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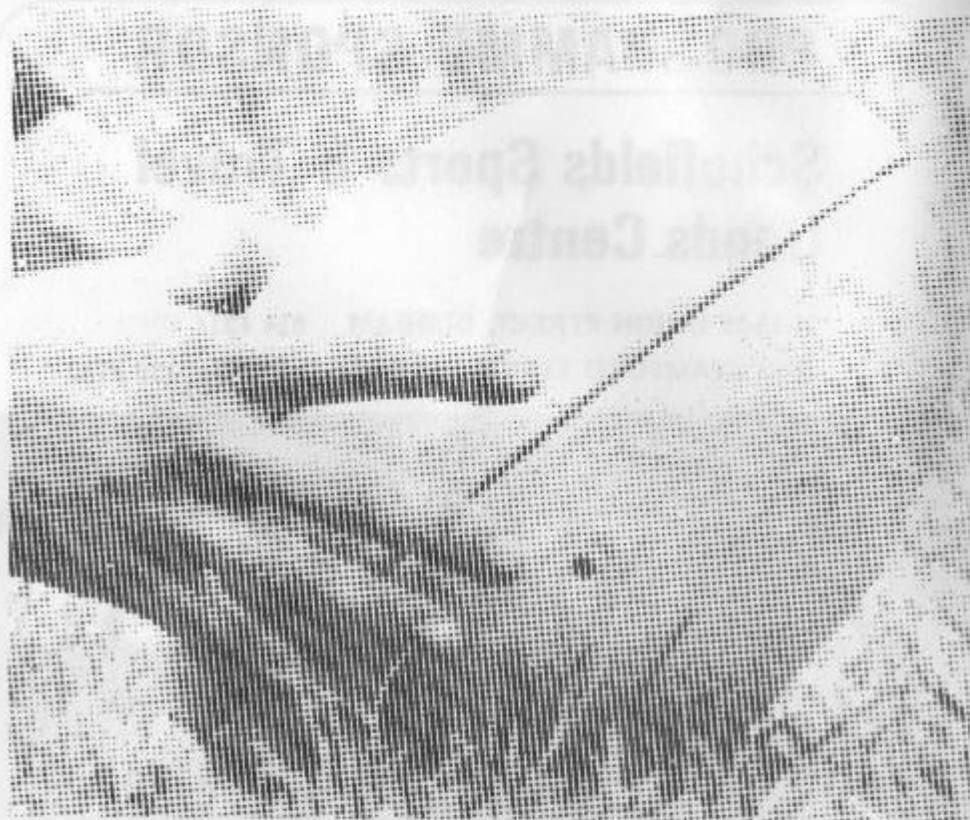
TUESDAY, 26th DECEMBER, 1978 Kick off 11.0 am



10p

TODAY'S MATCH BALL
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OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB THE PAVILION, WATERSHEDDINGS, OLDHAM

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Runners-up: 1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22 and 1954-55.

First Division Champions: 1904-05.

Second Division Champions: 1963-64.

Rugby League Challenge Cup winners: 1898-99, 1924-25, 1926-27.

Runners-up: 1906-07, 1911-12, 1923-24 and 1925-26.

Lancashire Cup winners: 1907-08, 1910-11, 1913-14, 1919-20, 1924-25, 1933-34, 1956-57, 1957-58 and 1958-59.

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.

OLDHAM OUTLOOK

The win at Huyton following those disastrous home defeats by Blackpool and Halifax, enabled all at Watersheddings to spend a happier Christmas than was once envisaged.

Coach Dave Cox reshaped his side for the trip to Merseyside and the changes paid handsome dividends with Steve Lund doing some heroic tackling in the centre, Eric Fitzsimmons showing some nice touches on the wing and Dave Fricker performing steadily at stand-off.

The new-look pack laid down the foundation for victory and there were impressive displays from the two lads called up from the "A" team, Barry Connor and Colin Hawkyard.

Connor did well in the specialised No 8 position in his first full senior game. In the first half hooker Roger O'Mahoney had his hands full trying to win an equal share of ball but once Connor sorted out his scrummage problems he had a very good game, indeed.

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But the star of the match, and a bright star, too, was 20-year-old Hawkyard, who had the sort of senior debut that most youngsters merely dream about.

Hawkyard handled well, ran straight and with determination and showed a keen football brain. For good measure he crossed the Huyton line for two tries to more than justify the confidence showed in him when we signed him on professional forms on the Thursday before the match.

His stunning debut followed two or three top-class displays in the 'A' team, while on trial, and was further proof that our youth policy is now beginning to come good.

We have reason to thank Alan Forster for our latest capture because Colin played for Huddersfield amateur club Bradley, whose coach is alan's Brother the former Huddersfield and Castleford forward.

Ironically, we once showed interest in Alan's elder brother, but he preferred to stay on as coach at Bradley because of the wealth of talent assembled there!

Some of that talent is now coming Watersheddings way and in welcoming Colin to the fold and offering best wishes for a long and happy stay here, we would like to place on record our gratitude to Alan Forster for making it all possible.

With several good young forwards now signed on, among them Connor, Hawkyard, Byram and Deakin, one or two others training or playing in the 'A' team and the return to training after a cartilage operation of Steve Herbert we felt it wise to acquire a forward of vast experience to help bring them on.

That was the reason for our approach to John Mansle, the 36-year-old Welshman who had been given a free transfer by Leigh.

A forward like Mansle might have done a very good job with young forwards around him, but John did not seem at all keen on the challenge we had in mind for him.

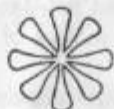
However, our search for the right kind of players will continue and all we ask for is a little bit of patience. It is a true saying that you act in haste and repent at Leisure!

May we wish you all a truly happy and prosperous 1979.

Harvey Ashworth

(PRESIDENT OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB)

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OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

After the encouraging performance at Huyton nine days ago, Oldham will this morning be hoping for further success in the traditional Christmas time clash against neighbours Swinton, a club who, like Oldham, are not enjoying the best of seasons.

They lie at present in fourth from bottom place in the Second Division table with just three wins and a draw to show from their 11 league outings. Two of those wins and the draw came in the opening three league matches of the season when they won 33-7 at Blackpool, beat York at home 20-11 and then drew 16-16 with Huyton. Following this encouraging start to the season, Swinton lost seven consecutive matches before beating Doncaster 43-9 at Station Road in their last but one match. However they disappointed again in their last match when they lost 12-9 at home to Bramley despite the fact that former Oldham favourite Tony Peters scored two tries in the opening fifteen minutes of that game.

Peters also scored three tries against Doncaster so will enter this morning's game against his previous club hoping to maintain his high scoring feat of five tries in his last two outings. The 26-years old loose-forward is a product of Leigh junior rugby who turned professional with the senior Leigh club in June 1971. Unfortunately he was unable to command a regular first team spot at Hilton Park and so was allowed to move to Watersheddings on a free transfer in August 1973. He made a try scoring debut for Oldham and, in all, scored 17 tries from 84 first team matches for Oldham before moving to Swinton last February in a straight exchange deal which brought centre Phil Ward to Watersheddings. Although the form of Peters in recent games has been most pleasing, it is 21-years old goal-kicking full-back Graeme Johns, transfer listed at £12,000, who is attracting most attention at Station Road. He is a former Roose (Barrow) junior who represented England at under-19 level before commencing studies at Manchester University and impressing Swinton officials who saw him in the University rugby union side. He joined the Lions in November 1975 and has shown considerable talent both with Swinton and Australian club Bomaderry, with whom he guested in 1976. His consistency was rewarded last October by selection as back substitute for Wales in their match against the Australian tourists at Swansea and although he was not used in that match it should not be long before he breaks into representative rugby.

Johns will be the chief dangerman in the Swinton side which this morning attempts to pull off its first victory over Oldham since November 1974 when they won a Second Division match at Station Road by 15-7.

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DICKIE BROWN TESTIMONIAL FUND

The New Hunslet Club are running a Testimonial Fund for the widow and two small children of their former player Dickie Brown, who was killed in a car accident prior to the start of the season.

Dickie was a former amateur international and played professionally with Doncaster and Oldham before joining New Hunslet. Any former playing colleague or Rugby League supporter who wishes to contribute to the fund can do so by sending a donation addressed to The Testimonial Fund, c/o New Hunslet R.L.F.C., 36A Boar Lane, Leeds 1.

All contributions will be acknowledged in the Club programmes.

A collection will be taken at half-time today for the above fund.

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- 8 ~~Dennis~~ ASHCROFT *PHYTHIAN*
- 9 ~~Bob~~ JOLLEY *B. SUTTON*
- 10 ~~Steve~~ PHYTHIAN *ARMITAGE*
- 11 ~~Tony~~ YOUNG *ASHCROFT*
- 12 ~~Vic~~ LAWTON *YOUNG*
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- 14
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MAN IN THE MIDDLE

This morning's Boxing Day clash is refereed by Grade Two official Derek Fox of Stanley, Wakefield who next Tuesday celebrates his 40th birthday. He commenced refereeing in 1971 and has received several encouraging reports from club officials. Mr. Fox is a magisterial officer at the Wakefield Magistrates Court and away from rugby league spends much of his leisure time gardening.

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The Supporters Club are running a trip to next years Cup Final and there are still a few places vacant. The total cost for the trip will be approximately £35. which includes 2 nights in London, £8. seat ticket and coach travel. Anyone interested should contact any Supporters Club Official at today's match.

SOCIAL CLUB

The Social Club is now open every night from 8-00 p.m. The Concert Room can also be booked for Private functions and anyone interested should contact the Supporters Club Secretary at today's match or telephone 633 4957 or telephone the Social Club 633 0368.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Patrons (£75) and Vice Presidents (£7.50) Subscriptions become due for renewal on 1st January 1979. Anyone wishing to become a Patron or Vice President or renew their membership can do so by returning the application to the Secretary.

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