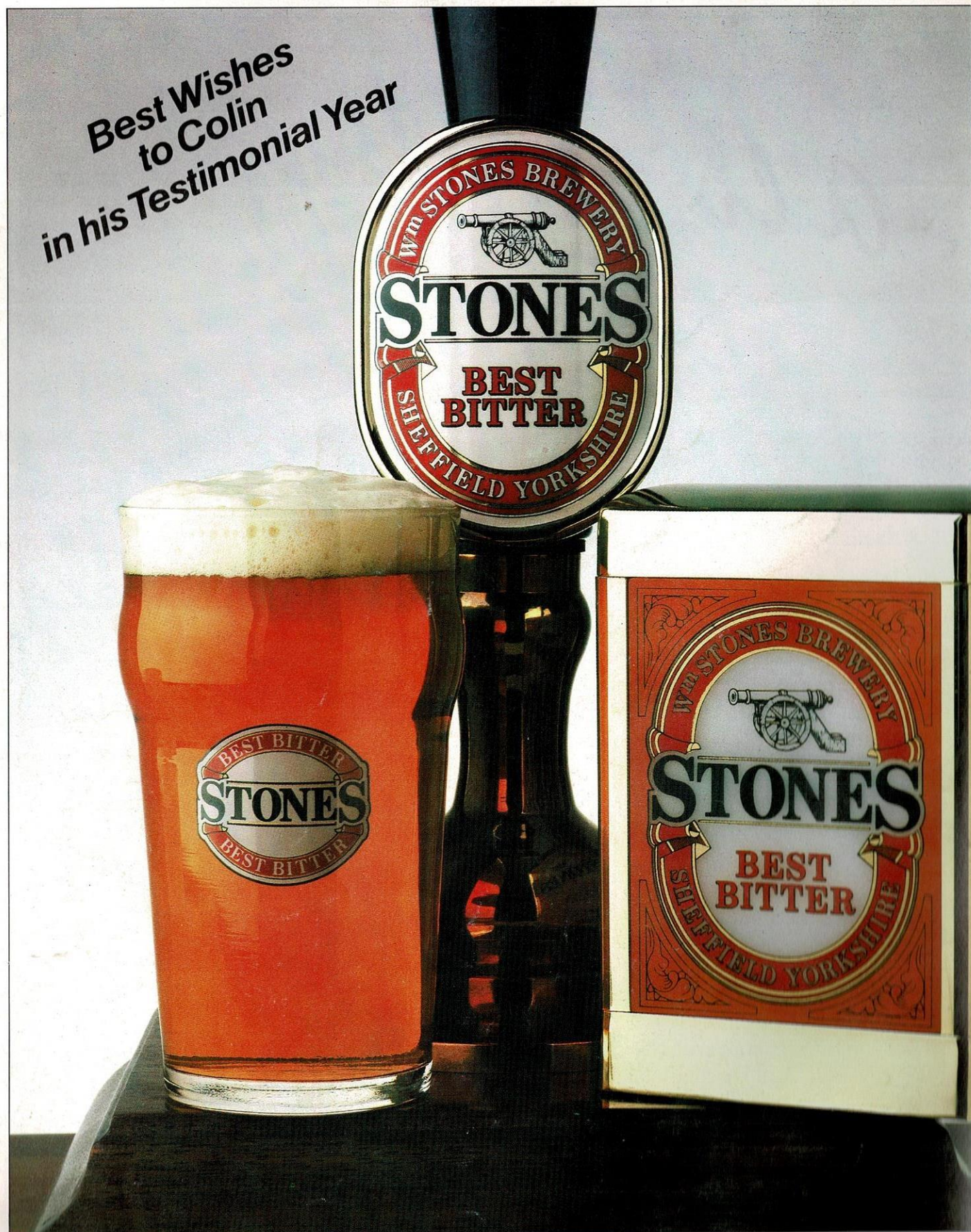


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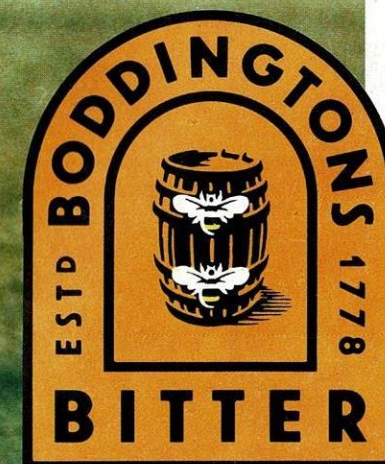


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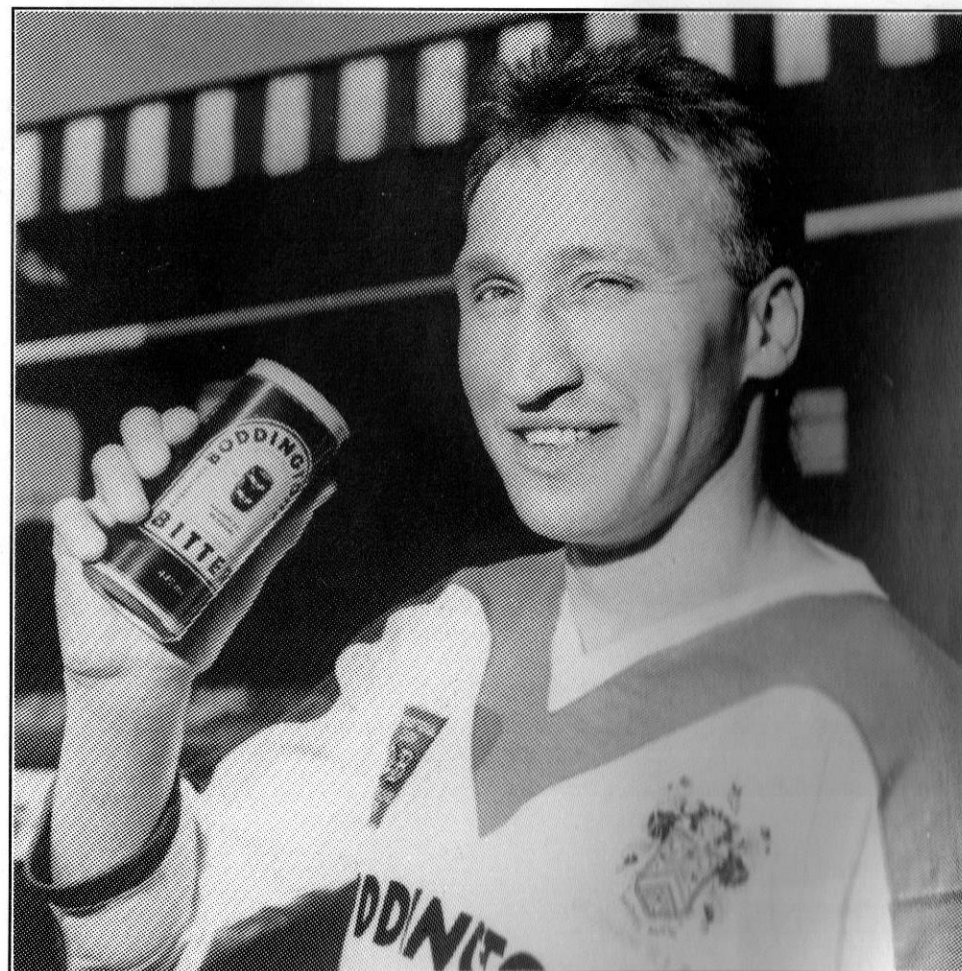


Colin  
Hawkyard  
Benefit  
Review

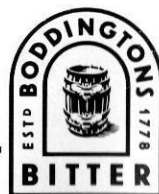




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*Colin Hawkyard.*

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Conduct a poll with any Oldham team over the last 11 years and one name that will always be near the top of the list of the player's player will be Colin Hawkyard.

That's not surprising because Colin has proved to be one of Oldham's most loyal servants and dedicated players.

Over the last decade Oldham's players knew they could rely upon Colin to give one hundred per cent and more everytime he pulled on a red and white jersey.

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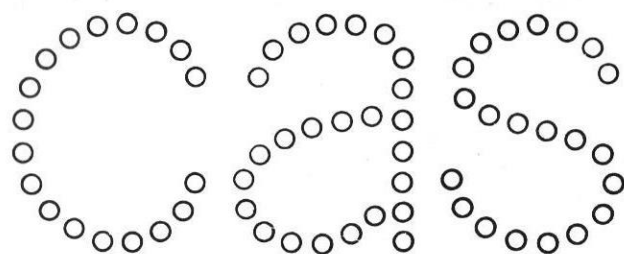
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# Old Faithful

*Oldham Evening Chronicle* journalist, Roger Halstead, has been writing about Oldham Rugby League Football Club for a quarter of a century, during which time he has probably seen the club play more times than anyone else. Here he gives an insight into Colin's career with Oldham.



"Old Faithful" is more often associated with Hull than with Rugby League on this side of the Pennines but the title of the Boulevard battle cry is the perfect description of Colin Hawkyard, whose professional career has now spanned 11 years and nearly 200 senior matches and countless 'A' team games.

The reserve matches form an important part of the Hawkyard story because the Huddersfield electrician has always tried his hardest to make the sparks fly whether it is an 'A' team match at Whitehaven in front of a few hundred spectators or in a crucial First Division battle at Watersheddings.

His total dedication to the game and to Oldham RLFC has always been exemplary.

Inevitably, his commitment and courage has always taken him into the battle where the most fierce exchanges were taking place.

Little wonder, then, that he has broken his leg, his thumb (twice) and his shoulder (three times!) on Oldham duty. To dislocate a shoulder once is bad enough. To do it twice would have many players thinking of easier ways of supplementing a living. Three times would be the end. Not for Colin.

He opted for the surgeon's knife rather than retire from the game he loves so passionately and even now he is facing another battle for fitness after a 17-week lay-off with a leg shattered in a reserve match at Odsal earlier this year.

I hesitated to suggest that the end might be in sight. I should have known better. First came the fixed stare that means Colin has something positive to say. "Finish? Not on your life! I've three seasons to do yet - at least - and when I do pack it in it will be the saddest day of my life."

There is more to Rugby League for Colin Hawkyard, you see, than winning pay, a contract and all the trappings of a modern-day professional. There is something else that money cannot buy - enjoyment.

"Eleven years - and I've enjoyed every minute," he says. "That's the most important thing of all. I can look back and think of so many grand times, so many friends, and so much fun. No amount of money can buy that!"

The pain, the disappointments and the heartaches along the way pale into insignificance against the good times.

It all began way back in 1978. The 20 year-old Hawkyard earned his first-team chance against Huyton at Alt Park, of all places, and he obliged with two tries - a distinguished start to an Oldham career in which Colin has had to battle against a "utility" tag and cruel luck with injuries.

He has never rejected an Oldham jersey, whether it is a first-team shirt or an 'A' team top, whatever the number.

Play-anywhere Colin arrived from Huddersfield amateur rugby as a ball-playing loose-forward but it was soon evident that his forte would be strong and forceful running, dreadnought tackling and an insatiable appetite for hard work on both defence and attack.

You can use any number of old Rugby League cliches and apply them accurately to the man who is now deserving a bumper benefit. Player's player, coach's dream, loyal servant are just three accolades that perfectly describe Oldham's latest long-serving beneficiary.



Mid-season 1978 Oldham line-up

It would be less than honest of me to say that Colin was the most skilful player ever to wear an Oldham jersey. That would never do because honesty is a Colin Hawkyard by-word.

As Frank Myler once said, you could put a rugby jersey on Colin Hawkyard and send him out against a herd of wild elephants in the knowledge that you would never get anything less than 100 per cent.

It was that attitude that often saw Hawkyard pencilled into an Oldham team sheet ahead of players with more accomplished ball skills.

He was never a flashy player and, as a result, he rarely caught the headlines. That was until one memorable night at the Watersheddings in 1986 when the 'invincible' Aussies were given the fright of their lives.

It was a game that was tailor-made for Hawkyard. Here were Oldham taking on a team of international stars who swept all before them in the northern hemisphere for the second consecutive tour.

If ever there was a 'David and Goliath' match this was it, and it proved to be a great night not only for Oldham, but also for Hawkyard who scored the first of the home team's tries as the Aussies were given a massive scare.

Mick Worrall made the vital break, Ray Ashton carried the move on, Gary Warnecke came into it and Hawkyard's razor-sharp backing up enabled him to finish off with a strong burst to the line.

"That was definitely the highlight of my career," recalls Colin, "But oddly enough, I didn't play well that night. Nevertheless, the memories of that match, and the great moment when I crossed the line will always be with me."

"Funnily enough, most of my best games have been night matches at Watersheddings. The atmosphere at Watersheddings, with the crowd packed in and the lights shining, is something really special and I think I have always responded on those occasions."

"Another match that will live in memory was a Lancashire Cup tie against Widnes. We beat them but they threw everything at us in the last few minutes and we really had to battle to survive."

"I came on late as a substitute and ended up on the wing. By this time Widnes were getting desperate and were spinning the ball from wing to wing."

"On two or three occasions I was faced with an overlap but I was able to nip in and take the centre and we hung on to win."

Those are the memories which Colin will one day be able to relate to his grandchildren. Hopefully, he will also be able to tell them that the fans responded magnificently to his testimonial and showed their appreciation in the usual manner."

Oldham and their 'Old Faithful' - Colin Hawkyard - are still roaming the Rugby League plains together. Long may the partnership continue!



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Gathering steam to run at another defence

**"I will never forget his magnificent performance for Oldham against the 1986 Kangaroos at the Watersheddings. We were up against some of the best players in the world that night and no-one gave Oldham a hope of causing an upset. Yet every player was determined to cause an upset that night and Colin, typically, led the charge against a pack of forwards containing the might and ability of the battle-hardened Les Davidson, Benny Elias, Phil Daley and Paul Langmack.**

**It was Colin who scored the first Oldham try, of course, in that stirring match, illustrating to his colleagues that Australia were far from supermen. It fired his team-mates and we took the tourists all the way before finally going down 16-22."**

**DAVID TOPLISS**  
*Wakefield Trinity coach and former Oldham captain*

# EARLY DAYS...

When Colin Hawkyard first pulled on Oldham's famous red and white hoops for a league match against Huyton (better known today as Runcorn) just before Christmas 1978 he was following in the footsteps of his grandfather and continuing a family tradition.

John Malone, a rugged, well-built six footer, played professionally for Halifax and Bradford in the late twenties and early thirties. Like Colin, John was a highly versatile performer and played in all positions except scrum-half and stand-off. When he retired he continued his association with Rugby League as a coach, leading Wyke, a local amateur side, to an impressive cup treble in the same season.

Nobody was more pleased about Colin's professional debut than his father Derek. An avid Rugby League fan, Derek risked the full wrath of the RAF to watch his hometown team, Huddersfield, who used to attract gates of over 15,000 just after the Second World War. An acting Sergeant stationed at York, Derek would skip out of camp, across back fields and catch several buses to get to Fartown, Huddersfield's home ground, in order to watch the match.

Derek's pleasure was all the more sweet because Colin could easily have committed himself to soccer, which he played throughout his time at primary school. When he went to Fartown High School, one of the country's new comprehensives with excellent sporting facilities, he might have carried on playing soccer but for the intervention of Frank Thackery, a young teacher in his late twenties who convinced Colin to try his hand at Rugby League.

Says Colin about those early days: "The first position I played was second row, just like my older brother Steve. After my first couple of games I discovered I enjoyed tackling. What's more, others appreciated my efforts. I remember after one game, Frank Thackery said to me 'One of your tackles per game will do for me Colin! You can imagine my delight!'"

Colin's natural tackling ability was evident from those schooldays. Playing 'British Bulldog' on concrete during school dinner times helped, an ideal apprenticeship for a second row.

With his twin brother, Kevin, and a group of other friends, Colin was a regular visitor to Fartown on training nights. "We'd borrow a ball and play behind the posts. At the time I think the sole aim was to try and hurt each other!"

After leaving school, Colin joined local Huddersfield electrical contractors, T.S. Lawton as an apprentice. His first wage packet, a mere £13, went on housekeeping and, like any young lad of his age, beer.

Older brother Steve, who eventually gave up Rugby at 24 after a succession of bad knee injuries, played for local amateur side Bradley and at the age of 17 Colin joined in the training sessions.

"For that first training session I must have looked a sight. As thin as a stick insect and weighing next to nothing! A puff of wind could have blown me over."

"However, lack of physical stature didn't prevent me being picked for Bradley's second team as a second row forward who was a little lost and bemused by the speed and strength of players who were several years older than me."

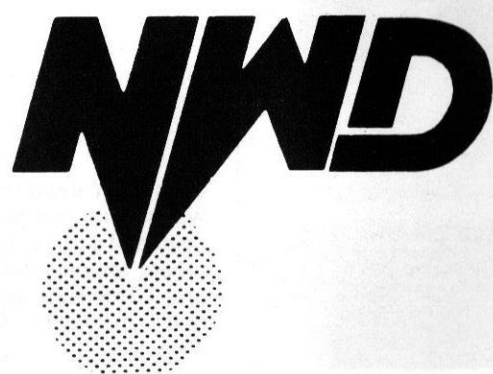
Colin's flexibility was first revealed at Bradley where he also played on the wing and as a centre. One memorable game had him facing Paul Powell, who went on to win GB representative honours, leaving the winger with a black eye to remember the confrontation.



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Life in the hard lane has its rewards - like scoring tries!

**“As First Team coach Colin was an important member of the team that won the Second Division Championship and Premiership. Throughout that Championship season he only missed training once and that was when his son Joel was born. Typically, Colin was most apologetic on the telephone. Even with a broken thumb he still trained and with a couple of games under his belt he was quickly back to his old form. I make no bones about my feelings for Colin. He was and always will be one of my favourites. His support play is commendable, his control of the ball is of a high standard and his ability to “quieten down” an aggressive opponent is well-appreciated by spectators and fellow players alike.**

**The qualities of honesty, humility and loyalty – which Colin has in abundance – are often overlooked but without them Rugby League wouldn’t be half the game it is today!”**

**ERIC FITZSIMMONS**

*Former Oldham player and First Team Coach*

During that first season Colin experienced the ups and downs of Rugby League that would be a trademark of his and Oldham’s career over the next decade.

The downside was relegation for Bradley following the departure of many of their star players while the upside was a trip to France with the Huddersfield Supporters U18 team.

Comments Colin: “It may have been France but the place where we stayed was more like a Blackpool boarding house and we got the impression the French weren’t over fond of us. That feeling was reinforced when we beat their open age team by 50 points. I scored two tries – but had a third disallowed. That’s the nearest I’ve been to a hat-trick before or since!”

At the time Colin was enticed by close friend Mal Jenkinson to try his hand at potholing: “Mal promised me it would be OK. All I needed was overalls and a pair of heavy boots. Nothing could have been further from the truth. I was frozen. And promptly kicked potholing into touch and concentrated on Rugby League!”

After several seasons at Bradley – including an appearance in the Huddersfield Cup against Underbank at Fartown – Colin was regularly winning man-of-the-match awards and had caught the eye of Alan Foster, an Oldham RLFC professional who asked if the young 20 year-old would be interested in going for trials with Oldham.

Training at the Watersheddings was a lot harder than anything he had experienced before but with help from professionals like Ian Taylor, Eric Fitzsimmons, Peter Deakin, Peter Jewitt, Fred Hall and Phil Larder he quickly adjusted and was picked for four trial matches.

“I wasn’t sure if I had done enough to impress but I knew I was about to find out when the committee summoned me to chat about my future – or lack of it – on December 14th 1978.”

“Fortunately I had more than convinced them I had a lot to offer Oldham and I signed professional forms on the spot, receiving a £700 signing on fee, a 10 year contract – and the shock of my life. I had expected to play for the ‘A’ team for a couple of years, learning the professional game. Instead I was picked at number 11 for the first team match against Huyton.”

Proud parents, Derek and Nora, made the journey across the Pennines to Liverpool to watch their son’s professional debut, carrying their own chairs into the stand. The journey was well worth the effort as Colin scored two tries as the side defeated Huyton 25-13 at Alt Park, a performance that earned this tribute from one newspaper.

“Hawkyard marked his debut by crossing for two tries as well as impressing critics with his tackling, backing-up and enthusiasm for work.”

Journalists weren’t the only ones who appreciated Colin’s game. A regular in the Oldham pack after a sensational debut, his strong running and tremendously enthusiastic tackling established him as a big favourite with the Watersheddings crowd.

Bradley fans already knew exactly what Colin could do and showed their appreciation of his years at the club by voting him most-improved player and player-of-the-year before he left.

That first season Colin joined saw Oldham struggling in Division 2 as a combination of ill-luck, injuries and some pathetic performances kept Oldham rooted in mid-table.

Big cheerful Dave Cox was the First Team Coach who signed Colin but promotion at work brought about his resignation from Watersheddings. School teacher Graham Starkey and his stop-watch took over but the key changes really took place the following season.

A new decade and a new look as Oldham was determined to become a force in the game and recapture the success of the fifties when the team had won the League Championship in 1956-57.



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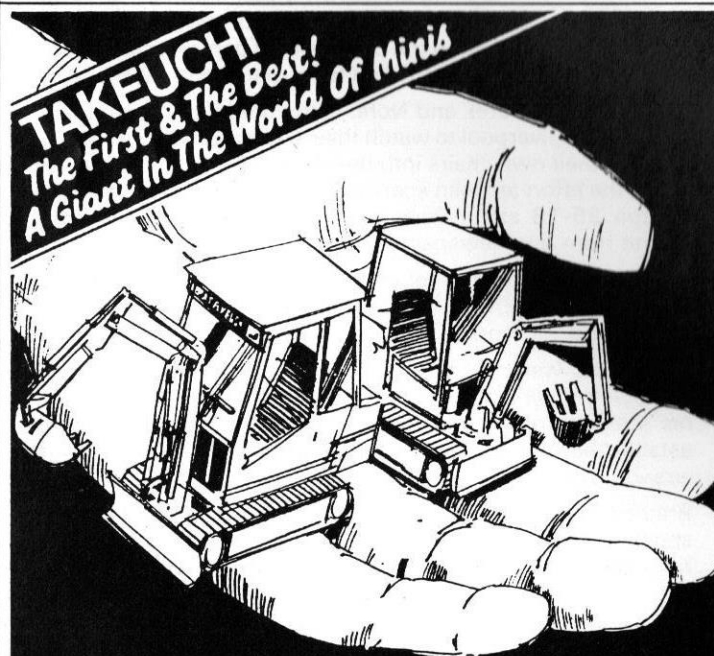
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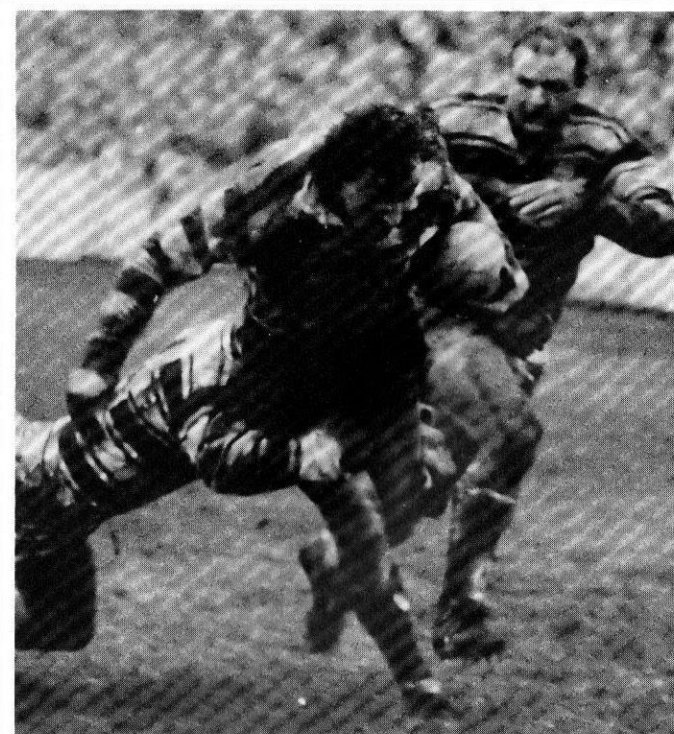
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Going down!

**"A decade of loyal service says a lot about Colin's resilience and the ability to bounce back after disappointments. I think his shoulder has been out more times than his wife! To his eternal credit he has always fought back to give 100% to Oldham Rugby League Football Club. Colin may never be one to figure in representative teams but having played with him, the greatest tribute I can pay is that if I picked a team to play for my life, Colin Hawkyard would definitely be in it."**

**MICK MORGAN**  
Former Oldham forward

Touch down!



To this end a colts side was established with young players of the quality of Andy Goodway, Mick Worrall, Terry Flanagan, Paddy Kirwan, Ray Ashton and Alan Platt all joining the club.

At the same time the side was strengthened with the purchases of Bill Francis as player-coach and the experienced Ken Gwilliam. Half way through the season English Rugby Union internationals, Adrian Alexander, who had captained his country, and Bob Mordell swapped codes for Oldham's red and white.

All this activity was bad news for Colin who had impressed so much the previous season. By Christmas he was more often than not playing for the A team with the occasional first team appearance as the competition for places became extremely fierce.

One compensation for not getting a regular first team place was a debut appearance in a professional cup final in the Lancashire Shield when Oldham beat Salford.

The first team, however, weren't doing so well and found themselves in Division 2 again.

For Colin Hawkyard, still only 22, first team appearances were few and far between although he remembers being picked for one game against Bradford Northern because "nobody else wanted the job at No. 8."

Relegation heralded a new regime at Oldham with the much trumpeted arrival of first team boss, Frank Myler, who was to coach the Great Britain side, and his assistant Peter Smethurst, who was responsible for the 'A' Team.

Said Colin: "Training was hard but enjoyable. As it should be. Peter was the most enthusiastic coach I have ever known while Frank had that certain air about him that commands instant respect. Certainly it paid off as Oldham were promoted as Second Division champions."

But while Oldham returned to their rightful place in the top flight Colin Hawkyard was on his way back to Bradley. He had struggled to get in the first team and wasn't impressing in the 'A' Team either when Peter Smethurst told him he would be substitute for a forthcoming game.

"What a shock that was. Not being picked for the 'A' Team was the straw that broke the camel's back and I felt I needed a change of scene to rekindle my interest in the game. I asked the club for a permit to play elsewhere and they agreed."

"I was back at Bradley with former Warrington player, Bill Pickup, as coach and my twin brother, Kevin, and some old workmates turning out for the side. It was all highly enjoyable and I even played at stand-off, a new role but one that was a lot of fun."

After several games Second Division Huddersfield, Colin's hometown club, took him on loan but after only two games he unfortunately broke his thumb.

That wasn't the only disappointment for Colin who found the difference in attitudes between an unambitious club such as Huddersfield and one of the big boys like Oldham contrasted unfavourably.

"Training was non-existent at Huddersfield. Favouritism at the club was so blatant it was embarrassing and was very insulting to many good, hard working players who deserved much better treatment. Disillusioned I stopped going to Fartown at about the same time as Terry Flanagan was leading Oldham back into the First Division. Obviously this was not one of the happiest times in my career."

Fortunately there was a considerable compensation for Colin - romance. During this period he met his future wife, Helen, a 17 year-old hairdresser in the Broadway pub, Huddersfield.

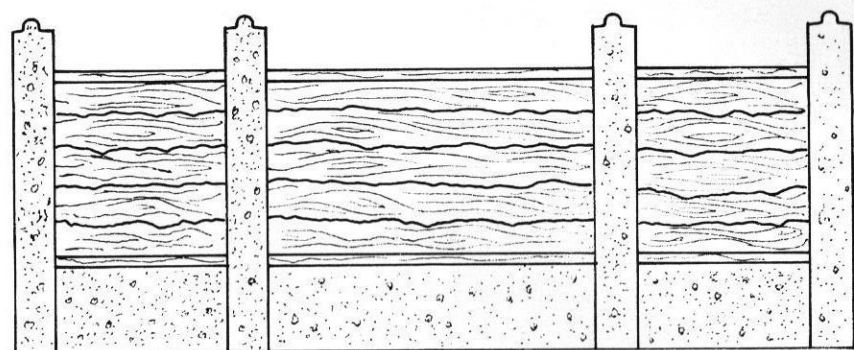
"She didn't like me at first, probably because the first time I saw her I said 'I'll marry you one day'. And although she took more chasing than a rugby ball, standing me up on two occasions, she changed her mind and we started going out together," says Colin.



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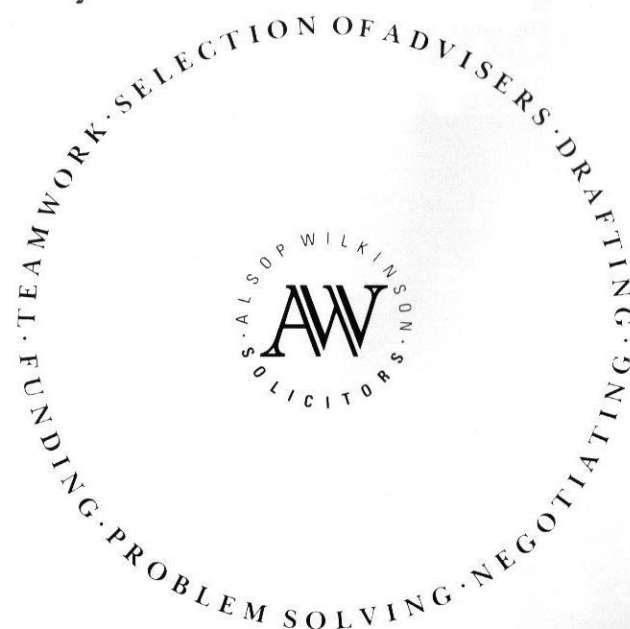


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Waiting to move into action

**“On the rugby field you would not find a more totally committed player and wholehearted performer than Colin Hawkyard in his Roughhead kit. When you talk about true professionals, the ones who are willing to play in any position, who work hard at training and who are continually trying to improve their individual game, then Colin ranks with the best. During my two seasons with Oldham, it was not only my pleasure to play alongside Colin but also to be considered a close friend of his. Good luck from Down Under.”**

**MAL GRAHAM**  
*Oldham player*

**“Two moments stick out in my mind which emphasise Colin's all round abilities. First, when he scored that marvellous try against the Australians in 1986, backing up superbly to take the final pass, shrug off two tackles and dive over near the post. Second, when playing Widnes away in 1985 Kevin O'Loughlin, the Chemics Centre, hit Colin off-the-ball. Colin, never one to walk away from a dust-up, duly supplied a barrage of blows to O'Loughlin's face until a posse of players pulled him off. Never wake a sleeping lion!”**

**TERRY FLANAGAN**  
*Oldham and GB international*

With the personal side of his life prospering Colin, encouraged by Helen, decided to swallow his pride and have another attempt to establish himself in the Oldham first team squad at the start of the 1982/83 season.

The side had been strengthened by the arrival of two new extremely experienced players, Brian Hogan, who led the pack by example and Alan McCurrie, whose tactical skills were invaluable to the side that was eventually to finish eighth in the League.

Revitalised following his period away from the club, Colin got down to some serious training and found he was enjoying his rugby again, thanks in no small part to the efforts of 'A' Team Coach, Brian Gartland.

“Brian Gartland was a man who helped me tremendously over the next couple of years, playing me as a centre on my return to Oldham, a switch that led to my recall to the first team. I shall always be grateful for his attention and encouragement which made me a better player and, just as important, a better person.”

After several strong outings with the 'A' Team, Colin returned to the first team as substitute against Halifax, ironically as reserve forward with Paddy Kirwan wearing the No. 14 jersey. With Kirwan already on the pitch, and centre Brian Caffery injured Colin took his place, producing two or three strong runs before triumphantly scoring a late try.

That return saw Hawkyard's transfer fee – listed at £5,000 before he went on loan – increase threefold to £15,000, although the club emphasised they would rather Colin was not on the transfer list at all!

The change from forward to centre had worked a treat and Colin was playing his heart out with his no-nonsense tackling and hard running.

“Stop them from scoring and we'll win,” was a favourite Frank Myler saying which Colin, in particular, could empathise with, especially as strong tackling has always been the foundation of his game.

One game against Leigh had Colin on the wing with the instructions not to let GB international Des Drummond near the ball. Colin responded in typical fashion and Drummond didn't get a run all night.

Tackling has always been a vital part of the Hawkyard game and he has some worthwhile advice to pass onto youngsters.

“My secret for good tackling is aggression, concentration and knowing the right time to commit myself. The best time to tackle an opponent is just after he gets the ball so he has no time to think about what he is going to do next! I always try to be 100% aggressive in the tackle. This gives me a great psychological advantage over the player with the ball. If he knows I am going to hit him like a ton of bricks then he's more likely to make an unforced error.”

Having established himself back in the first team disaster struck in the first game of the 1983/84 season when his shoulder was badly dislocated playing in the Wigan sevens, ironically against an old Oldham player, Clive Hunter.

In hospital Colin, under a general anaesthetic, had his shoulder put back in place. It was a horrific injury for an all-action player to suffer and was similar to the damaged shoulders experienced by Bradford Northern's Welsh international Terry Holmes and England soccer skipper Bryan Robson.

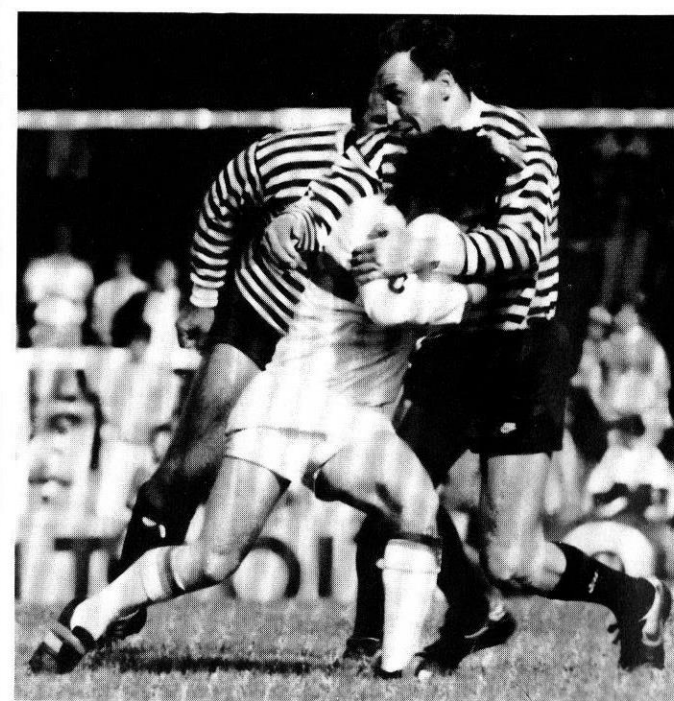
Dedication and hard work in the training room strengthened the shoulder and soon Colin was back in the first team as Oldham enjoyed an excellent start to the season with Mick Morgan leading the team in the forwards and second row Andy Goodway showing exactly why he was a Great Britain international.

Unfortunately the early form could not be maintained after Christmas and the team's championship challenge faltered badly. Frank Myler had been picked as the Great Britain coach





Another one bites the dust!



Colin proves once again he's one of the game's hardest tacklers

**“Colin is a coach’s dream: a hard rugged player and a dedicated trainer who has played in nearly every position on the park when the occasion arises. What’s more, he will always give you 100%.**

**Second row is his best position and when you consider that competition he has had to put up with – Goodway, Worrall and Graham Hobbs to name three – it soon becomes apparent what a loyal and faithful servant he has been to the club. Many a lesser man would have spat out his dummy and gone home!**

**Ask any coach and he will tell you how nice it is to have a good ball player but without team mates like the Colin Hawkyards of this world their talents would simply be wasted.”**

**BRIAN GARTLAND**

*Former Oldham First Team Coach*

Presenting a cheque at a charity function



for the British Lions tour of Australia taking five Oldham players – Ray Ashton, Terry Flanagan, as a late replacement, Andy Goodway, Mick Worrall and Des Foy – with him in the squad.

Colin was competing against international players to get into the Oldham side and he finished the season playing in the forwards, a tribute to his determination and effort, especially as he was almost lost to the game at the start of the season.

To make sure he maintained his presence in the side he worked throughout the close season with Mick Taylor on weights, running and sprinting to improve his strength, fitness and speed. His family helped out with father-in-law, Peter Bates, advising and helping out at three sessions a week.

“Throughout my career I have always placed a great emphasis on training and anyone wishing to pursue a career as a Rugby League professional needs to do the same. In these highly competitive days a player has got to train at the club and in his own time. Just as important, his eating and drinking has to be regulated.”

“I use weights to make myself stronger and fitter and do the distance running at home so the Oldham coaches can concentrate on skills and technique when we get together as a squad for training.”

“Whenever I train I always remember what Peter Smethurst used to say. Pain is only in the mind. And the harder I train, the more benefit I feel.”

That season Colin played regularly for the team, enjoying his best spell since joining the club although he blotted his copybook when he was sent-off for fighting Widnes’s Keiran O’Loughlin in an off-the-ball incident. Both players were given their marching orders although O’Loughlin had cause to regret causing the skirmish as his cheekbone had been fractured.

It was the first and only time Colin had been sent off and he was banned for a match. He accepted his punishment gracefully, even though other players had committed far worse crimes on the pitch and carried on playing. Although never condoning such cheats, Colin accepts it is part and parcel of the game.

Positions varied depending upon the needs of the club with Colin playing either in the forwards or at centre. Half way through the season Colin must have wished he’d stayed with the forwards because he dislocated his shoulder for a second time, this time against Warrington. The next time, said the doctor, it would mean an operation that could have ended Colin’s career.

It takes more than a damaged shoulder to stop a player as committed as Colin Hawkyard and after the usual recuperation period and intensive training he was back in the first team that was easily holding its own in the First Division although the ‘stars’ who formed the backbone of the early eighties were now heading for pastures new with Andy Goodway being bought by Wigan.

Colin was sorry to see one of his favourite players leave the club and reckons that few players could match Goodway for professionalism and attitude to the game. “If youngsters want a role model then they should look no further than Andy Goodway, who has proved to be an extremely valuable servant for Wigan as he was at Oldham.”

Also at the start of that season Colin finally got his girl, marrying Helen on August 27th at St. John’s Church, Huddersfield with best man Mal Jenkinson, who had once enticed Colin down a freezing pothole, making sure he went down the aisle!

In pre-season training Colin’s determination to reach maximum fitness proved his undoing when he opted to do an extra circuit on the tackle bags. His reward for his efforts was a dislocated shoulder – the third time it had happened in as many years – and the prospect of a long lay-off.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO COLIN IN HIS BENEFIT YEAR FROM ALL THE STAFF AT SEDDON ATKINSON.

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Colin on the attack

**"Colin played in both the forwards and the backs for Oldham and performed with great distinction in both roles, never giving less than 100%. Possibly Colin lacked size as a forward and an extra yard of pace as a back. Certainly if he had had either of these gifts he would have achieved international honours without any question. I've seen players with both fail to command a first team place while Colin's heart and vigour inevitably won him a place in the Oldham first team squad during my four years with the club."**

**FRANK MYLER**  
*Oldham and GB coach*

**"I would rather have Colin on my side in a game than have to face him playing for the opposition. One of my favourite memories during my coaching days was the great thrill of having Colin playing for the junior side along with his two brothers, Steve and Kevin. Together, they used to put the fear of God into opposing teams."**

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Yet another try!



Colin duly went into hospital for the operation to pin his shoulder into place and had to endure the worst and most painful week since he had started professional Rugby League. His state of mind wasn't helped by the fact that he could do little else but wait until he was fit enough to play.

Three slow, agonising months passed as he kept training, building up his strength ready to compete for his place in the first team.

Back in action for the 'A' Team against Wigan, Colin must have wondered if the effort had been worth it. Mick Ford, playing for Wigan prior to his move to Leigh and then Oldham, passed an exasperated Colin four or five times on his bad shoulder side.

Says Colin: "I was left standing, unwilling to put the full weight of my shoulder into the tackle. Although the shoulder was physically alright, there were the psychological fears to overcome and I knew it would take me a while to get used to the shoulder again."

With typical determination Colin forced his way back into the first team squad only to pull a hamstring sprint training with Paddy Kirwan. No sooner had he returned from a serious injury than he was out for another six weeks.

While convalescing, Oldham, with the assistance of Aussies Mal Grahame, Gary Warnecke and the Liddiard brothers were putting together a useful run in the Silk Cut Challenge Cup defeating Carlisle, Warrington and Bradford Northern on the way to booking a semi-final place against Castleford at Central Park.

Colin, back at full fitness, was selected for the first team squad but did not make the team, denying him the chance to do his bit to help Oldham reach Wembley's famous twin towers for the first time in the club's long and distinguished history.

However, despite leading at half-time Oldham lost 18-7 in a closely fought match and the Wembley dream was dead and buried for yet another season.

"The atmosphere in the dressing room after that match was something I never want to experience. I've never seen players look so despondent after getting so close yet ending up so far from the ultimate achievement for a Rugby League professional."

The rest of the season, sadly, proved to be an anti-climax.

A new season and renewed hope saw Colin free of injury problems with a regular place in the first team. Although the preferred playing second row where he could get more involved in the action he found he was being asked to play centre and on occasions on the wing – like the Lancashire Cup semi-final against Widnes when he came on as a sub and helped Oldham to a thrilling cup victory that sent them on their way to a showpiece final against mighty Wigan at St. Helens.

Colin was again substitute for the final and came on in the second half as centre but he and Oldham ran into a Wigan side at the top of their form and found themselves beaten by the boys from Central Park.

The cup final appearance was one of the season's highlights – the other was a remarkable match against the awe-inspiring touring Australians who had demolished any team who stood in their way.

They came to Watersheddings expecting an easy victory to extend their unbeaten tour record. They had quite a shock!

On for the injured Hobbs with the tourists apparently well in command at 14-2, Colin's touch down sparked a fight back from Oldham which cut their lead to a mere two points. Australia eventually won 22-16 but the Kangaroos had few harder matches on the tour which saw them return home undefeated.

Colin has particular fond memories of the match. "I remember hammering hard into Benny Alias and it took him a while to get up. That boosted my confidence and helped me settle into the game. Then when Mick Worrall broke through I started to



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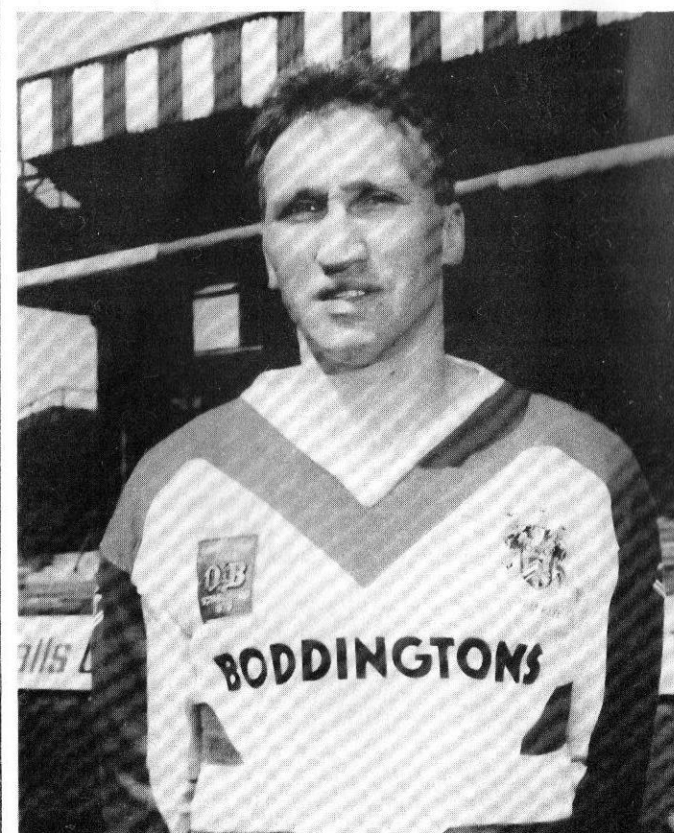


Looking for the gaps!

"Colin has always been a true and loyal servant to Oldham RLFC and has never given anything less than his best on the playing field. His attitude off the field has always been a great example to young players taking their initial steps up the Rugby League ladder. A man of few words, Colin has always let his rugby do the talking for him and is the epitome of the conscientious, loyal professional Rugby League player.

On behalf of the board and the club, thanks for 11 years devoted service."

HARVEY ASHWORTH  
Chairman, Oldham RLFC



back-up the ball and after a passing movement between Gary Warnecke and Ray Ashton I crossed over to score a memorable try. After that, with the fans going wild, all of us played our hearts out in a game I will always cherish," says Colin.

That sort of form inspired Oldham in the league but the news that Frank Myler was leaving at the end of the season was a shock to a lot of players - Colin included - and it affected the team's performances.

Winning games became a rarity and the team slumped down the table and into the Second Division, leaving Colin in no doubt what the root cause of the problem had been.

"Frank's decision to leave had a big effect on morale at the club and I think this was one of the major reasons as to why we were relegated after what had been a successful period for Oldham."

With Frank Myler, who had served Oldham so well, departed school teacher Eric Fitzsimmons was appointed coach, bringing with him a new style as Colin explains.

"Training was completely different with the emphasis on ball skills, and tackling bags and shields used in a more positive way. What's more, Eric introduced a more scholarly approach to the game with statistics about every part of the match and videos studied and analysed to improve performances and spot faults."

"It was a more professional outfit although some of the players resented his school master approach," commented Colin whose commitment, dedication and sheer hard work certainly impressed Eric.

Colin won Eric's inaugural "Most Consistent Player" award, with the first team coach saying Colin was a worthy winner.

He'd got into the team as a centre covering for injured players but won a place in the forwards when they returned.

Life was a lot easier against second division opposition and Oldham duly won the Second Division championship, although there were one or two scares along the way.

Highlight of the season was undoubtedly the Second Division thrill-a-minute Premiership Final against Featherstone Rovers at a packed Old Trafford. The final had one of the most nail-biting finishes seen at a major Rugby League final as Featherstone pulled back 20 points to take the lead.

Back in the First Division, Colin, named Oldham's most consistent player during the previous season by Eric Fitzsimmons, life was definitely not going to be easy as Wigan gave the team a lesson they wouldn't forget in a hurry. The players were taking a long time to adjust to the higher standard of play in the First Division and with several games lost through bad-luck, the going was getting tough.

And it was tough luck for Eric Fitzsimmons who was sacked by the committee and replaced by ex-Warrington coach, Tony Barrow, who arrived too late to prevent Oldham dropping down a division.

Sadly before Colin could prove himself to the new coach, an 'A' Team match against Bradford at Odsal ended his season. Running at full speed Colin heard the crack, like the ricochet from a rifle. A broken leg, it was the worst injury of his career.

Being out for so long gave him time to reflect on the game that is Rugby League. Colin's had more than his fair share of injuries and could be excused for feeling hard done by.

That, however, is not the Colin Hawkyard way. His long lay-off confirmed his commitment to the game and to Oldham, even though he is now in his 31st year.

For Colin the game is still a vital part of his life and he's looking forward to a couple of more years with Oldham as the club prepares for an immediate return to the top flight.

One thing is for certain. There won't be many more players trying harder than Colin to put Oldham back where they belong!



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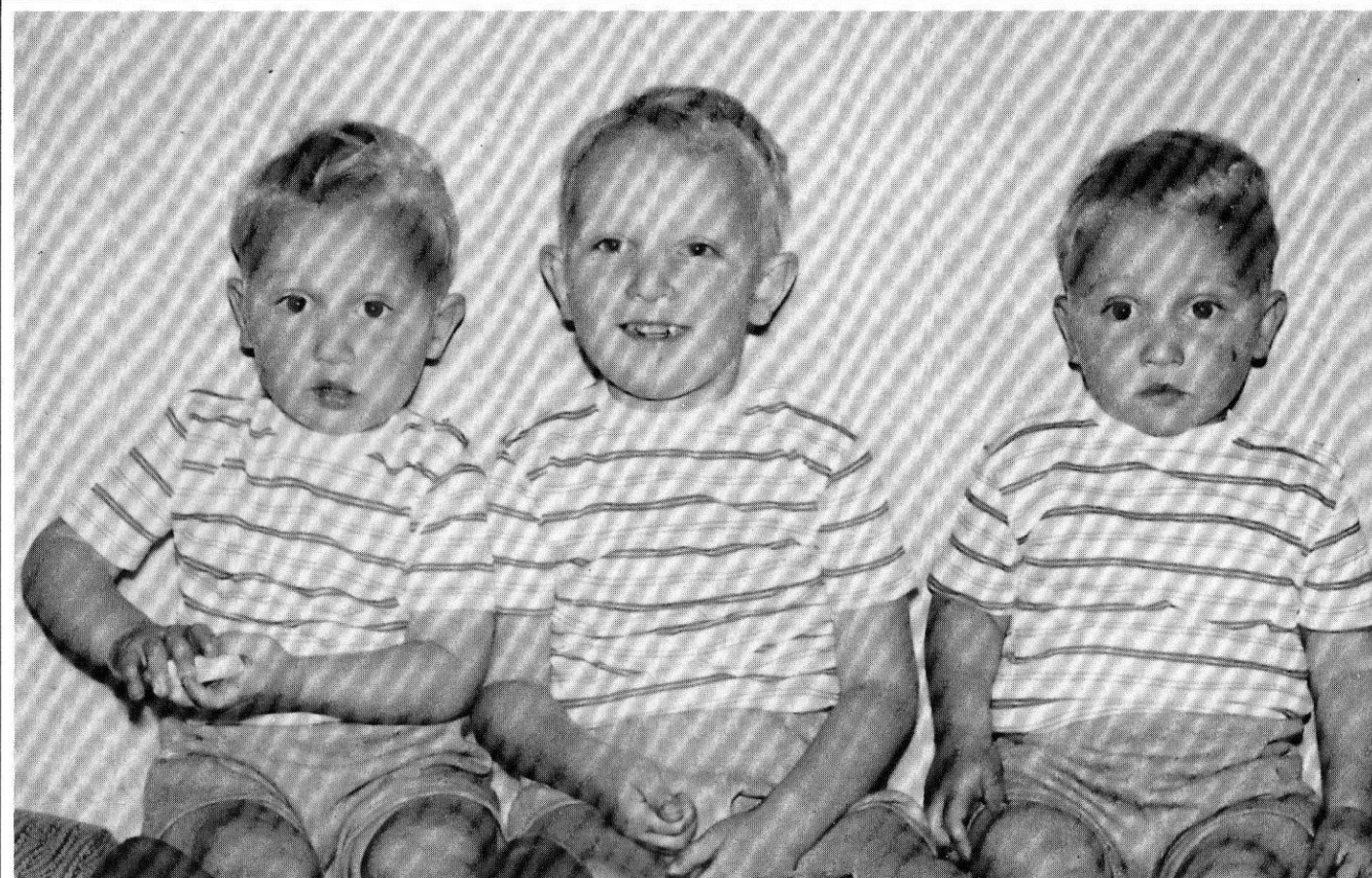
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THE THREE HAWKYARDS - (above) Twin brother Kevin, Steve and Colin  
(below) Kevin, Colin and Steve





- 1) 1980/81 first team squad.
- 2) We've won the cup—Oldham celebrate after the Premiership final victory.
- 3) Challenge Cup semi-final squad 1986/87.
- 4) Concussed after a brave performance against Featherstone Rovers. John Watkins helps out.
- 5) Setting off on a surging run against Workington.



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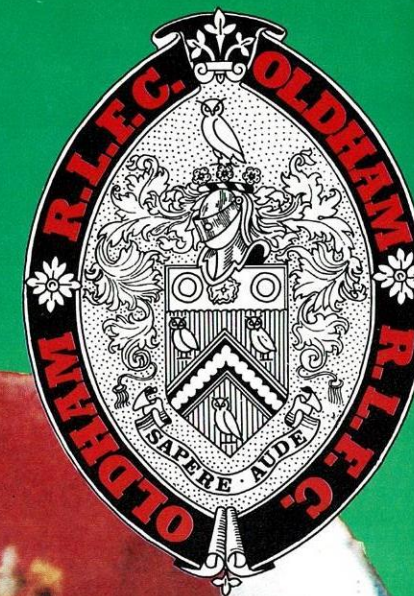
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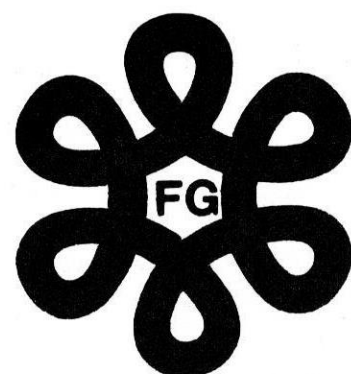
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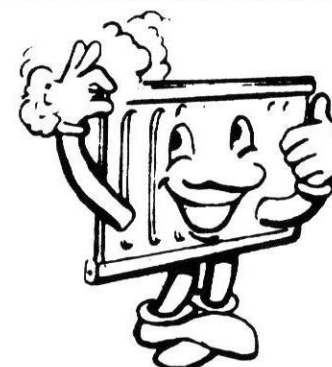
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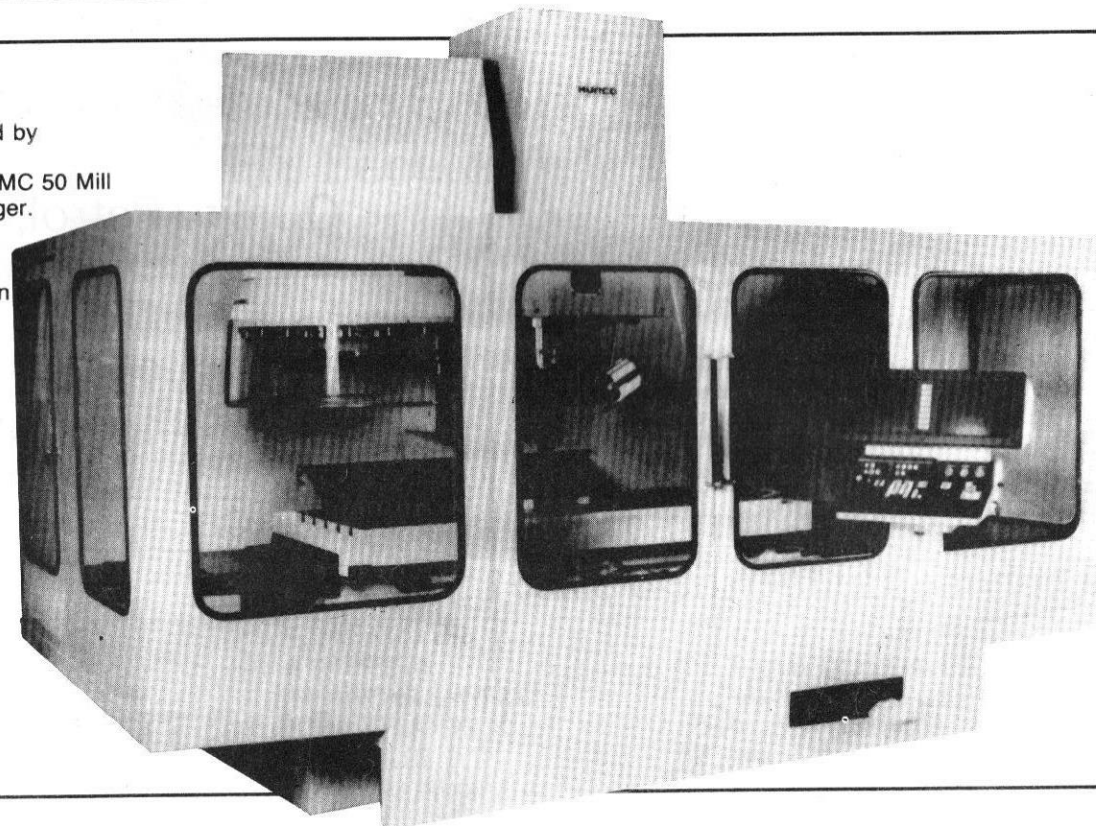
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*Good Luck*

1. How many times have Oldham RLFC won the Challenge Cup?
2. Name the six players who have won the Lance Todd Trophy and played for Oldham?
3. Name the three Oldham players who toured Australia with the GB squad in 1958.
4. Who was sent off in the 1960 Challenge Cup semi-final against Hull?
5. Goldswain and Turner were both signed from the same club. Which one?
6. He was a South African full back for Oldham during the 1960's. Who is he?
7. When did Alex Givons sign for Oldham: 1933, 1939 or 1943?
8. In 1971 two Americans made brief appearances for Oldham. Who were they?
9. Who were Oldham's two substitutes in the 1986 Castleford semi-final?
10. What is Oldham's record victory score?



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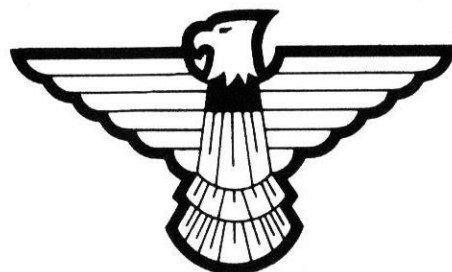
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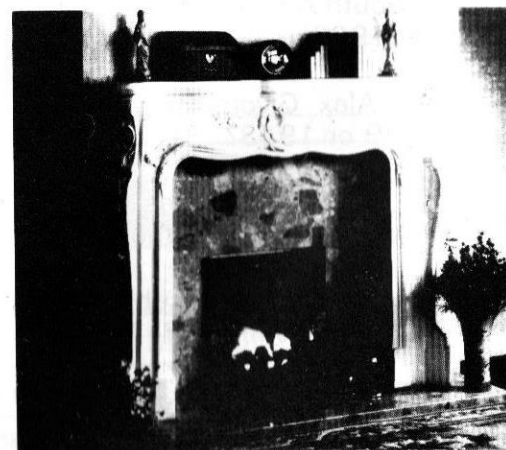
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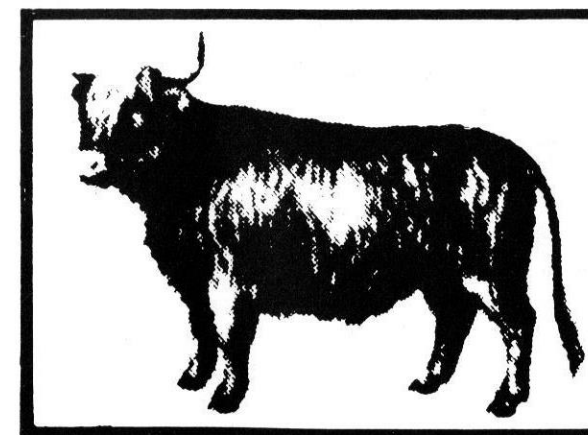
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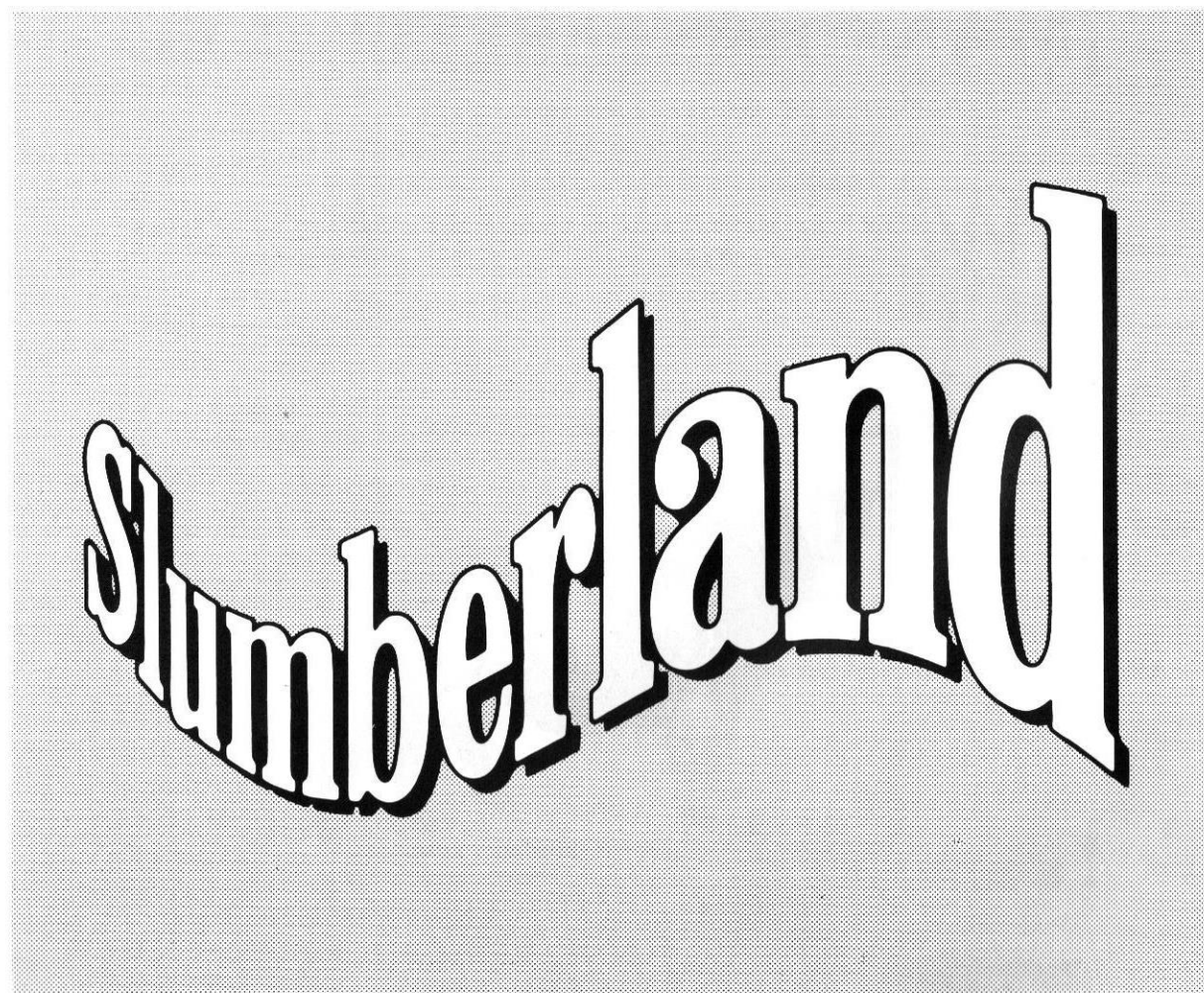
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 season



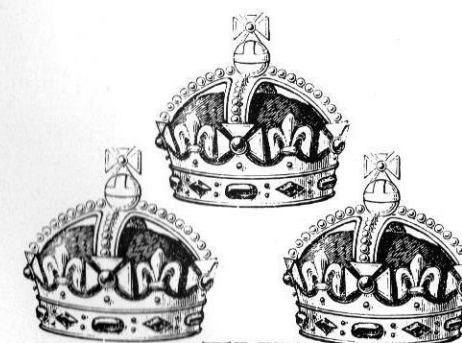
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Colin with father Derek (left) and father-in-law Peter Bates before the start of the season

Best wishes to Colin  
 in his Benefit Year  
 from



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**CAN YOU SPOT  
THE DIFFERENCE?**



These two cartoons may look identical but there are in fact ten differences. How many can you spot? Answers on page 45.



**Have a Great Benefit Colin  
from  
NORA and JOHN**

**SHEPHERDS ARMS  
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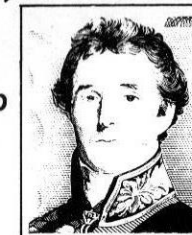
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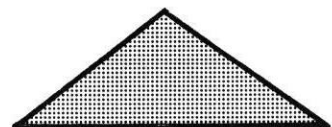


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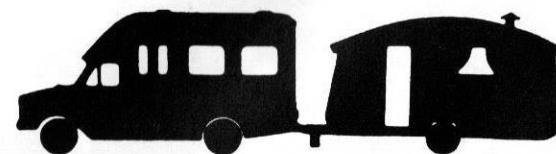
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# FIND THAT TEAM!

The names of 34 Oldham players, past and present, are hidden in the letter-maze either across, up or down or diagonally. All you have to do is find the names. And when you've found all 34, the remaining letters will spell the name of the team that is going to win the Second Division championship next season.

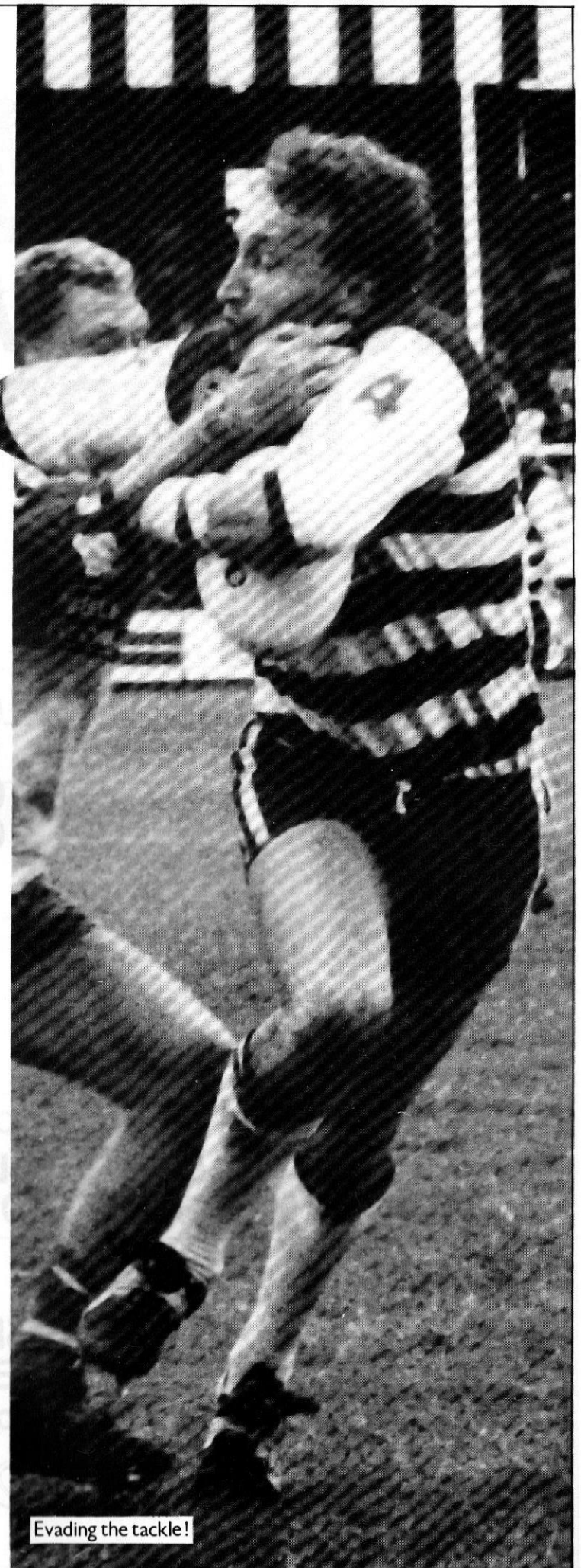
The players you are looking for are: Alexandra, Ashton, Atkinson, Bates, Casey, Clawson, Cook, Flanagan, Ford, Foy, Goodway, Graham, Hall, Hawkyard, Irving, Jones, Kirwan, Lord, Lund, Marsden, McCurrie, Morgan, Munro, Naidole, Ogden, O'Neil, Owen, Round, Ruane, Sherman, Taylor, Vigo, Ward and Worrall.

Send completed entries to: Letter-Maze Competition, "Development Officer", Oldham ORLFC, Watersheddings, Oldham. Entries should be in no later than 1st January 1990.

The first winner pulled out of the hat wins a rugby ball signed by the Oldham first team squad.

D R O F E I R R U C C M  
M U N R O O O L I E N O  
A A L D L Y G E N A U R  
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G O O D W A Y D D O N A  
E N N J H E N A G L O G  
L E A R O U N D S L S A  
O D M W L N E C E A N N  
D S R M R N E A T R I A  
I R E R L I F S A R K L  
A A H C O O K E B O T F  
N M S C D R A Y K W A H

Compiled by Helen C. Hawkyard



Evading the tackle!



Best wishes to Colin  
in his Benefit Year  
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## COLIN'S TOP THREE MATCHES

*Colin has played in nearly 200 first team matches for Oldham. Here he describes three that are particularly memorable.*

### HUYTON VERSUS OLDHAM

"My first choice has to be my debut for Oldham at Huyton. This was my first impression of professional Rugby League at a heavily vandalised ground with concrete walling around the pitch. I was picked to play at second row alongside another Huddersfield man, Alan Forster. On the pitch I soon forgot about the state of the ground and concentrated on the game which proved to be a dream debut with yours truly scoring twice. The second try started with a kick through the line. The ball was bouncing this way and that and fell in front of me. I couldn't refuse! Everything went well that day and I remember the smiles on the faces of my Mum and Dad. They were proud of me and I was proud of them for their support and help. A great day."

### OLDHAM VERSUS FEATHERSTONE

"Second choice is the Second Division Premiership final at a packed and very hot Old Trafford. I was confident we would win and in the first half my prediction was proving correct. Featherstone Rovers decided to spoil the party and staged a truly remarkable come-back to leave us a couple of points adrift. After they took the lead we waited behind the posts and Des Foy's head had dropped. 'Don't worry,' I said, 'There's another ten minutes to go yet!' Needless to say Des broke free to feed Kevin Meadows who scrambled over for the memorable winning try. My lasting memory of that great, exhausting day is the thousands of deliriously happy Oldham fans who were rejoicing in our victory. A great atmosphere, one I'll always cherish."

### OLDHAM VERSUS AUSTRALIA

"Finally, the night the all conquering Australians came to Watersheddings to sweep aside an Oldham side that was struggling in the League. The Aussie Kangaroos quickly stamped their authority on the game and were looking forward to an easy romp to victory. They didn't count on the Oldham fighting spirit or the incredible vocal support coming from terraces that encouraged us to give the Aussie's their biggest fight of the tour - and I started the charge with a memorable try. The rest of the team were inspired by the score and we ran the Aussies very close indeed, proving at home that we can beat anyone, especially with our great supporters."



Stop that man!



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# Colin's Best Team

In the 10 years Colin has been at Oldham he's played with the best. Here he turns selector and picks his team of the decade.

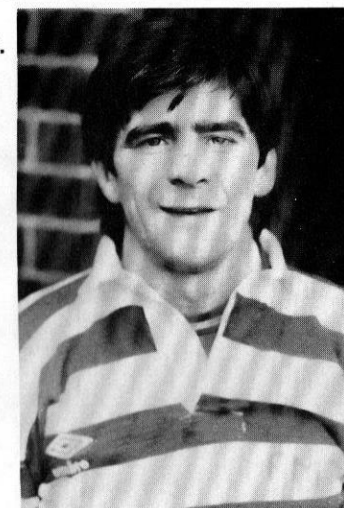
1. **MARTIN MURPHY**  
Very safe, safer than the Bank of England. Excellent on attack and a very loyal Oldham servant.
2. **MIKE TAYLOR**  
From Huddersfield, where all the best players come from. Need I say anymore!
3. **PHIL LARDER**  
Great finisher who has made a great contribution to Oldham over the years.
4. **DES FOY**  
Our very own Billy Wizz, whose speed and deadly try scoring won many games for Oldham. The Aussies were enjoying his silky skills but now he's back where he belongs.
5. **GREEN VIGO**  
One of the game's true characters who could score with style. The crowds loved him.
6. **DAVID TOPLISS**  
Excellent all round rugby player who was an inspirational leader. It's no surprise to see him doing so well as a coach.
7. **PADDY KIRWAN**  
Non-stop worker who thrilled us all when he scored the try that knocked Wigan out of the cup. With Paddy by your side, it's like playing with an extra forward.
8. **MICK MORGAN**  
One of the game's true hard men. Mick will take the knocks so others can take the glory. Rugby League would be lost without players like Mick.
9. **IAN SANDERSON**  
A true blue talent that has been locked away by the strong arm of the law for too long.
10. **HUGH WADDELL**  
A back rowers dream. Hugh is a hard running forward who never ever stops. A battering ram with the skills to match.
11. **ANDY GOODWAY**  
One of the best, a model professional in every sense of the word – until he decided to join Wigan. Seriously a great player who deserves all his success.
12. **COLIN HAWKYARD**  
Naturally, I'd always pick myself. First on the team sheet too!
13. **MICK WORRALL**  
Great forward who works selflessly for the team.
14. **DAVID HOBBS**  
Put this man anywhere in my pack and you'll have a pack that will do the business.
15. **TERRY FLANAGAN**  
A great leader – who can even organise from the bench. A future GB coach?



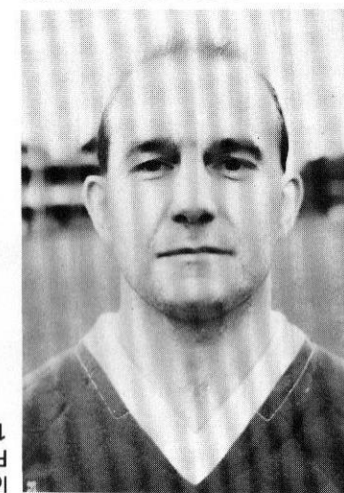
Breaking through against Workington...

And who would Colin's Oldham stars play against. Try this representative team for size.

1. M. Burke
2. J. Lydon
3. E. Hanley
4. G. Schofield
5. M. Offiah
6. T. Myler
7. A. Gregory
8. K. Ward
9. D. Watkinson
10. H. Waddell
11. A. Goodway
12. C. Burton
13. S. Norton
14. J. Joyner
15. J. Mills



DAVID TOPLISS



TERRY FLANAGAN



MICK MORGAN

Answers to 'SPOT THE DIFFERENCE'

1. 'V' on Shirt; 2. Number on Shirt; 3. Line on Ball; 4. Finger on left hand; 5. Stud on Boot; 6. Padding on Goal Post; 7. Line on Face of Opponent; 8. Arm in Crowd; 9. Line on Roof Support; 10. Roof Angle.



...leaving the defence clutching at empty space





Happy families - Colin and Helen with Ross (left) and Joel

*A big 'thank you'  
to you all*

First of all, I would like to thank my lovely wife, Helen, for her loyal support and help she has given me over the last 10 and a half years. With Helen by my side the bad times have been bearable and the good times twice as enjoyable. She's a great wife and mother to our two young sons, and future second rowers, Ross and Joel. Thank you Helen.

My family, Mum and Dad, Kevin and Steve and all the rest of the clan on both sides, deserve a special mention for all their support, helping me to reach the highs of my career at Oldham.

I would also like to take this opportunity of thanking all the First and Second team Oldham coaches, who have guided me throughout my ten years with Rugby League's best club. I've learned from each one and appreciate the time and effort they put into turning me into a better player.

There are many, many others – too numerous, unfortunately, to mention by name here. They have helped throughout the years and their assistance is very much appreciated.

I also wish to thank my Benefit Committee for making my Benefit year an exciting reality, the advertisers and contributors who made this Brochure possible, and Oldham Rugby League Football Club and its staff whose help has been invaluable.

And finally, an extra big thank you, the loyal supporters, for buying this brochure and supporting me throughout my Benefit year. I hope you enjoy reading about my career with Oldham and will treasure it as I undoubtedly will.

It has been a pleasure and a privilege to play for one of the world's best Rugby League club's in front of the most knowledgeable and loyal fans around.

I am eternally grateful for the chance to run a benefit year and thank you in advance for your support throughout the coming year.

Thank you. All of you!

*Colin Hawkyard.*