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RUGBY LEAGUE
FOOTBALL

Northern League
Championship Match

OLDHAM
v.
SWINTON

FRIDAY,
12th APRIL,
1968
Kick-off 7.30 p.m.

OFFICIAL PROGRAMME

6^D

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THE LAST MATCH

Yes, this season is almost over as far as we are concerned, today's game being our last. Swinton, however, have still to compete in the Championship play-offs, so the season for them goes on a little longer. We hope today's match will bring down the curtain at Watersheddings in style as two sides capable of playing attractive football are on view. Let us hope they give the Easter crowd a treat with a football feast.

Our last two games have been disappointing. Last Saturday we took on second in the table Hull K.R. and although we were far from disgraced, our handling could have been better and the tackling also, in the second half, could have been improved. Terry Dolly's brilliant try in this game was one of the highlights, seven men handled before Dolly was given a superb Buckley pass on the halfway line about 50 yards to the post; even the home fans rose and applauded it, as it was certainly a tremendous effort. Apart from that, however, the game generally belonged to the Rovers, although at times their handling, too, let them down, particularly in the first half when they should have had at least another two tries.

Martin Murphy at full-back was in fine form and no doubt relishing in his return to the No. 1 jersey, his tackling was exceptional and his 'running out' of the ball sometimes had Rovers somewhat spreadeagled. It is a pity that he had to concentrate mainly on defence, but with a side like Hull K.R. on a sunny day in front of their own fans this was only inevitable. Wilson's injury was rather untimely, for he and Hughes were leading the forwards well. It is ironical that the injury

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which caused Wilson to retire was accidentally done by team-mate John McCormack. Wilson missed Monday's home game against Warrington but it is hoped he will be fit to return to the side this afternoon.

Our Monday evening's game against Warrington was actually as frustrating as our efforts to get the game on. Yes, we succeeded at the seventh attempt to get this match played (surely this is a record) and then we had a disappointing crowd. The game itself was a disappointment, although it must be admitted we were short of a few regulars—Wilson, Fletcher, Donovan, Buckley, etc., and Curry's injury at half-time did not help matters; it meant shuffling the team around even more and, consequently, our second half performance was disappointing. In the second half the team promised a great deal, but, regretfully, achieved very little, mainly because of the inability to "cash in" on what are surely the fundamentals of the game—catching and passing a ball.

WELCOME TO THE LIONS

Swinton have had a very in and out season, much like ourselves, but with less "Cup success" as they were knocked out in the first round of the R.L. Cup by Bramley. Club coach Cliff Evans has left Station Road for St. Helens and the team's fortunes and fitness are in the hands of the very well known Dai Moses, who has been promoted from the 'A' team.

At full-back is stalwart Ken Gowers, still as good as ever and doing the job of place-kicking whilst Derek Whitehead is in the 'A' team. Jeff Price, the former Blackbrook junior, and Gomersall form one wing, whilst Alan Buckley, the former Broughton Park R.U. player, who has happily regained his best form and has come into the reckoning for a tour place again, plays inside to international John Stopford to form the other wing. Graham Williams, the diminutive and elusive

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number 7, teams up with Billy 'Daz' Davies to form a formidable half-back pair. In the forwards we shall see Barry Simpson, Mike Hutton and Dave Robinson, a very mobile back three, and up front, former Oldham hooker Graham Wood packs between Harry Scott, who has been purchased from Halifax, and the Cumbrian, McKay, who has recently come into the senior side. We wish them the best of luck.

A POPULAR COMPETITION RUINED

During the season just ending, Player's No. 6 have sponsored a competition to find the Player of the Season.

Yes! Without a shadow of doubt, the enterprise of Player's No. 6, who have sponsored two interesting competitions during the season, have been well and truly abused, and the season's brickbat must go to those supporters who have ruined the Player of the Season competition with their efforts to get players of their own club firmly placed in the league table. Of course, Player's No. 6 have learned from their mistakes in sponsoring this competition and if they consider it worth while to run a similar one next season, these mistakes will be ironed out.

To get to the point. I and many more deplore the attitude of supporters who have seemingly collected voting papers from anywhere—old programmes, etc.—and deposited the voting slips in boxes provided even before the game started; this is why the leading positions in the final table have more or less remained static the whole time.

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- 5—STOPFORD
- 6—DAVIES
- 7—WILLIAMS
- 8—SCOTT
- 9—WOOD
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- 11—SIMPSON
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Some weeks ago, I understand a club programme actually asked their supporters to vote for one of their own players presumably because the player concerned was well placed in the competition table. A few weeks ago, Alec Murphy received a number of important votes (he is lying fifth in the Player's table) following the game, Oldham v Leigh. Murphy did not play in this game and if he wins a prize in the competition, good luck to him, but what a farce it is.

No, I am not getting at everyone, only ourselves, because I am afraid this has happened at our own club with Martin Murphy. I have discouraged as much as possible this practise, but it still goes on, although nowhere near to the extent that it goes on at other grounds. Last Monday, 289 voting slips were returned to the office; 269 were for Parry Gordon, the Warrington player, who is lying third at present in the competition; the remainder constituted votes for both Martin Murphy of Oldham and, wait for it, Ian Towers of Oldham Athletic. The player who was awarded the £6 for being the Player of the Match did not receive one single vote from 'Latic' fans. I agree, Gordon did not have a bad game, but I also know that the majority of the voting slips were filled in before the game began. I wish to make it clear, the competition organised by Player's No. 6 has had a great deal of money, effort and time put into it and has, on the whole, been a success, especially the section of the competition whereby a neutral judge selects the Player of the Game, which carries a £6 award. This has created a tremendous amount of supporter interest, which has been proved with discussions after the game on who in fact should have been made the Player of the Match.

Yes, my bouquet is awarded to Player's No. 6 for their enterprise but my brickbat slams down hard on those few hundred fans who have been responsible for a farcical league table.

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EASTER HOLIDAY ATTRACTIONS

A guide to first-team Rugby League football matches in Lancashire on:—

Saturday, 13th April — All matches kick-off 3.0 p.m.

Blackpool Borough v Leigh, at Borough Park, Blackpool.

Swinton v Salford, at Station Road, Swinton.

Warrington v Wigan, at Wilderspool Stadium, Warrington.

Widnes v St. Helens, at Naughton Park, Widnes.

Monday, 15th April — All matches kick-off 3.0 p.m.

Leigh v Warrington, at Hilton Park, Leigh.

Swinton v St. Helens, at Station Road, Swinton.

Widnes v Liverpool City, at Naughton Park, Widnes.

Wigan v Salford, at Central Park, Wigan.

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FIXTURES 1967-8

1967				1968			
Date	Opponents	Venue	Result	Date	Opponents	Venue	Result
Aug. 15	(Tu) Liverpool City	Home L	12-13	Dec. 30	(S) Barrow	Home W	15-10
" 19	(S) Leigh (Lancs Cup - 1)	Home W	17-11	Jan. 1	(M) Workington Town	Away L	5-10
" 23	(W) Bradford Northern	Away L	10-28	" 6	(S) Batley	Away W	22-7
" 26	(S) Hull	Away L	20-29	" 13	(S) Wigan	Away P'poned	
Sept. 2	(S) Whitehaven	Home W	34-14	" 20	(S) St. Helens	Home L	14-26
" 4	(M) Blackpool Borough	Away L	19-15	" 22	(M) Wigan	Away L	3-39
" 7	(Th) Swinton (Lancs C - 2)	Away L	8-11	" 27	(S) Barrow	Away L	13-14
" 9	(S) Warrington	Away L	2-26	Feb. 3	(S) Hunslet (RL Cup Rd 1)	Away W	9-4
" 16	(S) Rochdale H.	Home W	13-12	" 14	(W) Batley	Home	
" 23	(S) Whitehaven	Away W	24-12	" 17	(S) Widnes	Home	
" 30	(S) Wigan	Home L	13-17	" 24	(S) (2)		
Oct. 3	(Tu) Hull K.R.	Home L	7-9	Mar. 1	(F) Rochdale H.	Away	
" 14	(S) Bradford Northern	Home L	14-25	" 9	(S) Workington Town	Home L	5-36
" 20	(F) Salford	Away L	6-12	" 16	(S) Leeds (RL Cup Rd 3)	Home L	0-13
" 28	(S) Blackpool Boro'	Home W	13-4	Apr. 6	(S) Hull K.R.	Away L	8-28
Nov. 4	(S) Leigh	Away L	2-29	" 8	(M) Warrington	Home L	5-23
" 11	(S) Australia	Home L	8-18	" 12	(F) Swinton	Home	
" 13	(M) Salford	Home L	0-4				
" 17	(F) Widnes	Away L	14-33				
" 25	(S) Hull	Home W	31-7				
Dec. 2	(S) Liverpool City	Away W	13-0				
" 8	(F) Warrington	Home	P'poned				
" 16	(S) St. Helens	Away L	2-10				
" 26	(Tu) Swinton	Away L	18-22				



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