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NORTHERN RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE
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OLDHAM

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Secretary : F. KERSHAW

Club Doctor : Dr. J. R. G. GRICE

Team Coach : J. NOON

Physiotherapist : F. NAVESEY

'A' Team Coach : F. SELWAY

CLUB NOTES

With a lot of justification National press headlines this week have screamed the sad news that the Rugby League game is sick and dying.

Attendances at five of the 14 games played last Saturday were under 1,000. The total of 39,000 spectators watching the day's programme was 6,000 less than at Manchester United's Cup-tie with Chester.

There has been a call for that tried, trusted and overworked British institution, "an investigating sub-committee" to investigate. Plans are being made to subsidise clubs, including our own, by building social centres. And an original thought comes from Hunslet to trim professional staffs down to 25 from 50 players.

These are laudable ideas, worthy of implementation, but with Rugby League football in its present state they are merely palliatives, not curatives.

In an age when even the sophisticated psychologist has had a go at psycho-analysing the drift of support away from professional sport, it is not the thing to simplify. But at the risk being Non-U, let us dare to say that the simple truth about the decline of the Rugby League game is that it is no longer an attractive game to watch.

The change in social habits over the post-war years, T.V. and the motor-car, have hit the Rugby League game just as they have hit Soccer. But they have not hit it to the shattering extent whereby "gates" of 800 are the rule rather than the exception at Whitehaven, Bramley, Batley, Dewsbury, Keighley, all traditional Rugby centres.

Again, the simple truth is that the "fans" are fed up with having to put up with the mauling, brawling barrage of beefcake which goes under the guise of Rugby League football. Paradoxically, it is often the case that the better the two teams involved, the more negative and frustrating is the football.

As the writer sees it, Rugby League football is being slowly killed by sheer professionalism. Professional coaches devise matchwinning plans which, more often than not, stifle a player's individuality. Professional players devise their gamesmanship gimmicks which make a mockery of the play-the-ball and scrummaging laws.

All this is done in the supreme cause of collecting a winning bonus. And the poor, long-suffering spectator can go to hell, or back to his television set or drive the wife and kids on a Saturday afternoon shopping spree.

Basically, the rules of the game are no different to those of the not-too-distant days when players like Ernest Ward, Ted Ward, Ernie Ashcroft, Brian Bevan, Cec Mountford, Tommy Bradshaw, Gerry Helme, Dave Valentine, Billy Banks,

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Willie Horne, and a host of others pulled in the crowds by the pure skill of performance. There are players today who are equally talented, but their talents largely remain obscure for the reasons already outlined, and the game suffers accordingly.

A more altruistic attitude to the game itself as it is played on professional grounds in the North, will have to be adopted by the players themselves.

Otherwise, within the next decade, Rugby League football could become a corpse. That would be a great tragedy for sport, for played as it should be played, Rugby League football is still one of the finest games on earth.

Today we welcome Oldham and we understand the Watersheddings committee in the last week or so have made it very clear to their players that attacking open football is what is required of them.

Let us hope both teams follow that edict this afternoon and make it a "Derby" to be remembered for the good things of Rugby League football.

NEW RUGBY LEAGUE TROPHY

The Rugby League has now a companion to the Lance Todd award which goes to the player Rugby League journalists consider to be the best player on the field in the Wembley Cup Final.

The new trophy, to be known as the Harry Sunderland Trophy, given by the Rugby League Writers' Association, is to perpetuate the memory of the former Australian tour manager, broadcaster, and journalist.

It will be awarded annually to the player deemed to be the best on the field in the League Championship Final. The award will be made on the vote of Writers' Association members attending the game.

The player, who will retain the trophy for one year, will also receive a personal gift from the Association.

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OTHER NATIONALITIES

Congratulations are due to Stan Owen and Laitia Ravouvou on their selection for the Other Nationalities team to play St. Helens on Wednesday, January 27th, kick-off 7.15. We are going to run a coach to this game. Anyone interested contact the secretary today.

HALF-TIME SPECIAL

The winner of our last 'Special' way back on November 28th at the game v. Dewsbury was Mr. R. H. Garnett, 225 Kensington Street, Rochdale, who was well satisfied with his prize of ten pounds.

Today we are giving the prize which should have been drawn for against Doncaster or Huddersfield, but due to postponements wasn't held; we named it as a "Christmas Spirit Hamper" in which there are wines and spirits etc., to the value of over £12. Tickets are only 1/- each—buy yours now and make it a "merry" new year.

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Evans	18		Parr, J.	10	1	Butler	5	
Drui	12		Miller	12	2	Parr, K.	6	
Noon	14	4	Bradley	9	1	Fishwick	5	
Stansfield	12	1	Ravouvou	9	1	Ince	3	1
Starkey	13	2	Sivill	9	1	Woodcock	3	
Walsh	14	2	Williams	9	2	Ashcroft	4	
Garforth	11	1	Owen	10		Crocker	2	
Toga	13		Short	9		Parry	2	
Unsworth	13	1	Baxter	9		Berry	2	
Brown	10							

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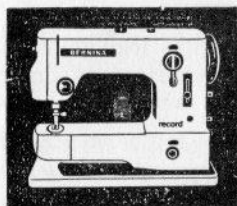
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Hon. Secretary	. . . K. ALLEN, 1 Sladen Mill Fold, Littleborough. (Tel. 89368).
Hon. Treasurer	. . . R. D. FLETCHER, 12 Margaret Avenue, Rochdale. (Tel. 48405).
Hon. Bar Secretary	. . . C. IBBERSON, 8 Charlotte Street, Rochdale (Tel. 48203).

SUPPORTERS' CLUB NOTES

BACK AGAIN

Today we are hoping that conditions will allow us to see a first-team match at the Athletic Grounds. In our Christmas programmes, which, of course, never got on sale, we wished all Hornets' well-wishers A Happy New Year. May we do that rather belatedly now?

BUSY PERIOD

Although there has been little football activity, your Supporters' Club Committee has been very busy.

On December 20th we had an excellent turn-up of members for the drawing of the Christmas prizes. Once again we wish to thank all those who gave prizes and sold tickets to help make the effort successful. Letters of thanks have gone out to all who gave prizes.

On Boxing Night a most successful Hornets night was held at the Milnrow Conservative Club. There was dancing to the Embassy Quartet and the Avengers, and carnival novelties gave a seasonal atmosphere to a pleasant evening.

CLUB PENS

We have just received a second order of club ball pens in red, white and blue. The first batch sold like hot cakes, and at 1/- each they are real value for money. You can get one from any committeeman.

ANNUAL DANCE

Our ANNUAL DANCE and one of the main events of our social year is on FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 5th at the CARLTON BALLROOM. There will be dancing from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. to the two resident bands, with spot prizes and balloons, etc. Tickets are now on sale, and, please note, they are at THE USUAL PRICE of 6/6.

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QUERY CORNER

After all this time I feel very disappointed in not being able to supply the information Mr. Travis asked for in October. A second letter to the Whitehaven R.L. Club has remained unanswered, and I have therefore not been able to get the heights and weights this gentleman asked for. If the information does turn up I will certainly give it.

NEW COMMITTEEMAN

Mr. G. Hawarth, of 111 Hollingworth Road, Littleborough, has been appointed to fill a vacancy on the Hornets Supporters' Club Committee.

JUNIOR SUPPORTERS' CLUB FILM SHOW

These notes are written on the afternoon of the Junior Supporters' Club Film Show at the Champness Hall, but a very successful evening is being looked forward to.

In acknowledging tickets for the show sent to him by Mr. J. F. Law, Junior S.C. hon. secretary, Master Brian Russell says: "I hope Hornets do well in the New Year and a Happy New Year to you."

We all share your hopes, Brian, and "A Happy New Year" to you also.

ANNUAL COMMITTEE OUTING

Because March 27th will be a congested day for traffic in the Liverpool area and because of the difficulty of meal accommodation and evening entertainment, etc., the Hornets Supporters Club annual committee outing will now be to our old favourite spot, Blackpool, on February 13th.

After the game, we shall have tea at the place where we have been very comfortable for many years, and then we shall adjourn to a country club which we have also visited many times before. The party will be 41 strong, and there are only one or two vacancies. If you are lucky you might get the last vacancy.

See Ken Allen today.

(P.T.O. for Fixtures and Results)

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FIXTURES 1964-65

FIRST TEAM

Date 1964		Opponents	Venue	Result
Aug. 22	(S)	Salford	Home	W 10-4
" 24	(M)	St. Helens	Away	L 4-28
" 29	(S)	Warrington	Away	L 9-37
Sept. 1	(T)	York	Home	W 23-12
" 5	(S)	Widnes	Away	L 0-33
" 12	(S)	(County Cup) Workington	Away	L 14-26
" 19	(S)	St. Helens	Home	L 6-17
" 26	(S)	York	Away	L 14-18
Oct. 3	(S)	Swinton	Home	L 4-14
" 10	(S)	Oldham	Away	L 5-14
" 17	(S)	Whitehaven	Home	L 10-17
" 24	(S)	Wigan	Away	Postponed
" 31	(S)	Widnes	Home	L 9-19
Nov. 7	(S)	Dewsbury	Away	L 5-15
" 14	(S)	Leigh	Home	L 2-14
" 21	(S)	Whitehaven	Away	L 6-16
" 28	(S)	Dewsbury	Home	D 7-7
Dec. 9	(W)	Swinton	Away	L 2-7
" 19	(S)	Huddersfield	Home	Postponed
" 26	(S)	Doncaster	Home	Postponed
" 28	(H)	Doncaster	Away	Postponed
1965				
Jan. 2	(S)	Salford	Away	L 5-21
" 9	(S)	Leigh	Away	L 2-9
" 16	(S)	Oldham	Home	
" 23	(S)	Huddersfield	Away	
" 30	(S)	Wigan	Home	
Feb. 6	(S)	(1) Blackpool B.	Away	
" 13	(S)	Workington T.	Home	
" 20	(S)	(2)		
" 27	(S)			
Mar. 6	(S)	Liverpool C.	Home	
" 13	(S)	(3) Widnes	Away	
" 20	(S)	Barrow	Away	
" 27	(S)	Liverpool C.	Away	
April 3	(S)	(SF) Warrington	Home	
" 10	(S)	(S.F.)		
" 17	(S)	Blackpool B.	Home	
" 19	(S)	Barrow	Home	

'A' TEAM

Date 1964		Opponents	Venue	Result
Aug. 22	(S)	Salford	Away	W 30-8
" 29	(S)	Warrington	Home	L 4-21
Sept. 5	(S)	Widnes LCCS	Home	W 17-12
" 12	(S)	Workington	Home	L 14-21
" 15	(T)	Wigan LCCS	Home	W 19-6
" 19	(S)	St. Helens	Away	L 3-10
" 26	(S)	Barrow	Home	W 15-11
" 28	(M)	Liverp'l LCCS (Semi-Final)	Away	W 15-8
Oct. 3	(S)	Swinton	Away	L 7-18
" 10	(S)	Oldham	Home	W 12-4
" 17	(S)	Whitehaven	Away	W 16-10
" 24	(S)	Wigan	Home	W 20-4
" 31	(S)	Widnes	Away	Postponed
" 31	(S)	Warrington LCCS (Final)	Away	L 5-13
Nov. 7	(S)	Leigh	Away	W 10-5
" 14	(S)	Whitehaven	Home	W 5-0
" 21	(S)			
" 28	(S)			
Dec. 5	(S)	Swinton	Home	Postponed
" 12	(S)			
" 19	(S)			
" 26	(S)	Barrow	Away	Postponed
Jan. 2	(S)	Salford	Home	Postponed
" 9	(S)	Leigh	Home	L 4-14
" 16	(S)	Oldham	Away	
" 23	(S)			
" 30	(S)	Wigan	Away	
Feb. 6	(S)			
" 13	(S)	blackpool B.	Home	
" 20	(S)	Workington T.	Away	
" 27	(S)			
Mar. 6	(S)	Liverpool	Away	
" 13	(S)	Widnes	Home	
" 20	(S)	St. Helens	Home	
" 27	(S)	Liverpool	Home	
April 3	(S)	Warrington	Away	
" 10	(S)			
" 17	(S)	Blackpool B.	Away	

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