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*Centenary
Season*

OLDHAM
v
WAKEFIELD

WEDNESDAY 30th MARCH 1977

Kick Off 7-30 p.m.

Programme
10p

OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB
THE PAVILION, WATERSHEDDINGS, OLDHAM

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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.



David Hill (left) and Roger O'Mahoney combine to halt a Castleford attack in our last league game at Watersheddings

Picture by courtesy of the OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

Wakefield Trinity, tonight's visitors to Watersheddings in a re-arranged First Division game, must be beaten if we are to retain the slightest hope of First Division survival.

Like Barrow, Oldham, Rochdale and Leigh, the Yorkshiremen need every possible point to ensure that they stay in the top flight so there is an awful lot at stake for both clubs this evening.

The possibility of our survival cannot be ruled out entirely because anything can happen in the next two or three crucial weeks with the bottom clubs playing each other in several instances.

For instance, we have yet to play both Rochdale and Leigh and there are several more matches involving the bottom clubs which are going to be vital in deciding which four clubs take the drop to the second division.

Despite Barrow's recent resurgence it seems almost a certainty that the four relegation clubs will come from Wakefield, Rochdale, Leigh, Oldham and Barrow and that probably means that three clubs will go straight back after only one season in the top division.

Coming straight back could well be Dewsbury and Kelghley but the other two clubs relegated at the end of last season, Huddersfield and Swinton are struggling in the lower regions of division two.

The slip in fortunes of both these once famous clubs must be a salutary to us all at Watersheddings. Relegation is not the end of the world but an immediate return is vital if a club is to avoid the sort of tragedy that has overcome clubs as the two mentioned clubs earlier, plus Halifax.

We have often been described as the yo-yo club, because of the way we have bobbed backwards and forwards between the two divisions but one important factor is that we have always come back at the first time of asking.

Anything less than that would be a near disaster, so much so that one could argue with a good deal of truth that if we do end up in the second division next season it will be a vital year and far from an unimportant one as many fans may view it.

However, two points off Trinity tonight might be the spark we need to pick up our challenge for staying in the first division and it is interesting to note that the match gives us a rare opportunity of recording a first division 'double' this season.

Back in early October we won at Wakefield 13-11 to record our second first division victory of the season, following our amazing 23-20 win against Wigan the previous Sunday.

In the win at Wakefield, John Blair landed two goals and scored a try and there were tries from Tony Wainwright and Mike Elliott.

The team that day was: Murphy, Elliott, Jackson, Wainwright, Lund, Blair, Treasure, Hughes, K. Taylor, I Taylor, Welding, Owen, Reynolds. Subs: Barton and Pollard.

Since then Trinity have had an in and out sort of season, turning in some very good wins notably one at Leeds at Christmas but falling down badly in other matches.

Recently they hit the headlines when they signed Mike Lamokowski the former England RU scrum-half, who played four times for his country at the 15-a-side game.

It will be interesting to see him in action tonight.

YOU'LL FIND ALL THE OLDHAM LOCAL SPORT
IN DEPTH
IN MONDAY'S

OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

Tonight's visitors to Watersheddings for this evening's rearranged First Division match are Wakefield Trinity who, like Oldham, have spent this season fighting off the threat of relegation. Results of recent matches indicate that Trinity will just about escape the drop but it would be a totally different story if only Wakefield had maintained the high level of performance that brought them a League 'double' win over Warrington, 38-21 at home and 31-15 away, an 18-8 win at Leeds and a 7-7 draw at St. Helens followed by a great 21-5 home win over the Saints. Instead Trinity have turned in some pretty disappointing displays, losing at home to Oldham and at Rochdale and Barrow as well as conceding a 'double' defeat to Salford plus that disastrous 52-0 hiding they conceded at Featherstone over Christmas. In that match Trinity had both Mick Morgan and Brian Lockwood sent off so could offer some excuse for such a humiliating defeat but no excuse can be offered for the Floodlit Cup defeat at Second Division Huddersfield or the 3-0 Challenge Cup defeat at Dewsbury, results which would have been unheard of not so very long ago.

Indeed, as that great Oldham side of the middle fifties was breaking up it was Trinity who rose to take their place when, in a glittering 10 year era starting in 1958, they won no fewer than 12 major trophies including three successful trips to Wembley. When Oldham visited Belle Vue in August 1958 to meet the team which was eventually to take their place at the top, they did so full of confidence and in the knowledge that Trinity had not beaten Oldham since November 1952, some seven matches previously. Both sides were undefeated at that early stage of the season so the match attracted a good deal of attention and a crowd of 13,200 attended to watch the following two teams in opposition:

Wakefield Trinity: Eric Lockwood; Fred Smith; Keith Holliday; Neil Fox; Aubrey Houlden; Harry Poynton; Ken Rollin; Sam Evans; John Shaw; Bob Kelly; Albert Firth; Les Chamberlain; and Ken Traill.

Oldham: Bernard Ganley; Dick Cracknell; Alan Edwards; Dennis Ayres; Geoff Sims; Alan Kellett; Frank Stirrup; Ron Rowbottom; Jack Keith; Don Vines; Charlie Winslade; Des McKeown and Derek Turner.

The result of that match was an emphatic 23-7 victory for Wakefield whose match winner was scrum-half Ken Rollin, the scorer of three tries. Winger Fred Smith scored his first try of the season and went on to break his club's record with a 37 total whilst Neil Fox's four goals also contributed to a season's total of 146, another club record. Trinity's other try came from Aubrey Houlden but Oldham could only muster one try, from Des McKeown, and a couple of Bernard Ganley goals against a Wakefield side bubbling with enthusiasm. Oldham, however, did beat Wakefield 28-11 in the return match three weeks later and finished the season in a higher League position than Trinity but since then both clubs have had their share of problems and, sadly, this season they have both been struggling at the wrong end of the table.

Trinity are attempting to rebuild their side and have recently signed Mike Lamokowski, the star rugby union half-back who many Oldham fans will be hoping to catch a glimpse of this evening but there is no doubt that Trinity's most outstanding back is David Topliss, a brilliant stand-off with lightning acceleration who has scored 130 tries for Wakefield during the past six seasons. Twenty seven years old Topliss was signed by Trinity in 1968 from Normanton Juniors and he quickly established himself in the Wakefield team where his outstanding performances won him a place in the Yorkshire team in 1971. Topliss spent last summer in the colours of Sydney club Penrith and has again stated his intention of spending another summer down under.

Oldham FC Down the Years

No. 16 By TOM WEBB

Harry Ogden, a local lad, had a benefit match in 1952-53 when 8,500 people paid their tribute to his long and loyal service. Ganley took the club goal scoring record to 145 to which he added 3 tries. Of the try-scorers, O'Grady 23, Lionel Emmett 15, Davies and Platt 14 each led the rest.

Average attendances shot up to 11,509 of whom 2,778 were members. In spite of paying £5,515 entertainment tax, the club made a profit of £1,862 after allowing over £1,000 for depreciation. Sid Little who had appeared in a handful of matches in the previous season, made a considerable impact on the game. He and Charlie Winslade made a great second row. Pitchford made his debut also.

Ganley's contribution to the club in 1953-54 was 130 goals and 3 tries, O'Grady 29, Davies 16 and Cracknell 11 were best of the Try-getters. Roland Barrow, 'Smut' Smith the Maori, Peter Fearls, Johnny Noon and Dennis Ayres were making their presences felt. Bryn Day ceased to play. An exhibition match was played at St. Annes Road Stadium with Leigh, which helped to promote the new Blackpool Borough club for the following season. A French referee, M. Vacher, had charge of the Swinton v Oldham match on Good Friday. Record receipts of £2,750 were taken at the second round R.L. Cup game when we lost at home to Warrington, and we lost away in the Lancashire Cup second round to the same club.

For the first time for three years ganley failed to reach the hundred mark, but he landed 88 goals in 23 games. Goldswain ably deputised and kicked 47. Davies 29, O'Grady 23, Cracknell 22, Pitchford 19 and Barrow 17 stood out in the list of try-scorers. The club reached the final of the Lancashire Cup in 1954-55 but lost to Barrow at Swinton by 12-2 before a crowd of 25,000. After beating Wigan in the R.L. Cup we lost narrowly at Leigh. In the league we reached the top four, finishing on level points with Warrington but the Wires were placed top with a superior scoring record. Leeds were vanquished in the semi-final but we lost 7-3 in the final after Roland Barrow was disallowed what seemed a perfectly valid try. The final at Maine Road attracted a crowd of just under 50,000. It was a good season but no major honours as we also lost the Lancashire League championship on an inferior scoring record. John Etty made his debut.

Membership again topped 3,000 in 1955-56 and the average home crowd was 12,180. Ganley kicked 75 goals in 21 games, Jack Rodgers reaching the 50 mark with Goldswain on 18. Davies 19, Pitchford 18, Cracknell 17, Noon 13 and Stirrup 12 performed well but their try totals were passed by John Etty who registered 22. Another important newcomer Derek 'Rocky' Turner ran in 7 in 28 games. The visit to Barrow gave that club its highest attendance of the season. Harry Ogden was in his last season and actor-author Jack Doughty made an appearance. Don Vines was introduced to Rugby League football by the club. The club participated in the ITV competition in London defeating Featherstone 8-7 but not qualifying for the play-off as winning margins decided this part of the tournament.

Success came again at long last in 1956-57 when Wigan, Salford, Leigh and St. Helens fell to Oldham in the Lancashire Cup. Sadly the club lost to Leigh away in the Challenge Cup 5-0. However, the Oldham heroes went on to win the Lancashire League title and to top the Northern Rugby Football League. Leeds were downed in the semi-final of the play-off and in a great final at Odsal Stadium, we beat Hull 15-14 to take the league championship. Out of 38 league games, 33 were won and 5 lost. Of the other 10 games, 9 were won and 1 lost. The Australians were thrashed 21-2. Ganley scored 194 goals in all club matches and John Etty scored 43 tries the second highest total in any one season. Cracknell 27, Ayres 27, Pitchford 20, Turner 18, Davies 17, Keith 14, Stirrup 9, Nestor 9 and Little 8 all had good try totals. Cracknell also kicked 19 goals. In all 13 players made 33 or more appearances.

What a season!



Chris O'Brien, the Oldham full back, was given a busy time against Castleford, dealing with the kicks of Malcolm Rellly.

Picture by courtesy of the Oldham Evening Chronicle.

CURTAIN RAISER

Tonight's curtain raiser is between Leigh Miners' Juniors and Oldham Schools at third year level (14 year olds).

Leigh Miners, in black shirts, are managed by Colin Pilkington and have won 19 of the 20 games played so far this season. The players are drawn from several Leigh Schools and include the following County players: Bob Kettle-Hooker, Tony Quinn-Second Row, David Ryan-Loose Forward, Andrew Ready-Centre.

The Oldham team have not yet played together at this age group. However, the team is made up of 13 players of extremely high ability and provide the Oldham public with an ideal opportunity to see the work being done in the Oldham Schools, and to judge the stars of the future.

The outstanding players are: Paul Stott (Counthill) Loose Forward, Des Foy (St. Alban's) Centre, Paul Chadderton (Breeze Hill) Full Back, Chris Willis (Saddleshworth) Scrum Half.

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APRIL 3rd K.O. 3.30

Oldham v Salford

FIXTURES 1976-77

FIRST TEAM				"A" TEAM				
Date	Opponents	Ground	F. A.	Date	Opponents	Ground	F. A.	
1976				Mar. 12	(Sat.) Leeds (3-00)	A		
Aug. 22	(Sun.) 1st Round County Cup-Blackpool (3-00)	A	10-17	20	(Sun.) Castleford (3-30)	H		
Sept. 5	(Sun.) Widnes (3-00)	A	20-22	27	(Sun.) Bradford N. (3-30)	A		
12	(Sun.) Leeds (3-30)	H	10-18	Apr. 3	(Sun.) Salford (3-30)	H		
19	(Sun.) Leigh (3-30)	A	13-19	8	(G.F.) Rochdale H. (3-00)	A		
26	(Sun.) Wigan (3-30)	H	23-20	17	(Sun.) Warrington (3-00)	A		
Oct. 3	(Sun.) Wakefield T. (3-30)	A	13-11	24	(Sun.) Widnes (3-30)	H		
10	(Sun.) Barrow (3-30)	H	33-01					
15	(Fri.) Castleford 7-30	A	5-11					
23	24 (Sat./Sun.) Player's No. 6			Aug. 21	(Sat.) Huyton L.S. (3-00)	A	F. A.	
31	(Sun.) Bradford N. (3-30)	H	17-9	28	(Sat.) Huyton L.S. (3-00)	H	36-4	
Nov. 6/7	(Sat./Sun.) Player's No. 6		10-20	18	(Sat.) Leigh (3-00)	H	25-9	
14	(Sun.) Barrow (2-30)	A	23-16	25	(Sat.) Wigan (3-00)	A	22-17	
21	(Sun.) St. Helens (3-30)	H	9-20	Oct. 2	(Sat.) Swinton (3-00)	H	15-35	
28	(Sun.) Workington T. (3-30)	H	11-2	9	(Sat.) Barrow (2-30)	A	26-8	
Dec. 5	(Sun.) Featherstone R. (2-30)	A		20	(Sat.) St. Helens (3-00)	A	22-17	
12	(Sun.) Featherstone R. (3-30)	H		27	(Sat.) Workington (2-30)	A	3-21	
19	(Sun.) Wigan (3-00)	A		Dec. 18	(Sat.) Wigan (3-00)	H		
26	(Sun.) Rochdale H. (3-30)	H		5-23	1977		8-18	
1977				0-18	Jan. 8	(Sat.) St. Helens (3-00)	H	10-11
Jan. 2	(Sun.) Salford (3-00)	A	12-33	15	(Sat.) Leigh (3-00)	A	10-21	
9	(Sun.) St. Helens (3-00)	A	7-17	22	(Sat.) Workington (3-00)	H	21-14	
16	(Sun.) Leigh (3-30)	H	P.P.	5	(Sat.) Huyton (3-00)	H	12-11	
23	(Sun.) Workington T. (2-30)	A	8-23	18	(Fri.) Warrington (7-30)	A		
30	(Sun.) Wakefield T. (3-30)	H		25	(Fri.) Rochdale (7-30)	A		
Feb. 6	(Sun.) Hull K.R. (2-45)	A	5-35	Mar. 12	(Sat.) Warrington (3-00)	H		
12/13	(Sat./Sun.) Challenge Cup			19	(Sat.) Swinton (3-00)	A		
1st Round, Dewsbury		H		26	(Sat.) Huyton (3-00)	A		
20	(Sun.) Hull K.R. (3-30)	H	8-15	Apr. 9	(Sat.) Rochdale (3-00)	H		
27	(Sun.) Warrington (3-30)	H	7-15					

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