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BENEFIT MATCH

at the
Athletic Grounds, Rochdale

TUESDAY, 5th APRIL, 1949

FOR THE

JOHNNIE DEAN

AND

FREDDIE LAMB

TESTIMONIAL FUND

KICK-OFF 6-30 p.m.

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Two Players who Deserve Reward

Since the Hornets Directors decided to grant a benefit match to Johnnie Dean and Freddie Lamb, events have conspired to delay the testimonial game. At the end of last season the Hornets progress in the Challenge Cup competition held up the arrangements, and at the start of the present season there was difficulty in finding a suitable evening date. It is hoped that the delayed date, April 5th, will prove an occasion that has been worth waiting for.

Long before a benefit match was suggested the Hornets officials recognised and appreciated the loyalty of the two players they now seek to reward. Both have borne a full share of the criticism which comes from football crowds and writers, yet over a long period they have been more often than not the first choice for their respective positions and have returned to the team after periodic falls from favour as, though nothing had happened. The virtue of being able to take the rough with the smooth, their sense of loyalty, and their reliability have won Dean and Lamb a warm place in the regard of Rochdale football followers. Now comes the chance to ensure that near the close of their playing days they receive financial reward to overshadow the hard knocks they have taken ungrudgingly over many years.

THE CHAIRMAN SAYS:

Mr. Wilfred Kershaw, J.P. (Chairman of the Hornets Board) on behalf of himself and his fellow directors writes: "Other players have won more medals than Freddie Lamb and Johnnie Dean, but I doubt if any club has had two such men on whom they could absolutely rely in fair weather and foul. If all players were as easy to deal with as they, the running of a football club would be much easier. I appeal most sincerely to the public of Rochdale to see that Freddie and Johnnie receive a benefit in keeping with what they have tried to do for the club and the game. Rugby League football takes a lot out of a man. We must see to it that whenever we have the opportunity we show the players that their efforts are appreciated."

MESSAGE FROM THE CAPTAIN:

Reg. Jones, the Hornets captain, sends a message to this souvenir programme. Reg says: "I first knew Freddie and Johnnie as opponents. Since the beginning of this season they have been my playing colleagues. As friend and foe I respect them as wholehearted players who have done good to the game and who are an example to others. I have not known the public of Rochdale very long, but I think I know them well enough to believe that they will come to the Athletic Grounds in force to give a bumper benefit to two real triers."

AN OLDHAM PROMISE

It is natural that the Oldham Club should have a part in the benefit match, for Lamb and Dean came to Rochdale from the junior game in that town and were guest players at Watersheddings during the 1939-45 war. Speaking after the Charities Cup match last August, Mr. Frank Holt, Chairman of the Oldham Committee, said: "Lamb and Dean gave splendid service to Oldham during the war and now they are to have a benefit match the Oldham club will whatever it can to make it a success."

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JOHNNIE DEAN

FREDDIE LAMB

In the case of Johnnie Dean, the Hornets hooker, the benefit match will be the reward of 18 years' service to the club. He had been playing with Salem Hornets in the Oldham junior game when he came to the notice of the Hornets officials. After playing two games with the "A" team he secured promotion to the first team and appeared in a mid-week match at Naughton Park, the Hornets defeating Widnes, a feat they have never accomplished on that ground since.

Signing fees paid to juniors in those days were low. Johnnie got nothing for signing for the Hornets, for when he put pen to paper it was in order to secure compensation whilst off work because of a football injury. Not until the middle thirties did he gain real first team status and eventually he succeeded Bob Lister as hooker. Since then, apart from the war years, he has had first claim to the position and has played many fine games. However numerous are his critics off the field there is no doubting the faith Hornets players have in his abilities as a hooker and his popularity among them is unquestioned.

Often the writer has heard a Hornets official remark: "I wish we had thirteen Freddie Lambs." That is a high tribute which speaks volumes for the service Freddie has given to the club. Like Johnnie Dean he has experienced what it is like to play and know that the playing money would not be available after the match. But in those dark days in the Hornets history, just before the war, the fact that they were members of the Hornets first team meant a lot for two faithfuls. Coming to Rochdale in 1937 from the Oldham junior club, Clarksfield, Freddie was promised £25 for signing for the Hornets. He got an instalment and the balance was paid four years later!

Except during the war, when he assisted Oldham and Keighley, Freddie has always been at the call of the Hornets—and he has never failed to answer the call. We have only to recollect his return to the field with a damaged nose in last season's Cup semi-final at Swinton and his recent re-appearance following an operation on New Year's Day to understand the new spirit and love of the game which have always been his striking characteristics. He played his first match for the Hornets at Featherstone in 1937.

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BENEFIT MATCH PERSONALITIES

Every effort has been made with the full co-operation of Mr. Chris. Brereton, (secretary of the R.L. Players' Union and Oldham Football Club) to make the benefit match attractive and well worth watching. At the time of the printing of this programme it was impossible to state the exact composition of the two sides, but there was the assurance that they will be capable of giving the public a 'treat'. Mr. G. S. Phillips, of Widnes, who would be a sure winner of any ballot for the League's best referee, offered to handle the game and he, as well as the visiting players, are assured of a hearty welcome.

The teams will be selected from—Hornets and Oldham XIII, Full-back: 1 W. Griffiths or J. McGilvray; Three-quarters: 2 S. McCormick (St. Helens), 3 J. Mahoney (Dewsbury); 4 L. Constance (Dewsbury) or A. Winstanley, 5 D. Schofield; Half-backs: 6 D. Rees (Belle Vue), 7 F. Lamb; Forwards: 8 T. Davies, 9 J. Taylor (Oldham), or J. Dean, 10 D. Booth, 11 D. Phillips (Belle Vue), 12 E. Gwyther (Belle Vue), 13 T. Rostron (Oldham). Colonial XIII, Full-back: 1 C. Eaton (Batley); Three-quarters: 2 B. Bevan (Warrington), 3 T. Verrankamp (Leeds) or R. Bartlett (Leeds), 4 I. Proctor (Leeds), 5 J. Gibson (Bramley); Half-backs: 6 D. Bennett (Bramley), 7 A. Burnell (Hunslet); Forwards: 8 D. Murphy (Leeds), 9 A. Sykes (Keighley), 10 M. Mulhall (Keighley), 11 H. Bath (Warrington), 12 A. Clues (Leeds), 13 H. Greenwood (Halifax). Referee: Mr. G. S. Phillips (Widnes).

THANKS

Thanks are tendered to all who have assisted in organising the benefit match—to Mr. Brereton and the visiting players, Mr. Phillips, the many friends at Oldham, including Mr. H. Braddock for the provision of transport for the players, Mr. J. J. Grundy for acting as secretary and treasurer of the benefit fund, to gatemen and the public for their support and to the programme advertisers and subscribers. The subscription list is still open.

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