

TOC H (MANCHESTER) RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

The Club was formed during Season 1924-25 by hostellers living in Mark 1V., Victoria Park; and the first match was played against the Manchester Y.M.C.A. The following week the same men played a hockey match but decided to keep to rugger in the future. The Officers of the period apparently believed that paper work was not essential, and as a result the Club has no records prior to season 1929-30.

However, it is known that the tenancy of the present ground was taken over in 1926 and here we have remained ever since. There have been many changes in the dressing rooms, and we have been in and out of the Didsbury Hotel no less than 5 times.

In 1929 a young sixteen year old boy, Charles Slow joined the Club and later was capped for England when with Northampton. Other members of the Club who have been honoured are: O.L.Jessop (Cumberland), J.Etteridge (East Midlands), and C.Chapman (Kent). We must be honest and add that these were not conferred when playing for the Club!

Just prior to the War we were fielding three teams, and out of a strength of 59 no less than 56 saw service with the armed forces. After the cessation of hostilities play was resumed in September 1945, and one fifteen was turned out throughout the season. Although the results were generally disastrous the Club re-built on a sound basis and today four teams are being fielded every week, helped and encouraged by old players. On several occasions during the past season five full fifteens have been fielded.

In 1949, the late Mr.Gordon Whittaker brought a fifteen along to play a team drawn from the five teams in South Manchester to celebrate our Silver Jubilee, and from this has grown the Annual game played at the end of each season on the ground of one of the five clubs.

Mr.J.H.Roberts has kindly stepped into the breach and taken over. Last season, his strong team was held to a most reasonable score.

The Club started a Seven-a-Side Competition for junior clubs in 1951 when 17 teams participated. The accepted entries for the seventh competition total 26, with other clubs wishing to play.

The Club was the instigator of the recently formed Manchester and District Rugby Union Fixtures Organisation, which seeks to ease the pressing problems of fixtures. Every club in and around Manchester are now members, and as far as 60 miles away.

In conclusion, the Club has a forward Looking policy of helping and encouraging youths and schoolboys to take up the game with results that are now showing much promise. Over two-thirds of the present playing strength of the Club first handled the oval ball when playing for the Club.

Anyone wishing to join the Club is invited to get in touch with the Secretary: WILFRID LORD, "Woodgarth," The Hough, Alderley Edge, Cheshire. Telephone: ALDerley Edge 2502.