

Oldham 15

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M. *2 tries*
- 3 LARDER, P. *3 goals*
- 4 WAINWRIGHT, T.
- 5 BARTON, E.
- 6 TREASURE, D.
- 7 BROWN, R. *try*
- 8 ASHCROFT, K.
- 9 TAYLOR K.
- 10 MCCracken, W.
- 11 HALL, F.
- 12 WELDING, R.
- 13 FARRELL, J.
- 14 McCone M
- 15 Reynolds J

Referee:
W. H. Thompson (Huddersfield)

Hornets 3

- 1 MALONEY, J.
- 2 BRELSFORD, N.
- 3 TAYLOR, D.
- 4 SIMKINS, C.
- 5 PRATT, A.
- 6 BUTLER, J.
- 7 GARTLAND, F.
- 8 BIRCHALL, P.
- 9 CLARKE, P.
- 10 HODKINSON, N.
- 11 FOGERTY, T.
- 12 SHEFFIELD, W.
- 13 WHITEHEAD, S. *try*
- 14 ASPINALL, W.
- 15 FLANAGAN, K.

E. Lea (St. Helens) Orange
R. Dennett (Warrington) Red

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OLDHAM 15

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ROCHDALE 3



Dickie Brown, Oldham's scrum-half, sets up an attack in the cup-tie at Rochdale on Sunday. It was Brown who schemed Oldham's second try to push us into a 10-2 lead.

(Picture by courtesy of the Evening Chronicle.)

OLDHAM MAN OF MATCH

Fill in the coupon below to nominate the Oldham player, who in your opinion was the most outstanding in today's match,

Drop your voting slip in at the Secretary's office, or Souvenir Shop, on your way home, or post it to reach us no later than 3 days after the game to "Man of the Match" The Pavilion Watersheddings, Oldham.

Name

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The Man of the Match

ROCHDALE

was *Dickie Brown*

OLDHAM PLAYER OF YEAR

At the end of the season, the player who has received most Man of the Match votes over the whole season will become Oldham's Player of the Year.

All voting slips will be kept, and the Player of the Year will be asked to draw one out at random when he receives his award. The lucky voter will receive a £20 cash prize, so don't forget your name and address when you cast your vote — YOU could be on a winner as well as the player for whom you vote.

xx Only voting slips from the Oldham programme will be accepted — plain paper votes will be void.

VOTED MAN OF MATCH

v BLACKPOOL
F. HALL

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

THAT was the game, that was! It had everything, didn't it? And now here we are again to replay Sunday's titanic Challenge Cup second-round tie with our neighbours, Rochdale.

We must, at this point, thank our supporters for all their tremendous backing at the Athletic Grounds. It provided a 'lift' for both the club and the players to know we have such support behind us, and judging by the volume of noise and that tremendous chant of 'Oldham, Oldham' we certainly provided the bulk of the 7,000-plus crowd.

The last time there was a draw between Oldham and the Hornets in the game's major cup competition was way back in the old Northern Union days of 1911. On that occasion the sides drew at Watersheddings, and Rochdale won the replay 4-3 at the Athletic Grounds.

Let's hope we can reverse that this time, for although these notes were written before Monday's third-round draw was made, the second-round tumble of such clubs as Salford and Wigan, coupled with New Hunslet's shock home win against darkhorses York, could — with any amount of reasonable luck — have opened up the strong possibilities of a semi-final appearance for tonight's eventual winners.

Make no mistake, our boys did well to earn this second crack.

Disappointing it may have been to see a 10-2 lead slide away, but whichever way you look at it we came away from First Division Rochdale — not one of our happy hunting grounds in recent years — with the tie still in the balance ... and that was no mean achievement.

Given reasonable breaks tonight, and once again the backing of our tremendous support, and we could still reach round three.

Because of several bumps and bruises picked up by our players at Rochdale it was not possible for our coach Jim Challinor to announce his side in time for these notes.

Brian Hughes received a shoulder

injury, Martin Murphy lost some teeth, and Fred Hall played most of the game in a badly-dazed condition.

He took a blow near the temple early on in the match and remembers little of the game. It speaks much for his courage that with our forward substitute already used, Bob Welding going on for Brian Hughes, Fred battled on as he did.

So we now come to round two of this great tie ... and one cannot help remembering the last replay we had here at Watersheddings in the Challenge Cup.

That, too, was in the second-round. It was in the late sixties and after drawing against Bradford Northern at Odsal, more than 17,000 spectators packed into Watersheddings for the second match.

It was a great night for Rugby League in Oldham, with our team knocking out Northern at the second attempt and going on to meet Leeds — also at home — in round three.

Sandwiched between the two cup-ties was a home match against Workington. After the 17,000 crowd for the Northern replay, the gate for the Workington home match was 3,000. Then came Leeds — and the attendance soared again, this time to more than 19,000.

If proof was needed that the Challenge Cup holds a special appeal that was it.

Tonight, therefore, we can expect our best gate for many seasons.

It has been noticeable in recent months that the vocal support for our side on away grounds has seemed to be greater than at home.

While that may seem strange, one explanation advanced is that supporters travelling away tend to congregate together on the terraces.

At Watersheddings they are spread around the stadium. We are confident, however, that after our achievement in bringing Rochdale back to Oldham, the support for our team tonight will surpass even the great heights it reached on Sunday.

Truly, that support is a big help ... just ask the lads!



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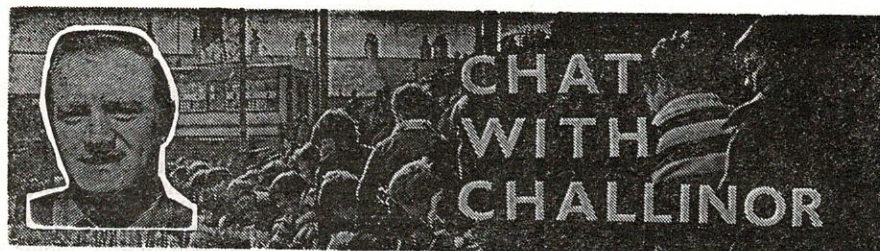
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PHEW! No doubt like you, our great supporters, it took me quite some time to come back down to earth after our 10-10 draw at Rochdale on Sunday. It was a typical cup-tie ... and a great one, too. It was hard, it was exciting, and in the end it could have gone either way.

It was naturally disappointing from our point of view to see Norman Brelsford slip in for those two late tries to save the tie for the Hornets, the latter one improved magnificently from near the touchline by John Maloney.

But one mustn't overlook the tremendous guts, courage, and industry of an Oldham side that fought like blazes to overcome the handicap of a shortage of ball from the scrums.

We tackled like Trojans and covered every inch of the Athletic Grounds to keep the Hornets out. That we succeeded in doing so until the last 15 minutes was quite an achievement in itself.

In the process we picked up quite a lot of bumps and bruises and that, allied to the work rate and industry we had shown earlier, began to have its effect in the game's later stages.

No words of mine can really do justice to the way Oldham gritted their teeth and got stuck into their task. Defensively, we were tremendous, until that little bit of tiredness began to creep in towards the end.

But, having said that, I don't believe we played as well when in possession as we undoubtedly can do. It rests upon us now, with the advantage of playing on our own ground tonight, to go one better and earn a place in the third round.

I sincerely believe we can do it ... and especially so if the supporters get with us again like they did at Leigh and, more so, at Rochdale on Sunday.

There was a big following of Oldhamers in the crowd and I know the players would like me to pass on their appreciation for the support they received.

Believe me, the players were every bit as disappointed as the large contingent of Oldham people in the crowd when the Hornets came back from the dead to equalise the scores with only five minutes of normal time remaining.

They had given everything they had got and so nearly came to pulling it off. For the fans it is disappointing, but just think what the players must think when they have battled so hard for so long.

But the fact remains that we did go away to meet a First Division club on their own ground, and we did end up with a draw and replay on our own pitch.

In that respect we did well ... very well indeed. In a cup-tie, where the tackling is generally tight and the defence sound and secure, scrum possession can be a vital factor.

You may have noticed that we swopped the props around a bit in a bid to find a winning formation. Brian Hughes began on the open side, with Keith Ashcroft on the blind side. Later, Bill BcCracken switched with Keith, but we were forced to reshape the pack again at half-time because of Brian's shoulder injury.

Keith went back to No. 8 and Bob Welding into the second row. We got more ball in the second half than we did in the first.

But having been very steady indeed in the first half we began to make mistakes towards the end of the match, and Hornets duly cashed in.

But when all is said and done, it is a fine performance to go away from home in the Challenge Cup ... and earn a draw.

OUR VISITORS

JOHN MALONEY: Signed from Dewsbury five weeks ago. He kicked seven goals in the first round win at Huddersfield and banged over that great goal from the touchline on Sunday to level the scores. Former Hull and York back.

NORMAN BRELSFORD: Oldham did Hornets a favour when they freed Norman eight years ago. A fast and tricky runner, as he proved when getting Hornets two tries in the first meeting.

DAVID TAYLOR: Another Oldham lad at the Athletic Grounds. Joined Hornets from Saddleworth Rangers as a 16-year-old, nine years ago. One of the strongest tackling threequarters in the game and a player with an eye for the opening.

TONY PRATT: Now in his second spell with Hornets and still as fast as ever. Joined Hornets from Birmingham R.U. in 1964 and returned to the Athletic Grounds last season after a three-year spell at Swinton.

COLIN SIMKINS: Local lad who joined Hornets from Broughton Park R.U. last season. A teacher at a Rochdale school, Colin is a strong runner and very sound tackler.

JOHN BUTLER: Shot to fame when former coach Frank Myler switched him from loose forward to out half when he joined Hornets from Keighley a couple of years ago. Great form last season earned him a trip to Australia with the Great Britain tour squad. On the transfer list at £15,000.

PETER GARTLAND: The man who makes Hornets tick. He has been out for most of the season with a bad hip injury, but he is now back at his very best form. Joined Hornets from St. Helens in 1971.

PETER BIRCHALL: The veteran of the side. Joined Hornets in 1960 and is still giving great service. Many appearances for Lancashire to his credit and has played for England under-24.

PETER CLARKE: Arguably the best ball-winning hooker in the game today. A resolute tackler in the loose, Clarke has been with Hornets six years. He is a product of the Warrington junior club Latchform Albion.

ALAN HODKINSON: Been around a long time, but still only 24-years-old. One of the hardest-working forwards in the game. A deadly tackler and powerful runner. Hornets paid Salford £1,000 for him five years ago. Been a regular ever since.

TERRY FOGERTY: Hornets costliest-ever buy at £7,000. Raised in Clarksfield, Terry, at his best, is probably the best second row forward in the game. Only just back in the team after a long spell out with cartilage trouble.

BILL SHEFFIELD: Another player who has only just returned to first-team duty. Very quick for his size—as Oldham discovered on Sunday. He, too, arrived at the Athletic Grounds via Knowsley Road.

STUART WHITEHEAD: Needs no introduction at Watersheddings, where he started his professional career. After a successful spell at Salford, Stuart joined Hornets two seasons ago and has proved a more than useful utility player. He appeared at centre, prop, second row and loose forward for Hornets.

WILLIE ASPINALL: The former Warrington and Great Britain tourist, who returned to action a month ago after being out for over 12 months with Achilles tendon trouble.

KEVIN FLANAGAN: Like Norman Brelsford, Kevin was released by Oldham seven years ago and has given splendid service while at the Athletic Grounds.



Rochdale Hornets, back row, from the left: Willie Aspinall, Stuart Whitehead, Peter Gartland, David Taylor, Peter Birchall, Tony Pratt, Peter Clarke, Bill Sheffield, Alan Hodgkinson, Kevin Flanagan. Front row: John Maloney, Colin Simkins, Terry Fogerty, Norman Brelsford, John Butler.

(Picture by courtesy of the Evening Chronicle.)

BRIAN BATTY OF THE MAIL

So there was a welcome in the hill-sides, after all! The red carpet was unrolled for Rugby League in Swansea and will be brushed down again next October.

The success of the Welsh Rugby team was overwhelming on the St. Helen's ground, with thousands of Union fans greatly outnumbering the League followers, who made the trip.

Within minutes of the triumph over France, League secretary Dave Oxley, who with P.R.O. Dave Howes had done a first class job, was planning ahead.

'This is a victory for Rugby League,' summed up secretary Oxley.

There was also a significant quote from Gerald Murphy, leader of the Swansea Council when he said: 'We have made more friends in rugby—this is what matters. Not how many players you have in a side.'

There was success on and off the field for Welsh skipper David Watkins in the way he led his side and accurately predicted the appeal that Dave Willicombe would have for Union fans.

Watkins had warned the local public: 'You are going to see the best centre to play in Wales for six years.'

The response from Willicombe was breathtaking as he displayed his attacking skills so admirably that one Welsh fan told me: 'This guy is faster than Gerald Davies.'

Well it would be wrong to make comparisons but I will settle for Barry John's view . . . : 'This boy Willicombe has certainly been a big loss to Welsh Rugby Union. He is a first class centre.'

While Willicombe was an unknown it was clear the fans still loved their old favourites John Bevan, who obliged with two tries and had the crowd on their feet every time he touched the ball.

The physical aspect was provided by big Jim Mills who took a salute after his fine try and delighted the crowd with his aggressive running.

The best story was that of the Warrington amateur team who made the trip, stopping on the way to play a Welsh Rugby Union side in the morning. 'We played 15-a-side, lost because we couldn't get the ball in the line-outs. But it was a great day,' said the skipper.

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FIXTURES 1974-75

Aug. 17—Rochdale (Law Cup) Home 27-15	Aug. 24—Blackpool Away 28-2
" 24—Blackpool Home 17-13	" 30—Widnes (7-30 p.m.) Away 13-10
Sept. 1—Widnes (3-15 p.m.) Home 9-14	Sept. 7—Blackpool Home
" 8—Blackpool Away	" 13—Salford (7-30 p.m.) Away
" 14—Huddersfield Home	Oct. 5—Rochdale Home
" 20—Hull K.R. (7-30 p.m.) Away	" 12—Wigan Away
" 28—Player's No. 6 (1st Rnd.)	" 19—St. Helens Away
Lancs. Cup, Rnd. 1 Home	" 26—Huyton Away
Oct. 6—N. Hunslet (3-30 p.m.) ... Away	Nov. 2—Swinton Home
" 12—Hull Home	" 8—Warrington (7-30 p.m.) ... Away
" 18—Whitehaven (7-00 p.m.) ... Away	" 23—Widnes Home
" 26—Huyton Home	" 30—
Nov. 3—Swinton Away	" 14—
" 9—Player's No. 6 (2nd Rnd.)	" 21—
" 16—Workington Home	" 26—
" 24—Doncaster (2-30 p.m.) Away	" 28—Huyton Home
" 30—Batley Home	Jan. 4—
Dec. 8—Workington (2-30 p.m.) ... Away	" 11—
" 14—Hull K.R. Home	" 18—Barrow Home
" 21—	" 25—Swinton Away
" 26—Huddersfield Away	Feb. 1—
" 29—Huyton (2-30 p.m.) Away	" 8—St. Helens Home
Jan. 4—New Hunslet Home	" 15—Leigh Home
" 11—Doncaster Home	" 22—Salford Home
" 17—Barrow (7-00 p.m.) Away	Mar. 1—
" 25—Swinton Home	" 8—
Feb. 1—	" 15—Leigh Away
" 8—Challenge Cup (1st Rnd.)	" 21—Rochdale (7-30 p.m.) ... Away
" 15—Leigh (3-45 p.m.) Away	" 29—
" 22—Challenge Cup (2nd Rnd.)	Apr. 5—Barrow Away
Mar. 1—Whitehaven Home	" 12—Warrington Home
" 8—	" 19—Wigan Home
" 15—Leigh Home	
" 23—Batley Away	
" 30—Hull Away	
Apr. 5—Barrow Home	
" 12—	
" 19—	

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