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10p

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Stuart Hall and Janet Withey (right) cut the tape to open our Clegg Street offices, watched by RL Queen Yvonne

Picture by courtesy of the OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

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

Lancashire Championship winners: 1907-08, 1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57 and 1957-58.

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

Lancashire Shield winners: 1975-76.



Lottery chief Peter Mason (right) sells the first tickets in the lottery to RL Queen Yvonne Bowden and comedian George Roper.

Picture by courtesy of the OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

Our brand-new lottery, launched last week, surpassed all expectations with the first batch of 40,000 tickets sold out within four days.

Lottery chief Peter Mason would have been happy had he "sold out" within two weeks and to achieve the target within four days was absolutely staggering.

Immediately, he left for the Midlands to pick up the second batch of tickets several days ahead of schedule and opened talks with club chairman Ray Hatton about bringing forward from January plans to launch a second scheme to run alongside the present one.

The lottery launch took place on Wednesday of last week when hundreds of agents attended a big night out at Romeo and Juliet's.

Entertainment was provided by comedian George Roper and singer John Lavelle of "New Faces" fame, plus a disco and the club's resident band.

The first tickets in the lottery, which offers a top prize of £1,000 and total prize pay-out of nearly £3,500, were sold to George Roper and the new Oldham RL Queen, Miss Yvonne Bowden.

On Saturday the action switched to our new lottery office in Clegg Street when Stuart Hall, the television personality, and local beauty queen Janet Withey spearheaded a promotion and officially cut the tape that opened the offices as the hub of the operation.

They then went, with club officials, to a site on the Market at the top of Curzon Street where the club had a stand and two booths advertising and selling a lottery which could prove the biggest thing to happen to our club in years.

Despite the atrocious weather many people turned out to watch the operation which was voted a very definite hit by all those concerned.

By Monday the first batch of tickets were running out and Mr Mason left for the Midland to pick up the next lot to keep the impact going.

"We are absolutely delighted", he enthused. "We are almost sold out and there are a lot of outlets we have not yet got to".

Added Mr Hatton: "Even allowing for the fact that we had done our ground work, the lottery was received about ten times better than we had anticipated.

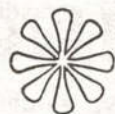
"It brought a smile to the treasurer's face which stretched from ear to ear".

Mr Mason believes the lottery could raise towards £200,000 a year and he makes his ambitious predictions on the strength of a claim that the Oldham scheme is the best in the area.

Harvey Ashworth

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He claims that the odds of winning will be less than one in ten against the local authority scheme's one in 13; that our scheme, which will pay out even the top prize of £1,000 within an hour or two, is the only real INSTANT lottery in the area; that the pay-out will be greater, in total, than that of any of our competitors.

The lottery can certainly be the biggest and most exciting thing to happen to the club for years and years; but we have to ensure that the early impact is maintained.

You can play a part, by selling tickets, putting us in touch with others who might want to sell them, or merely spreading the gospel and having a flutter yourself.

For further details contact the lottery office and ask for Mr Mason at 620/4870.

OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

This afternoon's visitors to Watexsheddings are the vastly improved Blackpool Borough outfit who last week almost pulled off the shock result of the season when they led big spending Hull by 11-7 late in their game at the Boulevard. Unfortunately for Boro', the Airlie Birds were able to recover and snatch a late penalty try which gave them a rather fortunate 14-13 win but the Blackpool performance just indicates the current strength of their experienced line-up.

The team is led by scrum-half and coach Bak Diabira, a former Hull junior who was with Bradford Northern and New Hunslet before joining Boro' 12 months ago. The experienced Diabira has played three times for other Nationalities and he forms a dangerous half-back partnership with the former Leigh utility back Alan Fairhurst who was snapped up by the Seasiders last February for £1,000. The versatile Fairhurst is Borough's leading try scorer this season with six touchdowns to his name and he is also a capable goal kicker, as is loose-forward Norman Turley, the former Warrington utility player. The most experienced section of the Blackpool line-up, however, must be the front row of the pack where Borough field former Workington Town and Cumbria prop Jimmy Hamilton, the fiery former Rochdale Hornets hooker Peter Clarke who a couple of years ago had a spell on loan at Watersheddings, and their most recent signing, Derek Watts who was bought last September from Workington Town for £2,000 after previous service with Leigh, Wigan and Huyton. Watts has played for both Other Nationalities and Wales whilst another experienced front-row forward who has played for Other Nationalities is ex-Huyton and Widnes hooker Don

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Parry. The other leading personalities in this Blackpool line-up are former Salford loose-forward John Corcoran and two talented and elusive wingers in Graham Pitchforth (ex-Halifax) and Norman Breisford who began his career at Watersheddings but who has just completed 10 years with Rochdale Hornets where he won Lancashire County honours.

The most interesting members of the Blackpool squad, though, are Bob Harrison and Ural Jackson who could be soon included in senior rugby after impressive reserve outings since being brought over from America where they play for the Delavan Red Devils of Wisconsin. Borough also have a couple of New Zealand recruits, Watson Tahere and Neville Parker so the Blackpool management could never be accused of lack of imagination in their efforts to bring rugby league success to the Fylde coast.

BRIAN BATTY

John Burke has it seems tragically played his last game of rugby at barely 21 - an age when he should be contemplating the prospect of a great career.

John is paralysed in Hexham Hospital and his club Workington Town are preparing to do everything they can to see he gets all possible financial help.

Burke suffered his crippling injury playing for Workington against Leeds earlier this season two days after his 21st birthday.

Now he and his young wife and child need all the help everyone in, and outside, the game can provide.

When Workington went into the Lancashire Cup final against Widnes at Central Park last month they wanted desperately to retain the trophy for a special reason.

They knew John was lying motionless in a hospital's special spinal unit watching the game on a television set fixed to the ceiling.

'We wanted so badly to win for one person - John Burke - so it has been a bitter disappointment for us to lose the trophy,' said Town's popular and dedicated director Tom Mitchell.

Now former chairman Tom, an experienced member of Council, is calling on everyone to support a fund they have launched.

'We feel that everyone in sport in the North - not just in Rugby League - should rally round and help us. We are hoping for a tremendous response,' he says.

I think, knowing the character and the good of the people who play, watch and help govern the Rugby League that they will be behind this appeal all the way.

I hope so for I cannot think of a more deserving cause.

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 - 14
 - 15
- Referee:
S. WALL (Leigh)

BLACKPOOL

- 1 Doug ROBINSON
 - 2 Norman BRELSFORD
 - 3 Paul MACHEN
 - 4 Tony REDFORD
 - 5 Graham PITCHFORTH
 - 6 Alan FAIRHURST
 - 7 Bak DIABIRA
 - 8 Jim HAMILTON
 - 9 Peter CLARKE
 - 10 Derek WATTS
 - 11 John CORCORAN
 - 12 Jim MOLYNEUX
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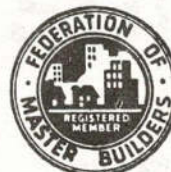
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MAN IN THE MIDDLE

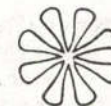
This afternoon's important match is refereed by 43-years old rugby league fanatic Stan Wall of Leigh who, as well as being a Grade One referee is also a Grade Two Rugby League Coach. Mr Wall was a former Lancashire County amateur scrum-half prior to taking up refereeing and his keen interest and vast knowledge of the game has led to his taking charge of two county matches as well as the England-Wales international in 1975. He is married with two children and is employed as a mining instructor with the National Coal Board.

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With the Amateurs ALAN BURKE

Last Sunday at Watersheddings, Saddleworth Rangers lifted the BARLA Lancashire--Cumbria Youth Cup for the second year in succession when they defeated Crosfields of Warrington in an excellent Final, played in atrocious conditions and for which both teams deserve credit. A penalty by Danny Cheetham and a Paddy Kirwan try in the closing minutes were enough to keep the trophy at Saddleworth, whilst a magnificent individual performance from captain Terry Flanagan gave him a fully deserved Man-of-the-Match award.

The majority of the successful Saddleworth youth team are on duty this afternoon representing the Oldham Amateur League's Under-18's town-team in their 1st Round match against Huddersfield in the BARLA Inter-League Youth Shield competition. Oldham should start as one of the favourites to take the title, and seemingly have a very good chance of at least progressing into Round 2. If the Oldham team do progress into the 2nd Round this afternoon, they should know their opponents by tonight as it is hoped that the draw will be given out on this evening's "Rugby League Special" programme on BBC Radio Manchester (6.15 pm.).

The Oldham League's open-age town-team went down by just 4 points to 0 in their Inter-League 1st Round game against Leeds a fortnight ago, whilst this afternoon at Hilton Park, Leigh, the BARLA Lancashire-Cumbria open-age Final is taking place between Leigh Miners Welfare and Crosfields, the winners of which will represent the amateur game on this side of the Pennines in the Rugby League Challenge Cup later in the season.

Next Saturday the two remaining 2nd Round matches will be played in this season's Oldham Standard Cup competition, which this season is celebrating its 75th anniversary. Ferranti are at home to Waterhead, and Saint Anne's entertain Salem Hornets, with the victors then joining Mayfield and Shaw in the semi-finals. The Final as usual will be played at Watersheddings on Good Friday morning (11 am.), and already the Oldham League have acquired sponsors for the match, programme, and match-ball. The Final itself is to be sponsored by Kegbro Construction Company of Broadbent Road, Oldham, the directors of which are Peter Brown and Kevin Geany, whilst the programme is being sponsored by Tommy O'Brien and Son, the building and demolition contractors of Thorpe Lane, Oldham. The match-ball is also being sponsored by a local firm, Len Hutton & Sons, the cleaning contractors of John Booth Street, Springhead.

Local teams will also be involved in the Rochdale Amateur League's Riley Cup next Saturday,

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