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HALIFAX v. OLDHAM – Sunday, October 4th, 1981

THIS AFTERNOON, we welcome the players, officials and supporters of Oldham to Thrum Hall for what should be one of the top Second Division matches of the season. Both clubs were relegated at the end of last season after some sterling performances in the higher grade, and both are among the favourites to return there at the first attempt. Oldham in fact, are so far unbeaten in the league this season.

Should Oldham succeed in winning promotion this time, then there is every chance that they could stay there and ultimately establish themselves as a leading First Division club, for they have some outstanding youngsters available to them. Loose-forward and captain, Terry Flanagan is a prime example of course, but half backs Ray Ashton and Paddy Kirwan and forward Alan Platt are not far behind. Ashton and Platt were recently transfer listed at fees of £60,000 each. This indicates how much talent these youngsters have.

Last February, Oldham won a crucial Division One relegation battle here at Thrum Hall by 13 points to 10. Since then, however, there have been a number of changes at Watersheddings. Former Swinton duo Frank Myler and Peter Smethurst have taken over as coaches, and have brought with them from Swinton stand off Alan Taylor and strong running second row forward David Nicholson for a joint fee of around £20,000.

Powerful centre Mick Parrish is banging over the goals again this season, whilst other top players to look out for are such as prop forward Billy Harris and former Rugby Union forward, Bob Mordell, another player recently transfer listed – at £35,000.



Cover photograph by kind permission of Halifax Evening Courier
Programme Notes by Andrew Hardcastle and Robert Gate.

HALIFAX v. OLDHAM 1880-1981 – By Robert Gate

HALIFAX FIRST ENCOUNTERED OLDHAM on January 1st, 1880 under Rugby Union Laws. The game was played on the old Hanson Lane ground which was vacated in 1886 and Halifax won convincingly by a goal and 3 tries to nothing.

Today's game is the 133rd between the club's since that first meeting. Oldham hold a slight advantage in victories of 67 to Halifax's 59. Results have gone thus:-

Halifax	Won	Lost	Drawn
Rugby Union (home and away)	4	1	—
League games at Thrum Hall	37	19	—
League games at Oldham	12	42	3
Cup-ties (home, away, neutral)	6	5	3
TOTALS	59	67	6

The first Rugby League (Northern Union) match between today's opponents took place on September 28th, 1895 in the code's inaugural season. It was Halifax's fourth game under the new regime and provided them with their fourth consecutive victory. The game took place at Thrum Hall and a 10-0 score line was the end product. Halifax's tries were scored by English International centre, Walter Jackson and the immortal stand off Archie Rigg, while Fred Firth, another English International and A. Robertshaw each kicked a conversion. The Roughyeds had their revenge in the return match winning 13-0 on 1st February, 1896.

Halifax's biggest win over Oldham in a league match was recorded on October 22nd, 1978 when a 32-2 victory was claimed at Thrum Hall, although they did record a 33-8 win back in April 1933. The teams in that 1978 game were:-

Halifax: Birts; Howard, Garrod, Snee/Hannah, Cholmondley; Blacker, Langton; Jarvis, Wood, Callon, Busfield, J. Martin/P. Martin, Loxton.

Oldham: Murphy/Anglin; Stondin, Larder/Taylor, O'Brien, Fricker; Munro, Radcliffe; Charles, O'Mahoney, Frodsham, Hall, Hughes, Flanagan.

Tries for Halifax were scored by Howard 2, Garrod 2, Snee, Birts, Cholmondley and Blacker. Birts kicked 4 goals. Uri Stondin scored Oldham's goal.

Two very high scoring games were played in 1959 within the space of four days. Halifax unfortunately were losers on both occasions. The first game was played at Thrum Hall on September 5th, 1959 and Oldham won 27-20. The teams will bring back fond memories to many fans.

Halifax: Owen (4 goals); Snowden, Burnett (2 tries), Palmer, Freeman; Dean, Jones (try); Thorley, Taylor (try), Fox, Sparks, Scroby, Clifft.

Oldham: Ganley (3 goals); Nestor (2 tries), Davies, Noon (2 tries), Simms; Kellett; Pitchford (2 tries); Smith, Keith, Goddard, Pugsley (try), McKeown, Robinson.

Three days later at Watersheddings, Oldham won 21-17 thanks to a wonderful virtuoso performance by an infallible Bernard Ganley who kicked nine goals from all over the park to augment Vince Nestor's solitary try. Halifax's own dead-shot Garfield Owen potted 4 goals and three tries were grabbed by Brian Sparks, Keith Williams and John Burnett.

The attendances were 11,301 at Thrum Hall and 12,003 at Watersheddings.

Stand-off in both those 1959 games for Oldham was the gifted Alan Kellett who gave good service to both today's contestants. After playing a couple of trial games for Halifax in November, 1954 from the local Ovenden club Kellett was signed by Oldham and made his debut in a 34-8 victory at Belle Vue Rangers on March 12th, 1955. Kellett went on to play in 196 games for Oldham (78 tries, 5 goals). When Oldham won the Lancashire cup in 1958, Kellett scored a try and dropped a goal as St. Helens were beaten 12-2. Halifax belatedly rectified their mistake in 1963, but it cost them £4,500 to obtain Kellett's services. It was money well spent, however, as he and another expensive signing, Swinton's Ken Roberts helped to transform Halifax into a trophy winning side. Kellett had three spells at Thrum Hall (including his trials) and played 130 matches for the blue and whites (23 tries, 18 goals). He was in the Halifax centre when the club won the Championship in 1965 and the Eastern Championship in 1964. Kellett also served Bradford Northern and Keighley.

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Number 18

Malcolm Agar

For the last couple of seasons, Halifax have been an outstanding team in defence. All members of the back section have been first class tacklers who have severely restricted the attacking scope of their opposite Numbers. At the same time, however, there has been a need for a player of genuine pace and skill to add a vital attacking ingredient. On the evidence of his play with Halifax so far, recent signing Malcolm Agar seems to be just that player.

It seems to be a tradition in England that players with footballing talent are channelled towards soccer - which is not so much the case in Wales and possibly explains why so many talented backs are produced in the valleys. Malcolm Agar's natural skills, therefore, took him along the path of soccer, and as a teenager he had trials as a left winger with Sheffield Wednesday. Always a R.L. fan, however, being a Castleford Supporter as a schoolboy, Malcolm turned to concentrate on rugby when those soccer trials came to nothing.

He joined Yorkshire Copperworks Rugby Union Club as a stand-off half, where he was quickly spotted by Dewsbury Rugby League Club and persuaded to sign on. He spent six years at Crown Flatt, appearing at centre, wing, stand-off and on one occasion at full back. Last season he finished as leading try scorer, despite missing games through injury.

When Nigel Stephenson left Dewsbury to join Bradford Northern, Malcolm also took over the goal-kicking role with much success; he had had experience of this at school where, being left-footed, he had generally taken the kicks from the right hand side of the field. At Thrum Hall Malcolm will be able to concentrate more on this aspect of his play, for it seems likely that he will be the club's regular goal-kicker. Initial indications are that he will be a success, for he strikes the ball with both power and accuracy. To date, he has certainly looked every bit as good as his predecessor, Jimmy Birts.

When Malcolm signed for Halifax at the beginning of this season after a spell on the Dewsbury transfer-list last season at £25,000, the actual fee paid (around £15,000) broke a Halifax record which had stood for over 20 years. It is amazing in these inflationary times that the £7,500 paid to Bradford Northern for forward Jack Scroby in 1959 still stood as the Halifax record until this summer. The record has since been broke again, of course, with the signing of Steve Bond.

Malcolm kicked his first goal for Halifax in his debut match against Bradford Northern at Thrum Hall on August 16th, and scored his first try in the home fixture with Bramley on September 6th. He missed the trip to Workington in the aftermath of the tragic death of his friend Alan Maskill, but he was back for the game against his former club Dewsbury to set the crowd talking with his magnificent 80 yard try when he beat the entire Dewsbury team to finally race over in the corner. The game also saw his first drop goal for Halifax.

Malcolm, born on December 12th, 1955, is a cousin of Carlisle's new player-coach Allan Agar. He is not married, though he is engaged.



Photograph by courtesy of Jim Moran. Post-card size copies available (40p) from souvenir shop.

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TEAMS

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Full Back

1 M. BLACKER

Threequarters

2 M. O'BYRNE

3 M. AGAR

4 D. CHOLMONDELEY

5 K. WAITES

Half Backs

6 G. GARROD

7 T. LANGTON

Forwards

8 A. ACKROYD

9 N. WHITEHOUSE

10 A. GARFORTH

11 K. LOXTON

12 D. CALLON

13 S. BOND

Substitutes

14 G. HIRST

15 D. WALTON

Referee:

J. MacDONALD
(Wigan)

Touch-Judges:

Gold

B. ROBINSON
(Leeds)

Cerise

C. A. SMITH
(York)

OLDHAM

(Red & White Hoops, Blue Shorts)

Full Back

TAYLOR, A. 1

Threequarters

CAFFREY, B. 2

McEWAN, A. 3

PARRISH, M. 4

HUNTER, C. 5

Half Backs

ASHTON, R. 6

KIRWAN, P. 7

Forwards

ALEXANDER, A. 8

O'MAHONEY, R. 9

HARRIS, B. 10

NICHOLSON, D. 11

WORRALL, M. 12

FLANAGAN, T. 13

Substitutes

HERBERT, S. 14

GOODWAY, A. 15

Scoreboard

HALIFAX SCORERS

TRIES:

GOALS:

DROP GOALS:

OLDHAM SCORERS

TRIES:

GOALS:

DROP GOALS:

RESULT

Halifax _____ Pts.

Oldham _____ Pts.

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The Halifax team in season 1934-35. The photograph was loaned by Mrs Rule, wife of the late Fred Rule, who died earlier this year. The players shown are: *Back:* Thornber, Baynham, Sparkes, Caley, Jack Cox, Treen, Rule. *Front:* Shaw, Dick Thomas, Cutbush, Harry Jones, Lockwood and Gascoign.

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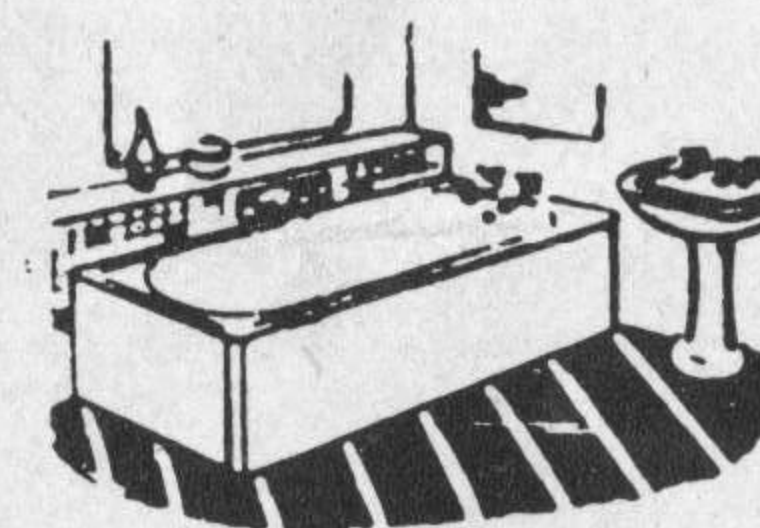
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"Fax and Figures"

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

Season 1963-1964

Captain: Alan Marchant

League Position: 8th (Div. 1)

Playing record: P.45 W.28 L.16 D.1 For 623 Against 498

			Appearances & Scorers	Tries	Goals
Featherstone R.	H	11-17			
Hull K.R.	A	10-7			
Swinton	A	7-13	Kellett 39	7	
Wakefield T.	H	7-5	James 38	8	105
Keighley	H	29-5 YC	Freeman 38	22	
Workington T.	A	5-15	Dixon 36	14	
St. Helens	H	13-5	Fogerty 36	5	
Wakefield T.	A	12-4 YC	Marchant 36	5	
Warrington	A	13-27	Roberts 34	2	
Dewsbury	A	10-9 YCSF	Renilson 33	4	
York	H	23-9 ED	Shaw 33	1	
Widnes	H	16-10	Burnett 31	9	
Hunslet	A	5-21	Jackson 30	22	
Bramley	H	19-2 ED	Duffy 27	1	
Featherstone R.		10-0 YCFin.	Scroby 26	1	
(at Wakefield)			M. Brown 20	5	
Hull	A	17-13	Robinson 20	8	
Keighley	H	22-10	Phillips 18	3	
Workington T.	H	19-2	B. Jones 13	—	8
St. Helens	A	13-12	Rhodes 12	2	
Huddersfield	H	8-3	B. Scott 12	1	
Wigan	H	10-16	Fox 11	2	
Keighley	A	11-3 ED	Daley 9	3	
Widnes	A	29-11	S. Kelley 6	1	
Warrington	H	18-10	Broadbent 5	—	
Featherstone R.	A	2-33	Harrison 5	—	
Batley	H	0-3 CUP	Hardcastle 4	2	
Hunslet	H	18-2 ED	Reeves 3	—	
Castleford	A	12-13	Stevenson 3	—	
Hull	H	15-3	Turnbull 1	—	5
Hull K.R.	H	9-8	Williams 1	—	
Hunslet	A	12-8 ED	Hudson 1	1	
Leeds	A	7-16	Crabtree 1	—	
Castleford	H	4-9	Gill 1	—	
Wakefield T.	A	10-38	Manning 1	—	
York	A	46-18 ED	Stockwell 1	—	
Hunslet	H	21-13			
Bramley	A	6-9 ED			
Wigan	A	3-3			
Keighley	H	18-14 ED			
Leeds	H	31-13			
Keighley	A	7-13			
Wakefield T.	H	21-12 EDSF			
Huddersfield	A	12-14			
Castleford		20-12 ED Fin.			
(Fartown)					
Swinton	H	12-15			

POINTS OF INTEREST: Halifax won both the Yorkshire Cup and the Eastern Championship — In the Eastern Final with Castleford Ron James kicked his 300th goal for Halifax and Duncan Jackson scored his 50th try — In scoring 3 tries in the home game with York (ED) Johnny Freeman overtook Arthur Daniels record total of 216 tries for the club — James extended his own record by scoring 8 tries from full back — Major signings were Ken

Roberts from Swinton (£5,500) and Alan Kellett from Oldham (£4,500) — Transfers included Frank Fox to Hull K.R. (£3,750), Keith Williams to Huddersfield (£1,750), Fred Turnbull to Wakefield (£1,750) and Mike Brown to the new Bradford Northern — Ken Roberts played for Britain while Fox and Shaw played for Yorkshire — Top attendance at Thrum Hall was 10,007 v. Wigan — The 'A' team won the YSC Championship defeating Hull 'A' by 48-5 in the final at Thrum Hall, Alan Rhodes kicked 9 goals — Phil Hudson scored 35 tries for the 'A' team, Paul Daley 20 tries and Trevor Stevenson 16 tries. Keith Williams kicked 85 goals and Alan Rhodes 34 goals — Wyn Phillips retired, playing his last game at Keighley (ED) — Alan Kellett was 'Player of the Year' in his first season with the club — Halifax had 10 players sent off during the season, including John Shaw on 4 occasions — Lewis Jones made his final appearance for Leeds in the game at Headingley (March 30th)

Today's Referee – is Mr John McDonald of Wigan. As a player in his younger days, he was a scrum-half, but in 1962, when in his middle twenties, he took up refereeing. He was promoted to Grade 2 in 1974 and to Grade 1 the following year. He still plays cricket and Crown Green bowls, and enjoys coaching Rugby League football. He is married with one daughter.

He first refereed a Halifax match on October 12th, 1975 when Halifax drew 15–15 with Whitehaven at Thrum Hall. He had the Halifax v. Oldham fixture at Thrum Hall in season 1977-78 when Oldham won 24–3 and among his other games featuring Halifax was last season's match at Castleford, when Halifax lost 23–9.

Dave Callon Testimonial Fund – Tickets for the forthcoming Sportsman's Dinner (at Brighthouse Civic Hall on Friday October 9th) are still available from the Souvenir Shop at the Newstead End of the ground. The five course dinner with the wines, and the opportunity to mingle with sporting celebrities, together with cabaret from Charlie Williams costs £10.

The highly popular Rugby League Roadshow comes to Halifax for Dave Callon on November 19th. The venue is King Cross Liberal Club, Arden Road. Further details later.

The Dave Callon Testimonial Brochure is now on sale in the Souvenir Shop.

Souvenir Shop – On sale in the shop on all match days are replica rugby shirts (complete with club badge), club sweaters, Halifax R.L.F.C. sweat shirts and a host of other souvenirs. Postcard size glossy photographs of all Halifax first and second team players are also available at the bargain price of 40p.

The shop also has a vast collection of rugby league books, magazines and programmes for sale. Many of these cannot be displayed because of space; if you are a keen collector, why not call in and ask for a private viewing? Or write to Andrew Hardcastle at 105 Paddock Lane, Norton Tower, Halifax, for a list of items available (enclose stamped addressed envelope please). Programmes and books are also purchased – good prices paid.

Rugby League Quiz – The Supporters' Club would like to hear from any husband and wife team (or any male – female combination) who would be interested in entering a nationwide quiz in which all the questions will be on rugby league. The prize at the end of the competition will be a fortnight's holiday for two in France. Enquire in the souvenir shop or from any supporters' club member.

Hooligans – Rugby League clubs like to pretend they do not have any hooligans amongst their supporters, but most of them do of course. The Batley Supporters' Club were concerned at the behaviour of a minority of Halifax fans in the match at Batley last month, whilst appreciating that the visit of Halifax provided them with one of their biggest crowds for years. Could we urge all Halifax fans to be on their best behaviour at all times.

Boot Sponsorship – For £25 (although the boots generally cost more than that) it is possible to sponsor the boots of a Halifax player. The following are so far sponsored:

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Sun.	"	23	YORKS. CUP 2nd Rnd		
Sun.	"	30	BATLEY	3-00	Away
Sun.	Sept.	6	BRAMLEY	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	13	WORKINGTON	3-00	Away
Sun.	"	20	DEWSBURY	3-30	Away
Sun.	"	27	HUNSLET	3-00	Home
Sun.	Oct.	4	OLDHAM	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	11	CARDIFF	3-00	Away
Sat/Sun	Oct 17/18		JOHN PLAYER TROPHY 1st Rnd		
Sun.	Oct.	25	SWINTON	3-00	Home
Sat/Sun	Oct 31/Nov 1		JOHN PLAYER TROPHY 2nd Rnd		
Sun.	Nov.	8	BRAMLEY	3-00	Away
Sun.	"	15	WORKINGTON	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	22	OLDHAM	3-00	Away
Sun.	"	29	—	—	—
Sun.	Dec.	6	ROCHDALE	3-00	Home
Fri.	"	11	SALFORD	7-30	Away
Sun.	"	20	HUYTON	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	27	KEIGHLEY	3-00	Home

1982

Sun.	Jan.	3	HUDDERSFIELD	3-30	Away
Sun.	"	10	BLACKPOOL	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	17	HUYTON	2-30	Away
Sun.	"	24	BATLEY	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	31	DONCASTER	3-00	Away
Sun.	Feb.	7	SALFORD	3-00	Home
Sat/Sun	13/14 Feb		STATE EXPRESS CHALL CUP 1st Rnd		
Sun.	Feb.	21	CARLISLE	3-00	Away
Sat/Sun	27/28 Feb		STATE EXPRESS CHALL CUP 2nd Rnd		
Sun.	Mar.	7	BLACKPOOL	3-00	Away
Sun.	"	14	DONCASTER	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	21	CARDIFF	3-00	Home
Weekend of	26/28 Mar		HUNSLET To be arranged		Away
Sun.	April	4	CARLISLE	3-00	Home
Fri.	"	9	KEIGHLEY	7-30	Away
Sun.	"	11	HUDDERSFIELD	3-00	Home
Sun.	"	18	SWINTON	3-00	Away
Wed.	"	21	DEWSBURY	7-30	Home
Sun.	"	25	ROCHDALE	3-00	Away

"A" TEAM FIXTURES, 1981/82

Sat.	Aug.	1	HUNSLET	3-00	Away
Sat.	Aug.	29	BATLEY	2-30	Home
Sat.	Sept.	5	BRAMLEY	2-30	Away
Sat.	"	12	HUNSLET	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	19	DEWSBURY	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	26	KEIGHLEY (Yks Cup 1st Rnd)	2-30	Home
Sat.	Oct.	3	HUDDERSFIELD	3-00	Away
Sat.	"	10	HULL	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	17	BRADFORD	3-00	Away
Sat.	"	24	YORKS. CUP 2nd Rnd		
Fri.	"	30	CASTLEFORD	7-30	Away
Sat.	Nov.	7	BRAMLEY	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	14	WAKEFIELD	2-30	Away
Fri.	"	20	LEEDS	7-30	Away
Sat.	"	28	BRADFORD	2-30	Home
Sat.	Dec.	5	YORK	2-15	Away
Sat.	"	12	—	—	—
Sat.	"	19	DEWSBURY	2-30	Away

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Sat.	Jan.	2	HUDDERSFIELD	2-30	Home
Fri.	"	8	HULL	7-30	Away
Sat.	"	16	WAKEFIELD	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	23	BATLEY	3-00	Away
Sat.	"	30	DONCASTER	2-30	Home
Fri.	Feb.	5	KEIGHLEY	7-30	Away
Sat.	"	13	FEATHERSTONE	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	20	YORK	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	27	FEATHERSTONE	3-00	Away
Sat.	Mar.	6	LEEDS	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	13	DONCASTER	3-00	Away
Sat.	"	20	—	—	—
Sat.	"	27	KEIGHLEY	2-30	Home
Sat.	April	3	CASTLEFORD	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	10	HULL KR	2-30	Home
Sat.	"	17	HULL KR	2-30	Away