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Monday 23rd April

Kick-off 3-00 pm



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Brian Batty of the Mail

RUGBY LEAGUE has a habit of regularly throwing up a real hardened professional in a sport accepted as mainly part-time by the rest of the world.

Sometimes these men don't always get the recognition they deserve—or it arrives late in their careers.

This was the case with Frank Myler, who recently announced that he's called it a day as a player to concentrate on coaching Rochdale Hornets.

Myler is fast making his mark in this respect although he's a relative newcomer to the coaching ranks.

WESTERN

I believe his success and his bright future is greatly boosted by his rugged and varied playing background.

Myler almost took up golf as a career — he still knocks the ball further than many a professional—but he also reminds me of a character who could have stepped right out of a Western film.

He's mean and hard when it comes to losing, he's quick on the draw when anyone makes the mistake of misjudging Rugby League or a player.

Yet he remains highly popular, with a fine reputation as a sportsman.

Myler was a shock choice as 1970 tour skipper before he went on to win the Harry Sunderland trophy for a memorable display in St. Helens' success over Leeds in the championship final.

SLAMMING

It was his qualities of leadership as much as his playing ability that helped Britain win the Ashes after a disastrous losing start in Brisbane.

He was not afraid to step on a few toes in Sydney shortly before the final Test, slamming the Aussie referees and touch judges but earning Britain a fairer deal.

Myler gained the respect of the Aussies as he has done with British players and it was a tragedy that staleness caught up with him and his side in the following World Cup.

But now he is doing a wonderful job for Rochdale, showing the same dedication and determination to succeed as he did when playing.

His retirement with back trouble is a blow to the game but now he can contribute plenty as a coach.

It's a pity so many other players with his qualities and experience are so easily lost to a sport which needs all the help it can get to survive.

Around the League

with - DAVE PARKER

DEWSBURY were on £75 a man to beat Bradford Northern in the semi-final at Odsal plus £5 from chairman Michael Lumb and £1 from coach Tommy Smales. All they ended up with was £8, but victories last week in the league put their earnings near the £80 mark.

Barrow have transfer-listed their former county hooker Edmund Thompson at £4,000 after he said that he was not prepared to continue playing with the club for losing pay. Prop Frank Harrison has also told the Furness club that unless he is guaranteed first team football he is not interested in playing at Craven Park. Scrum half Frankie Jones, who has been such a faithful servant through the bad times and good at Barrow has also quit. He is not happy at losing his place to young Dave Elkins.

Meanwhile former Blackpool Borough centre Dennis Jackson, who is having his second spell at Barrow has taken over the captaincy and the players are showing a little more spirit. He could be a favourite for the coaching job soon to be relinquished by caretaker-coach Bill Ferguson, although former Salford and Lancashire county winger Bill Burgess is all set to return to his hometown to take up a teaching post in the autumn. He is also attending a R.L. coaching course in June and is keen to get back into the game after a three year break while furthering his education.

I can reveal that Widnes-based referee Mick Naughton just pipped Oldham's Sam Shepherd for the whistle at Wembley on May 12. Sam will be reserve, and although I have not had it confirmed the voting was just one in favour of Mick.

After a three week absence from training Rob Valentine has returned to the fold at Wakefield Trinity, and in the meantime prop John Godfrey is on trial with Bramley.

As in recent years when St. Helens and Wigan planned trips to Australia in the close season snags cropped up only a couple of months before intended departure and the same problem is now preventing Leeds going ahead with plans. The Australian clubs are not keen on mid-week night matches and floodlights are not what they are here apparently and nobody is rushing forward to guarantee to the trip.

Rochdale, today's visitors, have allowed Huyton to take reserve back row forward Norman Williams on trial, and the Alt Park Club are also keen on acquiring the services of Widnes players Ged Lowe and Dave Macko.

Keighley have signed three junior internationals, but are not releasing their names until they have played in their local amateur finals.

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Spotlight on Dennis WRIGHT

A SERIOUS KNEE injury, and the care and attention he received in an Edinburgh hospital, put Dennis Wright on the road to success as one of the North of England's leading and most respected figures in the field of physiotherapy and athletic injuries.

At the time, Dennis was serving his National Service in Scotland and combining his duties for H.M. Forces with those as outside-left for the famous Scottish soccer club, Glasgow Rangers.

"I wanted a career outside football, and I had planned on specialising in physical education", says Dennis. "Then I had this rather nasty knee injury, and the skills of the medical staff left such an impression on me that I decided my future lay in physiotherapy, and helping those unfortunate enough to be in the position I had been in".

That was the start of a double-edged career in which Dennis, Oldham's medical man since the Gus Risman days, has gone to the top of the tree in his chosen profession and has also become accepted as one of the country's most knowledgeable men in the prevention, treatment and cure of injuries normally associated with sport.

The trainer and his "magic sponge" is just a relic of the past at Watersheddings.

For there is nothing magical about Dennis Wright—just knowledge and experience gleaned from years of study and even more years of physiotherapy practice and teaching, not only in hospitals in the Greater Manchester area but in his private practice in Manchester and, of course, here at Watersheddings and as the Great Britain R.L. team physiotherapist.

Top men from several sports have sought Dennis's advice on injuries—R.U. internationals, soccer internationals, top-flight Olympic athletes, leading tennis players, and even members of the British Olympic dressage team!

"But my biggest thrill was undoubtedly being a member of the backroom team

when Great Britain won the World Cup in France last year", he says. "Our lads went to France as no-hopers, but proved that by living and training together for even a short spell they are good enough to take on the world".

The world was indeed Dennis Wright's oyster way back in 1947 when, as a 17-year-old and already proven in the rigours of Third Division North soccer with Oldham Athletic, he was spotted by Glasgow Rangers trainer Arthur Dixon and taken along to team up with such famous stars as Willie Waddell, George Young and Willie Woodburn.

Dennis had four years in Scotland.

"Sadly, I didn't develop as had been expected", he says honestly. "There were a variety of reasons for this, just as there are for the vast numbers of lads taken on by the big clubs who fall by the wayside and are never even heard of".

So it was that Dennis, older and wiser, returned to Athletic, then managed by George Hardwick, shortly before their promotion to the second division.

Now, however, he was well into his studies in physiotherapy and soon left Boundary Park for part-time soccer with Ashton United in the Lancashire Combination and Stalybridge in the Cheshire League.

In 1952, he helped Ashton reach the first round of the F.A. Cup in which they held Halifax Town to a draw at The Shay, but were beaten at home in the replay.

As his soccer career came to a close with Stalybridge, his progress in his profession was beginning to blossom.

After working as a physiotherapist for the Oldham and then the Salford group of hospitals, Dennis went to Withington Hospital, Manchester, where he qualified as a teacher of physiotherapy.

Dennis is still employed at Withington, both as a physiotherapist and a lecturer in physiotherapy, and is now an examiner for the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists—proof of his standing in a profession in which there are no short cuts to the top.

Dennis teamed up with the boys at Watersheddings way back in 1962.

"And I have enjoyed every moment of my life at the club", he says. "I often tell the medical people that I have taken far more out of rugby than I have put in because, through the game, I have learned such a lot about injuries which has helped me in my hospital work. When a player is seriously injured, decisions have to be made quickly and efficiently, and this is good training.

"My most satisfying experience, as I say, was in seeing Britain win the World Cup.

"My biggest disappointment was in 1964 when Oldham won the semi-final, but still didn't go to Wembley.

"One gets a lot of pleasure, too, from seeing boys coming up through the 'A' team and going right to the top—lads like Bob Irving and Kevin Taylor.

"My only regret, in fact, is that Dr. David Preston, the club doctor, will soon be leaving. It is important that a club has a doctor who is always accessible and considerate, and I have always enjoyed the very best of relationships with Dr. Preston.

"I am delighted to learn, however, that Dr. Preston's partner, Dr. Duncan Gadsden, has intimated that he will take over".

Dennis, who lives with his wife Bunty and three sons, Martin (16), Peter (14) and David (11) in the Tandle Hill area of Royton, has come a long way since those early beginnings.

He has accompanied several British R.L. teams to France and made his name as one of the top men in his field, as shown by the number of lectures and courses he is asked to prepare.

He is currently running a course at Moston College on the treatment of athletic injuries, and recently delivered a paper on rehabilitation in lower limb injuries at a top-level conference at Salford University organised by the Rugby Football Union.

And only last week he was up in Middlesbrough, at a hospital there, giving a lecture on athletic injuries.

The Oldham club is indeed fortunate to have the services of a man like Dennis Wright, who would love to crown his connections with rugby by touring down under next year as did his predecessor, Paddy Armour.

Dennis has made quite a name for himself . . . thanks to that gammy left knee and the Edinburgh hospital!



THE
GREEN FINAL
 FOR ALL LOCAL SPORT

OLDHAM 6

- 1—DAVIES T
- 2—ELLIOTT M. *2 tries*
- 3—LARDER P.
- 4—WAINWRIGHT T.
- 5—HOGKINSON N.
- 6—HILL C.
- 7—McCONE M.
- 8—WILSON K.
- 9—TAYLOR K.
- 10—FOSTER F.
- 11—IRVING R.
- 12—HALL F.
- 13—FARRELL J.
- 14—*Blair*
- 15—*Reynolds*

Referee

W. J. GREENHALGH
 (Ashton-in-Makerfield)

HORNETS 7

- 1—CRELLIN, J.
- 2—BRELSFORD, N.
- 3—BROPHY, T.
- 4—WHITEHEAD, S.
- 5—KUCUVE, J.
- 6—BUTLER, J.
- 7—GARTLAND, P.
- 8—BIRCHALL P.
- 9—CLARKE P.
- 10—HOLLIDAY, B.
- 11—WELDING, B.
- 12—SHEFFIED, B.
- 13—HALMSHAW, T.
- 14—HILLMAN, A.
- 15—HAMMOND, J.

Touch Judges

J. Entwistle (Worsley) Red
 R. J. Percival
 (Warrington) Orange

OUR VISITORS . . .

ROCHDALE

This afternoon Oldham wind up their League programme with a tough but most interesting visit from local rivals Rochdale Hornets.

Oldham-born Johnny Hammond represented the English amateur team against France in 1970 before leaving St. Annes for Rochdale Hornets. Hammond was then a scrum-half but he has made a most successful switch to the full-back position.

Another Oldhamer is Norman Brelsford, the tricky winger, who became an Oldham player in February, 1965. He was eventually snapped up by Hornets on a free transfer which proved to be a shrewd signing. Last season he crossed for 18 tries and he has already beaten that total this season. In the first round of the Lancashire Cup he crossed for 5 tries in the 24-19 away win at Whitehaven.

Alongside Brelsford is another high-scoring player, Tom Brophy, who made a name for himself whilst playing for Liverpool R.U.F.C. He represented Lancashire, North West Counties and England at Rugby Union before turning professional for £6,000 with Barrow in 1966. Brophy was in the Barrow team which was defeated by Feathers'one Rovers at Wembley in 1967 and he also made the Lancashire County side whilst at Craven Park. Last August, Brophy moved to Rochdale in an exchange deal involving Joe Chamberlain and since then he has contributed 15 tries and 28 goals to the Hornets scoreline, including 2 tries and 5 goals (16 points) in the 34-7 victory over Blackpool Borough.

A player who could find himself in this afternoon's line-up is Jim Crellin, the 29-years-old Cumbrian who first played professionally with Workington Town in 1965 after signing from Moresby R.U.F.C. Crellin quickly settled into Rugby League and he had represented his county by the time he was transferred to Oldham in 1969. After just over 12 months at Watersheddings, Crellin moved to Rochdale for an £850 fee plus Gordon Worswick. Last season he played in the majority of Hornets games, scoring 16 tries and 24 goals, but this season he has had difficulty in making the first team, which gives some indication of the strength of Rochdale's backs.

One of the players who has been keeping Crellin out of the side is Albert Hillman, a Widnes-born lad who joined Rochdale from the Thames Board Mills junior outfit.

For the wing positions Rochdale have two Fijian candidates in Jonathon Kucuve and Mike Ratu. Kucuve is 27 years old and was signed in January, 1971, whilst Ratu is two years older and he joined Rochdale in 1964 from Stroud R.U.F.C.

David Taylor is yet another Oldham-born player on Horne's books. He was signed from Saddleworth Rangers and, apart from a short spell in 1971 when he was on loan to St. Helens, Rochdale has been his only club. Like the rest of the Oldham contingent he will be keen to play and impress this afternoon.

One player who could possibly be making his farewell appearance at Watersheddings is Frank Myler, who has suffered an injury early in the season which could make his mind up to call this his last season in a playing capacity. Myler is, of course, now at the veteran stage in a wonderful career which began way back in 1955 when he signed for Widnes from Widnes junior football. He proved to be an extremely talented half-back and he quickly made the Lancashire and then the British teams, but he really became a household name with his hat-trick of tries in the 1960 World Cup Trial. He was, of course, a member of Britain's successful 1960 World Cup team and he also toured Australia and New Zealand with Great Britain in 1966 before transferring to St. Helens in 1967. The following year he was a member of the St. Helens team which whipped Oldham 30-2 in the Lancashire Cup Final and in 1970 he returned to Australia and New Zealand as skipper of the British team. On returning to Britain, Myler was again selected to captain Britain in the attempt to regain the World Cup. This 1970 World Cup Tournament brought an end to Myler's international career after 30 test match appearances. He was then trans-

ferred to Rochdale as player-coach where he brought about a tremendous revival at the Athletic Grounds. Last season, as well as leading Rochdale to the Floodlit Cup Final, his own personal performances led to him being placed 9th in the Player's No. 6 'Player of the Year' Awards. Myler has proved to be a model sportsman and an inspiring captain throughout his career and Oldham fans will be delighted if they are able to see him play this afternoon.

At scrum-half Hornets have 26-years-old Peter Gartland who joined Rochdale from St. Helens in the summer of 1971 for £500. He has proved to be a bargain signing, for he has turned in some most effective performances around the base of the scrum.

Although the Rochdale backs form a skilful combination the real strength of the Hornets team is in their strong and mobile pack.

Prop forward Peter Birchall first signed for Rochdale in 1960, but after representing the Hornets in the 1965 Lancashire Cup Final and then appearing in the England Under-24 team, he was transferred to Bradford Northern for £2,750. Eventually he moved to Huddersfield before returning to the Athletic Grounds for £250. He is a dependable type of player who this season has twice been substitute for the Lancashire side.

Another candidate for the propping positions is transfer-listed Eddie Brown, the Lancashire Under-17 star who joined Rochdale from Mayfield juniors in September, 1966. Like Birchall, Brown has represented both Lancashire and the England Under-24 team.

Another player with plenty of international experience is Bill Holliday. He began his professional career with Whitehaven in 1958 and then moved to Bradford Northern and in 1964 to Hull Kingston Rovers for a hefty £8,000 fee. During his stay on Humberside, Holliday played regularly for Cumberland and Great Britain and when he moved to Swinton in September, 1968, a further £6,000 changed hands. After fading out of the picture at Swinton, Holliday made a determined return to first team rugby at the beginning of this season and he was Swinton's substitute in the Lancashire Cup Final. Last November he was transferred to Rochdale for £1,000 and made his debut up at Whitehaven, where his 3 goals enabled Hornets to score a 9-7 win against his home town club. He has scored over 50 goals for Hornets this season including 7 in the 44-8 away Cup victory against Keighley.

Rochdale have one of the best hookers in the League in Peter Clarke who was signed from Latchford Albion and, by coincidence, second team hooker Ray Harris is also a former Latchford Albion junior.

The rest of the Hornets pack consists of shrewd signings, not least of which is Alan Robinson, brother of Wigan's Dave, who was signed from Swinton and who is enjoying a tremendous season. Bill Sheffield joined Rochdale in February, 1971 from St. Helens in an exchange deal involving Kevin Earle, whilst another player who arrived at Rochdale via an exchange deal was Bob Welding. Welding's first professional club was Leigh and whilst with them he represented both Lancashire and England Under-24. He was then transferred to Bradford Northern, but he moved back to Lancashire in April, 1971 when he signed for Rochdale. Last season he was substitute in the Lancashire team.

The leading Rochdale try-scorer in the pack is speedy Stuart Whitehead, who has scored 9 tries this season. He is another former Watersheddings player, who was signed by Oldham in November, 1961 from Shawside juniors. In September, 1966 he was transferred to Salford, and he represented Salford at Wembley in 1969 as well as in this season's Lancashire Cup Final. He was transferred to Rochdale for £1,500 last November and he made his debut in the 22-12 home defeat by Wakefield Trinity when he scored a try.

Rochdale's most recent signing is loose-forward Tony Halmshaw who was signed from Halifax last month. Halmshaw had been at Halifax for 8 years, in which time he has played four times for Yorkshire and last season he played for Great Britain in the third test match when New Zealand were beaten 12-3. He has received some excellent Press reports since he joined Rochdale, and it would appear as if Oldham are in for a tough afternoon with which to end their League season.

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ROCHDALE HORNETS STATISTICS

Ground: Athletic Grounds.

Colours: Red, White and Blue.

Nickname: Hornets.

Founder members of the Rugby League in 1895.

Attendance record: 41,381, 1923-24 Challenge Cup Final, Oldham 4, Wigan 21.

Record win: 75-15 v. Broughton Moor in 1914-15.

Record defeat: 2-79 v. Hull in 1920-21.

Try-scoring record: 30 by Jack Williams in 1934-35.

Goal-kicking record: 109 by Walter Gowers in 1933-34.

Point-scoring record: 102 goals and 13 tries, 243 points, by Graham Starkey in 1966-67.

Lancashire Champions: 1918-19.

Runners-up: 1914-15.

Lancashire Cup Winners: 1911-12, 1914-15 & 1918-19.

Runners-up: 1912-13, 1919-20 & 1965-66.

Floodlit Cup runners-up: 1971-72.

Challenge Cup Winners: 1921-22.

Draw

GRAND NATIONAL DRAW: £50 winner, Mrs. A. Pumford; £10 Second, Mr. A. Rochford; £5 Third, _____; £3 Fourth, M. Elliott. OTHER RUNNERS, £1.00: W. Ludford, N. Shaw, Mrs. N. Heywood, A. Wainwright, E. Walters, K. Siddall, E. Collinge, K. Martin, Marjorie (Osram), Mr. Collier, A. Drinkwater, S. Collinge, Mrs. C. Blackburn, Mr. Scholes, Harold Chidgey, F. Heywood, (2 c/o Eric Schofield), c/o Norman Shaw. PRIZES NOT CLAIMED: £5, Third — 3961, £1.00 — 3892, 15742, 4307, 16582, 9770, 9688, 7864, 1444, 4849, 4931, 4839, 18121, 7856, 20740, 7137.

Rugby Quiz

- Which was the biggest league match attendance at Rochdale?
- When did Rochdale tour France?
- Which player made the longest run of consecutive appearances for Oldham?
- What were the results of last season's league matches between Oldham and Rochdale Hornets?
- Which Rochdale player toured Australasia with Britain in 1954?

ANSWERS

- In 1954-55, 19,654 saw Oldham beat Rochdale 18-4.
- In 1965, Rochdale lost all three games during their French tour v. Carcassonne 30-10, v. Perpignan 16-13 & v. Saint Gaudens 23-9.
- Tom Rees played in 121 consecutive matches for Oldham between March, 1933 and December, 1935.
- Oldham 2, Rochdale Hornets 8; Rochdale Hornets 2, Oldham 9.
- Ted Cahill.

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23—Whitehaven	H 30—13	14—York	H 16—10
26—Workington T.	H 19—5	19—Barrow	A 5—8
28—York	A 32—8	27—Barrow Ch. Cup	
Sept. 1—Salford, Lancs. Cup	A 17—41	1st Rd.	H 24—7
10—Hull	H 27—2	Feb. 4—Leigh	A 21—8
17—Huyton	A 25—13	11—Blackpool B.	H 24—5
23—Play. No. 6 1st R.	A 10—17	17—Chal. Cup 2nd Rd.	
29—Wigan	A 12—9	—Hull 2nd Rd.	24—2
Oct. 3—Salford (Fl. Cup)	H 12—8	25—Widnes	A 19—12
7—St. Helens	H 12—12	Mar. 4—Warrington	H 11—12
14—Workington T.	A 10—17	11—Barrow	H 37—6
22—Widnes	H 17—18	18—Blackpool B.	A 55—3
Nov. 4—Huddersfield	H 7—7	Apr. 1—Dewsbury	H 4—13
7—Castleford F.C.	H 9—7	8—Swinton	H 23—10
12—Huyton	H 22—0	13—Salford	A 10—18
17—Hull	A 17—14	21—Swinton	A
25—Wigan	H 11—6	23—Rochdale	H
Dec. 1—St. Helens	A 10—24		
5—Leigh F.Cup. Semi	8—10		
10—Salford	H 12—14		
17—Dewsbury	A 16—12		
24—Leigh	H 24—4		
26—Rochdale H.	A 14—16		
31—Warrington	A 10—20		

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