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A. WALKER

Vice-Chairman:

R. HARTLEY

Treasurer:

R. HARTLEY

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J. HIGGINS, D. HULME,
C. FARNWORTH,
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Dr. D. GADSDEN

Coach:

GRIFF JENKINS

Assistant Coach:

TERRY GORMAN

Physiotherapist:

DENNIS WRIGHT

Promotions Manager:

ALAN TAYLOR

BRIAN BATTY of the DAILY MAIL — —

With the season barely in sight of the halfway mark the signs are that the fans and players are already suffering from a surfeit of club football.

The fans are finding it a strain and an embarrassment having to reach so deep and so often into their pockets to cope with a crowded programme.

The players are becoming mentally and physically punch drunk as they attempt to plough through a fixture list that threatens to swamp them.

With so many different competitions now being squeezed into a strenuous League programme the fans are finding they can only use the season tickets for the odd game.

The result? They can't afford to watch as many as three games in a week so they become selective and attendances are suffering.

The players are finding the pace too severe, the injury lists are soaring and consequently the fans are having to settle for weakened sides.

It is a merciless merry-go-round that is leaving everyone dizzy.

'We cannot go on like this next season,' warned one club official recently, adding 'It is not fair on the players, fans or the sponsors.'

'There will have to be some drastic pruning and sponsored competitions will have to be organised so that they are in the fixture lists from the start.'

The most successful clubs and their players are going to collect the cash and trophies but at considerable expense.

The Australians are amazed at the marathon fixture lists which players face in this country compared with the relatively small programme of top Sydney clubs.

The bonus for a successful English player this season is a place on next summer's tour of Australia and New Zealand.

The highlight will be playing in the Tests — six of them — and the target trying to beat the record of the 1970 party, who only lost one game.

A wonderful prospect but I wonder how those Great Britain players who make the tour will be feeling next August as they make their way home . . . to face another exacting season and work!

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POOLS NEWS

Congratulations to Mrs. F. Fulton, of 26 Jordan Avenue, Shaw, who was the first winner on our new £100 Holiday Draw. We are sure she will be able to select, with the aid of Holts Travel, a holiday to remember.

Other items of interest for our Pools Agents is a competition where they can win a Cassette Recorder or a Turkey in time for Christmas.

On Tuesday, December 4th, we shall be holding an Agents Night in the VP Lounge. Agents, Prospective Agents, etc. are invited to come along and enjoy a drink and refreshments while they see the type of holiday they can win in the Draw.

The Chairman wishes to thank our hard working Pools Agents for their efforts which played a big part in making possible our new signing, Brian Gregory. The cash they turn in week after week will go a long way to ensuring the clubs' future standing and success.

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ON THE INSIDE WITH DAVE PARKER

Huddersfield committeeman and former Rugby League chairman Hubert Lockwood I understand proposed in last week's international selection meeting that the Great Britain players should be taken to a Yorkshire Dales retreat near Grassington. He knew of suitable hotel accommodation and was sure that training facilities could be arranged. I hope Mr. Lockwood, who was a Great Britain fullback himself when with Halifax, did not think he had a chance of using the Upper Wharfedale club's pitch and changing accommodation. Following the signing of David Knowles, their star second-rower by Wakefield last season, I know of at least one prominent man in Rugby League who is banned from entering the clubhouse.

Still with yesterday's Test, and it concerns, young Dave Topliss, or as he was christened during the World Cup in France — "La-Topless". It has been kept quiet, but Dave was involved in a nasty car accident last week, but he escaped with slight shock and an odd graze.

Nigel Stephenson after relinquishing the Dewsbury captaincy had talks last week about a move from Crown Flatt. The fee would be astronomical for this points scoring machine if Dewsbury let him go. It appears that the general team spirit in the club has waned since the upset over Mick Stephenson's "alleged shoddy treatment" on his claim for a stake of the signing-on fee Penrith paid for him.

One player, who would welcome a chance with another club is Keighley's utility back Bob Cryer, who is at present playing on permit with Keighley Albion at loose forward.

Barrow second-row or loose forward John Cunningham, who was sent off at Doncaster a fortnight ago, apparently was aggravated as he came off the pitch and I understand the disciplinary committee heard this week that he hit a Doncaster director and two spectators.

Doncaster in the meantime in an effort to strengthen their depleted ranks have asked Wakefield if they can take on loan in exchange for fullback Dave Towle, forward Ted Campbell and former Dewsbury centre Max Fletcher, who has not settled at Belle Vue. They have also been given permission by Keighley to take former Leeds stand-off Bob Smith on loan and second row forward Brian Harrison.

Graeme Langlands, to soften the blow of not being able to play again on tour, has dipped into his coffers to purchase a second hand XJ6 Jaguar. In Sydney, Langlands runs his own haulier business, and I understand that he gets his sleeves rolled up to do his fair share of driving.

Ian Halliwell, the £2,000 transfer-listed Doncaster loose forward has not turned up at Lawkholme Lane, Keighley, yet after being given permission to join them for trials.

John Warlow's retirement and his subsequent return to St. Helens could hit one or two snags. Warlow's wife is now an ardent Widnesian fan, and John himself is suspended for three matches from last month.

A CHANGE OF JOB?

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interview appointments please ring

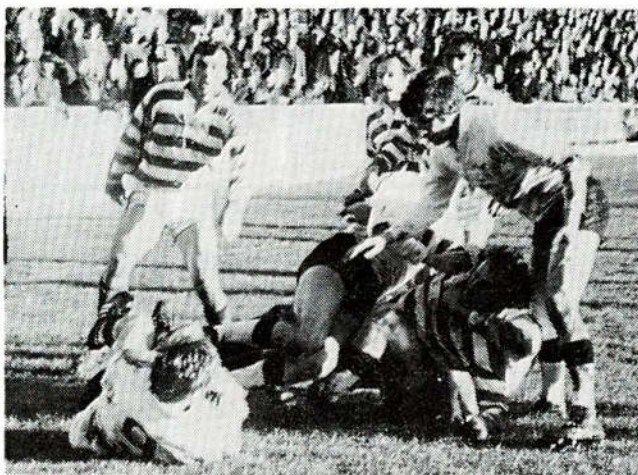
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Rugby Quiz

1. Which player made his debut in the Wigan versus Oldham, First Division match earlier this season?
2. Which eight Wigan players toured Australasia in 1950?
3. Which Second Division club has scored cup-tie victories against four First Division clubs this season?
4. What is the record transfer fee paid out by Wigan?
5. Which was Oldham's biggest victory against Australia?

ANSWERS

1. Jimmy Hornby, the Wigan winger.
2. Ashcroft, Bradshaw, Cunliffe, Egan, Gee, Hilton, Ratcliffe and Ryan.
3. Workington Town who have defeated St. Helens 11-5 (Lancashire Cup), Hull Kingston Rovers 20-9 (John Player Trophy), Rochdale Hornets 22-13 (Captain Morgan Trophy) and Salford 10-5 (Captain Morgan Trophy).
4. £11,000 for Bob Irving last September.
5. In 1956-57 Oldham beat Australia 21-2.



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17

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- 2—MUNRO G.
- 3—LARDER P. *3 goals*
- 4—WAINWRIGHT A.
- 5—O'BRIEN *a try*
- 6—~~BLAIR~~ *J. TREASURED.*
- 7—McCONE M.
- 8—CLAWSON T. *goal*
- 9—TAYLOR K.
- 10—HALL F.
- 11—GREGORY B.
- 12—McCRACKEN W. *try*
- 13—PETERS A. *try*
- 14—ELLIOTT M.
- 15—ASHCROFT K.

Referee:

A. W. ALLEN (York)

WIGAN

9

Red and White hooped jerseys
White Shorts

- 1—FRANCIS W
- 2—WRIGHT S
- 3—VIGO G.
- 4—O'LOUGHLIN K. *try*
- 5—HOWLETT R.
- 6—AYRES W.
- 7—NULTY J.
- 8—SMETHURST P
- 9—CLARKE C.
- 10—GRAY J. *3 goals*
- 11—IRVING R.
- 12—ROBINSON D.
- 13—CUNNINGHAM E.
- 14—HIGHTON T.
- 15—O'LOUGHLIN K.

Touch Judges

P. M. Oliver (Bolton) **Red**

R. J. Percival (Warrington) **Orange**

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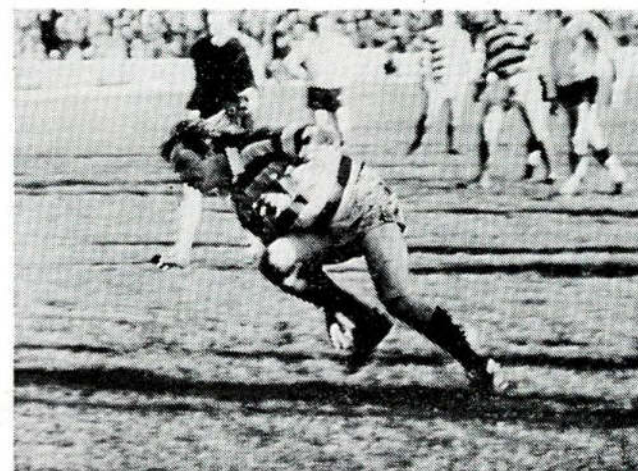
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Action Replay



Our Visitors . . WIGAN

Due to an injury crisis the Wigan team has been rather unsettled in recent weeks but it would appear that there will always be a place for 'play anywhere' Kevin O'Loughlin who has occupied every position in the Wigan line-up. O'Loughlin is in his tenth season at Wigan after previously being with Warrington Colts. In 1968-69 Kevin represented England under-24 against France at Castleford when he scored a try in the 42-2 English victory. He has also represented Lancashire. At the start of the season he was occupying the full-back berth but it would be no surprise if he was found in any other position. Kevin's 20-years-old brother Keiron O'Loughlin alternates between wing and centre and he played a big part in Wigan's winning of this season's Lancashire Cup for he was the scorer of two tries in the final. One of the biggest personalities of the Wigan backs is the crowd-pleasing Green Vigo from Cape Province, South Africa. Already Vigo has made his mark by scoring 8 tries since he joined Wigan from Saldanha Tigers RUFC last July. John Whittle is another speedy wingman whilst recently back from injury is Stuart Wright, the former Latchford Albion flyer. In season 1970-71 Wright crossed for 33 tries and that season he also made two appearances for Lancashire. In the centre Wigan have a very experienced player in 26-years-old Dave Hill who joined the Central Park club in October, 1967 from Liverpool RUFC. Hill has represented Lancashire and in 1971 he played for Great Britain against France in Toulouse when unfortunately the Lions were beaten 16-8. Another player who has represented Great Britain in Test match football is Bill Francis who wore a British jersey against the Australians in 1967. Francis joined Wigan in 1964 from a Featherstone junior club and he also has nine Yorkshire County appearances to his name. Originally Francis played on the wing (he scored 41 tries in 1968-69) but in recent years he has switched to centre with equal success. Amongst the up-and-coming players at Central Park is Bernard Coyle, the star of the Lancashire U17 side who joined Wigan in March, 1972. He made his debut at Bradford last season and he is being introduced steadily into First Division rugby. As well as being renowned for excellent junior signings, Wigan have also bought some extremely shrewd bargains from other clubs and into this category goes Terry Cassidy, the former Blackpool Borough stand-off. Cassidy had teamed up well with scrum-half Jim Nulty before the nippy little scrum-half sustained an injury from which he is only just recovering. Nulty turned professional for Wigan from the Widnes RUFC in September, 1972 and before the season was out he had won the Supporters' Club 'Player of the Season' Award. Twenty-years-old Nulty had high scoring games last season against both Huyton (try and 6 goals) and Bradford Northern (2 tries and 5 goals). In the absence of the injured Nulty, Wigan have switched Warren Ayres from stand-off to scrum-half. This switch has made little difference to the workman-like displays of the tricky Ayres who can play equally well in either position. He is the leading try scorer at Wigan with 10 and has been a most reliable clubman since he was signed from Warrington.

The Wigan pack has a very experienced look about it and it may include Colin Clarke, Britain's hooker in yesterday's battle against Australia. Thirty-years-old Clarke joined Wigan in January, 1963 from the progressive Orrell RUFC. He has several County and International appearances to his name and he was a member of the Great Britain team which toured Australia and New Zealand in 1966. At the beginning of the month he was a try scorer in Britain's wonderful 21-12 victory over Australia and Oldham patrons will be hoping that his club give him permission to play again this afternoon following yesterday's vital Second Test Match. Should Clarke be unavailable for selection then Graham Starkey will be able to switch John Gray from second-row to hooker. Gray gained international honours at hooker whilst with Coventry RUFC when he played for England U21 against Fiji. Last July he turned professional for £8,000 and scored a try and goal on his debut against Warrington. Gray has proved to be quite an accomplished kicker and his total to date stands at 42 including the four he landed in the Lancashire Cup Final. Although Gray is also a good prop, these two positions have been filled by Laurie Hinchcliffe and

Derek Watts. Twenty-three-years-old Hinchcliffe cost Wigan £4,000 when they signed him from Bradford Northern in October, 1972, whilst Watts arrived at Central Park in August, 1972 as part of the player exchange deal which took Geoff Fletcher back to Leigh. After joining Leigh from Tunbury Wells RUFC, Watts played a big part in Leigh's highly successful 1970-71 season. He played in both the Lancashire and Challenge Cup Finals that season and he gained another Lancashire Cup winners medal this season when he was substitute in the final. Wigan could field a second row partnership of ex-Oldham stars in Peter Smethurst and Bob Irving. The 34-years-old Smethurst has been written off at more clubs than he wishes to remember but he still bounces back with the enthusiasm of a newly signed junior. He began his professional career in 1955 with Swinton (Bob Irving was just seven then!) and his first move was to Oldham in September, 1961. Six years later, in September, 1967, Griff Jenkins signed him for Salford for £3,250 and then in January, 1971 a further £1,900 changed hands when Smethurst moved to Leigh. Last March, Wigan snapped up Smethurst and that famous grin was wider than ever when the Colliers lifted the Lancashire Cup especially after defeating two of his previous clubs, Oldham and Salford, in so doing. Bob Irving is a well-liked and much respected player at Watersheddings as his record indicates. He joined Oldham in January, 1965 from the Huddersfield junior club, St. Joseph's and his first representative honour came the following autumn when he was substitute in the England U24 side which defeated France in a match which marked the opening of the Oldham floodlights. Since that match Irving has visited France with the England U24 team and he has made several Yorkshire County appearances, the last being against Cumbria last September. In addition he has played in the six Great Britain International matches. Irving's biggest honour, however, came last year when he accompanied Great Britain to France when they won the World Cup. Although Irving only played in the 53-19 drubbing of New Zealand he was substitute in all three other games. In 1970 he toured Australia and New Zealand with the Great Britain team and played in 15 matches scoring 6 tries. In each of his last three seasons with Oldham he scored 13 tries so it was really no surprise when he scored against Oldham on his debut in the Lancashire Cup following his £11,000 transfer. The two remaining stars of the Wigan pack are Eddie Cunningham and Dave Robinson. Cunningham joined Wigan in August, 1969 from St. Helens junior football and he is an extremely fast player who once scored four tries in one match against Castleford. In season 1971-72 Cunningham made his only representative appearance when he played for Lancashire against Cumberland. In contrast Dave Robinson has made numerous county and international appearances since he joined Swinton, his first professional club, in May, 1963 from Folly Lane juniors. Robinson's first honour was for the English U24 side and since then he has played in 11 test matches as well as in several of Lancashire's games. Robinson has twice toured Australasia. The first time, in 1966, he was a great success but on the second occasion in 1970 he was handicapped by injury and, in fact, he only played in six games. At the end of last season Robinson retired to concentrate on his plumbing business but he has had a change of heart and he is back playing as well as ever now.

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FIRST TEAM FIXTURES

1973		
Aug.	18—Leeds	A
	25—Dewsbury	H
Sept.	1—Wigan, Lancs. Cup	H
	8—Bramley	H
	15—Player's Competition	
	22—Wakefield	A
	26—Castleford	H
	29—Wigan	A
Oct.	6—Whitehaven	H
	14—Dewsbury	A
	19—AUSTRALIA	H
	27—Featherstone	H
Nov.	2—St. Helens	A
	11—Widnes	H
	25—Wigan	H
Dec.	1—Featherstone	A
	8—St. Helens	H
	16—Warrington	A
	23—Leigh	H
	26—Rochdale H.	H
	30—Whitehaven	A
1974		
Jan.	1—Salford	A
	6—Hull K.R.	H
	13—Leigh	A
	20—Warrington	H
Feb.	2—Challenge Cup (1)	
	10—Bramley	A
	16—Wakefield	H
	23—Challenge Cup (2)	
Mar.	2—Leeds	H
	9—Challenge Cup (3)	
	17—Widnes	A
	23—Chal. Cup (Semi-final)	
	31—Hull K.R.	A
Apr.	7—Castleford	A
	13—Salford	H
	15—Rochdale H.	A

"A" TEAM FIXTURES

1973		
Aug.	11—Rochdale	H
	18—Barrow	H
	25—Workington	A
	29—Rochdale	
	(1st leg Shield)	H
Sept.	8—Rochdale	
	(2nd leg Shield)	A
	22—Barrow	A
	29—Wigan	H
Oct.	13—Swinton	H
	20—Swinton	A
	27—Workington	A
Nov.	3—St. Helens	H
	9—Widnes	A
	17—Huyton	A
	24—Wigan	A
Dec.	1—Barrow	H
	7—St. Helens	A
	16—Warrington	H
	22—Leigh	A
Jan.	4—Salford	A
	12—Workington	H
	18—Warrington	A
	23—Salford	H
	26—Swinton	H
Feb.	9—Huyton	A
	23—Huyton	H
Mar.	2—Barrow	A
	9—Huyton	H
	13—Leigh	H
	16—Widnes	H
	23—Rochdale	A
	29—Swinton	A
Apr.	6—Workington	H

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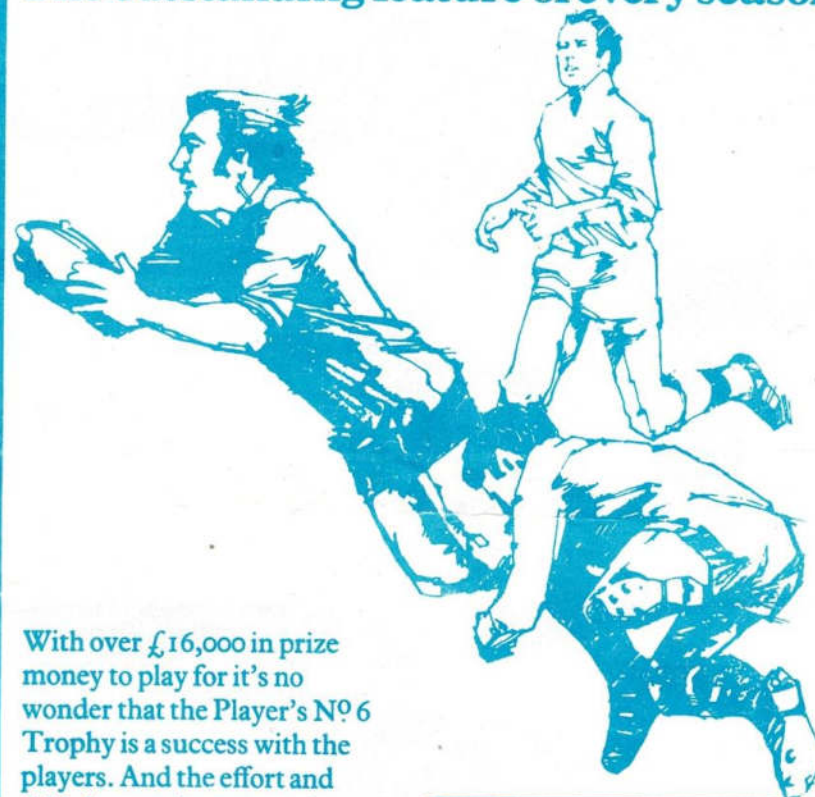
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