

OLDHAM TEAM CHECK RUNCORN

DUNCAN PLATT	1	SHAUN DOLAN
PETER LEWIS	2	KEVIN O'GARRA
DES FOY	3	TERRY ROSE
JOHN HENDERSON	4	CHARLIE JONES
PAUL LORD	5	SIMON ASHCROFT
BRETT CLARK	6	SHAUN BARROW
MIKE FORD	7	TOMMY RAWLINSON
LEO CASEY	8	JIM BALL
RICHARD RUSSELL	9	PAUL FENNEY
JOHN FIELDHOUSE	10	IKE SOUTHWARD
KEITH NEWTON	11	BRIAN PLATT
SHAUN ALLEN	12	GEOFF DEAN
JOHN COGGER	13	BILLY PLATT
TBA	14	TBA
TBA	15	TBA

Referee: Mr. K. Morris (Widnes). Touch Judges: Mr. N. Farrimond (Red Flag), Mr. D. J. Barratt (Orange Flag)

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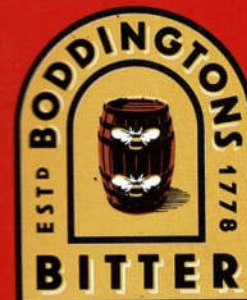
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CLUB RECORDS

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for Mike Ford January 1988

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

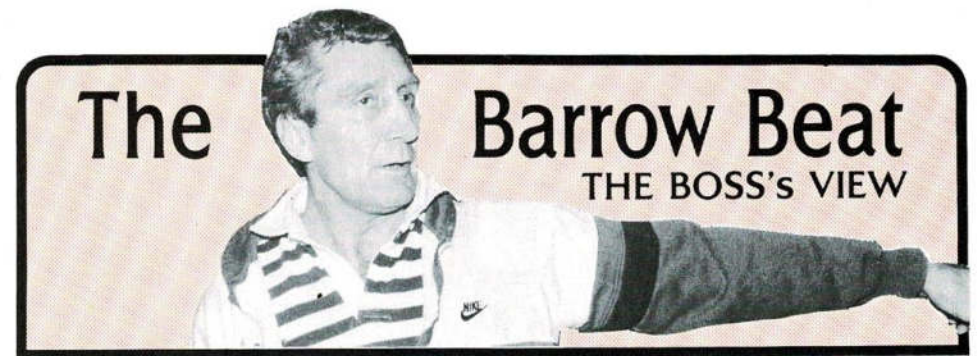
First Game: 21st October, 1876 v Stalybridge

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

WE'RE PUTTING OUR SHIRTS ON OLDHAM



The Barrow Beat THE BOSS'S VIEW

YOU will have read in the newspapers, no doubt, that we are constantly on the look-out for players of proven First Division calibre and quality with whom to strengthen our squad in readiness for next season.

We have already signed Peter Lewis on loan from Bramley, with a view to a permanent deal, and we were also involved in talks at one time with Brimah Kebbie, the Widnes wing.

At the time of writing these notes, we had agreed terms with Halifax to sign their Australian centre Tony Anderson and we were hopeful of completing a deal for a player with vast experience in the First Division.

I am also on the look-out for a couple of forwards, because in the First Division it is absolutely essential that you have a ready-made squad of at least 23 experienced men and, ideally, up to 25.

You only need to look at Liverpool soccer club to see that they are constantly at the top because they never sit back on their laurels. They keep competition for places at the highest level, they buy good players when they become available, and I have the highest regard for the job done by Kenny Dalglish and the entire Anfield set-up.

You see, in the First Division opponents hit you a lot harder, the game is much quicker and you pick up a lot more injuries. Consequently, you need a lot more players and it has been proved time and time again that if you only have 18, 19 or even 20 recognised First Division players are going

to struggle.

Anyone who thinks you can get by with a small squad in the top flight, filling in with youngsters, is living in a dream world. You can always pitch in one youngster, providing he is good enough and physically mature, but you can't be throwing in three or four and expecting to win matches at this level.

During the course of a season you can be hit by injuries, suspensions and various other factors that prevent you putting out your first-choice men, so you need to start off with enough quality players in a squad system to cope with everything that misfortune throws at you. Battle for places has to be tough and the man in form gets the job.

Last time Oldham won promotion, before my time at the club, efforts were made to consolidate with the team that went up. Unfortunately, it did not work. The squad needs to be assembled before the end of the promotion season, so that it can work together all through the summer and be ready and raring to go when the First Division campaign starts. If not, you can easily lose the first five or six games, and after that you are chasing to make up the leeway for the rest of the season.

My intention is to be ready for next season by the end of this one because we must be in a position to make an early impact next September. You never know... we could be playing Wigan, St. Helens, Leeds and Widnes in the first few matches. We must be ready.

TONY BARROW

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Welcome to Runcorn

RUNCORN, the team that props up the rest, are coming good and ready to take off ... so says Canal Street chairman Terry Hughes, who is far from downhearted at his team's lowly position at the foot of the Second Division. He can point to some very encouraging results in recent weeks and says boldly: "We might give Oldham a fright, who knows?"

There were signs of things to come when the Runcorn lads ran Bradford Northern pretty close at Canal Street in the Challenge Cup. Then came a trip to Humberside to play Hull KR and what everyone believed would be a massacre turned out to be a close-run thing. "And we didn't even play well that day," says Terry, "although we gave Rovers a fright."

The improvement was underlined when Rochdale, who slaughtered Runcorn by 90 points at Spotland earlier in the season, won by only 22 points at Canal Street recently.

Off the field, two well-known figures help to guide the fortunes of the Merseyside men ... coach Dave Chisnall, well known as a former player and coach with several top west Lancashire clubs, and the inimitable Geoff Fletcher, without whose steadfast and loyal support the club would surely have gone under several years ago.

Many long-standing Oldham fans will remember Geoff as an outstanding ball-playing forward for Oldham in his younger days. He also played for Leigh and Wigan but he is better known here for the loyal support he gave to the Oldham club — the same loyalty and devotion that he has now given Runcorn, and the former Huyton club, for many, many years. These days Geoff is not only a Runcorn director but he is also the club treasurer and Rugby League Council representative.

There are not many well-known names in the Runcorn side because the side had to be entirely rebuilt after the infamous players' strike of two years ago.

"We had to recruit 21 players pretty quickly," explained Terry, "so we obviously had to go for young players whom we believed would develop in the long term. When you have to recruit an entire squad and start from scratch, you expect that it will take time for the boys to settle down and come good, but they have come on in leaps and bounds.

"We have had some highly encouraging performances of late and I think we can look forward to a promising future over the next two or three seasons."

The average age of a young side is 22 and the experience, once provided by Ken Kelly (now at Oldham), comes from loose-forward Billy Platt, the much-travelled forward who has played for several clubs on both sides of the Pennines.

It was from Runcorn, of course, that Oldham recruited John Cogger for a bargain £12,000 ... and John, our captain, is still highly respected at Canal Street. "With 13 players like him, you could conquer the world," says Terry.

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FIVE MINUTES FROM M62 JUNCTION 21

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Flashback . . .

1987/88

Runcorn 8, Oldham 34



A Kevin Meadows hat-trick was the highlight of Oldham's 34-8 victory over Runcorn in the club's Second Division championship season. Other scores came from Des Foy (2), Gary Warnecke and Mal Graham, with Peter Walsh (2) and Mick Burke kicking the goals. Here, Colin Hawkyard tries to find a way through the Runcorn defence.

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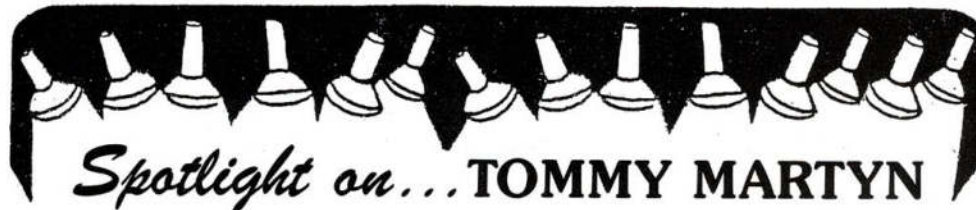
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ONE of the hot favourites for the first OB Young Player of the Year, a new Boddingtons-sponsored award for players under 21, has to be Tommy Martyn, one of a dozen or so youngsters signed by Oldham in the last couple of seasons.

Tommy, after spending most of the season with the A Team, is now displaying his silky skills in the first team, winning the man of the match award in the recent Second Division home match against Huddersfield.

Without question the young 18-year-old, who has been tipped for international honours by many of the game's pundits, can look forward to a great future in the Rugby League world, although signing for Oldham came as quite a surprise.

"I could hardly believe it when Oldham asked me to sign with them last year. I was just 17 and it was the chance of a lifetime to learn the game alongside top players like John Cogger and Mick Ford"

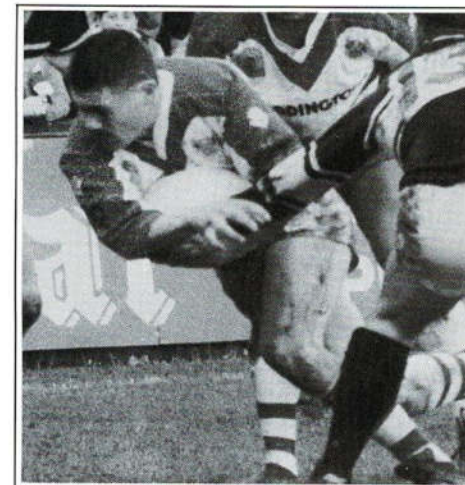
Not that Tommy hadn't already picked up more than his fair share of experience.

Tommy started out at seven years old by playing at wing for his junior school team before joining his hometown clubs, Leigh Rangers Under-16s and Leigh Under-19s, although at one point he was thinking of giving rugby up altogether and pursuing football.

"I lost confidence with rugby for a while and considered taking up football again, but my coach wouldn't hear of it and kept telling me I had to believe in myself more. His encouragement did wonders for my performance and I haven't looked back since!"

He was one of several Oldham youngsters picked for the GB Under-19s' Australian tour in the close season of 1989. Tommy's six weeks down-under was a real education.

"The Australian tour was brilliant experience for me because it was probably the first real challenge



of my rugby career — as well as being a superb trip!"

Although tipped for the top, Tommy is determined to keep his feet firmly on the ground. He says: "I still train twice a week with my mates at Leigh Miners and although they could have given me a hard time after my move to Oldham they've really spurred me on."

Support has come from his family, too. "I'm very lucky because all my family, mum, dad and sister Samantha, have always been behind me and encouraged everything I've done."

Tommy, a car mechanic, even gets encouragement at work because his boss is a Rugby League fanatic! "Where work's concerned there is no problem because my boss knows how important the game is and gives me time off here and there for training."

"Discipline is the most important factor in successful rugby and I'm getting first class experience playing alongside such a professional team. At the moment I'm training five nights a week to get into peak condition and to hopefully stay in the first team!"

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Stopped — Richard Russell tries to bust through the Huddersfield defence during the recent home game against the Yorkshire side, with Oldham coming out on top 23-8.



Catch me if you can — Paul Lord breaks free from the Keighley defence on his way to a well-earned hat-trick during the midweek 30-10 away victory against the Yorkshiremen.

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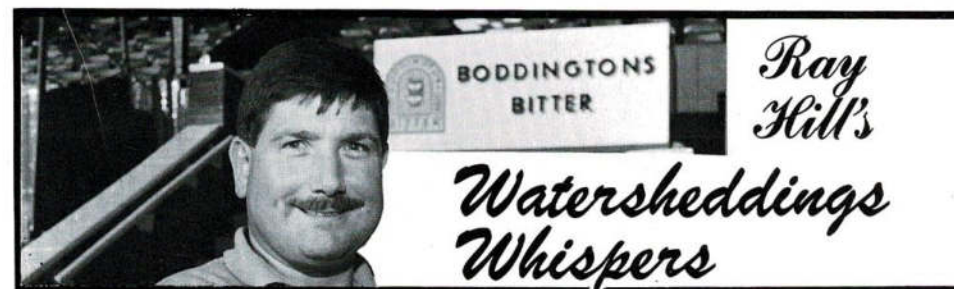
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BEFORE this season started I remember John Cogger on a club visit to Boddingtons Strange-ways Brewery telling Boddies representatives that he had three aims — to win the Second Division Championship, the Premiership and to reach Wembley.

Most people would have thought Johnny F. Cogger was being slightly unrealistic, but then most people didn't take into account the tremendous spirit at the club.

But it is true, we're one game from Wembley and a debut appearance at Rugby League's most prestigious final.

I am pleased for everyone, for the players and club officials who have worked so hard, for the fans who have always given us tremendous support through good and bad times, and for the club's sponsors, without whom our commercial activities would not be so impressive.

Sponsorship involves a lot of investment in both time and money, but is now paying dividends. And although this season is nearing its end, I am already looking for sponsors for the 1990/91 season. Anyone who wants more details should contact me on 061-620 4870.

As I've said, we are still involved in the chase for three major trophies, including the Second Division Premiership. Tickets for the double-header final at Old Trafford on Sunday 13th May are now available from the Ticket Office, The Rugby Football League, 180 Chapeltown Road, Leeds LS7 4HT.

Prices have been kept at last year's level of £12, £9 and £7, with the Rugby League accepting cheques or postal orders sent with an s.a.e. Alternatively, you can book by credit card — either Access or Visa — by calling 0532 629991 Monday to Friday between 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Premiership final attracted 40,000 fans

last season and another bumper gate is expected with, hopefully, a fair proportion of Oldham fans, as we intend to be contesting the final.

Success on the field does have its drawbacks, as we have had to cancel our St. Valentine's Massacre Disco and Casino night, originally postponed from 14th February, which was planned for this coming Wednesday. However, we're away to Hunslet so unfortunately the event has had to be cancelled. Gangsters and molls who have already bought tickets can get a refund at the social club or the club's ticket office.

Finally, congratulations to Oldham's other sporting heroes from everyone involved in Oldham Rugby. Oldham Athletic are through to Wembley for the first time ever in the club's 91-year history after beating West Ham in the two-leg semi-final.

Like us, the Latics have enjoyed tremendous success this season and fully deserve their Wembley final.

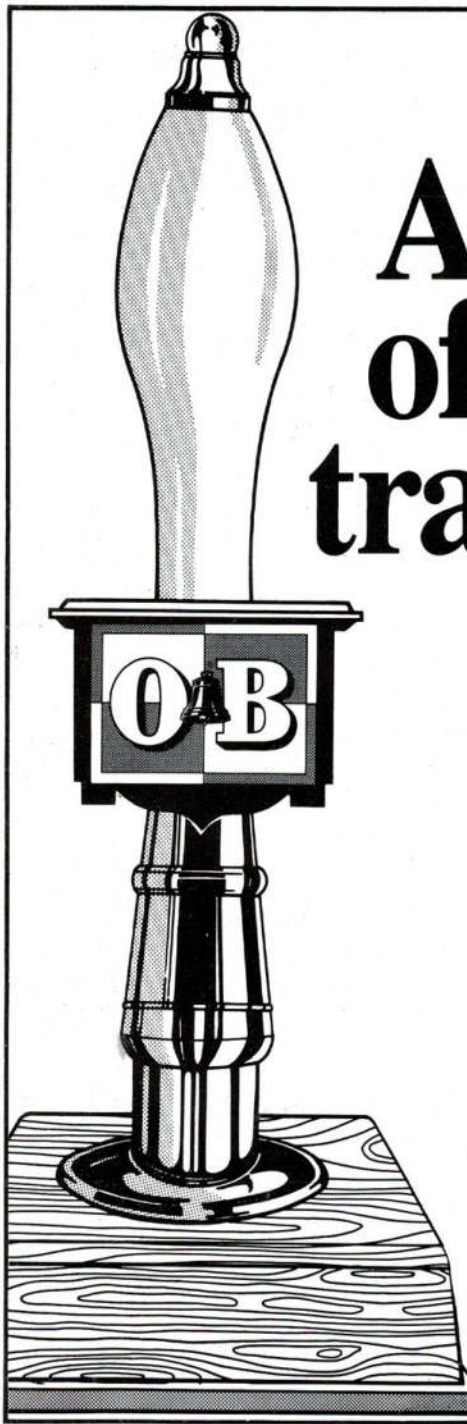
And who knows, if all goes well against Warrington at the end of this month, we could well be joining them to make a double Wembley celebration for Oldham.

Now that is something worth celebrating!

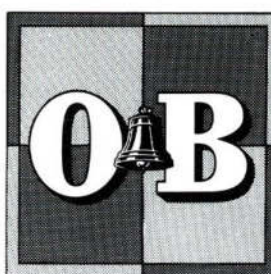
FLASH: Colin Hawkyard is currently enjoying his testimonial season with Oldham. Anybody interested in hosting an event on his behalf should contact Colin on 0484 538613.

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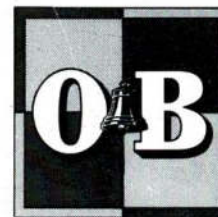


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CORNER

LEO'S FEBRUARY'S MAN!

LEO CASEY is the Boddingtons-sponsored Player of the Month for February following his outstanding performances in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup matches against Salford and Widnes.

He was presented with an inscribed medal, £100 cheque and a case of Boddingtons to celebrate at a ceremony at the club earlier this month.

The 22-year-old prop forward, who is on the verge of international honours, has won the award, judged by Oldham Evening Chronicle's Rugby League journalist Roger Halstead, for the second time this season following his nomination in September.



Leo Casey is presented with his Player of the Month medal by Boddingtons Pubs Promotion Executive Val Jackson.

PLAYER OF THE YEAR

TODAY is the last chance to vote for the Boddingtons-sponsored Player of the Year, the award that gives the fans on the terraces the

chance to thank the players who performed so well during this outstanding season.

A coupon is enclosed with this programme which enables you to vote for three awards.

First, there is the Player of the Year with the winner collecting a handsome trophy, £250 and a case of Boddingtons bitter to celebrate in style.

Second, there is the new Young Player of the Year, who must be under 21. He will collect a trophy and £150 cheque plus a case of Boddies bitter, too.

Finally, there is the Supporter of the Year, won last year by Mark Holmes.

All three awards will be made before the last League home game of the season against Rochdale.

On the subject of supporters of the year, one fan nominated a certain Tony Barrow, thirty-something, and said he deserved the award because he'd been to every match home and away and always gives great vocal support. Well done, Tony, was the final comment.

So come on! Let's have all your nominations for the supporter of the year award because, as the players and club will happily testify, Oldham fans are probably the best in Rugby League bar none.

GET IN TUNE AT YOUR OB LOCAL

FANCY hearing yourself on radio? Well, you could if you enter the Boddingtons Pubs/Piccadilly Radio Search for a Star competition, which is currently being run at OB locals around the Oldham area.

All you have to do is call in at your OB local where a competition is being held and sing into a karaoke machine, a PA system that provides backing music for singers.

Numerous heats are being held throughout the area, with the best 10 entrants being played on Piccadilly Radio. The winner collects a home karaoke machine and a special gold disc.

Forthcoming dates to look out for are:

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Globe Inn, Huddersfield Road	March 21
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John Cogger, Oldham's Australian skipper, has won the British Fuels-Daily Express "Personality of the Month" for February. He will be presented with an inscribed silver salver and £400 cheque before today's game.

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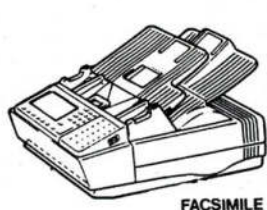
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Fixtures and Statistics

Date	Opponents	V	KO	P	Res	F-A	Tries	Goals	Att
Sep	3 Workington T	H	3.00		W	40-8	Henderson (2), Cogger (2), McAlister, Lord, Ruane, Russell	Platt (4)	3,743
	10 Halifax	A	3.00	11	L	12-22	Platt, Cogger	Platt (2)	8,612
	16 Barrow (Lancs Cup)	A	2.30		W	46-2	Lord (2), Ford, Casey, Platt (2), Allen, Hyde, Cogger	Platt (5)	2,300
	27 St. Helens (Lancs Cup)	A	7.30		W	36-6	Robinson, Ford, Platt, Cogger, Allen, Newton	Platt (6)	7,834
	1 Hull KR	H	3.00	12	W	12-4	Lord	Platt (4)	5,797
Oct	5 Wigan (Lancs Cup)	H	7.30		W	19-18	Fieldhouse, Newton, Ford	Platt, Hyde (2), Ford (dg)	8,603
	8 Runcorn H	A	3.00	9	W	34-6	Russell, Clarke (2), Meadows (2), Clawson, Irving	Hyde (2)	2,500
	14 Warrington (Lancs Cup final)	-	3.00		L	16-24	Irving, Robinson, Lord	Platt (1), Hyde (1)	9,895
	18 Halifax	H	7.30		W	14-3	Lord, Fairbank	Hyde (3)	6,953
	22 Carlisle	A	3.00	5	W	10-32	Fieldhouse (2), Hyde, Fairbank, Cogger, Meadows	Hyde (2), McAlister (2)	1,200
Nov	29 Batley	H	3.00	3	W	22-4	Ruane, Martyn, Meadows, Irving	Martyn (3)	4,120
	5 Doncaster	A	3.00	2	W	22-20	Casey, Lord, Hyde, Fairbank	Hyde (3)	3,813
	12 Keighley	H	3.00	2	W	50-34	Clark, Hyde, Irving, Ford, McAlister, Meadows, Ruane, Lord, Russell	Hyde (7)	4,113
	19 Fulham	A	2.30	2	W	40-10	McAlister, Ruane (2), Clark, Cogger, Allen, Ford	McAlister (6)	1,440
	26 Doncaster	H	3.00	2	W	30-8	Lord, Meadows, Ruane, Robinson, Clark	McAlister (5)	4,914
Dec	3 Bramley (Regal Trophy)	A	3.50		W	48-16	Robinson, Cogger (2), Lord, McAlister, Clawson, Clark, Croston	Platt (8)	1,632
	10 Huddersfield (Regal Trophy)	H	3.00		W	22-8	Cogger (2), Croston	Platt (5)	5,205
	17 St. Helens (Regal Trophy)	A	3.00		L	18-32	Fairbank, Cogger (2), Lord	McAlister	7,752
	26 Rochdale H	A	3.00	4	L	24-12	McAlister, Lord	McAlister	8,150
	1 Swinton	H	3.00	3	W	29-14	Ford, Lord (2), Cogger, Russell	Platt (4), Ford (dg)	4,954
Jan	7 Hunslet	H	3.00	3	W	48-10	Foy (5), Cogger (3), Fairbank	Platt (6)	3,644
	14 Huddersfield (SCCC)	H	3.00		W	30-8	Clark, Allen, Newton, Cogger, Fairbank	Platt (5)	4,593
	17 Hull KR	A	7.30	3	W	9-6	Irving	Platt (2), Platt (dg)	6,530
	21 Chorley	A	3.00	3	W	44-6	Irving (3), Foy (2), Cogger (2), Newton	Platt (6)	2,851
	28 Workington (SCCC Rnd 1)	H	3.00		W	30-8	Platt, Henderson (3), Clark	Platt, Atkinson (4)	3,710
Feb	4 Fulham	H	3.00	3	W	52-4	Henderson (4), Foy, Casey, Newton (2), Platt, Lord	Platt (5)	3,549
	11 Salford (SCCC Rnd 2)	A	3.00		W	18-7	Russell, Clark	Platt (5)	6,542
	18 Chorley	H	3.00	2	W	66-16	Clark (3), Russell (2), Martyn, McAlister, Casey, Cogger, Irving, Foy, Round	Platt (9)	3,576
	25 Widnes (SCCC Rnd 3)	A	3.00		W	16-4	Henderson, Newton	Platt (4)	11,820
	4 Huddersfield	H	3.00	3	W	23-8	Cogger, Lewis, Lord, Martyn	Platt (2), Atkinson, Martyn (dg)	5,615
Mar	7 Keighley	A	7.30	3	W	30-10	Ruane, Lord (3), Martyn, Irving	Platt (3)	1,252
	11 Batley	A	3.00	2	W	30-14	Lord (2), Casey, Clark	Hyde (7)	2,800
	18 Runcorn	H	3.00						
	25 Huddersfield	A	3.00						
	31 Warrington (SCCC semi-final)	A	3.00						
Apr	4 Workington	A	3.00						
	8 Carlisle	H	3.00						
	13 Swinton	A	3.00						
	16 Rochdale	H	3.00						
	21 Hunslet	A	3.00						

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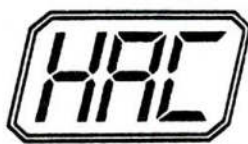


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Appearances and Scorers

	P	Sub	G	D	T	Pts
Shaun Allen.....	26	2	0	0	4	16
Keith Atkinson.....	7	9	5	0	0	10
Mick Bardsley.....	2	0	0	0	0	0
Ian Bates.....	1	0	0	0	0	0
Leo Casey.....	22	1	0	0	5	20
Brett Clark.....	27	1	0	0	13	52
Neil Clawson.....	4	1	0	0	2	8
John Cogger.....	30	0	0	0	22	88
Trevor Croston.....	4	4	0	0	2	8
John Fairbank.....	13	10	0	0	6	24
John Fieldhouse.....	28	1	0	0	3	12
Neil Flanagan.....	0	1	0	0	0	0
Mick Ford.....	29	0	0	2	6	26
Des Foy.....	12	0	0	0	9	36
John Henderson.....	12	2	0	0	11	44
Gary Hyde.....	17	2	28	0	4	72
Richard Irving.....	22	2	0	0	10	40
Peter Lewis.....	2	0	0	0	1	4
Paul Lord.....	30	0	0	0	21	84
Charlie McAlister.....	14	5	16	0	6	56
Tommy Martyn.....	4	1	3	1	4	23
Kevin Meadows.....	6	5	0	0	6	20
Keith Newton.....	24	0	0	0	9	36
Duncan Platt.....	20	0	88	1	6	201
Steve Robinson.....	12	4	0	0	4	16
Paul Round.....	1	2	0	0	1	4
Andy Ruane.....	17	1	0	0	7	28
Richard Russell.....	27	4	0	0	6	24

Up to and including Batley match

Division Two League Table

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Rochdale.....	22	10	0	1	468	159	9	0	2	292	161	38
OLDHAM	21	11	0	0	386	113	8	0	2	265	128	38
Hull KR.....	20	9	0	1	392	59	9	0	1	404	70	36
Swinton.....	22	9	0	2	314	135	8	0	3	249	166	34
Ryedale York.....	23	8	0	1	222	90	8	1	5	297	199	33
Halifax.....	21	10	0	1	307	117	5	0	5	243	159	30
Dewsbury.....	22	8	0	3	226	125	7	0	4	191	202	30
Trafford.....	22	8	0	4	248	193	6	0	4	197	167	28
Fulham.....	22	7	0	4	209	195	5	1	5	139	217	25
Batley.....	23	7	0	5	241	166	5	0	6	162	162	24
Doncaster.....	23	6	2	4	226	177	5	0	6	220	194	24
Huddersfield.....	22	5	0	5	145	129	7	0	5	230	191	24
Hunslet.....	24	5	0	8	242	260	4	0	7	151	183	18
Bramley.....	22	5	0	7	178	270	4	0	6	145	214	18
Whitehaven.....	23	6	0	6	190	242	2	0	9	145	268	16
Chorley.....	22	5	0	7	165	227	2	0	8	108	284	14
Carlisle.....	22	4	0	6	211	196	2	0	10	208	335	12
Keighley.....	22	3	0	8	194	351	2	0	9	160	311	10
Workington.....	22	2	0	8	124	256	3	0	9	128	367	10
Nottingham.....	23	1	0	10	114	451	1	0	11	136	427	4
Runcorn.....	23	0	0	11	87	261	0	0	12	102	484	0

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'A' Team Round-Up

Slalom Lager Alliance League

FIRST DIVISION										P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hull	21	16	1	4	517	269	33			21	16	1	4	517	269	33
Leeds	20	15	1	4	546	269	31			20	15	1	4	546	269	31
Hull KR	21	15	0	6	453	256	30			21	15	0	6	453	256	30
Castleford	19	14	0	5	522	334	28			19	14	0	5	522	334	28
Halifax	21	13	0	8	432	380	26			21	13	0	8	432	380	26
Wigan	21	12	0	9	517	388	24			21	12	0	9	517	388	24
Warrington W	20	12	0	8	473	424	24			20	12	0	8	473	424	24
St Helens	20	10	0	10	436	434	20			20	10	0	10	436	434	20
OLDHAM	21	9	1	11	377	375	19			21	9	1	11	377	375	19
Featherstone R	20	8	0	12	434	454	16			20	8	0	12	434	454	16
Swinton C	21	8	0	13	312	562	16			21	8	0	13	312	562	16
Widnes	21	7	0	14	328	597	14			21	7	0	14	328	597	14
Salford	20	4	1	15	422	458	9			20	4	1	15	422	458	9
Carlisle	19	4	0	15	322	584	8			19	4	0	15	322	584	8
Hunslet	19	3	0	16	221	528	6			19	3	0	16	221	528	6

'A' Team Player Profile

IAN BATES

Yorkshire-born stand-off or scrum-half Ian Bates is a popular favourite with fans thanks to his terrific courage and tremendous tackling ability, which is not hindered by his lack of size. A nephew of former GB internationals Alan and John Bates, Ian has also played at hooker and loose forward, proof of his versatility and commitment to the game.

'A' Team Fixtures and Statistics

Date	Opponents	Venue	Res	F	A
Sep 1	St. Helens	A	L	2-15	
8	Halifax	H	W	24-16	
15	Castleford	H	L	16-27	
29	Hull KR	A	L	14-20	
Oct 6	Salford A (LCCS)	A	L	0-6	
12	Halifax	A	L	10-22	
27	Hull	A	L	6-20	
Nov 3	Widnes	H	L	10-14	
10	Wigan	H	L	16-20	
17	Hull	H	D	16-16	
24	Leeds	A	L	16-28	
Dec 1	Warrington	H	W	36-12	
8	St. Helens	H	W	20-18	
22	Featherstone	H	W	28-26	
29	Swinton	A	L	20-23	
Jan 5	Hunslet	A	W	32-0	
12	Hull KR	H	L	6-12	
19	Warrington	A	L	12-18	
26	Salford A	H	W	26-18	
Feb 3	Salford (SACC Rnd 1)	A	L	12-30	
9	Castleford	A	W	32-18	
23	Wigan	A	W	17-12	
Mar 2	Featherstone	A	W	20-16	
16	Leeds	H	W		
23	Salford A	A	W		
30	Hunslet	H	W		
Apr 7	Carlisle	A	W		
13	Swinton	H	W		
20	Widnes	A	W		

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Terrace Talk

I DON'T know how the players are coping with it, but it seems that there is little else to discuss at the moment in Oldham except the Cup — be it Silk Cut or Littlewoods, the whole town is alive and buzzing with anticipation.

The reason I make the point is to stress the difficulties the players have to contend with by putting the semi-final to the back of their minds.

Take today's game, for example — Runcorn at home. On paper, it's the kind of fixture that looks a formality. It is certainly vastly different from our recent "big" cup games, but the concentration required by the players will be no less demanding. But I must confess that, human nature being what it is, surely there must be a subconscious feeling to take things easy.

I know that there are obvious answers like, "they are professionals and therefore must motivate themselves in the true sense of the word." That may be OK in theory, but doesn't always work in practice. This is where a coach can show his true colours. It must be very easy to motivate players to produce good performances when playing against the top sides, whether it be league or cup, but a coach must now try and produce a similar reaction and effective response from his playing staff when faced with a run-of-the-mill league encounter, and when coming up against the minnows of the game. But whatever the circumstances, the main achievement and aim has got to be promotion.

Fortunately, so far this season we appear to have got it right on all fronts,

as we can clearly be seen to have had a successful season. A Lancashire Cup Final appearance, plus effective and consistent league form with the added bonus of a semi-final appearance in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup. Today's fixture against Runcorn will be the last home game before our semi-final, and what a prospect to look forward to. It would be marvellous to think that by the next home fixture we might be in the Challenge Cup Final!

However, it's league action today, with Runcorn the visitors to Watersheddings. Their recent record certainly doesn't include any disclosed form, having gone 47 matches without collecting a win, their last victory being a 20-12 home win against Fulham on 30th October, 1988, although they have managed to draw against Workington Town on 22nd January, 1989. One has to feel some sympathy for the men from Runcorn, but the standards being set in the modern day game are very high indeed.

We do have something to thank Runcorn for in the shape of John Cogger, who is now performing heroically for the fans at Watersheddings, and let's hope for the 2 points, and also keep clear of injuries with our important semi-final looming on the horizon.

Enjoy your sport.



Jack Dearden

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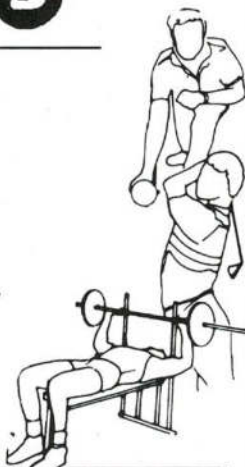
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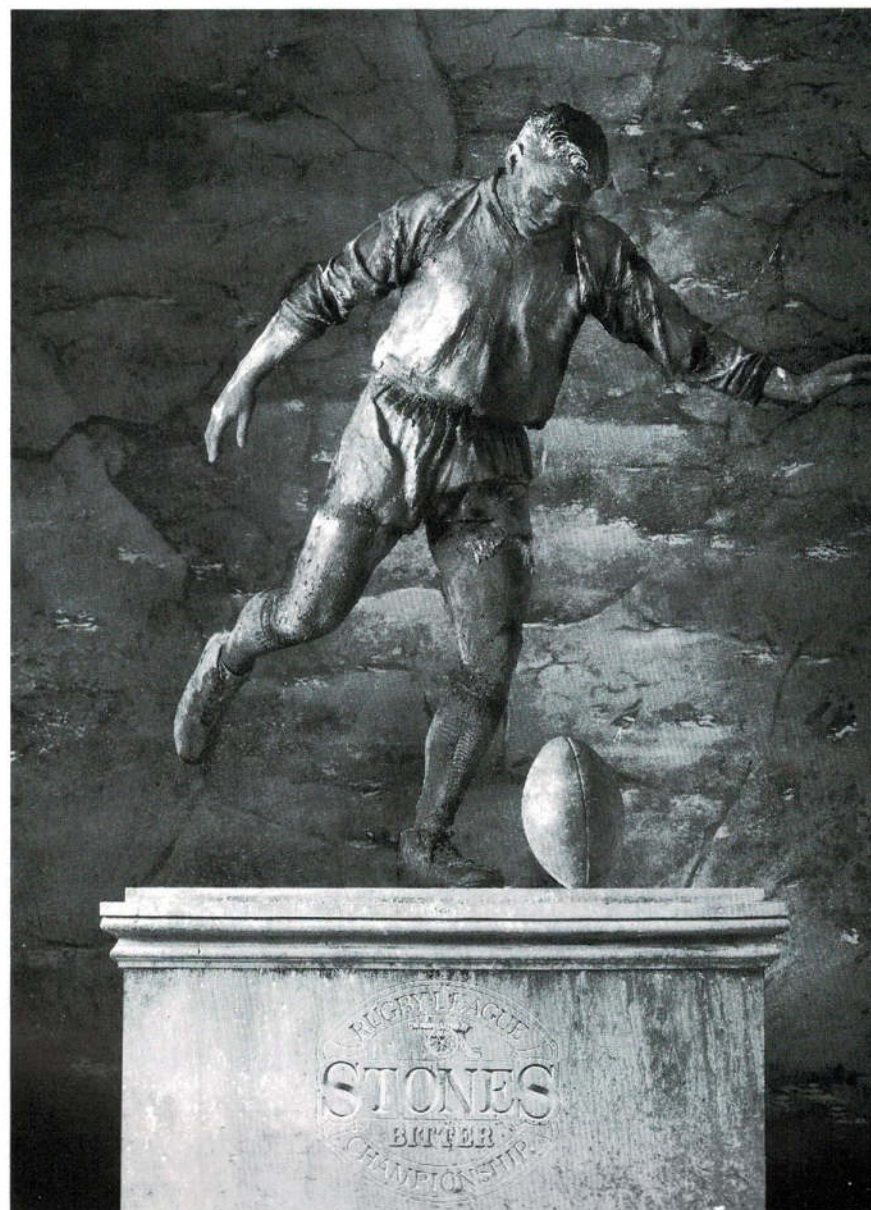


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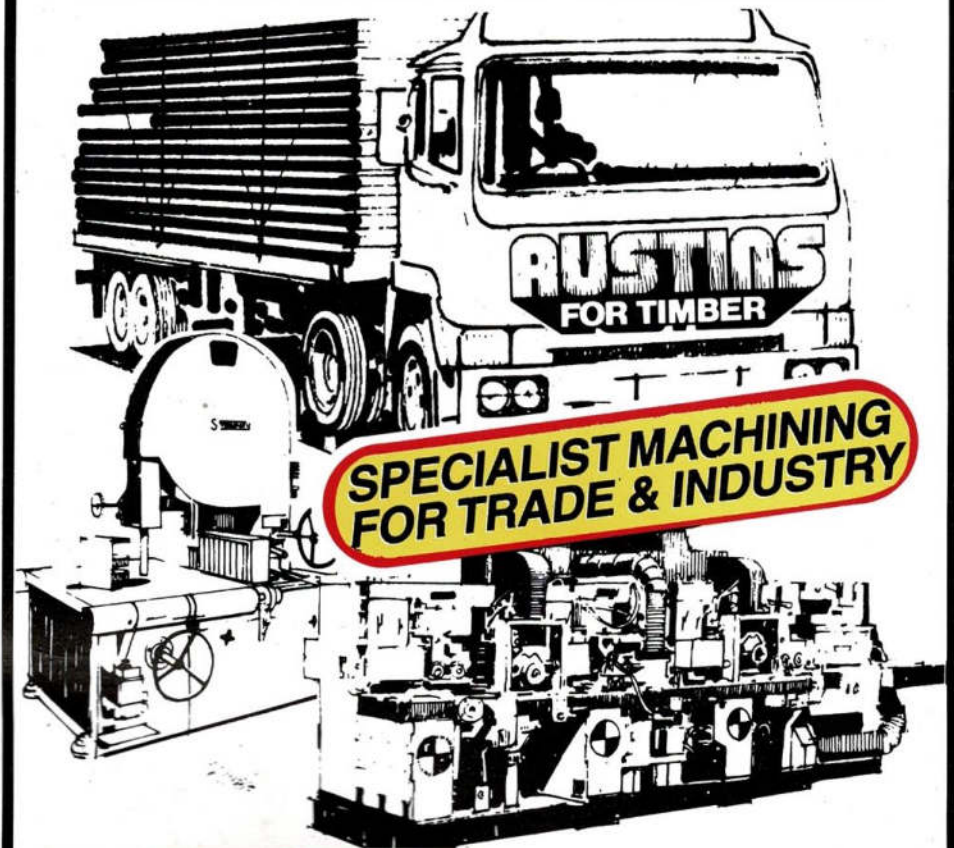
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