

TEAM CHECK

OLDHAM

DUNCAN PLATT — 1
 PAUL LORD — 2
 JOHN HENDERSON — 3
 GARY HYDE — 4
 STEVE ROBINSON — 5
 MIKE FORD — 6
 IAN BATES — 7
 IAN SHERRATT — 8
 ANDY RUANE — 9
 LEO CASEY — 10
 KEITH NEWTON — 11
 PAUL ROUND — 12
 JOHN COGGER — 13
 SHAUN ALLEN — 14
 NEIL CLAWSON — 15

CASTLEFORD

DAVID ROOCKLEY
 TONY MARCHANT
 MARK GIBSON
 GILES BOOTHROYD
 CHRIS CHAPMAN
 GRANT ANDERSON
 ROY SOUTHERNWOOD
 KEVIN BARD
 KEVIN WARDMORE
 KEITH ENGLAND
 MARTIN KETTERIDGE
 PAUL CRABTREE
 JOHN JOYNER
 WAYNE THORNTON
 PHIL MIRFIN

Referee: Mr. R. Whitfield (Widnes) Touch Judges: Mr. D. C. Lowe (Orange Flag), Mr. M. J. Hesketh (Red Flag)

PENALTIES				
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11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20

SCRUMS				
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PENALTIES				
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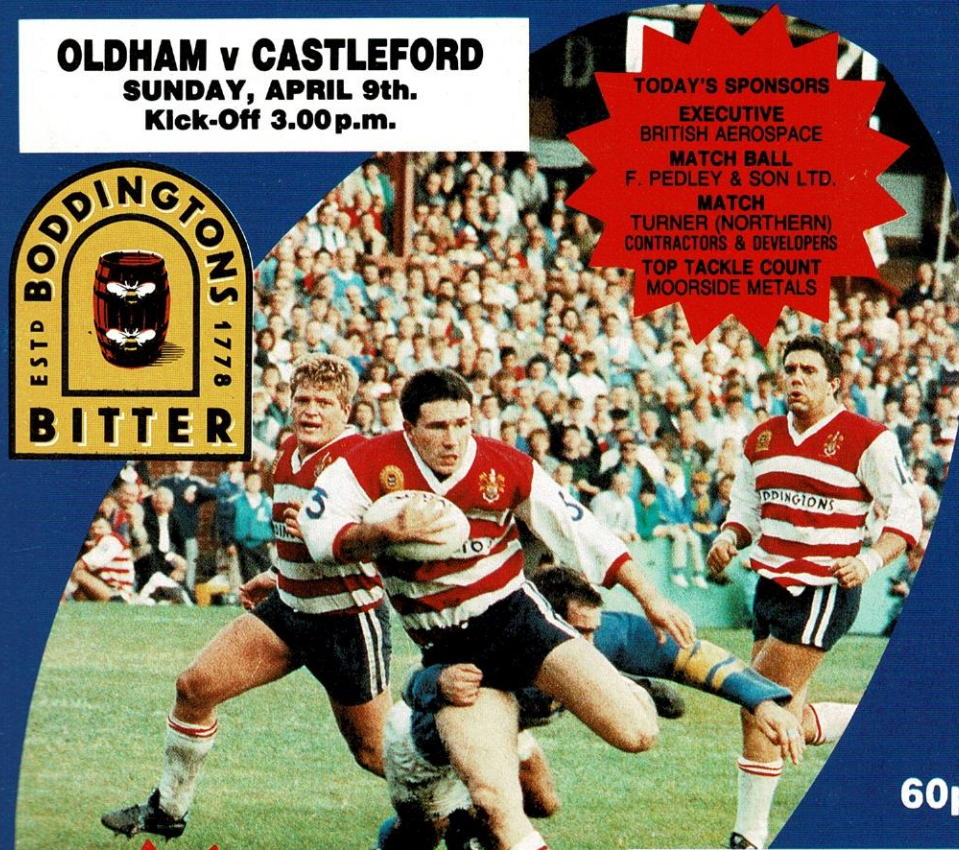
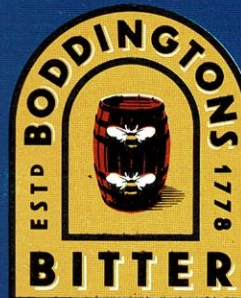
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Conditioner: O. Rowe

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4th February, 1987

Record Transfer Fee Paid: £65,000 to St. Helens
for Paul Round August 1987
and £65,000 for Mike Ford January 1988

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

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, 1956-57

Runners-up: 1906-07, 1907-08, 1908-09,
1921-22, 1954-55

First Division Champions: 1904-05

Second Division Champions: 1963-64, 1981-82,
1987-88

Rugby League Challenge Cup Winners: 1898-99,
1924-25, 1926-27

Runners-up: 1906-07, 1911-12, 1923-24, 1925-26

Lancashire Cup Winners: 1907-08, 1910-11, 1913-14,
1919-20, 1924-25, 1933-34, 1956-57, 1957-58, 1958-59

Runners-up: 1908-09, 1911-12, 1918-19, 1921-22,
1954-55, 1966-67, 1968-69, 1986-87

Lancashire Championship Winners: 1907-08,
1909-10, 1921-22, 1956-57, 1957-58

Runners-up: 1908-09, 1910-11, 1911-12, 1919-20,
1923-24, 1954-55

Lancashire Shield Winners: 1975-76, 1979-80

Colts Premiership Trophy: 1979-80

Second Division Premiership: 1987-88

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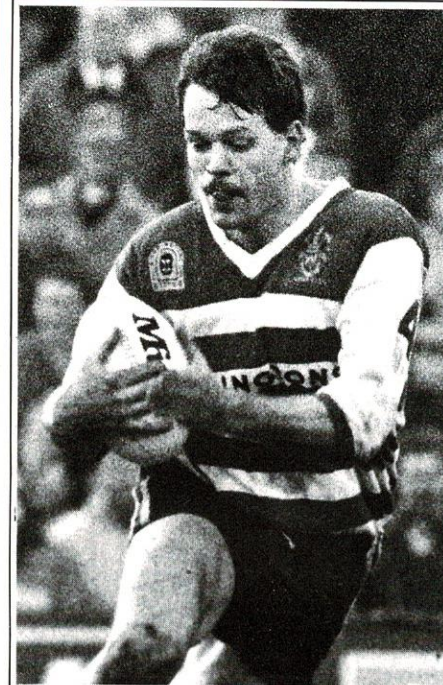
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PLAYERS PROFILE

GARY HYDE



PLAYER PROFILE

Full Name: *Gary Hyde*
 Nick Name: *None*
 Birthdate: *28.2.60*
 Birthplace: *Castleford*
 Marital Status: *Sandra; Ashley Danielle*
 Occupation: *Electrician*
 Car: *Austin Maestro*
 Fav. TV Show: *Cheers/Question of Sport*
 Fav. Film: *Gremlins*
 Fav. Music: *All types-Genesis; Billy Joel; Chris de Burgh*
 Fav. Food/Drink: *French food; white wines; lager*
 Fav. Reading: *James Herbert*
 Hobbies: *Golf, DIY at home, Eating Out*
 Fav. other sport: *Golf; American Football*
 Likes about game: *People-Winning*
 Dislikes about game: *Losing, Being Injured, Armchair Critics, Bad Refs*
 Superstitions: *None*
 Fav. position: *Centre*
 Fav. ground: *Headingley*
 Best moment: *Wembley in 1987, Castleford v Hull KR*
 Worst moment: *Losing 3 Semi-Finals in Challenge Cup*
 Hardest player to tackle: *None in particular*
 Hardest tackler: *All Players*
 Fav. all-time player: *Alan Hardisty*

CAREER WITH OLDHAM

Date signed on: *December 8, 1988*
 Debut: *v Warrington, 11.12.88*
 Appearances: *12*
 Tries: *3*
 Goals: *1*
 Drop goals: *0*
 Total points: *14*

AUTOGRAPH:

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ON THE BARROW BEAT

(A regular feature with Oldham coach Tony Barrow)



THE Oldham fans can rest assured that we are scouring the country for the right players to bring to Watersheddings for next season.

It is immaterial which division we will be in: we are determined to build a side that will take us into the big-time sooner or later.

My feelings on Australian imports are now widely known. I think there are a lot more disadvantages than advantages to bringing them over here on short-term contracts.

With that in mind we will be concentrating on our player-search in the British Isles — both in the Rugby League world and in the Union code.

We are having a good look around all over the place and we are looking for the players who can do us a lot of good.

There is a lot of talent in Union and I think Widnes have proved that if you get the right calibre of man on a long-term contract it is a very viable arrangement when compared with Australians who are going home in March.

We spent a lot of money on Australians this season, but I think only Chris O'Sullivan gave us a good return for our investment and I am determined that we will not be going for any Aussies in future who cannot come for at least a full season.

The trouble with buying on the established League market is that clubs are asking the moon at present for good players. It's crazy how asking prices have gone up in recent times.

In the Union game the difficulty is in picking the right ones — the players who you have confidence in to tackle, take the knocks, come back for more, and adapt to a new

game, often after uprooting wife and family and settling in a strange part of the country miles away from relatives and friends.

When you are talking about Union forwards it is even more difficult. A lot of them can't handle, and I would be very dubious indeed about going for a prop in the 15-a-side code. You would have to go for a wing-forward or a second-row man, players who at least get some chance of handling and running with the ball in Union.

So many Union forwards can't handle. They are just there for rucking, or mauling, or specialising in scrummage techniques or at the lines-out.

Inflated transfer fees for ready-made and experienced League men, coupled with the problems associated with Aussies and Union men make it all the more attractive, when money is tight, to sign 'em young and rear your own.

That's just what we intend to do at Oldham, as recent events have proved, but we do recognise that there is also a need to 'top up' with some senior men and despite the problems we intend to do so.

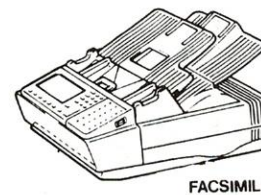
Last weekend's results, with Widnes slipping up at home to Bradford and Wakefield coming back from 14-2 down to beat St. Helens, were a real blow to us.

All we can do is keep on going and trying to pick up as many points as possible today and again at Bradford on Wednesday.

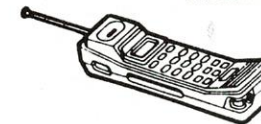
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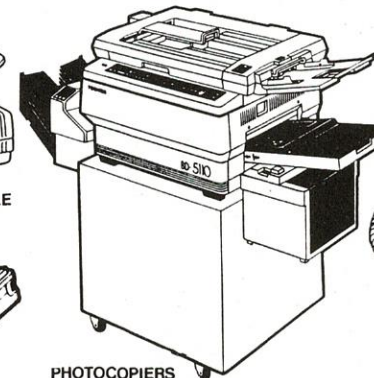
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OLDHAM'S FUTURE

A message to all from director Greg Pache



It is not very often that I speak publicly, or in the programme, but I wish to bring to the attention of supporters the importance of our share issue which has now been extended until 3p.m. on Wednesday, May 3rd.

As you are probably aware, we have been a members' club since 1876 and we have never been able to compete at top level consistently. Even the little success we have had was more than 30 years ago or as far back as the 1920s.

Being a members club has always hindered progress and limited financial support. For the first time, we can now convert to a limited company but when this was set in motion by the previous committee only £15,000 was raised by members. As it was for a closed company we could never have gained enough funds to keep Oldham Rugby afloat.

The alternative, therefore, was to look at other ideas to create a strong financial basis for success, hence the creation of the **PUBLIC LIMITED COMPANY**.

This gives an opportunity for everyone, not just members, to become a share holder of the club. i.e. companies, individuals, institutions, amateur club etc, both in the Oldham area and throughout Great Britain.

Putting figures into perspective, the market we are now entitled to pursue is enormous. As an example, our average home support totals about 4,000 and if each one of those 4,000 contributes, say, £100, we would be nearly half way to our target. That in itself would guarantee the survival of the club. Make no bones about it. If you want to continue to see rugby played in Oldham **BUY SHARES**.

It is no use saying: 'It'll be reet. Somebody else can put it in. I'm giving nowt. They'll only waste it. The club'll still be ere.'

WRONG. Think again. Be patient. Success takes time. You may say £100 is a lot of money. I'm saying, 'Yes, it is'. However, spread shares around the family and relatives. Ask your bosses to help. Think of every conceivable way in which you could introduce a shareholder. Mention it at your pub or club. I'm sure that, with effort, each supporter could raise £100 at least.

Don't forget also the Business Expansion Scheme. Contributions over £500 entitle the individual to tax relief, effectively reducing net cost for shares by 25 or 40 per cent.

We know supporters are not satisfied with results. Neither are we. We not only need money to reduce our deficit, but to be in a position to compete for the better class of players.

We have not become directors for the benefit of ourselves. On the contrary, we are here for the benefit of Oldham RLFC, a club which everyone should be proud of and which should be among the elite of the game.

Help us to save Oldham. Help us to make the club great. **BUY SHARES, and now is the time to do it.**

Don't delay because the offer has to close on May 3.

Yours sincerely,

GREG PACHE

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WATERSHEDDINGS SURVEY

AS this is the last home game of the season, and consequently this is the last programme for 1988-89, we would like to talk briefly about the confidence currently being shown in the Oldham club by so many people from different walks of life.

We still don't know for sure whether we will be in the first division next season or the second. We certainly do know that, wherever we find ourselves next term, the Oldham club will be on the move — upwards.

After a very quiet start, the share issue is now doing reasonably well and we must take this opportunity to confirm what you have read in the local press about the major investments of business men such as Tom Patterson, John Chadwick and Jim Quinn.

Tom is joint owner and co-ordinator of Patterson, Rothwell Ltd., a well-known Oldham-based engineering and moulding firm.

John, who will be remembered as the club secretary about ten years ago, runs two insurance brokers in Blackpool and has never once lost his Oldham-area interest.

Jim is chairman and managing director of Queghan Construction Ltd., tunnelling specialists who have business interests throughout the British Isles.

The three businessmen have invested substantial amounts of money into the share subscription and have demonstrated in the best possible way that they have a lot of confidence in what the club stands for and where it is going.

There was a mini-rush to buy shares before what was then the March 31st closing date and the total income at that stage stood at about £240,000, including the initial subscription from the directors.

We are now able to confirm that the shares will continue to be on sale until the first week in May. We must emphasise that this is not a sales gimmick, but a genuine attempt to make the best possible use of the time at our disposal while, at the same time, meeting all the complicated rules and regulations governing a share issue in which the Business Expansion Scheme is one of the major elements.

We now have another three or four weeks to try and push the total figure up towards the £300,000 mark — vital breathing space to get the message across to even more people, and time in which to conduct the business of seeking the option of some of our creditors to allow us to redeem the debt with shares.

If you have not already bought your shares, or you know of someone who is still interested in an investment, please note that it is not too late now that we have got the latest extension.

Copies of the prospectus are available in the secretary's office or the development association portacabin on the car park.

It may be that you have hung back looking for a lead that the club is on the right lines and preparing well for the future.

If, that is the case might we respectfully suggest that we are now working full steam ahead on the youth policy — a policy that has recently endeared the club to thousands of supporters who were disappointed when a similar policy was allowed to drop into decay some years ago.

The most recent signing, on amateur forms, was that of local boy Steve Entwistle, a winger from Waterhead, who played several games as an unnamed trialist in the 'A' team before his name leaked out a few weeks ago.

Steve, whose grandfather used to be the 'A' team coach here, is one of four members of the BARLA Great Britain under-19 squad to tour Australia this summer to have joined Oldham on amateur forms.

They will all turn pro for the club on their return from a trip which will include two youth Tests at Newcastle in New South Wales and at Tweed Heads, a beautiful, sunny spot on the NSW-Queensland border.

The Oldham club's four on the trip of a lifetime are Entwistle, scrum-half Neil Flanagan, stand-off Tommy Martyn and winger Richard Blackman.

Congratulations to all four as well as to local lad Martyn Kay, the St. Anne's under-19 hooker, who will also make the trip.

Our coach Tony Barrow's confidence in youth was underlined when he chose young Flanagan, just 18, to play scrum-half in the recent game against Widnes.

It was reflected also when he signed up the aforementioned quartet as well as two teenage St. Helens boys, Tony Leach and Tony Barrow.

The boss should know all about Tony . . . his son. Clearly, these very talented youngsters also have confidence in what the Oldham club can achieve in the next few years and events in this field certainly take the mind back to the days of 1979 when we signed up Andy Goodway, Terry Flanagan, Paddy Kirwan, Ray Ashton, Mick Worrall etc. etc.

Unlike yesteryear, though, we have to make sure that the conveyor belt does not grind to a halt and with this in mind we must offer congratulations, too, to local schoolboys Craig Mort and Paddy Mitchell, who represented England against France in last week's 24-6 English win at Wakefield in a schoolboy Test match.

Craig captained England and had a hand in several tries with his intelligent distribution from the loose-forward spot. With limited chances on the wing, Paddy also did well and scored England's second try — from a Mort pass, of course.

On a more sombre note, it is with deep regret that we record the death of a man who was a very influential figure at Watersheddings during the 1970s. Rory Hartley died last week in a Stockport hospital, after a long illness, at the age of 46.

He was elected to the committee in 1970 and he served until 1979, spending several seasons as treasurer during what was a very difficult time financially. Our deep condolences go out to all members of the family.

As an accountant, Rory believed passionately that the club could only make progress if the money side was run efficiently and smoothly, and that's exactly what we are endeavouring to do now as we put the club back on its feet for long-term success.

The lads who have signed for us think we are going places. The business men who have invested large sums of money think likewise.

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PACE-SETTERS SLIP (A look at Castleford)

CASTLEFORD, the small-town club from south of Leeds, looked all set to spring a major surprise by lifting the First Division championship for the first time until they staggered to a disastrous home defeat by Widnes in the second round of the Silk Cut Challenge Cup.

The Wheldon Road men, under the wing of Australian coach Darryl Van De Veld, were the surprise packets of the 1988-89 Stones Bitter championship and they led the First Division table virtually from the start of the season until only a week or two ago.

They didn't lose a league game until January 8 at Halifax — a remarkable run — but they picked up again after that shock defeat and looked odds-on for the league title until the bottom fell out of the Wheldon Road club's world after that heavy home defeat by Widnes.

Castleford began the cup campaign well enough — with a hard-earned first-round win against in-form Hull at the Boulevard.

They were out of luck when paired with Widnes in round two, but few could have expected even Widnes to rip open what had been a magnificent defence hitherto with such ease, as witnessed by thousands of television viewers nationwide.

Since that reverse, little seems to have gone right for Castleford, who have suffered a pile-up of injuries and have lost several games including defeats at lowly-placed teams such as Wakefield and Hull KR.

They are now well out of the championship running following Widnes's title surge and matters have not been helped by the return home to Australia of Test men such as Gary Belcher and Ronnie Gibbs — a further indication of how teams such as Widnes and Wigan are scoring points over their opponents at this time of the season.

Furthermore, Castleford are without the services of New Zealand winger Shane Horo. He is still in this country but his overseas clearance has expired and he cannot play.

Adding to the Castleford problems are injury worries which caused them to play at Widnes ten days ago with a vastly-depleted side.

Against Wigan at Wheldon Road last Sunday, Cas, were still without players of the quality of Kevin Beardmore, David Plange, Shaun Irwin, Dean Sampson and Ken Hill, while Bob Beardmore was absent, having lost his scrum-half place to Roy Southernwood.

Full back David Roockley has now settled his previous problems and is re-instated as the

regular No. 1. You will recall that David was a target for Oldham earlier in the season about the time that we signed Gary Hyde, who will be out to impress today in his first game against his former colleagues, with whom he played for ten years.

Tony Marchant, who has played for Britain at centre, was on the wing last week and the entire Cas back line was formed of local lads — Mark Gibson and Giles Boothroyd operating at centre and Chris Chapman playing on the left-wing.

Grant Anderson and Southernwood were at half-back, playing behind a pack which, despite being depleted, still had plenty of experience and class in Kevin Ward, Keith England, Martin Ketteridge and John Joyner.

Dean Blankley was in at hooker for the injured Beardmore — his first senior game with a No. 9 on his back.

But few debutants can expect to play between props of the calibre of Ward and England, the former certainly justifying the claim of many that he is the best prop in England and one of the best in the world on the form he has produced over the last two seasons.

Remember, how Ward and Hugh Waddell blitzed the big Aussie pack in that third Test win in Sydney last July?

Ward was a big hit on tour and he played a major part in Castleford's great run this season: clearly a player who will have to be closely watched today in a match which Oldham must win to retain their hopes of staying in the First Division.

If forwards like Ward and England provide the 'beef' in the Castleford pack there is no doubt where the brain lies — with evergreen loose-forward and skilful campaigner John Joyner, one of Cas's most loyal and dedicated servants.

No defence can afford to take its eye off Joyner for one split second. He has an acute rugby brain and a clever pair of hands and the combination of the two, plus a penchant for making a break, makes him a key man in the Castleford machine.

We lost only narrowly at Castleford early in the season, after making a late comeback, and Joyner was largely instrumental in guiding his side to victory that day, in much the same manner that he has played a prominent role in so many Castleford triumphs over the years.

Joyner, like Ward, poses a big threat to Oldham today — as does Martin Ketteridge, whose goalkicking when on form can be among the most lethal in the business.

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FIXTURES 1988/89

FIRST TEAM (Stones Bitter Championship)

AUGUST
28 WiganA L 40-18

SEPTEMBER
4 LeedsH L 22-28
11 Featherstone R (3.30)A L 18-14
18 County Cup—WorkingtonH W 64-2
25 Castleford (3.30)A L 22-19
28 County Cup — SalfordH L 2-18

OCTOBER
2 Hull K RH W 30-16
9 Wakefield T (3.30)A D 12-12
16 SalfordA L 38-20
23 St. HelensH L 22-26

NOVEMBER
6 WarringtonA L 32-30
13 John Player — WarringtonA L 21-14
20 HalifaxH L 12-14

DECEMBER
4 HalifaxA W 0-12
11 WarringtonH W 16-2
18 HullA L 11-8
26 SalfordH W 23-22

JANUARY
1 LeedsA L 48-4
15 Hull KRA L 34-6
22 Bradford NH L 14-30
29 Challenge Cup 1st round
DewsburyA W 9-40

FEBRUARY
5 WidnesA L 38-14
12 Challenge Cup 2nd round
SheffieldA W 20-32
19 HullH W 9-7
25 Challenge Cup 3rd round
Wigan (2.15)H L 4-12

MARCH
1 St. HelensA L 58-12
5 Featherstone RH W 40-18
19 Wakefield TH W 24-8
22 Widnes (7.30)H L 16-35
27 WiganH L 21-27

APRIL
9 CastlefordH
12 Bradford (7.30)A
23 Premiership 1st round
29 Challenge Cup final

MAY
7 Premiership semis
14 Premiership final

Kick-off 3p.m. unless otherwise stated

'A' TEAM (Slalom Lager Alliance League)

AUGUST
24 York (7.30)H W 38-2

SEPTEMBER
3 Dewsbury (2.30)A L 24-22
10 Featherstone R (2.30)H L 12-18
15 Bramley (7.30)A W 6-18
21 Huddersfield (7.30)H W 44-7

OCTOBER
1 Lancashire Shield — LeighA W 12-13
5 Wakefield T (7.30)H W 44-18
14 Lancashire Shield — WiganH L 9-10
21 Huddersfield (7.30)A W 8-34
26 Runcorn (7.30)H W 30-0

NOVEMBER
5 York (2.30)A W 23-24
9 Bramley (7.30)H W 48-12
25 Leigh (7.30)A W 10-32
30 Bradford (7.30)H W 20-6

DECEMBER
10 Barrow (2.30)A W 14-30
17 Workington (2.30)H W 36-10
31 Doncaster (2.30)H W 38-17

JANUARY
7 Trafford (2.30)A W 14-36
11 Trafford (7.30)H W 30-10
20 Bradford (7.30)A D 26-26
25 Dewsbury (7.30)H W 40-6

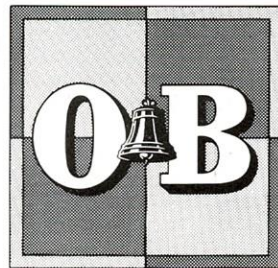
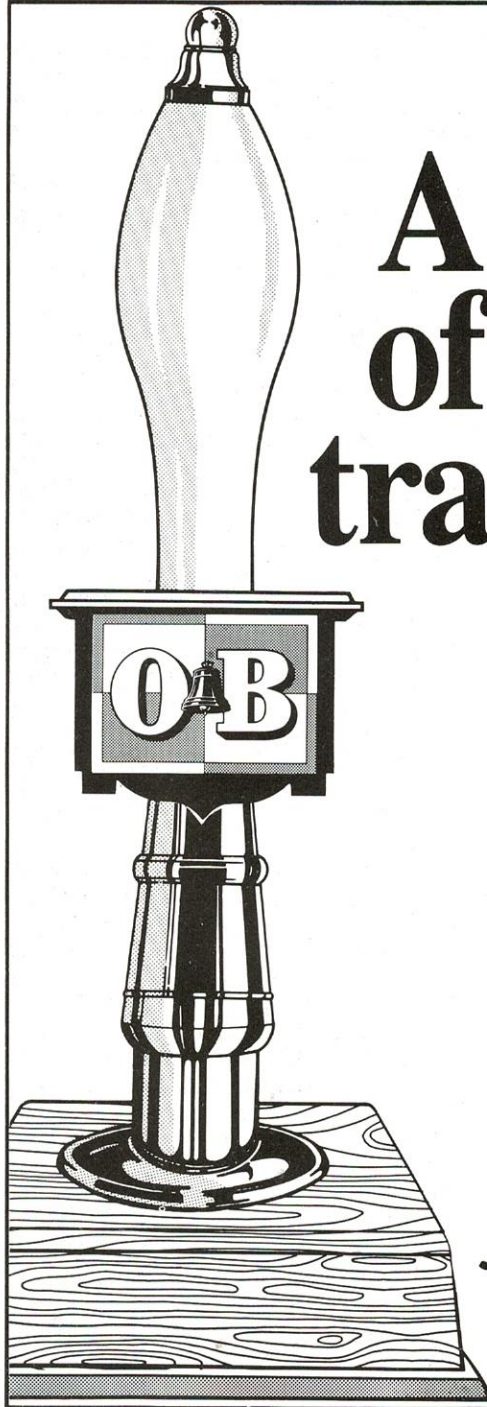
FEBRUARY
4 Challenge Cup — DewsburyH W 26-15
11 Doncaster (2.30)A W 16-24
18 Challenge Cup — WiganA L 20-12
22 Leigh (7.30)H W 22-8

MARCH
11 Barrow (2.30)H W 18-6
17 Wakefield T (7.30)A W 16-26
25 Workington (2.30)A W 12-24

APRIL
8 FeatherstoneA

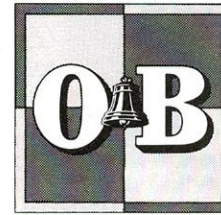
Runcorn have withdrawn from the competition.

A taste of local tradition.



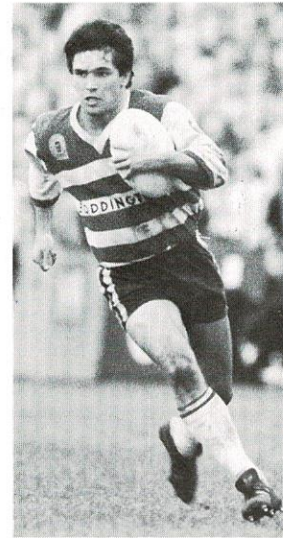
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CORNER

OB PLAYER OF THE YEAR SULLY'S YOUR NUMBER ONE



Chris O'Sullivan and OB Player of the Year Trophy
Australian stand-off Chris O'Sullivan is your favourite — and that's official.

Chris has received an overwhelming thumbs-up from the hundreds of fans who voted him OB Player of the Year for his outstanding contribution to the team this season.

Oldham's aggressive and courageous Aussie battler, who returned home to Canberra in March for the start of the Australian season, is the first recipient of the award introduced by official club sponsors Boddington.

Chris (pictured) receives the handsome OB Trophy and a cheque for £250, which will be sent out to him in Canberra, Australia.

Second place went to hooker Andy Ruane with Paul Round and Mike Ford

taking third and fourth places respectively.

CHEERS TO THE VOTERS

Everyone who voted for the OB Player of the Year award automatically enters a prize draw to be held before today's final home game of the season.

The first three names out of the hat each receive two cases of Boddington bitter — that's 48 cans of the North West's most popular beer.

The winners will be announced at half-time.

OB SUPPORTER OF THE YEAR

Without question, one of the harder decisions of the season is deciding who should be awarded the title OB Supporter of the Year. However, after much deliberation the judges selected Mark Holmes, Stoneleigh Street, Oldham, as a worthy winner of the Boddington sponsored award.

Mark, 25, who goes to all the first and 'A' team matches and has invested in shares, wins the attractive OB Supporter of the Year trophy, a pair of season tickets and a brand-new kit that the players will be wearing next season.

Dennis Southall, one of many who nominated Mark, picks up two VIP tickets for putting forward the OB Supporter of the Year.

The ten runners-up for the award, who will each receive a pair of Gold Card Tickets, are as follows: James Knox, Ashton Road, Oldham; Kirsty Blackburn, Frederick Street, Oldham; Joanne Taylor, Delph; Robert Moore, Bristol; Philip Wood, Shropshire; Tommy Mills, Ceylon Street, Oldham; Joe Gallagher, Greenacres, Oldham; Carol Jackson, Lees, Oldham; Jim Grimmy, Alkrington, Manchester; and, finally, five-year-old Keith Melvin, Primrose Bank, Oldham.

SPLIT DECISION

John Cogger and Andy Ruane are to share in March's Evening Chronicle

(continued on page 17)



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OB Man of the Month award following their outstanding individual performances in the fight against relegation.

The award's judge, journalist Roger Halstead, found it impossible to decide in either the Australian loose-forward's or the hooker's favour

Says Roger Halstead; "Both players have been an inspiration during March — John for his all-action displays and Andy for his touch-finding and skill around play-the-ball!"

John and Andy were presented with an inscribed medal, £100 cheques and a couple of cases of Boddington bitter by Shaun Bell of Boddington (see picture).

SILVER ANNIVERSARY

CONGRATULATIONS to journalist Roger Halstead, who this month celebrates 25 years reporting on Oldham Rugby League Football Club for the Oldham Evening Chronicle.

When Roger first started covering Rugby League for the evening newspaper in April, 1964, Labour's Harold Wilson was Prime Minister, the Beatles were top of the pops

and it only cost a few bob to watch Oldham!

10 YEARS GOOD DRINKING

Congratulations to Kevin Platt, landlord of OB local, the Clarksfield Hotel, Ronald Street, Oldham, who has won The Campaign for Real Ale award for the tenth successive year.

Kevin, who serves Boddington and OB bitter and mild pulled from traditional hand-drawn pumps, says the secret of his success and a decade of consecutive appearances in the Good Beer Guide is down to "constant quality-control checks."

Why not call in at the Clarksfield Hotel, or any of the other 80 OB pubs in the area, to conduct your own survey!

ENDPIECE

With the end of the season upon us, we can now look forward to a well-earned break before the opening of a new campaign in August. At OB Corner we wish you an enjoyable and pleasant summer.

Finally, we have one or two surprises lined up before the start of the 1989/90 season. Check your local press for details.



*Andy Ruane and John Cogger
joint winners of the Boddington player-of-the-month award for March
receive their medals, beer and cheques from Mr. Shaun Bell of Boddington.*



MAJOR SPONSOR OF THE RUGBY LEAGUE.

COMMERCIAL CORNER with RAY HILL

STAND by for some big changes on the commercial front in time for next season. No matter which division we find ourselves in later this year, this is an exciting period for the club with the launch of the youth policy once more and the comparative success of the share issue.

The long-term success of the club now looks assured and the commercial department will be playing a major part in the revitalised Oldham.

To start with we are moving premises shortly from the existing portacabin on the car park to a new development office and souvenir shop in the pavilion. Not only will this save on the hire of the 'cabin' but it will enable us to be involved in the club's computerisation scheme and it will also give us a brand-new shop situated where the lean-to offices are at present on the front of the pavilion.

The new shop will be the first thing fans see when they leave the car park and approach the club and we aim to run it in a more professional manner than of late. Stock will be maintained and we will endeavour at all times to give the customer what he or she wants.

Marketing is going to be a big thing in Rugby League in future, not only at league level but also at the clubs. The RL's appointment of a full-time marketing executive has set the trend and it is up to the clubs to capitalise as well.

Recently, I paid a visit to the Leeds club at Headingley to look at what they have to offer and, to say the least, I was very impressed. Alf Davies, their commercial manager, used to be at Bolton Wanderers and he is one of the most experienced men around.

I think we have to aim to emulate Leeds to some degree on marketing and the move to a brand-new shop in the pavilion will certainly be a big step in that direction.

We also have some interesting commercial developments in the pipeline for possible launch during the next few weeks. The details cannot be revealed yet, but if and when we tell you about them I think you will all be impressed with the scheme's potential.

Yesterday, in the social club, we had our big Grand National social event for the lucky winners of the Lifeline draw and there will be another big promotion during the summer when we once again put up a brand-new car for a Lifeline jackpot bonus.

During the week after Easter we occupied a site in the town shopping centre and once again it proved a most valuable exercise, particularly on the Friday when we sold about £1,000-worth of shares on that one day alone.

Over the course of the five days we were on the town-centre site we probably took about £1,500 in share investment, so it goes to prove that there is still a great deal of interest in the public limited company.

The period of time for the sale of shares has now

been extended until early May, so we should hopefully pull in more money before the curtain finally drops on the biggest single issue in the club's recent history.

Also, while in the town centre, we sold a considerable amount of stock from the souvenir shop, such as badges, scarves, etc., thus proving once more that there is a ready market for such items if they are available where and when they are required by the customers.

It probably would not be a viable proposition to have a permanent stall in the market place, but I think there is certainly a case for looking seriously at the opening hours of the club shop, always considering when it is most convenient for people to get up here.

While in the town centre we took the opportunity to raffle off a giant stick of Oldham Rugby rock. For 10p people could guess the weight of the rock and this aroused a lot of interest, to such an extent that we took nearly £200 on this one item alone.

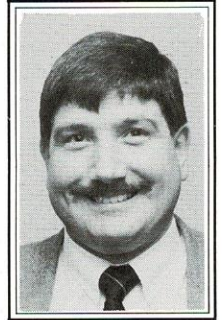
The winner was due to be announced in the Oldham Chronicle last Wednesday and we intend to present the rock during the half-time interval of today's final home game of the season against Castleford.

To all those people who supported our town-centre venture I would like to say **THANKS** and as this is the last programme of the season that also brings me round to saying thank-you to so many friends of the club who have given of their time and service in a voluntary capacity over the season.

I think of Ann the caterer; Mo; Mick and Louis Laverty; the commissioners; Bob Boustead and his two sons, Ken and Steve; Nicola; the two Karens, who run the souvenir shop on match days; Helen, my sister, who has stood in for Sue in the office while Sue has been absent on sick leave. We wish Sue well and hope she is soon back with us. The Supporters Club, of course, also do a great job.

If I have left somebody out I apologise and it is a pure oversight.

Finally, thanks to everyone who has helped the club in any way over the course of the season. It's been a long, hard road but as thoughts already turn to next season one can sense that there is a lot of activity at Watersheddings right now and a lot of exciting things just around the corner. I have a feeling it should be an interesting summer.



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WITH THE ALLIANCE SIDE

THE Oldham 'A' team was expected to take a large following of fans to Featherstone on Friday night for a top-of-the-table clash that was likely to settle the championship of the Slalom Lager Alliance second division.

The Oldham reserves took their unbeaten league run to 21 games with a 26-16 win against Wakefield at Bell Vue and a 24-12 victory at Workington to set up the title decider at Post Office Road.

At Belle Vue, Oldham included five teenagers in the backs, three of whom — Tommy Martyn, Neil Flanagan and Steve Entwistle — scored tries.

Forwards Tony Morrison and Bob Marsden also played a significant part in the victory, Marsden constantly punching holes in the Trinity defence when he came on as substitute.

Oldham trailed 4-2 at half-time, but an interception try by Martyn set them on their way and soon afterwards Neil Flanagan scored to put the Watersheddings youngsters in control.

Trinity battled back to 14-10 but late tries by Entwistle and Chris Willis put the issue beyond doubt.

The next big test was up at Workington, where victory was clinched with two late tries in the last ten minutes.

Two goals by Martyn and tries by winger Tony Leach and centre Tony Miller gave Oldham a 12-6 interval lead.

With ten minutes left, Oldham led only 14-12, but then Marsden and Morrison took over to clinch victory, Marsden's break putting Martin Hall over and then Morrison going 30 yards down the middle for a try which Martyn goaled.

There were impressive Oldham displays from half-backs Martyn and Neil Flanagan, hooker Hall and back-row men Terry Flanagan and Morrison.

Success can often create problems because the Great Britain under-19 Australian tour squad was due to train on Friday night and four members of our successful 'A' team are in that squad — Flanagan, Entwistle, Martyn and Blackman.

We were hoping to obtain permission to withdraw them from British training, just for once, for what was probably the most important 'A' team game of the season.

Coach Ian Taylor and the players are very appreciative of the terrific support they have received during the season and they are keen that those sentiments are passed on to the 'A' team's faithful and regular spectators.

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Sunday 14 May, 1.30 pm and 3.30 pm

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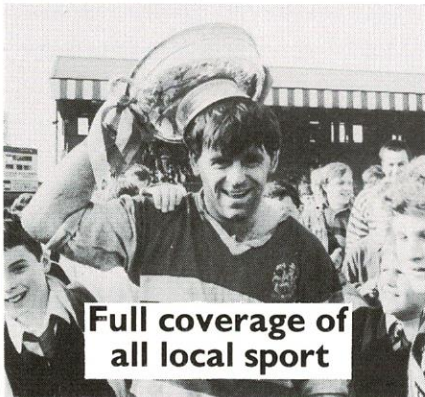
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APPEARANCES AND SCORERS 1988/89

OLDHAM PLAYING RECORD (30 POSSIBLE) (Including Subs)

	App	G	DG	T	Pts	Total App
J. Cogger	6			4	16	6
T. Croston	9					9
M. Lord	3					3
K. Newton	11			4	16	11
K. Meadows	26			7	28	70
R. Irving	5			2	8	20
D. Foy	5			2	8	181
C. McAlister	18	20		3	52	36
P. Lord	14			7	28	25
M. Ford	25			3	12	45
I. Bates	7					9
I. Sherratt	17			1	4	36
M. Hall	2					10
H. Waddell	2					54
C. Hawkyard	16			4	16	191
P. Round	28			9	36	61
T. Flanagan	15					288
S. Patterson	3					3
L. Casey	25			6	24	36
M. Burke	7	17		1	38	50
A. Ruane	28	10	4	4	40	28
N. Clawson	23					75
P. Taylor	9			1	4	32
K. Atkinson	7	8			16	36
J. Fairbank	10			2	8	10
C. O'Sullivan	22	1	4	6	30	22
A. Gilbert	9			4	16	9
A. N. Other	3			1	4	3
J. Henderson	20			8	32	20
S. Robinson	24			7	28	32
R. Marsden	4					9
M. Bardsley	8			3	12	18
T. Nadiola	2					66
T. Morrison	5					20
D. Platt	13	36		3	84	13
G. Hyde	12	1		3	14	12
S. Cummins	1					1
S. Allen	4			1	4	4
N. Flanagan	1					1

STONES BITTER CHAMPIONSHIP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leeds	25	10	0	3	309	178	8	0	4	211	164	36
Widnes	22	10	0	2	389	124	7	1	2	249	145	35
Wigan	22	7	0	3	236	168	9	0	3	233	199	32
Castleford	23	8	1	2	307	167	6	1	5	216	245	30
Hull	24	7	0	4	174	132	8	0	5	218	201	30
St. Helens	23	7	1	4	295	205	4	0	7	173	254	23
Featherstone	23	6	0	6	228	256	5	1	5	197	238	23
Salford	24	9	0	4	259	188	2	0	9	186	298	22
Wakefield	25	7	1	5	212	208	3	0	9	179	312	21
Warrington	24	7	0	6	299	230	3	0	8	127	180	20
Bradford N	23	4	1	5	188	178	5	0	8	266	284	19
OLDHAM	24	6	0	6	249	233	1	1	10	169	351	15
Hull KR	24	5	0	7	245	233	1	1	10	136	349	13
Halifax	24	4	1	6	156	179	1	0	12	119	326	11

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MATCH REPORTS

OLDHAM 24, WAKEFIELD 8

OLDHAM won their third consecutive league game at Watersheddings to edge themselves out of the bottom three on points difference as Wakefield slipped back. Oldham scored five tries to two and Wakefield looked a very poor side indeed.

Oldham led 16-0 at half-time and it was all over bar the shouting even then, Richard Irving having given the home side the lead after only seven minutes when he took advantage of a Trinity breakdown to kick ahead and win the touchdown race.

Paul Lord, who had an excellent game against his home-town club, scored two tries, one in each half, and others were scored by Mike Ford and Charlie McAlister, with Duncan Platt kicking two goals.

The versatile Shaun Allen won the man-of-the-match award while there were hard-working displays from top tackler Keith Newton and young Trevor Croston, who also distinguished himself with a devastating first-half break that set up the Ford try.

OLDHAM 16, WIDNES 35

OLDHAM could not have wished for a worse night to take on the speed merchants from Naughton Park. The conditions were appalling and very similar to those in which we gave Wigan a mighty scare in the cup. Unfortunately, Widnes were 14-0 up after quarter of an hour and hopes of a shock had already receded.

To their credit, Oldham kept plugging away. They had reduced the deficit to 21-10 at half-time and they reduced it further to 25-16 midway through the second half, but in truth the damage had already been done.

It was a night when Jonathan Davies, the former Welsh RU star, stole all the headlines and the plaudits because he scored two brilliant tries, landed five goals from seven shots and popped over a drop goal for good measure — 19 points that made sure Widnes won even when Oldham threatened to come back.

Shaun Allen started the Oldham fightback and

then John Cogger crashed over by the posts before Steve Robinson scored in the corner and Charlie McAlister landed a great goal off the touch line.

Teenager Neil Flanagan was given his senior debut after only two 'A' team outings and he did well in difficult circumstances, never once looking over-awed by the occasion.

The problem was that Oldham started 'cold' and left themselves too much to do.

OLDHAM 21 WIGAN 27

THIS was another case of Oldham starting slowly at the very time when the one thing that was needed was a bright and breezy opening spell.

Only 48 hours earlier Wigan had played Warrington in the cup semi-final but if you didn't know any better you would have thought it was Oldham who were playing their second game in three days judging by the first 20 minutes.

In that time Wigan sped into a 20-0 lead thanks to a brilliant Shaun Edwards hat-trick, but there then followed the most amazing fight back when Oldham actually scored 21 points without reply to snatch the lead against a shell-shocked Wigan outfit.

Two hotly-disputed decisions perhaps swung the game away from Oldham in the final analysis. The first came when Wigan forward Ian Lucas appeared to pass off the ground after the tackle was completed in the move that led to Tony Iro scoring Wigan's only try of the second half.

The score 26-21 to Wigan a few moments later when Duncan Platt's pass to the right sent Paul Lord scampering wide of the cover round behind the sticks for what would have been an easy goal shot.

Unfortunately, referee John Holdsworth signalled a forward pass and the try was disallowed. A try then and Wigan would surely have capitulated, but it was not to be and Wigan went on to win a game that was a real body blow to Oldham's hopes of staying in the First Division.

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