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HALIFAX v. OLDHAM

SUNDAY, 8th FEBRUARY, 1981 — Notes by Andrew Hardcastle

AFTER GAINING PROMOTION TO DIVISION ONE from third position in Division Two last season, Oldham set about establishing themselves in the top flight in an impressive manner. An experienced back and forward in the shape of household names Clive Sullivan and Brian Lockwood were signed from Hull K.R., goal-kicking centre Mick Parrish came from Hunslet to further strengthen the three-quarters, and Geoff Clarkson from Bradford Northern added power to the second-row. With the experienced Bill Francis leading the side, prospects looked good, for in addition Oldham's successful lottery had given them the finance to run a very successful 'A' Team and Colts Team, to provide plenty of young talent to back up the experienced players.

Not everything has gone according to plan, however. Bill Francis was transferred to Salford, and Brian Lockwood to Widnes, while injuries have also bitten hard to prevent the establishing of a settled team, and a couple of weeks ago they found themselves anchored at the foot of the table.

Oldham still have time to escape from the relegation zone though, one thing in their favour being the large number of home games which remain. A fresh batch of new players are being recruited; stand-off Dennis O'Neill is on trial from Whitehaven, £20,000 rated Billy Harris has arrived from York, and hooker Dave Walker has joined them from Huyton. In addition, the young players are continuing to develop. Terry Flanagan is an outstanding loose-forward prospect, having already been vice-captain of the Gt. Britain Under 24 side, and there are other young startlets in half-backs Paddy Kirwan and Ray Ashton, and forward Mick Worrall. Other forwards available include the two Rugby Union converts Adrian Alexander and Bob Mordell, and Gareth Owen, who was a member of the recent Welsh R.L. squad in France. In the backs there are also New Zealand centre Ashley McEwan, full-back Martin Murphy and winger Geoff Munro.

We welcome all the Oldham players, officials and supporters to Thrum Hall today.



Know the Players

Number 13

KEN LOXTON

KEN LOXTON is the only International on the Halifax register. He played in the 3rd Test against New Zealand in 1971, a match which Gt. Britain won by 12-3 after losing the first two tests 18-13 and 17-14. The Gt. Britain team that day was Edwards (Castleford), Sullivan (Hull), Hesketh (Salford), Holmes (Leeds), Atkinson (Leeds), Millward (Hull K.R.), Loxton (Huddersfield), Harrison (Hull), Karalius (St. Helens), Jeanes (Wakefield), Irving (Oldham), Nicholls (St. Helens) and Halmshaw (Hx.). Subs were O'Neill (Widnes) and Lowe (Hull K.R.)

Ken was born at Normanton on 23rd September, 1947. He attended Normanton Secondary Modern School, which has produced many professional Rugby League players, and played for them from the age of eleven at scrum-half, the position he has always favoured. He was also outstanding as a goalkeeper in the school soccer team, winning representative honours with the town team. In Rugby League also, he was selected for the district side.

From school Ken joined Normanton Under 17's, where he was selected for Yorkshire in his first season. He had just moved on to the Under 19's when he was offered three trial matches at Huddersfield in 1965. The second of these trial matches was in the first team, and he was signed by Huddersfield in October 1965.

He was a member of the Huddersfield team which won the Headingley Sevens in 1967, but the highlight of his career at Fartown was appearing in the 1971 Challenge Cup Semi-Final, where Huddersfield were narrowly beaten by eventual winners Leigh. He fell out with Huddersfield when they started to play him at loose-forward - Ken has always felt that he is not big enough to play in the forwards, and in 1973 he moved on to Keighley.

He spent five years at Keighley, but when Barry Seabourne arrived at Lawkholme Lane, Ken found that he was again being selected at loose-forward, and he decided to retire in 1978. This was the time when Halifax were going through that infamous season in which they hardly won a match. Feeling that the Thrum Hallers were a better team than their results indicated, and that he could do something himself to help, he offered his services to the club.

His Halifax debut came at Swinton on 27th March, 1978; since then he has made 68 appearances and has scored two tries. He missed last season's Yorkshire Cup Final through injury, but he was back for the Challenge Cup and promotion run, in which he played a vital part. He still prefers the scrum-half position, but as a loose-forward he has so much to offer to Halifax. His classic round-the-legs tackling is a major asset, but it is his ball-handling and the way he sets up the moves which make him so valuable to the Thrum Hallers. Now assistant coach at Halifax, he has an important part to play in the future - hopefully on the field.

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HALIFAX v. OLDHAM 1880-1981 — by Robert Gate

THE HALIFAX AND OLDHAM CLUBS have been meeting each other for 101 years. The first of these encounters took place on New Year's Day, 1880, when Halifax were the victors at the old Hanson Lane ground, scoring a goal and three tries to nil. The clubs met 5 times under Rugby Union rules, Halifax winning 4 of the games to Oldham's solitary triumph which occurred on April 12th, 1884 at Oldham. The only scores in this game were 2 tries to the Roughyeds.

Since the Great Divide of 1895 the teams have clashed in 125 games and the men from Oldham have an advantage overall, 65 wins to Halifax's 54. Results have gone thus:

Halifax	Won	Lost	Drawn
League games at Thrum Hall	37	18	—
League games at Watersheddings	11	42	3
Cup-ties	6	5	3
TOTAL	54	65	6

Halifax's highest score at Thrum Hall against Oldham came on April 17th, 1933 when 9,000 people saw the blue and whites win by 33-8. Older fans might like to recall the teams:

Halifax: Irving (6 goals), Ivor Davies, Haigh (try), Rule (try), Cutbush (try), Kitson (try), Hanson, Morris, Renton, Sparkes, Morgan (try), Baynham, Higgs (2 tries).

Oldham: Rees (goal), Williams, Bardsley, Taylor, Jones, Givvons (try), Reynolds (try), Ashworth, Scaife, Read, Thomas, McNally, Butterworth.

Oldham's best score at Thrum Hall was obtained on April 26th, 1961 when Alan Kellett scored 3 tries against his home-town club as Oldham won 28-9. The teams on that occasion were:

Halifax: Owen (3 goals), Snowden (try), Burnett, Palmer, Freeman, Williams, Critchley, Fox, Shaw, Crabtree, Scroby, Sparks, Phillips.

Oldham: Sims (5 goals), Davies, Nestor, Holden, Patterson (try), Kellett, Pitchford, Payne, Goddard, Dufty (try), Winslade, Robinson, Parker (try).

Halifax scored their highest win at Watersheddings in 1978-79 when a 25-5 score was recorded, while the worst beating received at Oldham came in 1924-25 with a 35-7 drubbing.

The last time Halifax were involved in a scoreless draw was in a game at Oldham on 11th April, 1949. (The last 0-0 draw at Thrum Hall was against Swinton as far back as 1930-31).

Undoubtedly the most important game contested between the sides was the Championship Final in 1907, when Halifax won 18-3 at Fartown before a crowd of 13,200. In those far-off Edwardian days Halifax and Oldham were among the major powers of the game and this was the first Championship to feature the top four play-off of blessed memory. It was also the first season of 13-a-side rugby.

Among the Oldham players to take part in that match were 2 great international forwards, Arthur Smith and Bill Longworth, who subsequently signed for Halifax. Smith, who won the Military Medal in the Great War, had the distinction of playing in the first six Tests in Rugby League in England against the 1907-08 New Zealanders and the Australasians of 1908-09.

The first player Halifax signed from Oldham was David John Lewis, a Welsh centre who arrived at Thrum Hall in 1905 before moving on to play for the Treherbert Northern Union team. Since Lewis, Halifax have obtained a number of fine players from the Oldham club. Before the Great War Halifax signed a useful half-back in Harry Pemberton, while in 1929-30 Halifax signed no less than three three-quarters from Watersheddings. They were Laurie Higgins, Alf Higgs and Abe Johnson who all gave good service. Both Higgs and Higgins played in the 1931 Cup-winning side, Higgins scoring 2 tries while Johnson played in some of the earlier rounds, kicking the goal that earned a 2-2 draw in the third round tie against his old club. Johnson still holds the record for most points in a match by an Oldham player, scoring 30 in 1928 against Widnes. Higgins set up a goal-kicking record for Halifax in 1930 when he kicked 10 against Featherstone Juniors in a first round cup-tie. Alf Higgs was a Welsh International centre before becoming an accomplished loose-forward. Subsequent signings from Oldham have been Friend Taylor, Tom Greenwood, Albert Fearnley, Peter Fearis, Jack Keith, Alan Jarman, Alan Kellett and Johnny Blair.

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Threequarters

2 O'BYRNE M.

3 GARROD G.

4 CHOLMONDELEY D.

5 WAITES K.

Half Backs

6 BLACKER M.

7 LANGTON T.

Forwards

8 CALLON D.

9 MASKILL A.

10 STANDIDGE G.

11 SCOTT M.

12 BUSFIELD D.

13 LOXTON K.

Substitutes

14

15

Referee:

R. MOORE
(Wakefield)

Touch-Judges:

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A. B. Cookson
(Leeds)

Cerise

K. Reed
(Leeds)

OLDHAM

(Red & White Hoops)

Full Back

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Threequarters

MUNRO G. 2

HUNTER C. 3

PARRISH M. 4

CAFFERY B. 5

Half Backs

O'NEILL D. 6

ASHTON R. 7

Forwards

CLARKSON G. 8

WALKER D. 9

HARRIS B. 10

MORDELL B. 11

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Scoreboard

HALIFAX SCORERS

TRIES:

GOALS:

DROP GOALS:

OLDHAM SCORERS

TRIES:

GOALS:

DROP GOALS:

RESULT

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Oldham _____ Pts.

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FIXTURES 1980 - 81

First Team			Yorkshire Senior Competition		
Date	Opponents	Venue	Date	Opponents	Venue
August			August		
Sun 17th	Castleford (WBYC)	Home 3.30	Fri 1st	Huddersfield	Away 7.30
Sun 31st	Warrington	Home 3.30	Fri 8th	Keighley	Away 7.30
September			Wed 27th	Bradford N.	Away 7.30
Fri 5th	Salford	Away 7.30	September		
Sun 14th	Workington T.	Home 3.30	Sat 6th	Huddersfield	Home 2.30
Sun 21st	Wakefield T.	Away 3.30	Fri 12th	Hull	Away 7.30
Sun 28th	Widnes	Home 3.30	Sat 20th	Wakefield T.	Home 2.30
October			Sat 27th	Leeds (Cup)	Home 2.30
Sun 5th	Featherstone R.	Away 3.30	October		
Sun 12th	Wakefield T.	Home 3.30	Sat 4th	Featherstone R.	Home 2.30
Sun 19th	Castleford	Away 3.30	Sat 11th	Wakefield T.	Away 2.30
Sun 26th	Hull	Home 3.30	Sat 18th	Castleford	Home 2.30
November			Sat 25th	Y.S.C. Cup	
Sun 9th	Workington T.	Away 2.30	November		
Sun 16th	Leigh	Home 3.30	Sat 1st	Keighley	Home 2.30
Sun 23rd	John Player Trophy		Sat 15th	York	Away 2.30
Sun 30th	Leeds	Away 3.00	Sat 22nd	Bramley	Home 2.30
December			Sat 29th	Leeds	Home 2.30
Sun 7th	John Player Trophy		December		
Sun 14th	Hull K.R.	Away 3.00	Fri 5th	Dewsbury	Away 7.30
Sun 21st	Barrow	Home 3.30	Sat 13th	Hull K.R.	Home 2.30
Fri 26th	Bradford N.	Home 3.30	Sat 20th	Hunslet	Away 2.30
Sun 28th	Bradford N.	Away 3.30	Sat 27th	Bradford N.	Home 2.30
January			January 1981		
Sun 4th	Castleford	Home 3.30	Fri 2nd	Castleford	Away 7.30
Sun 11th	Leigh	Away 3.30	Sat 10th	Doncaster	Home 2.30
Sun 18th	Leeds	Home 3.30	Sat 17th	Leeds	Away 3.00
Sun 25th	Salford	Home 3.30	Sat 31st	Hull	Home 2.30
February			February		
Sun 1st	Hull	Away 3.00	Sat 7th	Batley	Away 3.00
Sun 8th	Oldham	Home 3.30	Sat 14th	Featherstone R.	Away 2.30
Sun 15th	State Express Challenge Cup		Sat 21st	York	Home 2.30
Sun 22nd	Barrow	Away 2.30	Sat 28th	Dewsbury	Home 2.30
March			March		
Sun 1st	State Express Challenge Cup		Sat 14th	Hunslet	Home 2.30
Sun 8th	Featherstone R.	Home 3.30	Sat 21st	Doncaster	Away 3.00
Sun 15th	Warrington	Away 3.00	Fri 27th	Bramley	Away 7.30
Sun 22nd	Oldham	Away 3.00	April		
Sun 29th	St. Helens	Home 3.30	Sat 11th	Batley	Home 2.30
April			Sat 18th	Hull K.R.	Away 2.30
Sun 5th	Widnes	Away 3.00			
Sun 12th	St. Helens	Away 3.00			
Mon 20th	Hull K.R.	Home 3.30			

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A Statistical History of Halifax R.L.F.C. 1895 to date — by Robert Gate

Season 1967-68

Captain — Colin Dixon

League Position — 13th

Playing Record:		P.43	W.22	L.18	D.3	For 532	Against 580
Hull K.R.	A	8-20					
Huddersfield	H	6-6					
Widnes	H	24-16					
Doncaster	A	19-12					
Doncaster	A	28-10 YC					
Salford	H	27-18					
Hull	H	2-11 YC					
Hull	H	16-30					
Huddersfield	H	16-0 BBC					
Bramley	A	16-24					
York	H	30-17					
Leeds	H	5-5 BBC					
Doncaster	H	35-12					
Wakefield T.	A	9-7					
Leeds	A	7-12 BBC					
Warrington	H	8-0					
Warrington	A	17-12					
York	A	25-2					
Bramley	H	6-0					
Salford	A	3-14					
Castleford	H	2-2					
Australians	H	2-22 TOUR					
Huddersfield	A	2-12					
Wakefield T.	H	16-9					
Featherstone R.	A	17-14					
Bradford N.	H	2-18					
Bradford N.	A	10-8					
Keighley	A	22-10					
Hunslet	H	21-19					
Featherstone R.	H	12-8					
Leigh Miners W.	H	24-7 CUP					
Castleford	A	6-25					
Hull	A	3-13					
Leeds	A	0-35					
Huddersfield	H	5-23 CUP					
Leeds	H	10-29					
Widnes	A	8-16					
Hunslet	A	12-10					
Dewsbury	H	13-3					
Keighley	H	8-12					
Hull K.R.	H	23-14					
Dewsbury	A	5-12					
St. Helens	A	2-31 T16					

POINTS OF INTEREST: Halifax won the Wigan Sevens beating Widnes 28-11 in the Final — The Halifax seven were Goodchild, Dixon, Robinson, James, Ramshaw, Renilson and Fearnley — The 35-0 defeat at Leeds was the worst since March 1923 when Wigan beat Halifax 64-0 — On 25th August, Halifax played their first home game under floodlights against Widnes before a crowd of 4,472 — Renilson played for Britain in the 3rd Test against Australia and in both Tests against France — He was selected for the 1968 World Cup series in Australia and played in all 3 matches — Goodchild (2 tries) and Scroby played for Yorkshire v. Cumberland — John Burnett, Terry Ramshaw and Paul Daley were transferred to Bradford and Jim Mills went to Salford — John Martin made his debut in the home draw with Huddersfield — Largest home crowd was 11,549 against Bradford — Lowest home crowd was 2,038 for the York game — The league match at Odsal drew a crowd of 16,611 — In a World Cup Trial on 3rd May, Gt. Britain beat Halifax by 25-2. Tom Van Vollenhoven guested for the British side in his last game and scored 3 tries — Ron James kicked 7 goals in the victory at Warrington — Players making debuts during the season in addition to Martin were Anderson, Rayner, Kirkbride, Lord, Burks and Nicholson.

TEAM PHOTOGRAPH

The team photograph on a previous page was kindly loaned by former Halifax player Danny Hurcombe, who is shown on the photograph. The full list of players is: *Back row:* G. Baynham, J. Treen, H. Irving, C. Smith, A. Childs, O. Griffiths, M. Meek, W. Jones, *Front row:* D. Hurcombe, R. E. Thomas, H. Lockwood, J. Watson and W. Horrod.

A couple of matches ago a 1946 photograph was shown for which the players' names were not known. These have been identified by Mr Hurcombe as: *Back row:* A. Bassett, M. Meek, C. Smith, J. Dixon, T. Greenwood, W. Greenwood, C. Brereton, *Front row:* B. Mitchell, H. Lockwood, F. Rule, A. Daniels, D. Hurcombe, G. Humphries.

'A' TEAM NEWS

On January 21st, the 'A' Team were narrowly beaten by Hull K.R. 'A' at Craven Park, by 12 points to 5. Making his debut was promising Greetland All-Rounders full-back Dave Knight, who is a very useful goal-kicker. Steve Conway kicked the goal at Craven Park, however, and Tony Garforth scored the try. Hooker Nigel Whitehouse monopolised the scrums, and there were also good performances from Mick Scott and Steve Laws. The team was: Knight; Dickinson, Hirst, Langhorn, Conway; Hannah, Welsh; Laws, Whitehouse, Garforth, Scott, Beevers, Garbett. Subs: Shillito and Halloran.

Against Bradford Northern 'A' at Thrum Hall the following Wednesday, Halifax led 6-5 with threequarters of the game gone, but fell apart to finally lose 17-6. Halifax's points came from three good goals from Steve Conway, and the Supporters' Club 'Man-of-the-Match' award went to Nigel Marshall. The team was: Knight; Dickinson, Hirst, Conway, Snee; Hannah, Marshall; Trialist, Whitehouse, Trialist, Beevers, Walton, Garbett. Subs: Welsh and Laws.

DAVE CALLON TESTIMONIAL FUND

During this afternoon's match there will be a draw for a giant food hamper. Tickets are on sale around the ground, and supporters are encouraged to have a go at winning this excellent prize.

A few more members are still needed for the 300 Club. Call in at the Supporters' Club shop by the bar if you would like to join. Membership is £10, which can be paid at £1 per month. Monthly draws will be for £25, £15, £10 and a bottle of whisky, and the two major prizes are a continental holiday for two and a colour television.

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