

TOPBINS



Pictures by John Smith / FAW

# Hello There

## Almost the end of the season

At the time of writing, we're close to signing off for the summer across the domestic leagues. It's been another interesting and exciting season with the race to get into the Cymru Premier taking a lot of the focus. I know from a personal level, this season has been dramatic on the pitch but also off it as my team Holywell Town won promotion to the Cymru Premier but had a lot of work to do to get the licence.

I'm sure many of you know anyway but the work that goes on behind the scenes by volunteers is incredible, a lot of it unseen and unrewarded. but it's so vital to a club.

We've seen plenty happen on the managerial merry go round also this season and of course we have seen some great football matches and some strong teams in 2025/26. It goes to show the standard is getting higher and every season will be even more hard work to compete.

A shout out to all teams that won their league, got promoted this season.

From the mag's perspective, I will continue the coverage. I might be going to Tier 1 next season with an increased media workload but I want to ensure Tier 2 and of course as much of Tier 3 and the women's game get's coverage so we're not going anywhere.

I get a lot of nice feedback about the work going into the magazine and I want to do more and speak to more people. Without you all, it wouldn't be worth the effort. So a big thank you for all the support this season.

Enjoy the edition. Diolch,  
Dan

# Duo Part Of Historic Somalia Breakthrough

**Abdi Sharif and Mo Ali have played their part in a historic moment for Somalia, as the nation reached the group stage of AFCON qualification for the first time in their history earlier this month.**

Both players have been regular figures domestically this season, with Sharif making 22 appearances for Connah's Quay Nomads, while Ali featured 14 times for Rhyl 1879 in the JD Cymru North.

Somalia's progress came after a two legged preliminary round tie against Mauritius. Neither side could be separated across the two matches, with both finishing goalless, before Somalia came through on penalties to secure progression.

Sharif and Ali both started the first leg, with the Nomads midfielder keeping his place for the return fixture, while Ali was named among the substitutes for the second leg.

Ranked 198th in the world, Somalia will now be drawn into a qualification group alongside some of Africa's leading nations, with fixtures scheduled for September, October and November.





# Aizlewood To Step Down After Two Decades

Pictures by **Lewis Mitchell / FAW**

**Mark Aizlewood will step down as Carmarthen Town manager at the end of the season, bringing to a close a 20 year spell with the club.**

The decision has been made by mutual consent, with the club placing on record its thanks for his commitment and long standing service.

In a personal statement, Aizlewood reflected on his time at the Old Gold, describing it as an honour and highlighting the journey across more than two decades. From developing players to competing at the highest level possible, he spoke of the pride built through collective effort.

Family sits at the centre of his decision. Having stepped away previously before returning last year, he now feels the time is right to fully step back and dedicate more time to his wife, children and grandchildren.

**“It has truly been an honour to be part of this club. Carmarthen Town will always hold a special place in my heart.”**

Carmarthen Town end the season outside the top four, missing out on promotion in a campaign where the top three sides move up into the newly expanded Cymru Premier.

He will be succeeded by current assistant Rhodri Thomas, who takes charge of the men's first team following the conclusion of the season.

# Roberts Calls Time On Career

**Denbigh Town captain Keiron Roberts has officially brought the curtain down on his playing career.**

The 36 year old midfielder made 14 appearances in all competitions during his final season, closing things out with fixtures against Penrhyncoch and Caersws.

An experienced and tenacious presence in midfield, Roberts joined Denbigh in the summer of 2020 following spells with Greenfield and Rhydymwyn. He made his debut in the Nathaniel MG Cup against Llandudno in July 2021 and quickly became a key figure within the squad.

Across six years at Central Park, he established himself as a reliable and consistent performer, as well as a leader within the dressing room. He played an important role in one of the club's most successful seasons in recent years, serving as vice captain during the 2022/23 campaign as Town secured the Ardal North West title and the Ardal North League Cup.

His retirement marks the end of a long spell in the Welsh game, with Denbigh losing a player who set standards both on and off the pitch.



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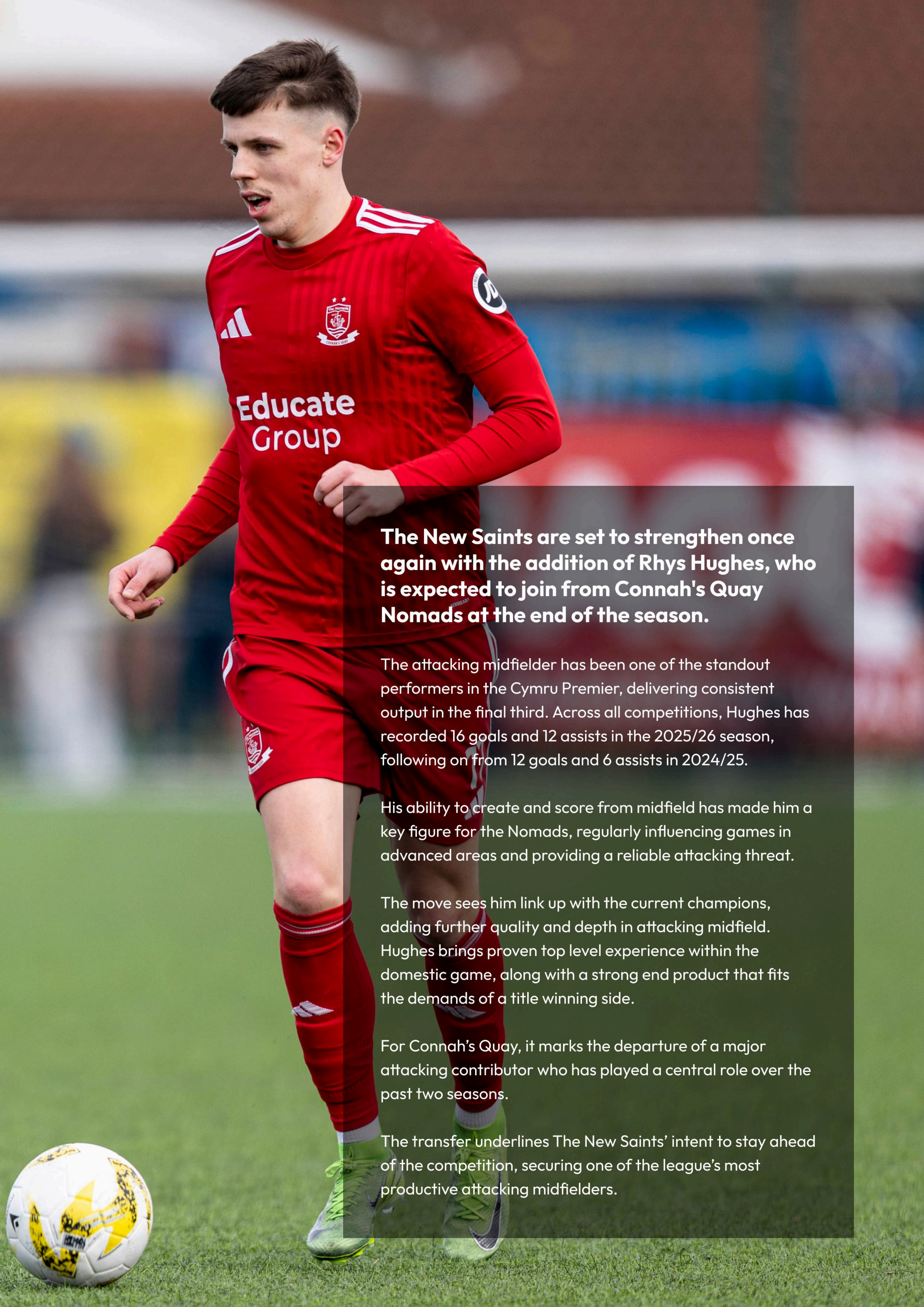
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# Rhys Hughes Set To Join The New Saints

Pictures by **Lewis Mitchell / FAW**



**The New Saints are set to strengthen once again with the addition of Rhys Hughes, who is expected to join from Connah's Quay Nomads at the end of the season.**

The attacking midfielder has been one of the standout performers in the Cymru Premier, delivering consistent output in the final third. Across all competitions, Hughes has recorded 16 goals and 12 assists in the 2025/26 season, following on from 12 goals and 6 assists in 2024/25.

His ability to create and score from midfield has made him a key figure for the Nomads, regularly influencing games in advanced areas and providing a reliable attacking threat.

The move sees him link up with the current champions, adding further quality and depth in attacking midfield. Hughes brings proven top level experience within the domestic game, along with a strong end product that fits the demands of a title winning side.

For Connah's Quay, it marks the departure of a major attacking contributor who has played a central role over the past two seasons.

The transfer underlines The New Saints' intent to stay ahead of the competition, securing one of the league's most productive attacking midfielders.



Pictures by **Sam Eaden / FAW**

# Ah-Mun Commits Future To Bluebirds

**Haverfordwest County have secured a key piece of their attacking line-up after Ben Ah-Mun agreed a new one-year deal with the club.**

The 34-year-old forward has been a consistent performer since arriving ahead of the 2024/25 season, making 74 appearances and contributing 30 goals along with 12 assists in all competitions.

Known for stepping up in the big moments, Ah-Mun has delivered when it matters most, including crucial strikes in European fixtures and the play-off final.

He has already racked up 22 goal contributions this season, underlining his continued importance as the Bluebirds push for another strong finish.

Manager Tony Pennock highlighted both his output and influence, pointing to his goalscoring record, experience and presence within the squad, while also noting there had been interest from elsewhere.

Ah-Mun, meanwhile, spoke of his desire to continue the journey, citing the togetherness within the group and his belief in what the club can achieve over the next year.





# Airbus Retain Cup

**Airbus UK Broughton capped off an impressive season by retaining the Welsh Blood Service League Cup, defeating Treowen Stars 2-0 at Latham Park.**

Already celebrating promotion to the JD Cymru Premier, the Wingmakers added silverware to their campaign with a composed performance, sealed by goals from George Peers and James Davies.

The decisive moment arrived midway through the second half when substitute Davies made an immediate impact. Just five minutes after coming on, he met Nathan Williams' delivery and turned it in off the underside of the bar to put Airbus firmly in control.

That came after a tight and scrappy opening period played in heavy conditions in Newtown, where both sides struggled to build sustained spells of possession. Airbus still looked the more likely, with Jordan Evans testing the goalkeeper and Danny Warren going close with a header.



Their pressure eventually told just before the break. Peers was brought down in the area and calmly converted the resulting penalty himself to give Airbus the lead heading into half-time.

Both sides had come through testing semi-finals to reach the showpiece. Airbus saw off Afan Lido, while Treowen needed penalties to get past Buckley Town.

Treowen, who impressed throughout their run to the final, continued to battle and showed resilience defensively, with Callum Hodges producing a key block to keep the scoreline down. Their cup run capped a solid first season in the Cymru South, where they secured a 9th-place finish.

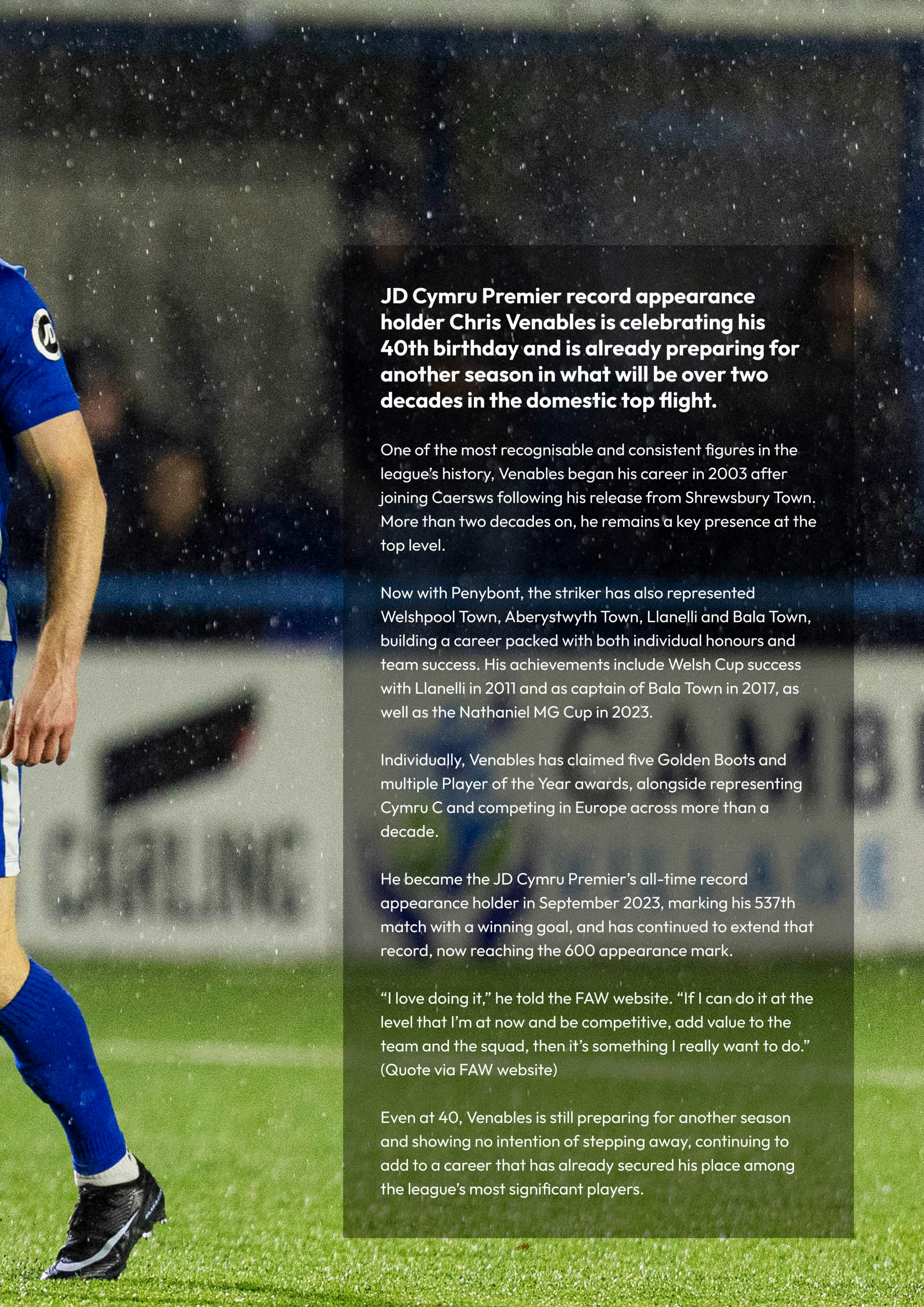
They pushed late on in search of a way back, but Airbus managed the closing stages well to see out the win. Back-to-back cup triumphs, combined with promotion, underline a strong season for Airbus as they prepare for a return to the top flight.

Gwasanae  
Welsh



# Chris Venables Celebrates 600th Game Milestone

Pictures by **Lewis Mitchell / FAW**



**JD Cymru Premier record appearance holder Chris Venables is celebrating his 40th birthday and is already preparing for another season in what will be over two decades in the domestic top flight.**

One of the most recognisable and consistent figures in the league's history, Venables began his career in 2003 after joining Caersws following his release from Shrewsbury Town. More than two decades on, he remains a key presence at the top level.

Now with Penybont, the striker has also represented Welshpool Town, Aberystwyth Town, Llanelli and Bala Town, building a career packed with both individual honours and team success. His achievements include Welsh Cup success with Llanelli in 2011 and as captain of Bala Town in 2017, as well as the Nathaniel MG Cup in 2023.

Individually, Venables has claimed five Golden Boots and multiple Player of the Year awards, alongside representing Cymru C and competing in Europe across more than a decade.

He became the JD Cymru Premier's all-time record appearance holder in September 2023, marking his 537th match with a winning goal, and has continued to extend that record, now reaching the 600 appearance mark.

"I love doing it," he told the FAW website. "If I can do it at the level that I'm at now and be competitive, add value to the team and the squad, then it's something I really want to do."  
(Quote via FAW website)

Even at 40, Venables is still preparing for another season and showing no intention of stepping away, continuing to add to a career that has already secured his place among the league's most significant players.

# From The Dugout To The Boardroom

**A new chapter begins for Sam Houldsworth.**

After more than 350 appearances and close to a decade leading the side as manager, Houldsworth's influence on Newport City Football Club has been significant at every level. From player to manager, he has played a central role in shaping the club through some of its most important years.

Now, as part of the club's ongoing restructure, he steps into the role of Director of Football, taking on responsibility for the long term direction, standards and structure of the football side.

Alongside this, Houldsworth also moves into the professional game as CEO of Newport County AFC, marking a major step in his career off the pitch.

As he begins this next phase, we sat down with Sam to reflect on his journey so far, his connection to Newport City, and his vision for the future across both roles.



**“Having taken on every role possible at the club has provided me with an understanding and knowledge base that is relevant at any level of football, in my opinion.”**



## **How does it feel to be stepping into Director of Football at Newport City while also taking on the CEO role at Newport County AFC?**

There are mixed emotions as I know I am making the correct decision to best help Newport City progress off the pitch. However, it is going to be emotional on Saturday for my last game in the dugout. It has been 10 seasons at Newport City, but 20 years of being in management and in the thick of it when it comes to the day-to-day management. I took on the role at Newport County on Boxing Day and have fulfilled my desire to work full-time within football. This is something I have worked very hard to achieve and therefore making this decision is the right one for me at this stage of my football career. I am excited for what is to come. My ambitions for both Newport City and Newport County will always be to progress the clubs and provide the best pathway possible for players in Newport and Gwent.

## **After over 350 appearances and nearly ten years as manager, what stands out most from your time at Newport City?**

This is a good question and one in which I have taken my time to answer. There are so many moments which I look back on with happy memories and can pinpoint many key moments in which the club could have taken a different, and more fortunate, route. However, what stands out most for me is those who have played their part in the club's progress. I couldn't tell you how many coaches, players, volunteers and supporters have been on this journey, yet I have had the pleasure of sharing the last 10 years with people who have committed their time to be a part of this football club. In football, as in all sports, we all strive to win and have these moments in which you can enjoy the fruits of your hard work. Having such good people pulling in the same direction is what will always stay with me.

## **How has your journey through playing and management shaped your approach to this new role?**

I believe it was always the route for me. I loved playing football. I wasn't the best of players, yet I enjoyed every minute of giving 100% in every game I played. Whether it was 11-a-side on the weekend, five-a-side or futsal with friends, I have always been a player that had that competitive edge and drive to win. I wasn't easy to play with, I was always very vocal and never took well to those who I felt were not fully committed. This trait came with me into my coaching career and all of those who have been at the club would agree that the level of commitment I have shown is unmatched. There are times, though, where it has led to some really difficult decisions involving people who I considered good friends.

These experiences, though, lead me into a Director of Football role as well as CEO of an EFL team, and all of the mistakes that I have made, and there have been plenty, happen for a reason. They shape me into who I am today and as long as I learn from these, then I can hopefully make better decisions in the roles I find myself in. Possibly the best attribute I can bring to my new role at City is support for the next manager. Having been in the role for so long, I fully appreciate what support is required from myself in my new position. I will know when that manager needs a message of support, when they may need someone to talk to or when they need that timely push to help them achieve success at the club.

## What were the key factors behind your decision to step away from day-to-day management?

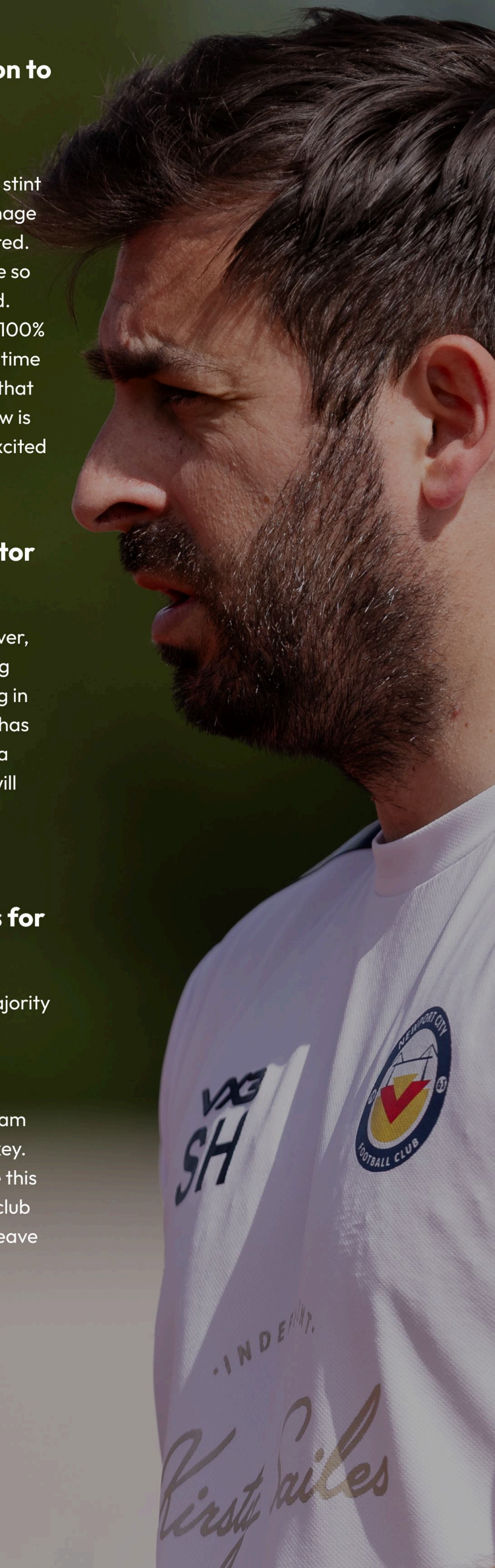
My new role at Newport County. The decision to step back was made at Christmas, but for numerous reasons it meant a short stint away from the dugout led to me having to step back in. To manage in the Cymru South there is a level of commitment that is required. Managers at this level show so much commitment and dedicate so much time, which those on the outside don't always understand. Work, families and friends will agree that it takes over and it is 100% an addiction. The person that I am, if I cannot give 100% of my time to the players and staff, then I am not the right person to be in that position. It has been an incredible journey in the dugout, but now is the time to progress to the next stage of my career and I am excited to see what the future holds.

## In practical terms, what will your role as Director of Football involve on a weekly basis?

Support for the new manager, this is the main one I feel. However, there will be lots of work to achieve the Tier 1 licence, something which took a back seat this season as soon as I realised finishing in the top three was not possible. Growing the team off the pitch has always been something that has had to happen, yet has taken a back seat due to the day-to-day demands of management. I will now be working with Mike to make sure we have plenty of new people coming in for essential roles around the club.

## What areas of the club do you see as priorities for improvement or development?

Personnel. For too long the club has relied on myself for the majority of work, my OCD hasn't helped. We need to have people with certain skill sets come in and be a part of the club. Our new academy structure will need a lot of support, a pathway for footballers in Gwent is high on our priority list and something I am very excited to be involved with. A new training ground is also key. We have been working closely with Newport Council to achieve this goal and we are closing in on a new facility which will take this club to the next level. All of these require a lot of work but will help leave a legacy for the next generation to enjoy.



## **How important is long term planning compared to short term results in your thinking?**

Essential. This season probably sums this question up. I am to blame for our failures this season due to focusing on the short term and not sticking to the long term plan. Moving forward in my new roles, I have to stick to the principles so that the long term results are achieved. This goes for Newport City and Newport County. Short term, though, I need us to avoid relegation with County so that I can really make a long term impact on the club.

## **What appealed to you most about moving into a CEO role in the professional game?**

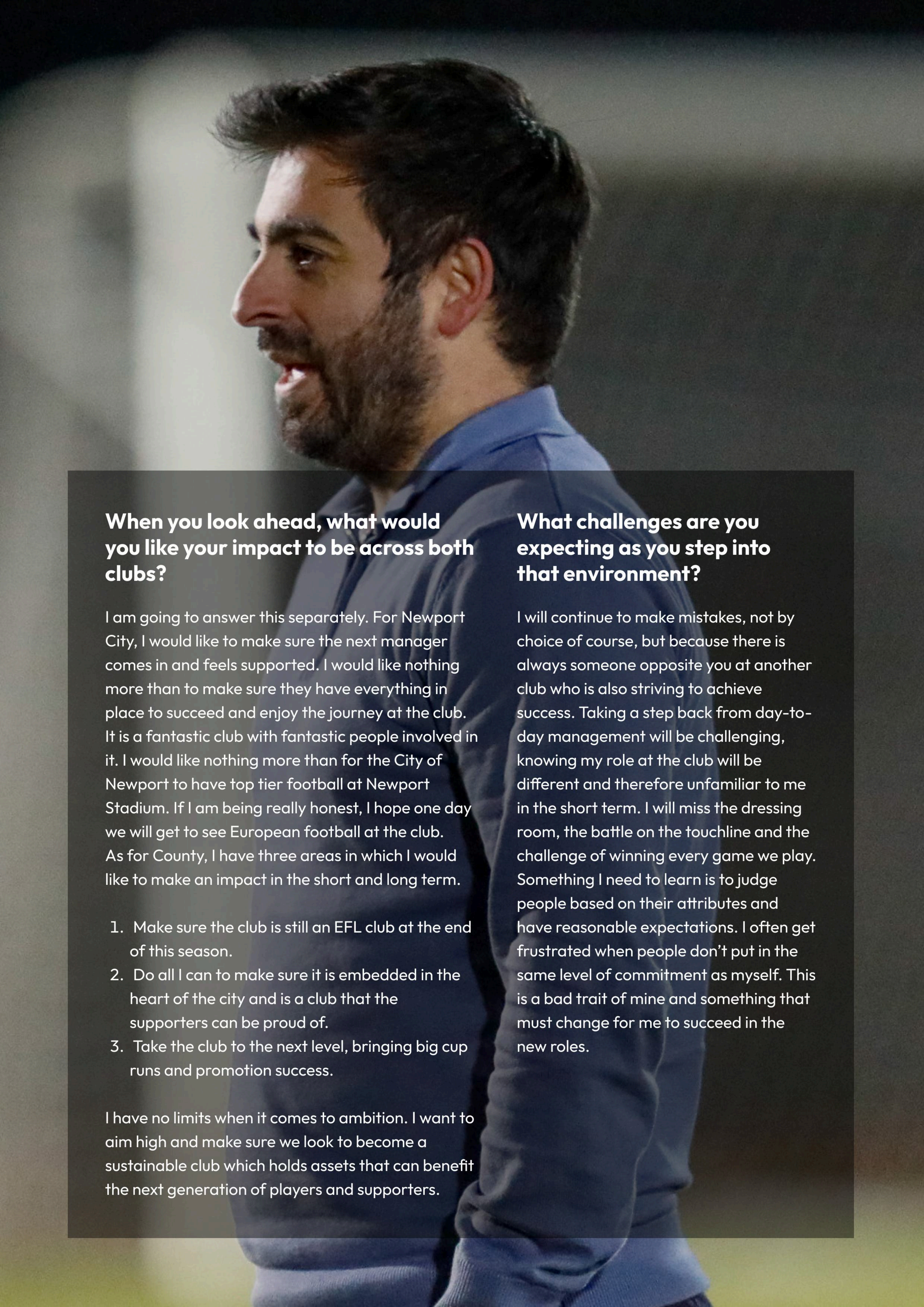
I initially took on the Commercial Director's role at County, but I always knew I could do more given the experience of running City for so long. Football clubs are run in similar ways. When stepping up to a professional level the principles are usually the same, it is just on a much larger scale and with more people relying on you to make the right decisions. I have always worked in sales and recruitment and understood the importance of under-promising and over-delivering. This is a trait that I knew would serve me well commercially for County and, in the short time of working at the club, I have made sure to use my experience to help in other areas that require support.

## **What skills from your time at Newport City do you believe will translate most into your new role?**

Drive, dedication, resilience and perseverance. Having taken on every role possible at the club has provided me with an understanding and knowledge base that is relevant at any level of football, in my opinion. Over the duration of my time in football I feel I have seen a lot. Leaning on these experiences and those people who have helped me along the way will hopefully help me going forward to excel in the new role.

## **How will you ensure both roles get the attention and leadership they require?**

This is difficult as it will take time to adapt. But in stepping away from management I feel I can better manage my time and put the focus and energy into each of my roles to achieve the desired outcomes. I struggle to switch off, something that must change as it isn't healthy. I need to spend more time with my family while enjoying the next part of the journey. That work-life balance is important and something which I know, yet struggle to put into practice. The drive to succeed and ambition to always achieve more means I will always find a way. I will work hard and the results will come. I am expecting a period of transition in which I will struggle and require those around me to be honest and tell me if I'm not doing a good job. At the same time, I need those around me to share the dedication to make sure we get City and County pushing for promotion in the near future.



### **When you look ahead, what would you like your impact to be across both clubs?**

I am going to answer this separately. For Newport City, I would like to make sure the next manager comes in and feels supported. I would like nothing more than to make sure they have everything in place to succeed and enjoy the journey at the club. It is a fantastic club with fantastic people involved in it. I would like nothing more than for the City of Newport to have top tier football at Newport Stadium. If I am being really honest, I hope one day we will get to see European football at the club. As for County, I have three areas in which I would like to make an impact in the short and long term.

1. Make sure the club is still an EFL club at the end of this season.
2. Do all I can to make sure it is embedded in the heart of the city and is a club that the supporters can be proud of.
3. Take the club to the next level, bringing big cup runs and promotion success.

I have no limits when it comes to ambition. I want to aim high and make sure we look to become a sustainable club which holds assets that can benefit the next generation of players and supporters.

### **What challenges are you expecting as you step into that environment?**

I will continue to make mistakes, not by choice of course, but because there is always someone opposite you at another club who is also striving to achieve success. Taking a step back from day-to-day management will be challenging, knowing my role at the club will be different and therefore unfamiliar to me in the short term. I will miss the dressing room, the battle on the touchline and the challenge of winning every game we play. Something I need to learn is to judge people based on their attributes and have reasonable expectations. I often get frustrated when people don't put in the same level of commitment as myself. This is a bad trait of mine and something that must change for me to succeed in the new roles.



# Willmott Retires And Takes Newport City Job Same Day

Robbie Willmott has called time on his playing career and immediately stepped into the next chapter, with Newport City confirming him as their new first team manager.

The announcement came on the same day that Barry Town United confirmed the midfielder's retirement, bringing an end to a career that has spanned almost two decades.

Starting out at Cambridge Regional College, Willmott broke through with Cambridge United, where he made over 100 appearances in his first spell before going on to feature for Luton Town. A return to Cambridge followed, before he established himself as a key figure at Newport County across two spells, racking up more than 200 appearances for the Exiles.

His career also included time with Ebbsfleet United, Eastleigh, Bishop's Stortford and Chelmsford City, as well as later moves to Exeter City, Walsall, Woking and Weston-super-Mare.

He joined Barry Town United in the summer of 2024, bringing that experience into the Welsh domestic game. Across 74 appearances, he became a steady, experienced presence in the side, scoring four goals and leading the team out as captain on the day of the Nathaniel MG Cup Final.

The 35 year old played his final match in the Linnets' defeat to Haverfordwest County in the JD Cymru Premier European Play Offs, drawing the curtain on a long and distinguished playing journey.

Willmott now takes charge at Newport, who compete in the JD Cymru South, following a change behind the scenes at the club.





# Two Minutes That Sent Bala Down

**For 88 minutes, Bala Town FC were staying up.**

They had done the hard part. Given themselves a chance. Put themselves in a position where survival was no longer a long shot but something real, something within reach.

Then, in the space of two minutes, it all unravelled.

A late equaliser shifted the mood. Seconds later, a second goal followed. The game flipped, the table flipped, and with it, Bala's 17-year stay in the Cymru Premier was over.

This was never about one result in isolation. Bala went into the final day knowing they were chasing Flint Town United FC, needing both a win and help elsewhere. For long periods, everything was lining up.

Momentum was building, belief was growing, and the sense inside Maes Tegid was that something unlikely was about to happen.

That's what makes it harder to take.

Briton Ferry Llansawel AFC had other ideas, striking twice late on to turn the situation completely on its head. There was no time left for Bala to respond, no way back once the damage had been done.

Elsewhere, Flint did enough. Their draw ultimately secured survival, rendering everything that had been building at Maes Tegid irrelevant in the final reckoning. Bala were relegated alongside Llanelli Town AFC, bringing an end to one of the longest continuous stays in the division.

After the final whistle, manager Steve Fisher spoke honestly about how close it had felt. "I honestly thought we'd done it... then we've shot ourselves in the foot."

It's a line that sums it up. Close enough to believe. Close enough to feel like the escape was on. And then gone, almost instantly.

For a club that has built its reputation on consistency and resilience, this is a significant moment. The challenge now is turning that disappointment into a response and finding a way back.



# Six Clubs Confirmed For Cymru Premier

Pictures by Lewis Mitchell / FAW

NIKE



**The line up for next season's expanded Cymru Premier is now complete, with all promotion places across both Tier 2 divisions officially decided.**

In the Cymru North, **Llandudno FC** secured the title to finish as champions following a standout campaign.

They are joined by **Airbus UK Broughton**, who claimed second place to seal their return to the top flight.

Third place goes to **Holywell Town FC**, who initially failed to secure a Tier 1 licence but successfully appealed the decision and will now take their place in the top flight. It marks a fitting outcome for the club, who won the league in 2023/24 but were denied promotion at that time due to licensing, making this a long awaited return.

In the Cymru South, **Trefelin BGC** were crowned champions following an outstanding season.

**Cambrian United** finished second, maintaining consistency throughout the campaign and remaining among the leading sides from start to finish.

The final promotion place from the south goes to **Ammanford AFC**, who secured third place in dramatic fashion. A 93rd minute winner from Matt Delaney in their away fixture at Cwmbran Celtic ensured Ammanford finished third, narrowly ahead of Caerau Ely.

At the other end of Tier 2, **Ruthin Town FC** and **Cwmbran Celtic** were relegated to Tier 3, completing the divisional changes ahead of next season.

With all six promotion spots now filled and licensing confirmed, the expansion to 16 teams marks a significant shift in Welsh domestic football, with the promoted clubs now preparing for the step up as a new era begins at the top level.

# Haverfordwest County Confirm Hybrid Model

**Haverfordwest County AFC have confirmed the introduction of a new hybrid model, set to be rolled out from next season as the club continues to build on recent progress both on and off the pitch.**

The structure will see a select group of the club's brightest young players move into a full-time training environment, while remaining part of the wider senior setup. The aim is clear: accelerate development and better prepare players for the demands of first-team football.

It marks another step forward for a club that has undergone a period of steady growth, highlighted by two European campaigns in the last three years. Rather than standing still, Haverfordwest are looking to strengthen the link between academy football and the senior game, ensuring that progression through the ranks is more than just a theory.

There is particular significance for the club's development pathway. The under-19s have enjoyed a sustained run of success, lifting two league titles and securing the FAW Youth Cup for the first time last season. That campaign also ended with victory in the national play-off final, earning a place in the UEFA Youth League.

Their European adventure brought a competitive two-legged tie against FK Budućnost Podgorica, offering valuable experience on a bigger stage and underlining the level of talent coming through the ranks.

The hybrid model now gives those players a genuine next step. Instead of looking elsewhere, emerging talent from Pembrokeshire will have the opportunity to remain local while training more intensively and pushing towards senior football.





# Flint Mountain Duo Depart

**Flint Mountain have confirmed the departures of Brandon Groves and Andy Walsh, with the club accepting the resignations of the duo with immediate effect.**

The pair arrived at the club last year as part of the coaching setup, with Groves later stepping up to Assistant Manager under Liam Dickinson. Following Dickinson's departure, Groves and Walsh took interim charge for the remainder of the Cymru North campaign.

It brings to a close a difficult season for the Mountain. After an impressive campaign the year prior, this season proved far more testing both on and off the pitch. A new groundshare with Prestatyn added further disruption, following on from a previous arrangement with Flint, and consistency was hard to find.

Off the pitch, changes were also made at boardroom level. In January, the club appointed 29-year-old Aidan Middleton as chairman, a move aimed at strengthening long-term direction and reinforcing ties with the local community.

Despite the challenges, Groves and Walsh guided the side through a turbulent period and ensured Flint Mountain retained their Tier 2 status.

With the future of the club now very much in focus, attention turns to what comes next, particularly with several key players expected to move on ahead of the new season.

# Wrexham Women Crowned Champions Of Wales



**Wrexham AFC Women have been crowned champions of the Adran Premier after a season that left little doubt about who the best side in the country was.**

Wrexham finished four points clear of Cardiff City Women, ending their grip at the top and doing it with consistency across the campaign. While others dipped, Wrexham kept picking up results, building momentum that never really slowed.

There's balance to it as well. The attacking output stands out, 70 goals across 20 games is relentless, but conceding just 26 shows this wasn't chaos. It's a side that knew how to win games properly.

Behind them, Swansea City Women and The New Saints Women couldn't quite keep pace, leaving it as a two team race that Wrexham ultimately controlled.

This title win marks the club's first at this level, and it's been earned rather than stumbled into. Not long ago they were fighting for promotion. Now they're setting the standard. And just to underline it, they didn't stop at the league.

Wrexham also lifted the Adran Trophy, winning on penalties to secure a league and cup double and cap off a season that will go down as the most successful in the club's history.

From building towards the top to sitting firmly on it, Wrexham Women have changed the landscape this season.



# Buckley Town Part Company With Manager

**Buckley Town parted company with Asa Hamilton, bringing an end to his time as first team manager after two and a half years in charge at The Globe.**

The 34 year old stepped down following the conclusion of the 2025/26 campaign, which saw the Bucks finish 13th in the JD Cymru North. A difficult run of form towards the end of the season proved costly, with the side losing 11 of their final 13 league matches, although they still managed to avoid any relegation concerns.

Hamilton's final game in charge came in a 5-1 defeat away at Holyhead Hotspur, which marked his 99th match at the helm.

His departure also saw his coaching staff leave the club, with Buckley confirming at the time that they would begin the process of appointing a new management team. The club also withdrew from a scheduled NEWFA Challenge Cup quarter final tie against FC Queen's Park in the immediate aftermath.

Hamilton had initially taken charge in October 2023 as player manager following the departure of Jason Aldcroft. After navigating a challenging start, he guided the club to safety and oversaw a run to the Welsh Cup quarter finals, the club's best showing in the competition since forming in 1977.

That progress carried into the following season, with Buckley securing an impressive fifth place finish. However, they were unable to replicate that consistency in 2025/26, with a League Cup semi final defeat on penalties adding to a frustrating campaign.

Across his 99 games in charge, Hamilton recorded 41 wins, 12 draws and 46 defeats, closing a spell that included both clear progression and a difficult final chapter.



# Cardiff City Complete Stunning Comeback



CWPAN CYMRU



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# ENILL

**Cardiff City Women produced one of the most dramatic turnarounds in recent memory to win the Bute Energy Welsh Cup, coming from three goals down to beat Swansea City Women on penalties at Rodney Parade.**

Trailing heavily heading into the final stages, Cardiff found a way back into the contest before taking the tie to a shootout, where they held their nerve to secure a 5-4 victory.

The decisive moment came when Stacey John saw her penalty saved by Ceryn Chamberlain, allowing Megan Bowen to step up and convert the winning spot kick.

The result seals a fifth consecutive triumph in the competition for Cardiff and marks a significant moment for new head coach Noah Bushby, who begins his tenure with silverware following the departure of Iain Darbyshire.

From three goals down to lifting the trophy, Cardiff once again found a way.



A young male football player in a red kit is celebrating on a pitch. He is smiling broadly, pointing with both hands towards the camera. The background shows a stadium with blue seats and a building with a green roof. The text '5 Mins With Jamie Hyne' is overlaid on the image.

# 5 Mins With Jamie Hyne

**There are some players you end up speaking to early on, and then there are ones where you wonder how it's taken this long. Jamie Hyne falls firmly into the second category.**

A consistent goalscorer and someone who has supported the magazine since day one, it's a bit of a travesty that I haven't had him involved sooner. One of the nicest lads I've come across in the game, his reputation off the pitch matches what he delivers on it.

With 110 career goals to his name and another strong season behind him, I caught up with Jamie to talk consistency, mindset, and what comes next.

**According to the data available, you've now hit 110 career goals, including 63 in 142 Tier 2 league games. How proud are you of that level of consistency?**

Very proud. Scoring goals isn't easy especially at a good level. I struggled to be consistent in the first few seasons at tier 2 so to hit 17 and 18 in the last 2 season is really pleasing.

**This season you hit 18 league goals in 29 games. What clicked for you in front of goal?**

Honestly, it's felt like a tough year. We and I haven't created as many chances as I'd have liked and I'm disappointed to have not reached 20. That would've been a great milestone to hit and it would've felt like I'd have cemented myself at the top end of the charts with some really good goal scorers. Being harsh on myself if things would have clicked more I'd have been up there but 18 league goals is nothing to be sniffed at and I'm really pleased to hit a good run of form in my first season at the club.

**What do you put that goalscoring record down to over a sustained period?**

I work hard off the field, I'm obsessed with running and I'm a firm believer that the harder you work, the more luck you get which directly translates to performance. I've never been fitter and that's resulted in my best scoring season. I must drive the physios at the club mad but they look after me (and us!) so well, they keep me in check when I need it but understand what I need to keep myself going.

**As a striker, how much of scoring is confidence and rhythm?**

It's all about confidence, scoring goals is so much easier when you're in the rhythm of it. I'm so bad for snatching at chances if I've not had a shot but the second I score, the next one comes so much easier. The consistency is something I need to keep working on to reach the top end of the goal scoring charts and make sure I stay there.

**Do you put pressure on yourself to maintain those numbers, or do you try to block it out?**

Not massively, it's not really a pressure thing but I do set myself targets. I want to be a leader in the dressing room and on the pitch and as a striker, scoring goals is a massive part of that. As I said before, I work hard and I strive for consistency which generally speaking should lead to more goals but it doesn't always work that way.

**You've proven yourself at this level. Is stepping up to the Cymru Premier something that appeals to you?**

Yeah absolutely, I've made no secret that I want to be playing in the league above soon. That's what I've been working towards and I'm gutted it hasn't happened this year finishing outside the top 3. Moving to Newtown felt like a step in the right direction and I am confident that's the case, I just need to keep working hard and hopefully the rewards will come as a team and club. I play football to test myself at the best level I possibly can and that is the Cymru Prem.



## What targets have you set yourself going into the new season?

Next season has to be promotion, back where the club belongs. We fell short this season which disappointed all of us, and quite frankly we could and should have done more. Next season we have to put it right and I want to be at the forefront of that! On a personal note, I want to be pushing for top goalscorer. I came 4th this year which is the highest I've managed so far but if I score more goals, we should finish higher.

## What moment in your career so far are you most proud of?

There's been a lot of great moments. It's hard to pinpoint a moment that stands out for me above all else but I think just winning trophies with my mates stands out for me. I've been so lucky to play with great lads and it's even better seeing my family on the sideline week in week out. The first central wales trophy we won at Guilsfield has a special place in my heart because the club hadn't won anything for 9 years, and it was the first trophy I contributed to winning which meant a lot.

## Who has had the biggest influence on you as a player?

Easy, my old man. He's my biggest fan and harshest critic but having him at every game gives me an extra 10%. He's the biggest influence for me on the pitch but also as a person. Him and Len spend 89 minutes of every game hammering me for not doing enough but it keeps me on my toes, and if I get a well done off Dad I know I've had a good game.

## What would you say to supporters who've backed you and seen you deliver consistently?

I'm so grateful to have the support that I do. I was backed constantly at Guils and moving to Newtown, having 3/400 fans every week cheering me and us on makes a huge difference. I try to speak to every fan I can and seeing the smiles on their faces when we win gives me a boost to go and do one more next week. The feeling around the club is fantastic and we're building something special with the community, it's great to be a part of it and I hope I can be part of the team that takes the club back where it belongs.



# Photos Of Welsh Football

# Gabe

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Ammanford AFC vs Cwmbran Celtic



Ammanford AFC vs Cwmbran Celtic

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Ammanford AFC vs Cwmbran Celtic



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# Dan Whitehead

X @dan\_whitehead15



Llandudno vs Guilsfield



Llandudno vs Guilsfield

# Dan Whitehead

X @dan\_whitehead15



Llandudno vs Guilsfield



Llandudno vs Guilsfield

# Dylan Evans

X @DylanEvansFB



Newtown AFC vs Caersws



Newtown AFC vs Caersws

# Dylan Evans

X @DylanEvansFB



Newtown AFC vs Caersws



Newtown AFC vs Caersws

# Perry Dobbins

X @PerryDobbins1



Barry Town v Haverfordwest



Barry Town v Haverfordwest

# Perry Dobbins

X @PerryDobbins1



Barry Town v Caernarfon



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