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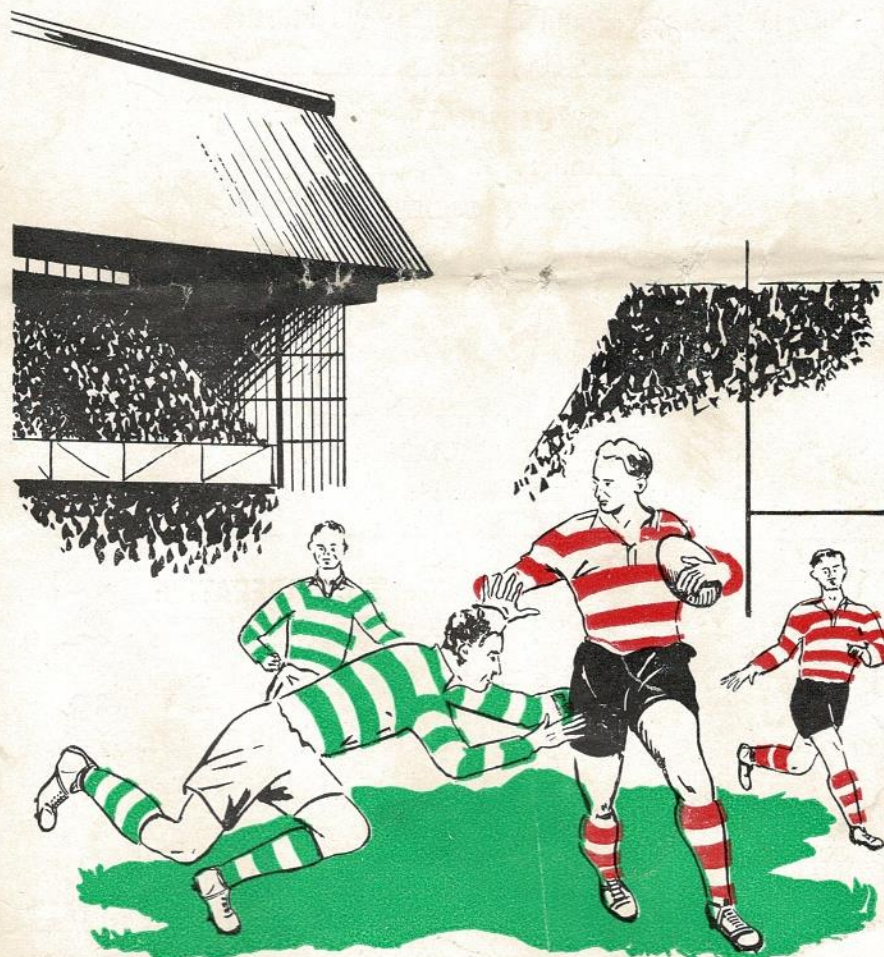
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No. 2—Saturday, August 23rd, 1952

Kick-off 3-0 p.m.

OLDHAM v. FEATHERSTONE

RULE CHANGES EXPLAINED by BOB PEMBERTON, Well-known Journalist

Speed and more speed. Apparently that is to be the keynote of the new season, and I feel that Oldham will not be lacking in that direction—at least, while the grounds are firm.

The new play-the-ball rule, which allows every man behind the one actually playing the ball to be on-side, will call for new tactics and a new technique. Have Oldham's forwards got the ability to adjust their style of play? I think they have. Bryn Goldswain, who is again to coach the lads as well as play at loose forward, took a half-day off last week to motor to Leeds for the conference between referees, coaches and Management Committee.

Bryn quickly grasped the essential requirements of the new law. I happen to know that he is not too keen on the new rule, but he realizes that it is there and he will just have to do something about it.

Spectators, as well as players, should note that when we say **all players must be behind** the man playing the ball, it is sufficient for a man's shoulder to be an inch behind, so it may appear to you that a man is offside when he isn't. Players will often be left in an offside position, but so long as they remain

passive—and the favourite way of indicating this is by holding the hands above the head—the referee will ignore them.

Mr. Bill Fallowfield, the Rugby League secretary, emphasised that the Management Committee want the game to be speeded up a lot. Referees must see that a tackled player regains his feet **immediately** and brings the ball back into play.

When this 'new' play-the-ball rule was last used I believe there was bridging between opposing players. That is, players linked together to form a loose scrum. That kind of bridging will **not** be allowed now, but there is nothing to stop players of the **same** side from linking arms to form a more solid barrier to a foot-rush.

As I understand it, the player who is tackled need not necessarily be the one to play the ball under the new rule. He can drop the ball and then anyone can play it. I can foresee some fun and games here, with a little half-back jumping aside to let the big forwards rush in.

Stealing the ball caused a lot of annoyance to a lot of people last season. It will still be possible for

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| M | 3. MITCHELL, W. S. | 3. METCALFE | Y |
| B | 4. DAVIES, A. | 4. GOLDING | M |
| L | 5. PLATT, L. | 5. MITCHELL | P |
| E | 6. DALEY, F. | 6. SHAW | I |
| Y | 7. STIRRUP, F. | 7. EVANS | C |
| | 8. OGDEN, H. | 8. DALY | |
| | 9. KEITH, J. | 9. OGDEN, M. | |
| | 10. DAY, B. | 10. HULME | |
| | 11. WINSLADE, C. | 11. LONGLEY | |
| | 12. LITTLE, S. D. | 12. FAWLEY | |
| | 13. GOLDSWAIN, B. V. (Capt.) | 13. LAMBERT | |
| | Reserves: | Reserves: | |
| | Warham, J., Tomlinson, A. | Blackburn, Ogden, J. | |
| | Referee: Mr. COATES of Pudsey | | |
| | Touch Judges: | | |
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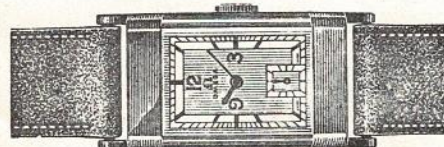
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a player to 'steal' the ball from another, but referees have been instructed to stop the man with the ball being held up by opponents while another player takes the ball from him. The new instruction is that once a player is held, whether he is standing or lying on the ground, the referee must indicate that he has to play the ball.

A penalty will now be given for a **deliberate forward pass**. I don't think this will affect the game very much. I believe there were only two in last Saturday's game with the Hornets, both against Oldham. It means that if a man runs in front of a colleague with the ball in order to gain an advantage he will be penalised. If accidentally offside it will be a scrum, as before.

*

NEW WELSH WINGER

You will not be seeing our new Welsh winger, Lionel Emmitt from Bridgend, for a week or two. He is a pit-top fitter and is working a two weeks' notice. The club have found him a job at Woodpark Colliery, Bardsley, and he will stay temporarily with Bryn Day. Bryn, who moved from Warrington during the summer, is now working in Oldham.

TODAY'S VISITORS

The surprise team of last season, Featherstone Rovers, who gave Workington a hard fight at Wembley before being beaten 18-10, are the first League visitors to Watersheddings for the 1952-53 season. Leading and coaching them again this season is Eric Batten, son of the famous Billy and brother of Bob, who has played for Oldham. Eric is a great believer in hard training, and you can expect these Featherstone boys to last a full 80 minutes, however fast the pace.

Another favourite is Freddie Miller, former Hull full-back, whose 101 goals had much to do with the Rovers' success last season. Freddie had talked of retiring from football to devote himself to his hotel in Hull.

Here is the team that played at Wembley: Miller; Batten, Metcalf, Tennant, Mitchell; Cording, Evans; Welburn, Bradshaw, Daly, Hulme, Grant, Lambert.

*

There was a record gate for the 'Law Cup' match with Hornets last Saturday—12,000 spectators paid £1,160.

The Australians will be at Watersheddings on Monday night, September 15th, kick-off 6 o'clock.

HALF-TIME SCORES

The Half-time Scores of the Matches given below will be shown on the Score Board immediately they are received

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