

Oldham

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M.
- 3 LARDER, P.
- 4 WAINWRIGHT, A.
- 5 BARTON, E.
- 6 TREASURE, D.
- 7 McCONE, M.
- 8 RAMSHAW, T.
- 9 TAYLOR, K.
- 10 KEAR B.
- 11 HALL, F.
- 12 HERBERT, S.
- 13 PETERS A.
- 14 O'BRIEN, C.
- 15

Referee:

J. E. Jackson (Pudsey)

St. Helens

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

J. F. Jones (Widnes)

H. Worth (Widnes)

Red

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 LEEDS

O'MAHONEY R.

Printed by Neil Simmonds, Clarkes Lane Works, Rochdale

OLDHAM v St. HELENS

SUNDAY 12th DECEMBER

Kick Off 3.30 p.m.



Tony Wainwright and Chris O'Brien move in to tackle Leeds centre, Neil Hague—an incident from our last home game.

Picture by courtesy of the EVENING CHRONICLE.

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

TODAY sees the start of a new career in Rugby League for our recently-appointed physiotherapist, Mr. Stuart Taylor. In welcoming him to Watersheddings, and wishing him a long and happy stay with us, we also say farewell to his predecessor, Mr. Dennis Wright, who left us following the match at Fartown last Sunday after 15 seasons as our club physiotherapist.

Dennis, as he was known to all and sundry at Watersheddings, "signed" for Oldham in 1961 during the spell as manager here of Gus Risman.

He did a wonderful job behind the scenes, ensuring that all our players went on to the field in the best possible condition, and it came not only as a bolt from the blue but as a terrible shock when we learned he was about to move across the other side of Manchester to join the Salford club.

Fifteen years, or a decade and a half, is a long, long time for any "backroom boy" to stay with one club and we know that many scores of players, both past and present, will join with us in wishing him all the best of good luck and good fortune in his new venture.

We feel equally sure that Dennis's heart will remain with us at Watersheddings for a long time to come. Who knows? Like so many players who move from here he may still, one day, look back on his career and say: "The best days were at Oldham."

As a mark of appreciation for all Dennis has done, and for the many good times spent at Oldham, both club and players presented him with a memento at our annual players' and staff Christmas party on Tuesday night.

The players handed him a silver tankard and the club a silver salver, both to be inscribed so that they will forever remain for him a reminder of his long stay at Watersheddings.

As Dennis goes out, Stuart moves in. He comes on the highest recommendation of his predecessor as a young man not only well qualified in his chosen profession but one who has long waited for such an opening into the field of sports medicine.

Aged only 23, Stuart qualified at a school of physiotherapy in Leeds and is now in his second appointment at Manchester Royal Infirmary, having spent some time at the Royal Infirmary, Liverpool.

We feel sure he will not only do a competent and able job for us but that, like Dennis, he will really enjoy becoming part and parcel of the behind-the-scenes "team" once he settles into the life and ways of a Rugby League club and gets to know all the players and staff.

We take the view that the appointment of a qualified physiotherapist is a vital and necessary one. It is not only beneficial to both players and club, in ensuring that they get the best possible treatment, but also acts as an insurance policy for the rare occasions when a really serious injury crops up.

We have had them here at Oldham from time to time. Who will ever forget the Malcolm Price injury at Rochdale? Or the Charlie McCourt injury at Barrow? These were not the usual type of injuries received in RL but of a much more serious nature and it was comforting not only to the club, but most of all to the players concerned, to know that in the vital period before they went out of the club's care and into hospital they were in the best possible hands.

Even our coach, Jim Challinor, has said that one of the reasons he came to Oldham was the knowledge that the club already possessed a physiotherapist whom he not only respected but had a tremendous confidence in.

We trust it won't be long before Jim and Stuart strike up a similar understanding.

In the meantime we say a very big THANK YOU to all Dennis did for the Oldham players—and we know for a fact that our best wishes will go alongside those of many, many players, now scattered throughout the country, who came to have confidence in and respect for the Oldham physiotherapist.

Looking to the Future

By DAVID BURKE
Salford City Reporter

Times are tough. And for Rugby League clubs, with dwindling "gates" and ever-worsening financial problems, the outlook is particularly bleak.

That is why it is even more important in these days of economic crisis to gaze into the crystal ball and make plans; Salford were one of the first clubs to take a bold step forward with their Variety Centre and Warrington soon followed with the ambitious Wilderspool Leisure Complex.

They are plans which will keep those two clubs in good financial stead for many a season to come.

Now, another club is following suit with architect Roy Fisk designing Swinton's future. The first phase of an exciting multi-thousand pound plan is due to open shortly.

The £60,000 sports complex at the Townsend Road end of the ground is a brave step by the Lions' new streamlined board of directors ... and other clubs may well be keeping a wary eye on the project as they, too, look to the future.

Forty-two-year-old Roy, a keen golfer and ex-president of Swinton Park Golf Club, is hoping to steer the Lions back to par after years in the wilderness. After living in the shadow of glamorous rivals Salford in recent years, the go-ahead board are determined to brush the cobwebs out of Station Road.

"I love the game," said Roy, "and a town like Swinton, which is the centre of the new City of Salford, wants a first-class rugby complex—that's what we are aiming at."

He added: "I don't know what happened after the Swinton successes in the early 60s, but now I am only concerned with the future."

Less than two years ago Roy was one of the remaining loyal fans who prayed for better times rather than merely reflect on the Good Old Days. Then Lions' chairman Jack Bateman asked Roy to look at development prospects for the ground. Some cynics suggested that flats were the answer — on the ground itself! But jokes like that disappeared when Swinton climbed back into the First Division.

Roy was invited onto the board, and within six months the eager, forward-looking businessman was vice-chairman and financial director.

Swinton have financed the new complex—complete with squash courts, sauna, gymnasium and bars — themselves and are now looking for a developer to back the proposed £250,000 social club and restaurant at the scoreboard end of the ground.

"Despite the country's problems and lack of money, I'm hoping we can make a start on the project within 12 months," said Roy. "And if phases one and two are successful, we will make a start on rebuilding the main stand. We want only the best at Station Road."

But Swinton are only too aware of what happened to Sheffield Wednesday in the Football League. They spent thousands on ground improvements, only to slip from the First Division to the depths of the Third Division.

Says one director: "We have a fine coach in Bob Fleet, and we are building a team to match the facilities we are planning at Station Road."

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Oldham on the attack in our unlucky 12-11 defeat by Leeds. Barry Kear, in possession, looks for support as Les Dyl makes the tackle.

Picture by courtesy of the EVENING CHRONICLE.

TRAVEL AS THE TEAM DOES

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OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

Oldham have been involved in several nail-biting finishes this season, one of them being in the opening round of the Lancashire Cup when, after trailing 19-2, Oldham rallied to give Saint Helens the fright of their lives before they won 19-17.

This afternoon Saints make their second visit of the season to Watersheddings with vital First Division points at stake on this occasion. The last time Saints came here in a First Division match was in 1973-74 when Oldham won 12-11 whilst during the previous season a League match at Oldham ended in a 12-12 draw so it all points to another close match this afternoon. The last occasion on which Saints won at Watersheddings in League warfare was just over four years ago—on December 4th, 1971 to be precise, when on a misty and cold Saturday a pitifully small crowd of only 1,295 saw Saints turn on a masterly performance to score a comfortable win.

Oldham had made a disastrous start to the season and had lost thirteen of their opening 18 matches including a 50 points to two thrashing at Knowsley Road and it was a supremely confident Saints team which took the field and lined up as follows:

Geoff Pimblett; John Wills, Bill Benyon, John Walsh, Frank Wilson; Ken Kelly, Geoff Heaton; John Stephens, Tony Karalius, Ken Halliwell, Eric Chisnall, John Mantle and Kel Coslett. Substitutes: Johnny Houghton (for Walsh) and Frank Barrow (for Chisnall).

The Oldham team was:

Martin Murphy; Mike Elliott, Ray Clark, Tommy Davies, Mick Wilde; Cliff Hill, Cliff Sayer; Ken Wilson, Kevin Taylor, Frank Walker, Bob Irving, Dick Bonser and Jim Reynolds. Substitutes: Norman Hodgkinson and Keith Jackson.

The experienced Saints pack proved far too good for Oldham and by half-time, with Oldham trailing 10-0, the writing was on the wall. Saints continued to dominate proceedings in the second-half and by the time referee Ronnie Jackson blew for full time, Saints were 28-0 in front. They had scored tries through Bill Benyon (2), John Wills, John Walsh, Frank Wilson and Ken Kelly whilst Kel Coslett had landed five goals.

That rather embarrassing defeat does not stand as Oldham's biggest ever home defeat for on their previous visit to Watersheddings in April, 1970, Saints had won 43-0 so, bad as Oldham's defeat was, it was still an improvement from the previous encounter!!

A win by any margin will suit Saints this afternoon as they chase unbeaten Salford in their quest to retain the First Division Championship. They lie in sixth place at the moment but have only played seven matches although they have won six of those games. Their only League defeat was away to Featherstone Rovers who beat them 29-11. They have recorded a League double over Huddersfield (47-3 at home and 22-21 away) and were most impressive when beating Leeds 24-2 at Knowsley Road so they will not lack confidence this afternoon.

It is certainly going to be tough for Oldham who desperately need the points to fend off relegation but one point which does favour Oldham is Saints involvement in next Tuesday's Floodlit Cup Final. The Saints will not relish a tough physical game 48 hours before a major cup final and that could be the key to a much needed Oldham victory this afternoon.

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Brian Batty

The county championship has again sparked off considerable controversy in the game, throwing up the annual doubts as to its future.

It has become the problem child of the Rugby League, an embarrassment as fans, players and officials clash with their views as to its worth.

There is no doubt that when you get League programmes decimated by postponements because of county calls on players then something is seriously wrong.

The original idea this season was to give the county championship two clear weekends following their plea for a fair deal 12 months ago.

But the League found they were unable to fulfil their promises when they had to fit in world championship games.

Yet we knew these world championship games would have to be played in October and November as long ago as last April and surely the League programme was only pencilled in at this time.

Surely it would have been wiser if the League had pointed out that this was one season when we could do without the county championship.

Instead we have an extra team competing in the Other Nationalities and chaos grows to an extent where we have eight matches postponed in one weekend.

The gates at the county matches have been alarmingly low and possibly reflect the public's present interest in the competition.

It makes me wonder how the counties manage to pay winning bonuses to their players and justify the expense of staging the games.

It should still be an honour to play for the county sides but if there is no one watching then the games will suffer and the players will have second thoughts about the value of the competition.

Widnes coach Frank Myler says: "I always regarded it as an honour to play for the county and I would like to think my players have the same approach.

"But there were not so many other competitions running at the same time when I played so we didn't have the present fixture problems."

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Groundsman: W. BUCKLEY

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 A
21—Wigan H
28—Player's No. 6—Huyton A
Oct. 5—Keighley A
12—Huddersfield H
18—Leeds A
26—Wakefield A
Nov. 2—Dewsbury H
9—Player's No. 6—round 2 A
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 H
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 12-7
—Sept. 6—Swinton (Lancs. Shield).....H 29-10
13-12 20—Wigan A
17-19 Oct. 4—Swinton H
5-27 18—Warrington H
— 25—Leigh H 38-17
10-24 Nov. 14—Salford A
17-8 29—Rochdale A
17-8 Dec. 6—Salford H
17-28 13—St. Helens A
15-18 20—Huyton H
23-18 27—Barrow H
15-6 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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