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Coaching Staff: Graham Starkey (Manager) Terry Gorman (Asst. Manager)
Bill Francis (Player/Coach) Bob Welding (A Team Coach)
Brian Gartland (Colts Coach)

Professional Playing Staff

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Leslie Cook - Michael Coombes - Mike Cowley - Glen Crehan -
Pasquale D'Adamo - Peter Deakin - Jim Fidler - Eric Fitzsimmons -
Kevin Flanagan - Terry Flanagan - Alan Forster - Bill Francis - Dave Fricker -
Andrew Goodway - Ken Gwilliam - Fred Hall - Colin Hawkyard - Steve Herbert -
Keith Jackson - Clive Jones - Paddy Kirwan - Phil Larder - Steve Littler -
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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

THE LIONS CAN STILL ROAR

Swinton skipper David Watkins . . . in his younger days as Salford Captain.



SWINTON, the once mighty Lions from Station Road, come to Watersheddings today seeking their first away victory of the season.

Prior to last week-end's match they had won only four Second Division games - at home to Oldham, Barrow, Whitehaven and Huyton - and had picked up their only point away from home with a draw at Rochdale Hornets. They may be in a lowly league position but Swinton are a side which invariably does well against Oldham. And although they have had some poor results this time and one or two backroom upheavals the fact remains that they have beaten two of the promotion hopefuls in Barrow and ourselves.

Our shock defeat at Station Road on November 18 was followed by Barrow's reverse there a week or two ago: positive proof that the Lions must not be taken lightly in today's encounter.

Oldham will be out for revenge because Swinton's 15 - 12 win inflicted upon player-coach Bill Francis and his team their first defeat of the Second Division campaign.

Since then things have changed drastically behind the Station Road scenes. Coach Ken Halliwell and his assistant Keith Ashcroft, the former Oldham player, left the club and Swinton are still seeking replacements.

Swinton are advertising for a coach or player-coach and have had about seven or eight applicants to date. An appointment could be made soon, but Chris Hesketh has already intimated that he is not interested in either the Swinton vacancy or a similar position at Barrow, where they are seeking a man to do the sort of job on the field which Bill Francis does so successfully for us here at Watersheddings.

Peter Smethurst, the former Oldham forward and ex - "A" team coach at Wigan, may be interested in the assistant's job at Station Road though no final decision will be made about that until the senior post has been filled.

There is unlikely to be any serious move to put club skipper and vastly experienced international David Watkins into the job because David still lives in his native Wales and only travels to the north on match days.

The signing of Watkins created a tremendous amount of interest early this season when Swinton nipped down to the Valleys to persuade the former Salford star to come out of retirement. David is not as young as he used to be, nor as nippy, but he is doing a splendid job as Swinton's full back and skipper and he is a man Oldham will have to watch today, especially when he gets into position for drop goals.

Stan Gittins is picking the team and training the players during the coaching vacancy and with Watkins around to take charge on the field the Lions can be expected to manage a roar or two this afternoon!

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THAT WAS THE YEAR THAT WAS!

By Roger Halstead
(Oldham Evening Chronicle)

ON behalf of all Oldham supporters I would like to propose a New Year toast to all those people at Watersheddings who have worked miracle to transform the club during 1979. They are many because no individual, single handed, can even hope to do the vast amount of work that has taken place at the club since this time last year.

To reflect a little, manager Graham Starkey had just joined Oldham, the lottery was still in its infancy, and the weather had just begun to bite.

The worst freeze-up since 1963 meant Oldham did not play a match from Boxing Day, 1978 until February 28th, 1979... and even that had to be taken from Watersheddings to Salford because the first round Challenge Cup-tie against Hull amateurs, Ace, was frost-bound at Oldham.

Of the team that lined up in the cup tie against the amateurs only Martin Murphy, Alan Forster, Eric Fitzsimmons, Steve Lund and Bob Blackwood have been figuring in recent matches - an indication of all that has happened in the space of ten short months.

Off the field the lottery has continued to grow, there have been enormous alterations and improvements to the club's facilities (aided in part by a Sports Council grant), the ground looks in better shape than at any time in the last 20 years, remarkable forwards strides have been made in the field of scouting and Oldham can now boast one of the best medical set-ups in Rugby League.

On the field the transformation has been incredible. The early part of the year saw the signing of Jim Fiddler, Dennis Ashcroft and Clive Jones and while this venture did not prove successful the club soon showed it had other irons in the fire and that it really did mean business.

The club had promised us a top-class player-coach to work hand in hand with manager Starkey and they produced former Wigan and St. Helens stand-off ace Bill Francis in a pre-season signing that has already proved very successful indeed.

It was realised, too, that the club had to cater for the future and thus was born the youth policy that is one of the most exciting things to happen at Watersheddings for a long time.

Under the wing of coach Brian Gartland, Oldham have collected the signatures of a galaxy of young stars who should, with luck, ensure the future success of the club.

The Union market did not escape attention and Oldham hit the headlines with their signings of Bob Mordell and Adrian Alexander, two players who have proved already that they can go a long way in the professional game.

Now, only a year since the dark days when all seemed lost, Oldham have recaptured the imagination of the fans and look set for a bright and breezy future.

Rarely, in professional sport, has there been such a phenomenal change in fortunes in such a comparatively short time.

I raise my New Year glass to chairman Ray Hatton and his hard working committee, to manager Graham Starkey and all the coaching staff, and to everyone - many of them unsung - who have contributed to the success story.

The policies were based on team work - even at managerial and coaching level - and it is to the full Watersheddings TEAM, on the field and off it, that I offer my toast.

Do I have a seconder?



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ALEX RULES, O.K.

By Alex Givvons
(RL Grade I Referee)



In the Batley programme on December 9th., I outlined the importance of the Referee and Touch Judges using common sense when applying the laws of the game and advantage. I said then that there were 10 points in the Laws of the Game to cover players misconduct, 21 common offences at the play-the-ball, and more than 25 common offences possible at the scrum.

It is clear to see that if the play-the-ball is speeded up 90% of the game will improve. Therefore if the tackler released his man and stood off him, and the tackled player got up to play the ball instantly without any further contact i.e. pushing, leaning, many problems at the play-the-ball can be eliminated. The scrum gives us more problems obviously because there are more players involved, but more important is the fact that in the professional game possession is all important. In the Union code only the hooker with head strikes for the ball, you can therefore see that our hookers and scrum halves are under greater pressure.

The scrum does appear to provide players with an ideal opportunity to put into practise theories which are designed solely to obtain unfair advantages.

These theories often conflict with the laws of the game and the Referee must take action to prevent the scrums becoming untidy and spoiling an otherwise entertaining game.

The defending team must make the mark. The attacking team must come in square and pack down when the scrum half is ready to put the ball in the scrum.

The hookers must have their arms around the props and not be hanging with the "Loose Arm" this tends to collapse the pack. The hooker on the bottom of a collapsed pack can be assumed to have caused this collapse, and should be penalised. A tight scrum can only be made by both teams pushing each other, this does not mean wandering all over the pitch, but by taking the strain. This should prevent loose arm and collapsing of the pack.

An interesting paragraph in the old laws of the game manual printed 1960 on scrums.

It will be of interest and surprise to many to note that there has been no laws forbidding forwards to push in the scrum. In 1928-29 the council ruled that forwards should not push, before the half-back was in a position to put the ball in the scrum, but since that date, this ruling has been carried to the extreme until pushing at all unless the ball was actually in play, was invariably penalised by Referees. The scrum became a static thing and good solid scrummaging a thing of the past. Many new offences came into being which would not be possible if the forwards were pushing. The council reviewed this aspect of play in 1954/55. Providing that the scrum half did not dummy, and the forwards did not pack until he was ready with the ball.

An obvious tip to hookers and scrum halves who feel they are being victimised by the Referee is to pay it straight for a time, to get the Referee "off their backs".

Everyone wishes the scrums to be improved so long as the Ref' sorts out the other team, or at worst keeps the penalty count even??

SUPPORTERS CLUB NOTES

COACHES:

Our next away game is on 13th January at KEIGHLEY, and a coach will leave the Social Club for the match at 1.45 p.m.

Adult Members	£1.30	Adult Non-Members	£1.50
Junior Members	.90p	Junior Non-Members	£1.10

Save money and become a member. Ask at the souvenir shop today.

BADGES:

Metal Oldham Supporters Club lapel badges are now on sale in all the canteens or at the Social Club, priced 50p each. Blazer badges can also be obtained for £7.50.

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Bukta Red and White Rugby Shirts available from the club.
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THE draw for the first round of the Challenge Cup was due to be made on the B.B.C. television programme "Grandstand" yesterday. By the time you read these notes you will know our fate. doubt there were many Oldham supporters glued to their television sets yesterday afternoon! We are all hoping for a good run in the Challenge Cup, of course, because nothing creates interest and sets the adrenalin running like a run on the Wembley road. . especially when you are a club that has not reached the semi-final for 16 years. Dare we venture to suggest that as cup time comes around once more we have assembled the strongest squad of players that we have had for many years?

THE crowd of 3,716 for the derby with Rochdale on Boxing Day was our best Watersheddings gate of the season so our long-serving centre Phil Larder made a wise choice when he opted for the Hornets game as the one at which he would take his testimonial collection. The collection raised nearly £200 and Phil would like to thank all those who contributed for their generosity. In the next few months he has several more interesting events coming up for his testimonial and full details will be announced as they come up.

THE club would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the supporters for their backing during 1979 and link with that a wish that you all enjoy a happy and successful 1980.

AN appeal was recently made through the Oldham Chronicle for offers of temporary accommodation for our two Londoners, Bob Mordell and Adrian Alexander. Several supporters came forward with offers of help and we would like to thank them all for their interest and their willingness to help the cause. The same sentiments are expressed by the two players themselves. We feel that we are now well covered in this area and, hopefully, both Bob and Adrian will soon be settled in the north.

THE next development programme on the ground will be the provision of new turnstiles at the end of Watersheddings Street. Everything these days costs a lot of money and new turnstiles are no exception. We hope to erect four entrances off Watersheddings Street in the near future and another four later, but these may have to wait until early next season. We would like to apologise for any inconvenience that may be caused during the alterations and explain, too, why we have recently raised the minimum admission price from 90p to £1. As any housewife will confirm, inflation continues to ear into any budget and though we regretted the increased admission we felt, as a committee, it was something we had to do to try and keep pace with rising costs.

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Two try Geoff Munro on the break against Rochdale

OLDHAM ACTION

All pictures by OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE



Phil Ward gets it in the neck at Dewsbury.



Adrian Alexander sends in Steve Lund at Dewsbury

DAILY MIRROR/SHOPACHECK TEAM OF THE MONTH AWARD.

Today's pre-match presentation to the Oldham squad is the Daily Mirror/Shopacheck 2nd. Division team of the month award for December.

The award is a top class framed citation and a cheque for £150 and is in recognition of the teams unbeaten run during the month.

We join Halifax, Batley, & Featherstone Rovers as holders of this monthly title, sponsored by Shopacheck, the Northern Financial Services Company, and promoted exclusively by the Daily Mirror.

The December 1st. Division team of the month is Hull, winners of the B.B.C. 2 Floodlit Trophy.

This prestigious award crowns an excellent month for our club, having beaten Batley at home, Huyton & Dewsbury away and drawn with leaders Featherstone Rovers at Post Office Rd, scoring 88 points in the process.

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TOM WEBB'S YESTERYEAR

We are attempting to give all the Oldham R.L.F.C. results since the club started in 1897. In the following tables the letters M, G, T, stand for Minors, Goals, and Tries. Minors were scored when either the attacking team kicked or carried the ball over the dead-ball line or the touch-in-goal line, or when the defending side made the ball dead. In the early days, a goal counted more than any number of tries.

Unfortunately, the match details are incomplete for the 1880's, and any details would be welcomed by me, Tom Webb, 3 Haggate Crescent, Royton, Oldham, OL2 5NF.

DATE	OPPONENTS	VENUE	OLDHAM POINTS			OPPONENTS POINTS			RESULT
			M	G	T	M	G	T	
1879-80									
October 4th	LITHERLAND	AWAY	2		1		Nil		WON
October 11th	MIRFIELD	HOME	5	3		1			WON
October 18th	BOLTON	AWAY	3			2			Draw
October 25th	BROUGHTON	HOME	1			4			Lost
November 1st	ROVERS (Manchester)	AWAY	6		1		Nil		WON
November 8th	FREE WANDERERS	HOME	2		1	2			WON
November 22nd	CHEETHAM	HOME	3			2		2	Lost
November 29th	SWINTON	AWAY				3	1	1	Lost
January 1st	HALIFAX	AWAY	2			8	1	3	Lost
January 3rd	LITHERLAND	HOME	6	2	5		Nil		WON
January 10th	FREE WANDERERS	AWAY	2	1		2	1		Draw
February 7th	BROUGHTON	AWAY	1			5	1	5	Lost
February 21st	CHEETHAM HILL	HOME	14	3	5		Nil		WON
March 20th	SWINTON	HOME	3	1		3	1	2	Lost
March 29th	CHEETHAM	AWAY	2		1	4		3	Lost

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COLTS CORNER

IT really is a happy new year for our young hooker Les Cook, who had more reason than most to curse his luck in 1979.

The Widnes lad, reared in the same nursery as former Swinton hooker Derek Clark, was the third of our young signings when we snapped him up from Widnes St Marie's on May 17 last year.

Earlier that year he had represented Lancashire under-18's against Cumbria and Yorkshire in the same county side as Ray Ashton, Mike Cowley, Mick Coombes, Terry Flanagan and Steve Littler.

He was thrilled to sign and was eagerly looking forward to a bright start to his pro career. At pre-season training he looked very impressive and the coaches had no hesitation in naming him in a young sevens side to compete in the Swinton sevens at Station Road last August.

It was in that match that he badly damaged a knee and had to be carried off with an injury that proved to be cartilage trouble and kept him out of action for many months.

A few weeks later, Les went into a Manchester hospital for surgery. He had learned, sooner than most, about the disappointments of a pro career! But he was never downhearted and thanks to the diligence of the club's specialists and the encouragement and help given to him during his recovery period from Dr. Donald Walton, our club doctor, and physiotherapist Alan Bonelle, Les was recently due to make his comeback.

He was pencilled in to play his first game against Leigh colts last week-end... an eagerly awaited but long overdue baptism.

But it's a true saying that it's an ill wind that never blew any good... and Les will long remember his stay in a Manchester hospital. One of the nurses who looked after him is now his girl friend!

We are also due to welcome back second-row man Andrew Goodway, who has been out for several weeks with a broken bone in his hand.



Les Cook

COLTS FIXTURES

1979

Aug. 18	Leigh	A	16-11
25	Bradford	H	38-2
Sept. 1	Leeds	A	15-13
8	Bramley	H	29-4
15	Castleford	A	28-11
29	Leeds	H	12-19
Oct. 6	Widnes	A	21-17
13	Hull	A	17-16
20	St. Helens	H	P
27	Wakefield	A	37-16
Nov. 3	Hunslet	H	19-13
10	Bradford	A	8-6
17	Salford	H	P
24	Hunslet	A	7-12
Dec. 1	Widnes	H	P
8	St. Helens	A	28-5
29	Leigh	H	P

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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HARD TIMES AHEAD, FINANCIALLY. . .

By Brian Batty
Daily Mail

League Secretary David Oxley warns that it is going to be tough for all sport financially in the eighties.

His prediction, which I am sure few will dispute, came at the recent sponsorship launching by Matthew Brown.

He was not attempting to justify Rugby League's latest sponsorship deal for Slalom Lager which is worth £215,000 over the next four years.

A lot of people may feel that the League has sold out somewhat cheaply for the chance to sponsor the First and Second Divisions championships and the Premiership Trophy.

In fact I have heard those views expressed in certain quarters and there are those who believe we did not get enough cash for the State Express Challenge Cup.

When you break down sponsorships individually they may not seem so attractive but collectively they are bringing a lot of money into the game.

And Rugby League has its share of financially hard up clubs just as in any other sport.

Secretary Oxley stressed the clubs can still arrange secondary sponsorships - even with breweries. Some clubs have done so already and, of course, they are wondering how their sponsors will feel at having to share programme space to announce Slalom Lager.

But again there is no restriction to prevent a club carrying the names of two breweries products across the front of their programme even if it may leave the fans in two minds as to which to drink. The next step for sponsorship is that of the international home series and negotiations are taking place to arrange a four year package deal.

But there is reason why this sponsorship money should leave clubs complacent for they will still need to maintain their individual efforts to raise cash.



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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 Swinton	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 Leeds	Home		7-31
Sept. 19	B.S.C. St. Helens			9-20
Sept. 23	Batley	Away		17-17
Sept. 30	John Player 2nd Round			
Oct. 7	Featherstone	Home	3.00 p.m.	23-22
Oct. 14	Whitehaven	Away		13-13
Oct. 21	Bramley	Home	3.00 p.m.	22-9
Oct. 28	Halifax	Home	3.00 p.m.	P
Nov. 4	Huddersfield	Away		12-3
Nov. 11	Barrow	Home	3.00 p.m.	6-5
Nov. 18	Swinton	Away		12-15
Nov. 25	Dewsbury	Home	3.00 p.m.	25-6
Dec. 2	Huyton	Away		31-4
Dec. 9	Batley	Home	3.00 p.m.	32-9
Dec. 16	Dewsbury	Away		17-14
Dec. 26	Rochdale	Home	3.00 p.m.	13-0
Dec. 30	Featherstone	Away		8-8
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.	25-23
Sept. 21	Warrington	Away	7.30 p.m.	16-10
Oct. 6	Workington	Away	2.30 p.m.	P
Oct. 18	Wigan	Home	7.30 p.m.	18-17
Oct. 26	Wigan	Away	7.30 p.m.	25-15
Nov. 1	Leigh	Home	7.30 p.m.	16-3
Nov. 10	Barrow	Away	2.30 p.m.	16-22
Nov. 15	Swinton	Home	7.30 p.m.	P
Nov. 24	Rochdale	Away	3.00 p.m.	P
Nov. 29	St. Helens	Home	7.30 p.m.	P
Dec. 7	Widnes	Away	7.30 p.m.	16-16
Dec. 15	Whitehaven	Away	3.00 p.m.	12-8
Dec. 20	Rochdale	Home	7.30 p.m.	P
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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WATERSHEDDINGS WELCOME THE YOUNG KANGAROOS

By Alan Burke

Public Relations Officer,
Oldham Amateur Rugby League.

The Australian Combined High Schools side arrive in this country on Thursday for their second visit to Britain following the successful tour which their predecessors made in the 1972-73 season. On that inaugural tour the Australians won all twelve of their matches, scoring over 400 points and conceding only 17, including just one try. Of the players in that original squad, second-row forward Ian Schubert soon made a return to Britain when he starred as a winger in the 1975 World Championships with the senior kangaroo side. Since then, two other youth representatives, Les Boyd and Craig Young, also visited these shores with the 1978 Australian Tourists.

This season's youth tourists will be playing just two matches in this country following a month-long stay in France, where they have had an 8-match series, including two Test Matches against the French Youth international side. The Australians opening game on this side of the Channel is next Saturday, when they face the Great Britain Under-19's team in a Test Match, at Headingley, Leeds (3p.m.). The Oldham Amateur Rugby League are, of course, very honoured that they will be represented in this historical match by Higginshaw's Tony Ogden, who will be playing at prop-forward for the Young Lions.

Next Sunday (11am), the Australians play their second match in Britain when they face the current BARLA Youth County Champions, Lancashire, here at Watersheddings. This will be the first ever Amateur Rugby League match between teams representing Lancashire and Australia, and once again the Oldham League hope to be well represented. Earlier in the season there were three local youngsters in the Lancashire side which won the County Championship by defeating both Cumbria and Yorkshire. The trio, namely Tony Ogden, winger Steve Topham of Saint Anne's, and hooker Kevin Byrne of Saddleworth Rangers, are all expected to take the field in next Sunday's encounter, and of course, the British Amateur Rugby League Association are hoping for a good attendance for what should be a very exciting match between some of the best young players in the World.

The Oldham Standard Cup also resumes next Saturday when the four quarter-finals take place, each to maintain their individual efforts to raise cash.

Ferranti entertain Fitton Hill. The other two ties are both to be played out of town, with the current holders, Mayfield, meeting Salem Hornets, at Spring Hill in Rochdale, and with Langworthy Juniors playing hosts to Saddleworth Rangers at Bolton Road, Pendlebury.

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