

Teams

OLDHAM

(Cherry/white hoops, blue shorts)

- 1 Geoff Munro
- 2 Chris O'Brien
- 3 Phil Larder
- 4 Phil Ward
- 5 Eric Fitzsimmons
- 6 Bill Francis
- 7 Jimmy Arnold
- 8 Jim Fiddler
- 9 Roger O'Mahoney
- 10 Alan Forster
- 11 Steve Herbert
- 12 Gary Walczak
- 13 Colin Hawkyard

- 14 Fred Hall
- 15 Ian Taylor

HUYTON

(white/red/amber/
black hoops, black shorts)

- 1 John Tavern
- 2 Kevin Fitzsimmons
- 3 Paul Fitzpatrick
- 4 Paul Hunter
- 5 David Leatherbarrow
- 6 David Prescott
- 7 Alan Bishop
- 8 Jeff Fletcher
- 9 David Walker
- 10 Bob Goulding
- 11 John Coop
- 12 Charlie Leadbetter
- 13 Alex Heeson

- 14 Gerald Hartley
- 15 Peter Middlehurst

Referee: T.M. Beaumont, Huddersfield Touch Judges: E.M. Russell, Rochdale D. Watson, Wakefield

NEXT GAME AT WATERSHEDDINGS

Thursday 13th Sept - 'A' Team v Blackpool Borough 'A'. Kick Off 7.30p.m.

Sunday 16th Sept - John Player 1st Round v Leeds. Kick Off 3.0p.m.

Wednesday 19th Sept - B.B.C. Floodlit Trophy. Pre-Round v St. Helens. K.O. 7.30p.m.

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OLDHAM RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB OFFICIALS

The Pavilion, Watersheddings, Oldham.

Tel: 061-652 5244

President - H.V. Ashworth

Chairman - R. Hatton

Vice-chairman - J. Bowden

Treasurer - K. Broadbent

Committee : E. Buckley, F. Diskin, J. Hall, D. Hulme, R. Ogden, K. Potter

Coaching Staff : Graham Starkey (manager) Terry Gorman (asst. manager)
Bill Francis (player/coach) Bob Welding (A team coach)
Brian Gartland (colt's coach)

Professional playing staff:

Jimmy Arnold - Dennis Ashcroft - Ray Ashton - Harold Byram - Barry Conner - Leslie Cook
- Michael Coombes - Mike Cowley - Peter Deakin - Jim Fiddler - Eric Fitzsimons - Kevin
Flanagan - Terry Flanagan - Alan Forster - Bill Francis - Dave Fricker - Andrew Goodway -
Fred Hall - Colin Hawkyard - Steve Hebert - Keith Jackson - Clive Jones - Paddy Kerwin -
Phil Larder - Steve Littler - Steve Lund - Jeff Munro - Martin Murphy - Tony Newall - Chris
O'Brien - Ian Ogden - Roger O'Mahoney - Kevin O'Rourke - Gareth Owen - Johnny
Paterson - Ian Radcliffe - Warren Ryans - Ian Taylor - Garry Walczak - John Walls -
Mike Worrall.

Physiotherapist:

Asst. Physiotherapist:

Secretary - K. Wilkinson

Commercial Manager - Peter Mason

Public relations officer - Barbara Wilde

Groundsman : F. Brookes

Asst. Groundsman : M. Bashforth

CLUB RECORDS

Record Victory	67-6 against Liverpool City April 59
Record defeat	11-67 by Hull K.R. Sept. 78
Record attendance	28,000 v Huddersfield Feb 24th 1912
Record receipts	£4,897 v Leeds 3rd March 1968
Record transfer fee paid	£10,650 to Workington for Ike Southward March 1959
Record transfer fee received	£11,002 : 10s from workington for Ike Southward Jan 62
Record try scorer	Reg Farrar 49 tries 1921/22 season
Record goal scorer	Bernard Ganley 224 goals 1957/58 season
Record point scorer	Bernard Ganley 28 pts v Liverpool City April 59

CLUB 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

We Welcome Our Visitors - HUYTON

LITTLE Huyton, who finished next to bottom of the Second Division last season with three wins and three draws out of their 26 matches, come to Watersheddings today with one of the smallest professional playing staffs in the Rugby League.

"I have only 12 available professional players", says player-coach Geoff Fletcher, the former Oldham player, "but we will do our best to battle on bravely".

Fletcher has just completed a two-year contract at Alt Park and has been offered another contract for another 12 months.

At the time of writing these notes he had not signed it - but he was still carrying on in his player-coach capacity.

Fletcher is obviously worried at the shortage of players at Alt Park, but that does not stop him singing the praises of his men for the brave fight they put up in the first round Lancashire Cup defeat at Barrow.

Though Barrow won 44-11, the score in no way reflected the game, he said. "We arrived late, had to take the field in a hurry, and Barrow ran up 25 points in the first 25 minutes.

"After that, we fought hard and did well considering all the circumstances".

Towards the end of last season, the Oldham club allowed prop. Peter Frodsham to go to Alt Park on loan, but the move did not work out and Frodsham played only twice before leaving.

His departure was another blow to Fletcher, whose squad was reduced considerably by the sale of Keith Wills to Barrow, Arthur Daley to Leigh and Jimmy O'Neill to Whitehaven.

Injuries to Doug Reynolds, Mike Shee and Mike Smith have crippled the Huyton camp and the men from Merseyside look like enduring another long battle for survival.

They face another gigantic task to keep the flag flying on Merseyside - and all at Oldham wish them well in their efforts to succeed.

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ROGER'S REPORT

By **ROGER HALSTEAD**
(Oldham Evening Chronicle)

Of all the exciting events to take place at Watersheddings in the past few months I regard the launching of a streamlined youth policy the most thrilling of all.

In the past few years the club's terrible cash plight made it impossible for Oldham to compete on equal terms with the top clubs in signing young players with the right background and pedigree.

Hence, many of those boys from the Oldham area left town: Nicky Kiss, Martin Foy, Martin Burns, Mick Coates and Dale Wharton to name but a few.

It was a real tragedy and a course of events which Oldham had to change if they were to ever obtain the benefits of a sound youth policy and a steady flow of the right type of boy to Watersheddings.

The fantastic success of the club's lottery launched in November, 1978, plus the "signing" of youth coach Brian Gartland from Saddleworth Rangers made it all possible.

Almost overnight, it seemed, Oldham could challenge any club in the game in the quest for the top boys - and they did not waste time in proving it!

First came Ray Ashton, a stand-off half from Widnes who had captained the county youth side and been substitute for Great Britain.

Next followed Mike Cowley of St. Helens - a Lancashire and Great Britain centre.

Third came hooker Les Cook from Widnes - another member of the county side.

Oldham were on their way. But that was only the start.

Gartland and his right-hand man, Derek Foy, spotted the talents of a hard forward from the Redhill, Castleford amateur club and it led to the signing of Andrew Goodway.

Nearer "home", too, was not neglected and within 48 hours of his finishing his A-level examinations, Saddleworth scrum-half Paddy Kirwan signed the forms that made him an Oldham professional.

A young giant from Leigh Miners and yet another member of the county side - Mick Coombes - was snapped up thanks to the foresight and timing of the club's new assistant manager Terry Gorman.

And on a hot night just before Wakes in June the biggest "fish" of all was in the net - Terry Flanagan, one of the most sought after youngsters in Rugby League, and captain of the Great Britain under-18 side.

No longer could anyone accuse Oldham of being left behind. Indeed, they were now leading the pack!

For every top club in Lancashire had been in the hunt for Flanagan, including Warrington, Salford, St. Helens, Wigan and Widnes.

The influence of Gartland was a major factor in the decision of several of the boys named to throw in their lot with Oldham.

All along the line, it seems, Oldham are now gearing up for something big.



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CLUB NEWS

WHAT a treat there is in store for local Rugby League fans following the draws for the BBC Floodlit Trophy and the John Player Competition!

Following today's first home game in the Second Division, we are at Watersheddings again next Sunday in the first round of the Player's Trophy, and you don't get much more attractive opposition than in the shape of Leeds.

Then, on the following Wednesday, September 19th, we have a visit from another top First Division side, St. Helens, in the preliminary round of the Floodlit Trophy.

In the eight years of the competition it will be the first time Oldham and Leeds have been paired together and we can expect a real cracker of a tie.

Leeds are still one of the best sides in the game and you can always rely upon them to produce top-quality football.

Widnes may have stolen everyone's thunder last season, but Leeds broke their stranglehold on the major trophies when they finished fourth in the First Division and then went on to win the Premiership by defeating Bradford Northern in the final at Fartown.

After Leeds, the Saints came marching in! They will be here on the following Wednesday in the preliminary round of the Floodlit Trophy and the reward for the winners will be a home first-round clash against Rochdale Hornets.

The deadline for preliminary round games is actually Tuesday, September 18th, but we received special permission to go beyond the deadline by one day.

For several reasons, we put in our application to the league and we received special permission to play on the 19th.

So far as team strengthening is concerned, we were very disappointed to be rejected by Great Britain prop-forward Brian Lockwood, whom we would have liked to come here as pack leader to help bring on our young forwards.

We have a lot of promising forwards, but we need an organiser to play in the pack and help them to fulfil their potential and their promise.

Lockwood would have been absolutely ideal, but he preferred to stay with champions Hull KR, to whom he had already given his word. The fact that Roger Millward is also his cousin was a contributing factor too.

We had lengthy talks with Lockwood and he was very impressed indeed at what our chairman, Ray Hatton, was able to explain to him about our new-style set-up at Watersheddings.

You will doubtless have read in the local press what he had to say about the sort of club we are trying to establish. What a pity he was unable to become part of it!

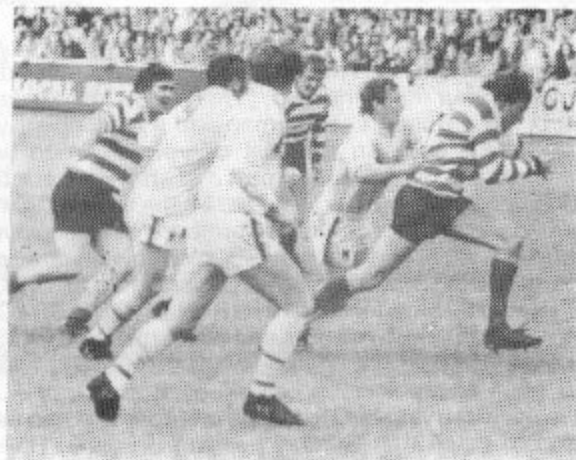
However, the search will go on. Players of the calibre of Brian Lockwood are few and far between, but that is the sort of level at which we are aiming. We want to strengthen the side, but we have to ensure that when we do go out and buy we bring the player or players who can make a really big impact.



WARNING TO YOUNGSTERS

We would request that the children please refrain from sitting over the perimeter walls, as this is causing damage to the boards and is unfair to the advertisers whose signs are being concealed.

OLDHAM ACTION



Colin Hawkyard seen making a determined break against Warrington but Oldham were not at their best and were knocked out of the Forshaw's Lancashire Cup by the Wires.

ALL PICTURES BY COURTESY OF OLDHAM EVENING CHRONICLE

OLDHAM R.L. F.C. SUPPORTERS CLUB.

COACHES: The Supporters Club are again running coaches to away matches and details for the next two matches are as follows:

Batley 23-9-79 Depart from Social Club at 1.45 p.m. Cost; Adults - £1.20
Members, £1.30 Non-Members. Child. (under 14) 80p. Member, 90p Non-Members.

Seats for these matches can be booked through any Supporters Club official at today's match.

SOCIAL CLUB: With effect from Wednesday 12th September 1979 the Social Club will be open for Junior Supporters for a games and record night, with pool table, darts, etc. available. Soft drinks only will be served along with refreshments. Admittance will be free to Supporters Club members and membership can be taken out on the night. It is hoped that these evenings will be successful and form the basis of a Junior Supporters Club.

RADIO MANCHESTER SPORTS QUIZ: Once again the Supporters Club has been invited to enter a team in the Radio Manchester Sports Quiz 'Top Score' which will be broadcast on the radio later in the year.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the team should contact any Supporters Club official at today's match or in the Social Club on any evening during the week (except Wednesday).

MEMBERSHIP: Why not become a member of the Supporters Club and help us to help keep a winning team on the field. Membership fees are as follows:

Adult - £1.00

Married Couple - £1.50

Child (under 14) - 50p

B.B.C. RADIO MANCHESTER

As Great Britain were thrashed in the third test in Australia, you probably turned to your mate and said: "No, I don't want to know about it."

But being a Rugby League man and a masochist, you probably groped for the 206 spot on the dial of your radio to listen to BBC Radio Manchester's on-the-spot report and after-match interviews.

Indeed your local station covered all the tourists' games in Australia with particular emphasis on the performance of local players.

It perhaps illustrates the way in which this unique coverage on radio has increased since the start of BBC local radio in 1968. Radio Manchester, for example, broadcasts "RUGBY LEAGUE SPECIAL" every Sunday night at 6.15 for 30 minutes and also broadcasts a 15 minute programme for amateurs during the week.

Our team of reporters is headed by Ron Marlor . . . whom you might have seen carrying his Uher tape recorder and mic dashing from the main stand to catch that Sunday evening deadline. He is built like a scrum-half, wears a flat cap on bad days and speaks with the voice of authority. Rugby League coverage has increased substantially on Radio Manchester during the past few years and we hope that it is not without coincidence that "gates" too have risen.

We see our role to encourage and foster interest in Rugby League football which, as we all know, is the best game in the world. I have been watching it since I was a lad of five!

It is not simply a question of covering matches, it is also passing on to you over the "airwaves" team and club news and details of special events.

When you arrived at the ground today you probably received a 206 "Touchdown" car sticker. Please stick it on your car as we are attempting to reach a wider audience with the programme and to "sell" the game to those who have not yet sampled it.

Your club officials and Radio Manchester have the same "goal" which is to continue the upsurge of interest which has arisen over the past two seasons.

**Allan Shaw, Manager,
Radio Manchester**



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THE NEW LOOK OLDHAM R.L.F.C.

Ground Advertising:- How do you like the 'new look' Oldham ground? At considerable expense the perimeter wall has been completely timber-clad and weather proofed to provide our advertisers with a superb backing for their signs. This is, of course, in addition to an extensive programme of repairs and renovations to both ground and pavillion, undertaken during the close season and still continuing.

However, due to the bad weather conditions of the past few weeks, our signwriters have been unable to complete all the boards taken by our advertisers. As soon as this can be remedied, we shall see quite a transformation as the Oldham ground becomes comparable with any in the League.

Approximately two thirds of the advertising boards available have been taken up, but space is also now available on the newly boarded Hutchins and New Stand walls. Advertising costs have been kept to a minimum for the 79/80 season and any Company interested in taking out an advertising board at the 'new look' Oldham ground, please contact me.

My thanks to all our new advertisers, your support is appreciated.

All spick and span . . . that's our Watersheddings ground after a programme of improvement during the last few months.

The 'New Look' Match Programme

How do you like the 'New Look' Oldham match programme?

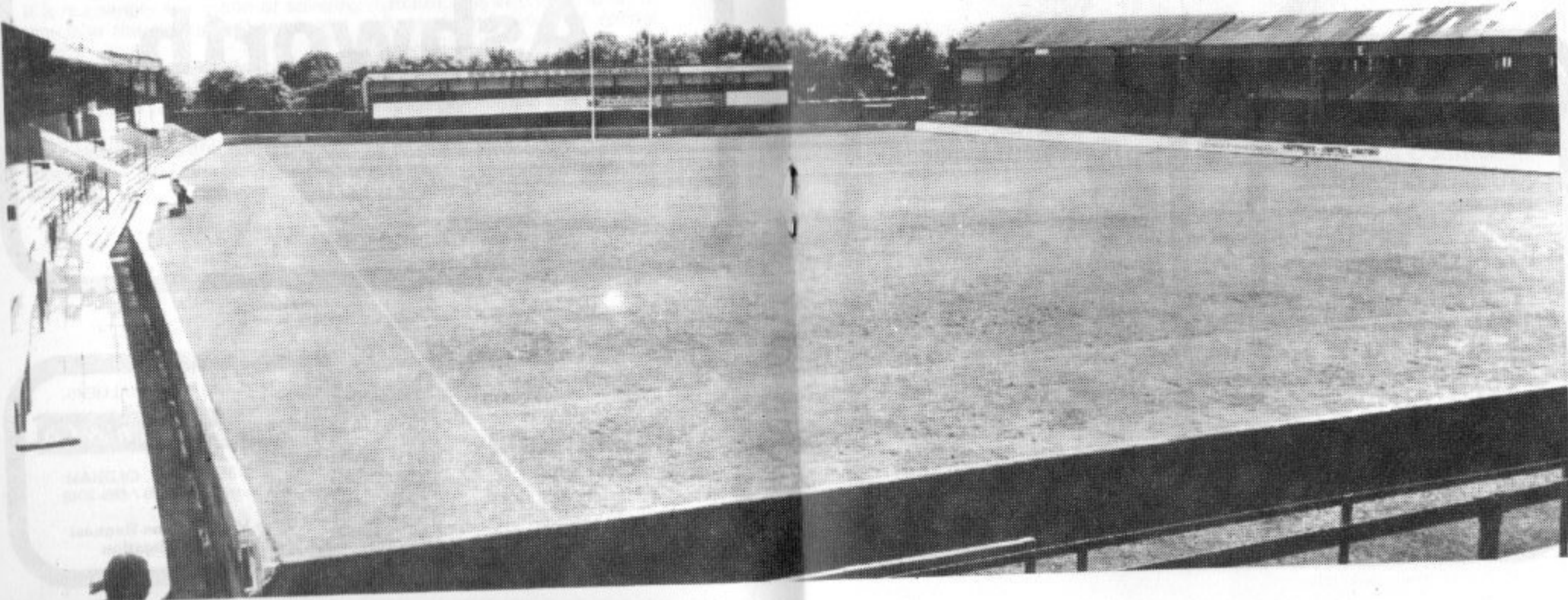
A great deal of thought and planning, plus 'burning of the midnight oil' has gone into producing what I feel sure you will agree is a vastly improved 79/80 season programme. The cost involved in putting the whole thing together has been considerable, hence regrettably, the increase in price to 20p.

However, we now have a match programme to be proud of, interesting to read and a worthwhile match souvenir. All part of the new image we are creating at the Oldham R.L.F.C.

Advertising space in the programme is almost filled for the season because again the rates have been kept low but a small amount of space can still be made available. All enquiries to me please.....

Sponsorships: Programme and match ball sponsors are required for the 'New Look' match programme. This interesting form of advertising carries the benefit of a prime position on the cover of the programme, (front cover for programme sponsor and back cover for match ball sponsor). Choose your own match from the fixture list and bring along your staff/customers/friends with the complementary tickets provided. Enjoy a cold buffet and drinks in the committee room after the match. --- Interested? --- contact me,

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TOM WEBB'S YESTERYEAR

HUYTON . . . were known as Wigan Highfield 1880, later lapsed and were revived about 1906 and won the Lancs. Junior Cup 4 successive times before they were barred from the competition!
They entered the Northern League in 1922, went to London in 1933 and had one season as London Highfield. They moved to Liverpool in 1934 and became Liverpool Stanley at Stanley Track. They changed names yet again in 1951, when they became Liverpool City playing at Knotty Ash. Their final move was to Huyton at Alt Park in 1968, as Huyton F.C. Players associated with both the Oldham and Huyton Clubs are:- Terry Gorman, Ken Grundy, Dave Cox, Jeff Fletcher, Arthur Daly, Bill Payne, Jim Challinor, John Mullarkey, Jeff Wirrall, Bill Newton.

Club nickname 'The Ton'

Ground Capacity - 15,000

Record attendance - 3,500 76/77 season

Record Victory - 20-0 win over Batley 1974

One of their record defeats was 5-60 by Salford in 1969.

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COLT'S CORNER

OUR scouting network has pulled off another "scoop" with the capture of a young second-row forward from west Lancashire, who was being sought by St. Helens and Warrington.

He is Mick Worrall, a big lad of 6ft. 3ins. and 14 stones, who is the younger brother of Tony Worrall, a centre snapped up by the Wires' a year ago after starring on the BARLA youth tour of Papua New Guinea.

Mick is 17 and a player whom we believe could go places.

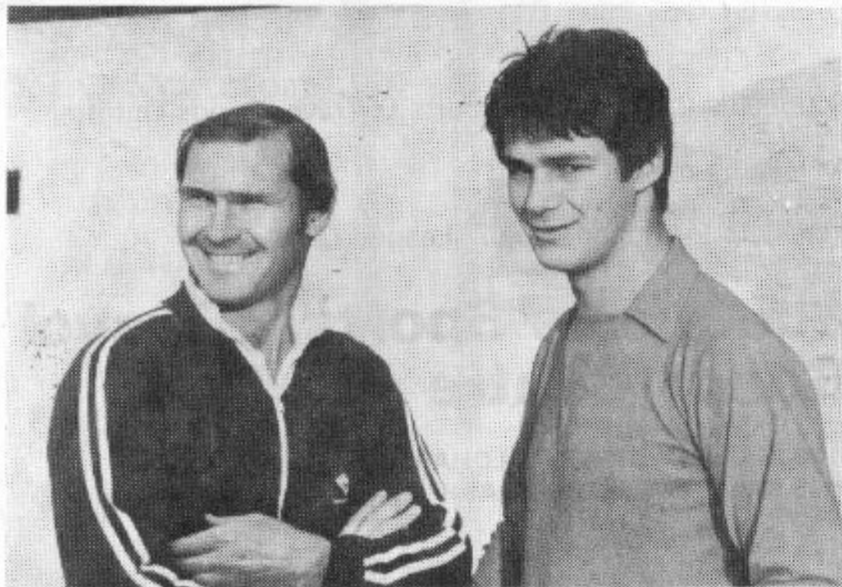
Harry Cook, the well-known St. Helens official, had spoken to the player's father about the boy's future while Warrington were very interested indeed.

He first came to our attention when he played well for Crossfield's, the Warrington amateur side, against Saddleworth Rangers and we were also impressed when watching him playing a star role for the Warrington under-18 side against Widnes under-18s in the quarter-final of the county cup.

We welcome Mick to our fast-growing "nursery" and trust that he will have a long and successful career at Watersheddings.

He is, incidentally, a nephew of Bill Delooze, the prop-forward whom many fans will remember as an Oldham player of the mid-1960s.

..... The Oldham boys produced a terrific performance to beat Bradford 38-2 in their opening home game against Bradford Northern. They scored 10 snappy tries and had the game won by half time when they led 18-2. Tries were scored by Johnny Johnson (2) Andrew Goodway (2) Paddy Kerwin, Ray Ashton, Joe Warburton, Phil Vincent, Mick Coombes, Pasquale D'Adamo.



Our latest teenage signing is 17-year-old Mick Worrall, a big second-row forward from the Warrington amateur club, Crossfields. Mick is seen here on one of his first training nights chatting with player-coach Bill Francis.

COLTS FIXTURES

1979

Aug. 18	Leigh	A
25	Bradford	H
Sept. 1	Leeds	A
8	Bramley	H
15	Castleford	A
29	Leeds	H
Oct. 6	Widnes	A
13	Hull	A
20	St. Helens	H
27	Wakefield	A
Nov. 3	Hunslet	H
10	Bradford	A
17	Salford	H
24	Hunslet	A
Dec. 1	Widnes	H
8	St. Helens	A
29	Leigh	H

1980

Jan. 5	Salford	A
12	Bramley	A
19	Hull	H
26	Dewsbury	A
Feb. 2	Rochdale	A
9	Cup-First Round	
16	Hull KR	H
23	Cup-2nd Round	
March 1	Castleford	H
8	Hull KR	A
22	Dewsbury	H
29	Wakefield	H
April 5	Rochdale	H



Our new mascot is eight-year-old Stephen Gartland, son of our colts coach, Brian Gartland. Stephen is pictured here with second-row forward Stephen Herbert before the St. Helens friendly.

JOE GALLAGHER

PAINTER and DECORATOR

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RUGBY LEAGUE NEWS By Brian Batty

(Daily Mail)

At last it looks as if tours Down Under are to start the right way round - in New Zealand.

For years I have been advocating that it would be far better for Britain to use New Zealand as a stepping stone on the way to Australia for a number of sound reasons.

But the Aussies have always resisted this sort of move on the grounds that they felt that it could harm a tour of their country where the fans might feel they are getting second best.

There is so much more in favour of a move that I am convinced will benefit all three countries in the long run.

Britain would be able to seek the blend and understanding needed in a big tour squad and sort out a Test side in New Zealand ready for the crunch series with the Aussies.

I believe there is every case for streamlining trips to New Zealand for a month has proved to long in the past on top of the two months spent in Australia.

I know some people will feel there is the danger of losing players with injuries before they get to Australia but with 30 players and the chance of reinforcements these problems can be overcome.

Then again there are usually English-like conditions in New Zealand that will suit our boys more and give them the chance to settle in easier than in Australia.

In fact on the four trips I have made to New Zealand the grounds have been far heavier than those over here with Park scarcely fit for Test rugby at times.

The Officials in that country have maintained that going there in July is a mistake because of the tremendous amount of rain they get compared to the better months of May and June.

It seems sense to limit this part of a tour to about a fortnight with around four matches, excluding the country games.

Two tests - one in Auckland and another in Christchurch should be enough but if the Kiwis insist on a third then perhaps extra games against the Maoris and the Auckland club side would be enough to complete the programme.

Given the right results then Britain could move on the Australia where I would trim out many of the country games now and concentrate on a six-week programme.

With a nine-month season here I reckon two months' extra rugby is enough for the fittest of our players who are facing too many matches already.





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First team fixtures 1979/80 Oldham Rugby League Football Club

Date	Opponent	Venue	K.O.	F. A.
Aug. 19	County Cup 1st round	Away		22 - 15
Aug. 26	Warrington 2nd round	Home		6 - 34
Sept. 2	Doncaster	Away		
Sept. 9	Huyton	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Sept. 16	John Player 1st Round			
Sept. 23	Batley	Away		
Sept. 30	John Player 2nd Round			
Oct. 7	Featherstone	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Oct. 14	Whitehaven	Away		
Oct. 21	Bramley	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Oct. 28	Halifax	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Nov. 4	Huddersfield	Away		
Nov. 11	Barrow	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Nov. 18	Swinton	Away		
Nov. 25	Dewsbury	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 2	Huyton	Away		
Dec. 9	Batley	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 16	Dewsbury	Away		
Dec. 26	Rochdale	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 30	Featherstone	Away		
Jan. 6	Swinton	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Jan. 13	Keighley	Away		
Jan. 20				
Jan. 27	Huddersfield	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Feb. 3	Challenge Cup 1st Round			
Feb. 17				
Feb. 24	Challenge Cup 2nd round			
Mar. 2	Barrow	Away		
Mar. 9	Whitehaven	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Mar. 16	Keighley	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Mar. 23	Halifax	Away		
Mar. 30	Doncaster	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Apr. 6				
Apr. 13				
Apr. 20	Bramley	Away		
Apr. 27				

'A' Team Fixtures 1979/80 Oldham Rugby League Football Club.

Date	Opponent	Venue	K.O.	F. A.
Sept. 1	Workington	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Sept. 7	Leigh	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Sept. 13	Blackpool	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Sept. 21	Warrington	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Oct. 6	Workington	Away	2.30 p.m.	
Oct. 18	Wigan	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Oct. 26	Wigan	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Nov. 1	Leigh	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Nov. 10	Barrow	Away	2.30 p.m.	
Nov. 15	Swinton	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Nov. 24	Rochdale	Away	3.00 p.m.	
Nov. 29	St. Helens	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Dec. 7	Widnes	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Dec. 15	Whitehaven	Away	3.00 p.m.	
Dec. 20	Rochdale	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 4	St. Helens	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 10	Swinton	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 17	Widnes	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Jan. 19	Whitehaven	Home	3.00 p.m.	
Jan. 26				
Feb. 2				
Feb. 9				
Feb. 14	Warrington	Home	7.30 p.m.	
Feb. 23				
Mar. 1	Barrow	Home	2.30 p.m.	
Mar. 12	Salford	Away	7.30 p.m.	
Mar. 15	Blackpool	Away	3.00 p.m.	
Mar. 20	Salford	Home	7.30 p.m.	

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AMATEUR R. L. NEWS By Alan Burke

The chase for this season's Pennine League Championship honours began yesterday with almost 70 open-age amateur teams from Oldham, Rochdale, Huddersfield, Halifax and Bradford, hoping to win one of the seven divisional awards. This weekend has also seen the opening matches being played in the 1979-80 BARLA Lancashire-Cumbria Cup competition, although this season's tournament has yet to produce any local interest, with Oldham's four entrants, Ferranti, Saddleworth Rangers, Saint Anne's and Waterhead, all having received byes in Round 1.

The County Cup, which like the respective professional competition is sponsored by Forshaw's Burtonwood Brewery, is effectively the qualifying rounds for this season's Rugby League Challenge Cup, as the eventual winners of the amateur tournament will join the thirty senior clubs on their trek to Wembley, as will the victors in the amateur Yorkshire Cup. The second round draw for this season's Lancashire-Cumbria Cup is due to take place this afternoon, and it is hoped to be announced on this evening's "Rugby League Special" programme on BBC Radio Manchester (6.15p.m.).

The local radio station's weekly Amateur Rugby League news programme begins its new season this coming week although with a change of title, time and day. The 15-minute broadcast, re-titled "BARLA Reports", and which will include news of the Pennine League and the North-West Counties League as well as interviews with local personalities, can now be heard every Friday at 6.30p.m.

The British Amateur Rugby League Association have recently decided to bring forward the 1st Round of their Inter-League Youth Cup, which for the first time will be played at Under-19 level, and also to play each round at fortnightly intervals instead of the usual monthly periods. The opening matches will now take place on the weekend of September 29-30, and it is hoped that the competition will be completed prior to the Youth County Championship matches in November. The County Under-19 games are also being played earlier than usual so that the International selectors can view the country's top players in action against each other before they choose the Great Britain side to meet the touring Australian Youth team in January.

The Australians' last tour to this country in 1972 provided them with a clean sweep of all opposition, including the English Schools side who they defeated on three occasions. Since then, however, the formation of BARLA and the upsurge of interest in schools rugby has greatly improved the ability of Britain's young players, and it is certain that the tourists will find their games more of a contest.

A brand new Amateur Rugby League tournament begins next weekend when 32 of the Country's top sides compete for the John Player Sevens Trophy. Each game will kick-off 30 minutes prior to a professional Player's No.6 Trophy match, with Ealing (London) facing National Dock Labour Board (Hull) before the Oldham-Leeds encounter. The Oldham League's representatives, Waterhead, take on Moldgreen (Huddersfield) at The Willows, Salford this Friday (7p.m.).

**FOR ALL THE LOCAL AMATEUR LEAGUE NEWS AND REPORTS
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