



**THE**  
**RUGBY**  
**LEAGUE**  
**FOOTBALL BOOK**

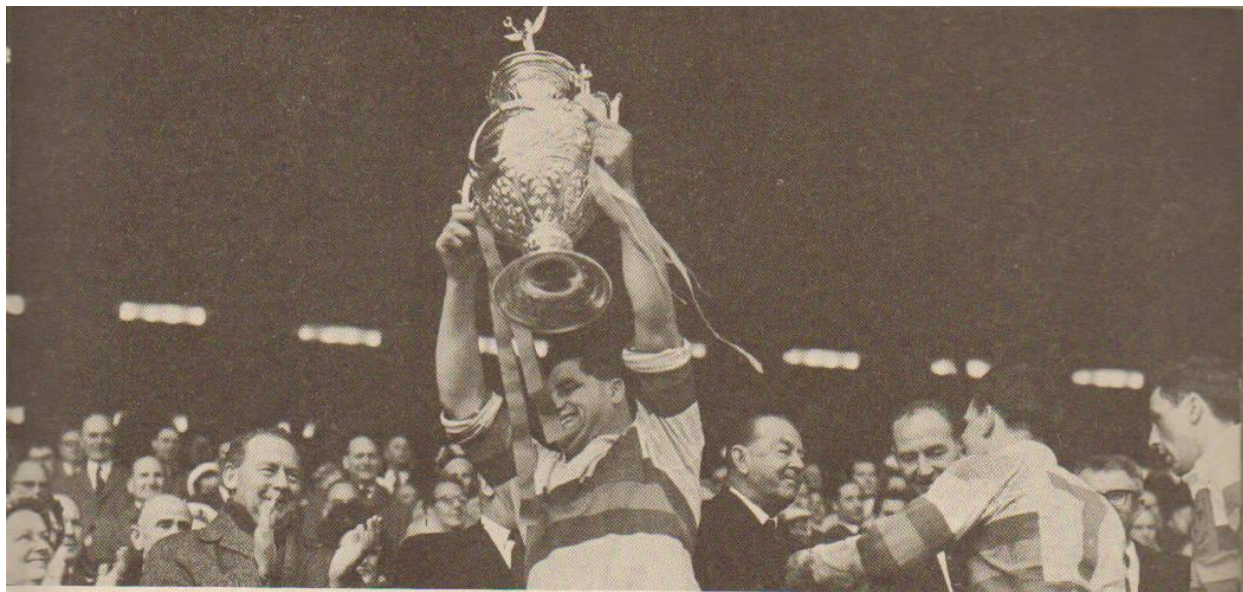
*Edited by*  
**BEV**  
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*Wilkinson, the Wakefield prop forward, up-ends Ramsden, the Huddersfield loose forward, in the Wembley Challenge Cup final*





*Turner, the Wakefield captain, holds the Cup aloft*

# Wakefield's Wembley Triumph

**W**EMBLEY Day, 1962, belonged to Neil Fox! Wakefield's powerhouse centre stole the honours from the start to finish – and in doing so possibly started a trend which could bring out a new facet of the game. For May 12 was also the day of the drop-goal. Three shots from Fox at vital stages in the game rocked Huddersfield to their very foundations; foundations on which was built

the wall-like defence of a dogged, hard-working outfit.

The pre-set plan of Huddersfield's canny Scottish coach Dave Valentine was obviously to cut out the frills in attack and give absolutely nothing away when the positions were reversed. Perhaps the Fartowners carried the policy a little too far—they were beaten 12 points to 6—but they were ruthlessly efficient



*Hurst and Skene of Wakefield  
bring down Haywood of Hudders-  
field*







when it came to keeping their line intact. There were only two tries from each side, but all the more credit for the ingenuity and far-sightedness of Wakefield's coach Ken Traill for plotting such an unusual route to victory as the drop-goal, for many years allowed to decay as a strategic weapon in hard-fought games like this.

He judged rightly that Huddersfield, given little chance of winning by the experts, might resort to negative tactics in a desperate effort to upset odds. So prepared for this, the Wakefield skipper Derek Turner and ace-marksmen Neil Fox knew what they must do if the hunch proved correct.

They were soon to get the answer – and so were the 85,000 spectators. For in the first 15 minutes Huddersfield's young hooker Don Close quickly established his superiority in the battle for scrum possession, but, even in

*Fred Smith, the Wakefield winger, is tackled into touch by Wicks, the Huddersfield winger*

those early stages with a lion's share of the ball, the Fartowners showed they were relying mainly upon their strong pack of forwards to carry the day.

Their relentless slogging down the centre soon resulted in a casualty, however, when Turner was dazed in a tackle and had to leave the field for a time. This was indeed a great blow to Wakefield, but it also gave their great second row man Brian Briggs the chance to show his leadership. Even when his skipper returned still slightly dazed, Briggs led the pack like a man possessed, giving one of the finest forward displays ever to be seen on the green turf of Wembley.

Indeed, in the 18th minute it was Briggs who fed Fox for the first drop goal. Making



little headway against the ferocious tackling of his fellow Yorkshiremen, the fair-haired giant scooped the ball back from a play-the-ball into the waiting hands of Fox. The young centre stood calmly poised as a mass of claret and gold jerseys converged. But, a split second before he was buried in the stampede, the ball had gone straight and true from his deadly left foot for a magnificent 25-yard drop goal.

The boy-wonder was on the Wembley points trail again. He had no hope of repeating his 1960 triumph when he landed a record seven goals and scored two tries, but a few more drop-goals like that could earn him his second winners' medal.

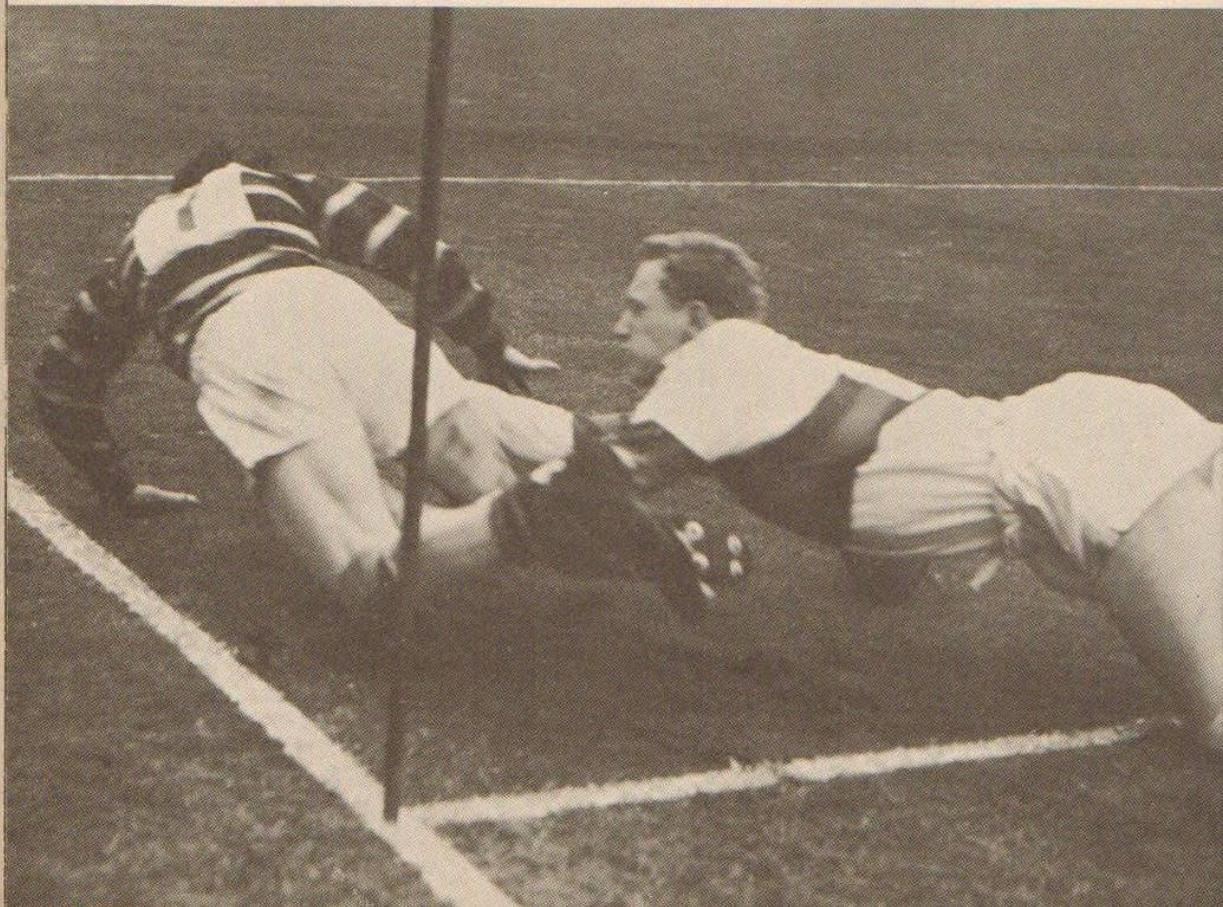
And it was a jubilant Fox who set Wakefield on their first try-scoring raid 60 seconds later, and was there for the final pass to finish off the brilliant move. He was the one man Huddersfield could not hold, and when the big, bustling centre got the ball on his own 25-yard line

it took both Leo Booth and winger Aidan Breen to check him. Even so, he struggled partly free and sent a beautiful pass to his unmarked wing partner Ken Hirst.

This was the first chance of the match for the 21-year-old winger who had been preferred at the last minute to £9,000 Springbok Jan Prinsloo, and he took it gratefully. In a thrilling touchline sprint he outpaced Huddersfield's efficient cover defence, swerved inside to meet full-back Dyson and then gave the ever-present Fox a return pass for a 25-yard dash to the corner for a sparkling try.

But the Cup was far from won. Huddersfield battered their way back into the game with a tremendous series of forward rushes which would have pushed back any defence and, in the 29th minute, they deservedly

*Smales, the Huddersfield scrum half, goes over to score with Gerry Round, the Wakefield full back, tackling*

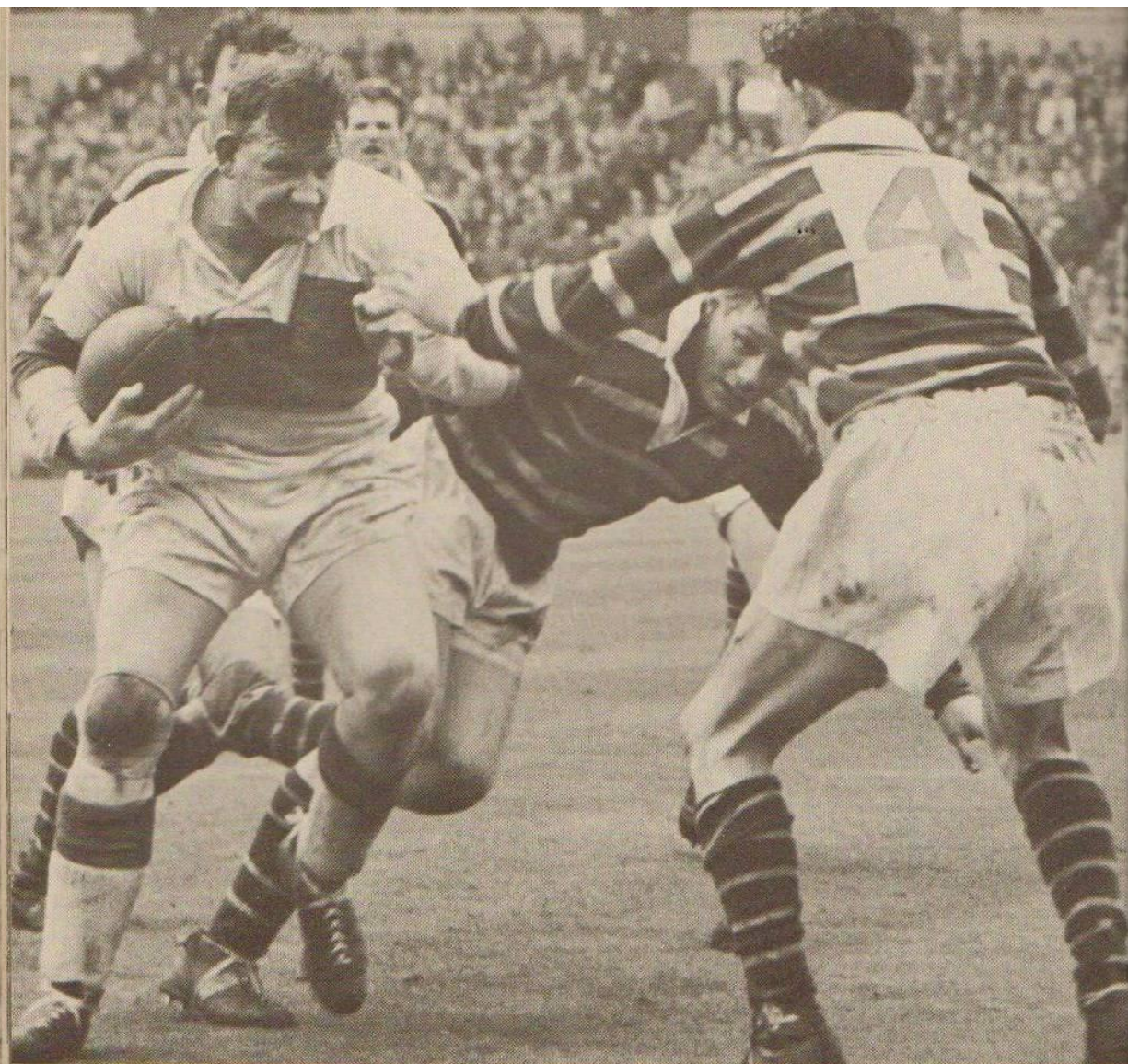






*Booth, the Huddersfield centre, is brought down by Holiday of Wakefield*





scored a try. Wakefield were still deploying their forces after one unsuccessful raid when suddenly Huddersfield's tireless leader Tommy Smales popped up on the weakened right flank of the opposition. Jack Wilkinson seemed to have the evasive scrum-half in his grasp when Smales somehow gave him the

*Wilkinson, the Wakefield prop forward, hands off Haywood, the Huddersfield centre*

slip and, in the race for the corner, full-back Gerry Round could not get across quickly enough to stop him darting over for a brilliantly taken try.





*A Wakefield player is caught in possession*





*Ramsden, the Huddersfield loose forward, dives over to score with Gerry Round, the Wakefield full back, tackling*

So it was 5-3 at half-time, and the bitter struggle for the vital next score waged on until the 63rd and 64th minutes when again the effervescent Fox came into the picture with a repeat performance of his pre-interval strategy.

It was this brief spell which clinched the destination of the Challenge Cup – and swung the voting of the journalists to give Fox the coveted Lance Todd Trophy for the outstanding player of the game.

Wakefield had struggled into an attacking position with Huddersfield gallantly contesting every inch when Fox struck again. Turner, by this time fully recovered, gave him the ball and, before Huddersfield had time to realise they were getting a double dose, it was sailing between the uprights for a valuable two points.

It was a savage blow to the Fartown defenders, for they knew there could be no defence against such a long-range missile! Triumphant at seeing their tactics paying rich dividends, Wakefield immediately stormed in to consolidate their position and it was again their left flank which found the chink in Huddersfield's armour.

Briggs made the deadly thrust with a powerful run which brought Breen off his wing and again gave Hirst a clear field. But this time he was on his own. He could not hope for any support as the Huddersfield cover desperately fell back. Hirst caught Dyson on the wrong foot with a beautiful in-field swerve and then cut out again for the corner, beating Smales in his dash to the line.

With Wakefield leading 10-3 the Cup was won and lost. Huddersfield's loose forward Peter Ramsden scored a late try, but it was fitting that Fox should have the last word – or at least the last kick. For as Referee Dennis Davies put the whistle to his lips for the end of the Cup Final, Neil Fox, the Wakefield wonder-boy, unleashed his left foot to send his third drop-kick over the bar.

Teams, WAKEFIELD: Round, Smith, Skene, Fox, Hirst; Poynton, Holliday; Wilkinson, Oakes, Firth, Briggs, Williamson, Turner.

HUDDERSFIELD: Dyson, Breen, Booth, Haywood, Wicks; Deighton, Smales; Slevin, Close, Noble, Clarke, Bowman, Ramsden.

REFEREE: Mr. D. T. H. Davies (Manchester).





*The victorious cup-winners*



*Tommy Smales (right) holds up the Championship cup after the presentation with Frank Dyson (left)*





## Champions of 1962

# SMALES IS HUDDERSFIELD HERO

**W**ELL, the 1962 Champions are Huddersfield, and deservedly so after their great Odsal victory against Wakefield. But it was a pity their sweet taste of success was slightly tainted by a doubtful try.

For the years to come 'the try that never was' will be the biggest bone of contention ever to be chewed over whenever Championship Finals come under discussion East of the Pennines.

The record books already have Huddersfield's 14-5 win in black and white, but what is not recorded among the mass of facts and figures is that Huddersfield's first try, which changed the course of the game, should not have been allowed.

It came in the 37th minute with Wakefield holding a 5-2 lead.

Huddersfield full-back Frank Dyson cleared his line with a long kick into the Wakefield

territory where Trinity's South African centre Alan Skene grabbed the bouncing ball. He was tackled as he tried to pass the ball back to Gerry Round, but, as the full-back went to pick it up, Huddersfield loose forward Peter Ramsden appeared to hold him back while winger Mike Wicks swept in to scoop it up and race over the line.

Referee Norman Railton must surely have been unsighted for what an outcry there was from the Trinity followers when he ran up to credit Wicks with the score.

To rub salt in the Wakefield wound, Dyson, whose goal-kicking had been off-beam in the previous week's Wembley defeat, sent the ball soaring between the posts from the touchline to improve the try.

It was a bitter blow for Wakefield and they never recovered. Whether they would have won but for THAT try, and pulled off the



fantastic four-cups-in-a-season will never be answered, although it will surely be the subject of dispute for a long, long time.

Wakefield started off where they finished in their Wembley triumph. After Dyson had shot over a penalty goal for the Fartowners, that irrepressible young man Neil Fox put his stamp on the game.

In the 29th minute, after a quiet start, he suddenly exploded into action. In typical Fox style he burst through two tackles to give Fred Smith a half-chance. The winger might possibly have scored himself as he whizzed down the touchline for the corner flag, but

instead he turned the ball back inside. As at Wembley, Fox had galloped alongside and gratefully took the pass to romp under the posts for a glorious try and, with an easy goal-kick, brought his season's points tally to his best-ever - 456.

Then came the Wicks try to give Huddersfield the boost they needed. From that point they were undoubtedly the better team. Determined to get at least one trophy to mark their season's astonishing improve-

*Ramsden of Huddersfield lets the ball go as he is challenged by Round of Wakefield*







*Keith Holiday of Wakefield is tackled by Ramsden of Huddersfield*

...





*The Huddersfield team before the start of the game*

ment, they were content to play it safe.

Their splendid defence, aided by Wakefield's many handling mistakes, overcame Milan Kosanovic's 2-1 scrum superiority for the Trinity.

All that was required of Huddersfield was to keep up their remorseless tackling and take what chances were offered. And after Dyson had landed his third goal following an obstruction, one such chance was presented.

It came in the dying seconds of the game. A gap suddenly appeared in Wakefield's otherwise tight defence as Huddersfield's hero, skipper Tommy Smales, received the ball after a tackle. The enterprising scrum-half was through it in a twinkling and in the thrilling race for the line he just squeezed over as he was felled by a tackle.

The Odsal bowl exploded as Huddersfield's

excited fans showered on to the pitch to congratulate the man-of-the-match, and it was minutes before police cleared them away as Dyson's low kick crawled over the cross-bar to give the Fartowners their seventh Championship.

The victory brought a great personal satisfaction to ex-Leigh player Gwyn Davies. For him it was the climax to one of the unhappiest careers in the game. Unsettled with the Lancashire club and dogged by injuries, the tiny half-back, who signed for Huddersfield only a few weeks before, recovered from a hip injury just in time to win his first medal - and he earned it. He outshone Wakefield's tourist Harold Poynton in attack and defence, highlighting his game with four delightful bursts.





*Neil Fox in action*