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Runners-up: 1908-09, 1911-12, 1918-19, 1921-22, 1954-55, 1966-67 and 1968-69.

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Runners-up: 1908-09, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1919-20, 1923-24 and 1954-55.

Lancashire Shield winners: 1975-76.



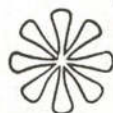
Action at Halifax

Picture by courtesy of the Oldham Evening Chronicle

Harvey Ashworth

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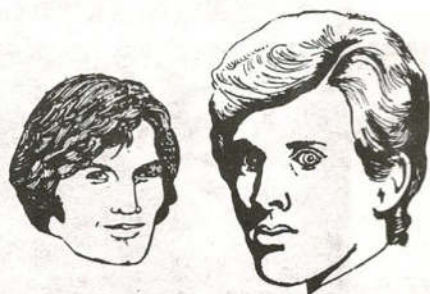


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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

The outlook today is decidedly bleak. We now have one of the biggest injury lists in the club's history and, to make matters even worse, we were struck down last week by the outbreak of a stomach virus.

On top of that the game at Halifax was still in its early stages when Martin Murphy and Phil Larder were forced to retire with injury and Fred Hall became a passenger on the wing when he, too, ought really to have been substituted.

Larder, who has knee ligament damage, now joins our list of players who are being kept out of action for several weeks because of more serious injuries: players such as Steve Herbert, John Blair and John Paterson.

Latest news on Herbert is that he has now left hospital after a knee cartilage operation, but it will clearly take him several weeks at least to get back into action.

Blair, who will probably have to have a similar operation, is still waiting to go in, while Larder will be out for several weeks after being examined by a Manchester specialist on Monday.

On top of that little lot there are a whole list of players with bumps and bruises and coach Dave Cox had to take charge of Tuesday's training session without the help of his assistant, Bob Welding, who was confined to bed with the stomach upset.

Also unavailable for training for the same reasons were Steve Lund and Ian Radcliffe.

In fact, there were only 11 players who were fit and raring to go for training, Jimmy Reynolds, Uri Stondin, Brian Anglin, Geoff Fox, Kevin Flanagan, Gary Leicester, Geoff Munro, Barrie Connor, Peter Deakin, Alan Bates and Roger O'Mahoney.

It really was a terrible position to be in and even at that early stage it was obvious that in no way could we fulfil yesterday's "A" team engagement at Barrow in the second round of the Lancashire Shield.

That match was postponed and it will be interesting to see what sort of a side we can field in today's home game against Batley.

On a brighter note we would like to welcome to the club Eric Fitzsimmons, who has successfully completed six "A" team trials and with whom terms were agreed on Tuesday night.

We wish Eric a long and happy stay at Watersheddings and hope that he really settles down to enjoy his new code, having turned from soccer in which he had played for Athletic and several non-league clubs.

May we wish also much happiness to our former coach Graham Starkey and Miss Meg Nicholls, who were married on Monday after a courtship lasting 15 years.

Graham was always a popular figure during his stay at Oldham and on behalf of everyone at Watersheddings may we extend best wishes to the happy couple.

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OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

Oldham's story of misfortune continued last week at Halifax where another heavy defeat was conceded, leaving Oldham with the worst defensive record in Division Two. However, despite these unhappy set backs, Oldham are still undefeated at home and hope to maintain that record this afternoon when they face Batley, another club who have made a dissappointing start to the season.

Batley, in fact, lie next to bottom of the Second Division table with just one win and one draw to show from their seven league matches. Their solitary win was recorded last Sunday when they defeated free spending Whitehaven 8-7, prop Joe Waltham scoring all his sides' points with a try, two goals and a dropped goal. Their drawn game came in the opening league match of the season when Huyton were held 6-6 at Mount Pleasant whilst, in between times, Batley have lost at home to Dewsbury and Blackpool Borough and have returned empty handed from visits to Keighley, Hull and New Hunslet. Like Oldham, they have been eliminated at the first hurdle of the two cup competitions, losing 24-8 at home to Halifax in the Yorkshire Cup and then meeting with a 27-2 defeat when they visited Wakefield Trinity in the Players Trophy competition.

Prior to the season, Batley had reason to feel confident of a successful 1978-79 campaign for, apart from securing sponsorship of every home game, they had made several encouraging pre season signings the most notable of which were hooker David Teasdale, accurate goal-kicker Henry Oulton and the strong running Keith Riggs who was signed from Wakefield Trinity in July for £1,000. Twenty-three-years old Riggs is a product of Hunslet junior rugby who turned professional with the old Hunslet club in September 1971. He consequently moved to Wakefield Trinity in October 1976 where his powerful style impressed the Batley management and, although principally signed as a winger, he has been used recently in the second-row of the pack. These signings, plus the return to fitness of player-coach Dave Stockwell, who suffered a serious internal injury towards the end of last season, raised the hopes of Batley followers and, indeed, several times this season Batley have shown encouraging form without, alas, the results which would have given them some much needed confidence.

A victory for them today at Watersheddings would certainly be a big boost to their confidence but if past results are any guide then a victory seems most unlikely for Oldham have beaten Batley on the last six occasions that these two clubs have met and one has to go back over eight years, to March 1970, for Batley's last victory over Oldham, a 13-5 league win at Mount Pleasant. Last season Oldham won at home 28-13 and followed that up with an 18-9 win at Batley last February which marked a try scoring debut for Oldham centre Phil Ward.

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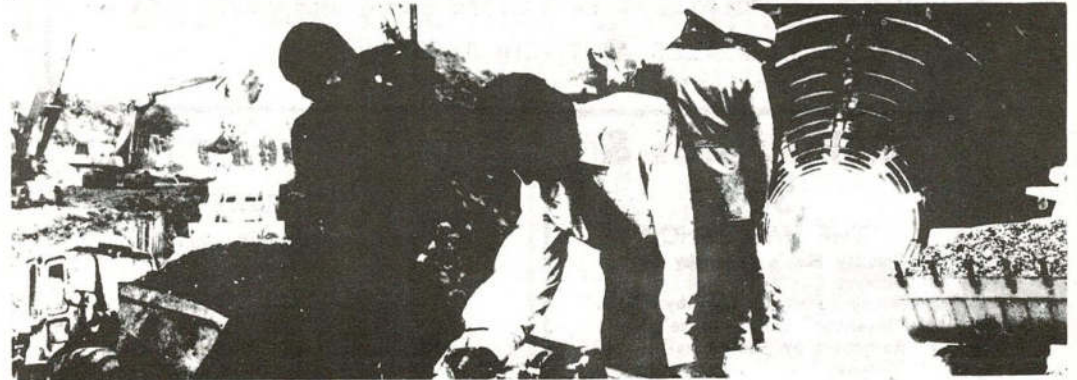
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MAN IN THE MIDDLE

This afternoon's important league match is refereed by 42-years old Grade Two official Bernard Shooman from Roundhay, Leeds. He is an enthusiastic Rugby League follower whose sole interests revolve around the game, either refereeing, coaching or watching. He is a qualified Grade Two coach and secretary of the Leeds branch of the Rugby League Coaches Association. Mr. Shooman is married with three children and is employed as a payroll manager.

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RUGBY QUEEN DANCE

This years Rugby Queen Dance is to be held in the Social Club on Friday 3rd November, 1978. Tickets priced £1.00 including buffet can be purchased from any Supporters Club official at todays match.

SOCIAL CLUB

The Social Club is now open every night from 8.00 pm. The Concert Room can also be booked for Private functions and anyone interested should contact the Supporters Club Secretary at todays match or telephone: 633 4957 or Social Club.

WHITEHAVEN 19/11/78

Anyone interested in going to the above away match should book seats through any Supporters Club official at todays match. If there is insufficient interest in this match by next Sundays home game then the coach will be cancelled.

GUIDE TO GROUNDS:

Because more and more Rugby League fans are travelling to away matches and using the northern motorway network, the Rugby League and Arrowfast Express have combined to produce a Guide to Grounds. The 36-page pocket size booklet donates a page to each of the 30 professional clubs and provides travelling directions, compiled by the Automobile Association, to each ground from the nearest motorway. The Arrowfast Express/Rugby League Routeway is priced only 20 pence plus 10p. p. & p.

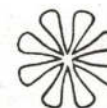
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With the Amateurs ALAN BURKE

Congratulations once again go to the Saddleworth Rangers Under-18's team who last Sunday qualified for their second consecutive BARLA Lancashire-Cumbria Youth Cup Final when they travelled to Whitehaven to defeat Cumbrian side Kells 16-7 in the semifinal. Saddleworth are of course the current holders of the County Youth Cup having defeated Blackbrook in last season's decider at Watersheddings whilst the Rangers opponents in this year's Final will be Warrington side Crosfields, who in their semi-final last weekend had a fine 15-7 home win against Wigan St. Patricks.

In last weekends quarter-finals of the County open-age competition, Oldham's sole survivors Saint Anne's fell in Saint Helens to Blackbrook, whilst yesterday the Saints were due to begin their defence of the Oldham Standard Cup with an away tie in the first round to North West Counties League side Langworthy Juniors of Manchester. Saint Anne's will in fact be hoping to complete a hat-trick of victories in the Final of the Standard Cup, which will this season be celebrating its 75th anniversary, having been first played for in the 1903-04 season. The Final of this year's Standard Cup will as usual take place at Watersheddings on Good Friday morning.

Two first round matches were played yesterday in the local competition together with a couple of the second round games, from which the winners will qualify for the semi-finals. The remaining quarter-finals will be played on December 2nd, following which the semi-final draw, as for the other rounds, will be made live on Radio Manchester.

The two coaches of the successful Saddleworth Rangers youth side and Saint Anne's, namely Brian Gartland and Brian Churm, have again been chosen as the men to be in charge of the respective Oldham Amateur League town-teams. After receiving a bye in the first round, the Oldham open-age team begin their challenge for the BARLA Inter-League Shield in Round 2 with a home tie against the strong Leeds Amateur League. However, the Oldham youth team, who also received in the opening round of their Inter-League tournament, will not know until tonight who they will be facing in their first game of the season. Following two matches which are taking place this afternoon in the Preliminary Round of the competition, the draw for the first round will be broadcast on this evening's "Rugby League Special" programme on Radio Manchester.

BARLA have just published their souvenir brochure of the Gt. Britain International team's tour earlier this year to Papua New Guinea, Australia, and New Zealand. The brochure, packed full of photographs and statistics of the tour can be obtained priced £1, including postage from BARLA headquarters, Britannic Building, 3, Upperhead Row, Huddersfield.



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