

The try that put the Fartowners tails up



Magnificent display by Huddersfield forwards swamps Cup-holders

Smales nips smartly between French and Vollenhoven for Huddersfield's first try at St. Helens after being put through by Bowman, who is lying on the ground.

"Davies did not refuse to play"

—Mr. K. Senior

Huddersfield took the field at St. Helens on Saturday to the strains of "Entry of the Gladiators"; it ought to have been to "See the Conquering Heroes Come!" In the following eighty minutes they proceeded to show the Rugby League Cup-holders how to play Cup football—sound, solid and not as unimaginative as many would have us believe—and it brought them their due reward with a 13-2 success.

No wonder that at the end the players leapt on one another's shoulders in their excitement at going forward; no wonder the supporters, who had gone to cheer encouragingly, whooped with delight, and no wonder, too, that selector J. S. Barritt was smiling.

He had been impressed at Leigh of the work of the Huddersfield forwards, and he had just seen his impressions confirmed. In those 80 games it would seem that at least a couple of the Fartowners have booked themselves for a trip "down under" at the end of the season.

Which two? My guess is Bowman and Noble, but on Saturday's showing it could be any of the five who finished the game—to select one above another in that match would be the gravest injustice.

First there was the veteran Slevin, the cool, calm general, selecting first this man and then that to be the shock troop of the moment, and seeing all the time that the man he served never got ball and tackler together.

Noble, Bowman and Clark took turn and turn about to be the battering rams, and if the first named got most of the glory because he made one try and scored another, the others tried no less mightily.

Backing them all up was Close, always with the ball and always there to tackle, and getting a fair share of possession if, for once, having the worst of the scrums.

Tackling was Huddersfield's greatest asset on Saturday. It was clear before the game that at all costs St. Helens must be prevented from getting the ball to the fast wingers, Vollenhoven and Sullivan, and right well did Huddersfield see that this policy was carried out.

Vollenhoven was so starved of the ball that by the end he was wandering all over the field in search of it.

Low tackles

How much was the worth of the Huddersfield tackling and marking may be judged from the fact that at one point in the second half Huddersfield with the ball were penned in their own "25" for minutes on end, but when they lost possession St. Helens were pushed back into their own half in the twinkling of an eye. It was most illuminating.

Shining brightly in this stern duty of defence was the young, lightly built Deighton. On him fell the task of marking the mighty Huddart, and once again it was David who felled Goliath!

Fell him he did, time after time, classically going low to whip his ankles from under him, and after once or twice failing to hang on, making sure afterwards that he was not going to be shaken off.

Stocks, Wicks and Haywood, if less spectacular, never shirked and both wingers made the best of what little chance they had, with Haywood adding an almost insulting last-minute try and Wicks having two or three telling runs.

In such a rugged cup-tie it was surprising how little Dyson was called upon, but his very presence gave confidence to those in front, and that he could be relied on was early shown by a couple of tackles on Ashcroft and confirmed by later ones on Sullivan and Ashcroft again.

Not as much was seen of Davies as in other games, and that I feel is a compliment to him, because he could so easily have tried to do too much, particularly after the dismissal of his opposite number Murphy.

He had at any rate a big hand in Bowman's try, and by a little dart here and a dash there kept reminding St. Helens that they had better not ignore him. Smales, too, was quietly effective, and the manner of his try backing up a thrust by Bowman to nip over was a tribute to his excellent supporting work.

Sending-off incident

I have purposely left until the end the sending off of Ramsden and Murphy. St. Helens, upset by the early Huddersfield scores, and I thought made one or two questionable tackles and the game generally was "hotting up." In this atmosphere of tension Vollenhoven got away, Ramsden dove across to squeeze him to the touchline but the winger sliced furiously inside, to be brought flat on his back by a high tackle. It looked nasty—but then from a distance any head or shoulder tackle on a flying winger looks like a stiff arm—and the crowd yelled for blood.

RIGHT: Major and Stocks at grips, with the Fartowner making sure he doesn't lose the ball.

BELOW: Only inches to go but Dyson pulls back Sullivan's head to stop him putting the ball over the line, with another couple of tacklers hanging on to his legs.

The tackle not only flattened Vollenhoven, it also put Ramsden down, and Murphy, backing up was said by the referee to kick at him. He promptly sent both off, though that did not end the incident, for a spectator jumped the fence and had to be prevented getting at the referee.

Personally I doubt if either decision was justified, and the arguments will be long and frequent whether the result turned on the incident, for many will argue cynically that Ramsden for Murphy was a "good swap."

At any rate up to that point Murphy had not been at all impressive, and if St. Helens could not make play for their fast wingers, could they have fared any more successfully in putting Murphy through?

Forward success

It is very doubtful, for they were beaten—and beaten most decidedly—in the most important part of cup-tie football—in the forwards. The strong bullocking of Major, French and Watson was never done swiftly enough to be really effective, and if Huddart and Ashcroft once or twice crashed past the first and second tackles away from the ruck, they undid the good by holding on too long.

No, Huddersfield, encouraged by that early penalty (one of only two or three that came their way) deserved their win, and the longer the game went on the more assured they became.

Their tries came from Smales, Bowman and Heywood, with Dyson kicking two goals. Rhodes kicked a penalty for St. Helens.

After Saturday Huddersfield can surely look forward with confidence to the game at Castleford.

—The Scout

MR. KEN SENIOR, the Huddersfield R.L. Club secretary, this morning denied reports that Davies, their new stand-off, who signed from Leigh shortly before the Cup deadline a month ago, refused to play at St. Helens on Saturday unless he was paid for the game against Leigh ten days previously.

"At no time did Davies say he wouldn't play," said Mr. Senior. "Before the game, he asked for clarification of his position about the Leigh match. After a talk with the chairman of the Football Committee, Mr. Cunningham, the matter was satisfactorily resolved and Davies played."

Davies was chosen for the game against Leigh on February 21, but when the Huddersfield team arrived at Leigh, Davies's home town, the player met them and said that owing to a leg injury he was not fit. The team was therefore switched, with Deighton going to stand-off and Booth coming in at centre.

It is customary for Huddersfield reserves to help the trainer run down the players before a game but on this occasion Davies did not do so.

He was selected for the "A" team match last Saturday week but did not turn up for it, nor was he at Fartown for the training on Tuesday, though he did turn up for special cup training on Thursday.

Suffragette on Norwegian stamps

Oslo.—The first woman to be portrayed on a Norwegian stamp will be one of the first Norwegian suffragettes, Camilla Collett, the 150th anniversary of whose birth will be commemorated in January next year.

The stamp will also commemorate the introduction of universal suffrage in Norway fifty years ago in June 1963.

