

Oldham

12

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M.
- 3 LARDER, P.
- 4 WAINWRIGHT, T.
- 5 BARTON, E.
- 6 TREASURE, D.
- 7 BROWN, R.
- 8 ASHCROFT, K.
- 9 TAYLOR, K.
- 10 HUGHES, B.
- 11 HALL, F.
- 12 REYNOLDS, F.
- 13 FARRELL, J.

14 *Blair*
15 *Mitchell*

Referee:

G. F. Lindop (Wakefield)

Blackpool

3

- 1 REYNOLDS, D.
- 2 JOHNSON, J.
- 3 STAUNTON, G.
- 4 HERITAGE, J.
- 5 HOCKING, L.
- 6 MARSH, G.
- 7 DERBYSHIRE, C.
- 8 SINGLETON, R.
- 9 MARTLAND, R.
- 10 SEDDON, G.
- 11 MOLYNEUX, J.
- 12 CRANK, P.
- 13 ROWE, P.

14 HAIGH, J.
15 CAMPBELL, P.

T. A. Rynn (Wigan)

K. Ashall (Prescott)

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Red

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OLDHAM

12

v

BLACKPOOL

3



Flying through the air with the greatest of ease . . . that's Oldham winger Eddie Barton, whose strong-running style earned him a cracking try against Swinton.

—Picture by courtesy of the Evening Chronicle.

OLDHAM MAN OF MATCH

Fill in the coupon below to nominate the Oldham player, who in your opinion was the most outstanding in today's match,

Drop your voting slip in at the Secretary's office, or Souvenir Shop, on your way home, or post it to reach us no later than 3 days after the game to "Man of the Match" The Pavilion Watersheddings, Oldham.

Name

Address

The Man of the Match

BLACKPOOL

was *Fred Hall*

OLDHAM PLAYER OF YEAR

At the end of the season, the player who has received most Man of the Match votes over the whole season will become Oldham's Player of the Year.

All voting slips will be kept, and the Player of the Year will be asked to draw one out at random when he receives his award. The lucky voter will receive a £20 cash prize, so don't forget your name and address when you cast your vote—YOU could be on a winner as well as the player for whom you vote.

xx Only voting slips from the Oldham programme will be accepted—plain paper votes will be void.

VOTED MAN OF MATCH

v SWINTON

B. HUGHES

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

WE have rounded the final bend and are well into the last furlong in the race to give Ken Wilson a bumper testimonial. Within the next few weeks Ken's benefit year will draw to a close and the testimonial committee intends to finish with a flourish to ensure that the club's "A" team coach gets the sort of reward he so richly deserves after all his years at Watersheddings.

A recent pie and pea supper in the vice-presidents' lounge raised an estimated £50 for the fund and we still have a few testimonial ties for sale at £1.25 each. Only a limited number remain unsold.

Before Ken's big year draws to a close at the end of March there will be several functions to come. Two already booked are a big night out at the Broadway Club on Thursday, February 27 when the Black Abbots will top an all-star bill. Tickets, priced at 70p, are obtainable from members of the benefit committee.

On Sunday, March 9, the incomparable Bernard Manning will star at a lunchtime concert in our own social club, from 12-30 onwards. Donation is 50p. This happens to be the week-end of the third round of the Challenge Cup. Dare we say that we might be involved?

Turning to team matters, we want to take this opportunity of putting the record straight regarding two recent items about the club which appeared in the Sunday papers.

Contrary to last week-end's report, we were not approached by Dewsbury for Tony Wainwright in the week before the cup signing deadline. As you know, we were concerned with Widnes in talks about a possible transfer of Ian Holland and with St. Helens about the proposed move to Oldham of Mick Murphy.

The last we heard from Dewsbury, who were at one time interested in Tony and David Treasure, was many, many weeks ago.

The other item which caused some concern among club officials was the reference two weeks ago to the state of our ground. The report stated that all our remaining home "A" team games would be played on opponents' grounds.

This is just not true. It has never even been discussed in committee and it is something we would not consider.

The fact that we played our "home" reserve game at St. Helens on Friday was coincidental. We agreed to that only because of today's cup tie and the urgency with which it was felt necessary that our "A" team should have a game.

Their matches have been restricted in number in recent weeks, for one reason or another, and it was felt that it would be unwise to ask the players to have another week-end off—the only other possible answer to the problem of having two home games in one week-end.

But in no way does this affect the other home reserve team games from now to the season's end.

Incidentally, annual subscriptions for the vice-presidents' association are now due. Membership cards, priced at £6, can be obtained from the association chairman, Keith Broadbent, or the money can be sent to the club secretary Mr. Kevin Wilkinson, at the Watersheddings office.

Numbers are limited to 150 so if you haven't availed yourself previously of the vice-presidents' facilities please hurry to avoid disappointment.

During half-time today a collection will be taken for Doncaster centre George Pflaster, who broke his leg when the Dons played here last month.

He is married with two children, will be off work for a considerable time, and because the accident happened while he was playing professional sport he qualifies for no pay from his employers while he is absent.

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THE Challenge Cup signing deadline came and went without the usual flurry of activity. Apart from Bradford's signing of Mick Murphy, Eddie Cunningham's move from Wigan to St. Helens, and Peter Dunn's transfer from Bradford to Dewsbury there wasn't much in the way of last-minute excitement.

No doubt a shortage of money throughout the game was one of the principle reasons.

Ironically, Oldham might well have been involved in two deals before the deadline—the outgoing transfer of Ian Holland and the incoming one of Mick Murphy.

A number of people, particularly since last Sunday's 18-2 defeat of Swinton, have asked me why we showed any interest in Murphy in the first place.

In no way was our move for Murphy indicative of any dissatisfaction in the performance of the two props currently in possession of our 8 and 10 shirts—Keith Ashcroft and Brian Hughes.

That must be made very clear right from the start. Both players had excellent games last Sunday. Keith has been around in Rugby League for a long, long time and he knows what the game is all about. Brian, at 22, is a comparative youngster. He has his whole career in front of him and should do very well indeed.

No... we went for Murphy merely because I felt it was necessary—not just for the cup but also for our promotion push—to have more strength in depth. It is an old but in some respects a true saying that a side is only as good as its reserve strength.

We are not very strong in the prop-forward position, other than Keith Ashcroft and Brian Hughes, and I felt it was important that we got some cover so that, if it became necessary to find a replacement for one or the other of them, we would not find ourselves in the position of having to push second-row men up front to fill the gap.

While you can fill in like that for a short term it isn't advisable to think of it as a permanent answer and at the moment we don't have much in the way of props coming through the "A" team.

I thought the signing of Murphy would have been good for the side. He would have provided us with cover, strength and experience and that little bit of competition which is always a good thing.

In the end it wasn't to be. But the committee did their very best and the only thing that prevented us signing him was Bradford's intervention and the fact that Murphy, living temporarily in Leeds, found he had the chance of not only going to a First Division club but one considerably nearer to Leeds than Oldham.

I would also like to defend the club's actions in the Ian Holland affair. A lot has been written in the Press about the negotiations but, believe me, Oldham did their utmost to aid Widnes, to such an extent that they gave them permission to speak to Ian and permission for him to train there.

I am sorry he has decided to retire, but that wasn't Oldham's fault.

It is the sort of thing that sometimes happens in professional sport when a player is moving from one club to another and the talks break down.

Finally, may I congratulate the team on their sound show against Swinton. Under trying conditions we again proved we can be a hard team to beat.

We shall have to play similarly against Blackpool today. Borough, with no chance of promotion, will be banking all on pulling off a shock. Most people expect us to win. The pressure is on us. At all costs, we have to match their determination—and rely on our talents, both individually and collectively, to see us through.

Magic of the Cup

by DON YATES

THE most treasured ambition of any Rugby League player is to appear at Wembley in the final of the Challenge Cup — the game's most glamorous competition.

This week-end 32 clubs set out to seek fame and fortune and although only half a dozen or so can feel really confident of reaching Wembley the other potential giant killers will be out to write another chapter in the already overflowing book of cup memoirs.

The name of Wigan figures prominently in those pages, with a special mention of the great Jim Sullivan, who holds the record for goals kicked in a match with the 22 he landed in season 1924-25 at the expense of Flimby and Fothergill who were beaten 116-0 in the first round.

The record for number of points scored in a cup-tie falls to George "Tich" West who scored 10 goals and 11 tries, 53 points for Hull Kingston Rovers in the 73-5 defeat of Brookland Rovers in 1905.

Huddersfield recorded the biggest win of the competition in 1913-14 when they beat Swinton Park Rangers 119-2. The following season Huddersfield recorded the largest marginal victory in a final by beating St. Helens at Watersheddings by 37 points to 3.

The Challenge Cup competition also means bumper attendances with the biggest crowd to watch a Rugby League game anywhere being recorded in the replayed final of 1954. That match between Halifax and Warrington was staged at Odsal Stadium, Bradford, and was watched by an estimated crowd of around 110,000. The gates to the stadium were broken down so the exact number of people present will never be

known but the official attendance was 102,569. Playing for Warrington that evening was Oldham coach Jim Challenor, who scored a try in his side's 8-4 victory.

There have been many thrilling moments both in the final and the preliminary rounds with Oldham's fans recalling those three epic and controversial semi-final clashes with Hull K.R. in 1964 when after a 7-7 draw at Leeds the two sides tied again 14-14 before that match at Swinton was abandoned because of bad light and with Oldham leading 17-14 and well on top.

The third meeting at Huddersfield ended in a 12-2 defeat for Oldham. The match-winning feats at Wembley always capture the big headlines with supporters of St. Helens still recalling the length-of-the-field effort from Tom Van Vollenhoven in that sun-drenched epic against Wigan in 1961, and who will forget the story book victory of Leigh in 1970 when they defeated white hot favourites Leeds in the biggest Wembley upset since 1930.

In 1930 homespun Widnes pulled off an even more startling win against a star-studded St. Helens team who seemed destined never to win the cup until the 1950s when Alan Prescott's boys broke the ice.

By the middle of May another chapter in Challenge Cup history will have been written and another name added to the list of cup winners. The two clubs on show today will be giving of their best in the hope that they manage to travel a long way on that rocky road to Wembley and, maybe, have their names etched in Challenge Cup glory.



Who's under the melee? Who else? Our non-stop utility man Dickie Brown. An incident from our 18-2 win against Swinton last Sunday.

Picture by courtesy of the Evening Chronicle

The Cup for Clangers

by TOM BERGIN

Editor, Salford City Reporter and
Chairman Rugby League Writers'
Association

TODAY'S the day when fans' thoughts turn to Wembley, for at this stage of the Cup they are all hoping that their team will get to Wembley. It's a long, long trail with many pitfalls, but it's the uncertainty of the knock-out ties that brings the excitement.

Players, as well as spectators, are excited, and there will be many mistakes today by men who would normally not put a foot (or hand) wrong.

But spare a thought also, for the men who make the draw. You have probably sat at home and watched the draw being made. Easy, isn't it? But here, again, nervous excitement enters into it. Mr. Brian Snape, chairman of the League, and Mr. Harry Womersley, the vice-chairman, were no doubt a bit jittery as they made the draw for today's first round games. They're only human, after all, and when you are being watched on TV by millions of people even the simplest task becomes difficult.

All the chairman has to do is take a numbered ball out of a bag held by the vice-chairman, call out the number, and when the League secretary, David Oxley, has given the name of the club represented by the ball, put it on a stand. But simple as that may appear, some right clangers have been dropped over the years.

At one time the draw was made in alternate years in hotels in Leeds and Manchester but whilst the room was crowded it was a family affair and the occasional hitches were passed off with good humour. In those days the names were on slips of paper and the biggest slip-up came in 1924 when Salford were last out of the hat—with no opponents. A re-check showed that Hunslet's slip was attached to that of another club.

Not surprisingly they demanded a re-draw but it was decided that they should visit Salford and, happily for them, they won at the Willows.

In 1938 Castleford presented the League with a set of numbered balls in time for the 1939 competition. The tension was increased after the War when it became the practice to televise the draw and on one occasion the vice-chairman, who traditionally holds the bag, shook it so vigorously that some of the balls popped out on the floor and the draw had to be re-made.

Then the Rugby League secretary, Bill Fallowfield, had the bag enlarged and when the original balls became too chipped he approached Lord Pilkington, president of the St. Helens Club, whose firm presented a new set—after many experiments.

Three years ago there was another mix-up when there was only one team in the bag—Leeds—for the final pairing and then that of Leigh fell on the floor. The puzzle was, how long had the Leigh ball been out of the bag?

So when you next see the chairman and vice-chairman of the Rugby League appear unnaturally tense in face of the cameras and take extra time in deciding whether or not they have drawn ball No. 6 or ball No. 9 do not be impatient. They are not only carrying the bag, they are carrying the can as well.

This is the first in a series of regular articles to be used in our programme by members of the R.L. Writers' Association.

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FIXTURES 1974-75

Aug. 17—Rochdale (Law Cup) Home 27-15	Aug. 24—Blackpool Away 28-2
" 24—Blackpool Home 17-13	" 30—Widnes (7-30 p.m.) Away 13-10
Sept. 1—Widnes (3-15 p.m.) Home 9-14	Sept. 7—Blackpool Home
" 8—Blackpool Away	" 13—Salford (7-30 p.m.) Away
" 14—Huddersfield Home	Oct. 5—Rochdale Home
" 20—Hull K.R. (7-30 p.m.) Away	" 12—Wigan Away
" 28—Player's No. 6 (1st Rnd.)	" 19—St. Helens Away
Lancs. Cup, Rnd. 1 Home	" 26—Huyton Away
Oct. 6—N. Hunslet (3-30 p.m.) Away	Nov. 2—Swinton Home
" 12—Hull Home	" 8—Warrington (7-30 p.m.) Away
" 18—Whitehaven (7-00 p.m.) Away	" 23—Widnes Home
" 26—Huyton Home	" 30—
Nov. 3—Swinton Away	" 14—
" 9—Player's No. 6 (2nd Rnd.)	" 21—
" 16—Workington Home	" 26—
" 24—Doncaster (2-30 p.m.) Away	" 28—Huyton Home
" 30—Batley Home	Jan. 4—
Dec. 8—Workington (2-30 p.m.) Away	" 11—
" 14—Hull K.R. Home	" 18—Barrow Home
" 21—	" 25—Swinton Away
" 26—Huddersfield Away	Feb. 1—
" 29—Huyton (2-30 p.m.) Away	" 8—St. Helens Home
Jan. 4—New Hunslet Home	" 15—Leigh Home
" 11—Doncaster Home	" 22—Salford Home
" 17—Barrow (7-00 p.m.) Away	Mar. 1—
" 25—Swinton Home	" 8—
Feb. 1—	" 15—Leigh Away
" 8—Challenge Cup (1st Rnd.)	" 21—Rochdale (7-30 p.m.) Away
" 15—Leigh (3-45 p.m.) Away	" 29—
" 22—Challenge Cup (2nd Rnd.)	Apr. 5—Barrow Away
Mar. 1—Whitehaven Home	" 12—Warrington Home
" 8—	" 19—Wigan Home
" 15—Leigh Home	
" 23—Batley Away	
" 30—Hull Away	
Apr. 5—Barrow Home	
" 12—	
" 19—	

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