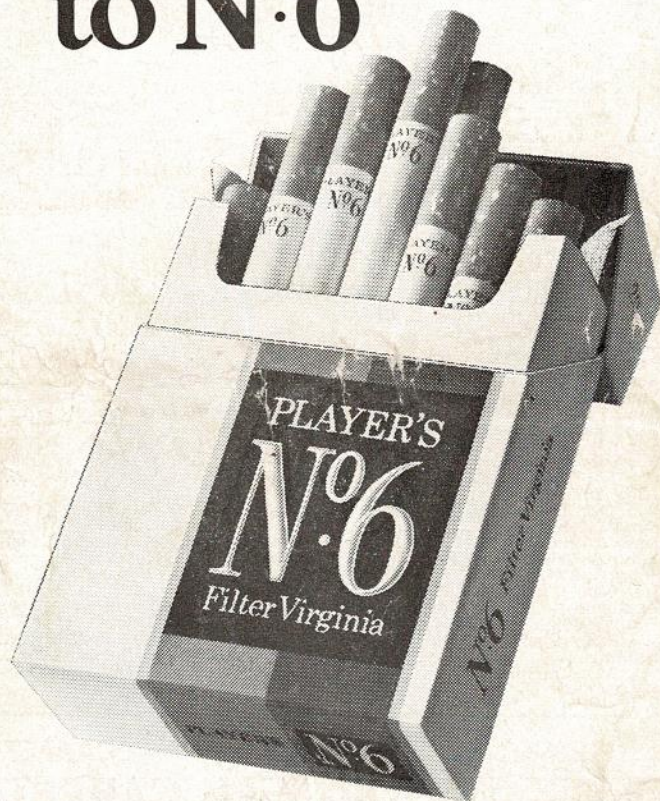


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*Centenary
Season*

OLDHAM
V
LEIGH

PLAYERS No. 6 - 2nd ROUND

SUNDAY 7th NOVEMBER

Kick Off 3-30 p.m.

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HONOURS

Rugby League Championship Play-off winners: 1909-10, 1910-11 and 1956-57.

Runners-up: 1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09, 1921-22 and 1954-55.

First Division Champions: 1904-05.

Second Division Champions: 1963-64.

Rugby League Challenge Cup winners: 1898-99, 1924-25, 1926-27.

Runners-up: 1906-07, 1911-12, 1923-24 and 1925-26.

Lancashire Cup winners: 1907-08, 1910-11, 1913-14, 1919-20, 1924-25, 1933-34, 1956-57, 1957-58 and 1958-59.

Runners-up: 1908-09, 1911-12, 1918-19, 1921-22, 1954-55, 1966-67 and 1968-69.

Lancashire Championship winners: 1907-08, 1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57 and 1957-58.

Runners-up: 1908-09, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1919-20, 1923-24 and 1954-55.

Lancashire Shield winners: 1975-76.



Oldham's mascot, little Martin Hall, gets a hand-shake from the mayor, Councillor Christopher McCall, before last Sunday's big match against Bradford.

Picture by courtesy of the OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE.

OLDHAM OUTLOOK

LEIGH come to Watersheddings today in the second round of the Player's No. 6 Trophy. And we have an old score to settle, having been beaten 19-13 at Hilton Park in a First Division fixture earlier in the season.

It is very important that we win, not only to move a step nearer our target of picking up a trophy but to earn more money from the prizes.

These notes inevitably had to be written before Tuesday's Floodlit Trophy game at Hull so we may still have an interest in two knock-out tournaments which can bring in some badly-needed cash.

It was very encouraging to witness a 5,000-plus crowd here last Sunday for the visit of Bradford Northern. It must be a long time since those supporters arriving half-an-hour before the kick-off could not get on the car park!

In actual fact it was our highest attendance at Watersheddings for a League match since the visit of Warrington in March 1973. On that occasion just over 6,000 watched the match, but we would willingly settle for 5,000 at every home match.

With that size of gate regularly the club could really begin to go places.

The beauty of a big crowd is not only the money they pour through the turnstiles. A big crowd means more programme sales, more profit from the canteens for the members of the Supporters' Club, bigger car park receipts and bigger takings over the bars.

Apparently, the Supporters' Club took record takings from the canteens against Northern.

It was great to see so many former players here. And some of them had travelled long distances. Ike Southward, for instance. Mind you, there was perhaps some method in Ike's madness, to coin a phrase.

For his Workington Town side are here at Watersheddings on Sunday, November 28 and one can bet that Ike took the opportunity of giving the Oldham team the once-over.

Next Sunday we travel to Barrow and then we have two home games that should provide decent gates, particularly if the weather is as kind to us as it was last Sunday.

Two weeks today we are at home to St. Helens, always attractive opposition, and then the following week we take on the Lancashire Cup finalists from Workington.

The Town have really been going places this season and there should be a good following down from Cumbria for this match.

It will be a big day for Iain MacCorquodale. The local lad plays a major role in the Derwent Park side's success as one of the game's top marksmen.

So don't forget forthcoming matches here at Watersheddings—St. Helens on November 21 and Workington on November 28.

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IN MONDAY'S

OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE



A big crowd was entertained by four seven-a-side boys' teams before the start of last Sunday's centenary special against Bradford Northern. The boys were playing for medals provided by Oldham chairman Arthur Walker and his vice-chairman John Hall. Here, Mr. Hall hands out the medals to some of the lucky lads.

Picture by courtesy of the OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE.

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Oldham FC Down the Years

No. 6

by TOM WEBB

AFTER a long struggle for the payment of "broken time"—that is payment for time taken off work in order to play rugby—the bulk of the leading clubs in Lancashire, Cheshire and Yorkshire broke away from the Rugby Union in the summer of 1895 to form the Northern Rugby Union, normally known as the Northern Union.

The Oldham club played a leading part in this struggle which had begun in the late 1880s with Joseph Platt, the Oldham treasurer, taking on the onerous job of secretary.

After many secret meetings the 22 clubs finally set up their own competition and several of the leading Midland clubs promised to join in the following season, but this development did not arise.

The Oldham club had arranged home and away fixtures with Swansea, Edinburgh Wanderers and Hartlepool Rovers, plus one fixture each with Rockville and Watsonians.

During the first season of the Northern Union all the 22 clubs met each other twice, the games with Lancashire and Cheshire clubs counting in the Lancashire Senior Competition with the Yorkshire clubs having a similar organisation.

Oldham finished third in the combined competition and tied with Runcorn for the Lancashire competition, losing the play-off at Broughton by six points to five.

During the fateful 1895-6 season Oldham spent £1,000 on improving the stands and finished with a profit of £1,148. The club president was Ernest Kempsey, a cotton mill owner of Chadderton.

Sam Taylor of Derker and John C. Buckley of Barker Street were joint secretaries with Harry Varley acting as first team captain.

Jack Hirst, with 28 tries, was top scorer for the whole of the Northern Union and with three goals totted up 94 points to give him third place among the points scorers with Sammy Lees on 90 finishing in fourth place.

Oldham played 42 League games, winning 27, losing 13 and drawing 2, scoring 44 goals and 88 tries against 27 goals and 23 tries.

In the match against Halifax on February 1, 1896, Jack Hirst intercepted a pass by a Halifax player near the Oldham line and ran almost the length of the field to score a try. This remarkable feat would be even more meritorious in those days when they still played 15-a-side.

During the next season, 1896-7, both Bill McCutcheon and Harry Varley ended their playing connections with the club. Varley later returned to his native Yorkshire and McCutcheon became one of the Northern Union's leading referees.

In those more primitive days the officials of the Northern Union would referee or act as touch judges. Clubs also nominated referees and it was common to see the name of the referee followed by his club.

The advent of new recruits to the game caused the main competition to be cancelled and the Lancashire and Yorkshire Senior Competitions, with 14 and 16 clubs respectively, became the major leagues.

Friendlies were known as "ordinary" games and Oldham met Huddersfield, Manningham and Halifax in such encounters.

This time, 1896-7, Oldham finished as runners-up in Lancashire with 20 wins, 4 draws and 2 defeats in the Lancashire competition, although they played 40 games in all.

On Christmas Day the crowd broke in the ground for the match with Stockport and the crowd was estimated at 20,000. Sam Taylor resigned as club secretary after 15 years.

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Oldham

- 1 MURPHY, M.
- 2 ELLIOTT, M.
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- 4 WAINWRIGHT, A.
- 5 LUND, S.
- 6 TREASURE, D.
- 7 McCONE, M.
- 8 WELDING, R.
- 9 CLARKE, P.
- 10 TAYLOR, I.
- 11 KEAR, B.
- 12 POLLARD, G.
- 13 PATTERSON, J.
- 14 BARTON, E.
- 15

Referee:
T. J. COURT
(Leeds)

T G Dg P

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Leigh

- 1 HOGAN, M.
- 2 WOODS, J.
- 3 STACEY, M.
- 4 GRIMSHAW, S.
- 5 WALSH, J.
- 6 TAYLOR, J.
- 7 SAYER, C.
- 8 CHISNALL, D.
- 9 HUGHES, E.
- 10 WILKINSON, A.
- 11 GRIMES, P.
- 12 MACKO, D.
- 13 BOYD, D.
- 14
- 15

J. A. Clarke (Wigan) Orange
W. J. Greenhalgh (Ashton in Makerfield) Red

T G Dg P

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OUR VISITORS

BY DON YATES

PLAYER'S TROPHY action once again returns to Watersheddings this afternoon when newly promoted Leigh face Oldham in a second round match which promises to provide plenty of entertainment for the supporters of both clubs (writes Don Yates). This will be the first match between these two clubs in the main Player's Trophy competition but they did meet in subsidiary competition sponsored by John Player and Company when the competition was first introduced in season 1971-72.

That competition was named the "top tries contest" and involved the teams eliminated from the opening round of the main tournament. The winner of this subsidiary competition was the team who scored most tries and this was expected to create a feast of open rugby. In the first round of the main competition Oldham were drawn away at Whitehaven whilst Leigh had to make the difficult journey over to Leeds. As expected, both clubs found the going tough in those matches and Oldham, with Alan Kellett getting himself sent off, went down 5-0 up in Cumbria whilst Leeds duly disposed of Leigh 18-8 with, incidentally, Tony Wainwright scoring one of the Leeds' tries. The draw for the "top tries" contest paired Oldham with Leigh who, at that time, were holders of the Rugby League Challenge Cup. This "top tries" competition never really caught the imagination of the public and the attendance at Watersheddings was a meagre 1,925. Both sides were at full strength and lined up as follows:

OLDHAM: Martin Murphy; Mike Elliott, Phil Larder, Joe Collins, Mick Wild; Johnny Blair, Cliff Sayer; Ken Wilson, Kevin Taylor, Frank Walker, Bob Irving, Jim Reynolds and Ray Clark. Substitutes: Tommy Davies and Dick Bonsor.

LEIGH: Stuart Ferguson; Rodney Tickle, Tony Barrow, Mike Collins, Joe Walsh; Dave Eckersley, Jimmy Boylan; Alan Ogden, Kevin Ashcroft, Derek Watts, Jimmy Fidler, Peter Smethurst and Tommy Martyn. Substitutes: Stan Dorrington and Keith Clarke.

A feature of this match was the appearance in the visitor's pack of former Oldham favourites Peter Smethurst and Alan Ogden but past associations were soon forgotten as the two sides battled out what proved to be a tough, demanding contest. The first half belonged to Leigh who went ahead with a try from Tony Barrow and three goals from Stuart Ferguson but Oldham recovered a little after the interval and put themselves back into the game following the dismissal of Stuart Ferguson shortly after he had landed his fourth goal. Bob Irving crossed for a try which Phil Larder goaled but despite a good deal of late pressure by Oldham they were unable to get in front and ended up beaten by 11 points to five. Of course, the object of this "top tries" contest was to score tries and with both Oldham and Leigh registering only one apiece they had no chance of taking the top prize of £500. The winning club were Swinton who scored 13 tries in the 53-6 victory over Hunslet whilst second place and £250 went to Featherstone who scored 12 tries in the 54-0 win over Batley. The third prize of £150 went to Salford with 10 tries against Warrington who were beaten 38-7. That "top tries" competition did not prove very popular and has not been repeated but the main Player's Trophy has gone from strength to strength and is now firmly established on the Rugby League calendar.

Neither of these two clubs have ever got through the second round of this tournament so one of the clubs, at least, will have reason to celebrate after this afternoon's game. Since that "top tries" defeat in November 1971 Oldham have managed to defeat Leigh on all their three visits to Watersheddings so, with home advantage being the key factor, they must feel confident of reaching the last eight and in so doing avenge that 19-13 League defeat suffered at Hilton Park in the opening weeks of the season.

Brian Batty

Australian president Kevin Humphreys readily concedes that his country will find it tough retaining the World championship trophy with the return of Great Britain next year.

"It is going to be completely different to the last competition," Humphreys told me after the International Board had voted out Wales.

"But this competition must be bigger than any country. It is the success of it that counts. Besides cutting down costs we shall certainly get better crowds to watch a Great Britain side than we would have got for Wales."

He is right, of course, for Wales have lost their stars and with them what drawing power they had in Australia or New Zealand.

But it must not be forgotten that Wales finished higher than New Zealand and France last year and, by beating England, put the trophy on a plate for the Aussies to collect.

"It would be wonderful for New Zealand or France to win the championship," added Humphreys but there seems little chance of this happening in the near future.

I asked if we could expect to see Artie Beatson leading Australia now that he is player-coach of Eastern Suburba.

"Artie will most certainly be there barring injury for the coaching aspect is not affecting his play and he is still going strong," he said.

"And you can expect to see Bobby Fulton, who has joined Artie at Easts, back in the international side along with Ron Coote.

"It looked bad for Coote when he broke his arm last season for he had been outstanding but he has recovered and is still a great player."

It is clear that Australia has found there is no substitute for skill and experience.

But they have still brought along a promising crop of young players in past seasons with last year's World championship star Ray Higgs continuing to improve.

Higgs has won a trip to Europe as the top Sydney player but there seems no chance of him playing in England this winter.

"Higgs had a hard season and finished with a broken cheekbone in the Grand final. He needs a rest rather than more rugby," said Humphreys.

That is the view we have taken about many of our top players who have made the trek to Sydney in recent summers for they cannot carry on like machines without their form suffering.

THE PLAYER'S No. 6 TROPHY COMPETITION

This season the Player's No. 6 Trophy competition is proving more popular than ever with Rugby League fans.

The first round, played two weeks ago, attracted a record 48,000 spectators through the turnstiles at the 16 matches, a tremendous 36 per cent. increase on attendances recorded in the same round last season and a sure indication that the competition, now in its sixth season, is a big winner with the fans.

Now the eight second round matches look sure to ensure the pattern continues with four former winners of the trophy (Halifax, Leeds, Bradford Northern and Widnes), two former finalists (Salford and Hull) and three former semi-finalists (St. Helens, Bramley and Castleford) still in the running to provide top class cup rugby.

This season the prize money stands at a record £25,600 and today's unfortunate losers will still receive the consolation of a £550 pick-up. For the winner there is a place in the draw for the quarter-finals. That draw will be made at the studios of BBC Radio Leeds, Merrion Centre, Leeds, next Monday (8 November) at 11 a.m. and will be broadcast over local radios throughout the North during the day. The quarter-finals will be played on the weekend of 20 November, the semi-finals on 27 November and 11 December and the final on 22 January, 1977.

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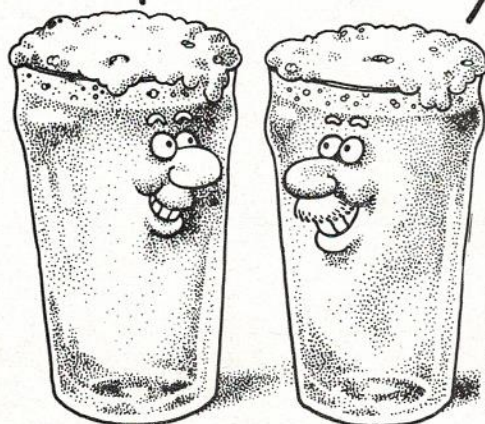
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NEXT MATCH AT WATERSHEDDINGS

NOVEMBER 21st K.O. 3.30

Oldham v St. Helens

FIXTURES 1976-77

FIRST TEAM

| Date | Opponents | Ground | F. A. |
|----------|--|--------|-----------|
| 1976 | | | |
| Aug. 22 | (Sun.) 1st Round County Cup—Blackpool (3-00) | A | |
| Sept. 5 | (Sun.) Widnes (3-00) | A | 10-17 |
| 12 | (Sun.) Leeds (3-30) | H | 20-22 |
| 19 | (Sun.) Leigh (3-30) | A | 10-18 |
| 26 | (Sun.) Wigan (3-30) | H | 13-19 |
| Oct. 3 | (Sun.) Wakefield T. (3-30) | A | 23-20 |
| 10 | (Sun.) Barrow (3-30) | H | 33-0 |
| 15 | (Fri.) Castleford 7-30 | A | 13-11 |
| 23/24 | (Sat./Sun.) Player's No. 6 1st Round Batley | H | 5-11 1976 |
| 31 | (Sun.) Bradford N. (3-30) | H | |
| Nov. 6/7 | (Sat./Sun.) Player's No. 6 2nd Round | | |
| 14 | (Sun.) Barrow (2-30) | A | |
| 21 | (Sun.) St. Helens (3-30) | H | |
| 28 | (Sun.) Workington T. (3-30) | H | |
| Dec. 5 | (Sun.) Featherstone R. (2-30) | A | |
| 12 | (Sun.) Featherstone R. (3-30) | H | |
| 19 | (Sun.) Wigan (3-00) | A | |
| 26 | (Sun.) Rochdale H. (3-30) | H | |
| 1977 | | | |
| Jan. 2 | (Sun.) Salford (3-00) | A | |
| 9 | (Sun.) St. Helens (3-00) | A | |
| 16 | (Sun.) Leigh (3-30) | H | |
| 23 | (Sun.) Workington T. (2-30) | A | |
| 30 | (Sun.) Wakefield T. (3-30) | H | |
| Feb. 6 | (Sun.) Hull K.R. (2-45) | A | |
| 12/13 | (Sat./Sun.) Challenge Cup 1st Round | | |
| 20 | (Sun.) Warrington (3-30) | H | |
| 26/27 | (Sat./Sun.) Challenge Cup 2nd Round | | |

| Date | Opponents | Ground | F. A. |
|---------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| Mar. 12 | (Sat.) Leeds (3-00) | A | |
| 20 | (Sun.) Castleford (3-30) | H | |
| 27 | (Sun.) Bradford N. (3-30) | A | |
| Apr. 3 | (Sun.) Salford (3-30) | H | |
| 8 | (G.F.) Rochdale H. (3-00) | H | |
| 11 | (E.M.) Hull K.R. (3-30) | A | |
| 17 | (Sun.) Warrington (3-00) | A | |
| 24 | (Sun.) Widnes (3-30) | H | |

"A" TEAM

| Date | Opponents | Ground | F. A. |
|--------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| 17-9 Aug. 21 | (Sat.) Huyton L.S. (3-00) | A | 36-4 |
| 28 | (Sat.) Huyton L.S. (3-00) | H | 25-9 |
| Sept. 4 | (Sat.) Widnes (3-00) | H | |
| 18 | (Sat.) Leigh (3-00) | H | 22-17 |
| 25 | (Sat.) Wigan (3-00) | A | 15-35 |
| Oct. 2 | (Sat.) Swinton (3-00) | H | 26-8 |
| 9 | (Sat.) Barrow (2-30) | A | 22-17 |
| 15 | (Fri.) Widnes (7-30) | A | |
| Nov. 13 | (Sat.) Barrow (3-00) | H | |
| 20 | (Sat.) St. Helens (3-00) | A | |
| 27 | (Sat.) Workington (2-30) | A | |
| Dec. 18 | (Sat.) Wigan (3-00) | H | |
| 1977 | | | |
| Jan. 8 | (Sat.) St. Helens (3-00) | H | |
| 15 | (Sat.) Leigh (3-00) | A | |
| 22 | (Sat.) Workington (3-00) | H | |
| Feb. 5 | (Sat.) Huyton (3-00) | H | |
| 18 | (Fri.) Warrington (7-30) | A | |
| 25 | (Fri.) Rochdale (7-30) | A | |
| Mar. 12 | (Sat.) Warrington (3-00) | H | |
| 19 | (Sat.) Swinton (3-00) | A | |
| 26 | (Sat.) Huyton (3-00) | A | |
| Apr. 9 | (Sat.) Rochdale (3-00) | H | |

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