

38 OLDHAM Team Check RUNCORN 4

76- MICK BURKE	1	TOMMY RAWLINSON
KEITH ATKINSON	2	IAN SMITH
DES FOY	3	CLIVE HUNTER <i>Booth</i>
CHARLIE McALISTER	4	JOHN BOOTH <i>Pojunas</i>
KEVIN MEADOWS	5	PAUL DURNIN
PAUL LORD	6	KERRY GIBSON <i>Astrall</i>
MIKE FORD	7	DAVID CROMPTON
NEIL CLAWSON	8	GLYN SHAW
IAN SANDERSON	9	STEVE MOYLAN <i>Dooley</i>
HUGH WADDELL	10	GEOFF DEAN <i>Myland</i>
PAUL ROUND	11	DAVID HUNT <i>Asterbrook</i>
MAL GRAHAM	12	TERRY ROSE <i>Daley</i>
GARY WARNECKE	13	JOHN COGGER
PETER WALSH	14	TBA <i>Mascott</i>
COLIN HAWKYARD	15	TBA <i>Middlehurst</i>

Referee: Mr.K.Dockray (Leeds) Touch Judges: Mr.H.Josephson (Red), Mr.D.Muhl (Orange)

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4th February, 1987

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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

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Since 1900, Alan Davies, 182

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1913-14, 1919-20, 1924-25, 1933-34, 1956-57,
1957-58, 1958-59

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PLAYERS PROFILE

MIKE FORD



PLAYER PROFILE NO.13

Full Name: Michael Alan Ford
Nick name: Fordy
Birthdate: 18.11.65
Birthplace: Springhead, Oldham
Marital Status: Single/fiancee Sally Anne
Occupation: Newsagent
Car: 1.45 Fiesta
Fav. TV Show: Minder, Only Fools & Horses, Question of Sport
Fav. Film: Dirty Dozen
Fav. Music: Queen, Elton John, Paul McCartney
Fav. food/drink: Lamb, Vimto
Fav. reading: Daily Mirror
Hobbies: Training, golf
Fav. other sports: Soccer, golf, athletics
Likes about game: Crown appreciation
Dislikes: Too many penalties, niggling
Superstitions: None
Fav. Ground: Wembley, Sydney Cricket Ground
Fav. position: scrum-half
Best Moment: Winning Challenge Cup
Playing for Eastern
Worst Moment: Being dropped
Hardest Player to: tackle: Phil Ford
Hardest tackler: Paul Medley
Fav. all-time player: Brett Kenny

CAREER WITH OLDHAM

Date signed on: 9.1.88
Debut: v Whitehaven (Div II)
Appearances: 10.1.88
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 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom Lager – for packaging and bottle dress.
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 Slalom International – for bottled lager.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID. Gold Medal and Certificate.
 Slalom D – for bottled lager.
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Wakefield	24	11	1	1	356	103	8	1	3	230	129	39
Oldham	24	11	0	2	386	170	8	1	2	232	117	39
Featherstone	25	9	1	1	300	121	9	1	4	264	197	38
Sheffield	26	8	1	4	232	179	7	0	6	212	194	31
Springfield	23	8	0	3	195	130	7	0	5	172	183	30
Barrow	25	9	1	2	179	107	4	1	8	138	240	28
York	24	8	0	4	284	188	5	1	6	202	219	27
Mansfield	26	8	1	4	171	163	5	0	8	242	243	27
Keighley	26	9	0	4	270	150	4	0	9	167	244	26
Workington	24	7	0	5	207	173	6	0	6	137	228	26
Runcorn	22	9	0	3	254	186	3	0	7	108	175	24
Carlisle	24	7	1	4	197	156	4	0	8	124	221	23
Doncaster	26	7	1	5	239	223	2	1	10	147	248	20
Rochdale	24	8	0	5	159	128	2	0	9	121	263	20
Bramley	26	6	0	7	189	227	3	1	9	165	309	19
Whitehaven	24	7	0	5	195	121	1	1	10	173	263	17
Huddersfield	25	5	1	7	230	248	2	0	10	111	279	15
Dewsbury	24	5	0	5	151	139	2	0	12	164	316	14
Fulham	24	5	0	7	173	212	2	0	10	136	283	14
Batley	24	3	1	9	156	231	3	0	8	110	172	13

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MAL'S MESSAGE

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

In addition to the 80 minutes on the park on a Sunday afternoon, quite a lot of the Oldham players have been going out with Ray Hill on commercial work on behalf of the club and we have found this not only a success for the club but very rewarding for ourselves.

To those of us from overseas, such as Peter Walsh, Charlie McAlister, Gary Warnecke and myself, it has been particularly interesting to look at local industry and as players who use aircraft a lot in our trips across the world it was fascinating to see the plane-makers at work at British Aerospace.

Our visits have also included calls at Park Cake, Rempoy, Slumberland, George Mills, Cobden Chadwick, Weatherseal and the Oldham Chronicle.

The usual format is that we look around the places, meet the people, have a draw for things like a club scarf, tie, rugby ball or mug, tell everyone about Lifeline or Cashline and then go back about a week later to 'sign up' the work force in our money-raising schemes.

I would like to thank the firms involved for opening up their facilities to us and the employees for welcoming us wholeheartedly into their places of work.

A big thank-you to all then, with the reminder that the end of the season is in sight so if you or your firm is thinking of inviting us around please let us know as soon as possible so we can make the necessary arrangements.

MAL GRAHAM



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FOLLOW THE 'A' TEAM

OUR promotion-seeking Oldham 'A' team picked up two more useful victories in its assault on the championship of the Alliance's second division. We did not play too well at Dewsbury, but we still came away with a 16-10 victory thanks to no small degree to Steve Robinson, who scored two late tries - one from long range - to clinch victory.

WITH Patterson, Kirwan and Hall getting the ball wide, and Casey and Sherratt running well in the pack, Oldham went into an early lead with a try by Patterson, goaled by Hall, and looked capable of establishing total superiority.

BAD handling and poor tackling crept in, however, and Dewsbury hit back to lead 8-6 at half-time and then added a penalty to take a 10-6 lead midway through the second half.

IT needed Robinson's two-try special to get Oldham out of trouble on a day when the club was hard pressed to field a representative team and brought former winger Geoff Munro out of retirement to help out.

GEOFF switched to full back in the second half, replacing a trialist, and made several timely tackles. Kirwan also had a good game, as did Steven Walsh on the left-wing, another player helping us out, and doing very nicely indeed.

THESE two golden-oldies - Munro and Walsh - also played a prominent part in our next win - a much more convincing 38-6 triumph over Bradford Northern at Watersheddings on a cold and windy night.

IT was a similar night to that in early season when Northern handed out our biggest defeat at Odsal, so the win provided us with ample revenge and also produced two hat-trick players in Leo Casey and Steven Walsh.

WE played some terrific football in the difficult conditions to score a total of eight tries - three each for Casey and Walsh and others for Robinson, who later had to quit with an ankle injury, and Munro.

BOTH these teams included a sprinkling of senior players and lined up thus:

Oldham: Patterson; Trialist, Irving, Robinson, Trialist; Walsh, Kirwan; Sherratt, Hall, Casey, Croston, Morrison, Peters. Subs: Trialist, Foley.

Bradford: Potts; Sidebottom, Nahu, Kamis, Simpson; Robinson, Godfrey; Simpson, Duggan, Grayshon, Croft, Moulden, Evans. Subs: Jones and Hall.

THE referee was K. Moore of Wakefield, son of the well-known and now retired whistler, Ronnie Moore, while the Bradford No 10 was Paul Grayshon, son of the famous Geoff, and the loose-forward was none other than Steve Evans, remembered in his Featherstone and Hull days as a stand-off or centre of international repute.

TEAMWORK was the essence of an Oldham victory which keeps us plugging away towards the promotion group but there were particularly pleasing individual displays from centre Richard Irving, scrum-half Paddy Kirwan, and forwards Leo Casey and Tony Morrison.

CASEY'S penetrative running was an outstanding feature of the match and in additionn to scoring three tries and having a hand in some of the other scores he could have done even better had he steadied down somewhat when he had made his break and made better use of the ball. Nevertheless, well done Leo - a great performance!

RICHARD IRVING also ran strongly and, like Casey, did enough to earn a sub's call-up in the first team game at Sheffield where Ian Sherratt and Kirwan made up the squad. THE 'A' team was due to have played Barrow at home last Tuesday and the programme for remaining games, starting this Wednesday, is as follows:

BLACKPOOL (h) Wednesday, April 6; Workington (h) Saturday, April 9 (2.30); Wakefield (a), Wednesday, April 13; Whitehaven (a), Saturday, April 16 (2.30); Batley (h) on Monday, April 18.

AT the time of writing the outstanding game at Workington had still to be arranged.

WITH THE SUPPORTERS CLUB

It's here already...our last league game at home before we start the premiership play-off. We are hoping for a good, clean game in the true spirit of Rugby League and we welcome today's visitors, Runcorn, to Watersheddings and invite home and away spectators to use our canteens situated around the ground.

We would like to thank the following juniors for their efforts in the sponsored walk around the car park prior to the Huddersfield game - David Kivlin, Anne Marie Kivlin, Peter Collinge, Ashley Baxter, Darren Newton, Gary Rafferty and Christine Gallagher. We hope to have raised about £210. Brilliant, kids!

The seniors walk to Rochdale was due to have taken place last Friday, and we will report on its success, or otherwise, in the next programme.

Special thanks go to Mr. Ken Leyland, signwriter, for the supporters boards used on the coaches.

The second set of tickets for the Wakefield match will be raffled off at today's game. The player of the year dance tickets are now on sale. Inquire with any Supporters' Club official or at the canteens. Tickets are limited, so hurry!

By now, you should all have received your voting slips so please return them as quickly as possible. We still have two away games left - at Wakefield and Carlisle - as we approach the season's end, and bookings are building up on the coaches so please book early (especially for Wakefield) by phoning Joe Gallagher on 627-0235 or Donald Pilkington on 665-1832.

Videos are still available, to hire at £1.50 a night or to buy at £10 each.

Many thanks to the club directors for the concessions to juniors in the season now ending. Hopefully, we will be able to offer the same next season. Watch the press. We are hoping to get all the juniors together at the end of the season to organise some events during the summer, while you are starved of rugby. Letters will be sent out to all members.

PROGRAMME NEWS

Programme collector Michael Turner is trying to complete a post-war set of Oldham programmes, home and away. He requires many such programmes for the period 1945 to 1956 and would love to hear from anyone who can help him on 061-620-6005

BEST FROM DOWN UNDER

The end of the season will soon be upon us. But that doesn't mean an end to Rugby League at Watersheddings. We are planning to show the best of the video action from Australia each Tuesday and Wednesday evening throughout the summer in the social club. Interested? Mention it to Jack Roscoe in the social club and he will give you all details.

FACE IN THE CROWD

THERE is something I've just got to get off my chest and it concerns Mr. Addy's comments regarding our team as "bully boys". This season we have seen Oldham perform in a peculiar Jekyll and Hyde manner occasionally driving the supporters wild with delight, and sometimes to the depths of despair, but never, ever, have I seen any one of our players use "bullying" tactics on any of our opponents.



JACK DEARDEN

- our man on
the terraces.

He went on to say: "I haven't seen a First Division performance today from Oldham". Well, Jack, I don't think we even saw a Second Division performance from your team, which brings me on to the subject of Second Division rugby in general.

I would like to see the authorities considering the possibilities of promoting some of our better amateur teams, assuming of course that the amateur clubs concerned feel they have the resources and finances to supplement their playing qualities.

It would certainly be an incentive to amateurs and I don't think we would lose much by giving it a go, judging by some of the poor attendances in several Second Division fixtures.

Soccer has recently implemented a similar system and, while still in the early days, at least some teams cannot say that they have been denied an opportunity to make progress. Just look at Wimbledon - ten years ago in the Southern League and now a well-established First Division club and only 90 minutes away from the FA Cup Final.

However, back to today's game. Earlier in the season we achieved an excellent win at Runcorn in a mudbath and I hope today's encounter will see an improvement in both playing and weather conditions. It certainly won't be a pushover, however, against opponents who were in contention for promotion themselves until several weeks ago.

If we did well at Sheffield and Rochdale Hornets it could be a full house at Wakefield Trinity next Sunday and if winning the title comes down to support and encouragement from the fans I know we won't be lacking as the season builds up to a thrilling climax.

So let's keep our tremendous support going right to the end of the season and on into the Premiership. The Belle Vue clash should certainly be a cracker.

JACK DEARDEN

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Manchester Evening News

COMMERCIAL CORNER

(Development Office Topics with Ray Hill)

AS this is our final home Second Division game - with only the play-offs to come - it would be remiss of me not to place on record the club's gratitude and appreciation to all those firms and individuals who have sponsored us this season.

Team sponsors, match sponsors, programme sponsors, and ball sponsors deserve our unqualified thanks and I will certainly be taking the opportunity in the not too distant future of contacting them again and offering them first chance of similar support next season when we have the added benefits of First Division football to offer.

Our support this season, in all its aspects, has been a revelation and if we can do so well in the Second Division it makes one wonder how well we can do in the First when there is so much more to be gained, from the sponsors' point of view, in terms of media attention, bigger crowds, and the presence of the TV cameras and journalists from the national papers.

By and large, the daily-paper coverage of Second Division matches is not very good and we have come to rely, as ever, on our trusty friends from the Oldham Chronicle, the local radio stations, the Advertiser, Radio Cavell, who do such a great job in taking our club into the local hospitals, and the local press agency.

It isn't very often that we get other media present at Second Division matches, but it be oh so different in the First Division. The national dailies will want match reports from Watersheddings (even if they don't send their own representative) and we can expect a much bigger national projection, both on Monday mornings with match reports and on a day-to-day basis with news and club gossip.

The potential sponsor will also enjoy the potential benefits of business and custom from out of town. Unlike Second Division clubs, those in the top flight bring a lot of travelling fans - an untapped source of business from the local firm that wants to project its image in a Rugby League environment.

Exciting days ahead, therefore, and I hope you will all want to be part of it in some shape or form.

In the meantime, we have to keep working hard at increasing revenue from our fund-raising activities and I can tell you that Lifeline membership has now topped 1,600 - more than 250 up on previous record figures. Our next target is 2,000 and we hope to reach it by early summer, so that we can look forward to offering a jackpot prize of a brand-new car later in the year.

I am happy to report that the Development Office is rapidly becoming a great hive of activity as our schemes take off and our expansion is such that we are always interested to hear from anybody who would like to help as agent or collector on 620-4870.

Finally, a reminder to all those Lifeline members who won a Grand National horse in our draw. It's the big day on Saturday, and we are looking forward to welcoming all those "owners" to the Watersheddings Grand National.

RAY HILL

We would like to thank all today's sponsors:-

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GOODBYE TO PETERS

In what was a swiftly negotiated deal, Steve Peters left us to join Leigh last week and just in time to beat the league match deadline. Steve came to Oldham with Kevin Meadows at the start of the season from Warrington, but two suspensions- one of six matches and one of eight- robbed us of his services for long periods. Leigh, battling against relegation, were keen to link up Peters with his former St Helens mates Billy Benyon and Harry Pinner and we feel we a very good deal in the circumstances. The fee plus VAT was in the region of £18,000 -to £20,000.

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THE BOSS TALKING...

(A personal view by Oldham coach Eric Fitzsimons)

WELCOME today to all our visitors from Runcorn as we play our last home league fixture of the season. I'm sure it will be a tough game. Bill Ashurst will be keen to see his lads redress the balance from our visit to Canal Street. On that day we settled in quickly and never let the Runcorn players gain a toe-hold. They were unlucky that we were in a hungry mood.



Sunday, January 17, is a day that will remain in the mind of Charlie McAlister as his life. Not only did he charm the Oldham supporters with his play, but he was also forced to make a decision he didn't want to do at the time. We are all aware that it was a comparatively unknown freelance journalist from West Lancashire who gave Charlie's name to the Daily Mirror when he was playing as A N Other. The Mirror printed it and virtually blew his chances of ever playing Rugby Union again.

Charlie is now delighted at how things have turned out. So are we all at Oldham. We would like to give thanks, therefore, to our mystery mole from the St Helens area but he should remember please that not all RU trialists are successful, so their anonymity should be preserved at all times - and their future in Union - by keeping their names out of the Press in future.

Back to our game at Canal Street, John Cogger was once again prominent. He's a lively lad, who loves to dart from acting half-back. He has a very aggressive style and is capable of capitalising on any slack defensive work. I can appreciate why Runcorn have worked hard to keep hold of him again this year. He has also been a key player all season.

It is now obvious that we will play in the premiership play-offs at the end of the season. Our final position will determine the draw, of course. For the team finishing top, home advantage is guaranteed in both first and second rounds.

Add to that the prospect of £10,000 for finishing as champions and there is every incentive for us all to blaze to the bitter end. There is much more than financial incentive at stake, though. There is a certain amount of pride involved as well.

Four failures weigh heavily on our minds - Doncaster, Barrow, Wakefield and Featherstone. No one will convince me that any of these teams should have beaten us. The remaining games are a simple test of the team's 'desire'. Success or failure hinges around the team's ability to play as a team that wants to prove beyond doubt that it is the best team in the Second Division.

Runcorn is the immediate hurdle. We will negotiate them all one at a time!

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APPEARANCES & SCORERS

SEASON 1987-88
(to date - 31 possible)
(Excluding Rochdale Game - Good Friday)

	APPTS (inc.Subs) T		G	DG	PTS
Atkinson K.	11	4	46	-	108
Irving R.	10	1	-	-	4
Hawkyard C.	25	3	-	-	12
Meadows K.	31	12	-	-	48
Edwards J.	6	-	1	-	2
Peters S.	13	-	-	-	-
Kirwan P.	9	2	-	-	8
Sherratt I.	7	1	-	-	4
Sanderson I.	22	4	-	-	16
Waddell H.	29	7	-	-	28
Worrall M.	6	2	2	-	12
Graham M.	31	10	-	-	40
Flanagan T.	29	5	-	-	20
Round P.	29	16	-	-	64
Sherman P.	3	-	-	-	-
Copeland T.	3	-	-	-	-
Morrison T.	5	-	-	-	-
Bardsley M.	9	-	-	-	-
Marsden R.	1	-	-	-	-
Burke M.	24	6	4	1	33
Walsh P.	25	11	61	-	166
Bates I.	3	1	-	-	4
Clawson N.	26	2	-	-	8
McCarthy B.	17	10	-	-	40
Foy D.	20	10	-	-	40
Robinson S.	8	1	-	-	4
Nadiola T.	3	-	-	-	-
Warnecke G.	20	7	-	-	28
Myler C.	3	-	-	-	-
Hall M.	3	2	-	-	8
Ford M.	13	6	-	1	25
McAlister C.	11	6	1	-	26
Lord P.	7	2	-	-	8
Casey L.	4	-	-	-	-

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OLDHAM RLFC FIXTURES & RESULTS 1987-88

Opponents	Att.	F	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Aug 30	Whitehaven	3,122	20	-6	Atkinson 3G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Sep 2	Kelby	3,724	32	-3	Atkinson 3G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Sep 6	Barrow	2,851	46	-11	Atkinson 7G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Sep 20	Warrington	5,554	8	-42	Atkinson 2G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Sep 27	Darlington	3,520	22	-20	Atkinson 4G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Sep 27	Darlington	2,060	18	-20	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Oct 4	Huddersfield	1,729	26	-4	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Oct 11	Sheffield	3,774	44	-20	Burke 2T	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Oct 18	Carlisle	3,174	44	-20	Burke 2T	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Nov 1	Kelby	3,724	32	-3	Burke 1T	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Nov 8	Fulham	3,197	36	-8	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Nov 15	Bradford	4,858	22	-6	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Nov 22	Barnley	2,808	44	-10	Burke 3G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Nov 29	Warrington	5,084	14	-10	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Dec 6	Darlington	3,551	17	-16	Burke 1G	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Dec 13	Barrow	1,800	14	-18	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Dec 13	Barrow	8,116	8	-18	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Dec 26	Rochdale	4,866	24	-12	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Jan 3	Springfield	2,507	20	-20	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Jan 10	Whitehaven	3,007	34	-20	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Jan 17	Nunston	2,231	10	-20	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Jan 24	Warrington	5,240	7	-17	Meadows	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Jan 31	Warrington	7,540	7	-17	Meadows	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Feb 7	Carlisle	1,257	17	-4	Meadows	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Feb 14	Carlisle	1,257	17	-4	Meadows	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Feb 21	Farnham	2,500	8	-8	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Feb 28	Farnham	2,500	8	-8	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Mar 6	Warrington	2,866	36	-16	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Mar 13	Bradford	1,839	36	-16	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Mar 20	Huddersfield	1,956	48	-15	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Mar 27	Rochdale	2,390	28	-15	Burke	Irving	Hawkyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kirwan	Sheratt	Sanderson	Waddell	Worrall	Finagan	Sherratt	Round
Apr 4	Runcorn																	
Apr 10	Warrington																	
Apr 17	Carlisle																	

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MATCH REPORTS

Oldham v Huddersfield

A nine-try spectacular blitzed Huddersfield and enabled Oldham to run up a season's best 48 points, while at the same time "nilling" the Yorkshiremen, in a game that made big inroads into title rivals Wakefield's superior points difference.

Mick Burke had an outstanding game, cashing in on the service provided by half-backs Mike Ford and Paul Lord to join the line effectively and play a major role in the build-up to most of the tries.

The first half was a little "iffy", but Huddersfield were totally swamped afterwards when the home side added six tries to the three they scored before the interval.

Charlie McAlister, who also had an outstanding game, scored two, Ford grabbed another two, and Burke, Paul Round, Gary Warnecke, Mal Graham and Peter Walsh also scored as Oldham stepped up their challenge for the title.

Sheffield v Oldham

After a dreadful first half, in which the Eagles were arguably the better side, Oldham finally got their act together to pick up two useful points on a day when title rivals Wakefield and Featherstone both slumped to shock defeats.

We won 28-15 on our first visit to Owlerton Stadium and there was a novel touch after the match when hundreds of Oldham fans, waiting to leave the car park, heard of the Wakefield and Featherstone defeats on their car radios - and went wild with delight.

Scarves were waved and horns were blown, but despite the improved second-half performance and a terrific individual display from man-of-the-match Mal Graham we will have to shape better than this to go on and take the title.

Keith Atkinson kicked four goals and our five tries were scored by Graham (2), Peter Walsh (2) and Atkinson on a day when Graham killed off the Eagles with a try on the stroke of half-time and a determined run to capitalize on a Mike Ford try to put in Walsh for another try just after the turn-round.

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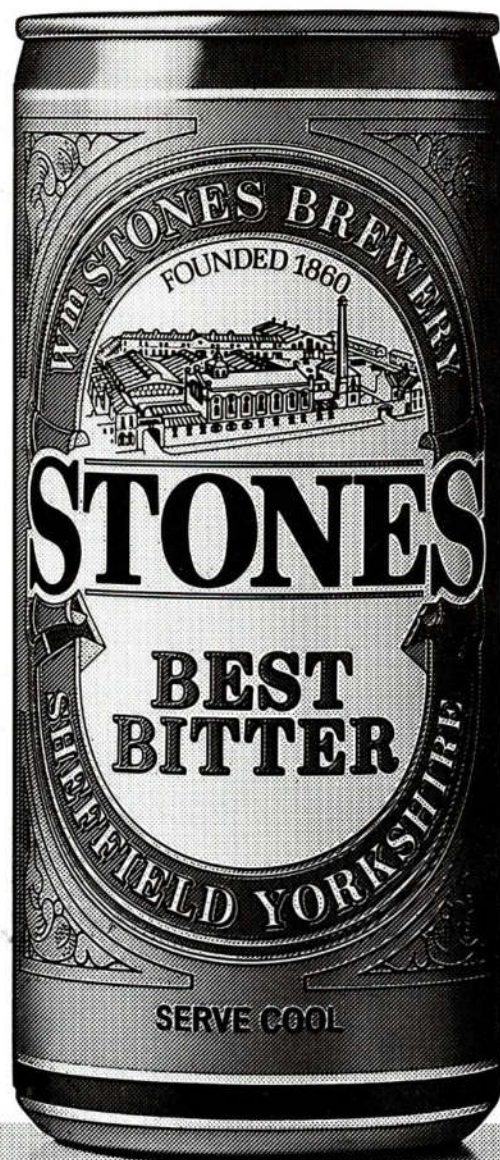
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DIRECT FROM THE BOARD

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

THIS WEEK - JIM KNOX



As the season draws to a close there is a lot of speculation in the media about clubs chasing players for next year and my attention was drawn to a letter in the Oldham Chronicle in which an Oldham fan was wondering what we were doing on the team strengthening front in readiness for our anticipated return to the First Division.

Well, the answer is that we are out to strengthen our squad with players of the highest quality and calibre. We take the view that, at this stage, there is nothing to be gained by showing our hand in the press.

You can take it from me, though, that we are not going up to the First Division just to make up the numbers. We are going up with the intention of making our mark, and to that end, we fully appreciate what we have to do in recruitment.

We are very active on the home scene, but we are also spreading our nets far and wide. We also have our contacts in Australia and we have been making inquiries in several directions in a bid to bring to Watersheddings some of the best players available.

It would be foolish to make rash promises and it would be unwise to name names.

But I promise you this: we will leave no stone unturned in our ambitions to build for next season a side of which we will all be proud to call our own.

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CORKY'S COMMENTS...

(Iain Mac Corquodale on the local scene)

The Federation of Oldham Schools' Sporting Associations is sponsoring a coaching course led by Mal Graham and including Oldham's other foreign stars at Hathershaw Sports Centre on April 14, 21 and 28 for all boys in junior schools. Just turn up for 4.0 pm with your kit and trainers and report to under-11 town team coach Paul Scott. The sessions finish at 5.30.

It was hard lines for both the town's under-11 and under-15 sides who went out of their cup competitions at the final hurdle. The under-11s, despite a magnificent game by Stephen Crowther, lost 4-0 at West Cumbria and the under-15s went out 8-2 against Wigan. The under-13s play their semi at Wigan on April 21 at Robin Park where they lost the rehearsal 18-14 despite three splendid tries from Cheetham, Birch and Eckersley.

Congratulations to Ray Hicks the Saddleworth Rangers coach, on taking Rangers to the 1st 16 of the National Cup and, like St Anne's, qualifying for what was expected to be a cracking Standard Cup final on Good Friday.

Thanks to John Rogers, the Higginshaw under-15s coach who, with special help from other Higginshaw members and Mick Slicker, raised £500 for the schoolboys' Aussie tour with a race night at Greenacres Squash Club.

On Thursday of this week, the town's under-13 side will be filming for the first-ever promotional Rugby League video. They will be starring with Great Britain stars Ellery Manley, Sean Edwards, Steve Hampson and David Stephenson at Headingley. They have been chosen by National Director of Coaching, Phil Larder, for their exceptional talent and the video will be used to promote the game both in Great Britain and overseas.

There are a few big functions in the pipeline as the funds for Australia move towards the £20,000 target. On Sunday, April 10, at lunch time, the Fytton Arms, long recognised as one of the best supporters of charity in the town, is holding a concert and our young prop Tommy Foley's father, also called Tom, will certainly have organised something special to raise funds for the youngsters.

On April 19, Muriel Kirwan's dance, including more than 50 of the boys who have sign as professionals from local schools or amateur clubs, will be held at Uppermill Civic Centre. There are still a few tickets available for a special event at which one of the highlights of the evening will be a group photograph of all those professionals born locally, some of them before 1920. Congratulations to Muriel on her detective work.

(continued on page 28)

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RUNCORN'S SPECIAL RECRUIT

Since Oldham last played Runcorn on a wet day at Canal Street, the men who are working desperately hard to establish League just across the Mersey from Widnes have recruited Kerry Gibson, a remarkable man from Australia, who plays the game despite the handicap of having lost his left arm below the elbow.

After a short stay with Springfield Borough, Kerry joined Runcorn and did more than enough as substitute against Workington two or three weeks ago to earn a full first-team call-up as stand-off against Whitehaven last Sunday.

"He took his chance well," says matter-of-fact boss Bill Ashurst, the former Wigan, Wakefield and Great Britain star, "and certainly deserved his call-up against Whitehaven."

The 29-year-old from Sydney was born with one arm, but the handicap never stopped him leading the full life of a young Sydneysider and he says: "One of my first memories is of throwing a rugby ball around in the garden."

"I could always run fast and I also like cricket and swimming. I have always had to prove myself all through my life, but there are times when the disability has helped. Opponents facing me for the first time wonder what I am going to do next and those split-seconds can be vital."

Gibson has already won the admiration of the Canal Street coaching staff. Arthur Daley, surely remembered here as the young Widnes lad who turned pro for Oldham around the same time as Ray Hicks, and now Ashurst's assistant, says of Kerry: 'He is a very skilful player and a great extrovert. It's a joy to see such a man on the park.'

The Aussie brothers Cogger - John and Jamie - were prominent members of the Runcorn side when Oldham won there a few weeks ago, but scrum-half Jamie is now back home Down Under and with Kevin Blythin injured, the No 7 shirt may well go to the long-serving David Crompton.

(continued on page 27)

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RUNCORN'S SPECIAL RECRUIT

(continued)

Clive Hunter, another former Oldham man, figures in the centre, while we could well see today the appearance of a well respected veteran of the front-row, who missed our game at Runcorn because of 'flu Glyn Shaw.

The Welshman is still going strongly and he forms a strong and experienced front-row with Steve Moylan, the hooker, and Geoff Dean or another evergreen player, Eric Prescott.

With the all-systems-go John Cogger at loose-forward - he won last season's Second Division Man-of-Steel award - Runcorn must not be treated too lightly if Oldham are going to score the comprehensive victory they need to keep chipping away at that Wakefield points difference.

Says Ashurst - well remembered as a classy centre and then a clever back-row forward - "We have been struggling a bit of late and a big factor has been the waterlogged state of pitches. We are not a big side and the heavy going has been to our detriment."

"In all my years in the game I have never known such a wet winter and there is no doubt in my mind that the conditions have handicapped us."

"But Runcorn can always be relied upon to give their best shots. We will never show the white flag, that's for sure."



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PRESS BOX CHATTER

(Roger Halstead, Oldham Evening Chronicle)



You could almost have thought Oldham had won the Second Division title judging by the excited reaction of fans when they heard after the Sheffield game at Owlerton that both Wakefield and Featherstone had slipped to surprise defeats.

Word of the double boost to Oldham's championship hopes spread like wildfire as fans huddled around car radios before leaving for home.

When it was confirmed that Wakefield had gone down 12-10 in a game kicking off at Bramley at 3.30, the Oldham supporters danced and cheered in the car park and many of them ran back into the ground to pass on the good news to the Oldham players, who were still in the dressing room.

Coach Eric Fitzsimons was understandably delighted, but he kept his feet firmly on the ground. "The pressure is still on," he said, "because we have three tricky away games at Rochdale, Wakefield and Carlisle."

It's all building up now to a real title showdown at Wakefield on Sunday and Oldham will have to go into that big test with the commitment and fortitude that enabled them to beat Bradford and Warrington and give St Helens a night scare in the semi-final of the John Player Trophy last autumn.

Wakefield won't live with Oldham in that mood. Having said that, Trinity will gain confidence from the knowledge that they won at Watersheddings on a day when Oldham failed abysmally to match them for commitment - an error which surely will not be repeated again.

ROGER HALSTEAD

CORKY'S COMMENTS...

(continued)

On Sunday April 24, Dave Graham, a talented sportsman who played for Fitton Hill when I worked with Kevin O'Rourke there a few years ago, has planned a rugby match with Cobden Chadwicks Sports and Social Club, followed by a concert at the Phoenix Bowling Club.

Fay Bowden and Jack Roscoe have planned a Fiesta party, with lots of reasonably priced high quality produce in the social club at Watersheddings on Friday, April 8.

On Friday, April 22 there will be a great night at the Pennine Lounge with group, disco and food. It's organised by Bernard Exton and members of St Augustine's PTA. Bernard's son, Steve, helped out the 'A' team at Blackpool earlier in the season.

Many thanks to all these organisers and to those who support the events. I know how much the youngsters appreciate these efforts and I'm sure their rugby skills will delight us all for years to come.

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