

Teams

from:

OLDHAM

(Cherry/White hoops, Blue shorts)

1. Mick Hogan.
2. Geoff Munro.
3. Phil Larder.
4. Phil Ward.
5. Eric Fitzsimmons.
6. Bill Francis.
7. Jimmy Arnold.
8. Gareth Owen.
9. John Pitts.
10. Alan Forster.
11. Steve Herbert.
12. Garry Walczak.
13. Colin Hawkyard.

14. Ray Ashton.
15. Jim Fiddler.

Referee: Mr. T. J. Court - Leeds.
Red Flag: Mr. J. H. Ross - Barrow-in-Furness.
Yellow Flag: Mr. W. Brown - Manchester.

St. Helens

(White Shirts with Red "V", and white shorts)

1. Steve Peters.
2. Les Jones.
3. Derek Noonan.
4. Chris Arkwright.
5. Roy Mathias.
6. Peter Glynn.
7. Ken Gwilliam/Neil Holding.
8. Mel James.
9. Graham Liptrot.
10. Neil Courtney/Tony Bolton.
11. George Nicholls.
12. Chris Selven.
13. Harry Pinner.

- 14.
- 15.

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ST. HELENS

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Tel: 061-652 5244

President - H.V. Ashworth

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Vice-chairman - J. Bowden

Treasurer - K. Broadbent

Committee : E. Buckley, F. Diskin, J. Hall, D. Hulme, R. Ogden, K. Potter

Coaching Staff : Graham Starkey (manager) Terry Gorman (asst. manager)
Bill Francis (player/coach) Bob Welding (A team coach)
Brian Gartland (colt s coach)

Professional playing staff:

Jimmy Arnold - Dennis Ashcroft - Ray Ashton - Harold Byram - Barry Conner - Leslie Cook
- Michael Coombes - Mike Cowley - Peter Deakin - Jim Fiddler - Eric Fitzsimons - Kevin
Flanagan - Terry Flanagan - Alan Forster - Bill Francis - Dave Fricker - Andrew Goodway -
Fred Hall - Colin Hawkyard - Steve Hebert - Keith Jackson - Clive Jones - Paddy Kerwin -
Phil Larder - Steve Little - Steve Lund - Jeff Munro - Martin Murphy - Tony Newall - Chris
O'Brien - Ian Ogden - Roger O'Mahoney - Kevin O'Rourke - Gareth Owen - Johnny
Paterson - Ian Radcliffe - Warren Ryans - Ian Taylor - Garry Walczak - John Walls -
Mike Worrall.

Physiotherapist:

Asst. Physiotherapist:

Secretary - K. Wilkinson

Commercial Manager - Peter Mason

Public relations officer - Barbara Wilde

Groundsman : F. Brookes

Asst. Groundsman : M. Bashforth

CLUB RECORDS

Record Victory	67-6 against Liverpool City April 59
Record defeat	11-67 by Hull K.R. Sept. 78
Record attendance	28,000 v Huddersfield Feb 24th 1912
Record receipts	£4,897 v Leeds 3rd March 1968
Record transfer fee paid	£10,650 to Workington for Ike Southward March 1959
Record transfer fee received	£11,002 : 10s from workington for Ike Southward Jan 62
Record try scorer	Reg Farrar 49 tries 1921/22 season
Record goal scorer	Bernard Ganley 224 goals 1957/58 season
Record point scorer	Bernard Ganley 28 pts v Liverpool City April 59

CLUB HONOURS

Rugby League Championship Play-off winners:	1909-10, 1910-11 and 1956-57
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

We Welcome our Visitors — ST. HELENS by DON YATES

For the second time in the space of four days First Division opposition visits Watersheddings on cup-tie business with this evenings visitors travelling from St. Helens to decide which club will entertain Rochdale Hornets in the first round of the BBC TV Floodlit Trophy.

These two clubs have met on just one previous occasion in this particular competition, Saints beating Oldham 14-0 in the opening round of the 1967 competition. They must feel confident of repeating that victory tonight for, including a couple of friendly matches, they have won their last seven matches against Oldham including a 27-20 victory here at Watersheddings five weeks ago in a pre-season challenge match. Oldham, in fact, have not beaten Saint Helens since they pulled off a surprise 8-7 league win at Knowsley Road in February 1976 thanks to a late dropped goal from Johnny Blair.

The records of the two clubs in the previous 14 tournaments would also indicate an away victory for Oldham's longest run in the Floodlit Trophy was to a semi-final tie in 1972 when Leigh put paid to Oldham's hopes with a narrow 10-8 victory at Hilton Park. Saints, on the other hand, have lifted the Floodlit Trophy on two occasions, in 1971 and 1975, and have been beaten finalists on five other occasions. The Saint Helens squad is a most experienced combination packed with speed and skill so they will be expected to make another lengthy run in this competition despite their rather dismal start to the season.

They are led by veteran compaigner George Nicholls, one of five Saints players who toured Australasia with Great Britain last summer. It was on that tour that Nicholls achieved his highest honour, that of leading the British Lions during the test series. Thirty-five years old Nicholls has been playing professionally since 1965 when he joined Widnes from the Derby Arms junior club and he had gained full international honours before he moved to Saint Helens in January 1973 for £9,000. In all Nicholls has played 16 times for Lancashire, 11 times for England and in 29 full internationals for Great Britain. He has made two full tours of Australasia, in 1974 and 1979, and he has also played in the World Championship competitions of 1972, 1975 and 1977. Nicholls was a member of Saints 1975 Floodlit Trophy winning side.

Saints' forward substitute in that 1975 final was lively hooker Graham Liptrot, the 24 years old former junior who also toured Australasia last summer. He has played four times for Great Britain at under-24 level and twice for the full England side.

Welsh prop Mel James joined Saints in October 1972 from Swansea RU FC and in his first ever game of rugby league he scored three tries for Saints 'A' against Oldham. He has since gone on to play six times for Wales and fully deserves his tour selection last spring.

A valuable member of the British squad in Australasia was versatile utility back Peter Glynn who can play equally well in any back position. He is 25 years old and joined Saints from junior football. So far he has played four times for Lancashire and twice for England.

Saints' fifth Australasia tourist is former Llanelli RU FC winger Roy Mathias who is another versatile player for he has appeared at loose-forward in the Welsh national side. He joined Saints in 1972 and has since played 16 times for Wales, visiting Australasia with them for the 1975 World Championship. Mathias scored two tries when Saints last won the Floodlit Trophy with that 22-2 victory over Dewsbury four years ago.

Defeat in the past two Floodlit Trophy finals will have made Saints even more determined to succeed this evening and so Oldham face an enormous task if they are to remove such illustrious opposition from this glamorous and lucrative competition.

Don Yates



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ROGER'S REPORT

By **ROGER HALSTEAD**

(Oldham Evening Chronicle)

Phil Larder, now in his benefit season, was 'sold' on Rugby League and Oldham when his parents took him to Watersheddings as a small boy to watch the great side of the late 1950's.

The Oldham side in those days was packed with big-name stars but even in that illustrious company one player stood out above all others to young Larder - Alan Davies!

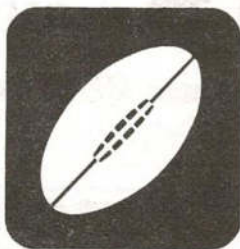
Schoolboy Larder was thrilled by Davies's speed, strength and skill and it was while watching Alan in action that Phil dreamed of the day he, too, would drag an Oldham jersey over his head.

He made his debut against Blackpool and brought the house down with a 60-yard try out of his own half and up the touchline towards the pavilion corner.

It was the first of many tries Larder was to score for Oldham and Phil has gone on to serve the club loyally and steadfastly for more than a decade. In the last few years he has been one of the few Oldham backs with the speed, confidence and stamina to score out of his own 25 and in the Second Division he is still doing it at 34!

As a goalkicker, too, Phil made his mark and he twice topped the century in a season during Graham Starkey's last spell here between 1970 and 1973.

Away from Watersheddings, Phil is now putting a great deal back into the game as coach to the town's senior schoolboy side which last season lifted the English Schools' Trophy with that memorable win against Hull. When his playing days are over he fancies moving into coaching in a big way . . . but, before that, he deserves a bumper benefit.



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ALEX RULES O.K.

Can you give the Correct Decision?

(1) A player kicks ahead, but is then obstructed.

- (a) The ball lands in the field of play.
- (b) The ball goes in touch on the full.
- (c) The ball first bounces in the in goal area.
- (d) The ball is caught by the fullback in the field of play.

(2) Can the player in possession ever be guilty of obstruction?

(3) A common form of obstruction occurs when a player after kicking the ball forward, is tackled or impeded by an opponent. However, a tackler cannot be expected to delay making a tackle. Because the player in possession might decide to kick the ball. The onus is on the kicker to get in his kick before his opponent commits himself to the tackle.

The referees problem is to decide instantly whether the opponent was committed to the tackle, or if the player in possession left his kick too late.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS 1 & 2

- (1a) Penalty kick, where ball next bounced in field of play.
(1b) Penalty kick, 5yds in from touch. Opposite point of entry.
(1c) Penalty kick, 5yds from try line, opposite point of entry.
(1d) Penalty kick, where ball is caught.

(2) No. The player in possession may use the goal posts or dodge behind a ruck of his own players.



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"OPEN RUGBY"

The International Rugby League Magazine

A new-looking Rugby League magazine is now available throughout the country including news of the game at schoolboy, amateur, and professional levels, and is unique in the fact that it is the only such publication in Britain covering the affairs of the 13-a-side code.

The magazine - "Open Rugby" - has, in fact, now been published for over three years, although its production has so far been a hobby for editor Harry Edgar, a lifelong Whitehaven supporter now living in Oxford. However, after issuing 19 such editions, Harry has now decided to give up his job as a printer to take on the promotion of "Open Rugby" as a full-time occupation. The magazine was first published in May 1976 as a four-page news-sheet, but since then its popularity has grown so much that thousands of Rugby League enthusiasts, both at amateur and professional level, are now regular subscribers.

The September 1979 edition of "Open Rugby" is now available in a modernised 32-page form, including features on Blackpool Borough, the Hull duo, and several Rugby League personalities, as well as a complete look at the behind-the-scenes efforts currently happening in Oldham as the town again strives to become a force in Rugby League circles. The story covers events in the schools, in the local amateur league, and at the professional club, while also included in the magazine is a review of the recent Australasian tour, a look at how the media treat the game, and news from other Rugby League playing countries.

The aim of the magazine is to help promote and develop Rugby League at all levels, while also providing intelligent reading for all those who care about the future of the game. The publishers hope to try and assist in putting our game in its rightful position where many of the sport's outstanding players will be given the widespread praise and recognition they deserve, instead of being tragically ignored by all but a small dedicated corner of the mass media.

It is hoped that copies of the current edition of "Open Rugby", priced 35p, will be available around the ground at today's game. Amateur clubs and supporters' clubs are also able to benefit from the sales of the magazine with a slight reduction being made to anyone making a bulk order. Details of the magazine and how to place an order for future editions can be obtained from either Harry Edgar, 71 Observatory Street, Oxford, or Peter Deakin, 23 Ward Street, Oldham.



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CLUB NEWS

Mr. DAVID OAKES, a 29 year old accountant, has been appointed financial and administrative controller of Oldham Rugby League Football Club.

He will be directly responsible to the committee for all financial matters. This does not only include finances on the football side but those concerned with the social club and the thriving Development Association, based at Clegg Street in the town centre.

Mr. Oakes, who lives in Whitehall Street, Oldham, and is married with one child, will operate from offices at Watersheddings.

A former head boy at the Bluecoat School, he began his career in banking and then went into accountancy, working for several local firms, including Times Printing Co., Seddon Atkinson and A.M. Lock and Co.

In his last post he was chief accountant at A.M. Lock and Co.

Mr. Kevin Wilkinson, our club secretary for the past eight years, is moving across the car park to take over as manager of the social club.

Mr. Wilkinson has long fancied a crack at the social club and he intends to give the club a 'new image' with particular emphasis on building up the catering side.

He will shortly begin a venture, for instance, in which meals will be served in the social club restaurant after Sunday games. If that is warmly received, it could well be extended to other nights in the week.

His big drive, however, will be to attract business men's trade at lunch time. Details of the opening will be announced in the local press, but the intention is to cater for all tastes and pockets at lunch time, Tuesday to Friday inclusive.

The Fitness Club and trim trail will be opened to the public shortly and with full lunchtime dining facilities also available it is thought the venture will really take on.

Of the appointment of Mr. Oakes, club chairman Ray Hatton says: 'Financial matters at Watersheddings are now too big and too comprehensive to be dealt with by a committee man. They constitute a full-time job in themselves.

"Mr. Wilkinson has been keen for a long time on doing something with the social club so the committee decided to appoint a man with accountancy qualifications to look after what is a big operation in itself.

Mr. Oakes will not be touching the day to day secretarial work on the football side. That will be done by Mrs. Anita Lees, who has been Mr. Wilkinson's assistant for some time.

During the course of the season we will either promote someone or appoint someone to be club secretary on the football side".



MR. DAVID OAKES.



Phil Larder races away against Huyton to score Oldham's opening try.



GARY WALCZAK on the move against Huyton COLIN HAWKYARD and BILL FRANCIS coming across in support.



A Huyton reception committee in the shape of props Geoff Flekler (no 8) and Bob Goulding (no 10) was waiting to tackle Alan Forster in the recent match at Watersheddings.

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LEAGUE TABLES

FIRST DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	pts
Leeds	2	2	0	0	62	27	4
Castleford	2	2	0	0	61	27	4
Bradford Nthn	2	2	0	0	40	8	4
Warrington	2	2	0	0	52	26	4
Salford	2	2	0	0	47	23	4
Widnes	2	1	0	1	38	27	2
Hull K.R.	2	1	0	1	39	35	2
Leigh	2	1	0	1	32	40	2
Wakefield	2	1	0	1	25	33	2
Wigan	2	1	0	1	25	37	2
Workington	2	1	0	1	19	39	2
St. Helens	2	0	0	2	38	48	0
Hull	2	0	0	2	26	39	0
New Hunslet	2	0	0	2	26	39	0
York	2	0	0	2	26	63	0
Blackpool	2	0	0	2	18	63	0

SECOND DIVISION

	P	W	D	L	F	A	pts
Halifax	2	2	0	0	55	1	4
Oldham	2	2	0	0	40	3	4
Dewsbury	2	2	0	0	50	21	4
Barrow	2	2	0	0	23	7	4
Huddersfield	2	2	0	0	27	24	4
Feathrstn R.	2	1	0	1	50	42	2
Bramley	2	1	0	1	37	29	2
Huyton	2	1	0	1	26	33	2
Whitehaven	2	1	0	1	17	46	2
Rochdale	2	0	0	2	14	20	0
Swinton	2	0	0	2	21	36	0
Batley	2	0	0	2	19	34	0
Keighley	2	0	0	2	32	48	0
Doncaster	2	0	0	2	5	55	0

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COLT'S CORNER

THAT 29-4 hammering of Bramley at Watersheddings gave the Oldham colts their fourth successive victory and shot them into a two-point lead at the top of the Rugby League's under-19 league.

The Oldham whiz-kids are the only side to have scored more than 100 points and apart from Widnes and Rochdale, who have played only one game, they share with Hull the distinction of having the best defensive record.

Both clubs have conceded only 33 points, but Hull have played three matches to Oldham's four. The only unbeaten teams are Widnes, who have played only one, Oldham and Hull, who dropped a point when drawing 7-7 at St. Helens.

Oldham have scored 23 tries in their defeats of Leigh, Bradford, Leeds and Bramley and 16 of them have been scored by five players.

Top of the list is scrum-half Paddy Kirwan, who has scored in every game and twice at Leigh to total five.

He is followed by winger Johnny Johnson, a Widnes boy, who has four, stand-off Ray Ashton (3), and forwards Andrew Goodway and Mick Coombes, who have two a piece.

Latest personality to be suitably impressed by the form of the Oldham youngsters is Irvine Barracough, whom older Watersheddings fans will remember as a full back just after the war.

Irvie is now groundsman at the University grounds in Leeds where Oldham beat the Headingley colts 15-13.

He told Holdham officials it was heart-warming to see such a competent Watersheddings side. He liked the display of the whole side but picked out forwards Andrew Goodway and Terry Flanagan and halves Paddy Kirwan and Ray Ashton for special mention.

Colts results to date: Castleford 22, Leeds 21; Leigh 14, OLDHAM 20; Rochdale 9, Hunslet 27; St. Helens 7, Hull 7; Salford 10, Bramley 8; Bramley 28, Hull KR 11; Dewsbury 15, Castleford 48; Hull 22, Salford 15; Hunslet 14, Leeds 9; OLDHAM 38, Bradford 2; Wakefield 6, Leigh 23; Widnes 30, St. Helens 7.

Bradford 18, Hunslet 15; Bramley 32, Wakefield 2; Castleford 11, Hull 21; Leeds 13, OLDHAM 15; Leigh 14, Salford 18; St. Helens 22, Dewsbury 12; Hunslet 15, Hull KR 18; Leeds 11, Leigh 11; OLDHAM 29, Bramley 4; Salford 20, St. Helens 11; Wakefield 14, Bradford 16.



After four matches the top try scorer in the colts team is scrum-half Paddy Kirwan, seen here on the day he signed for Oldham. Left to right: Club Official-Ken Broadbent, Kirwan, Colts, Coach Brian Gartland, Mr. Peter Kirwan-the player's father. Paddy has scored five tries so far in four games.

COLTS FIXTURES

1979

Aug. 18	Leigh	A
25	Bradford	H
Sept. 1	Leeds	A
8	Bramley	H
15	Castleford	A
29	Leeds	H
Oct. 6	Widnes	A
13	Hull	A
20	St. Helens	H
27	Wakefield	A
Nov. 3	Hunslet	H
10	Bradford	A
17	Salford	H
24	Hunslet	A
Dec. 1	Widnes	H
8	St. Helens	A
29	Leigh	H

F. A. 1980

Jan. 5	Salford	A
12	Bramley	A
19	Hull	H
26	Dewsbury	A
Feb. 2	Rochdale	A
9	Cup-First Round	
16	Hull KR	H
23	Cup-2nd Round	
March 1	Castleford	H
8	Hull KR	A
22	Dewsbury	H
29	Wakefield	H
April 5	Rochdale	H

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RUGBY LEAGUE NEWS By Brian Batt

(Daily Mail)

'The Rugby Union by shutting its door firmly against the amateur player of the other code, now supported by no less a body than the Sports Council, is making a huge mistake for it could be destructive to itself and harmful to its image as a sport to be enjoyed by the true amateur.'

That is just one of the many forthright views held by Ray French in his book *My Kind of Rugby* which I am sure will really interest followers of Rugby League.

French, former England Rugby Union forward brought up in a League stronghold eventually turned professional with his hometown club St. Helens, played for Great Britain and went on to join Widnes.

He won all the game's honours in a career that brought him into contact with the richest of League characters and his book is full of some fascinating stories as well as interesting comparisons on the two codes.

French adds the point: 'The insistence of the Rugby Union in refusing to allow an amateur player the right to transfer from League to Union damaging to its reputation and is out of place in our society.'

'Their governing body refuse to do so because, they claim, an amateur team may play against a professional team in the Rugby League Challenge Cup and would thereby forfeit its amateur status.'

'Why should Rugby Union cling so obstinately to senseless and outdated rules which inhibit the game's development for the enjoyment of all?'

Ray enjoyed his Union days but found he had to prove himself in League to be able to regard himself as a success at rugby.

He has always possessed a ready wit and among the many fine stories he recalls ? ? ? ? ? surrounding his game against France at Twickenham.



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First team fixtures 1979/80 Oldham Rugby League Football Club

Date	Opponent	Venue	K.O.	F. A.
Aug. 19	County Cup 1st round	Away		22-15
Aug. 26	Warrington 2nd round	Home		6-34
Sept. 2	Doncaster	Away		25-0
Sept. 9	Huyton	Home	3.00 p.m.	15-3
Sept. 16	John Player 1st Round			7-31
Sept. 23	Batley	Away		
Sept. 30	John Player 2nd Round			
Oct. 7	Featherstone	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Oct. 14	Whitehaven	Away		
Oct. 21	Bramley	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Oct. 28	Halifax	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Nov. 4	Huddersfield	Away		
Nov. 11	Barrow	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Nov. 18	Swinton	Away		
Nov. 25	Dewsbury	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 2	Huyton	Away		
Dec. 9	Batley	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 16	Dewsbury	Away		
Dec. 26	Rochdale	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 30	Featherstone	Away		
Jan. 6	Swinton	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Jan. 13	Keighley	Away		
Jan. 20				
Jan. 27	Huddersfield	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Feb. 3	Challenge Cup 1st Round			
Feb. 17				
Feb. 24	Challenge Cup 2nd round			
Mar. 2	Barrow	Away		
Mar. 9	Whitehaven	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Mar. 16	Keighley	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Mar. 23	Halifax	Away		
Mar. 30	Doncaster	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Apr. 6				
Apr. 13				
Apr. 20	Bramley	Away		
Apr. 27				

'A' Team Fixtures 1979/80 Oldham Rugby League Football Club.

Date	Opponent	Venue	K.O.	F. A.
Sept. 1	Workington	Home	3.00 p.m.	15-12
Sept. 7	Leigh	Away	7.30 p.m.	5-13
Sept. 13	Blackpool	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Sept. 21	Warrington	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Oct. 6	Workington	Away	2.30 p.m.	
Oct. 18	Wigan	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Oct. 26	Wigan	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Nov. 1	Leigh	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Nov. 10	Barrow	Away	2.30 p.m.	
Nov. 15	Swinton	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Nov. 24	Rochdale	Away	3.00 p.m.	
Nov. 29	St. Helens	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Dec. 7	Widnes	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Dec. 15	Whitehaven	Away	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 20	Rochdale	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 4	St. Helens	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 10	Swinton	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 17	Widnes	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 19	Whitehaven	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Jan. 26				
Feb. 2				
Feb. 9				
Feb. 14	Warrington	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Feb. 23				
Mar. 1	Barrow	Home	2.30 p.m.	
Mar. 12	Salford	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Mar. 15	Blackpool	Away	3.00 p.m.	
Mar. 20	Salford	Home	7.30 p.m.	

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AMATEUR R. L. NEWS By Alan Burke

He felt it was out of place to have his interests described in the programme as cards and darts in the local and felt squash and skiing sounded better.

That was until he was approached about them after the game by a top Union administrator at the cocktail reception at the swank Mayfair Hotel.

'Ah, I see you are a skier, French,' he was asked. Having never been on skis in his life and questioned about the area he used he refrained from saying St. Moritz and claimed: 'Oh, the lower slopes of the Berge.'

The official was impressed enough to admit he could consult his travel agent about the place not knowing that 'Berge' is the name of the Pilkington Glassworks dump for broken glass in St. Helens.

This season the British Amateur League Association will be playing hosts to two groups of Rugby League tourists, with the Papua New Guinea International team arriving in this country next month after a tour of France, and with the Australian Combined High Schools side making a welcomed return to these shores after their all conquering visit in 1972.

Before the formation of BARLA in March 1973, most players in the local amateur leagues were only able to exhibit their skills against opposition from within their own town, with the highlight of each season being a coach trip to play an away tie against some 'foreign' side in the Inter-Town competitions. However, the amateur players of today think nothing of having to travel the length of the country to play a pre-season friendly, while more ambitious clubs even stage annual games against teams from across the Channel. Trips across the water used to be restricted to the two-yearly visit into France by the Great Britain International team, although nowadays these matches are virtually looked upon as trial games prior to the country's best players making far greater journeys.

In 1977, the first ever Amateur Rugby League tour to the Southern Hemisphere took place with the Great Britain Under-18s' side visiting Australia and New Zealand, while last year the open-age International team made the inaugural visit by any sporting side to Papua New Guinea where Rugby League is the national sport. Now it is the turn of Britain to accommodate the forthcoming tourists, with the hope that, like the professional code, a regular cycle of International visits can be made.

Following a series of seven matches in France, mainly in the Toulouse, Carcassonne, Marseilles, and Perpignan areas, the Papua New Guinea side will be the first ever International team from that country to come to Britain when they arrive at Manchester Airport on Monday, October 29th. The tourists will play their first match two days later when they take on the Saint Helens Amateur League side, the current BARLA Inter-League Champions, at Knowley Road, St. Helens (7.30p.m.). The team will then move across to Humberside in readiness for a Test Match against Great Britain on Sunday, November 4th. The final match of the tour will take place in Cumbria, when a three day visit to the Lake District will include a game against the amateur County side at Craven Park, Barrow, on Tuesday, November 6.

And no sooner will the Papuans be on their flight home than the Australian Schoolboys will be arriving to try and emulate their predecessors' achievements of a clean sweep of all British opposition. On that last tour the Australians conceded just one try in twelve games, all of which were won, including three Test Matches against the English Schools side. This time the highlight of the tour will be the Test Match against the Great Britain Youth team, scheduled for Headingley, Leeds, on Saturday, January 12th.



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