

Line up

Oldham

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M.
- 3 LARDER, P.
- 4 BOTTOM, S.
- 5 O'BRIEN, C.
- 6 BLAIR, J.
- 7 McCONE, M.
- 8 RAMSHAW, T.
- 9 TAYLOR, K.
- 10 WELDING, R.
- 11 KEAR B.
- 12 HALL, F.
- 13 PETERS A.
- 14 PATTERSON, J.
- 15 BROWN, R.

Referee:

H. G. HUNT (Prestbury)

Australia

- 1 EADIE, G.
- 2 RHODES, J.
- 3 ROGERS, S.
- 4 BRASS, J.
- 5 McMAHON, A.
- 6 RAUDORIKIS, T.
- 7 MAYES, J.
- 8 VIEVERS, G.
- 9 LANG, J.
- 10 MACKAY, I.
- 11 PLATZ, L.
- 12 FITZGERALD, D.
- 13 PORTER, J.
- 14 CRONIN, M.
- 15 HIGGS, R.

E. Glazebrook (Wigan)

Red

T. A. Rynn (Wigan)

Orange

MAN IN THE MIDDLE

HARRY G. HUNT. Height: 6ft.;
Weight: 13 st. Hobbies: Tennis, Golf
and Committee Work. Occupation:
European Sales Manager. Married with

one daughter. Promoted to Grade 2 in
1961 and to Grade 1 in 1963. Honours
include Challenge Cup Final in 1966,
Championship Final in 1972 and an
International in 1975.

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A Welcome on the Mat

(by ARTHUR WALKER, Chairman, Oldham R.L.F.C.)

TONIGHT sees the appearance at Watersheddings of our old friends from 12,000 miles away on the other side of the globe—the Australians.

In giving them a good, old fashioned Lancashire welcome on behalf of everyone at Oldham I would like to extend to the team's managers, coach Graeme Langlands, and the players our thanks for their willingness to participate in our centenary celebrations.

One hundred years of rugby football here in Oldham really is something to celebrate.

And we do not intend to let the 100th birthday pass by without making it a year to remember.

Tonight's game will be the first of several centenary events in the next 12 months. Who better than the Australians, world-championship winners, to kick-off for us in grand style?

It would be remiss of me, at this point, not to congratulate the Kangaroos on their world series success—and perhaps issue a friendly warning that England will be out for revenge when the next series comes around!

We are indeed privileged to have at Watersheddings the world's best players on view and I know I speak for you all when I wish them a safe journey home after their game against the Rest of the World in France and the continued success of their game back home.

What's more, I hope they will long remember their short stay in Oldham and may it not be too long before they are back here again, producing all that is best in Rugby League football from Down Under.

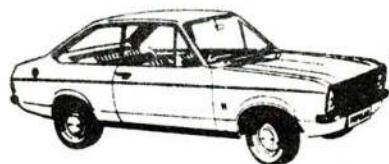
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OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

TONIGHT Oldham face the might of Australia in a prestige fixture which for many will be the highlight of the Watersheddings season.

The Oldham rugby public are fortunate inasmuch as all 13 Australian trips to Britain for major tours have included a visit to Watersheddings and this evening's match is the 16th meeting between Oldham and Australia. The previous 15 matches have resulted in 10 Australian victories and one draw leaving Oldham with four wins. Australia's first visit to Oldham came during the 1908-09 tour when Oldham won 11-5 and four years later Oldham repeated that success by beating the 1911 tourists 14-8. Those tourists must have been quite impressed by what they saw at Watersheddings for the two famous brothers, Billy and Viv Farnsworth, returned to England to play for the Oldham club. That 1911-12 side was the first Australian side to win the Ashes in England so Oldham's victory must have been quite meritable. Billy Farnsworth was never on the losing side in his 13 tour appearances whilst Billy was high in the Australian scoring charts with 19 tries from 29 matches.

The 1921-22 tourists became the first Kangaroo side to beat Oldham when they won 16-5 but later in the tour they returned to Watersheddings and played Oldham again and on that occasion Oldham won 15-5. The tourists of season 1933-34 also made two visits to Watersheddings but the Roughyeds were not so impressive during that season and Australia triumphed by 38-6 in the first match and then by 38-5 at the second attempt.

The biggest crowd to watch an Oldham-Australia confrontation was attracted to the game during the 1952-53 tour when the match ended in an exciting 7-7 draw. The attendance then was 19,620 which is more than the last three Oldham-Australia matches have attracted put together!

Oldham's last victory over Australia came during the championship winning campaign of 1956-57 and it was also Oldham's biggest win for Australia were swamped in that match to the tune of 21 points to 2.

The most controversial visit to Oldham by an Australian team must have been that torrid meeting in 1959

when fighting erupted early in the game and continued in spasms throughout. Frank Pitchford (Oldham) and Barry Muir (Australia) were sent off in that match but in between the bouts there was also some fine football. Reg Gasnier played brilliantly to score three superb tries whilst for Oldham, Alan Davies crossed for two tries and there was some excellent goal kicking from Brian Carlson.

The last Australian team to visit Watersheddings were the 1973 tourists who gave their test pack a run out against Oldham. These forwards were most impressive and completely overran their opponents to lay the foundations for an easy victory. The strong running of Bob O'Reilly, Ken Maddison and Bob McCarthy shattered Oldham and by half-time the Kangaroos led 18-2. Poor Bill McCracken, who was making his debut for Oldham, must have wondered what hit him as Australia swept to their biggest ever victory over Oldham. The ten Australian tries were scored by Geoff Starling (4), Ken Maddison (2), Ted Goodwin, Bob McCarthy, Paul Sait and Mick Cronin who also landed six goals. Graeme Langlands kicked the other Australian goal. Oldham scored tries through Peter Astbury and John Blair whilst Terry Clawson kicked two goals. The sides lined up as follows:

Oldham: Martin Murphy; Geoff Munro, Mike Elliott, Tony Wainwright, Chris O'Brien; Bob Gaitley, Peter Astbury; Terry Clawson, Kevin Taylor, Ken Wilson, Bill McCracken, Fred Hall and Jim Reynolds. Substitutes: Johnny Blair and Arthur Daly.

Australia: Graeme Langlands; Ray Branighan, Geoff Starling, Mick Cronin, Ted Goodwin; Tim Pickup, Denis Ward; Arthur Beetson, Elwyn Walters, Bob O'Reilly, Ken Maddison, Bob McCarthy and Paul Sait. Substitutes: Graham Eadie and Greg Pierce.

Oldham can expect a similar exhilarating show from these current Australian stars who always provide plenty of fireworks to entertain the fans. It may be asking too much to hope for an Oldham victory but the Oldham lads will be determined to give a good account of themselves and send the Australians home with good reports of their visit to Watersheddings.

PEN PICTURES — AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS

MANAGER — MR. BOB ABBOTT

Bob Abbott, co-Manager of the Australian touring party, is regarded as one of the most progressive officials in the game. A member of the Executive of the New South Wales Rugby League, he represents Cronulla Sutherland with whom he is Deputy Chairman. He is also Chairman of the Promotions Committee which has been largely responsible for a Sydney crowd increase of 250,000 in the just concluded season.

ASSISTANT MANAGER — MR. JACK CAIRNS

Jack Cairns, the Australians Business Manager, is a long serving senior official from Queensland. Mr. Cairns is Deputy Chairman of Toowoomba and Vice-President of the Queensland Rugby League. He has spent 26 years in Rugby League administration and has managed several Queensland touring teams.

PHYSIOTHERAPIST — MR. ALF RICHARDS

Alf Richards is a veteran of the English Rugby League scene on his fifth visit to this country. He was trainer with two Kangaroo sides and three Australian World Cup teams. In all, Mr. Richards has participated in 70 internationals and is regarded as the world's best in his profession. He has been associated with Australian teams since 1956 and currently works with Sydney champion club, Eastern Suburbs.

PEN PICTURES — AUSTRALIAN PLAYERS

GRAHAM EADIE (Manly-Warringah). Age 21. 5ft. 10ins. 14st. 7lbs. Joined Manly-Warringah from Woy Woy in 1971. Toured with 1973 Kangaroos. Manly's goalkicker and leading points scorer for 1975.

JOHN RHODES (Wynnum-Manly, Brisbane). Age 28. 5ft. 10ins. 11st. 7lbs. Rhodes has made a brilliant comeback to international football this season after sound showings for Queensland against N.S.W. His speed and agility won him selection for Australia in 1968 as a winger while he was with Canterbury-Bankstown Club, N.S.W.

JOHN BRASS (Eastern Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 29. 5ft. 9ins. 13st. Brilliant centre, playing one of his best seasons this year. Has played more than 100 first grade matches with Easts. Rugby Union international who joined Easts in 1968. Represented for Australia against Great Britain in the 1970 Series.

MICHAEL CRONIN (Gerrington, N.S.W.). Age 23. 5ft. 11ins. 14st. 3lbs. Cronin is currently being sought by nearly every Sydney club, but continues to refuse their offers. Starred on the 1973 Kangaroo tour and against the touring Englishmen last year. A classy centre and accurate goalkicker. Very prominent again throughout Phase 1 of the World Championship.

IAN SCHUBERT (Eastern Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 19. 5ft. 11ins. 12st. 4lbs. One of the finds of 1975. Last year was a schoolboy in Armidale. Played wing for City Firsts in his first year in Sydney. Representing Australia for the first time.

JOHN PEARD (Eastern Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 29. 5ft. 8ins. 12st. East's local player who played Presidents Cup in 1965. Has played all his career with Eastern Suburbs apart from two seasons (1972 and 1973) with St. George. Representing Australia for the first time.

JOHN MAYES (Eastern Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 26. 5ft. 6ins. 11st. Eastern Suburbs junior who had one year with Manly-Warringah in 1973. Member of Eastern Suburbs grand final side in 1974 and 1975. Headed try-scoring list in 1973 and again in 1975. Representing Australia for the first time.

TOM RAUDONIKIS (Western Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 25. 5ft. 7ins. 11st. 7lbs. First represented Australia in 1971 and barring injury has been a first choice selection ever since. Tireless defender and attacker.

JOHN QUAYLE (Parramatta, N.S.W.). Age 27. 5ft. 11ins. 13st. 6lbs. First joined Eastern Suburbs from Manilla, N.S.W. Transferred to Parramatta Club in 1973. Has represented for Sydney against Country and also for N.S.W. against Queensland. Representing Australia for the first time.

LEW PLATZ (Wynnum-Manly, Brisbane). Age 22. 6ft. 14st. 10lbs. Top all-round performances for Queensland against N.S.W. this season won him a place in Australia's international teams this year. A tigerish defender and a handy second-rower in attack.

ARTHUR BEETSON (Eastern Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 30. 6ft. 2ins. 16st. 8lbs. World's best prop. Had another outstanding international series for Australia this year. He is captain of Eastern Suburbs, and he has been playing for Australia since 1966. He came from Redcliffe, Brisbane, to join Balmain in the early sixties. Joined Eastern Suburbs in 1971.

IAN MACKAY (Eastern Suburbs, N.S.W.). Age 22. 5ft. 11ins. 15st. Extremely promising young prop. Fast and strong. Is a product of Eastern Suburbs Junior League. Representing Australia for the first time.

TERRY RANDALL (Manly-Warringah, N.S.W.). Age 24. 6ft. 1in. 15st. Started his career as a centre with Manly, but his great defensive record saw him switch to the forwards two seasons ago as a second-rower. Switched to prop this season and has been an instant success in his new position in international matches.

JIM PORTER (Parramatta, N.S.W.). Age 26. 5ft. 9ins. 13st. 6lbs. Outstanding winger, very versatile, can also play fullback, centre and lock. Representing Australia for the first time.

DENIS FITZGERALD (Parramatta, N.S.W.). Age 25. 6ft. 2ins. 14st. 8lbs. Utility forward. Denis, a tall rangy non-stop worker, was selected as a prop but can play second-row and lock. A good runner, he boasts more than 110 first grade games with Parramatta since 1969. Played for N.S.W. in 1971 and last year represented Sydney against Country in their annual clash.

GREG PIERCE (Cronulla Sutherland). Age 25. 6ft. 13st. 7lbs. Greg is on his second visit to England, having toured with the 1973 Kangaroos. He has played for Sydney, N.S.W. and Australia. A devastating defender, he is also dangerous in attack and backs up the ball carrier, looking for chances to score.

GEORGE PIGGINS (South Sydney). Age 29. 5ft. 8ins. 13st. 4lbs. George, one of the hardest men in the game, is regarded as the toughest to beat for the ball in the powerful Sydney competition. He is a veteran of more than 200 matches and 12 seasons with the famous South Sydney Club. Played for N.S.W. in 1974 and represented Sydney in 1974/75. A prolific winner of possession for his team by lightning fast strikes in playing of the ball.

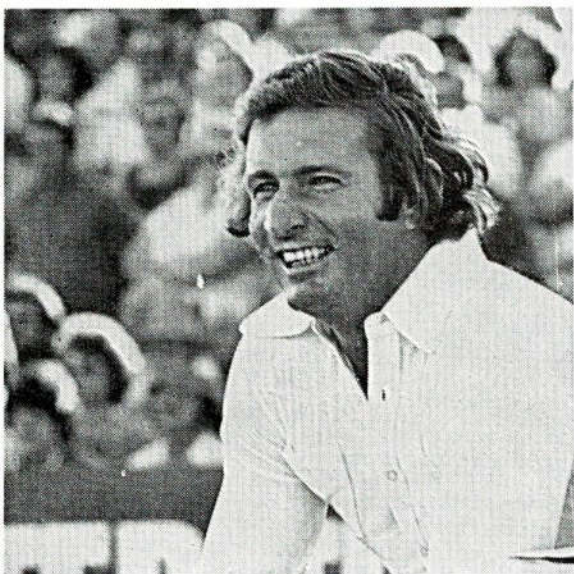
GREG VEIVERS (Brisbane Souths). Age 25. 6ft. 15st. 7lbs. Greg is a member of a famous Australian sporting family. His cousin, Mick, played Rugby League Tests for Australia; another cousin, Tom, toured England with a cricket team. Greg forced his way into this Australian team after representing Queensland as a second-rower and prop since 1970.

JOHN LANG (Brisbane Easts). Age 24. 5ft. 8ins. 12st. 7lbs. John, since touring England and France with the 1973 Kangaroos, has asserted himself as Australia's top hooker. A good ball winner, he is also very fast in open play. A specialist dummy half, he often catches the defence with a solo run from a play-the-ball.

ALLAN McMAHON (Balmain). Age 21. 6ft. 1½ins. 14st. 2lbs. Allan has won Australian selection from his first season in Sydney football. Played on the N.S.W. south coast last year from where he represented Country. Plays full-back, centre or wing, and is very fast for a big man. A former junior spring champion, he was three times runner-up in the N.S.W. championships before deciding to concentrate on Rugby League.

STEVE ROGERS (Cronulla Sutherland). Age 20. 5ft. 11ins. 13st. 7lbs. Steve is one of the most exciting young players in the game. Has played with Cronulla since 1973 and in that year was chosen to tour as a Kangaroo. Has never played a Test match but with his quick acceleration and elusive swerve, is certain to earn the honour.

RAY HIGGS (Parramatta). Age 24. 5ft. 10½ins. 14st. Ray earned his tour spot in his first season with Parramatta Club. Originally from Roma, in Queensland, he played three years with Brisbane club Redcliffe and one year with Nambour. A tough tackling second-rower, he justifies team mates nickname of "Bull Dog".



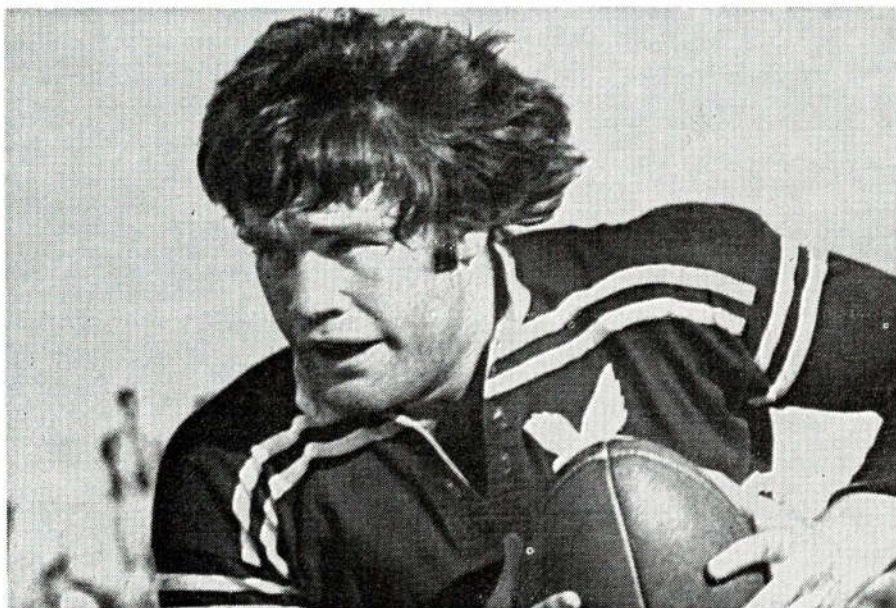
Graeme Langlands

Line up of Champions

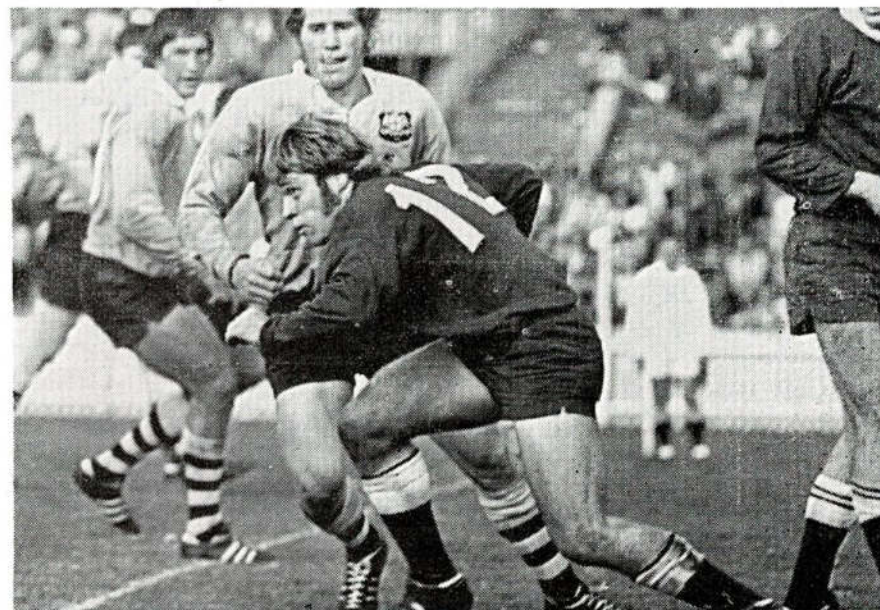


Ian Mackay (above)

John Lang (below)



Graham Eadie



Chat with Challinor

MAY I take this opportunity of congratulating the Australians, our guests tonight, on their achievement in winning the first Rugby League world championship series.

No matter what was the outcome of Saturday's England-Australia clash at Wigan, the Aussies have proved themselves worthy title holders—first with their successes Down Under in the opening phase of the world series and then by beating Wales and France so convincingly with their young and untried bunch of Kangaroos who have come to Europe.

Most of us had hopes that England might snatch victory but our defeat by Wales in Brisbane during the summer put the Aussies firmly in the driving seat—and there they stayed.

It was really no surprise, either. The game in Australia is in a very strong position at present. Attendances are booming and the Kangaroos triumph in the world championship should continue to keep trends moving in the right direction.

We all got a very good hint of things to come from the Aussies when their team of schoolboys was over here three years ago.

As far as I know only Ian Schubert, of that touring party, has returned with the international side this time but I am sure that next time we see the Aussies here there will be several more members of that all-conquering schoolboys' touring party making a return visit to Britain.

That boys' team was full of brilliant prospects and it was no coincidence that when I was in Australia with the Great Britain party on the 1974 tour the standard of rugby, even in the country districts, had improved tremendously from the days when I went out there as a player.

The Australians concentrate almost entirely on mastering the basics of the game. I don't believe they are as adept as are English players in setting up moves and distributing the ball cleverly.

But they can give us a few lessons in basics such as quick movement of the ball, backing up, good handling and hard tackling.

Without doubt they are a top attraction and it would be a tragic loss if the four-yearly tours were to be scrapped in favour of an annual world championship series.

Fans in England really look forward to seeing our visitors from overseas and to participate in the intense rivalry that exists.

The same applies when Great Britain teams go to Australia. You have all heard of the big-name League clubs in Sydney but the real backbone of the game in Australia is the rugby, similar to that in our amateur game, which is played in the country districts.

The small townships in New South Wales and Queensland look forward for months to the visit of a touring side and you really have to go on such a tour to experience the sort of effect that a British team has on the local people.

Shops are shut down for the afternoon and one gets the impression that the whole town comes to a standstill while the match is in progress.

Many fans travel hundreds of miles to cheer on their "local" team and, for them, it would be a very sad day indeed if the traditional tour was to be abolished.

The same applies here. The world championship has many features to commend it but I don't think there is any real substitute for the long tour in which the world's best players are appearing regularly on our club grounds throughout Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumbria.

We are fortunate to have our Australian guests here tonight. Old friendships will be renewed and doubtless new ones will be made.

And we can seek comfort from the fact that, although R.L. seems to be struggling somewhat at international level in France and New Zealand, it is breaking records and increasing in popularity in Australia.

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Coaching in the Seventies

by ERNIE CHRISTENSEN

who is in this country covering the World Championships for his newspaper, "The Sydney Sun"

RUGBY LEAGUE has not yet entered the computerised stage in Australia—but it is well on the way with far greater checks than ever before on a player's performance.

Not too many years ago the only statistics taken in a match—apart from the score!—were the number of scrums and penalties. In fact, some clubs didn't even bother with a penalty count.

Now, in Sydney, there is far greater emphasis on match figures, and these cover every possible aspect of a match. ALL Sydney clubs now take tackle counts, an innovation which was—so far as I know—introduced by former Rugby League secretary Bill Fallowfield.

Paddy Armour, the Wakefield physio-therapist who did such a fine job with the 1966 British tourists in Australia, once told me that Mr. Fallowfield had him check tackles in an international match in England. One English forward, who had deservedly won a high reputation for his play, was found not to have made a single tackle. He never played international football again.

Beyond doubt, the top coach in Sydney these days is Jack Gibson who has led Eastern Suburbs to the Premiership title in the last two years. This year they beat St. George 38-0 in the Grand Final.

Gibson leads all other coaches with his ideas, many of which are adapted from American gridiron.

A few years ago he puzzled the opponents by sending his team out for a floodlit cup final with heavy mascara painted on their cheeks. Gibson told his players that it was an American

ruse to keep the light glare from affecting vision when taking a ball put into the air. Whether or not it did, the psychological effect was 100 per cent effective with the players taking the field full of confidence.

Gibson checks the tackle count at half-time and again at the final whistle, and any first half slacker can be assured of firm words of advice at the interval. Any player not making a full share of the tackles in a match will be missing the next week.

Gibson also has another club official noting every missed tackle, an innovation which English clubs could well copy in an effort to match the Australian standard of defence.

Other checks include how many times a player is tackled in possession, how many times a player loses the ball, how many breaches of the rules he commits, how many tackles the ball is held after possession is gained. On top of all this, each match is video-filmed and coach Gibson spends most of Monday running it through and through checking on ways the team's performance can be bettered.

Easts have regular sessions where players have to dive-tackle inflated tractor-size tyre tubes; then they dive at a rolling tube, rise immediately and dive-tackle another going in a different direction.

Gibson's theory is that tries must not be conceded, and the minimum of penalties must be given away. Every team's ambition, of course. But Gibson firmly believes that the element of risk should be removed from a game, and attention to detail gives the natural ability of players full scope.

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Star Trek

by DAVID J. HOWES, Rugby League P.R.O.

RUGBY League could be retitled "Stars on Sunday . . . and Saturday . . . and Friday".

For the game is packed with personalities—enough to satisfy the appetite of any avaricious stargazer. The senior supporters who recall Rugby League's glory days, bemoan the lack of colour about today's game. But how many of today's players would have captivated the huge crowds of yesteryear?

No one can deny that the unqualified talents of Roger Millward, David Watkins and Les Dyl, the sheer excitement of wingers John Bevan and John Atkinson, and the strength and drive of Mal Reilly and George Nicholls, would have captured the imagination of those hey-day fans.

The great players of yesteryear had one great advantage which is missing today. They displayed their talents against a backcloth of feverish support, packed terraces and terrific tension.

Today the stage setting is more stark. Rugby League deserves a wider audience. As a live sport it has no equal.

Today's stars need a lift. Their efforts need to be appreciated by tens of thousands of sport loving people. Spectator sport is like showbiz. Would Shirley Bassey give such inspired performances in front of a handful of people rather than the uplifting atmosphere created by a packed house in the Albert Hall?

The answer to this pressing problem is not easily forthcoming. Rugby League needs a boost in attendances—and quickly.

But never before in the eighty-year history of the Rugby League has the supporter had such a vital role to play. Today, as Rugby League makes a valiant bid to steer itself on to a course to future success, the dedicated follower has emerged as an unofficial P.R.O.

Word of mouth is acknowledged as the best form of advertising. Every fan is capable of becoming a travelling salesman for the game. Theoretically, if every regular supporter was to bring along to a match just one friend, Rugby League's gates would double "at a stroke"

Every fan should be a roving ambassador for Rugby League. In the pub, the office, the workshop . . . the topic of conversation should be Rugby League . . . and more Rugby League.

The keyword for success must be unity. For too long the "knockers" have been given the freedom of the park, decrying every effort and ruining the confidence of those people striving to put the game right.

If Rugby League is to continue to impress the outside world, the game must work together, giving solid support to every venture at every level. If the game is to conquer new territories, we must form one undivided rank. Too often in the past, Rugby League has suffered because it has knocked itself in public, damaging the public's faith. Rugby League is not shortsighted. It is accepted that there is a lot of work to be done in many spheres. What is needed now is constructive criticism.

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