

Oldham

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M.
- 3 LARDER, P.
- 4 WAINWRIGHT, A.
- 5 LUND, S.
- 6 TREASURE, D.
- 7 HAMMOND, J.
- 8 HICKS, R.
- 9 TAYLOR K.
- 10 WELDING, R.
- 11 HALL, F.
- 12 HERBERT S.
- 13 BROWN, R.
- 14 BLAIR, J.
- 15 FLANAGHAN, K.

Referee:

D. G. Kershaw (York)

St Helens

- 1 PIMBLETT, G.
or GWILLIAM, K.
- 2 JONES, L.
- 3 BENNION, W.
- 4 WILSON, F.
- 5 MATHIAS, R.
- 6 ECKERSLEY, D.
- 7 HEATON, J.
- 8 CHARLES, C.
- 9 LIPTROTT, G.
- 10 JAMES, M.
- 11 NICHOLLS, G.
- 12 CHISNALL, E.
- 13 COSLETT, K.
- 14 HULL, D.
- 15 CUNNINGHAM, E.

D. Bowes (Swinton)

Red

B. Baker (Wigan)

Orange

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

St. HELENS

was

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 Oldhams 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 KEIGHLEY

D. TREASURE

TODAY'S MATCH BALL

presented by

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OLDHAM

v

ST HELENS



An all-action picture of our young second-row forward Stephen Herbert, taken during Oldham's 13-12 home win against Keighley last Sunday.

(Picture by courtesy of the Evening Chronicle.)

Sunday 31st AUGUST

kick-off 3.30 pm

8p

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

WE'RE back on the cup trail today—and how! The visit of St. Helens to Watersheddings in the first round of the Lancashire Cup pairs us with a team that has epitomised consistency in the years since the war.

We have vivid memories of the hiding they gave us in the last match of last season—the premiership play-off at Knowsley Road—so there will be plenty of incentive for our players to try and even up the score now that they are back on our own pitch.

We are hoping, naturally, for a very good crowd for this attractive fixture—and a result that would pair us with the winners of the match between Swinton and Barrow in round two.

The winners of the Saints-Oldham clash will have to travel for the second-round tie but, whoever wins today, have a very good chance indeed of progressing to the semi-finals.

You will all be pleased to know that the operation on Johnnie Farrell in the neuro-surgical unit at Crumpsall Hospital, Manchester, was a huge success.

The doctors are hoping that John will be on his feet again within two weeks.

Congratulations go to our "A" team centre Stuart Bottom and Christine Bowden, elder daughter of our club official, Jack Bowden, who were married recently at Oldham Parish Church.

Jack, incidentally, has been elevated to the position of President of the Lancashire County Rugby League and, here again, congratulations are in order.

We trust you were suitably impressed with the state of the ground and its environs when the new season began last Sunday.

A lot of people have put in a lot of time to ensure that we were looking "spick and span" for the start.

To all of them go our thanks but, perhaps especially because they

travelled some distance to help us, they go to the boys and staff of Dobroyd School, Todmorden, who did a great job—and a quick one—in painting the boundary walls and much of the stands.

We trust you enjoyed our little "guess who?" feature in last week's programme. It proved a popular innovation and club secretary Kevin Wilkinson actually received ten entries in his office BEFORE the match began.

Funnily enough, of the ten, not one supporter correctly identified the players in total. The player who caught out most supporters was the one bending down with his back to the camera. Many fans opted for Phil Larder. It was, in fact, Stephen Herbert.

Still, it was an enjoyable bit of fun and we hope to keep you similarly entertained in future weeks this season.

It should, in fact, be a very interesting season from the spectator-participation point of view.

As you will all know by now it is our centenary season and we are hoping to put on many special efforts by way of celebrating our 100th birthday.

There is to be the publication of a special centenary brochure—hopefully early in the New Year—and all those who take advantage of the £5 club membership will have their names published in it.

There are plans, too, to organise one or two members' nights, similar to those we have already had for the pools agents, and we might even have tailored a special members' tie for the centenary year.

These are hard times in Rugby League... but we intend to do everything possible to make our 100th birthday a year to remember.

We can do it, of course, only with the support and participation of those people upon whom we have come to rely... and that, we hope, means YOU.

Coals to Newcastle?

By G. F. Potts
Editor, Pontefract and Castleford
Express

THIS latest news which links Featherstone Rovers with redundant Salford scrum-half Peter Banner could quite well be read as a case of taking coals to Newcastle.

After all, in post war years Post Office Road has established itself as a breeding ground for some of the best half-backs in Britain—and there are no signs that the stream is about to run dry.

With Steve Nash transferred to Salford for a Featherstone club record of £15,000, supporters began to look around for a successor. In fact, there was a ready-made one in Phil Butler.

Unfortunately, on the first day of the new campaign Phil got a bad shoulder injury. Tragedy for some clubs, not for Featherstone. For another young No. 7, Dale Fennell, was available and — in a pre-season practice match at Castleford — had already proved he had the ability.

Dale is a son of a former Rovers' full-back, Jackie Fennell — and there could be no better stable than that.

Looking back over the years at Featherstone, it is difficult to assess the various talents of half-backs who have worn the famous striped jersey. Does the £15,000 tag make Nash the best of the lot?

That would be like asking whether Larwood was faster than Lillee or if Stanley Matthews was a better forward than Pele.

But indisputable is the fact that Featherstone have bred some of the finest half-backs in post war rugby. In that time, in fact, transfers have earned the club a cool £50,000.

The surplus-to-requirements theme began in 1954/55 when the success story of the Fox-Mullaney partnership was beginning to blossom. It freed Ray Evans for Rochdale Hornets for a £1,500 fee—the then second highest for Post Office Road.

The following season it was Tommy Smales' turn to leave. He went to Huddersfield for £1,000, and three seasons later Alan Marchant moved to Halifax for £5,000 while Colin Clift joined Rovers for £4,000.

The first notable stand-off on the move was Ivor Lingard who went to play in Australia for Paramatta in 1963 at a fee of £4,000.

In 1965 Don Fox went to Wakefield for £3,000; three years later Carl Dooler joined Hull K.R. for £6,500 and in 1971 the same club paid Rovers £7,500 for the services of Terry Hudson. Only last season, Leeds signed Mel Mason for £6,000.

If pressed for priority, my vote would go to Fox. Others tackled better, had more fluency and speed; but none had greater flair to add to physical strength. And, of course, he could kick the odd goal or two ...

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Our hooker Kevin Taylor (above) had the critics raving over his performance against Keighley.

Jack McNamara (Manchester Evening News) said: "He sniffs out openings like a hound hunting truffles."

Roger Halstead (Evening Chronicle, Oldham) said: "He was the one home forward still breaking tackles and making ground in the closing stages."

Picture by courtesy of Oldham Chronicle.

RESULT OF NAME THE PLAYERS

First correct entry received: Warren Taylor, 28 Heywood Fold Road, Springhead, Oldham, who received two free tickets for today's match.

- 1 RAY HICKS
- 2 JOHNNY BLAIR
- 3 MIKE ELLIOTT
- 4 STEVE HERBERT

- 5 IAN HOLLAND
- 6 MARTIN MURPHY
- 7 STEVE LUND
- 8 TONY WAINWRIGHT

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

GERRY KERSHAW. Born 24-10-1943. Height: 5ft. 8½ins. Weight: 11½ stones. Hobbies: Skiing, Walking Brass Band Music. Occupation: Schoolmaster with responsibility for Youth Centre and outdoor pursuits. Married—no children.

Passed Referees' Exam. at 18, promoted to Grade 2 at approximately 23 years of age and upgraded to Grade 1 after one season. He is Secretary of the R.L. Senior Referees' Association. Honours include Player's No. 6 Final 1973/74 and the Floodlit Final in the same season.

TRAVEL AS THE TEAM DOES

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OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

Oldham could not wish for more attractive visitors to Watersheddings for today's Lancashire Cup-tie than the present First Division Champions Saint Helens, a remarkably consistent team who have only ended the season outside the top four once since season 1957-58.

On the last occasion that these two clubs met, in the Premiership play-off last April, Saints rubbed in their obvious superiority by handing out a 42-5 thrashing to Oldham. But Oldham's supporters will be quick to point out that one has to go back to season 1971-72 for Saints' last victory here at Watersheddings. That season Saints reeled off a hat-trick of victories over Oldham for as well as two resounding league wins (28-0 here and 50-2 at Knowsley Road) they won a thrilling first round Challenge Cup-tie by 8-6 on a frost bound Oldham pitch. Since then Saints have twice visited Watersheddings, both times in league warfare. In season 1972-73 the sides drew 12-12 and the following year Oldham won 12-11 so it looks as if another close finish is to be witnessed this afternoon.

Oldham have met Saint Helens several times in the Lancashire Cup competition, the first time being way back in season 1906-07 when Oldham won 17-14 here at Watersheddings in the opening round. The two sides have met three times in the final of the competition and it was at this stage when they last met each other in this tournament. That was seven years ago when the final was last staged on a Friday evening. A crowd of 17,008 were attracted to Wigan's Central Park ground to watch that historic match. En route to the final Oldham had beaten Rochdale Hornets (away) 17-5, Workington Town (home) 7-5 and Salford (away) 12-9 whilst Saints' path to the final was via Wigan (home) 19-16, Widnes (away) 20-17 and Leigh (away) 17-6. Although Saints were favourites to lift the trophy a close fought encounter was envisaged between the two clubs who lined up as follows:

Oldham: Martin Murphy; Mike Elliott, Phil Larder, Jim McCormack, Derek Whitehead; Wilf Briggs, Tommy Canning; Ken Wilson, Kevin Taylor, Geoff Fletcher (captain), Bob Irving, Charlie McCourt and Arthur Hughes. Substitutes: Trevor Buckley and Denis Maders.

Saint Helens: Austin Rhodes; Frank Wilson, Bill Benyon, Frank Myler, Ken Williams; Alan Whittle, Tommy Bishop (captain); John Warlow, Bill Sayer, Cliff Watson, Graham Rees, Eric Chisnall and Kel Coslett. Substitutes: John Houghton and Brian Hogan.

The first half produced a tremendous battle between the packs with Saints possibly just on top although it was Oldham who led at the interval with a penalty goal kicked by Wilf Briggs. More significant was an injury to Oldham skipper Geoff Fletcher which led to his substitution by Denis Maders during half-time. In the second half the heavier and more experienced Saints forwards made their presence felt in no uncertain manner and once they had nosed in front the Oldham defence crumbled to allow Saints to pull off the biggest win in a final in the history of this 70-years old competition. The final margin was a crushing 30 points to two scoreline which was made up from 6 goals by Kel Coslett and tries from Frank Wilson, who scored two, Ken Williams, Tommy Bishop, Graham Rees and Eric Chisnall.

Oldham have not won a Lancashire Cup-tie since that date and have lost in the opening round to Swinton twice, Salford twice, Wigan and Widnes and will admit that they are not the favourites to win this afternoon. But cup results are not always true to form and Oldham proved last season that they are quite a handful at home in cup football. It all points to a rousing match which could see Oldham mapping out a trip to either Barrow or Swinton in the quarter-final a fortnight hence.

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Chat with Challinor

RUGBY LEAGUE football, as I said last week, has never been afraid of change. It is also very conscious indeed of the fact that innovations and alterations can bring problems that were perhaps never foreseen by the advocates of something new.

Perhaps it was that in-born cautiousness that led the Senior Referees' Association to welcome the new method of treatment while play proceeds — but to add the rider that trainers and physiotherapists ONLY should be allowed on to the field of play to attend to players requiring treatment.

The inference is obvious ... the referees were apparently concerned that some coaches might use the new system, which gives touchline personnel carte blanche to cross the touchline whenever a player looks groggy or worse for wear, to nip into the middle and discuss tactics.

On the face of it their recommendation was a wise one. But is it?

Let's examine the facts behind the controversy here at Watersheddings last Sunday when I was called upon to act as sponge man because both our regular physiotherapists, Dennis Wright and Brian Churm were away on holiday.

Rugby League is only a part-time profession. Everyone connected with it has a full-time occupation as well and very often, particularly at this time of the season, those connected with a club take their holidays, not because they particularly wish to but because it suits the demands of their full-time employers.

The same sometimes applies with players—one reason why it would be difficult to play R.L. in the summer.

But back to the point. For very genuine reasons, and because of exceptional circumstances, we were unable to put a physiotherapist in the field last Sunday.

I pointed this out to the referee, Ronnie Jackson, before the start. I admit it put him in a spot but he accepted that SOMEBODY had to attend to our players so he reluctantly agreed.

I gather he later told the Press he would have to inform the Rugby League of the facts for clarification of the position should it arise at some other game in the future.

The next thing I knew, early in the first half, the Keighley chairman, Mr. Ken Riley, approached me in the dug-

out and said I had no right to go on to the field.

I assured him that the referee was aware of what I was doing, that I had no alternative, and that I would not be doing any verbal coaching while I was out there.

It all set me thinking about whether it is really practicable to insist on the "no coaches" rule.

To start with there are some clubs where the coach actually goes on to the field to attend his players as a matter of course—and has done for years.

I understand, for instance, that this is the case at Barrow where Frank Foster, the coach, is also the sponge man.

That could be done away with by INSISTING that Barrow, or any other club similarly placed, finds another man to trot into the middle.

But what is all this really gaining? Is it stopping coaches passing on hints? I doubt it. It would be interesting to know how many times, in seasons past, a trainer has run on to attend to an injured player and at the same time imparted a little bit of the coach's wisdom to another player for general circulation around the team.

In the middle of a match, half-time apart, a coach cannot go into a long detailed explanation of what he wants his team to do.

The best he can do is to issue a snap command. You know the sort of thing ... "Play on that full-back", "Use the wind", "Tighten up on defence", etc.

And, surely, it doesn't need the coach to run into the middle to say that. The trainer can do it equally well on his behalf.

I am not saying it is right and proper. I am merely saying that the "no coaches" rule will not prevent it happening.

I even heard a story last season of one well-known coach who, wanting to get more effort from his team, clanged a huge hand-bell! It was a pre-arranged signal to his team to work harder!

Seriously, while I can see the reasoning behind the bar on coaches, I don't really think it will achieve anything ... except to cause more headaches for clubs who find themselves without a physio on one particular day or employ elderly physiotherapists who normally leave the field work to the younger man.

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Assistant Groundsman: A. WOOLEY

FIXTURES 1975-76

1975

Aug. 10—Rochdale (Law Cup)	A
17—Warrington	A
24—Keighley	H
31—St. Helens (Lancs. Cup)	H
Sept. 7—Featherstone	A
14—Lancashire Cup—round 2	H
21—Wigan	H
28—Players' No. 6	A
Oct. 5—Keighley	A
12—Huddersfield	H
18—Leeds	A
26—Wakefield	A
Nov. 2—Dewsbury	H
9—Players' No. 6—round 2	H
16—Salford	H
22—Huddersfield	A
30—Leeds	H
Dec. 14—St. Helens	H
21—Bradford	A
26—Swinton	H
Jan. 1—Salford	A
4—Castleford	A
11—Hull K.R.	H
18—Dewsbury	A
25—Widnes	H
Feb. 8—St. Helens	A
15—Challenge Cup (1)	A
21—Wigan	A
29—Challenge Cup (2)	H
Mar. 7—Wakefield	H
12—Castleford	A
21—Widnes	A
28—Featherstone	H
Apr. 7—Warrington	H
11—Bradford	H
16—Hull K.R.	A
19—Swinton	A

F. A. 1975

29- 2 Aug. 30—Swinton (Lancs. Shield)...	A
—Sept. 6—Swinton (Lancs. Shield) ...	H
13-12 20—Wigan	A
Oct. 4—Swinton	H
18—Warrington	H
25—Leigh	H
Nov. 14—Salford	A
29—Rochdale	A
Dec. 6—Salford	H
13—St. Helens	A
20—Huyton	H
27—Barrow	H
1976	
Jan. 10—Swinton	A
23—Widnes	A
31—Rochdale	H
Feb. 7—St. Helens	H
21—Wigan	H
Mar. 5—Warrington	A
13—Leigh	H
20—Widnes	H
27—Barrow	A
Apr. 3—Huyton	A

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