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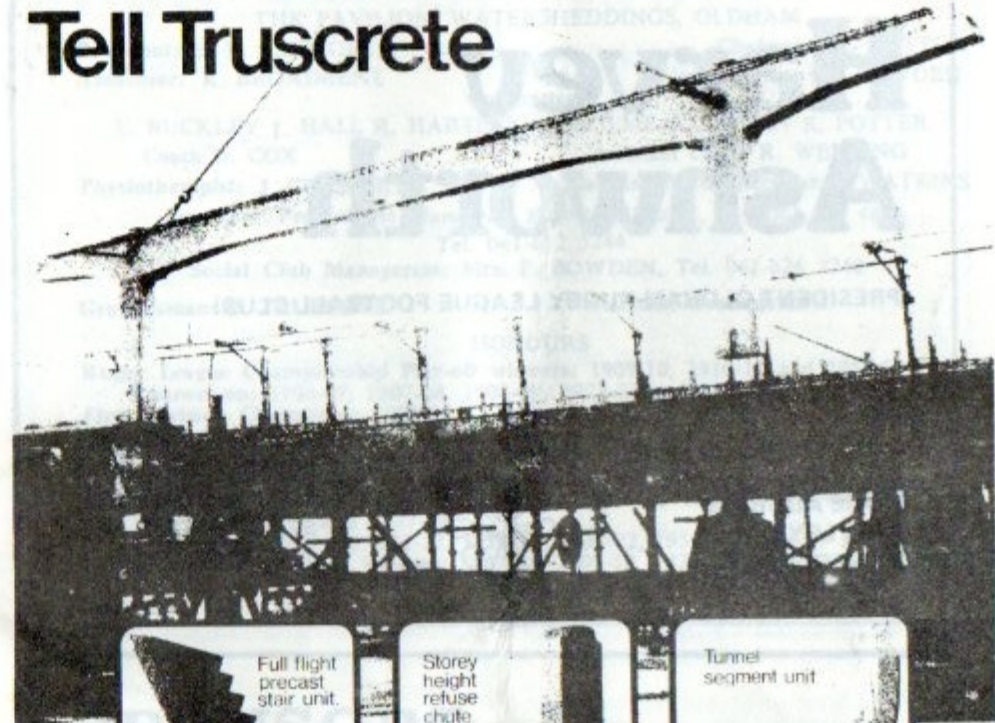
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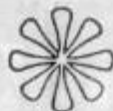
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OLDHAM OUTLOOK

This evening sees the last of our home matches for the 1977-78 season but it could turn out to be one of the most exciting and most crucial of the winter.

These notes were written before our trip to Cumbria last week-end but if we won at Whitehaven - and our form against Huddersfield and Doncaster suggested we might - much could depend on the outcome of this evening's York clash so far as promotion is concerned.

We were looking to Rochdale Hornets to do us a good turn against Huddersfield last Sunday. If they did, we can reciprocate tonight because a York defeat here at Watersheddings would virtually ensure the Hornets passage into the First Division next season.

It would also give us two more points with which to stake our own claim for the top-four. Indeed, tonight's match could be very important for both clubs.

Our final Second Division fixture of the season is at Halifax on Sunday, of course, and we would hope for a good following to help the players "sign off" for the summer break in fine fashion.

Even when the senior side has finished, however, there will still be some outstanding "A" team matches to be played and one or two top amateur events to be held here at Watersheddings. Watch the Press for details and also details of the proposed Oldham - Hornets match as a testimonial for Martin Murphy and Norman Brelsford.

Perhaps the time is now opportune to thank you all for your support throughout the season and link with that a request that you also support us through the summer months so that we can have the best possible start to next season no matter which division we find ourselves in.

How can you support us through the summer? There are several ways, not least by helping us with the new lottery which we are really out to expand in a big way.

You can help, first and foremost, by becoming a member of the lottery, which has a fabulous WEEKLY prize of £1,000 plus a £250 prize and several £10 prizes, but you may also be interested to know that we have openings for work on the lottery, both full time and part time.

We are interested to hear from anyone -- men or women -- who might like to work in the evenings or even from people who might like to apply for full-time "selling" vacancies.

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The battles on the field will soon be over for another few months... but the battles behind the scenes will be going on all summer and we need all your help and loyal support.

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OUR VISITORS BY DON YATES

The dramatic promotion chase reaches its climax this evening in Oldham's final home game of the season against a York side who have staged a tremendous late rally in an attempt to clinch that one remaining promotion spot. A defeat this evening will virtually end the promotion hopes of the unfortunate club so both York's and Oldham's First Division dreams are in the balance this evening when Oldham attempt to gain revenge for their 14-5 defeat at York shortly before Christmas.

York's fog shrouded victory over Oldham last December was their first defeat of Oldham since November 1971 when they pulled off a narrow 9-8 win at Wiggington Road. Later that season Oldham gained revenge with a 32-14 home win over York and then the following season they registered a league double over their Yorkshire rivals, winning 32-8 away and then by 16-10 at home but since those matches in season 1972-73 the two clubs have not met in league football. They did meet, however, in a close and exciting second round Challenge Cup-tie two years ago when a crowd of 6,290 were attracted to Watersheddings for a cup epic which Oldham eventually won 6-5. York were a little unfortunate in that match for they scored the only try of the game through David Berends, dominated the match for long periods and should have clinched victory late in the game when the usually reliable Neil Fox missed a simple penalty attempt. They will be hoping for better luck this evening as they chase promotion favourites Huddersfield who they visit next Sunday in another crucial match.

York's assault on promotion is based upon a talented squad of players which includes £10,000 signing Terry Morgan, who has scored almost 200 points this season, former Oldham favourites Terry Ramshaw and three players who this season have won county representation, full-back Barry Banks, centre Jackie Marston and their versatile forward Mick Morgan. Twenty-nine-years old Mick Morgan is a vastly experienced player who provides the team's motivation and his transfer from Wakefield Trinity in March 1977 for £10,000 has proved to be a sound investment. His two players who this season have won county representation, full-back Barry Banks, centre Jackie Marston and their versatile forward Mick Morgan. Twenty-nine-years old Mick Morgan is a vastly experienced player who provides the team's motivation and his transfer from Wakefield Trinity in March 1977 for £10,000 has proved to be a sound investment. His two appearances for Yorkshire earlier this season boosted his number of county appearances to nine and he also played six times for England. The versatile Morgan has played in every forward position and has gained representative selection at both hooker and loose-forward and this versatility was, no doubt, instrumental in his selection in the English squad which visited Australasia in 1975 for the World Championship series. When Morgan began his professional career, by joining Wakefield Trinity from Featherstone Juniors in 1966, he was a centre but the majority of his 270 first team appearances for Trinity came after he had been converted into the pack from where he scored 76 tries and appeared in two Yorkshire Cup Finals as well as the final of the 1972 Players Trophy competition.

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With the Amateurs ALAN BURKE

Although tonight sees the end of professional rugby league in Oldham for another season, the local amateur league have still to stage many top-class events both on and off the field-of-play.

This Sunday, April 16th, the Oldham Amateur League stage the 3rd annual Albert Edwards Memorial 7-a-side competition, which will be taking place here at Watersheddings with a 2 pm. start. Wigan-based Ince have won this competition on the previous two occasions, but at the end of last season the team had to disband and therefore there is sure to be a new name on the trophy this year. The draw for the opening round of this season's tournament is Fitton Hill v Salem Hornets; Waterhead v Saddleworth; Higginshaw v Mayfield; St. Anne's v Ferranti.

On Tuesday April 18th, the opening round of this season's Oldham Championship Play-off will be taking part, with all the matches kicking-off at 6.30 pm. Standard Cup finalists Saddleworth and St. Anne's meet again in this opening round, this time at Greenfield, with the winners then being at home in the semi-finals to the victors of the Fitton Hill-Higginshaw clash which will be taking place at Alexandra School. Also in the 1st Round, Mayfield take on Ferranti at Firgrove in Rochdale, and the winners of that tie will then play hosts in the semi-finals, which will be held on Tuesday, April 25th, to either Waterhead or Salem Hornets, who meet at Waterhead Park in their 1st Round encounter.

The night after the Championship semi-finals, Wednesday April 26th, the Oldham League will be presenting the first showing in Oldham of the BARLA Youth Tour to Australasia film, which features highlights of the curtain-raiser to the 1977 World Championship Final. The film will be shown at the Oldham RLFC Social Club and will start at 8 pm.

On Sunday April 30th, Watersheddings sees the Final of the Pennine Cup, and although the finalists are as yet unknown, there seems a very strong possibility that this may be an all-Oldham affair. The kick-off time for the Pennine Cup Final will be 3 pm, whilst just 5 days later on Friday, May 5th, the Oldham Championship Play-off will reach its conclusion, again at Watersheddings, with the Final which will be kicking-off at 7.15 pm.

To finally complete the rugby league season at Watersheddings for 1977-78, BARLA will be holding their 5th annual National 7-a-side Finals here, for the second consecutive season, and which will include teams from all over the country and from both Open-age and Youth levels. The Oldham League, as hosts, will automatically be allowed a team in both sections of this competition, and whilst it is already known that Saddleworth Rangers will be representing the town at Under-18 level, the Open-age team to qualify will be the side which is successful in winning this Sunday's Albert Edwards Memorial Sevens.

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Brian Batty

Every sport is guaranteed to provide its share of romantic success stories and Rugby League is no exception.

Take the case surrounding two Yorkshire scrum halves who have suffered such contrasting experiences this season.

When Kevin Dick walked on Wembley last May, the darling of the delighted Leeds fans and a favourite of millions of television viewers, he was on top of his sporting world.

He had put both feet firmly on the road to success and this season we expected to see him make an even greater impact on the game.

But, as so often happens, he became dogged by bad luck and injury and has had to fight his way back to fitness along the same path as many other players.

He has been forced to become a spectator as Leeds have battled their way back to the Challenge Cup final.

But behind his heartbreak lies one of the game's most rewarding feats for little Sammy Sanderson, a nother great little scrum half and popular player.

Sanderson was proving a fine partner for Dave Topliss when Wakefield Trinity went out and bought Mike Lampkowski, the former England Rugby Union scrum half.

Sanderson's days were clearly numbered at Belle Vue and his career could have gone downhill but for Leeds coach Syd Hynes shrewdly taking him to Headingley.

It was a dream move for the likeable Sanderson, a talented player who fashioned his skills in the hard school of a once-strong Halifax side.

Sanderson can hardly believe his luck. Leeds gave him the No. 7 spot and he has played a useful role in their Cup success.

'It has been a fantastic experience to help Leeds get to Wembley something I never expected even when they signed me from Wakefield,' said Sanderson modestly.

The sad twist is that Lampkowski, who has done a sound job for Wakefield, is now out of the rest of the season with a knee injury.

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