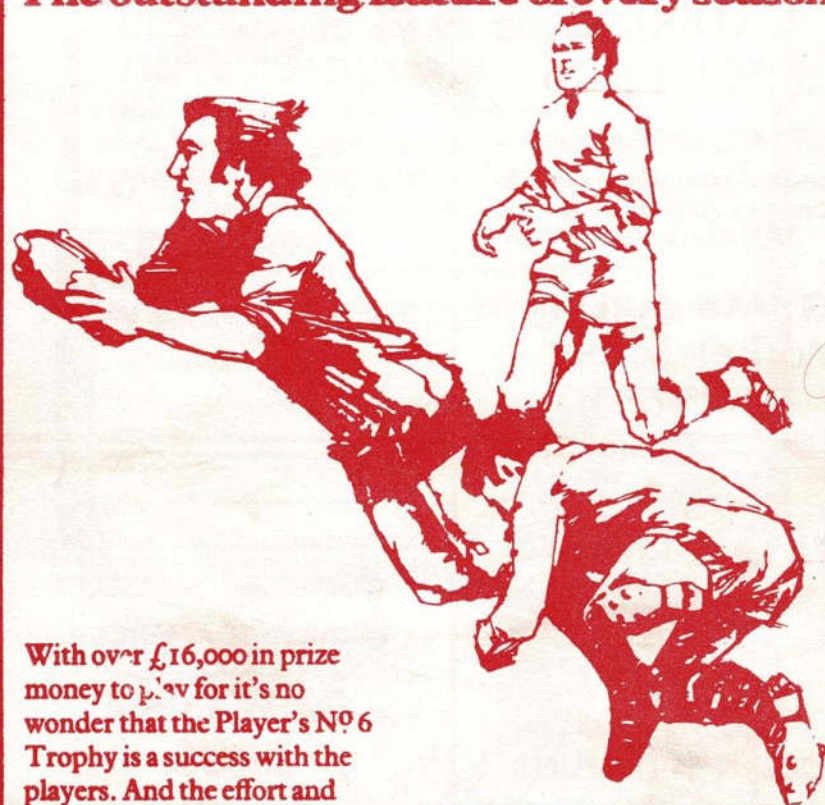


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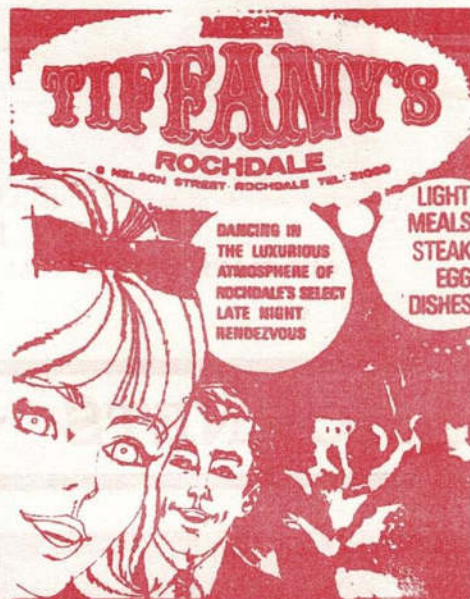
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This is it. — **THE BIG ONE** —
Hornets v. Oldham. What a way to end an amazing season. Who would have thought at Christmas, when both teams took part in that fog-bound "derby" classic at Watter-sheddings, that the season would have ended in such a traumatic fashion.

That Boxing Day game ended in victory for us and was in the middle of a superb run of 12 games without defeat. Oldham had gone through seven successive victories before that game. Alas for both clubs, darker days where just around the corner. Oldham won their next game against Whitehaven but since then have taken only five points from their League programme. We, on the other hand, continued the good run right until 9th February. That was the day we lost in the Players No. 6 final to Warrington.

Since then (these notes were written before the start of the Easter programme) we have drawn with Bramley and beaten Wakefield. A disastrous spell which has seen us clinging grimly on to our First Division place.

Oldham's purple patch in October, November and December, saw them chalk up successive victories over Castleford, Featherstone Rovers, Widnes, Wigan, Featherstone, St. Helens and Leigh.

At that stage of the season Oldham like ourselves, were looking forward to a good season in the

First Division. How times change. Still, whatever the situation, 'derby' games usually bring out the best in both teams, so we are confidently expecting a great game today.

Oldham this season have spent £30,000 on strengthening their first team pool. Terry Clawson, Brian Gregory, David Treasure and of course, our former second row forward Bob Welding have found their way to Watersheddings since the start of the season.

Incidentally, Bob Welding has impressed the Oldham supporters with his all-action displays, but was unlucky to be ruled out of last week's game at Castleford because of injury. The last three clashes between Hornets and Oldham have been very close. At this time last year we scraped home 14-12 at the Athletic Grounds, thanks mainly to a late try by Willie Aspinall and a fine touchline goal from Bill Holliday. In October last year, in a Floodlit Cup Competition we just managed to pip Oldham 4-0 at the Watersheddings and then there was that Boxing Day 15-11 win of ours against them at Watersheddings. The highlight of that game was, of course, Stuart Whitehead's sensational 70 yards try midway through the first half. A try never to be forgotten by those people fortunate enough to be there that day.

We can only hope today's game is as entertaining as that last clash. If it is we are in for a bumper end of season climax.

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Brian Batty of the Mail

John Butler's selection for the Great Britain's tour of Australia this summer was a little belated but still one of the most popular in the 26 strong squad.

It is generally accepted that all the players heading Down Under on May 23 are dedicated and determined to succeed in the quest to regain the Ashes.

But I was impressed by the immediate reaction of Butler when he discovered he was to replace Salford's Keith Fielding, who withdrew for personal reasons.

'I am not going out there to be a ham-and-egger,' he declared. 'I want to win a Test place.'

That honest approach is characteristic of a player who has quickly carved out a dazzling new career with Rochdale Hornets when he was almost swept up to the game's scrapheap.

There was a most unhappy chapter in the Butler success story when he was forced to retire injured in the Players No. 6 final against Warrington, after making a great start in this game. Fortunately,

Butler has made a habit of bouncing back as he did after packing in the game 12 months ago.

'I was fed up with travelling from my St. Helen's home to play for Kegihley and decided to call it a day,' he recalls.

'But when Rochdale came for me I had second thoughts and decided to play again.'

It was, of course, coach Frank Myler's experienced eye and sound judgement which prompted the Butler switch from loose forward to stand-off.

After winning recognition from Great Britain's selectors to travel to France as reserve, it must have been a disappointment to Butler to find he had failed to win an original place in the 26-strong tour party.

The value of Butler's inclusion is that he can play loose forward, stand-off or even centre for he is powerful, skilful and enthusiastic.

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- 3—BROPHY, Tom
- 4—McGIFFEN, Steve
- 5—PRATT, Tony
- 6—BUTLER, John
- 7—HAMMOND John
- 8—BROWN, Eddie
- 9—CLARKE, Peter
- 10—HOLLIDAY, Bill
- 11—HODKINSON, Alan
- 12—FOGERTY, Terry
- 13—HALMSHAW, Tony

- 14—
- 15—

Referee :

R. JACKSON (Halifax)



Touch Judges :

J. Casey (St. Helens),

Orange Flag

K. Ashall (Prescot)

Red Flag

OLDHAM

- 1—MURPHY, Mick
- 2—BARTON, Eddie
- 3—LARDER, Phil
- 4—WAINWRIGHT, Tony
- 5—HOLLAND, Ian
- 6—TREASURE, Dave
- 7—McCONE, Mick
- 8—ASHCROFT, Keith
- 9—BROWN, Dick
- 10—MAYE, John *FALL*
- 11—GREGORY, Brian
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modern lines or looking into the past.

He spends hours poring over old programmes, enjoying reading about former stars and would, I reckon, be great material for a

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

Today we give pride of place to John Butler who will soon be flying off with the Rugby League Touring team to Australia.

So many supporters have asked if they can give a donation to assist with the extra expense that John will be facing, that we are holding a collection this afternoon on his behalf. The Colts team have offered to make the collection and it will take place at half-time today. We hope you will give generously.

Half Time Special

Dependant on Friday's half-time draw snowball not having been won the snowball will today have

sporting quiz panel.

He's a player anxious to enjoy every minute of this coming tour and most of it, I feel at the expense of the Australians.

advanced to £25.00 plus the normal £5.00 prize will make £25.00 which may be won for only 5p. Tickets are on sale at various parts of the ground, buy yours now and support our effort.

Forthcoming Attractions

Such is the state of Rugby League today that at the time of writing it is not known who we will play in the "1974 Club Championship" which will take the place of the Top 16 Play off of recent years. Sufficient to say that we will probably have a home game next Sunday and it will be necessary to watch the press for details.

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IN THE HORNETS NEST

We welcome Officials, Players and supporters of Oldham this afternoon for what should be the customary attractive game between the two clubs. Once again the Nest Bar is open for your liquid refreshment, will visitors please sign the book on entry. If you have not already obtained your Chester Cup draw tickets you may do so today the draw will take place on Sunday the 5th May, this draw is in aid of the John Butler tour fund, as this is probably our last first team game this season depending of course on any play-off that may come our way, I would like to thank all the staff that have worked so well together in all our bars, who will be carrying on through the summer at the Stock Car Meetings and other attractions during the close

season, we hope to find time for a few alterations and plenty of spit and polish,

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Our Shop is now open at the back of the main stand. Club ties are now on sale. You may purchase any of our Souvenirs during the close season we are always at the ground and only to pleased to help you. CLUB TIES £1.25

Tea Bars— Pie and Peas can be purchased at the main tea bar at the scoreboard end of the ground. We also have tea bars on the railway side of the ground and yet another one next to the main stand at the Nest Bar end. On sale now are mini Pops and cokes—just the thing for the children.

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FIRST TEAM FIXTURES 1973-74

Aug.	12—Oldham (Charity)	Home	30-14
"	19—Warrington	Home	6-7
"	25—Wakefield	Away	8-42
Sept.	1—Huyton		
"	5—Swinton (Flood. C.)	Home	15-14
"	9—Castleford	Away	19-21
"	14—Salford Lancs. Cup 2	Away	3-24
"	16—Huddersfield	Home	18-2
"	23—Hull K.R.	Home	21-15
"	26—Swinton (Flood. C.)	Away	6-5
Oct.	7—Widnes	Away	15-5
"	10—Oldham (Flood. C.)	Away	4-0
"	21—Bramley (3-30 p.m.)	Away	13-17
"	28—Workington	Away	13-22
Nov.	4—Wigan	Home	21-12
"	6—St. Helens (Flood. C.)	Away	7-15
"	11—Dewsbury	Away	5-10
"	18—Whitehaven	Home	34-7
"	25—Leigh	Away	18-10
Dec.	9—Hull K.R.	Away	13-9
"	16—York (Players C. 2)	Home	11-0
"	23—Widnes	Home	12-7
"	26—Oldham	Away	15-11
"	30—Leeds (Players C. 3)	Home	7-5
Jan.	6—Bramley (Players C. Semi)	14-2	
"	13—Featherstone (2-30)	Away	17-17
"	20—St. Helens	Home	11-7
"	27—Leigh	Home	12-0
Feb.	3—Halifax (RLCC 1)	Home	13-6
"	9—Warrington (Player's C. Final)	Wigan	17-26
"	15—St. Helens (7-30)	Away	5-38
"	24—Wigan (RLCC 2)	Home	8-25
Mar.	3—Bramley	Home	5-5
"	16—Leeds	Away	28-30
"	20—Featherstone	Home	0-7
"	24—Salford	Home	3-8
"	26—Warrington	Away	13-16
"	30—Wigan	Away	8-20
"	31—Castleford	Home	10-16
Apr.	7—Wakefield	Home	15-6

Apr. 7—Leeds Home 9-21

" 12—Dewsbury .. Home

" 13—Whitehaven Away

" 15—Oldham Home

"A" TEAM FIXTURES 1973-74

Date	Opponents	Ground	F	A
Aug.	11—Oldham	Away	12-11	
"	17—Warrington	Away	15-23	
"	25—Swinton	Home	9-21	
"	29—Oldham (L S)	Away	2-7	
Sept.	1—Wigan	Away	0-32	
"	8—Oldham (L S2)	Home	12-12	
"	22—Huyton	Away	35-7	
"	29—Leigh	Away	28-6	
Oct.	6—Widnes	Home	22-11	
"	12—Salford	Home	18-6	
"	20—Workington	Home	11-5	
"	27—Wigan	Home	22-11	
"	24—Leigh	Home	11-0	
Nov.	1—Swinton	Away	13-8	
"	14—Widnes	Away	10-8	
Jan.	5—Barrow	Away	8-8	
"	19—St. Helens	Away	14-15	
"	26—Warrington	Home	5-7	
Feb.	9—Barrow	Away	8-8	
"	16—St. Helens	Home	11-3	
Mar.	1—Swinton	Home	20-2	
"	9—Barrow	Home	34-3	
"	15—Swinton	Away	15-12	
"	23—Oldham	Home	6-16	
"	30—Wigan	Home	7-20	
Apr.	6—Leigh	Away	26-0	
"	9—Salford	Away	10-15	
"	16—Huyton	Home		
"	21—Workington	Away		
"	23—Leigh	Home		
"	27—Barrow	Home		

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