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Blue Shorts.

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6. John PATTERSON
7. Paddy KIRWAN
8. Gareth OWEN
9. Ray MARTLAND
10. Billy HARRIS
11. Bob MORDELL
12. Alan PLATT
13. Terry FLANAGAN

- 14.
- 15.

WIDNES

White Jerseys
Black Shorts.

1. Mick BURKE
2. Stuart WRIGHT
3. Mick GEORGE
4. Eddie CUNNINGHAM
5. Keith BENTLEY
6. Eric HUGHES
7. Andrew GREGORY
8. Mick O'NEILL
9. Keith ELWELL
10. Brian LOCKWOOD
11. Les GORLEY
12. Martin SMITH
13. Eric PRESCOTT

14. John MYLER
15. Brian HOGAN

Referee: Mr. Ken Spencer (Warrington)

Touch Judges: Mr. D.M. Russel (Rochdale), Mr. H. McGuire (Whitehaven)

NEXT MATCH AT WATERSHEDDINGS
Sunday 22nd March, 1981 - HALIFAX

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OLDHAM

V

WIDNES

Watersheddings - Tuesday 17th March, 1981.

RUGBY LEAGUE DIVISION 1

25p



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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	£9,100 v Wakefield 24th Feb. 1980.
Record transfer fee paid	£18,500 to Hunslet for Mick Parrish Sept. 1980
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
First game	October 21 1876 v Stalybridge
Highest number of Points Scored	Bernard Ganley 2881
Most Appearances	Joe Ferguson 685
Most Tries	Pre 1900 Jack Hirst 233 Since 1900 Alan Davies 182

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, 1933-24, 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 1979-80
Colts Premiership Trophy:	1979-80

CUP KINGS WIDNES

WIDNES, today's visitors to Watersheddings, have enjoyed a decade of brilliant success under three top coaches -- Vince Karalius, Frank Myler and Doug Laughton.

In cup and league the Chemics were the top team in Rugby League during the super seventies and if they are not quite equalling their former feats this season by their own high standards, that is -- one can rest assured that it won't be long before Widnes are riding high again.

To some extent the men from Naughton Park are having to rebuild and they are passing through that transitional period that all clubs have to go through from time to time.

This follows the transfer of several big names to new club Fulham, led by their former captain and scrum-half general Reg Bowden, who was the first player signed by the Craven Cottage regime way back last summer.

To lose a player of Bowden's calibre would have been a blow to any club but as Widnes prepared to rebuild and reshape a side capable of continuing their success through the eighties David Hull, Mal Aspey and Dave Eckersley all followed their captain's path to London.

The loss through injury of winger Stuart Wright for much of this season was another blow for Laughton but the strength in depth of the Widnes club has again come up trumps, aided and abetted by the signing from Leeds of centre or back-row forward Eddie Cunningham.

Cunningham has slipped into the jersey worn so gloriously over so many years by Aspey, whose stunning dummy and break which set up a try for winger Keith Bentley in last season's Premiership final will be talked about for many years to come.

Despite their many changes of the past few months, Widnes still field a highly talented team with ace goalkicker Mick Burke at full back.

Mick played for the Great Britain under-24s against New Zealand at Fulham a few weeks ago and did enough to warrant promotion to the full Test side when skipper George Fairbairn pulled out through injury.

Young Bentley is one of the finest wing prospects in the game -- he played in the first Test against the Kiwis -- and there is not much wrong with a back line that includes the likes of Mick George, Cunningham and the pacy Eric Hughes. Up front the Chemics also pack a top-class set of forwards with household names in Mick Adams, Steve O'Neill, Keith Elwell and Welshman Glyn Shaw. Despite the loss of so many stars, Widnes will still be a team to be feared when the Challenge Cup ties come around. Last season they had a terrific time, failing by only one point to pip Bradford for the First Divisions title.

The Premiership ultimately went 'to form' with leaders Bradford winning through to the final at the expense of St. Helens, and Leigh and Widnes going through against Hull KR and Leeds

It was appropriate that the top two teams should clash in the final and Widnes produced a magnificent show on a warm afternoon in May to lift the Premiership Trophy.

It was rich revenge for the Lancashire Cup winners who, earlier in the season, had been beaten by Bradford in the final of the John Player Trophy.

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TWO-UP, TWO-DOWN HAS TO COME

By Roger Halstead
(Oldham Evening Chronicle)

THE call be the game's coaches for a change in the promotion and relegation system is but the latest of many shouts for an end to having four clubs up each season and four down. Meeting at Carnegie College, Leeds, for a two-day conference, the coaches of our senior clubs were apparently unanimous in their demands for a system of two up and two down.

Their views will be passed on the the League Council and sooner or later -- sooner, I hope -- moves will be made towards introducing a change.

I believe the big change has to come and will come, but not for the reasons outlined by the coaches.

Their argument was based on a belief that four-up, four-down led to too much safety-first football, the obvious inference being that if only two clubs were to be relegated from the First Division there would be a greater tendency for teams to throw the ball around with gay abandon and produce the sort of football that spectators love to see.

I am not so sure about that. If a team is successful by playing hard, tackling tenaciously, cutting down mistakes to a minimum and grinding down the opposition why is it going to change its tactics because only two sides are going down instead of four?

If it is successful, it will not be involved in the relegation battle, anyway. Take Warrington, the undoubted team of the season this year.

One cannot help but admire their professionalism, their terrific tackling, their insistence on doing the basics correctly. But, in truth, there is not a great deal of flair about their method. If you want fast-flowing, crowd-pleasing football, do you watch Warrington, or do you watch Leeds? Most people would opt for Leeds.

On the other hand Leeds are not half as successful this season as the Wires, who top the First Division, were in the last eight of the cup on Sunday, and already have two trophies on the shelf.

I don't think legislation can produce good football. Certain measures might help but in the final analysis it gets back to coaching, coaching attitudes and the particular requirements of a club committee or board of directors.

Just at present there is a tremendous concentration within our game on tackling and defensive work. One has only to watch a professional League game and then compare the tackling to that in a Union international, for instance, and the difference stands out a mile.

It naturally follows, of course, that there is a greater likelihood of open rugby, exciting breaks, the selling of dummies and so on in the attack-minded Union code than in the defensive-minded League game.

I suppose it is all about striking the right balance. No one in League wants to see paper-thin defences. But it would be nice to see a few teams capable and willing to throw the ball around more than they do.

Defences, generally, are so much on top in two-division football, which pits the strong against the strong and the weak with the weak, that coaches will really have to revise their own ideas rather than look to league legislation to alter the trends.

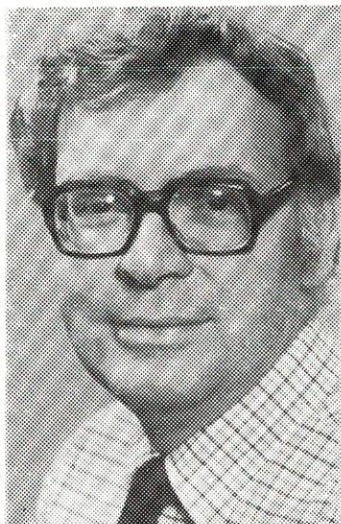
If the truth were known I don't believe there is a lot of REAL coaching goes on in League and I am absolutely convinced that there is insufficient emphasis on fitness.

Individual skills are one thing -- team skills can only be produced effectively and consistently if the players are fit and sufficiently well organised to know what is expected of them.

Progress in our game continues to be held up by old-fashioned thinking.

How many teams, for instance, perform the pre-match warm-up as introduced at Watersheddings by Graham Starkey.

It must be good sense to start a match after a light work-out instead of emerging directly from a cramped dressing room.



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TOM WEBB'S HISTORY OF WIDNES RLFC

In 1873 a few interested young men formed the Farnworth and Appleton Football Club. In those days "football" was the usual name for rugby clubs as well as association clubs.

Two years later the team moved headquarters to Simms Cross and changed its name to become Widnes Football club. Another move two years later to Mill Brow saw the club with its first boarded enclosure.

Johnny Briggs the famous Lancashire cricketer played full back for the club until a broken arm in a match with Sale ended his rugby career. Another well known figure joined the club in 1881, J.H. Smith. He played until 1891, was captain for three seasons and secretary for at least another six seasons. Later he took up refereeing and handled the second Challenge Cup final. He later became a legislator and was president of the Northern Union.

In 1884 the club moved its headquarters to Lowerhouse Lane and three years later changed its colours from chocolate and sky blue to the now famous black and white. When the Northern Rugby Football Union was formed in 1895, Widnes were among the 22 clubs which broke away from the Northern Union. When the first touring team from this country visited Australia in 1910, no Widnesians were selected but in the next tour which took place in 1914, Albert "Chick" Johnson and Jack O'Garra, a forward and standoff respectively went on tour, "Chick" scoring a try in the third test when we won the Ashes.

Many great names have worn the black and white jerseys. The Aspey brothers, grandfather and great uncle of Mal Aspey were active at the turn of the century. Later the Higgins brothers and the Hoey brothers were among the stars, Jimmy being the first player on record to score in every match for his club in a season. In 1930 the second Challenge Cup final was played at Wembley, the contestants being St. Helens, the crack team of the year and Widnes, composed of twelve local lads and one South African. Against all the odds, the Chemics won the trophy. The team had cost the club less than £100 but they beat "the team of all talents".

Some well know administrators have been associated with the club. In my time Frank Devonald, Bill Johnson, Harry Ditchfield, Tom Smith and Harry Greenwood have all successfully led the club. Coaches have included Paddy Lyons, Tommy McCue, Tommy Shannon, Jack Broome, Joe Egan and Vin Karalius with Doug Laughton being in charge at present.

In recent years the Chemics have had more successes than any other club which is no wonder when we note some of their outstanding players such as George Nicholls, Reg Bowden, Ray Dutton, Keith Elwell, Dave Eckersley, Mick George, Eric Hughes, Jim Mills, Stuart Wright, Glyn Shaw and some most promising up and coming young players.

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NEWS FROM THE RUGBY LEAGUE

There is Standing Room only for the 1981 Final. Standing Tickets, priced only £3.00, are now available from every professional club or by post from:

The Rugby Football League
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MARCH 'OPEN RUGBY'

Rugby League's only magazine 'OPEN RUGBY' should not be missed by anyone interested in the game. The March edition, now available, continues 'Open Rugby's' reputation for providing the very best in Rugby League action photography.

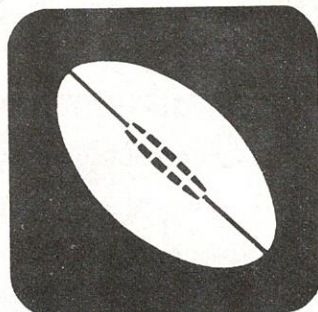
There are features on Leigh's John Woods, Barrow's Ian Ball, York's John Crossley, and Whitehaven's Brian Rose. This month's 'Open Rugby' interview is with Tommy Bishop.

There's an in-depth look at what amateur RL players can achieve today, plus many more features from all around the Rugby League world. Order 'OPEN RUGBY' this month, and every month, from your newsagent. To obtain by post, send 65 pence to:

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GEOFF MUNRO BENEFIT

Oldham fans are reminded that the popular Sunday Mirror Rugby League - 'Geoff Munro Benefit' Roadshow is to be staged in Oldham on Wednesday, 25th March, in aid of the Geoff Munro Benefit. The venue is the Queen Elizabeth Hall and the evening starts at 7.30 p.m. when Oldham stars of today and yesterday will be on parade. Tickets are now on sale priced £1.50 or admission can be gained on the evening.

A reminder of the details. Sunday Mirror Rugby League Roadshow at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on Wednesday, 25th March, from 7.30 p.m.

HESFORD IS ON TARGET

STEVE HESFORD and Warrington have done it! Steve, Rugby League's "Goldon Boot", whose accurate right foot has kicked many important points this successful season, is the Daily Express Hepworths tailoring February Player of the Month. And that means Warrington have added another record to their already impressive list - that of being first club to supply, in succession, too, three Players of the Month.

Skipper Ken Kelly led the way in December, then came ace forward Tommy Martyn, and I am surprised sure-shot Hesford has had to wait so long for the Express Hepworth accolade, Steve was also!

He admitted quite freely he thought he had a chance for the award. "I've had enough plugging with all the headlines. We've done so well recently that I felt that if I didn't get it last month, I would, this", he told me.

"Now I'll be able to buy a new donkey-jacket", cracked bricklayer Hesford, when I reminded him that a cheque for £100 and £100-worth of classy Hepworths' clothing go with the Express silver salver.

Soccer, in particularly goal-keeping, was Steve's first love - not surprising considering his father was the Huddersfield Town goalie of the Thirties, Bob Hesford.

Then about five seasons ago he was given a trial at Warrington, signed, started off in the first team, and has never looked back.

"It was just natural", said 26-year-old Steve, "I kicked at school and I kicked at Fleetwood, and somehow goalkeeping and kicking seem to go together.

For the last four seasons Hesford has not been out of the top four in the League's goal-kickers' list. Currently he is leading this term's race with 113-17 in front of his nearest challenger.

Three Fives Challenge



The Rugby League Three Fives Challenge Cup

1981 FINAL

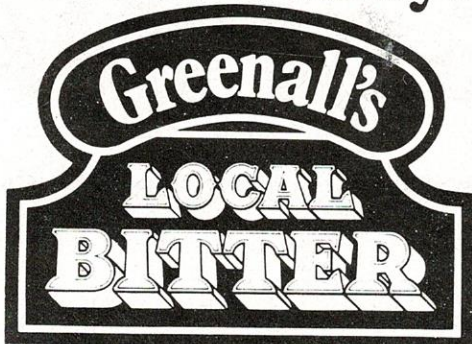
Saturday 2nd May, Wembley, Kick-off 3 p.m.

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ALEX RULES O.K.

By Alex Givvons
(RL Grade 1 Referee)

THE ADVANTAGE LAW:-

The referee will signal by a wave of the arms, chest high, palms away from chest, across the front of the body.

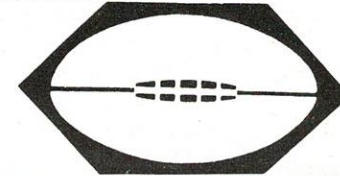
The referee can contribute to the game by good use of the advantage law, without making the game untidy. It is a particular problem on heavy and wet grounds.

The advantage law applies to all phases of play, the referee is the sole judge, i.e. offside at the play-the-ball, knock-on, territorial or tactical, if a penalty kick would be of greater value.

An infringement is not "neutralised" simply because the ball comes into contact with an opponent. He must have the opportunity to gain an advantage and also exploit that opportunity, or endeavour to, before play is allowed to proceed.

The referee will indicate instantly he decides to allow advantage, until then he is allowed to recall play.

No two situations are the same.



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COLTS LEAGUE TABLE UP TO AND INCLUDING 7.3.81

	P	W	L	D	Goals	Trs.	Pts.	Goals	Trs.	Pts.	PTS		
Hull	22	20	2	-	4	128	181	803	1	43	22	153	40
OLDHAM	21	19	2	-	1	101	142	629	3	34	321	167	38
Castleford	22	15	6	1	3	92	128	571	3	33	33	232	31
Hull K.R.	18	14	4	-	-	68	100	436	1	44	36	197	28
St. Helens	21	14	7	-	3	64	75	356	5	53	59	288	28
Featherstone R.	22	13	9	-	7	96	83	488	3	74	70	361	26
Bramley	19	11	8	-	2	73	71	361	2	58	71	331	22
Bradford N.	23	11	12	-	1	76	80	393	4	73	88	414	22
Leeds	20	10	9	1	1	83	116	515	1	64	75	354	21
Hunslet	20	10	9	1	-	52	71	317	4	64	70	342	21
Leigh	19	6	11	2	2	77	57	327	4	63	69	337	14
Wakefield T.	18	5	12	1	-	51	79	339	3	54	71	324	11
Rochdale H.	17	4	13	-	5	55	69	322	2	64	98	424	8
Salford	18	3	15	-	4	35	40	194	3	69	93	420	6
Halifax	21	3	18	-	6	52	41	233	1	108	148	661	6
Widnes	21	-	21	-	1	11	10	53	-	184	308	1292	0



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SUPPORTERS CLUB NOTES

Anyone wishing to become a member of the Supporters Club may do so at any Canteen or in the Social Club. **Price:** £1.00 (including a Diary)

Forthcoming events in our Social Club, run by the Supporters Club.

An Easter Bonnet Parade - on Saturday 18th April, 1981. Admission Adults £1.00, Children 60p. 8 p.m. - 12 Midnight (including supper)

The Player of The Year Dance on Friday 24th April, 1981. Cabaret & Disco By Vic Preston. Admission £1.00 8 p.m. - 12 Midnight.

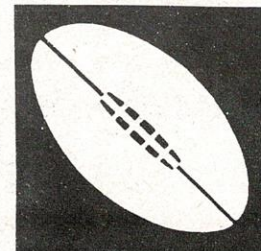
Annual Pram Race on Monday 25th May, 1981. To leave the Social Club at 7 p.m. Followed by a Disco & Presentation from 9 p.m - 12 midnight Admission 50p.

Lancashire Federation of Rugby League Supporters Club Annual Player of the Year Awards and Rugby League Queen Competition. In our Social Club on Friday May 29th, 1981 8 p.m. - 1 a.m. Cabaret & Dancing. Tickets £1.00 each. From any Supporters Club Committee Member.
(A number of Star Player's in attendance)

Wembley Draw on Tuesday 21st April, 1981 - Draw at 9 p.m. Potato Pie Supper **Free to all Supporters Club Members.** Small charge to non-members. Buy your Draw Tickets in our Canteens today or in the Social Club.
Prizes: Cup Winners £25.00 Runners up £10.00 Losing semi-finalists £2.50 All other teams £1.00 **Tickets** 50p per book.

The Trumanns Man of Steel to be held at the **Golden Garter** on Wednesday 13th May, 1981. Tickets may be ordered from any Canteens or the Social Club.

Metal Supporters Club Badges are on sale at **60p**, **Blazer Badges £7.50** each. **Oldham R.L.F.C. Sweaters** sizes are 34, 36, 38, 40 in red, these are priced at **£10** each. **Red & White Rugby Shirts** sizes 30,32 **£6.50** each, 34,36 **£8.75** 40,42 **£10.35**. **Red & White Scarves** at **£1.75**. **Bobhats £1.25** each. **Colts Car Stickers 45p** each. All items can be bought from any canteen or in the Social Club at any time.



The cup winner.



Slalom Lager

Brewed by Matthew Brown



JIMMY 'TACKLER' THOMPSON CALLS IT A DAY!

Jimmy Thompson's decision to call it a day at the end of this season sees another fine member of our last Ashes winning side leave the playing scene.

Brian Batty
Daily Mail

DAY!

Thompson has been one of the game's top forwards for more than a decade, battling courageously in recent years to overcome injury troubles with plenty of character and determination.

It seems an eternity since he made his mark at Wembley in the second row of that fine Featherstone Rovers Cup winning side against Barrow in the 1967 final.

I was fortunate enough to see Thompson develop into a Test forward three years later on the successful tour of Australia and New Zealand.



'Tackler' as he became nicknamed by the respectful Aussies, had left England eager to learn the ropes but he quickly forced his way into the Test side to stay. He returned home a giant in playing terms having gone out a mere stripling but tragically ran into a crippling knee injury that threatened to wreck his fast ripening career.

But he eventually underwent an operation on the shattered knee and after almost two seasons out of the game gradually won his fight to remain in top class football.

There was no doubt that his loss of pace - a legacy of his injury - was a handicap but when Peter Fox took him from Featherstone to Bradford Northern to renew their partnership it was like the start of a second career.

Coach Fox had had Jim under his wing at Post Office Road long enough to visualise the new role he could play as a skipper and in the front row of the pack at Odsal.

It proved a shrewd move - Bradford will never get a better deal - for soon Thompson was heading for fresh honours and was back on the international front.

Since they teamed up again Bradford have won the Premiership trophy, the Yorkshire Cup, the John Player trophy and the First Division championship.

Fox had set his heart on taking Bradford to Wembley this season but that dream was to live no longer than the first round and so the chance for Jim to bow out in style was lost.

There is still the Premiership to aim for and so Bradford have an extra spur to give Jim a fine send off and I am sure he will be in there battling for a final honour.

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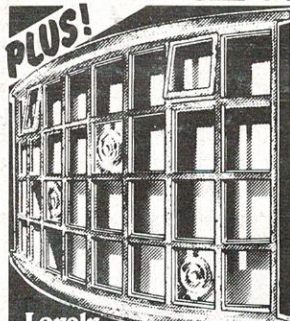
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FIRST TEAM FIXTURES 1980/81

Date	Opponent	F. A.
H Aug. 3 Sun.	Rochdale (Charity Match)	32 - 15
A Aug. 10 Sun.	St. Helens (Friendly)	12 - 30
A Aug. 17 Sun.	Swinton (County Cup)	11 - 5
A Aug. 24 Sun.	County Cup 2nd Round	15 - 13
H Aug. 31 Sun.	Castleford	14 - 14
A Sept. 7 Sun.	Bradford	10 - 21
H Sept. 14 Sun.	Featherstone	11 - 16
A Sept. 21 Sun.	Hull	14 - 16
A Sept. 28 Sun.	Leeds	15 - 12
H Oct. 5 Sun.	Leigh	15 - 12
A Oct. 12 Sun.		
A Oct. 19 Sun.	Widnes	18 - 28
H Oct. 26 Sun.	Workington	18 - 10
A Nov. 2 Sun.		
A Nov. 9 Sun.	Featherstone	10 - 31
H Nov. 16 Sun.	Bradford	9 - 2
A Nov. 19 Wed.	Salford	22 - 7
A Nov. 23 Sun.	John Player York	9 - 11
A Nov. 30 Sun.	Wakefield	15 - 24
H Dec. 7 Sun.	Workington	4 - 25
H Dec. 14 Sun.	Widnes	9 - 27
H Dec. 21 Sun.	Hull K.R.	10 - 11
A Dec. 26 Fri.	St. Helens	2 - 1
Boxing Day		
H Dec. 28 Sun.	Hull	2 - 30
A Jan. 1 Thurs.	Warrington	11 - 27
A Jan. 4 Sun.	Barrow	
H Jan. 11 Sun.	Leeds	19 - 12
A Jan. 18 Sun.	Castleford	20 - 11
A Jan. 25 Sun.		8 - 15
H Feb. 1 Sun.	Barrow	13 - 10
A Feb. 8 Sun.	Halifax	11 - 2
H Feb. 15 Sun.	Challenge Cup Blackpool	
A Feb. 22 Sun.	Hull K.R.	
H Mar. 1 Sun.	Challenge Cup 2nd Round	
A Mar. 8 Sun.	Warrington	
H Mar. 15 Sun.		
A Mar. 22 Sun.	Halifax	
H Mar. 29 Sun.	Leigh	
A Apr. 5 Sun.	Wakefield	
H Apr. 12 Sun.		
H Apr. 17 Fri.	St. Helens	
Good Friday		
H Apr. 20 Mon.	Salford	
Easter Monday		

'A' TEAM FIXTURES 1980/81

Date	Opponent	F. A.
H Aug. 7 Thurs.	Higginshaw (Friendly)	26 - 2
H Aug. 14 Thurs.	Saddleworth Rangers	P
A Sept. 3 Wed.	Salford	6 - 13
A Sept. 9 Fri.	Warrington L.C.C.S.	2 - 8
H Sept. 18 Thurs.	Swinton	27 - 23
A Sept. 25 Thurs.	St. Helens	6 - 15
H Oct. 2 Thurs.	Leigh	10 - 23
H Oct. 9 Thurs.	Rochdale Hornets	16 - 13
H Oct. 16 Thurs.	Widnes	12 - 11
A Oct. 18 Sat.	Whitehaven	18 - 10
A Oct. 25 Sat.	Workington	20 - 14
H Oct. 30 Thurs.	Wigan	15 - 29
A Nov. 8 Sat.	Blackpool	7 - 8
A Nov. 14 Fri.		
H Nov. 20 Thurs.	Salford	P
A Nov. 27 Thurs.	Swinton	16 - 11
H Dec. 4 Thurs.	Wigan	14 - 13
A Dec. 11 Thurs.	Widnes	18 - 7
H Jan. 3 Sat.	Barrow	10 - 8
A Jan. 9 Fri.	St. Helens	5 - 16
H Jan. 17 Sat.	Whitehaven	7 - 0
A Jan. 31 Sat.	Barrow	21 - 3
H Feb. 5 Thurs.	Warrington	8 - 14
H Feb. 19 Thurs.	Blackpool	11 - 0
A Mar. 6 Fri.	Warrington	
H Mar. 14 Sat.	Workington	
A Mar. 19 Thurs.	Rochdale	
H Mar. 26 Thurs.	Leigh	

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LOCAL INTERNATIONAL HONOUR

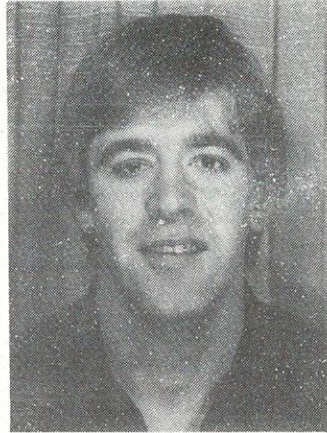
Alan Burke
Public Relations Officer,
Oldham Amateur Rugby League.

Mark Rowbottom, the 17 year old Saddleworth Rangers prop or second-row forward, has become the latest Oldham Amateur League player to receive international recognition by being selected to play for the Great Britain youth team against France in April. Following consistently good performances throughout the season for Saddleworth, the Oldham town-team, and Lancashire, Mark will now represent his country in the front-row of the scrum against the French at Central Park, Wigan, on Sunday April, 12. Just five days later, on Good Friday morning at Watersheddings, he will again be involved in top action, helping the Saddleworth open-age side in their Standard Cup Final appearance against Waterhead, while he will also be involved in the BARLA Inter-League under-19s decider later in the season, when Oldham and Warrington meet in the final.

The Oldham youth town-team won through to that final last week when they gained an 11 points to 5 home win over Saint Helens, having previously defeated Wigan by the same score in the quarter-finals, and West Cumberland in Round One 19-10. Warrington, the current holders of the trophy, also gained their Cup Final place last week with a narrow 18-17 away success at Leeds, and will have home advantage in the final against Oldham, on a date yet to be decided. The Oldham under-19s side, coached by former Watersheddings player Ray Clark, will be making their first appearance in the Inter-League Final, while the Oldham open-age side are also hoping to gain a similar honour. Having drawn 7-7 at home to the Allerdale League of Cumbria in their semi-final, the Oldham senior team now face a trip to Maryport this coming Saturday for the replay, with the winners then facing Leeds in the final. The Yorkshire side disposed of the current trophy holders, Humberside, by 19 points to 3 in their semi-final, and have also been given ground advantage for the decider. One thing that is certain is that a new name will appear on the open-age trophy this season. Since the formation of BARLA in 1973, neither Allerdale, Leeds or Oldham have won the trophy, although Leeds have appeared in one previous final, when they were runners-up to Hull in 1975.

Despite the open-age having reached the Inter-League semi-final stage, the Oldham League do not have a single representative in the Great Britain team to visit France on Saturday, April 11, and with only Saint Anne's County scrum-half Dave Grimbley having been named among the reserves. The Oldham League were also astonished at the omission from the youth side of their under-19s scrum-half Gary Ainsworth of Saddleworth, who gave two very workmanlike displays for Lancashire in the recent BARLA County Championships, but who is not even named anywhere in the squad.

Following the two International matches, the British Amateur Rugby League Association will choose their Players of the Year at both open-age and under-19 levels. This season the awards are being sponsored for the first time ever, with 'Adidas', the renowned sportswear company having announced their first involvement with Amateur Rugby League. The respective winners will each receive a full set of rugby kit from the company, including boots, bags, and tracksuits. This coming Sunday the Oldham under-17s town-team will be in action in the Second Round of their Inter-League competition. Having defeated Leigh away from home in Round One by 45 points to 7, Oldham now visit Widnes.



FOR ALL THE LOCAL AMATEUR RUGBY LEAGUE NEWS:
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