

Oldham

4

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M.
- 3 LARDER, P. *2 goals*
- 4 WAINWRIGHT, T.
- 5 BARTON, E.
- 6 TREASURE, D.
- 7 McCONE, M.
- 8 ASHCROFT, K. *B. Hughes*
- 9 TAYLOR, K.
- 10 McCracken, W.
- 11 HALL, F.
- 12 WELDING, R.
- 13 BROWN, R.
- 14 BLAIR, J.
- 15 REYNOLDS, J.

Referee:

G. F. Lindop (Wakefield)

Widnes

10

- 1 DUTTON, R. *3 goals*
 - 2 PRESCOTT, G.
 - 3 GEORGE, J.
 - 4 ASPEY, M.
 - 5 KARALIUS, A.
 - 6 O'NEILL, J.
 - 7 ASHTON, J. or BOWDEN, R.
 - 8 MILLS, J.
 - 9 ELWELL, K.
 - 10 SHERIDAN, B.
 - 11 FORAN, J. *M. Woods*
 - 12 WOODS, M. or ADAMS, M. *try*
 - 13 LAUGHTON, D.
 - 14 *J. Ashton*
 - 15 *J. Ashton drop goal*
- K. Ashall (Prescott) Orange
E. Glazebrook (Wigan) Red

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OLDHAM

v

WIDNES

10



Bobby Welding, our big, hard-working second-row forward, had a splendid game against Whitehaven. He is pictured here, tackled by Tom Gainford.

(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

WIDNES

was *Kevin Taylor*

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 ROCHDALE R. BROWN
v WHITEHAVEN R. WELDING

Sunday 9th MARCH
kick-off 3.30 pm 8p

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

WELL, here we are back in the third round of the Challenge Cup for the second time in three years. Today, we welcome Widnes to Watersheddings for what is invariably a high-class match between the two teams.

The Chemicals, who won the Lancashire Cup and reached the final of the Player's No. 6 Trophy, were last here early on in the season when they progressed to the second round of the county cup competition thanks only to a try by Eric Hughes, running off Brian Hogan, in the last few minutes.

If this afternoon's game is as good as that one, or indeed as good as several first-class encounters between Oldham and Widnes in the last few years, then the big crowd should be in for a treat.

* * *

SECONDARY POOL

WITH only a few matches left in the current season, our popular Timed Try competition must inevitably come to an end. Results of the weekly competition, of course, are based on the official times, as recorded by the match timekeepers, of tries and goals. Clearly, it's the sort of money-spinning competition that cannot continue once the season is over.

We are, therefore, pressing ahead with a new, secondary pool to augment our main Three 'N One competition. The Timed Try has proved a tremendous success which indicates a definite need for some form of ticket competition.

The feelings of agents seem to clearly show that a bingo-type pool would be the most popular. We have recently been visiting other clubs and studying their money-raising methods. After careful thought, incorporating the knowledge we have from our own efforts in the past and the tips we have picked up on our travels, we have produced a combination of pools that ensures another outstanding winner.

Having established that we can run a secondary pool successfully, and having established that there is a positive need for a good ticket in Oldham, we have decided on the following features:

- A ticket that contains bingo, lucky numbers, fruit symbols, and Green Shield stamps.
- Prize money of more than £200 a week with unclaimed money distributed through a special TV draw as and when it reaches sufficient value.

Further details will be available at a big Agents' Night to be held next Thursday, March 13th at 8-30 p.m. in the Vice-Presidents' Lounge.

This is going to be another big night for agents so please try and come along.

LEIGH MATCH

AS you will doubtless have read in the Press, the Leigh match at Watersheddings next weekend has been brought forward from Sunday to Saturday, with a 3 p.m. kick-off.

This was done at the request of the Rugby League, who wish to keep the Sunday free of League matches because of the England-France World Championship game at Headingley.

We had two alternatives... playing on the Saturday or rearranging the match for later in the season as a mid-week fixture.

We didn't want to take the latter course because, with important promotion-clinching matches coming up, an anticipated appearance in the end-of-season play-off, and our interest in the Challenge Cup, the last thing we wanted was a late-season fixture glut.

TRY SCORERS

Mike Elliott 18; Dave Treasure 10; Phil Larder 9; Tony Wainwright 9; Eddie Barton 7; Dickie Brown 7; Ian Holland 4; Kevin Taylor 3; Keith Ashcroft 2; Mick McCone 2; John Paterson 2; Bob Welding, John Blair, Brian Gregory, Roger O'Mahoney, Martin Murphy, Bill McCracken, John Farrell, Brian Hughes, Jimmy Reynolds one each.

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VERY early on in the season, in one of my first articles in the Oldham programme, I said that as far as promotion to Division One was concerned we shouldn't count our chickens . . .

I suppose that still applies, though after the two hard-earned and valuable promotion points we picked up last Sunday against Whitehaven, our main objective for the season—a place in the top four—now looks like becoming a reality.

The win against the Cumbrians was vital because they themselves were still in with an outside chance of going back to the top flight at the first attempt: had they won at Water-sheddings.

A glance at the placings now indicates that two more points from our final four games will be sufficient to push us up. We may finish in third position but, truthfully speaking, our target right from last August has been to gain PROMOTION rather than necessarily clinch the TITLE.

Inevitably, now that we are in this strong position, our thoughts must turn to next season . . . and whether we are going to be sufficiently strong to hold our own in Division One.

Little purpose is achieved in going up if you are going to come straight down again. Of the promoted teams last year, only Bradford Northern—the Second Division runaway champions—have really made much impact in Division One.

Halifax look doomed already to go straight back down, York have got a real fight on their hands to stay up, and even Keighley, after their magnificent start to the season, are now struggling to hold their own.

What a bitter disappointment it must be for a club, its management, coach, players and spectators, when it samples the joys of promotion one year and the disappointments of relegation only 12 months later!

SO WE HAVEN'T ONLY TO THINK ABOUT GOING UP—WE HAVE ALSO TO ENSURE THAT

OUR THINKING AND OUR PRE-PARATORY WORK IS GEARED TO STOPPING THERE.

To this end a lot of work is going on behind the scenes as we build up our resources on the playing side and plan for the future.

Junior signings are essential to make sure that new, young players are continually coming to the forefront. I believe the club committee and the scouts have done a good job in bringing to our notice a lot of promising youngsters.

Our latest signing was that of 18-year-old Stephen Herbert, a son of Norman Herbert, who used to play for Workington Town and Great Britain. We believe Stephen can go a long way in Rugby League. But he is, of course, only one of several young players we have gathered together in the "A" team.

Whether these boys come through next season to make their mark in the First Division remains to be seen. Suffice to say that we are moving, I think, in the right direction.

Unlike the Second Division there is no chance of a let-up in the main stream. Every match will be vital. Every match will be like a cup-tie: it is a cut-throat competition.

It isn't very long since Dewsbury won the League championship. Sadly, they are second from the bottom of the division now and look a sure bet for relegation. It is as tight as that.

The pressure will be on us in every match and that is why it is so vital that we have a good, strong panel of players.

One thing, I believe, is a certainty . . . we will be working just as hard, just as enthusiastically to hold our own in the top flight as we have been to do well in Division Two.

Sheer hard work by the players has put us where we are today. I have been delighted, as I'm sure you all have, at the graft and industry of the players. After all, you don't get anywhere in this life if you don't work hard.

OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

OLDHAM'S Challenge Cup opponents of this afternoon, Widnes, are enjoying one of their best ever seasons for apart from lying second in the First Division table, they are proud holders of the Lancashire Cup and were finalists in the John Player Trophy.

The Widnes league record stands at 14 wins and a draw from 20 matches with League double victories having been scored against Halifax (31-7 at home and 19-3 away), Bramley (21-7 home and 9-6 away), Keighley (8-0 home and 10-5 away) and Wakefield Trinity ((11-7 home and 12-8 away). Four of the five Widnes League defeats have been by a one point margin, but, in the other match, away to Leeds, Widnes crashed to a 31-3 defeat.

Not only will Oldham be out to reach the cup semi-final this afternoon, they will be hoping to gain revenge for that first round Lancashire Cup knock out by the eventual cup winners. What a thrilling finish to that match for the crowd of 2,959. Oldham had jumped into a 7-0 lead after 23 minutes and were well on top before suddenly running out of steam. After 60 minutes Widnes took the lead at 9-7 but three minutes from the end Johnny Blair kicked the equallising penalty to give what would have been a fair result. Tragically for Oldham, Widnes were not satisfied with a draw and in injury time loose-forward Bobbie Blackwood clinched victory with a try converted by Ray Dutton to give Widnes a 14-9 win.

In the quarter final Rochdale should have eliminated the Chemics for they

were the better side when the two clubs met at the Athletic Grounds, but Widnes held on for a 7-7 draw. In the replay Widnes lost Jim Mills sent off but this loss seemed to inspire the other players who combined to scrape through 8-7.

Widnes were drawn away again in the semi-final when they visited Leigh in what proved to be a hard-fought match with both defences generally on top. However, Mick Adams was able to capitalise on two defensive mix-ups in the otherwise very strong Leigh rear guard and that was enough to see the Chemics through by 8 points to 5.

Widnes were worthy winners of the final against Salford which was staged at Wigan for they were always in command. During the first half, Keith Elwell (twice) and John Stephens went close to scoring and it would have been no injustice if Widnes had led by 15 points at half-time. Salford, with Mike Coulman outstanding and winning the man-of-the-match award, could not match the Widnes team work but they defended well and came back late in the game. The closeness of the scores always gave Salford a chance to pull off victory but in the end the better side won although the 6-2 final scoreline flattered Salford a little.

No doubt Widnes will be determined to add the Challenge Cup to their earlier Lancashire Cup success but Oldham will be equally determined to atone for that Lancashire Cup exit and it all points to an exciting afternoon of cup-tie thrills.



It's anybody's ball! Martin Murphy, challenged by Spanky McFarlane, prepares to pounce on the ball during the Whitehaven game. On the ground is Dickie Brown.

Picture by courtesy of the Evening Chronicle

LES

The Man behind Wales

By: Derek Gledhill, Yorkshire Post

IF enthusiasm was as infectious as it has always been reputed to be, Halifax would have no difficulty in escaping relegation, the Welsh would become World Champions and attendances at Rugby League matches would be climbing.

Listening to Les Pearce talking Rugby League for half an hour makes it hard to believe that after parting company with Leigh, he decided to call it a day so far as coaching was concerned.

True, he eagerly accepted an invitation to take charge of the Other Nationalities' side in the county Championships. It was an honour, but he regarded it as a "one off" job.

Then one night came a knock at his door, which he opened to find two Halifax directors waiting to inquire whether he would go back to Thrum Hall as coach. "No," said Les. He had retired from the game. "Definitely," he added.

"Well, help up out for just one match then, to give us time to find someone permanent," they said. "Crafty beggars," says Les. "They knew I'd not be able to resist the challenge once I started."

Sure enough, his short-lived retirement was over and his two "come-backs" have proved the stepping stones to Pearce's appointment as coach to the Welsh team, a job he is tackling with

all the fervour one would expect from a man who learned his rugby in Swansea.

Halifax found Pearce, now 48 playing Rugby Union for Swansea in 1949 and the idea of showing in his home town that Welshmen do not lose their rugby skills when they switch to League was almost as big a thrill as the thought of a trip to Australia.

He missed that honour as a player, when the competition was perhaps fiercer than today — Halifax alone had a pack of international quality.

Pearce's tactical know-how should stand Wales in good stead. All three clubs he has coached — Dewsbury, Halifax and Leigh — reached Challenge Cup semi-finals under his tuition; in addition Halifax were first winners of the Player's Trophy and Leigh won the BBC 2 Floodlit Competition.

He is confident that the Welsh side will give a good account of itself in Australia.

"We've got power in the forwards and speed in the backs. Win or lose the others will know they've had a game," he says.

Pearce is counting on traditional native pride giving his side the edge. 'Putting a Welsh lad into a Welsh jersey is like giving him an injection. It make a moderate player good and a good player great,' he says.

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FIXTURES 1974-75

Aug. 17—Rochdale (Law Cup)	Home	27-15
" 24—Blackpool	Home	17-13
Sept. 1—Widnes (3-15 p.m.)	Home	9-14
" 8—Blackpool	Away	13-5
" 14—Huddersfield	Home	11-15
" 20—Hull K.R. (7-30 p.m.)	Away	8-17
Oct. 6—N. Hunslet (3-30 p.m.)	Away	24-7
" 12—Hull	Home	10-5
" 18—Whitehaven (7-00 p.m.)	Away	10-2
" 26—Huyton	Home	18-7
Nov. 3—Swinton	Away	7-15
" 16—Workington	Home	7-11
" 24—Doncaster (2-30 p.m.)	Away	18-3
" 30—Batley	Home	17-2
Dec. 8—Workington (2-30 p.m.)	Away	20-7
" 14—Hull K.R.	Home	15-6
" 26—Huddersfield	Away	11-12
" 29—Huyton (2-30 p.m.)	Away	22-12
Jan. 4—New Hunslet	Home	23-2
" 11—Doncaster	Home	23-3
" 17—Barrow (7-00 p.m.)	Away	0-10
" 25—Swinton	Home	18-2
" 15—Leigh (3-45 p.m.)	Away	18-4
Mar. 1—Whitehaven	Home	17-1
" 8—		
" 15—Leigh	Home	
" 23—Batley	Away	
" 30—Hull	Away	
Apr. 5—Barrow	Home	
" 12—		
" 19—		

Aug. 24—Blackpool	Away	28-2
" 30—Widnes (7-30 p.m.)	Away	13-10
Sept. 7—Blackpool	Home	
" 13—Salford (7-30 p.m.)	Away	
Oct. 5—Rochdale	Home	
" 12—Wigan	Away	
" 19—St. Helens	Away	
" 26—Huyton	Home	
Nov. 2—Swinton	Away	
" 8—Warrington (7-30 p.m.)	Away	
" 23—Widnes	Home	
" 30—		
" 14—		
" 21—		
" 26—		
" 28—Huyton	Home	
Jan. 4—		
" 11—		
" 18—Barrow	Home	
" 25—Swinton	Away	
Feb. 1—		
" 8—St. Helens	Home	
" 15—Leigh	Home	
" 22—Salford	Home	
Mar. 1—		
" 8—		
" 15—Leigh	Away	
" 21—Rochdale (7-30 p.m.)	Away	
" 29—		
Apr. 5—Barrow	Away	
" 12—Warrington	Home	
" 19—Wigan	Home	

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