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SUNDAY, 22nd FEBRUARY, 1976

Kick-off 3-00 p.m.

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(Northern League Match)



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Central Park Chatter

Welcome to Officials, Players and Supporters from Oldham

At present holding eighth position in the league with 9 victories, 8 defeats and 1 drawn game, and with the 'Saints' scalp under their belt from the game on February 8th, we can expect an all out attempt by our visitors to maintain their progress today.

On the other hand we must go all out if we are to keep pace with the contenders for league honours, and we trust this will form the right setting for a keen and exciting game.

R.L. Challenge Cup

Having gained victory at Bramley last week we are drawn to play Widnes away in the second round on Sunday, 29th February (kick-off 3.00 p.m.). There can be very few harder tasks than this, but cup tie rugby, as we are fully aware, is a great leveller and we shall look forward to the game with confidence. (Listen to announcements and check local press for details of ticket sales.)

The game at Bramley was fiercely contested, again proving that club reputations are thrown to the four winds when the Challenge Cup competition is underway. Bramley proved to be worthy cup fighters despite their lack of success in this competition generally (they have never progressed beyond the third round). Stern and effective tackling was necessary to keep the Bramley pack at bay.

Wigan "A"

The attractive, open style rugby which has been prevalent in our "A" team, continued on February 10th when we beat Oldham "A" by 15pts. to 8pts.

Tries were scored by No. 4 (A. N. Other), Allan Bailey, Stephen Davies and Adrian Foster. Goals were scored by No. 4 (A. N. Other) and Alan Taylor dropped a goal.

It is somewhat unfortunate that more spectators do not support the "up and comings" in order to speed them on to further success.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH: Another Wigan star recently out through injury—George Fairbairn in determined fashion breaking tackles.

by courtesy of Wigan Observer

How would you like to be a Referee? (v)

What would you do if:— (a) A pass is made between two stationary players who are level with each other, facing their opponent's line? (b) A pass is made between two players who are level with each other and running towards their opponent's line?

Answer to question (iv)

Question: Red player (A) kicks the ball 20 yards upfield. A colleague of the kicker's side (B), 5 yards in front of (A), chases the ball. The opposing full back, in attempting to catch the ball, fumbles it backwards and the ball is collected by (B) who goes on to score. Would you allow the try?

Answer: Yes. An offside player is placed onside if an opponent touches the ball without retaining it.

Whistler for the Day: George Frederick Lindop

Fred Lindop, as he is perhaps better known, is no stranger at Central Park. He has this season taken charge of our games against Warrington away (BBC 2) and St. Helens at home.

Fred hails from Wakefield and has been a top grade referee since 1967. He has officiated at several top class games including the 1970 Challenge Cup final.

His hobbies include rugby coaching, gardening and golf. He is married, with a son and daughter.

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FRIDAY	HI-TIME DISCO
SATURDAY	CABARET/DANCING

Brian Batty on Rugby League

It has become a habit these days for critics of the 15-a-side code to take a swipe at Rugby League at the slightest opportunity.

Perhaps it is a result of having to follow England's highly unsuccessful team although there seems to be great excitement at the prospect of them avoiding the wooden spoon this season.

The latest attack on League was launched from a rather inexperienced quarter of Manchester and began with a comparison of the crowds following the Wallabies and those who watched the Kangaroos.

There is no doubt that for a code, which their manager admits, is ranked fourth in Australia to Rugby League, Australian Rules and Soccer, the Wallabies pulled in some great attendances.

It was a pity they did not match up to them in practice for the 7,000 fans at the North West Counties were among many who must have wondered why the Wallabies got such a build up.

Still the Union critic reached the conclusion that this crowd when matched against the 9,000 plus for England v. Australia in the World Championship is a sure sign of the ever increasing pull of Union and the demise of League.

Even though the World Championship game was fully screened live—a fact that was stressed for a week by the BBC—League crowds don't bear comparison with Union internationals.

But at least Wembley crowds of 80,000 plus compare with the 70,000 they get at Twickenham for occasions which are as much a social event as Challenge Cup finals.

Rugby League is restricted to a small area so the televising of internationals has not helped but when it comes to club matches it is a different story.

There are only a handful of fans at top Union club matches while League can still boast reasonable figures to provide an atmosphere to match the vastly superior quality of rugby produced at 13-a-side level.

The most surprising criticism I read was that few League clubs could afford to attract top Union players to give up a way of life that leads to world travel and the thrill of playing to packed stadiums.

There has been no shortage of League trips to Australia and New Zealand in the seventies to play before big crowds—and with a lot more success than sides like England Rugby Union have enjoyed.

By
**Brian
Batty**
of the
"Daily Mail"





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Wednesday, 3rd March, Kick-off 7.30 p.m.

WIGAN versus Bradford Northern

Saturday, 6th March, Kick-off 2.30 p.m.

Wigan "A" versus Widnes "A"

RUGBY LEAGUE QUIZ

1. What is Oldham's nickname?
2. Which famous Wigan Centre made his name at Oldham?
3. Who was it that coached both Wigan and Oldham?
4. Which Wigan stand-off finished his playing career at Oldham?

Answers on page 11.

Simplicity is the Keynote

A Personal View by Bob Pemberton former Daily Telegraph RL expert

THE LAWS of the game should be simple—straightforward and to the point. Over-complicated rules and regulations only serve to bewilder the spectator, torment the players and overload the poor referee with mini calculators and heavy, leather-bound volumes of the "Blue Book" of rules.

In most people's view, the referee already has enough to carry with his whistle, notepad, pencil and 2p piece!

The tap kick is worth a second look. I wonder how many of you standing on the terraces today know, for instance, why the game is re-started with a tap kick on the "25" after the ball has been put dead by the attacking side?

The idea, in the first place, was that the defending side should get possession. Previously, some bright boys had been putting in hefty, long kicks over the dead ball line so that they had every chance to regain possession from the drop-out.

So the tap kick became law. Simple? But hang on a minute! That was too simple for some officials. They spotted a snag. Some devilish defenders, they said, would actually give away a penalty kick so that they could get possession of the ball if the shot at goal failed!

Believe it or not, the rule was quickly amended so that if the daring defenders were wicked enough to give away a penalty, they would not have the advantage of a tap kick. In this case, they drop out from the "25".

I ask you! How many teams would be daft enough to risk giving away two points for the sake of gaining possession? Only a team with a long lead—and it wouldn't matter then, anyway.

Another query: Why should the team starting a match have to kick the ball at least 10 yards—or pay the penalty? Ridiculous! We should follow soccer; that's a simple game, easy to understand. That is why it is so popular. How can we expect to attract new spectators if we keep complicating the rules? Surely, a simple tap kick to start the game and another to start the second half is simple enough, and we can follow that by introducing a rule to say that, following a score, the game shall always re-start with a tap on half way?

Several years ago I saw a Wembley Cup Final start with the ball being kicked directly into touch by a Hunslet player. This gave Wigan a penalty kick from the half-way line—and they scored. What a way to start a match . . . and at Wembley!

Our legislators must wake up to the fact that, in the future, simplicity should be the keynote. Then, and only then, Rugby League may rediscover its popularity.

Quiz Answers

1. The Roughyeds.
2. Alan Davies.
3. Griff Jenkins.
4. Cliff Hill.

Cliff Webb

of the Wigan Observer

After emerging from the Second Division at the end of last season, today's visitors, Oldham, have gradually built up the most effective team they have had for some years and I expect Wigan will find today's game one of the hardest of the season.

Under coach Jim Challinor, the "Roughyeds" have brought off quite a few surprise wins this season, the last being at St. Helens last Sunday week. For that, Wigan should be truly grateful, for Saints' defeat made Wigan's own title hopes that much brighter, but I doubt if Wigan will be showing Oldham any gratitude today.

Today's match should be a hard, fast game because both clubs are noted for trying to play open rugby. Oldham have always been popular visitors to Central Park for that reason, and Wigan fans still rave about the great Oldham team of the mid-1950's, when Bernard Ganley, Alan Davies, Bryn Goldswain and John Etty reigned supreme.

Wigan have already met Oldham at the Watersheddings this season, beating them 10-24 on September 21, but we have to go back nearly three years to recall Oldham's last visit to Central Park. That was on September 29, 1973, when Wigan won 18-0. That was one defeat which contributed to Oldham's eventual relegation at the end of that season.

Yet Oldham had dealt Wigan a shock blow only 11 days previously, when they came here and beat Wigan 9-16 in the second leg of a Floodlit Trophy preliminary round and ousted Wigan from the tourney on a 26-23 aggregate.

Today's match should be an interesting one, if Wigan have managed to get some of their "invalids" fit again. Oldham are playing well and Wigan want to keep their excellent league record in its present state. The visitors must be boosted by the news last week that stand-off David Treasure has withdrawn his transfer request and has now settled down at Watersheddings.

I have seen David have some very good games. If pack leader Terry Ramshaw is also in form, Wigan will have to look out.

On the other hand, it will be Oldham's turn to worry if Wigan full-back George Fairbairn is available to bring his accurate goal kicking ability into play, and if the mighty Wigan pack hits top form. On balance, I think Wigan will win this one, but it won't be easy and it may be close.

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Supporters' Association

Today's Visitors

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the supporters of Oldham to Central Park for this first Division game. Way back in September Wigan had a fine 24-10 win over Oldham at Watersheddings.

Today Oldham are likely to field a team containing players like Murphy, Treasure, Elliott, Larder and Kevin Taylor a fine hooker. With a wealth of playing talent such as that Wigan will have to be on form to collect both points.

Last match details

Salford 36 pts. Scorers: *Tries* Butler (2), Hesketh (2), Richards (2), Prescott, Watkins. *Goals* Watkins (6).

Wigan 20 pts. Scorers: *Tries* Vigo, Coyle, Karalius, O'Loughlin. *Goals* Karalius (4).

This was a sad game for a weakened Wigan, short of Fairbairn, Francis, Nulty, Gregory and loosing Ashcroft injured. The lads played very well in a good match.

Wigan 17 pts. Scorers: *Tries* Karalius, Irving, Whittle. *Goals* Karalius (4).

Huddersfield 11 pts. Scorers: *Tries* Weavil, Doyle, Mullaney. *Goals* Hooson.

This was a bad match for Wigan who were way below form and perhaps a bit lucky to win by 6 points.

Wembley Draw

Watch this space for details of a Fantastic Draw with high cash prize:

Sales Shop News

New in Stock Leather Rugby Balls £2.60. Possibly in stock today Wigan Rosettes. Ties £1.25, Scarves £1.20, Cloth badges 60p, Pennants 25p, Lapel badges 20p, Purses 15p, Key rings 12p, P.V.C. Wallets 10p, Photo's 8p, 10p, 25p & 30p. **ONE ONLY** 75-76 John Player Year Book £2.50.

R.F.L. DIVISION ONE (Up to and including Sunday, 8th February)

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FEATHERSTONE R.	20	14	1	5	365	234	29
LEEDS	18	13	0	5	347	238	26
WIDNES	19	13	0	6	312	221	26
WAKEFIELD	20	13	0	7	383	273	26
WIGAN	16	12	1	3	303	187	25
ST. HELENS	15	11	1	3	285	133	23
OLDHAM	18	9	1	8	243	258	19
HULL K.R.	15	9	0	6	227	256	18
CASTLEFORD	19	8	1	10	321	266	17
WARRINGTON	20	8	1	11	216	337	17
DEWSBURY	19	7	1	11	206	309	15
HUDDERSFIELD	21	5	0	16	297	424	10
BRADFORD N.	20	5	0	15	220	327	10
KEIGHLEY	19	3	0	16	173	352	6
SWINTON	22	2	0	20	177	432	4

WEMBLEY 1976, MAY 8th.

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FIXTURES

'A'
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Featherstone

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† VOID RESULT

AUGUST 1975

6 Wed	Warrington (Locker Cup)	H	42-4
9 Sat	M6 Sevens (Final Wigan v Leeds)	H	18-23
16 Sat	Widnes (3.00)	H	13-14
24 Sun	Wakefield (3.30)	A	18-9
31 Sun	Warrington (Lancs Cup 1st) (3.00)	A	39-14

SEPTEMBER

6 Sat	Hull K.R. (3.00)	H	34-13
13 Sat	Workington (Lancs. Cup 2nd) (3.00)	H	21-22
21 Sun	Oldham (3.30)	A	24-10
27 Sat	Keighley (Players No.6 1st) (3.00)	H	30-7
30 Tue	Salford (BBC.2 Pre. R.) (7.30)	H	14-14

OCTOBER

7 Tue	Salford (BBC2 P. R. Replay) (7.30)	A	25-19
18 Sat	Keighley (3.00)	H	22-11
28 Tues	Warrington (BBC2 1st) (7.25)	A	14-8

NOVEMBER

4 Tues	Leeds (BBC2 2nd) (7.25)	A	10-17
8 Sat	Widnes (Players No. 6 2nd) (2.45)	H	5-18
14 Fri	† Wakefield (7.30) (Abnd. after 34 min.)	H	10-10
16 Sun	Wakefield (3.00) (Replay)	H	29-20
21 Fri	† Bradford N. (7.30) (Abnd. h/time)	H	5-10
30 Sun	Warrington	H	18-7

DECEMBER

13 Sat	Castleford (3.00)	H	15-10
21 Sun	Swinton (3.00)	A	6-5
26 Fri	(Boxing Day) St. Helens (3.00)	H	12-12

JANUARY 1976

1 Thurs	(New Year's Day) Warrington (3.00)	A	0-3
3 Sat			
11 Sun	Dewsbury (3.30)	A	15-3
17 Sat	Huddersfield (3.00)	A	24-19
25 Sun	Swinton (3.00)	H	36-4

FEBRUARY

3 Tue	Salford (7.30)	A	20-36
7 Sat	Huddersfield (3.00)	H	17-11
15 Sun	Bramley (R.L.C.C., 1st)	A	10-5
22 Sun	Oldham (3.00)	H	
29 Sun	Widnes (R.L.C.C. 2nd) (3.00)	A	

MARCH

3 Wed	Bradford N. (7.30)	H	
13 Sat	Leeds (3.00)	A	
17 Wed	Featherstone (7.30)	H	
20 Sat	Dewsbury (3.00)	H	
26 Fri	Castleford (7.30)	A	

APRIL

4 Sun	Widnes (3.00)	A	
6 Tues	Hull K. R. (7.30)	A	
11 Sun	Keighley (3.00)	A	
13 Tues	Bradford (6.00)	A	
16	(Good Friday) St. Helens (3.00)	A	
19	(Easter Monday) Salford (3.00)	H	
23 Fri	Leeds (7.30)	H	

AUGUST 1975

8 Fri	Warrington (Friendly) (Charity Match) (7.30)	A	8-24
23 Sat	Huyton (3.00)	H	24-17
30 Sat	Barrow (L.C.C.S., 1st Rd., 1st Leg) (3.00)	H	27-16

SEPTEMBER

5 Fri	St. Helens (7.30)	A	18-37
10 Wed	Rochdale (7.30)	H	8-18
13 Sat	Barrow (L.C.C.S., 1st Rd., 2nd Leg) (3.00)	A	6-26
17 Wed	Widnes (7.30)	A	11-10

OCTOBER

3 Fri	Warrington (7.30)	A	20-15
11 Sat	Huyton (3.00)	A	16-14
22 Wed	Leigh (7.30)	H	34-10

NOVEMBER

15 Sat	Warrington (3.00)	H	13-9
22 Sat	Barrow (3.00)	A	28-13

DECEMBER

6 Sat	St. Helens (3.00)	H	23-9
17 Wed	Swinton (7.30)	H	29-10
27 Sat	Rochdale (3.00)	A	5-23

JANUARY 1976

10 Sat	Barrow (3.00)	H	33-8
17 Sat	Leigh (3.00)	A	13-12
24 Sat	Swinton (1.00)	A	

FEBRUARY

10 Tue	Oldham (7.30)	H	
21 Sat	Oldham (3.00)	A	

MARCH

6 Sat	Widnes (2.30)	H	
19 Fri	Salford (7.30)	A	
31 Wed	Salford (7.30)	H	

OTHER GAMES (FINALS AND REPRESENTATIVE)

1975			
Oct. 4	Lancashire Cup Final Salford v. Widnes (3.00)		8-16
Nov. 1	World Championship England v. Australia (3.00)		16-13
Dec. 20	County Lancashire v. Yorkshire (3.00)		7-17