Oldham hard in the second half. They continued to dominate the scrum thanks to the hooking of Great Britain man Mike Stephenson, who scored further tries through second-row man Grayshon and substitute half-back Lane.

At 12-7 to the Yorkshiremen, and with only 15 minutes remaining, it looked odds on Oldham going under for their third consecutive league defeat.

But that wasn't accounting for a remarkable Oldham come-back sparked by a brilliant Martin Murphy try with only ten minutes remaining.

Crossfield passing in the Dewsbury 25 had the home defence in a tizzy, and Murphy, linking up well

and using the left flank as a foil, nipped through the gap for a try which Larder improved to equalise.

A Foster drop-goal, and another Larder long-range penalty with only two minutes to go - and Oldham were sitting pretty.

In many respects they were fortunate, and Oldham officials admitted it. But it is true, as they said: "Perhaps it's about time we had a bit of luck".

Taylor, Wilson and Irving were the pick of the Oldham forwards while Murphy, Larder and Wainwright were always dangerous in a back division that possesses the ability to get among the tries given more good ball by the big man up front.

The match marked the debut of new pack man Albert Halsall, a big strong forward who, as could be expected in his first game, took time to settle into the pattern provided by a new set of colleagues.

STORM IN THE MUD



Kevin Taylor produced a storming show against Salford, and is captured here on one of his many sorties down the middle as he runs into a Dixon tackle.

RED DEVILS SNATCH LAST SECOND WIN

WHAT A TRAGIC end to a storming comeback by Oldham! No wonder, Salford coach Cliff Evans literally leaped out of the dug-out as the hooter sounded to produce a victory jig as his side of points plunderers, this time restricted to two tries, snatched the win which keeps them bobbing merrily up the Northern League table.

Almost as the ball left the boot of David Watkins to soar between the sticks for the winning goal, the final hooter sounded the death knell for Oldham after their two-try second-half display that twice dragged them level at 7-7 and 12-12.

In many respects it was rough justice on Oldham though, in truth, they can blame only themselves for dropping the vital point that would have kept them on the fringe of the league's top four.

The match didn't provide the classic we had hoped for. There was too much faulty handling by both sides for that, and one would have expected Oldham to get the ball moving out along the line more than they did, particularly now that they possess potential match-winners outside of the scrum in players like Norman Hodgkinson, Phil Larder, Tony Wainwright and Martin Murphy.

Having said that, however, praise must be handed out to the home side for the quality rugby that produced their two tries.

The first came from a well-worked set move from a trap penalty close to the Salford line. The ball passed through four pairs of hands at top speed

and in two directions before Jim Reynolds plunged through a gaping gap in the rearguard to touch down.

The second followed a piece of prize football in which Oldham stretched Salford on the left, before scoring on the right.

A Wainwright break brought out the best in Paul Charlton but there was no stopping Oldham as the ball was moved quickly to the opposite flank where Murphy linked up and Larder cleverly straightened up the attack to give Mick Elliott a try at the flag.

That was rugby at its best - and had Oldham been able to sustain it there would have been no need for the folly of those last few frantic seconds. It all began with a minute to go when Warrington referee Eric Lawrinson penalised Salford for obstruction against Murphy who has short-kicked on the visitors' 25.

Despite the pressures, and the importance, of the kick, Larder levelled the scores with the goal, and it looked a banker draw.

What happened next provided Oldham supporters with one of their biggest disappointments of the season.

The ball went loose after only one tackle, and Oldham, in their eagerness to get up and block a last-filing Watkins drop goal, ran offside at the play-the-ball.

Everything rested on Watkins, and the Welshman didn't let his side down as he blasted home the winner.

There were sound Oldham performances from Murphy, Larder, and Wainwright, but the star of the whole show was Kevin Taylor.

He won the scrums, tackled hard and often and was a real terrier in the loose. It was a pity he had to be on the losing side - and he wouldn't have been had Oldham as a whole backed up and supported the man in possession as intelligently as he.

OLDHAM: Murphy, Elliott, Larder, Davies, Hodgkinson, Wainwright, McCone, Wilson, Taylor, Foster, Irving, Ashcroft, Reynolds.

SALFORD: Charlton, Watkins, Hesketh, Richards, Gill, Banner, McKay, Devlin, Grice, Dixon, Davies, Prescott.

Referee: Mr E. Lawrinson (Warrington). Attendance: 3010.

OLDHAM RLFC 1972-73 RESULTS & ATTENDANCES

August 12	home	v. Rochdale Hornets	Friendly	18-16	2,060
19	away	v. Huddersfield	League	25-7	2,352
23	home	v. Whitehaven	"	30-13	2,701
26	home	v. Workington Town	"	19-5	2,702
28	away	v. York	"	32-8	1,719
September 1	away	v. Salford	Lancs Cup	17-41	5,815
10	home	v. Hull	League	27-2	2,372
17	away	v. Huyton	"	25-13	900
24	away	v. Hull	Players Cup	10-17	2,700
29	away	v. Wigan	League	12-9	3,000
October 3	home	v. Salford	Floodlit Cup	12-8	4,507
7	home	v. Saint Helens	League	12-12	6,574
14	away	v. Workington Town	"	10-17	823
18	home	v. Great Britain	Trial	18-15	3,829
22	home	v. Widnes	League	17-18	4,644
November 4	home	v. Huddersfield	League	7-7	1,922
7	home	v. Castleford	Floodlit Cup	9-7	2,212
12	home	v. Huyton	League	22-0	1,941
17	away	v. Hull	"	17-14	2,000
25	home	v. Wigan	"	11-6	2,866
December 1	away	v. Saint Helens	"	10-24	4,800
5	away	v. Leigh	Floodlit Cup	8-10	2,894
13	home	v. Salford	"	12-14	3,010
17	away	v. Dewsbury	"	16-12	1,500
24	home	v. Leigh	"		
26	away	v. Rochdale Hornets	"		
January 6	away	v. Whitehaven	"		



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HISTORY MAKERS

A special guest at today's match could be Mr Frank Shaw of Sydney, Australia. The son of Oldham's former committee man and assistant physiotherapist, George Shaw, Frank is here on holiday with his wife Dawn after travelling across the world with the official party of Australian school-boys who are here on a six week tour.

The young Kangaroos, who are making history, arrived in the Oldham area nine days ago, stayed at Castleshaw Camp and took

on an East Lancs. side which included three Oldham boys at Watersheddings on Wednesday.

This weekend, the boys leave the area for West Lancashire where they will spend Christmas in private homes in the Warrington area.

Two of the lucky lads will stay with St. Helens and Great Britain coach Jim Challinor.

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Congratulations on today's visitors, Leigh, on coming from the second favourite spot to snatch - and deservedly - the BBC2 Floodlit Trophy from Widnes.

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LOOKING ROUND THE LEAGUE

REFEREES ARE taking more and more interest in spreading the game and coaching the novices and amateurs with clubs, schools and universities. Fred Lindop's job allows him to get down to Nottingham and Sheffield to keep an eye on those varsity sides, while Halifax based referee Maurice Oldroyd, a milkman from 4.30am till noon, now frequently turns his rest period into refereeing on Wednesday afternoons, and has been instrumental with Huddersfield senior referee Billy Thompson in forming the Huddersfield Polytechnic team, who start their programme next month.

BILLY WILL coach the Polytechnic and his immediate task is to have them in trim for the first round of the University Cup on January 24 when they meet Manchester University. World Cup referee Mick Naughton looks after a hoard of schoolboys in the Widnes area. A deputation of Rugby League councillors are to meet university officials in the New Year to discuss way of developing the game further and offering what ever help they can.

SCRUM HALF Kenny Taylor, released by Barrow, has returned to his home town of Doncaster, and last weekend played his first game for the Dons second string. Also back in action with the Dons is their talented goalkicking loose forward Steve McManus, 27, who interested Oldham two seasons ago when he was constantly voted man of the match in the John Players competition. McManus has had a lot of personal family troubles to tidy up over the past twelve months and is now ready to settle down to the game again.

HAD FORMER Bradford Northern halfback Drew Broatch not broken his left arm against Halifax two weeks ago York could have expected a transfer request from their club skipper Harry Whittaker, who is not content with being on the sidelines every week. Whittaker is now playing stand-off to the man who has been keeping him out



Mick Naughton

teenage scrum half Gary Smith.

BRADFORD Northern chairman Harry Womersley has said he will accept any reasonable player-exchange for his scrum half Bak Diabira and Tommy Thompson, the former Hunslet and Yorkshire county winger.

ALTHOUGH it is not allowed under Rugby League rules I understand that former Hunslet and Blackpool Borough prop forward Alan Bancroft paid his own transfer fees to get away from Blackpool and play with his local club. Keighley coach Ken Traill is keen to

round of the Rugby League Challenge Cup as representatives of the West. Dewsbury Celtic again fly the Yorkshire amateur flag.

BLACKPOOL BOROUGH beat St Helens by five minutes to the signature of St Helens junior prop Fed Fletcher. Apparently all the traffic lights were at 'Green' for manager Ces Mountford on his drive from Borough Park.

WORKINGTON, to add atmosphere for home matches are to hand out 1,000 free tickets to schoolboys. A junior side is also being formed at

REFEREES ARE MORE THAN WHISTLE MEN

get Bramley's powerful second rower Alan Ashman, who is a relative newcomer to the paid ranks.

SEVERAL clubs have Yorkshire county cricketer Peter Squires under observation as a winger. I can tell you that Leeds fancy him as a stand-off, the position he played with Ripon Grammar School and St Johns College, Yorks.

MILL OM, the little Cumbrian Club who figured prominently in the early days of Rugby League, are back on the map and play in the first

Derwent Park. Workington scrum half Jackie Newall has settled his dispute with the club after talks with the committee following his displacement in the side by Arnie Walker. When the Castleford match was postponed at Fartown last weekend, owing to fog Jack Scroby took the players for a drink before farewell and moving off to realise a lifetime ambition to coach Halifax, the team he watched with his father and brother Brian, before becoming a top class prop himself with Bradford N, Halifax and Yorkshire.



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RUGBY NEWS

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LEIGH LAUNCH BACK INTO LEAGUE STRUGGLE AFTER T.V. CUP WIN

LEIGH, currently rebuilding after the break-up of their Wembley side, come to Watersheddings today bidding to repeat the success against our boys in the semi-final of the Floodlit Trophy at Hilton Park three weeks ago.

And they will be no strangers to Watersheddings with former Oldham forwards Geoff Fletcher, Peter Smethurst and Alan Ogden possibly in the line-up, and, of course, John Stringer as secretary.

There have been many close connections with Oldham and Leigh in recent years, beginning with the deal which took Tommy Warburton to Hilton Park in exchange for Wilf Briggs shortly after the arrival of Alex Murphy at Leigh.

Oldham did very nicely out of that deal, picking up Briggs plus £5,000 for Warburton, and three or four years later, Oldham were on thereceiving end again, taking another £5,000 from Leigh for the services of Alan Ogden.

Both Fletcher and Smethurst, of course, moved to Hilton Park via other clubs, but both can expect a big welcome today from Oldham supporters who loved their style.

Both are full-blooded 80 minutes players who did a lot for Oldham during their stay here, and Oldham fans will still connect Smethurst with those fabulous three matches against Hull KR in the Challenge Cup semi-final of 1964.

It was smiler Smethurst, then a centre, who scored the first Oldham try in the first clash at Headingley... and Peter looks back with pride on his days at Watersheddings.

He said recently "They were great days indeed, but if I had my time over all again I think I would do the same."

That's not surprising because his move to Salford made him a regular member of the Reds' pack

and his disappointment at being only substitute in Salford's Challenge Cup final against Castleford was more thn made up for when he returned to the Empire Stadium with Leigh.

Over the years there has been a long list of players who have ultimately appeared at Wembley after leaving Oldham... and Peter dropped into the same celebrated company as players like Alan Davies, Frank Pitchford, and Derek Turner.

Fletcher moved to Hilton Park via Wigan, and he is still remembered at Watersheddings for his clever, ball-playing displays in the days when he captained the team under the coaching of Gerry Helme.

Leigh, once the pride of West Lancashire in the days when players like Rex Mossop, Trevor Allen, Charlie Pawsey, Bill Kindon, and Jimmy Ledger, thrilled the Hilton Park crowds, had their big moment at Wembley last year when Murphy and Co turned the form book inside-out with their triumph over Leeds.

Almost before the celebrations were over, however, the headlines were screaming the news that mastermind Murphy was bound for the new set-up at Warrington.

Alex was soon to move and to make matters worse for the Leigh board, players like Geoff Clarkson, David Chisnall, and Kevin Ashcroft ultimately followed their 'king' to his new palace.

When full back David Eckersley followed suit, going to St Helens, the Wembley team had been broken and it was literally hit for six when Welshman Stuart Ferguson, whose goalkicking at Wembley

had played a major part in the success, pulled out and returned to his native pastures.

The time had come for Leigh to begin their rebuilding programme. The coaching job went to Smethurst but after only a few weeks in the job Peter quit. "It wasn't for me", he said later.

Derek Hurt was hauled in to replace him - but the results still failed to come.

Gradually, however, the rebuilding programme was beginning to take shape. Frank and Tony Barrow had joined Leigh, and more recent signings have been Fletcher from Wigan and hooker Derek Clark from Salford.

At last Leigh began to pull round, and the return to fitness after a long injury lay-off of the big Paul Grimes further strengthened the pack.

But the current hero of Hilton Park is scrum-half John McAttee, whose brother Peter was once lined up to come to Watersheddings.

It was McAttee who scored the winning try to knock Wigan off the Floodlit Trophy trail, and it was McAttee again who dished out to the k.o to Oldham in the semi-final.

His try under the sticks 15 minutes from the end of the semi-final, dashed Oldham's hopes of making their first cup final for several years and earned Leigh their right to meet Widnes in an all-Lancashire clash at Wigan.

Shortly before the Wigan tie, Leigh appointed former Halifax boss Les Pearce as coach, and Les, an experienced campaigner, will be out to bring out the best in a side which is chocker-block full of experience.



Look out David Watkins! Keith Ashcroft, looking determined and ferocious, bursts through a Chris Hesketh tackle against Salford, as the Salford Red's Welsh skipper waits to take him.

LINE-UP

OLDHAM 24

- 1. MARTIN MURPHY
- 2. MIKE ELLIOTT
- 3. PHIL LARDER 29 9 9 4
- 4. TOMMY DAVIES
- 5. NORMAN HODGKINSON
- 6. TONY WAINRIGHT T 9
- 7. MICK McCONE
- 8. KEN WILSON HALSALL T
- 9. KEVIN TAYLOR T
- 10. HALSALL FOSTER 9
- 11. BOB IRVING JACKSON
- 12. FOSTER ASHCROFT
- 13. JIMMY REYNOLDS
- 14. BOTTOM
- 15. KEITH ASHCROFT Baldwin

LEIGH 4

- 1. HOGAN
- 2. STACEY
- 3. JONES A Barrow
- 4. COLLINS
- 5. LAYSON Riding
- 6. BARROW Masgrave
- 7. SAYER Melling
- 8. GRIMES Ogden
- 9. CLARKE
- 10. FLETCHER Fiddler 2 goals
- 11. FIDDER GIMES
- 12. BARROW Lester
- 13. MARTYN
- 14. BIDDING Davies
- 15. LESTER F Barrow

Referee : Mr P. Geraghty (York)
Touch Judges : Mr El Lea, Mr C. Callister

Your Scorecard

OLDHAM

TRIES GOALS

LEIGH

TRIES GOALS

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