

36 OLDHAM Team Check 8 FULHAM

Steve Robinson	1	MICK BURKE	1	GEORGE LAWRIE	<i>Guyott</i>
(A. N. OTHER)	2	DES FOY	2	RUSS BRIDGE	<i>Ferguson</i>
BRYAN MCCARTHY	3	KEVIN MEADOWS	3	HUW REES	<i>Bridge</i>
PETER WALSH	4	PADDY KIRWAN	4	DAVE GILLAN	
IAN SANDERSON	5	NEIL CLAWSON	5	ADRIAN CAMBRIAN	<i>Bibby</i>
HUGH WADDELL	6	PAUL ROUND	6	STEVE GUYETT	<i>Rees</i>
COLIN HAWKYARD	7	MAL GRAHAM	7	KEIRON MURPHY	
IAN BATES	8	TERRY FLANAGAN	8	MICK HUTCHINSON	
	9		9	CRAIG TAYLOR	
	10		10	CRAIG MILLER	
	11		11	NEIL GRIMOLDBI	
	12		12	KEVIN MANNING	<i>Fenn</i>
	13		13	PAUL O'RILEY	
	14		14	COLIN FENN	<i>Trialist</i>
	15		15	SHANE KELLY	

Referee: D.J. Carter (Widnes) Touch Judges: J.S. Welsh (Orange) K.M. Morris (Red)

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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 points
v Liverpool City, April, 1959

First Game: 21st October, 1876 v Stalybridge

Highest number of points scored:
Bernard Ganley, 2,881

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Since 1900, Alan Davies, 182

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1957-58, 1958-59

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1954-55, 1966-67, 1968-69, 1986-87

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PLAYERS PROFILE

Paul Round



PLAYER PROFILE NO. 3

Full Name: Paul Round
Nick Name: Roundy
Birthdate: 24.9.63
Birthplace: St. Helens
Married Status: Single
Occupation: Miner
Car: Cortina
Fav. TV Show: Hill St. Blues
Fav. Film: One Flew Over
The Cuckoo's Nest
Fav. Music: All
Fav. Food/
Drink: Spaghetti, Casseroles
Fav. Reading: Rugby Leaguer,
newspapers
Hobbies: Music
Fav. other
Sports: Boxing, athletics
Likes about
Game: Physical aspect,
social side
Dislikes about
Game: Bad referees
Superstitions: None
Fav. Ground: Wembley
Fav. position: Second-row
Best Moment: Scoring try at
Wembley
Worst Moment: Not picked for '85
Premiership
Hardest player
to tackle: All small players
Hardest tackler: Don't like saying
Fav. all-time
Player: George Nicholls

CAREER WITH OLDHAM

Date signed on: August 20, 1987
Debut: v Whitehaven (A) -
Div 2 30.8.87
Appearances: 10
Tries: 6
Goals: 0
Drop goals: 0
Total points: 24

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 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS SILVER MEDAL. Slalom D – for bottled lager.
 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom International Strong Lager – for bottled lager.
 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom D – for bottled lager.
 1983 B.B.I. AWARDS DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE. Slalom Lager – for packaging and bottle dress.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID. Gold Medal with Palm Leaves and Certificate.
 Slalom International – for bottled lager.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID Gold Medal and Certificate.
 Slalom D – for bottled lager.
 1984 MONDE SELECTION MADRID Gold Medal and Certificate.
 Slalom Lager – for bottled lager.

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1971/72	9,500		5,000	Halifax	Wakefield	22-11	Bradford	7,975
1972/73	16,100		5,000	Leeds	Salford	12-7	Huddsfd.	10,102
1973/74	16,100		5,000	Warrington	Rochdale	27-16	Wigan	9,347
1974/75	16,100		5,000	Bradford N.	Widnes	3-2	Warrington	5,935
1975/76	22,800		6,000	Widnes	Hull	19-13	Leeds	9,035
1976/77	25,600		6,000	Castleford	Blackpool	25-15	Salford	4,512
1977/78	30,000		8,000	Warrington	Widnes	9-4	St. Helens	10,258
1978/79	33,000		8,000	Widnes	Warrington	16-4	St. Helens	10,743
1979/80	35,600		8,500	Bradford N.	Widnes	6-0	Leeds	9,909
1980/81	36,500	3,500	8,500	Warrington	Barrow	12-5	Wigan	12,820
1981/82	43,000	7,000	9,000	Hull	Hull K.R.	12-4	Leeds	25,245
1982/83	44,500	10,500	10,000	Wigan	Leeds	15-4	Elland Rd. Leeds	19,553
1983/84	45,900	14,100	10,000	Leeds	Widnes	18-10	Wigan	9,510
1984/85	55,000	20,000	10,000	Hull K.R.	Hull	12-0	Boothferry Park, Hull	25,350
1985/86	57,000	23,000	11,000	Wigan	Hull K.R.	11-8	Elland Rd. Leeds	17,500
1986/87	58,800	26,200	12,000	Wigan	Warrington	18-4	Burnden Park Bolton	21,144

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As a result of preliminary-round ties already played, Featherstone Rovers, Swinton and York are through to the first round, to be joined by the winners of today's preliminary-round clash between Oldham and Fulham.

The first round will start on Friday evening, 13 November, when Springfield Borough play Barrow and the following day the match of the round, St. Helens v Widnes will be screened on BBC Grandstand after a 2.15 pm kick-off.

The other matches will be played on Sunday, November 15 as follows: Batley v Hunslet; Carlisle v Warrington; Dewsbury v Doncaster; Featherstone v Castleford; Swinton v Salford; Hull v Workington; Hull KR v Rochdale; Keighley v Halifax; Leigh v Huddersfield; Oldham or Fulham v Bradford; Runcorn v Mansfield; Wakefield v York; Whitehaven v Leeds; Wigan v Sheffield.

After the first round, the draws will be made through the BBC local radio network covering the second, third and semi-final rounds. The draw ceremonies will be staged at the studios of BBC Radio Leeds at 7.50 am and transmitted to other local radio stations throughout the north.

They will take place on Monday, November 16 (second round), Monday, November 23 (third round) and Monday, November 30 (semi-finals).

The draw panel will comprise Bob Ashby, chairman of the Rugby Football League David Oxley, Secretary General of the League, and a representative of Imperial Tobacco Limited.



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'WATERSHEDDINGS SCENE'

(News and views from inside the club)

MICK BURKE

IT is with great pleasure that we can officially confirm the signing of Mick Burke on a three-year contract. Mick has been in terrific form lately and after talks with the board and coach Eric Fitzsimons, he has come off the transfer-list and has signed a three-year deal.

Mick produced, against Barrow, the form that earned him Great Britain caps, the Lance Todd Trophy and the Harry Sunderland award and he said afterwards: "Our defeat at Barrow last season had a lot to do with our relegation. It was a challenge to beat them this time, "...the sort of attitude the club will be looking for from Mick as he completes his distinguished career here at Watersheddings.

HUGH WADDELL

Hugh Waddell, our popular prop who won the man-of-the-match award in our last home game against Barrow, has also signed a contract to stay — for two years. Hugh's powerful displays in the front-row have been catching the eyes of supporters, who will be pleased to know that the former Blackpool man is staying.

NINE LISTED

The club captured some column inches in the national press when it announced the listing of nine players. Eric Fitzsimons has something to say on this issue in his column elsewhere in this programme, but for the record the players listed, with fees, are as follows:

Paul Lowndes (£15,000), Mick Bardsley (£5,000), Chris Chisnall (£5,000), John Ogburn (£5,000), Paul Sherman (£15,000), Jeff Edwards (£12,000), Tony Morrison (£15,000), Phil Morris (£3,000), Chris Myler (£5,000).

Tony Morrison was heard to remark later that his intention was to show 'em'. Well done, Tony, that's just the sort of attitude the coaches will be looking for.

CAN YOU HELP?

Mr. D.J. Power of 32, Warley Road, Halifax, Yorkshire, HX1 3SU, requires two Oldham programmes to complete a remarkable collection going back to 1946. They are Oldham v Australia (Dec 4, 1948) and Oldham v New Zealand (October 25, 1947). He promises a 'handsome reward' to anyone who can oblige. He is also seeking information about two former Oldham players, namely J.B. Mahoney and T. Ayres. Please contact him direct or through the rugby club office.

Another supporter, Mr. David Livsey, of 8, Brendan Hills, Royton, (633-5219), is looking for written or photographic material about the club during the fabulous fifties era. He would particularly like to hear from anyone who can provide him with newspaper cuttings from that era, the club's souvenir brochure to celebrate the centenary in 1976, Supporters' Club Yearbooks from the 1950s, or a copy of the Oldham Chronicle's four-page centenary supplement, dated Tuesday, October 26, 1976.

An anonymous fan who has been a supporter for 60 years wants to know if juniors can be allowed into matches for £1. The answer is 'yes' — if they join the Junior Roughyeds for an annual fee of £1. Membership provides free 'A' team admission and a 50p reduction on first team games, thus producing the £1 admission which our friendly pensioner is looking for so that he can bring his grandchildren.

LEAGUE APPEAL

The Rugby League has launched an appeal for memorabilia to be featured in the Whitbread Trophy Bitter 'Hall of Fame' to be opened in October, 1988.

The League is searching for historical souvenirs of the 13-a-side code including jerseys, photographs, trophies, medals, caps and paintings.

Members of the public who feel they have items which may be of interest are asked to notify the Public Relations Department at RL headquarters, but they should NOT send items by post.

FLASHBACK

DO YOU REMEMBER?

A regular feature in which we delve into the photographic files of the Oldham Evening Chronicle. This week: Golden Oldies!



1. No safety problems here, Oldham v Wigan at Watersheddings in 1958. What a lovely crowd!



3. 18.5.57. Four cups in one season. Left to right: John Etty, Frank Stirrup (Championship), Bernard Ganley (Lancashire League), Alan Davies (Lancashire Cup), Charlie Winslade (Law Cup).

MATCH REPORT

STONES BITTER CHAMPIONSHIP/DIVISION 2

OLDHAM v BARROW

OUR best crowd of the season so far — 3,925 — went home delighted after we had given title rivals Barrow a six-try drubbing.

Although we only led 14-8 at half-time on a beautiful autumn day, it was soon apparent that Barrow were inferior in most aspects of play.

The Oldham tackling was good, New Zealand referee Bill Shrimpton did a first-class job, and our forwards subdued Rod Reddy and Co to lay down the foundation from which Peter Walsh, Mick Burke and Des Foy all scored tries. Ian Sanderson also scored while Hugh Waddell, the man of the match, went in twice to crown a terrific performance of strong running and foraging.

Walsh landed six beautiful goals with his straight-on style to complete a performance that augurs well for the future.

KEIGHLEY v OLDHAM

AFTER losing in the last minute at Doncaster, we knew what Keighley felt like at Lawkholme Lane last Sunday. The home side was in the lead 10-8 until 40 seconds from the end when Bryan McCarthy got over in the corner after some slick passing by Terry Flanagan and Mick Burke.

Oldham could have had a couple of tries early on, but Keighley's line remained intact, whereupon Oldham started a bad patch in which they conceded a lot of penalties and lost a lot of possession.

It was 2-2 at half-time and Keighley, with the slope in their favour during the second period, scored a fine try by loose-forward Mark Ragan, an Oldham school teacher. Keith Dixon added the goal, Paul Moses tacked on a drop goal and at 2-9 down Oldham were in trouble.

There was only ten minutes left when Paul Round set up a try for Peter Walsh, who also added the easy goal. A Carl Hirst drop goal kept Keighley buzzing until the dying seconds when Oldham, somewhat fortunately, it must be said, crossed for the winning try to the delight of another massive red-and-white following.

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CORKY'S COMMENTS ...

Iain McCorquodale – on the local scene.

THE spotlight this week drops on the local amateurs who, at open-age level, had a cracking inter-town fixture against Rochdale at Saddleworth in the second-round of the BARLA inter-league tournament.

Ray Hick's open-age side had a fine 42-15 win over their near rivals from the other side of Summit hill and now progress to round three.

The Oldham side was: Andy Bloor (St. Anne's); Steve Robinson (Saddleworth), Bryn Parfitt (Saddleworth), Paul Garnett (St. Anne's), Raoul Burke (Salem Hornets); Graham Robinson (Shaw), David Johns (Salem Hornets); Peter Byrne (Waterhead), Brian Smith, (St. Anne's), Duncan Maders (Saddleworth), Phil Cunliffe (Saddleworth), Jack Henthorn (Salem Hornets), Mick Swift (St. Anne's). Subs: Ian Burgess (Shaw), Gary Cunliffe (Saddleworth).

Stand-off Robinson had a magnificent game, scoring 22 points and helping to create tries for his colleagues with shrewd handling. Henthorn (2), Bloor, Garnett, and Burke scored the others as Oldham's superior handling and organisation brought its just reward.

A report on the town team under-19 match against Humberside will appear in the next programme.

At half-time in today's match, two officials of the local amateur league, Jack Roscoe and Ronnie Hardaker will present a cheque for £1,000 towards the under-13 schoolboys tour to Australia in June, 1988. This splendid total was raised by a raffle at the presentation night, proceeds from the Bernard Flanagan Memorial game, and from league funds.

Thanks are extended to those who helped to organise a sportsmen's dinner at the Waterhead club where speakers Terry Flanagan (Oldham club captain) and Ray Hicks (ex-Oldham player and now coach with Saddleworth Rangers, West of Pennines under-19s and Lancashire open-age) gave speeches containing many hilarious incidents about many of the local celebrities present.

Both refused to accept payment or expenses and I'm sure every other town must be jealous of the close co-operation between amateurs, professionals and schools which is now so much in evidence in Oldham.

Special thanks to Neil Wildbore, whose donation of a colour TV raised over £400, Stuart Taylor, Jimmy Green, Jeff Eastwood, Jeff Badby, Brian Carruthers, Jeff Bell and finally Roger Halstead, whose selection of an international side, from a list of 30 players, coincided with Terry Flanagan's, and who immediately returned his cash prize to the fund. Incidentally, the team was:

Lydon; Clark, Schofield, Hanley, Gill, Edwards, Gregory; Ward, Kiss, Crooks, Goodway, Medley, Arkwright, with Oldham's John Watkins a late selection as kit man.

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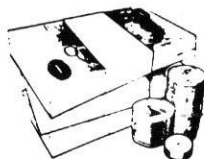
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THE BOSS TALKING...

(A personal view by Oldham coach Eric Fitzsimons)

One of the most consistent performers this season has been Colin Hawkyard. He has played with great enthusiasm at both centre and back—row forward. He has not missed a game and he has missed only one training session since I arrived and that was on the day of the birth of his second son, Joel.



Colin is a professional in every sense of the word and it was a pleasure to see him earn an award from the chairman last week for his efforts.

The 'A' team is going through a transitional period. Sadly, several players have been transfer-listed. New players must be brought in to replace the old and the emphasis on reserve team results must be played down until we have the right balance of young talent to work with the experienced players who have immediate first team potential.

The 'A' team has been associated with failure by many players for many years at Oldham. There is a certain sense of indignity and shame in their minds at having to play in the reserve team. It should not be seen as a graveyard. Many will play there this season for different reasons — learning, recovering playing form, or recovering from injury, for example.

This is the most crucial area in the long-term development of this club and we will remove anyone who threatens its purpose. Senior players are expected to show good attitude and commitment when they are in the reserve team.

Several of the local 13, 14 and 15-year-olds reading this programme today will be approached by this club when they are of age and we want to ensure by then that the club has the best learning environment not just in this country, but in the world, for youngsters coming into the professional game.

We want to put the Oldham club where it belongs. It is already happening to the town of Oldham at schoolboy and junior levels. The demonstration at Liverpool and lately at Central Park by the Oldham boys under Iain, underlines what our local talent is capable of.

Take a trip on Sunday mornings to watch any of the local sides, particularly St. Anne's under-19s, Higginshaw under-17s, Saddleworth under-14s and under-15s, Oldham Junior under-11s and under-13s and Royton Tigers under-9s and you will see teams who are playing superb rugby this season.

Oldham has waited many years for local talent to be given its chance. We don't expect to sign it all. The parents and the boy have the field to play and there is no doubt that we may make the occasional misjudgment. That is one of the problems of signing under-developed talent. It can go either way. Over half the team that featured Terry Flanagan, Paddy Kirwan, Mick Worrall and Andy Goodway failed to 'make it'.

In deciding who we wish to sign, the over-riding factor of all — above strength, speed, stamina, and skill — will be ATTITUDE. Young players of dubious attitude, no matter how talented, will not be approached by this club. Honesty, trust, reliability, pride, perseverance and the ability to learn will form the basic bottom line.

Weaknesses in one or more of these qualities will force a wrong reaction at some stage and usually when the team least needs it.

Have patience in the coming months. There will be no panic signings. There will be a detailed assessment of each new candidate and, most important of all from our point of view, we will only have players here who want to play for Oldham.

Anything less is not good enough!

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THE ENTERTAINER ... THAT'S HUGHIE!

OLDHAM prop Hugh Waddell is one of four players in the running for the Sunday Mirror - Wallace Arnold Entertainer of the Month award. The others are Paul Medley (Leeds), Martin Offiah (Widnes) and Brendan Hill (Bradford).

The winning player each month wins a £250 holiday voucher and the winning fan receives a holiday voucher for £150 from Wallace Arnold.

To enter send the name of your chosen player, add your name and address and phone number (if possible) and send it to Entertainer of the Month, Sunday Mirror, Maxwell House, Withy Grove, Manchester M60 4BR. Hurry though - entries must be in TOMORROW.

DIARY DATE - this Tuesday, November 10. Canberra v Manly on video in the social club (8.0 pm). Late bar, pastie and mushy pea supper. Tickets £1.50. See the best of Aussie RL in this year's Grand Final.

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Appearances & Scorers

SEASON 1987-88
(to date - 10 possible)

	APPS (inc. Subs)	T	G	DG	PTS
Atkinson K.	7	1	27	-	58
Irving R.	9	1	-	-	4
Hawkyard C.	10	1	-	-	4
Meadows K.	10	4	-	-	16
Edwards J.	6	-	1	-	2
Peters S.	5	-	-	-	-
Kirwan P.	8	2	-	-	8
Sherratt I.	4	1	-	-	4
Sanderson I	10	3	-	-	12
Waddell H.	10	3	-	-	12
Worrall M.	6	2	2	-	12
Graham M.	10	4	-	-	16
Flanagan T.	9	2	-	-	8
Round P.	10	6	-	-	24
Sherman P.	3	-	-	-	-
Copeland T.	3	-	-	-	-
Morrison T.	1	-	-	-	-
Bardsley M.	2	-	-	-	-
Marsden R.	1	-	-	-	-
Burke M.	5	3	-	-	12
Walsh P.	5	4	14	-	44
Bates I.	3	1	-	-	4
Clawson N.	5	1	-	-	4
McCarthy B.	4	4	-	-	16
Foy D.	3	1	-	-	4
Trialist	1	-	-	-	-

John Player Special Trophy

If a replay is needed to settle today's preliminary round tie in the John Player Special Trophy it will take place on the Fulham ground at Chiswick on Wednesday, November 11 at 2.30 pm as the ground does not have floodlights.

If Oldham win today, seat ticket plans for Bradford's visit in round one next Sunday are as follows: All seats cost £5. Those in Hutchins stand will be on general sale from 9 am tomorrow. Main stand seats will be for season ticket seat holders only during Monday and Tuesday, after which they will go on general sale.

In addition to normal 9-5 opening, the office will be open between 6.30 and 8.30 tomorrow evening (Mon) for ticket sales.

OLDHAM RLFC FIXTURES & RESULTS 1987-88

Opponents	At	F	A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Aug 30	Whitehaven	3	122	20	-6	Ashington	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Sherman	Hound
Sep 6	Barrow	3	724	32	-3	Ashington	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Sep 13	Barrow	2851	46	-11	Ashington	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Sep 20	Doncaster	2089	19	-20	Barrow	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Sep 27	Doncaster	2089	19	-20	Barrow	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Oct 4	Sheffield	1729	25	-4	Barrow	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Oct 11	Sheffield	3	774	44	-20	Barrow	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Oct 18	Carlisle	3855	36	-8	Barrow	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Oct 25	Carlisle	186	12	-10	Barrow	Irving	Heakyard	Meadows	Edwards	Peters	Kerran	Sherratt	Sunderston	Widdell	Flanagan	Flanagan	Sherman	Widdell
Nov 15	John Player																	
Nov 22	Workington																	
Dec 6	Doncaster																	
Dec 13	Barrow																	
Dec 26	Rochdale																	
Jan 3	Springfield																	
Jan 10	Whitehaven																	
Jan 17	Runcorn																	
Jan 24	Wakefield																	
Jan 31	Challenge Cup																	
Feb 14	Challenge Cup																	
Feb 21	Challenge Cup																	
Feb 28	Challenge Cup																	
Mar 6	Workington																	
Mar 13	Bramley																	
Mar 20	Huddersfield																	
Mar 27	Sheffield																	
Apr 3	Sheffield																	
Apr 10	Wakefield																	
Apr 17	Carlisle																	

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Join Lifeline — and win £1,000. No wonder joint winners Hazel Garlick and Lynda Smith are all smiles when photographed with commercial manager Ray Hill and Steve Ledger, a director of Roseman's (vegetable imports) of Smithfield Market, Manchester, who sponsored the Barrow match.

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WITH THE SUPPORTERS CLUB

Although local lad Richard Russell is making a name for himself with Wigan — didn't he look a great prospect when winning the man-of-the-series award in the televised British Coal nines? He has not forgotten his early upbringing in the Oldham Schools' RL and he has donated a ball, autographed by the players in the Wigan v Manly epic, for us to raffle off to raise money for the local boys' trip to Australia next year.

Tickets are available at 50p each and we hope supporters will rally round for a worthy cause and a terrific prize.

Special thanks are due to Richard and also to Mr. Jim Pyne of Alva Road for a kind donation to the same fund, to J and B Gallagher (confectioners) of Edward Street, Werneth for a £10 donation to the Junior Roughyeds half-time draw, and to Mr. David Whitehead for a signed Athletic ball for raffle at a future date.

If anyone is interested in donating £5 for the Junior Reds draw on match days they are asked to contact any member of our committee.

We are now selling copies of home and away matches on video, complete with commentary, at £10 each. They are well produced, and the club and safety people have given permission for the men taking the film to site themselves on the popular side. This produces a good atmosphere on film as it projects the packed terracing in the main paddock instead of the empty E stand side.

Orders for tapes can be handed in at the development office, or any of the canteens, or they can also be hired out at £1.50 per night by contacting our committee between 8.30 and 10.0 pm in the social club on Monday nights.

We are again holding Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve family nights so order your tickets now because they will be in big demand.

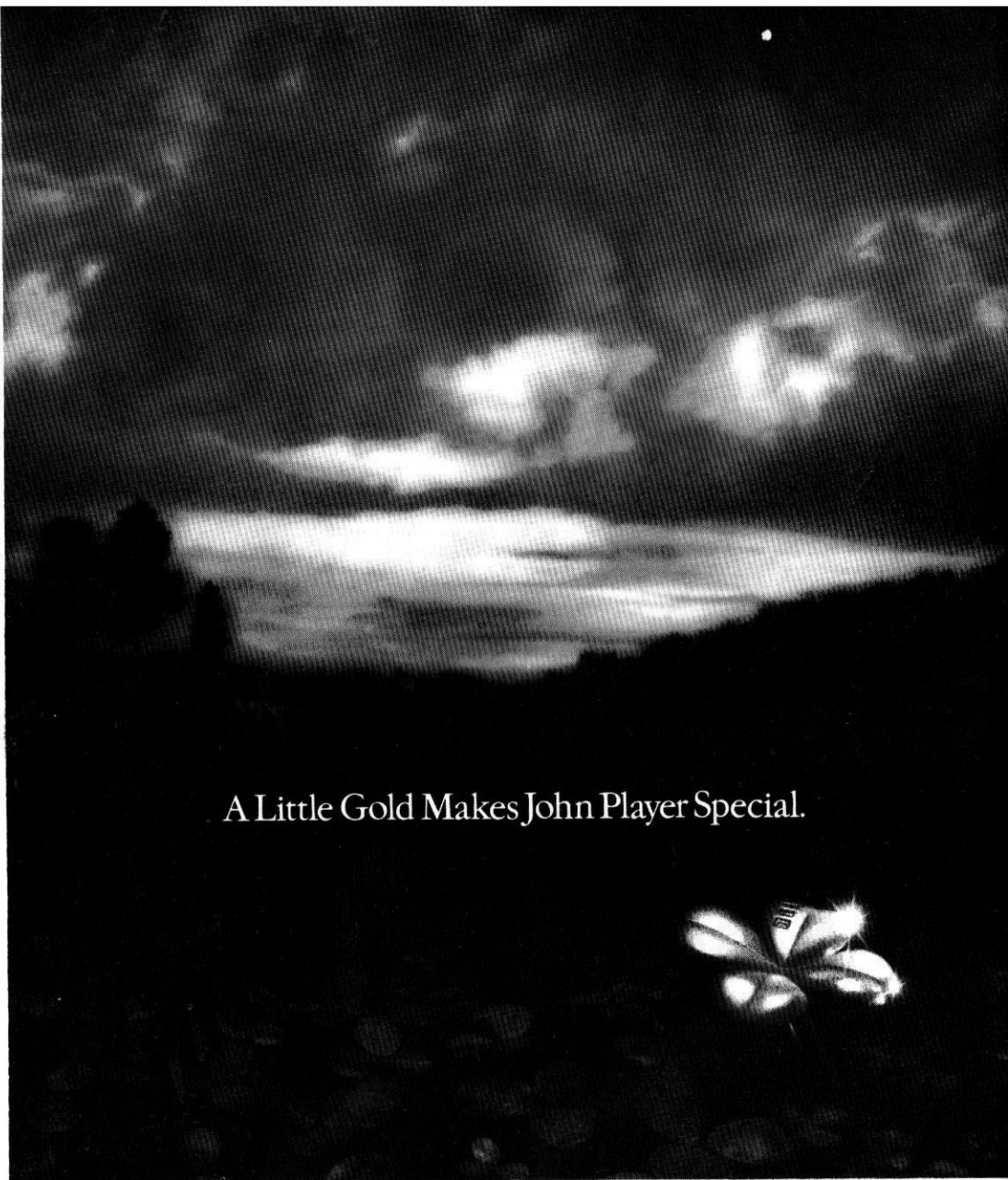
Finally, we welcome all our friends and supporters from Fulham, who have made the long trip north. After their long haul up the motorways, they will need refreshment and our canteens are open as usual around the ground.



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DIRECT FROM THE BOARD

A regular feature in which a member of the board
 will take you behind the scenes.

This week — HARVEY ASHWORTH



IT is no secret that my lifelong ambition has been to see Oldham walk out of the famous tunnel at Wembley. Amid all the changes that have taken place at Watersheddings, on and off the field, in the last few months that burning desire to watch Oldham playing in a Challenge Cup final is as strong as ever.

So what can we do, collectively, to try and increase the chances of this wonderful dream coming true? There is no doubt that things are moving in the right direction, but as far as I am concerned the biggest single factor that will determine the extent of the club's success in the future is the issue of the forthcoming sale of shares in the new company.

I would like to make a personal plea, on behalf of the directors, to all our terrific fans, supporters, and friends, both in Oldham and over a wider field, to stand by us when the sale of shares is launched and each and everyone of us do our best to see that the sales drive is a massive success.

We need that sort of backing to go where we want to go and perhaps more importantly, to ensure that the club has a bright future.

A lot of people are working desperately hard towards the club's future success and you can rest assured that any money invested into the Oldham club will be used wisely and with the best interests of the shareholders in mind.

There are signs that massive confidence in the club is being built up in and around the town. We have to keep moving towards our ultimate goal of really seeing the floatation of shares taking off in a big way.

In the final analysis that is all down to YOU. Do you know what I mean?

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FULHAM: The club with three lives RISMAN sparks a revival.

Ray French turns the spotlight on today's cup visitors by courtesy of the TODAY newspaper.

AMERICAN author Mark Twain, after ill-informed comment in the press, was forced to announce his continued presence by declaring: "Reports of my death have been grossly exaggerated". The same might be said of Fulham Rugby League Club.

Formed in 1980, and the forerunner of Rugby League's expansion in the eighties along with clubs like Carlisle and Mansfield Marksmen, Fulham have seen their fortunes ride a roller coaster since those heady days when they defeated the mighty Wigan in their first, historic match.

Huge expenses incurred transporting Northern-based players to and from London, their enforced removal from Craven Cottage to their present ground at Chiswick, and the departure of financial backer Ernie Clay of Fulham Football Club, have taken the Rugby League club on three occasions to the brink of extinction.

But with a reshaped board of directors, a new coach in Bill Goodwin, and with a manager of the experience of former British Lions RU and Great Britain RL player Bev Risman, the club is now more than alive and well. It is planning its future.

Good wins over Bramley and Featherstone Rovers are a tribute to the success of the club's new policy of encouraging Southern amateur talent, League or Union, and of at last creating a club which is wholly Southern based.

Now retired from his West London Institute lectureship, but still a fitness consultant to the Lawn Tennis Association, Risman is optimistic.

"We reformed the club 18 months ago and Fulham is now on a sound financial footing. But we realise that Fulham would only ever make a success if we put our roots down in London and became the extension of the ever-growing amateur leagues in the south."

Players like Frank Feighan and Colin Fenn of the Peckham and South London amateur clubs are typical of the new breed of player. Keiron Murphy, the ex-Nottingham RU scrum-half, and Huw Rees, former Wales 'B' and Penarth stand-off, are examples of the many Union players flocking to take part in the new venture.

And with Australians like Craig Taylor from Brisbane to assist, the club is now ready, according to Risman, for lift-off.

"We are aiming for a top-eight position in the Second Division this season and a First Division place next season. We still have much to do but teams up North are learning that we are no longer the soft southerners they like to think of us."

Soft southerners or not, there is no denying Risman's claim that "we must have the most intelligent team in the Rugby League. Their assortment of teachers, professional salesmen, interior decorators and graduate engineers could provide any winning side in A Question of Sport.

With new signing Shane Kelly, a giant prop from Brisbane, now providing even more strength, Fulham will be looking for a good run in one of the cup tournaments.

"We have lots of enthusiasm in the team at the moment. All our lads need is a greater understanding of the game", insists Risman.

Fulham could line-up today something like this:

George Lawrie, Russ Bridge, Huw Rees, Dave Gillan, Adrian Cambriani; Steve Guyett, Kieron Murphy; Mick Hutchinson, Craig Taylor, Craig Miller, Niel Grimoldbi, Kevin Manning, Paul O'Riley. Subs - Colin Fenn, Shane Kelly.

Lawrie, Taylor, Manning, O'Riley and Kelly are Aussies, while Gillan and Miller are New Zealanders, all but three being exempt from the overseas restrictions because of British passports and the like.

Rees and Cambriani are Welshman but the remainder of the squad is made up of players from Union or amateur RL in the south, many of them with success stories to tell in student rugby.

FOLLOW THE 'A' TEAM

The 'A' team is passing through a transitional period and that is reflected in the way in which recent games have produced mixed fortunes.

There was a particularly good show from the forwards in the Lancashire Shield quarter-final at Warrington where we trailed only 5-10 until the last few minutes when the Wires scored the only try of the match and went on to win 18-5. It was a 'lucky bounce' try that sunk us and the pack - Casey, Hall, Foley, Marsden, Fairbank and a trialist - did not deserve to be on the losing side.

A young and inexperienced side lost 38-14 at Barrow where we held a much bigger team to 8-8 at half-time before slipping out of contention. There were 13 local boys and nine under-19s in the squad. A sign of the things to come? Casey and Hall were voted the team's best.

So to the other night at Watersheddings when we beat Dewsbury 16-6 with Mick Parrish scoring four goals and a try, and Mark Fairbank also crossing the Dewsbury line. Steve Patterson, playing his first game for two years, caught the eye alongside Casey and, particularly, Fairbank, whose penetrative running contributed much towards the victory.

COMMERCIAL CORNER

(Development Office topics with Ray Hill)

A mini-weekend in London for two, to the value of £150, awaits the lucky winner of a Lifeline draw for those members who turn up at the society's annual meeting in the social club on Thursday, December 3.

If he or she prefers, the winner can use the £150 towards the cost of any holiday from Neilson Travel, but I want to stress that we are anxious to get as many people as possible to the Lifeline AGM so we are restricting the draw to those people who turn up.

We also have a special Christmas Lifeline draw for a £500 Neilson holiday. This will be open to ALL Lifeline members and you can still join now to qualify, like so many other people are doing.

We have signed up about 250 new members in the past six weeks and we will soon be topping the 1,000 mark in membership figures.

The £1,000 weekly winner can, if he or she so wishes, pick up the cheque on match day and be a VIP guest of the club for the day.

Talking of Christmas, why not pay a visit to our souvenir shop. We have excellent gear for presents, including multi-coloured club sweaters and replica jerseys, scarves, hats, sweatshirts and other club favours and souvenirs.

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PRESS BOX CHATTER

(Roger Halstead, Oldham Evening Chronicle)



Oldham are certainly over-due some success in the John Player Special Trophy. In the 16 seasons of Player tournaments, they have progressed beyond the second round only once and that was when they reached the semi-final - also as a Second Division team - in season 1981-2.

The club's total prize money from the competitions over the years amounts to £10,650, and among those clubs which have pulled in more are Barrow, Blackpool Borough (now Springfield), Wakefield, and Workington, all currently in the Second Division.

The leading money earners from the Player's competitions are Widnes (£41,775), Wigan (£40,475), Warrington (£39,850), Hull KR (£29,625) and Hull (£28,500). Other teams to top the £20,000 mark are Bradford and Leeds.

Since Oldham reached the last four, to be beaten by Hull at Headingley, they have had poor record in this competition. They managed to reach round two in 1984 and 1985, but in 1984 they lost at Hull after winning at York in the first round and in 1985 they won at Bramley in round one only to lose 8-7 at Hull KR in controversial circumstances following the sending-off of David Liddiard.

That was a bitter pill to swallow because Liddiard was off as early as the 32nd minute and was ultimately to be found not guilty of a high tackle on David Laws.

Supporters will be hoping for a good run this year, but Fulham must not be underestimated. The winners of today's clash are at home to Bradford next Sunday. A word of warning. Many fans will recall the occasion, a few years ago, when Oldham met lowly Workington in the first round of the Challenge Cup forearmed with the knowledge that it was Swinton at home in round two.

I think the whole club was premature in anticipating a third round place and, in the event, Workington pulled off a massive cup shock to leave the Oldham players with faces almost as red as their shirts.

That was a lesson that will surely take a long time to forget.

ROGER HALSTEAD



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