

28 OLDHAM Team Check WHITEHAVEN 20

MICK BURKE	1	DAVID LIGHTFOOT	<i>Fisher</i>
BRYAN MCCARTHY	2	NORMAN LOFTHOUSE	<i>40</i>
DES FOY	3	BILL FISHER	<i>M'Connell</i>
GARY WARNECKE	4	ROB ACKERMAN	
KEVIN MEADOWS	5	WILLIE RICHARDSON	<i>Solaine</i>
PETER WALSH	6	MARK BECKWITH	<i>2T</i>
<i>Mike Ford</i> STEVE PETERS	7	DAVID WATSON	
NEIL CLAWSON	8	WILL TARRY	
IAN SANDERSON	9	GARY MOUNSEY	<i>T</i>
HUGH WADDELL	10	DUNCAN MCCARTNEY	
<i>Colin Hawkyard</i> PAUL ROUND	11	STEVEN HOWSE	
<i>Mal Graham</i> COLIN HAWKYARD	12	IAN BELL	
<i>Steve Peters</i> MAL GRAHAM	13	NEIL FEARON	<i>Burney</i>
TERRY FLANAGAN	14	TBA	
MICK BARDSLEY	15	STEVE BURNLEY	<i>Fearon</i>

Referee: Mr.K.Dockray (Leeds) Touch Judges: Mr.D.J.Barratt (Red) Mr.R.Carter (Orange)

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Record Receipts: £30,388.70 v Wigan,
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Record Transfer Fee Paid: £65,000 to
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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 points
v Liverpool City, April, 1959

First Game: 21st October, 1876 v Stalybridge

Highest number of points scored:
Bernard Ganley, 2,881

Most Appearances: Joe Ferguson, 685

Most Tries: Pre 1900, Jack Hirst, 233.
Since 1900, Alan Davies, 182

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Rugby League Championship Play-off Winners:
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Runners-up: 1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22,
1954-55

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Second Division Champions: 1963-64, 1981-82

Rugby League Challenge Cup Winners: 1898-99,
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Runners-up: 1906-07, 1911-12, 1923-24, 1925-26

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

Runners-up: 1908-09, 1911-12, 1918-19, 1921-22,
1954-55, 1966-67, 1968-69, 1986-87

Lancashire Championship Winners: 1907-08,
1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57, 1957-58

Runners-up: 1908-09, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1919-20,
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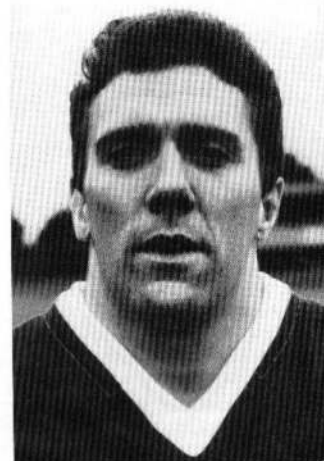
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PLAYERS PROFILE

NEIL CLAWSON



PLAYER PROFILE NO.7

Full Name:	Neil Clawson
Nick Name:	Sir
Birthdate:	5.5.61
Birthplace:	Castleford
Marital Status:	Jane/Emma, Carl
Occupation:	Miner
Car:	Triumph
Fav. TV Show:	Bread
Fav. Film:	Papillon
Fav. Music:	Motown
Fav. food/drink:	Steak/Guinness
Fav. reading:	True stories
Hobbies:	Shooting
Fav. other sports:	Weight-lifting
Likes about game:	Pay Day
Dislikes about game:	Losing
Superstitions:	None
Fav. position:	Prop-forward
Fav. Ground:	Headingley
Best Moment:	Oldham v Aussies, '86
Worst Moment:	Not playing in Lancs cup final, '86
Hardest player to tackle:	Andy Gregory
Hardest tackler:	David Hobbs
Fav. all-time player:	George Nicholls

CAREER WITH OLDHAM

Date signed on:	August, 1986 (from Featherstone)
Debut:	v Halifax (A) 3.9.86 (First Div)
Appearances:	43
Tries:	3
Goals:	0
Drop goals:	0
Total points:	12

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 1983 BREWEX CHALLENGE CUP WINNERS. Voted best international bottled lager.
 1983 BREWEX MEDAL AND DIPLOMA. Slalom Lager – Best in Class One for bottled lager.
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 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom International Strong Lager – for bottled lager.
 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom D – for bottled lager.
 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom Lager – for packaging and bottle dress.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID. Gold Medal with Palm Leaves and Certificate.
 Slalom International – for bottled lager.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID. Gold Medal and Certificate.
 Slalom D – for bottled lager.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID. Gold Medal and Certificate.
 Slalom Lager – for bottled lager.

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Workington	14	5	0	1	96	55	6	0	2	103	108	22
Featherstone	15	6	0	1	198	95	4	1	3	155	127	21
Runcorn	13	7	0	0	181	96	3	0	3	64	67	20
Wakefield	13	6	0	1	242	83	3	1	2	106	75	19
Barrow	16	7	0	1	125	75	2	1	5	84	157	19
Springfield	14	3	0	3	84	99	5	0	3	145	128	16
Keighley	17	6	0	2	166	93	2	0	7	111	198	16
Mansfield	16	5	1	2	116	109	2	0	6	132	168	15
Rochdale	16	7	0	2	117	74	0	0	7	55	199	14
Carlisle	13	4	1	1	103	83	2	0	5	67	144	13
York	15	4	0	4	143	154	2	1	4	96	145	13
Doncaster	17	3	1	4	132	153	2	1	6	133	156	12
Batley	15	3	1	4	109	120	2	0	5	72	87	11
Whitehaven	14	5	0	3	117	75	0	0	6	75	119	10
Fulham	15	4	0	3	119	79	1	0	7	102	214	10
Bramley	17	4	0	5	132	154	1	0	7	105	230	10
Huddersfield	15	4	0	5	161	156	0	0	6	46	103	8
Dewsbury	14	2	0	4	78	85	1	0	7	94	180	6

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MAL'S MESSAGE

(A few words from Oldham's player-coach)

What are the odds against Oldham being drawn to play Warrington at Wilderspool in THREE successive cup competitions? They must be fantastic. Still, it's happened so we have to make the best of it and you can rest assured that we will be doing just that.

The good thing about playing the Wire once more is that we know exactly what to expect. We will be under no misapprehension and I don't think we will fall into the trap of underestimating them, will we? We have already been there in the John Player Trophy and done the job so that will be a plus for us psychologically.

On the debit side, it really is a stroke of bad luck that we have had to make three trips to Wilderspool and have not had the chance to have a crack at them here. I would be 99.9 per cent sure of beating them at Watersheddings, but I still feel confident at Wilderspool where I helped Bradford to knock them out of the first round of the cup a year ago.

Warrington had two players dismissed last weekend – centre Paul Cullen and prop Tony Humphries – and all the Oldham players must be very disciplined to make sure that we don't have any players appearing before a judiciary committee that is going to be very stern indeed after the spate of sendings-off and brawls throughout the League in recent weeks.

We have a tough programme coming up in both cup and league and I want to stress that every Oldham player must be mindful of his discipline and conduct.

MAL GRAHAM



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WATERSHEDDINGS SURVEY

(News and views from inside the club)

MICK BARDSLEY

Mick Bardsley is no longer on the transfer list. One of nine players put on offer earlier in the season, Mick has forced himself into the first-team reckoning in recent weeks and has agreed to have his name removed from the list on which he was on offer at £5,000.

STARS OF THE SCREEN

After two TV appearances during our John Player Trophy run, we will again be on the little screen on January 24 when the Oldham - Wakefield game will be televised for showing that night on the ITV "Scrum-down" series.

ERIC'S TV DATE

Our coach Eric Fitzsimons had a TV date yesterday when he was commentator Ray French's right hand man at the John Player final between Leeds and St. Helens - another example of how the Oldham club has come to be recognised by the media in the past few weeks.

TIPPED FOR THE TOP

Oldham forwards Hugh Waddell and Paul Round are being mentioned as 'possibles' for the forthcoming Aussie tour. In last Saturday night's Pink Final, writers Jack MacNamara and David Burke named Round in their 'shadow' team. On the following day, Waddell was watched at Springfield Borough by Phil Larder, a member of Great Britain's backroom team.

SILK CUT DRAW

Ticket details etc. for our first-round Silk Cut tie at either Warrington or Huddersfield cannot be announced until after the preliminary round next weekend. Our next home game, v. Wakefield, will be a vital one in the title race so make a mental note now and try and bring a friend.

BEATING THE DEADLINE

It's the cup signing deadline tomorrow and you will have read in the press that we have been very active recently trying to strengthen the squad in time. We have been linked with several players including Mike Ford, Neil Turner (Doncaster), Errol Johnson (Leeds) and a trialist wing. At the time of going to press negotiations were continuing.

MRS MIKE ELLIOTT

It is with the deepest sympathy that we record the passing of Mrs Elliott on Christmas Day, aged 42. For nearly 14 years, Mike was an immensely popular player at Watersheddings and to him and his family we extend the deepest sympathy of everyone at the club, and all supporters.

COMMERCIAL CORNER

(DEVELOPMENT OFFICE TOPICS WITH RAY HILL)

HERE'S hoping you all had a happy Christmas and a good New Year. One of our supporters certainly did because he won £1,000 on the scratch-off lottery ticket - a grand way to celebrate the festive season in style. Incidentally, in these days when we rely so heavily on sponsorship, Lifeline and Cashline, I think it's perhaps time that we gave a 'plug' to the lottery tickets, which still provide a useful income even though the boom days of the lottery have gone for ever.

Within the next few weeks we will be on a new lottery ticket. It will be more simple and it will not include bingo: in short a ticket that lots of people are asking for and one we hope will prove very popular.

So do buy a ticket when you can because it only costs 25p and, as I say, it is useful income and a source that we want to try and build up if possible.

Congratulations to the £1,000 winner - a fan from Springhead - and also to Mr. Broadhurst of Moorside, who won the £500 holiday voucher for Lifeline members, drawn during the Rochdale game. The scheme is run in conjunction with Neilson Travel and Mr. Broadhurst will get £500 knocked off the cost of any holiday he books with Neilsons.

By the end of January, I hope to be carrying a full stock of club favours, souvenirs and clothing in the shop and I would hope that, now that we are well into the New Year, those fans who may have been considering joining Lifeline or Cashline, but wanted to get the holiday over first, will now come forward and sign up.

It goes without saying, of course, that we truly appreciate all the help we get from so many directions and I would like to guarantee the continued appreciation and hospitality awaiting all our sponsors, who are entertained so well on match days thanks to Ann, who does the catering, and to people like Lou Laverty, Mo, Steve, Hooley and Sharon.

We are a 'team' - just like the team on the field - and any team is only as good as its supporters. Thanks to all and here's to a terrific 1988.

FACE IN THE CROWD

"The potential has been obvious at Watersheddings, but it has remained untapped for a generation. The Oldham supporters are as fanatical and loyal as any in the game. I love the people of the town and admire the way they have rallied round the club this season, following the shattering blow of relegation."



JACK DEARDEN

— our man on
the terraces

That was Mal Graham speaking about the fantastic support the club has enjoyed this season, especially during our tremendous John Player Trophy run.

Unfortunately, we lost out once again at the semi-final stage, but most neutral observers felt we scored a moral victory. People are now starting to sit up and take notice of what is happening at Watersheddings.

As supporters I think we can share in the credit because, without the fans, there could be no team. This excellent support is welcomed and appreciated by all players, coaches, directors and everyone else connected with the club.

Now that we are into 1988 let's all make a New Year resolution to keep up the good work and to try and encourage a friend, neighbour, workmate or drinking pal to come along with us and sample what the 'new' Oldham club has to offer in terms of Sunday afternoon entertainment.

The more WE put in through our support on the terraces the more enjoyment WE get out because it means the directors can move ahead confidently with their ambitious plans for the future.

For the next two or three weeks it's back to the bread and butter of the Second Division and the forthcoming fixtures could have a crucial bearing on our title fortunes. Before the first round of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup we have to play Whitehaven, Runcorn and Wakefield and in the not-too-distant future we have to play Featherstone Rovers twice - a programme that underlines the fact that there is a lot of hard work to be done in the next couple of months.

We mustn't forget that when most Second Division teams visit us, it is their cup final. As a result of our recent TV appearances and massive coverage in the papers, our visitors usually raise their game in a bid to put one over on the team that is setting the pace.

One has only to look at our form against Bradford, Warrington and St. Helens to realise that most players relish a challenge to play against the best. However, I am sure we have the players to deal with this and I'm equally certain that Eric Fitzsimons and his staff will make the players well aware of the pitfalls that lie ahead.

Finally, it was good to see Hugh Waddell collecting the man-of-the-match award against St. Helens. Doesn't he look to have put on a yard of pace? Dressing room gossip has it that Hugh has picked up parking tickets in the town and he has put on speed by chasing the traffic wardens to plead his innocence and tell them: "Where I come from in Burton (or is it The Big Apple) we don't have wardens, parking meters etc. I'm used to parking anywhere."

Keep up the sprinting, Hugh - and don't forget to sidestep the traffic wardens!

JACK DEARDEN

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CORKY'S COMMENTS ...

(Iain MacCorquodale on the local scene)

THE year 1988 is going to be one to remember for the Oldham schoolboys, who take part in the first-ever schools' RL tour to Australia. A party of 19 has already been announced but a couple of places have been left open for any boy who progresses well over the rest of the season.

Tour captain will be Martin Halkyard of Saddleworth School, but St. Augustine's (the new RC comprehensive school formed by the amalgamation of St. Alban's and St. Anselm's two years ago) provides the largest contingent. The present squad is as follows:

St. Augustine's: Richard Badby, Lee Bradbury, Nathan Cheetham, Joe Diveney, George Slicker, Martin Swan, and Mick Martindale. **Saddleworth:** Martin Halkyard, Chris Eckerley, Antony Grimshaw, Phil Russell, Jason Wardle. In addition, the other boys named are Jonathan Eastwood (Breeze Hill), Martin Birch (Bluecoat), Phil McLean (Our Lady's), Mick McLean (North Chadderton), Philip McAndrew (Royton and Crompton), Dave Ward (Counthill), and Billy Tindall (Grange), the 'baby' of the party, who will have his 12th birthday the week before the boys leave Heathrow for Brisbane.

These boys, all rugby fanatics, offer Rugby League in the town and country a great future. They will give the local amateur clubs, who have done so much to develop their skills, years of good service and will hopefully help to put Oldham at the top of the Rugby League world whether or not they become professionals.

Fourteen of them have played for Lancashire at either schools or BARLA level and 12 of them were members of the under-11 town team which crushed Wigan 26-4 in the Lancashire final of 1986.

Tour details are as follows : June 18, Heathrow to Brisbane; June 21, game in Brisbane; June 23, game in Tweed Heads; June 25, game in Tamworth; June 30, game in Newcastle; July 2, game in Sydney; July 5, game in Canberra; July 9, game in Sydney; July 10, Sydney to Heathrow.

David Howes of the Rugby League gave the organisers advance information about the senior tour and it was possible to fix matches at venues so the boys have the opportunity to watch top-class Australian fixtures as well as the GB games. Naturally, the boys are hoping that at least one Oldham player gets selection so they can give extra support to one of their favourites.

Michael Ford, the Leigh scrum-half, attended the Christmas training sessions to help pass on his skills, while several Oldham players have volunteered their help later in the season. The organisers would like to thank all those who have helped in any way and a list of those who have contributed will be published in a future programme.

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THE BOSS TALKING...

(A personal view by Oldham coach Eric Fitzsimons)

IT is sad to see headlines featuring sin-bins, sendings-off, brawls, trials by video and allegations of unprovoked violence by some of the leading clubs in our great game of Rugby League. One of the great attractions of the game is the physical element. To see a good, hard tackle send the ball carrier reeling backwards can be as pleasing for the spectators as the centre slicing through two defenders on his way to the line.

At any level of Rugby League, a player must be prepared to accept a knock, legitimate or otherwise. It is the basic principle which raises League above so many other games. It is the cornerstone of discipline on the field. It is the element which the RUFC have for years classed as "the character building nature of the game."

The game has improved. Team and individual standards have improved. There is much greater pressure on players to win than there has ever been. Bad players will take short cuts if they are given the opportunity. They will 'spoil' opponents in any way they can. Good refereeing is a vital component in any game. The bad players must not be allowed to succeed. Any player who steps over the line should be dealt with firmly. That is what the players expect and it is vital for the game that both players and referees understand this and follow through with their end of the contract.

Both players and referees have a part to play on the pitch. Where one or both break down in their responsibilities we have the type of problems that have been in headline print recently.

Our code at Oldham is simple: if you are sin-binned or sent off, you are fined once the video confirms the offence. It usually does. Only Mick Burke's sin-bin at Batley was unwarranted this season. We have had three sendings-off and four sin-bins so far. It's not a record we are proud of but we work at getting it right and it's important that our policy falls in line with the wider interests of the game.

If this game is going to spread and grow stronger it has to sell itself as a sport that any parent would like their child to play. I wonder what effect the Yorkshire Cup final brawl has had on prospective newcomers? The Rugby League should insist that every club match is videotaped.

I would also like to see an improvement in refereeing standards. Give each referee a video copy of his game. Let him see his faults. It's no different to what the intelligent players already do. It might also take some of the pressure off referees by reducing the amount of weekly assessment. How can he relax and create a good match relationship with three different sets of assessors on his back? To referees I would say study the mannerisms of the grid-iron officials, the RU referees and touch judges and the Australian and Kiwi officials.

In all three you see very little wild gesturing and contorted facial expressions. The decisions and signals are carried out in a calm, dignified manner which is what most volatile situations demand.

The best official we have seen this season is Bill Shrimpton of New Zealand. He made mistakes but he always looked in total control. To touch judges I would say first of all watch more carefully what happens after the ball has been passed or kicked. Don't be a game spectator. Play your part and stick your flag up every time there is an off-the-ball incident. Again, do it in a calm manner, don't be sprinting on to the pitch and wildly waving.

Finally, we can take a leaf out of the Australian book and clean up the game by the use of video evidence after the game. All clubs should be made to submit them to the RL, who should study them and pull in any player who is guilty of violence and who has escaped the referee's punishment.

We're all keen for success in 1988. Our minimum estimation is promotion. We also want the championship to prove we are the best in the division, which I believe we are. Featherstone may be our biggest threat. We look forward to meeting them in February. May 1988 bring you many great Oldham performances as well as the right results. Best wishes to you all.



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Appearances & Scorers

SEASON 1987-88
(to date - 19 possible)

	APPTS (inc.Subs)	T	G	DG	PTS
Atkinson K.	7	1	27	-	58
Irving R.	9	1	-	-	4
Hawkyard C.	14	3	-	-	12
Meadows K.	19	5	-	-	20
Edwards J.	6	-	1	-	2
Peters S.	10	-	-	-	-
Kirwan P.	9	2	-	-	8
Sherratt I.	4	1	-	-	4
Sanderson I.	18	4	-	-	16
Waddell H.	18	5	-	-	20
Worrall M.	6	2	2	-	12
Graham M.	19	4	-	-	16
Flanagan T.	18	3	-	-	12
Round P.	19	13	-	-	52
Sherman P.	3	-	-	-	-
Copeland T.	3	-	-	-	-
Morrison T.	3	-	-	-	-
Bardsley M.	8	-	-	-	-
Marsden R.	1	-	-	-	-
Burke M.	14	4	3	1	23
Walsh P.	14	6	42	-	108
Bates I.	3	1	-	-	4
Clawson N.	14	1	-	-	4
McCarthy B.	12	10	-	-	40
Foy D.	9	4	-	-	16
Robinson S.	8	1	-	-	4
Nadiola T.	3	-	-	-	-
Warnecke G.	8	4	-	-	16
Myler C.	3	-	-	-	-
Hall M.	2	2	-	-	8

CODE 13

The December issue of the quarterly journal, 'Code 13', which traces Rugby League heritage, is available from Trevor Delaney, 6, Elmwood Terrace, Ingrow, Keighley BD22 7DP priced £3, post free. Back issues are available at £2.95 (post free). The December issue is the fifth. For a free introductory copy of issue No.1 simply send 50p in stamps.

The latest edition covers the history of Rugby League's first champions, Manningham, and the background to the formation of Bradford City in 1903. It is the first detailed history of Valley Parade as a rugby ground, recalling the ground's first major tragedy on Christmas Day, 1888 as well as detailing the games which have been played there involving Bradford Northern.

'Code 13' is fully illustrated and includes a history of Leigh's grounds, an interview with Warrington's Bill Shankland, part five of the Challenge Cup history, and a survey of Rugby League and soccer attendances.

OLDHAM RLFC FIXTURES & RESULTS 1987-88

Opponents Alt.

F A 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15

Aug 30	Whitehaven	3,122	-8	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 10	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Sep 2	Killinghall	3,274	32	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 11	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Sep 5	Warriors	2851	46	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 12	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Sep 12	At Newbould	2851	46	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 13	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Sep 20	At Newbould	2851	46	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 14	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Sep 27	Doncaster	2086	18	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 15	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Oct 4	Huddersfield	3,178	28	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 16	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Oct 11	At Newbould	3,178	28	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 17	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Oct 18	Carlisle	3,274	46	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 18	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Oct 25	At Newbould	3,274	46	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 19	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Nov 1	Killinghall	3,274	46	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 20	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Nov 8	FULHAM	2197	36	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 21	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Nov 15	Bradford	4854	22	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 22	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Nov 22	Batley	2858	44	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 23	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Nov 29	Warriors	5084	14	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 24	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Dec 6	Doncaster	2,551	17	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 25	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Dec 13	At Newbould	2,551	17	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 26	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Dec 20	St Helens	5,880	14	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 27	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Dec 27	At Newbould	5,880	14	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 28	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Jan 3	Rushdale	4,866	8	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 29	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Jan 10	Whitehaven	2,506	24	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 30	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Jan 17	At Newbould	2,506	24	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 31	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Jan 24	At Newbould	2,506	24	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 32	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Jan 31	At Newbould	2,506	24	At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 33	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Feb 7	Challenge Cup			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 34	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Feb 14	Challenge Cup			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 35	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Feb 21	Challenge Cup			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 36	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Feb 28	Featherstone			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 37	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Mar 6	Workington			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 38	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Mar 13	Barrow			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 39	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Mar 20	At Newbould			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 40	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Mar 27	Sheffield			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 41	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Apr 4	Runcorn			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 42	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Apr 11	Runcorn			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 43	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Apr 18	Warrington			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 44	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round
Apr 25	At Newbould			At Newbould	Irving	Meadons	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Barratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Round 45	Graham	Fleming	Sherrin	Round



FLASHBACK... March 1, 1981 and Paddy Kirwan is on his way to a crucial try in Oldham's 18-7 win over Workington Town in the second round of the Challenge Cup.

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MATCH REPORTS

Oldham v Rochdale Hornets

THE score perhaps flattered us, but we nevertheless beat Hornets in the Christmas derby 24-12 to retain our 100 per cent home record this season. Des Foy, Colin Hawkyard, Kevin Meadows and Hugh Waddell scored tries and Peter Walsh landed four goals, the highlight of which was Kevin's 90-yarder that killed off the brave Hornets challenge.

Springfield v Oldham

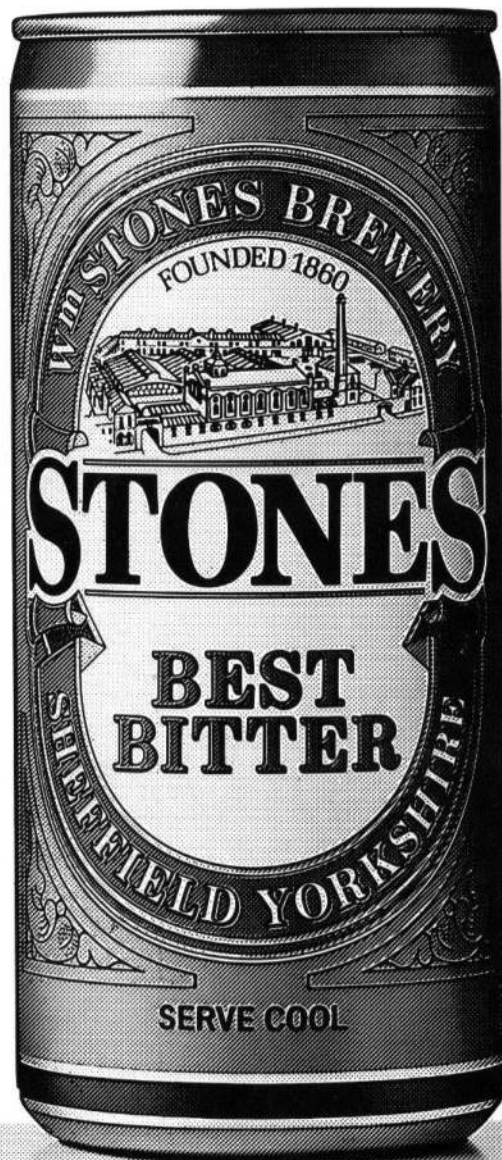
IN atrocious conditions on the Wigan Athletic soccer ground, we beat Springfield 20-4 in a professional performance. A mystery trialist played on the wing and scored one of our three tries, Bryan McCarthy and Gary Warnecke scoring the others, Peter Walsh kicked four goals.



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DIRECT FROM THE BOARD

(A regular feature in which a member of the board will take you behind the scenes)

THIS WEEK - HARVEY ASHWORTH

AS you will have gathered from the Press, we are making a determined effort to strengthen the squad before the Challenge Cup deadline tomorrow, not just for the challenges that lie ahead this season - the cup, the second division title, and the premiership - but to prepare the club for next season when, hopefully, we will be in the top-flight again.



It is no secret that we have been linked with Leigh scrum-half Mike Ford but Mike is only one of several players who have been attracting our attention in the past week or two, including the Doncaster winger Neil Turner, who scored two cracking tries here when the Dons were beaten 17-16 in early December.

There have been others, too and the wish from the board is that our terrific fans, friends, sponsors and backers keep up the good work - especially when the shares come on the market soon - so that we can continue to build a team that can do well in the First Division.

The gate of nearly 5,000 for the Rochdale game was highly encouraging and if we can keep nudging towards that 5,000 target we will be in a much better position financially to put our exciting plans into operation.

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WELCOME TO WHITEHAVEN

JUDGING by the high standards they set last season, when they finished third in the Second Division behind Swinton and Hunslet, the 'Haven are having a disappointing time this year, having won only five of their 14 league games and coming to Watersheddings today still seeking their first victory on their travels.

A far cry from last season when the Cumbrians missed out on promotion only because, as a one-off, the League decided that only the top two teams would go up.

'Haven won each of their 14 home games to prove invincible at the Recreation Ground, and with that sort of record they were expected to make another impact this time on the Second Division promotion race.

However, just as fate dealt them a cruel blow when only two teams went up last season, so they again found themselves on the wrong end of a slice of bad luck when their first three fixtures this season were against three of the sides relegated from the First Division - Oldham, Featherstone and Wakefield.

'Haven fully expected to start off with a win over Oldham at the Recreation Ground on a late summer's day in August, but with Ian Sherratt in stunning form in the front-row, the Oldham pack laid down the foundation for Oldham's 20-6 victory in what must rank as one of our best displays in the league.

Whitehaven official Eppie Gibson recalls it well. "We were very impressed with Oldham," he said. "We expected to win before the game, but Oldham were a big, hard side and they deserved their victory.

Unfortunately, the League in their wisdom gave us three opening fixtures against teams coming down from the First Division and we never really seemed to recover from this difficult start.

"Early results can make or mar a season. Confidence comes from wins and the difficult start set us back."

The early-season disappointments eventually led to the parting of the ways with coach Phil Kitchen and the promotion to boss of his assistant, John 'Spanky' McFarlane - the former Workington, Barrow and Whitehaven forward, who was a member of the famed Workington pack of several years ago.

'Spanky' now has as his assistant the ex-Workington, Whitehaven and Blackpool hooker Alan Banks - local men guiding the fortunes of a team which is largely composed of local players.

Nevertheless, there are some overseas men in the 'Haven side, including scrum-half David Watson from Auckland, New Zealand, prop Will Tarry from Queensland, Australia, and former Kiwi Test forward Ian Bell, who played against us on the opening day of the season.

In recent weeks, 'Haven have also had the services of New Zealander, Kelly Shelford, a cousin of Wigan's Test forward Adrian Shelford, but Kelly now has a knee cartilage injury and he was due to return home to New Zealand this week.

His injury, coupled with a broken ankle sustained against Carlisle recently by Gary Hetherington, will give the Cumbrians a loose-forward problem, which could possibly be filled by Neil Fearon, who has been out of the senior spotlight for the past few weeks.

In the centre, and appearing at Watersheddings for the first time, will be former Welsh Rugby Union and British Lions star Rob Ackerman.

FOLLOW THE 'A' TEAM

IT never rains, but what it pours! After two postponed matches and a lay-off over the Christmas holiday period, the 'A' team lads were raring to go against Blackpool last Saturday, only to discover that the monsoon conditions had turned Watersheddings into a paddy field.

Successive matches against Barrow, Dewsbury, and Blackpool have now been postponed and the 'A' team like the first team, can stand by for a fixture glut towards the end of the season.

It also means that Trevor Croston is having to wait a long time for his professional debut and that players like Ian Sherratt and Ian Bates cannot get in the match practice they need after long absences through illness and injury respectively.

Had the Blackpool game been played, Richard Irving would have been played in the centre to get him more involved, but Bates would have missed out because of 'flu and Paul Lord - another player needing matches after injury - would have come in at stand-off with Steve Patterson switching to the scrum base.

After 12 games played, the 'A' team is in a mid-table position with 13 points from five wins and three draws.

WITH THE SUPPORTERS CLUB

A very big welcome today to those Whitehaven supporters, who have made the long trip from Cumbria. We hope we can offer the same hospitality as we received from Whitehaven when we went to the Recreation Ground on the opening day of the season.

We hope for a good, clean game in the best traditions of Rugby League football.

Our canteens around the ground are open for refreshments and by the time these notes are read we hope to have a new canteen open behind the main stand. We apologise for any inconvenience caused at the big canteen at half-time. This is due to losing one canteen inside the main stand at the start of the season due to safety requirements, but we hope the provision of another refreshment point will help to ease the congestion.

May we remind all fans that match videos are now available at £10 to buy and £1.50 to hire. Fans wishing to book on coaches to away games should ring Joe on 627-0235 or Donald on 665-1832, but NOT the social club. Departure times will appear in the local press when possible.

It is still not too late to join the Supporters' Club, seniors or juniors, and we promise you great value for money. Ask at any canteen on match day or prior to departure to away games.

Thanks to everyone who attended the Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve family nights. We hope everybody enjoyed the two events as much as the committee. Thanks, too, to Mr. and Mrs. Jack Roscoe and family, staff etc. for all their efforts, and to the players who signed Christmas cards for the juniors.

Finally, we wish to extend the club's most sincere sympathy to our former winger Mike Elliott, following the tragic loss of his wife on Christmas Day.

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PRESS BOX CHATTER

(Roger Halstead, Oldham Evening Chronicle)



THE big news prior to Christmas was the club's announcement of plans to form a public limited company at Watersheddings. It was generally understood that the club was to be converted to a private limited company, but the 'new' club is nothing if it isn't ambitious with a Capital 'A' and the decision to float the club into the world of big business - as far as is known Oldham will be the only PLC in the Rugby League - underlines the extent of the board's ambitions.

The Oldham company will not be involved in dealings with the stock market, but as a PLC it will rank alongside some of the bigger soccer clubs such as Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United.

The idea, presumably, is to attract major investment from a wide area and with that in mind the club's accountants are currently in negotiations with the Inland Revenue for the go-ahead to introduce the Business Expansion Scheme which will allow major shareholders in certain tax brackets to claim relief on their investment.

By going public, the club can advertise extensively and use professional marketing and public relations expertise to 'sell' shares nationwide and stand a realistic chance of raising the £500,000 which is the ultimate target.

Such ambition behind the scenes is carried through on to the field of play. There are similarly exciting ventures in the pipeline on the playing side, but more of that later as and when the plans unfold.

ROGER HALSTEAD



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PROGRAMME POSTBAG

The following letter was sent to our club secretary, Mrs. Lees, from Mr. Alan Smith of Baselstrasse 40c, 4132 Muttens, Switzerland.

Dear Mrs. Lees,

In a recent match programme for the game against Fulham, a Mr. D.J. Power announced that he was seeking certain programmes to complete a remarkable collection of Oldham Rugby programmes going back to the 1940s. One of the requested items was for a game against New Zealand in October, 1947. It happens that I have this programme in my own collection and I am more than happy to donate it to Mr. Power's collection. He promises a 'handsome reward' but I don't want anything personally. If he would like to, he could make a modest contribution to the Oldham club.

It may seem unusual to receive a letter about Oldham Rugby from Switzerland. However, I remain a staunch supporter despite having left the town many years ago. My father sends the Oldham Chronicle match reports to Switzerland every week. My connections with the Oldham club go back even further. Former Oldham full back, R.L. Thomas, was my grandfather and another of his grandchildren, Dickie, is my cousin. In fact, I suspect that Dickie originally gave me the programme in question.

My uncle is Jack Read, a long-serving prop-forward in the period 1925-1940 and still going strong at the age of 84! Jack is, in fact, one of the few surviving members of the last Oldham team to win the RL Challenge Cup.

This brings me to one of my greatest unfulfilled ambitions. No prizes for guessing! It is, of course, to see Oldham at Wembley in the cup final. For over 30 years I've shared the disappointment of our faltering on the road to Wembley. Let's hope one day soon I can book that plane ticket to London.

I'll close by wishing everyone at the club well in their efforts to put Oldham where it belongs, right at the very top of the Rugby League world. Keep up the good work,

Regards

ALAN SMITH

FOOTNOTE: The programme in question is now in the club office, awaiting collection by Mr.D.J.Power. The office staff preferred not to send it through the post during the Christmas rush and had difficulty in tracing Mr. Power by 'phone.

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