

# WELCOME TO TOP BINS MAGAZINE

# A magazine dedicated to the JD Cymru Premier, North & South leagues and others bringing you news, views and stats.

First off, sorry for it being such a wait to get the latest edition out. It's been very busy with life and football and well, there isn't enough hours in the day to juggle it all sometimes.

Secondly, football is back and underway at the time of writing this. We're a few games into the new season, a season that promises so much what with the 3 up scenario into the Cymru Premier. Thanks everyone for the lovely messages over the summer about the magazine and the social media stuff.

As always if you have ideas for the magazine please do get in touch. It's only me doing it so sometimes I might miss something.

Shout out to our sponsor **Emerge Sign & Print** who are with us every step of the way. If you are interested in sponsoring an edition please do get in touch.

And thanks as always to the individuals who spend their valuable time answering questions and talking to me about Welsh football.

Please enjoy the edition and see you on the socials

Ta Dan





# SPOTLIGHT ON TWO RISING TALENTS

I've had these two on my radar for a while. Jack Parry and Kieran Baker are both exciting young players starting to make a name for themselves.

I'd originally planned to interview them separately, but football being football, they've only gone and ended up at the same club before I had chance to get anything written.

Now teammates at Rhyl 1879, who were promoted last season, they're gearing up for the next step in their careers. Kieran has picked up an injury and hasn't played any minutes so far this season, but is on the road to recovery. They've not had many minutes together yet, which just adds to the intrigue. Before they begin this new chapter side by side, I caught up with them to talk development, confidence, breaking into senior football and a few lighter bits too.

# JACK PARRY STRIKER, 19

# What was it like joining Rhyl 1879, and how are you feeling about the new season ahead?

I had a number of offers but felt Rhyl was the right move for me at this stage in my career. I was in constant dialogue with Gaffer and Ronnie and the club matched my ambition. I spoke with former players Mark Powell and Stu Carroll who live local, they were so complimentary about the club and its wonderful supporters, so it was an easy decision to make.

I'm really excited to get going, there's been a big turnover of players so we need time to gel and implement the manager's ideas.

# Rhyl has a big reputation and a long history in Welsh football. Does that bring any added pressure as a young player coming in?

Rhyl is a massive club with such a huge fan base, it's a bit of a sleeping giant at this level, so of course that brings a bit of pressure, but I believe in myself and my own ability and I have came here to take Rhyl back to where they belong and give those loyal fans something to cheer about.

# Which coach or teammate has had the biggest influence on your development so far?

(Coach) I'd probably say Ryan Dicker coming through the academy system at Crewe. He had the biggest impact on me, coach me at different age groups and in the Youth Team, before he took the assistant managers position.

(Teammate) Mike Hayes was a great help to me last season both on and off the pitch. He has had a great career in wales and played at the highest level, so was great to learn off.

#### Do you model your game on any professional player?

I would say I have similar attributes to Jamie Vardy, he works so hard for the team, and wants to play on the shoulder of defenders to run in behind with his pace and scores different types of goals.



### What's been your favourite moment in football so far?

I would say being voted and winning player of the month in February 25 (for Cymru North) whilst at Flint Mountain, it's was great to receive individual recognition.

# What's it like stepping into senior football from youth level?

It's a lot different, the physicality element was an eye opener when I went out to Ashville on a youth loan at 17, and the importance of fighting for the 3 points week in week out whereas in youth level football the focus is more on development at 18/23s level.



# What advice would you give to someone younger trying to break into senior football?

Be yourself and have confidence in your ability. Train with the intensity you want to play at and have high standards and the rest will fall into place.

# What's your routine on matchdays? Any superstitions?

I don't really have a set routine, it depends on the schedule but I try and prepare and eat properly.

# How do you stay confident if you have a tough game?

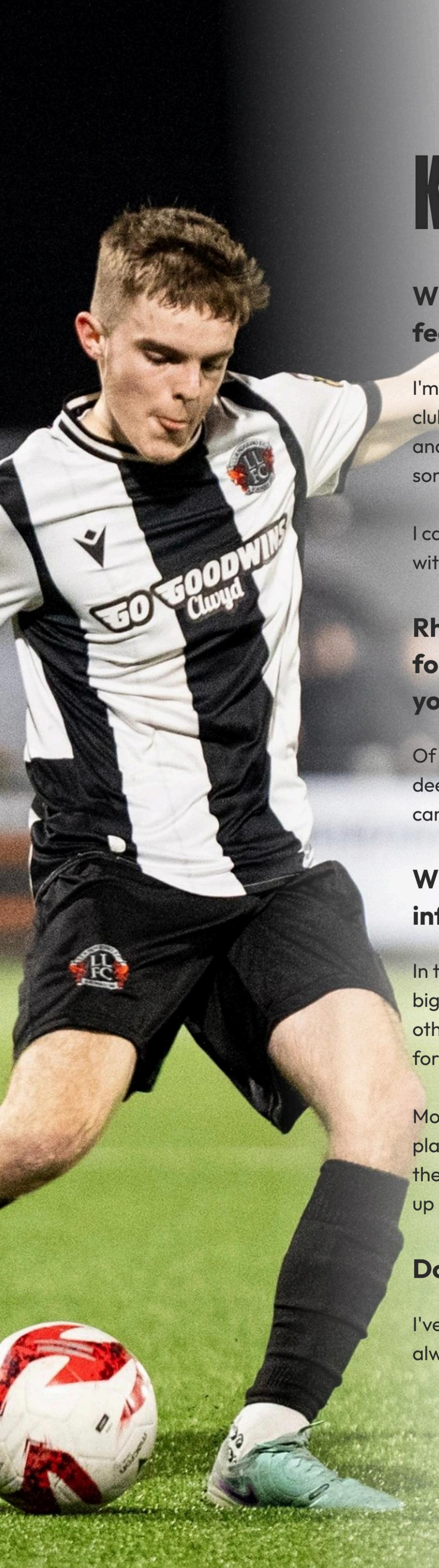
I would say I am a confident player who as a striker thrives of scoring goals so sometimes when things don't go my way or the teams way it is important to keep believing in your own ability and not be scared of trying things.

# How do you balance football with work or college?

I'm quite lucky in that respect that my day to day job is a TA in a school so it ties in perfectly with football as I have weekends off and can attend sessions of an evening.

# If you could play at any stadium in the world, where would it be?

I have been quite fortunate to play and score at PL grounds such as Molineux and Turf Moor, but I'm a massive Liverpool fan so it would have to be Anfield!



KIERAN BAKER DEFENDER, 19

What was it like joining Rhyl 1879, and how are you feeling about the new season ahead?

I'm really excited to join Rhyl this season. I regard Rhyl as one of the biggest clubs in Wales. So to be a part of that, I feel very privileged. As soon as Paul and Ronnie got in touch with me, their ambitions were clear and it was something I couldn't turn down.

I can't wait for the new season to start, and play in front of all the Rhyl fans with aims of finishing high up in the table.

Rhyl has a big reputation and a long history in Welsh football. Does that bring any added pressure as a young player coming in?

Of course it does, however in football I've always been thrown in at the deep end and come out on top. I play my best football under pressure so I can't wait for it.

Which coach or teammate has had the biggest influence on your development so far?

In terms of coaches, Jason Dennan (Llandudno U23s Coach) has had the biggest influence in my football career. Jason always believed in me when others didn't, he was the one who had faith in me and kept pushing me forward for first team football at Llandudno last season.

Mo Ali and Alex Boss were really instrumental to my development. By playing with the experience them two have, I have learnt so much from them in a short period of time. I'm delighted Mo has joined Rhyl as we linked up really well last season.

Do you model your game on any professional player?

I've never really focused on comparing myself with any other players, I've always just worked on my own game creating my own path in football.



# What advice would you give to someone younger trying to break into senior football?

It takes time and a lot of belief in your own ability. Chances don't come often, so when they do, grab it with both hands and give it 100% with no regrets.

# If you could play at any stadium in the world, where would it be?

I have to say the Theatre of Dreams, as I am a massive Manchester United fan.

# How do you stay confident if you have a tough game?

My dad's my biggest critic... even if I've had a good game, he'll find something for me to improve on. I've got confidence in my own ability and my teammates. I don't dwell on errors and mistakes as I'm confident that i can learn things to improve my game in the future.

# How do you balance football with work or college?

It's difficult, but I manage. I start early and then finish at 3pm. This gives me a bit of time to focus on myself and my football

### What's been your favourite moment in football so far?

My favourite moment in football so far has to be representing Tranmere Rovers in the FA Youth Cup against Bradford City at Prenton Park also, making my debut for Llandudno first team aged 16 under Sean Eardley. I'll be forever grateful for him believing in me.

# What's it like stepping into senior football from youth level?

It was a big change in physicality however the technical side was no problem. However as some have seen last season, I can more than hold my own and love a tackle.



# 





After joining the Cymru Alliance in 1992, the club quickly made a name for itself, lifting the league title in 1996–97 and stepping into the top flight the following season. Life in the League of Wales wasn't easy, but Rhayader held their own for five straight seasons before relegation in 2002.

A lack of players meant they couldn't return to the Cymru Alliance, so they dropped into the Mid Wales League. Just a few years later, the club folded entirely in 2006. A brutal moment for a proud football town.

But Rhayader didn't stay down for long.

By 2008 they were back, working their way up the leagues again. Runners up in 2009–10, champions in 2011–12, and champions again in 2016–17. Each season added another layer to their reputation for resilience.

The club moved between tiers often, sometimes forced by circumstance rather than ambition. In 2020, like many, they were hit hard by the pandemic. One season was cut short, the next never even kicked off.

Since 2021 they've been part of the Ardal and Central Wales League setup, continuing to fly the flag for football in Powys. No matter the league or the opposition, Rhayader Town remains a symbol of staying power and community pride.



#### Nickname(s)

Thin Red Line, The Red Kites

#### Founded

Reformed 2007

#### Ground

The Weirglodd, Rhayader, Powys

#### Capacity

2,200

#### Manager

Eifion Price



# Rhayader Town FC Timeline Since 1992

#### 1990s

1992 to 1993 - Joined the Cymru Alliance

1996 to 1997 - Won the Cymru Alliance title

1997 to 1998 - Promoted to the League of Wales

#### 2000s

2002 to 2003 - Relegated from the League of Wales. Could not take up a Cymru Alliance spot due to lack of players. Dropped into the Mid Wales League

2006 - Club folded

2008 to 2009 - Rejoined the Mid Wales League

2009 to 2010 - Finished as league runners up

#### 2010s

2010 to 2011 - Promoted to the Cymru Alliance

2011 to 2012 - Returned to the Mid Wales League and won the title

2012 to 2013 - Promoted again to the Cymru Alliance

2016 to 2017 - Back in the Mid Wales League and crowned champions

2017 - Moved to the Mid Wales League South

2018 to 2019 - Returned to the Mid Wales League

**2019 to 2020 -** Season ended early due to Covid 19. Standings decided on a points per game basis

#### 2020s

2020 to 2021 - Season cancelled below Tier One due to Covid 19 regulations

2021 to 2022 - Became founding members of the Ardal South East division

2022 to 2023 - Moved into the Ardal North East

2023 to 2024 - Joined the Central Wales League South





# HI HIS

1875 - 2025

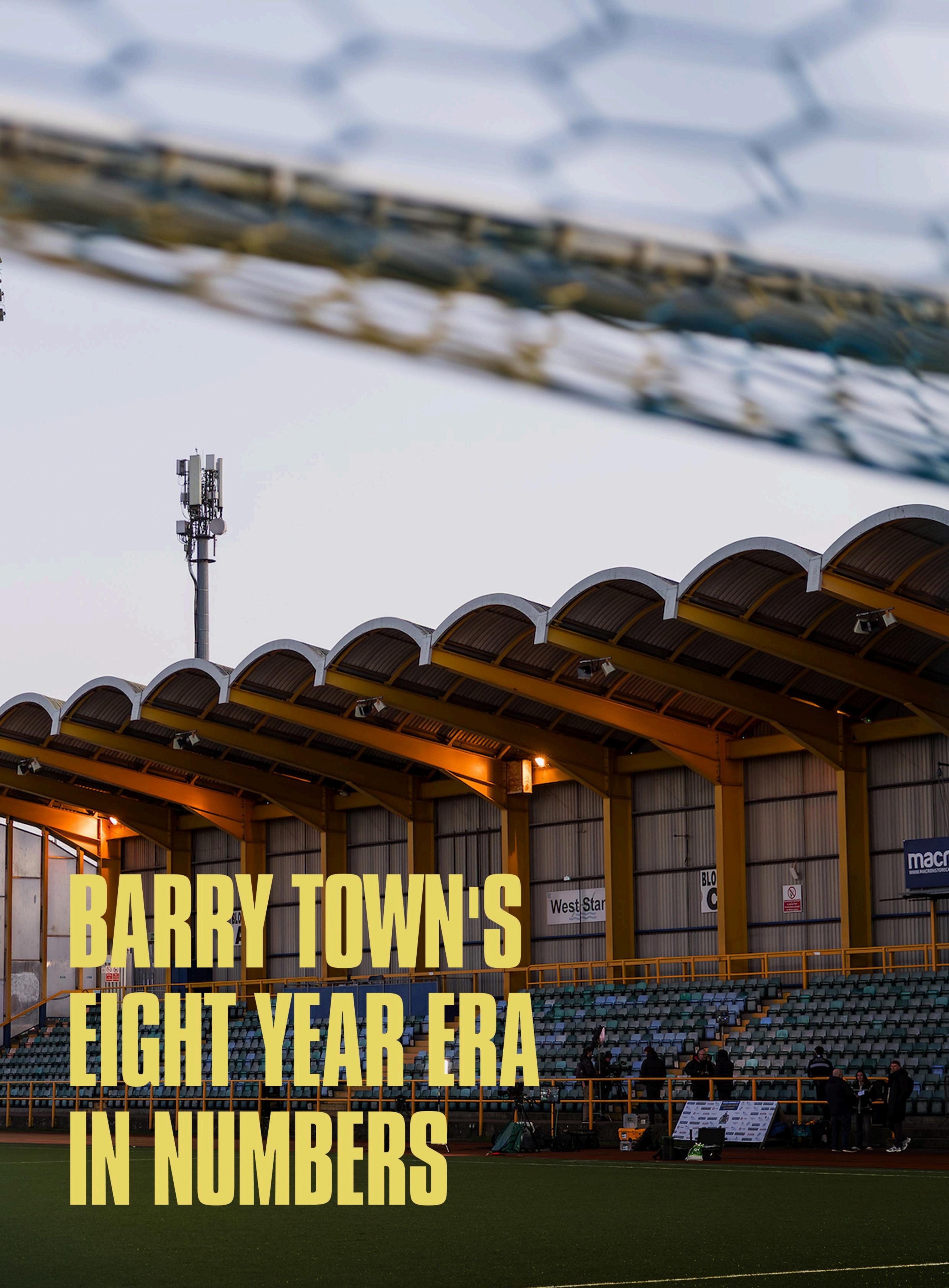


- Football begins in Newtown with two clubs,
   Newtown and White Stars.
- White Stars win the Welsh Cup in 1879, becoming the first official holders.
- After several failed mergers and foldings,
   Newtown AFC is re-established in 1884.
- The club wins the Welsh Cup in 1895, then famously beat Manchester City the same year.
- By 1901 the club is inactive. A revival comes post-war in 1919.

#### 1925 - 1975

- Newtown spend these decades playing in regional football, primarily the Mid Wales League.
- The club maintains its presence locally but has limited exposure beyond that.
- Success begins to build again towards the end of this stretch, setting up bigger moves ahead.

- 1975 2025
  - Dominate the Mid Wales League with five titles between 1976 and 1988.
  - Move into the English system via the Northern Premier League
  - Join the newly formed League of Wales in 1992.
  - Twice finish second in the top tier and play in European competitions.
  - Reach the Welsh Cup final in 2015 and qualify for Europe again, beating Valletta and facing FC Copenhagen.
  - Relegated from the Cymru Premier for the first time in April 2025 after 33 consecutive top-flight seasons.



286 GAMES

215 WINS

LOSSES

TOS SCORED

222 CONCEDED

693 PTS Once the dominant force in Welsh football, Barry Town United have a legacy built on silverware, swagger and serious firepower. Based at Jenner Park, the club became a powerhouse through the 1990s and early 2000s, regularly brushing aside domestic rivals and making their mark in Europe.

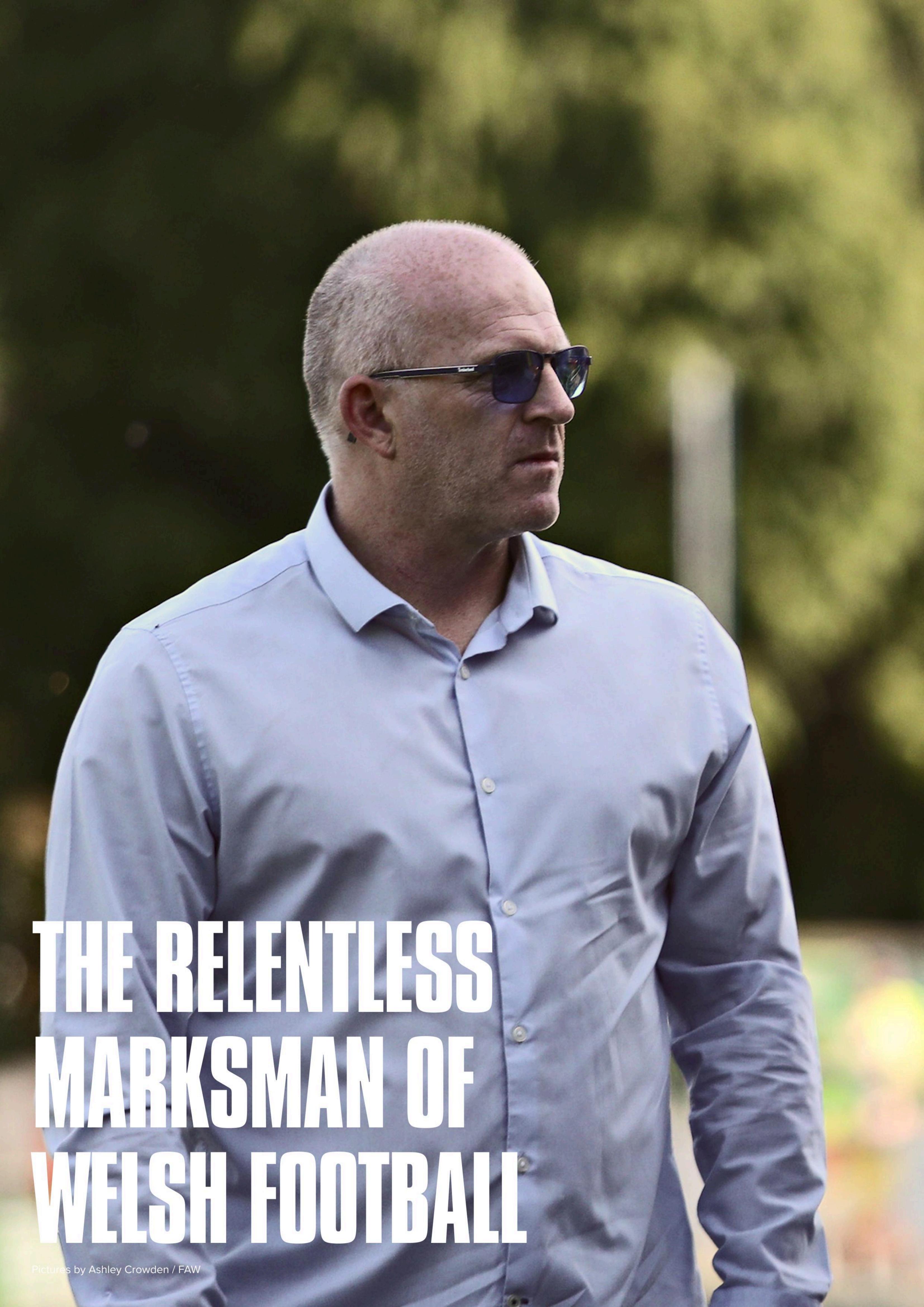
Between 1995 and 2003, they were in a league of their own. Over eight seasons, they played 286 league games, won 215 of them, scored 785 goals and picked up 693 points. They lost only 23 matches and claimed seven league titles, missing out just once in 1999 to 2000 by a single point.

A big part of that dominance came from their goalscorers. Tony Bird scored 51 goals for the club during this period, while Eifion Williams netted 68, becoming one of the league's most prolific forwards and a key figure in Barry's domestic and European success.

Key stats from the golden era:

- 1997 to 1998 Unbeaten all season with 33 wins and 5 draws
- 1996 to 1998 Two seasons running with a plus 103 goal difference
- 1995 to 1999 Four straight league titles

It remains one of the most dominant periods in Welsh football history. Ruthless up front, rock solid at the back, and relentless in their pursuit of silverware. Barry set a standard few have matched.



# When you talk about goalscorers in Welsh football, one name stands clear of the rest. Marc Lloyd Williams.



















Across a career that spanned more than two decades, the Bangor born forward did what he was born to do: put the ball in the net. With an official 319 goals in the Cymru Premier, he remains the all time leading goalscorer in the top flight of Welsh football. A record that continues to stand untouched.

Lloyd Williams began his senior career at
Porthmadog in the early 1990s before moving
to Bangor City, where he would become a club
legend. Stints in the English system followed,
including spells with Stockport County, York
City, Halifax Town and Southport, but it was in
Wales where his impact was truly felt.

He turned out for a host of Cymru Premier clubs over the years: Bangor City, Porthmadog, Aberystwyth Town, The New Saints, Newtown, Rhyl and Airbus UK Broughton. No matter the shirt, the result was the same. Goals, and plenty of them.

His most prolific spell came during his time with TNS, where he scored 60 goals in just 67 appearances. But perhaps his most iconic moments came in Bangor blue, where he struck nearly 100 goals across several stints with the club.

What made him stand out was not just his eye for goal, but his consistency. Whether it was a cold Tuesday night in Bala or a big game under the lights at Farrar Road, you could back Lloyd Williams to get on the scoresheet. He was not flashy. He was efficient, instinctive, and always in the right place.

Even late in his career, he continued to score regularly, ending his senior playing days with spells at Newtown, Rhyl, Airbus and eventually Llanberis.

Across all Welsh clubs and levels, he scored at least 290 competitive goals, but the number in the Cymru Premier alone sits at 319, according to publicly available records.

There have been many great forwards in Welsh domestic football, but few have left such a lasting legacy. His name is etched into the history books, his record untouched, and his impact undeniable.

Marc Lloyd Williams did not just play in the Cymru Premier. He defined it.

Disclaimer: Goal and appearance figures are based on publicly available sources including Wikipedia and may not reflect official FAW records.



# From Goal Machine to Touchline Tactician: The Rhys Griffiths Story

Rhys Griffiths is one of the most iconic names in modern Welsh football. A prolific striker who terrorised defences for over a decade, he built a legacy on goals, grit and an unmatched instinct in front of goal. Now he is building something different. From the dugout at Penybont, Griffiths is leading a new challenge and aiming to knock TNS off their perch.

His playing stats speak for themselves. Griffiths finished his career with 275 goals in 423 games, with some frankly ridiculous spells along the way. He scored 60 goals in 99 appearances for Port Talbot Town, and his time at Llanelli was nothing short of legendary with 180 goals in 181 games, a record that barely seems real.

But Griffiths was more than a poacher. He was physical, clever, and relentless. Week after week, season after season, he delivered.

Whether it was for Cwmbrân Town, Haverfordwest, Carmarthen, Port Talbot, Llanelli or later stints with Aberystwyth and Penybont, he brought goals. Even a move across the border to Plymouth Argyle showed his adaptability, grabbing goals in the English Football League at the age of 32.

Now in the next chapter of his footballing journey, Griffiths is making waves from the touchline. Since taking charge at Penybont, he has turned them into genuine contenders in the JD Cymru Premier. Last season they ran TNS close and, perhaps more impressively, beat them twice, something few sides in Welsh football can boast.

Under Griffiths, Penybont play with intent. They are organised, aggressive, and unafraid to take risks. You can see his playing personality bleeding into the squad, a hard-working group with a clear identity. They are not just here to make up the numbers. They are here to challenge.

With the Cymru Premier growing in profile and competitiveness, there is a real opportunity for clubs to break new ground. Penybont under Griffiths are trying to do just that. The aim is clear, to bring silverware to Bryntirion Park and to shake the dominance that TNS have held for far too long.

Whether he is scoring goals or calling the shots, Rhys Griffiths has always been at the heart of Welsh football. And if this latest chapter ends in titles, you would not bet against him becoming a legend in the dugout too.





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Image by Newport County FC





# Louis Lloyd has completed a move from Caernarfon Town to St Johnstone ahead of the 2025/26 season.

The 21-year-old forward joins the Scottish Championship club on a three-year contract, subject to international clearance. The deal was agreed earlier in July for an undisclosed fee.

Lloyd leaves Caernarfon after scoring 16 goals in the 2024/25 JD Cymru Premier season, earning a share of the league's Golden Boot. He also scored four goals in a 5–2 European play-off quarter-final win over Barry Town United. His performances earned him the JD Cymru Premier Young Player of the Season award and a place in the official Team of the Season.

He initially joined Caernarfon in 2023 and scored over 30 goals in all competitions during his time at the club. He previously spent time with Wrexham and Shrewsbury Town.

Lloyd's competitive debut for St Johnstone has been delayed twice. A paperwork processing issue prevented him from featuring in the Premier Sports Cup. After his international clearance was finalised on Friday, he suffered a foot injury during training later that day.

St Johnstone manager Simo Valakari described the situation as "worrying" and confirmed the club is awaiting a further assessment to determine the extent of the injury. Lloyd was not involved in the following day's match against Elgin City.







During his previous time with the club, Clarke built a strong reputation for his work rate, direct running and ability to deliver in big moments. He scored important goals, formed effective partnerships across the front line, and played a key role in Caernarfon's push for a top-six finish.

This summer's triple TNS loan mirrors last season, when the Cofis also took three players from the champions. The trend has prompted debate among rival fans over competitive balance, but for manager Richard Davies, the focus is on adding proven Cymru Premier quality.

Alongside the return of Bradley, Lock and Clarke,

Caernarfon have also signed former TNS goalkeeper Connor Roberts, further strengthening the squad ahead of the new campaign.





Llandudno have added significant attacking firepower with the signing of prolific striker Dylan Proctor from Rhyl 1879.

Proctor was in outstanding form during the 2024–25 campaign, finishing as the Ardal North West's top scorer with 28 goals. Across all competitions, he found the net 31 times in just 27 appearances, helping Rhyl secure the league title and promotion to the Cymru North. His consistent goal–scoring made him one of the most sought–after players in the division over the summer.

The 22-year-old forward is known for his clinical finishing, aerial ability, and physical presence, qualities that Llandudno will be looking to harness as they push for a strong season in the Cymru North. His arrival provides a proven cutting edge in front of goal and underlines the club's ambition to compete at the top end of the table.

The move comes in the same week that Dylan's brother, Calum, departed Rhyl to join Flint Mountain, marking a busy summer for the Proctor family. While Rhyl will now be tasked with filling the gap left by two key players, Llandudno will be hoping Dylan's scoring touch continues in black and white.

With a proven track record and plenty of years ahead of him, Proctor's signing is a clear statement of intent from the Seasiders as they look to make their mark on the 2025–26 campaign.



# KAYNE MCLAGEON JOINS NEWPORT GITY AND HISTHE GROUND RUNNING

Kayne McLaggon has signed for Newport City ahead of the 2025–26 season and already looks at home in his new colours.

The former Barry Town United captain scored on his first two appearances, first against Baglan Dragons in the Nathaniel MG Cup, then again on his league debut against Afan Lido. It has been a dream start for the 34year-old striker, who joined the club this summer after eight standout seasons at Jenner Park.

McLaggon made over 200 appearances for Barry, scoring more than 130 goals and wearing the armband through some of the club's most successful modern campaigns. A product of Southampton's academy and a Wales C international, he brings serious pedigree to Newport's front line.

He joins a Newport City side full of ambition, coming off a third place finish in their first ever Cymru South season. The club have added proven experience to their ranks, with McLaggon linking back up with former Barry teammate Nat Jarvis.

With two goals in two games, McLaggon has wasted no time settling in, and if early signs are anything to go by, he could be a major figure in Newport's promotion push this season.

GREG DRAPER
JOINS NEWTOWN

Newtown have secured the signing of experienced striker Greg Draper ahead of the 2025-26 Cymru North season.

The 35-year-old is best known for his prolific spell at The New Saints, where he became one of the most feared forwards in the league and won multiple Cymru Premier Golden Boot awards.

Across a decade at Park Hall, Draper scored more than 160 goals in all competitions and played a key role in TNS' domestic dominance.

According to unofficial data from Transfermarkt, Draper has made 372 career appearances and scored 226 goals. It is an outstanding strike rate that underlines his reputation as one of the most lethal forwards in Welsh football history.

After leaving TNS as a player in 2021, Draper remained with the club in a coaching role while also representing their under 21 side. His return to senior football with Newtown brings a wealth of experience and a proven eye for goal to Latham Park.

For Newtown, the move is a statement of intent.

Draper's pedigree at the highest level of Welsh football adds a new dimension to their attacking options, and his influence off the pitch is likely to be just as valuable as his contributions on it.



# WHO MAKES THE KITS IN WELSH FOOTBALL

When it comes to kits in Welsh domestic football, one name towers above the rest: Macron. From the Cymru Premier to the North and South divisions, the Italian brand is everywhere. But they're not the only ones dressing the nation's clubs.

Across all 44 teams in the three tiers, Macron supply 19 clubs, giving them a commanding lead over the rest. You'll spot their gear at clubs like TNS, Barry Town, Llanelli and more. Whether it's down to affordability, availability or just good relationships, they've cornered a massive part of the market.

Close behind, Adidas and Joma both kit out 6 clubs each. Adidas bring their global appeal to the likes of Connahs Quay, Newtown and Holywell, while Joma are favoured by teams including Carmarthen, Pontypridd and Mold.

Then come the rest. The one club brands.

Tor Sports supply Haverfordwest and Llantwit Major Nike work with Cardiff Met. Hope and Glory provide kits for Colwyn Bay. Puma, Surridge Sports, VX3, Acerbis UK, Classic Sportswear, Conquer Teamwear, Caelo, Saeth and Rhino are each linked with a single club.



#### PURPOSE-DRIVEN

One name on the list carries more than just branding. It carries meaning. Caelo is a new kit manufacturer launched by Newport City following seven months of behind-the-scenes work to create something rooted in quality and purpose. The name comes from the Latin for sky or heaven, inspired by a personal tragedy experienced by the club's owner.

This season, every Newport City player from under 6s through to the senior team will wear Caelo. It marks the beginning of a new chapter in the club's identity.

"Being able to transfer our vision into a kit this season has been a great experience. I am unbelievable proud of the outcome and we have had such good feedback from supporters, orders have been coming in for both the home and away kit which is fantastic. We look forward to developing and sharing the full range throughout the season and hope more clubs in Wales will be wearing Caelo kits next season. For me as a manager the 14 day turnaround, along with the quality of the kit is superb"

It's the start of something bigger. The club plans to offer the brand to other local teams, with an eye on rolling it out across Wales next year. The goal is to provide high quality kits at a more affordable price than current providers. A project built with passion, purpose and plenty of care.

































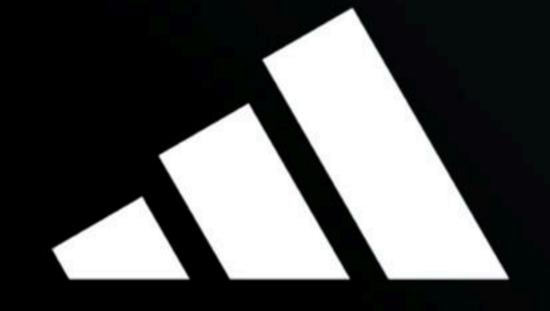
# WHO MAKES THE KITS IN WELSH FOOTBALL

Correct at the time of writing.



TNS
PENYBONT
BARRY TOWN
LLANELLI
BALA TOWN
BRITON FERRY
FLINT TOWN
LLANDUDNO
GUILSFIELD

DENBIGH
CAERSWS
RUTHIN
CAMBRIAN
BAGLAN DRAGONS
TREFELIN
TRETHOMAS
AFAN LIDO
YNYSHIR ALBIONS
TREOWEN





CONNAHS QUAY
NEWTOWN
GRESFORD
HOLYWELL
RHYL
BUCKLEY

HOLYHEAD HOTSPUR
BRICKFIELD
MOLD
CARMARTHEN
CARDIFF DRACS
PONTYPRIDD









CAËLO









COLWYN BAY CAERNARFON PENRHYNCOCH



HAVERFORDWEST



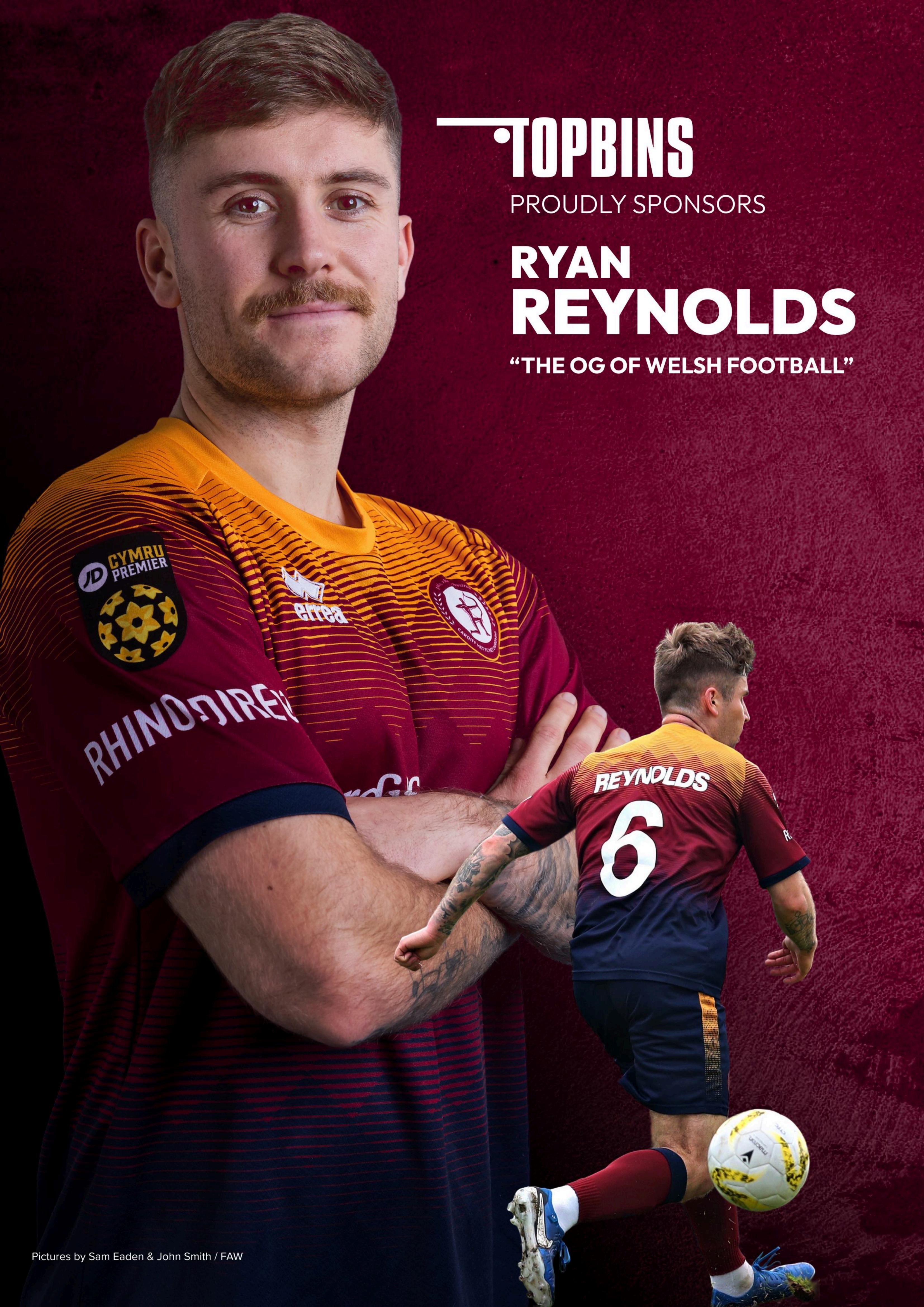


Bangor City 1876 have teamed up with hummel for the new season, a partnership that feels like a perfect fit. The Danish brand brings decades of craft and a proper sense of style, with those unmistakable chevrons ready to make a statement in Bangor. Despite currently playing in Tier 3 of Welsh football, the club continues to draw national attention thanks to its strong identity, supporter-driven roots and bold off-field moves.

This is more than a badge on a shirt, it's a signal of intent. From the first team to the youth sides, everyone will share a clean look and a united front, backed by a five-year deal with one of football's most iconic kit suppliers. Bangor might not be in the top two tiers right now, but the presence they carry in the Welsh game is impossible to ignore.

Pictures by Nik Mesney / FAW







With Welsh league football receiving limited television coverage, photographers have become an essential link between the game and its audience. Their images capture moments that would otherwise be missed, giving supporters, players and communities a visual connection to matches across the country.

Across the Cymru Premier, North and South, photographers regularly attend fixtures in all conditions. They capture goals, celebrations and decisive moments that are then shared on social media, used in match programmes and featured in local and national news outlets.

This coverage is vital for clubs. Professional quality images help attract sponsors, build online engagement and give teams a strong visual presence that television often overlooks. For players, it provides a personal record of their careers. For fans, it is often the only way to see match action beyond the final score.

Many photographers are volunteers, committed to promoting the game they follow. They often spend long hours editing and uploading photos so that clubs and supporters can see the action as soon as possible after full time.

We spoke to several photographers who cover the Welsh leagues from north to south. They told us about working in all weather conditions and the satisfaction of seeing their work used to represent Welsh football.

In a landscape where live coverage is limited, Welsh league photographers are ensuring the game is still seen. Their work promotes clubs, raises the profile of the leagues and preserves the moments that make Welsh football what it is.

### SAM EADEN

### What first sparked your interest in photography?

My mums always been keen on taking photos, everywhere she goes she sees angles and little things and I guess that's where it comes from originally. I used to play Rugby League as a kid all the way from 8 to 19, but unfortunately got quite a bad injury when I was 16 so instead of sitting there doing nothing I thought I might as well be of some use. Went to some local football back in Barnsley and took some very primitive photos but enjoyed it.

### How did you end up focusing on football, and especially the Welsh leagues?

I went to uni in Bangor and in my first year due to Covid the only games I could get to were the Barnsley first team games behind closed doors (big thanks to the media guys there). And then in my second year I finally got to some Welsh league stuff and it went from there.

### Was there a specific match or photo that made you think "this is what I want to do more of"?

I don't think there was a specific game or moment, I just kept improving and enjoying going to different grounds and wanting to see more and do more is what made me continue and push with it.

### What's it like photographing the Cymru Leagues week in, week out?

There's nothing like Welsh football. It's absolutely brilliant. I see this more especially when I shoot back in England, it just doesn't have the same feel. Everywhere you go there's someone you know and someone to talk to. Not being Welsh myself I've tried to embrace that culture as much as I can and it seems to have embraced me too.

### Are there any grounds that are particularly photogenic or particularly difficult?

I have some personal favourites. Belle Vue in Rhyl has to be up there, feels like a proper football ground. I'm also a big fan of any which include a lot of greenery e.g. Bala and Guilsfield. Same can be said for anything with a decent view, Porthmadog and Newtown come to mind. Also being a cofi of some sorts I'd have to say the Oval, proper old school. On the other hand, bottom of my list would probably be Airbus or TNS, I've been there that many times it does get a bit boring and astro certainly doesn't help.

# How do you approach shooting in very different setups, from big crowds to near-empty grounds, sunny afternoons to stormy midweekers?

Not too much to be honest, you can only shoot what's in front of you. Obviously with a bigger crowd allows for more spectator shots whilst an emptier game would focus on the match itself a bit more. In terms of the weather I'd probably just say it inhibits how much I'd get about really. If it's lovely and sunny I'll try and be all over the place, if it's lashing it down I'll probably just stay where I am.

## Have you noticed a rise in interest or quality in the media side of the Welsh game?

And yes I have, obviously it's a slow burner with what the FAW are trying to do and sometimes they get a bit of stick for how it's done. But no doubt the rise and improvement of the socials and content produced is down to some proper hard work and brain storming from the guys behind the scenes, Olly Allen, Nick Davies and Rob Dowling all put in ridiculous amounts of work over the season to try and improve what everyone sees and experiences which cannot be undermined.

### What gear do you normally take with you to matches?

So I've got 2 Canon 1Dx mark 2's, a 16/35 wide, 70-200 and a 400mm lens. It's not cheap but it's essential really.

## Do you plan what kind of shots you want, or just go with the flow once the whistle goes?

I have an idea sometimes if I'm going to a certain ground or something is happening that day, but it's all off cuff from when I arrive to when I leave.

### What's the biggest challenge when covering games in the Welsh pyramid?

I'd probably say the weather. It rains and it rains and it rains and when it doesn't, it's just really cold. With not much cover anywhere too, it can be a pretty horrible afternoon/evening if the lucks not with you.

## How do you work under pressure, like tight deadlines, bad weather or quick turnaround requests?

In terms of deadlines it's a non negotiable really. If the photos aren't ready by the next day, the game isn't really relevant anymore, it's the same for anyone shooting any sport anywhere and it's just the nature of the beast really. Luckily I'm young and full of energy for now, ask me again in 20 years and I might not be so keen for some late night editing.

## What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into football photography in Wales?

I say this to anyone who asks me, go to as many grounds as you can. There's so many teams and so many beautiful pitches and testing yourself in different environments it will only help you improve. It also means more coverage for some teams who may not get it.

### Have you ever captured a special moment that meant a lot to a player or club?

Yes, Dean Redmond scoring the winning goal for Menai Bridge Tigers following the passing of his dear friend Sean Brett. Speaks for itself really.



### Are there any matches or cup finals that really stand out to you over the years?

I got to see Chelsea play at Barnsley during Covid which was insane, seeing the likes of Thomas Tuchel and Tammy Abraham at Oakwell. I also got to see my local Sunday league team win a cup final at Oakwell aswell with a lot of my mates playing. The game I would choose though is Caernarfon vs Penybont to get into Europe a couple of seasons ago. Seeing how much it meant to the town and the cofis and being able to be a part of that, it will live with me for a long long time.

## Do you think there are enough opportunities or support for aspiring photographers in the Welsh system?

In terms of opportunities, absolutely, I guarantee anyone reading this who wants to get into it, your local club will probably need a matchday photographer, it likely won't be paid, but it's a platform to go and improve. As the Welsh leagues grow, hopefully teams will put more emphasis on social media and give more opportunities to aspiring photographers. Llandudno (Levi Montgomery) and Denbigh (Lisi Jones) are great examples of where young photographers can flourish.



## How important is it to have your work seen, through socials, clubs or media outlets?

It's imperative really, if not, it's almost futile. Photos are taken to be used so it's so nice to see when clubs and players are using your photos, makes it all worthwhile really. This also goes back to why I love Welsh football. I could go photograph the English leagues, league 1, championship and premier league and have the photos sit in an album in hope they'll be published by a major news outlet but never see the light of day. Or be used by people who value them. Answers on a postcard.

#### Favourite ground to shoot at?

As I said previously probably Rhyl, although with how many times I go, and the fact it doesn't ever get old, Aber has to be up there too.

#### Worst weather you've battled through?

Probably Holyhead vs Caernarfon in the Welsh cup last season. If you were there, I hope you've dried off by now.

#### Canon, Nikon or Sony?

Canon. We don't talk about the others.

#### One lens you couldn't live without?

400, once you get one, you'll wonder how you ever lived without it.

#### Bucket list match or venue in Welsh football?

Match. Bangor vs Caernarfon. Ground, Tyddyn Paun, CPD Llangoed, the home of football.



### LEWIS MITCHELL

### What first sparked your interest in photography?

My family used to give me disposable cameras to play with on holidays in France when I was little, it was always exciting waiting for them to be developed and then laugh at how bad they mostly turned out! As I got older it moved into small digital cameras and it was still just as fun capturing whatever I saw but with the more enjoyable outcome of nicer photos to show from it.

### How did you end up focusing on football, and especially the Welsh leagues?

I ended up studying Photojournalism & Documentary Photography at the University of Gloucestershire, and enjoyed being involved in the sport department, both playing within the uni's football league & interning as a photographer for their semi-pro rugby league side, this experience was great for preparing me for working within sports. I graduated in 2016 and was able to travel back to France and watch a few of the Wales games which was obviously an amazing journey, spending time with my cousin Llew out there who was involved in the Port Talbot Town 1901 Ultras movement at the time, he convinced me to come down to a game when we got home so I took my camera and enjoyed it so kept coming back for more!

### Was there a specific match or photo that made you think "this is what I want to do more of"?

That moment probably didn't come until 2017, I found out Paul Merson would be turning out for Caerau FC so headed up there to photograph their match against Pontyclun and sure enough there he was warming up and having photos with the crowd, He was subbed in the second half and the match was abandoned when the floodlights failed but the interest in my photos from that night blew up and run up by several national newspapers so was a bit of a catalyst in me staying involved and finding other Welsh football stories to be told.

### What's it like photographing the Cymru Leagues week in, week out?

I love it, it's pure unsanitized football which I think is hard to find these days. You can feel a sense of community in so many clubs across the county, committed volunteers who have been involved for decades, passionate fans supporting their local team and the competitive standard of football between the players is great to watch too.

### Are there any grounds that are particularly photogenic or particularly difficult?

Grounds in the Cymru Leagues are so unique to each club there's no two the same, Wales is such an impressive country on the eye I do love the scenic grounds within the valleys like Cambrian United & Ynyshir Albions where you can really show off the dominant hills amongst terraced housing close by which is so typically Welsh.

Some grounds can be quite tight with barriers close to the pitch which provides a challenge but the biggest issue can be floodlights, At night games we often struggle with underpowered lighting and sometimes it's good to sit in a particular spot which you know has better coverage of light.

#### What gear do you normally take with you to matches?

The cameras I photograph with are a Canon R3, R6II & R6. I typically use three lenses which are 14–35mm f4 for general stuff, 70–200mm f2.8 for close action & 400mm f2.8 for action further away. The laptop I have with me to edit pitchside is Macbook Pro loaded with Photomechanic which allows me to cull & add captions quickly before editing with Photoshop.

# How do you approach shooting in very different setups, from big crowds to near-empty grounds, sunny afternoons to stormy midweekers?

I don't tend to approach any game differently from another, I photographed in completely empty grounds during covid which wasn't great for photos looking back. If there is a particularly big crowd for a match I'll take a look at where the loudest supporters are setting up and try to place myself near them, if their team scores then it's a good bet players will run over to celebrate with them which are the images we all like to see.

Naturally I prefer to shoot during the warm sunny afternoons of summer, stormy midweekers provide a challenge but I prepare for that by having covers for the equipment, and if it gets particularly bad just hide up in a stand which can provide another angle of the match I wouldn't have had pitchside.

## Have you noticed a rise in interest or quality in the media side of the Welsh game?

I think there's always room for improvement in coverage of the Cymru Leagues, It's great to be involved in that movement as a freelancer for the FAW, and It's amazing to see the increase of output & quality of images on the leagues social media accounts each week journey that started with a DIY attitude providing photos for Y Clwb Pel Droed. Individual Clubs are seeing the value in having a good media presence with photos, graphics & video now too and there are talented people creating content that was quite sparse or of poor quality a few years ago so it is heading in the right direction.

### What's the biggest challenge when covering games in the Welsh pyramid?

Clubs always provide a warm welcome with great access so there's not many challenges apart from the weather & floodlights!

## Do you plan what kind of shots you want, or just go with the flow once the whistle goes?

I do a bit of research which determines my thinking on what to get from each game which includes the teams' recent form, general news around the particular clubs, new signings or missing players and most importantly the weather forecast. You make your own luck in this game so you have to be well prepared for when the opportunity for a great photo presents itself. Once the match starts I can decide if it's worth staying in the same spot for the second half or move elsewhere depending on how the action is going and if I feel the need to cover that place differently to the last time I visited.

### Are there any matches or cup finals that really stand out to you over the years?

Having been involved at Penybont for so many years getting to the Welsh Cup Final was massive at the time and nearly clawing it back towards the end was excruciating. Subsequent victories against TNS in the league leading to two European adventures to Andorra & Lithuania will live long in the memory and thankfully through my photos!





## Do you have a favourite photo you've taken in the Welsh leagues? What's the story behind it?

My favourites change quite often but it'd probably be the photo of James Loveridge scoring a penalty at Afan Lido, It was an evening game with a nice sky so when the penalty got awarded I remembered seeing a Sgorio video showing Dai the Llanelli Town fan celebrating, I decided to move behind the goal to mix it up and when the ball went in sure enough he raised his hands and made for a nice photo from a different angle. It ended up getting a special merit at the World Sports Photography awards so it was great to showcase the league on that sort of stage.

### Have you ever captured a special moment that meant a lot to a player or club?

I've been lucky to develop friendships over the years with volunteers, supporters, players & coaches in the Cymru Leagues and having those relationships is invaluable in getting access & reactions when things go well! I went to school with Cullen Kinsella who lifted the Cymru South title as Llantwit Major captain so that was special for us but I also played youth football with Josh Yorwerth whose shown me photos of him and his young son after a Barry Town match blown up as a canvas in his home which also shows it's not just on the pitch that memories need to be captured.



## How do you work under pressure, like tight deadlines, bad weather or quick turnaround requests?

There's always a particular rush to get certain images onto the archive by certain moments of the matchday, General Views on arrival, Warm Ups before KO, Goals as they go in and some action before HT. I find it quite thrilling working at that fast pace and seeing photos used quickly. Bad weather can slow the process down a bit but I have a little rain tent for the laptop to get the job done. One particular request we had this weekend was photos of Karl Lewis & Callum McKenzie who were both taking charge of their first league games for Llantwit Major & Aberystwyth Town so I got those up before focussing on the rest of the warm ups.

### How important is it to have your work seen, through socials, clubs or media outlets?

It's why we do it, the clubs & league won't grow if these photos sit on a hard drive never seeing use. I smile when I see a player use my photo to celebrate a moment on their socials or walk into a clubhouse and they've decided to frame a particular image on the wall to remember forever. It's important that media outlets such as the BBC use up to date imagery to show what's been going on and not a stock image of a random football which is what was happening not that long ago.

## What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into football photography in Wales?

Jump in and get involved at your local club, they'll be welcoming, appreciative of your coverage and provide an opportunity to showcase what you can do which goes hand in hand.

#### Favourite ground to shoot at?

Bridge Meadow Stadium

#### Worst weather you've battled through?

Welsh Blood Cup South Final 2024

#### Canon, Nikon or Sony?

Canon.

#### One lens you couldn't live without?

70-200mm f2.8

#### Bucket list match or venue in Welsh football?

Penybont v Leeds United in the UEFA Conference League

### LISI JONES

### What first sparked your interest in photography?

Honestly, I can't pinpoint a single moment as it was more of a gradual thing. I always enjoyed taking photos on my phone, especially while travelling. I'd often find myself capturing little details or moments just for fun. I'd even thought about getting a camera a few times, but never quite followed through. Then, after a few years of following Denbigh Town FC as a supporter and getting to know the club's photographers and staff pretty well, something clicked. I'd be watching matches and would think to myself, "That would've made a brilliant photo." That thought stuck with me. So in January 2024, I finally bought my first camera and taught myself how to use it from scratch. My first game was Llannefydd v Bethesda Athletic on January 13th. Nothing special, just a local game 15 minutes up the road from where I live. I'd never used a camera before that. It was all new, but I think I did a pretty good job. Not long after, Ollie gave me the chance to shoot for Denbigh alongside Roy and Steve, who've been incredibly supportive and helpful. Since then, I've fallen in love with photography, especially sports photography, and it's just grown from there.

### How did you end up focusing on football, and especially the Welsh leagues?

Football has always been a big part of my life as it's my main hobby and passion. Supporting Denbigh Town naturally drew me into the Welsh leagues more than any other since it's local to me. When I started taking photos for the club, I began paying closer attention to the league as a whole. What started as a side interest quickly became something I cared about a lot. I've also met loads of brilliant people through it, like other photographers, volunteers, club staff, and the community makes it even more enjoyable. I want to keep covering this league and keep improving every step of the way.

### Was there a specific match or photo that made you think "this is what I want to do more of"?

There hasn't been one specific match or photo, but it's moments where players or clubs use my photos. Whether it's as a profile picture, in a post, or just a message saying thanks, it all makes it worthwhile. It shows that people value what I'm doing and the time I put into doing this, and that's all the motivation I need. Even something as simple as getting credited and thanked for my work makes me think, "this is what I want to keep doing."

#### What's it like photographing the Cymru Leagues week in, week out?

It's honestly great fun. I know there are people out there who cover all the leagues (Cymru Premier, North and South) and cup games across both tiers, and that's amazing, but even just shooting for one club feels special. I get to be part of the club's journey, capturing all the different moments. One of the best moments so far was when we reached the Welsh Cup quarter-finals for the first time in our history after beating clubs that all began with the letter LI. Sadly, we couldn't beat Llanelli, but being there to capture that was unforgettable, even though we lost.

## Are there any grounds that are particularly photogenic or particularly difficult?

Definitely! In terms of nice backdrops, I'd say
Penrhyncoch, Caersws, and Llannefydd are at the top
of my list as they've all got something unique about
them. I've also been to Blaenau Ffestiniog and Llanrwst
as a supporter instead of a photographer, and both
have scenic setups that make for great backgrounds.
On the tougher side, I'd say Airbus UK Broughton and
Colwyn Bay can be challenging because of the
floodlights. You get bright spots and dark patches,
which makes consistency a bit tricky. This is all based on
the grounds I've been to.

# How do you approach shooting in very different setups, from big crowds to near-empty grounds, sunny afternoons to stormy midweekers?

Crowds add something to the atmosphere, especially at smaller grounds where the fans are right up close to the pitch. They make for great reaction shots too, particularly when a team wins or scores at a crucial point. So far, I've been quite lucky with the weather, only dealing with some rain while shooting. But I've been a spectator at matches with brutal conditions, and I'm always relieved I wasn't pitch-side that day. I'll always take the sun over wind or rain, even if it's shining in my face.

## Have you noticed a rise in interest or quality in the media side of the Welsh game?

Oh yeah, 100%. The media presence in the Cymru Leagues has grown massively. More clubs are active on social media, which is so important for connecting with local communities and fans. And photography plays a huge role in that. It brings matches to life online. A good match day photo can make someone think, "I wish I'd gone to that game", or even better, "I'm going to the next one." You can see the effect in growing attendance numbers, too. Media is such an important part of how clubs present themselves and engage fans, and I think the Cymru Leagues have done a fantastic job building that online connection.

### What's the biggest challenge when covering games in the Welsh pyramid?

My biggest challenge is probably making sure I don't miss key moments. It sounds simple, but the game can change in a split second, and I've looked away at the wrong time before only to hear the crowd cheer and realise I've just missed a goal. Staying focused the entire time is tougher than it sounds.

## Do you plan what kind of shots you want, or just go with the flow once the whistle goes?

I go in with a simple plan. I always try to grab photos of the ground and warm-ups before kick-off. During the match, I aim to get a good variety of each player playing for Denbigh, if possible, so no one feels left out. These shots often get used for graphics or social media posts. I usually stick to the side where we're attacking, which makes it harder to get good defensive shots with a shorter lens, but I do my best to balance it out and to make sure everyone is included.

### Are there any matches or cup finals that really stand out to you over the years?

Derby games like Denbigh vs Rhyl or Ruthin always stand out. The atmosphere is always great, and you can see how much it means to the players and fans, which comes through in the photos. I haven't covered a cup final with Denbigh yet, but it's something I'd love to do. Capturing the day we lift more silverware would be a dream.

#### What gear do you normally take with you to matches?

In my bag, I've got a Canon R6, a 70–200mm f/2.8 Mk II, a 24–70mm, and my EF to RF adapter. I also keep a waterproof cover for the gear and a microfibre cloth just in case the weather turns. Outside of the bag, I bring my monopod, my knock-off mini-max stool, and my MacBook Air, which I use to edit and send photos live during the game for social media. It's a small setup, but it gets the job done.

## Do you have a favourite photo you've taken in the Welsh leagues? What's the story behind it?

I don't have a single favourite, but I love a good action shot where you get two players battling for the ball. Usually one from each team, especially if there's some emotion in the moment. Those kinds of images tell the story of the match, and I think they're the most exciting to capture and publish.



#### How do you work under pressure, like tight deadlines, bad weather or quick turnaround requests?

I try to get a few key images out during the match, like a goal or an interesting moment, so the media officer can post in real time. I keep my camera connected to my MacBook so I can quickly edit and send the best shots across. For full galleries, I aim to have everything ready within 24 to 36 hours. People might not realise how much time and care go into editing. It's not just about taking the photo and sending it over raw. I want the photos to be the highest quality possible, so I'll spend the time making sure every image looks its best before I share it.

### Have you ever captured a special moment that meant a lot to a player or club?

One moment that stands out is when I covered title-winning games. Rhyl vs Llannefydd, for example, which I covered for Lock Stock. Rhyl won the league on that day, and a lot of families and friends of the players were there. I took some nice photos of the players celebrating with their loved ones and the trophy. Those kinds of images matter the most, in my opinion. They're not just for social media. They become memories people hold on to for a long time.

## What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into football photography in Wales?

Just go for it. Don't overthink it. Reach out to your local club and offer to take some photos. The worst thing they could say is no, but I doubt they would. Smaller clubs especially love it when someone wants to help out, as they often don't have as much media coverage as some other bigger clubs. Once you shoot a few games, you'll start building a portfolio and meeting more people. The football media community we've got is welcoming. Photographers and club staff are usually happy to offer help or advice. Every connection you make opens more opportunities. Social media officers love having new content to share, and your photos might even draw more attention to the club and bring more fans to the games.





### How important is it to have your work seen, through socials, clubs or media outlets?

It's very important. I started posting on Twitter, then created an Instagram account last October, and that's helped me reach a lot more people. I've had recognition from other photographers and even people connected to the FAW, which has been amazing. I've met fellow photographers through social media and later in real life, too. It's helped build a little community. I've also had photos featured in local papers and websites like Grassroots North Wales, Cymru Sport, and even by the Cymru Leagues themselves. For someone who's only been in this industry for 18 months and a club photographer for just over a year, that kind of recognition means the world.

#### Favourite ground to shoot at?

Central Park as it's our home ground.

#### Worst weather you've battled through?

Definitely the cold in Llandudno on a Friday night in February. It was about 2°C, but the wind made it feel closer to -4°C. To make matters worse, I'd forgotten my coat, so I was absolutely freezing. By the end, I couldn't feel a thing, I was that cold.

#### Canon, Nikon or Sony?

Canon. I used to be with Nikon, but I swapped in early January to Canon.

#### One lens you couldn't live without?

My 70-200mm. Without it, there wouldn't be any photos.

### Bucket list match or venue in Welsh football?

I don't have one specific match in mind, but I'd love to cover a big game involving Denbigh, ideally a final. I've captured trophy lifts before with other clubs, but it would be incredible to capture one with Denbigh.



### NKMESNEY

# What first sparked your interest in photography and how did you end up focusing on football, and especially the Welsh leagues?

To answer both of the above together, I used to work for gap personnel when Gary Dewhurst first bought Connah's Quay Nomads and he asked me if I wanted to get involved with the club at all and I jumped at the opportunity as I've loved football all my life – he gave me a small budget to get an entry level camera and the rest is history.

## Was there a specific match or photo that made you think "this is what I want to do more of"?

The first trophy would be the trigger point for the rest of it all I think - Nomads' 1-0 victory over Airbus in the Europa League Play Off back in 2016 - I'd already been involved for a number of years at that point, but being part of the off-field staff for a trophy winning team that would then go on to get through a round in Europe at our first attempt was an amazing experience and one I'll never forget.

### What's it like photographing the Cymru Leagues week in, week out?

I really enjoy it as I get to know a lot of the players and staff around the grounds and they always make me feel welcome whenever I go, so it then gives me a bit more freedom in terms of where I can go and what I can do as people are very accommodating, meaning I can get different photos that perhaps in my earlier years of just "keeping my head down" I wouldn't have been able to get.

### Are there any grounds that are particularly photogenic or particularly difficult?

I think due to the nature of Welsh football, the biggest challenge is the lower attendances as whenever I've covered games at a higher level, the photos always instantly look better because of the crowd in the background, so I always try and position myself to get the most out of the backdrop in the shots. I was at Colwyn Bay this past weekend though and a crowd of 1500+ was great to see and the recent renovations to their stadium looked fantastic.

# How do you approach shooting in very different setups, from big crowds to near-empty grounds, sunny afternoons to stormy midweekers?

As I mentioned above, I always keep an eye out for where things are positioned, like fans, banners, the sun etc as dependent on where they all are will generally dictate where I sit in a game to enhance the backdrop as much as I can do. In terms of weather, it's a case of always being prepared in Wales as the weather can change so suddenly, so even it's I've put sun cream on before kick off, I'll always still have my waterproofs with me!

## Have you noticed a rise in interest or quality in the media side of the Welsh game?

Yes absolutely in the last few years – just in the number of games that I have been commissioned to personally, along with now seeing that it's not just 2–3 photographers, but more like 8–10 across Wales that FAW are regularly using, meaning that there is a significant increase in output throughout the leagues.

### What's the biggest challenge when covering games in the Welsh pyramid?

I would have to say the floodlights - unfortunately, not many of the grounds have got great floodlights, so you end up having to do a lot of post-production editing to get the best out of the photos, or alternatively shooting with a lower shutter speed to allow more light into the frame, but then you run the risk of getting blurry images.

### What gear do you normally take with you to matches?

I've got 3 x Canon 1DX MKII bodies along with three lenses in the form of a 300mm, a 70-200mm and a 16-35mm - they give me great variety for all focal lengths, but I would say that I spend the majority of my time on the 300mm.

## Do you have a favourite photo you've taken in the Welsh leagues? What's the story behind it?

It would have to be my foggy photo at Deeside Stadium which I entered into the This Is Welsh Football UEFA Competition in the lead up to the 2017 Champions' League final which ended up in the UEFA Direct Magazine - the match got called off because of some crazy fog which just descended onto the pitch and it made for an awesome photo.

## Do you plan what kind of shots you want, or just go with the flow once the whistle goes?

I've always got a pretty good idea of what I want to get in terms of stock photos to be used on things like the Cymru Leagues website, but then it's a case of adjusting on the fly as well as certain aspects of a game can change what you shoot and where you are shooting from.

### Are there any matches or cup finals that really stand out to you over the years?

There' a few that I've done that have really stuck with me - Connah's Quay Nomads away against Partizan Belgrade was a crazy atmosphere - a typical eastern European night match in a big open-bowl style stadium with flags and a guy on a loudspeaker getting the crowd going all night. Next up would be getting asked to be the official photographer for Ukraine when they face Wales in the World Cup Play Off match - they were unable to send their own due to the war, so I was drafted in - an amazing experience and once the full time whistle blew, my job as focusing on Ukraine only went out the window!





#### How do you work under pressure, like tight deadlines, bad weather or quick turnaround requests?

I've become used to turning things around quickly – before I started working for the league, I used to pride myself on at the time being one of the only clubs who would actually post in–game photos as they were happening – most clubs at the time would perhaps post 1–2 at half time and full time, but I used to challenge myself to get a handful out during each half so that it made our social content stand out, so now that I do a lot of coverage for the JD Cymru Leagues and I need to post a gallery of photos during a game I find it quite comfortable to achieve. Bad weather is just something you get used to and in a weird way I enjoy it as the photos always look great when it's chucking it down, so it's I'm happy to get soaked very often to get some really cool looking photos.

### Have you ever captured a special moment that meant a lot to a player or club?

It would have to be the second time Connah's Quay
Nomads won the league on a personal note - the first
time was during Covid so we couldn't really celebrate it,
so to win it the second time was just an amazing
experience and gave the players the chance to really
celebrate it.

## What advice would you give to someone wanting to get into football photography in Wales?

Get involved with your local team and ask questions – I've had a number of photographer DM me on Instagram asking for help and advice and I'm more than happy to help if any aspiring photographers are after any tips etc

## Do you think there are enough opportunities or support for aspiring photographers in the Welsh system?

It's definitely a growing platform as I mentioned before – more and more photographers are being used by the FAW as they increase the coverage of the game in Wales be it in the Men's or Women's game, so the opportunities are certainly there if you prove your skillset and desire.

### How important is it to have your work seen, through socials, clubs or media outlets?

Yes, it's very important - I got my first bit of work through the FAW after they saw the work that I did for Connah's Quay Nomads appearing so regularly on their feed, so make sure that you post your work regularly, be it through the club channels that you are supporting or through your own social media channels.

#### Favourite ground to shoot at?

I'd be hard-pushed to look past Colwyn Bay at the moment within the Welsh pyramid and I've love the handful of games that I've shot at Wrexham's Racecourse ground as well.

#### Worst weather you've battled through?

A storm that soaked my cameras so much they switched off before half time once - I've since invested in some serious waterproof covers!

#### Canon, Nikon or Sony?

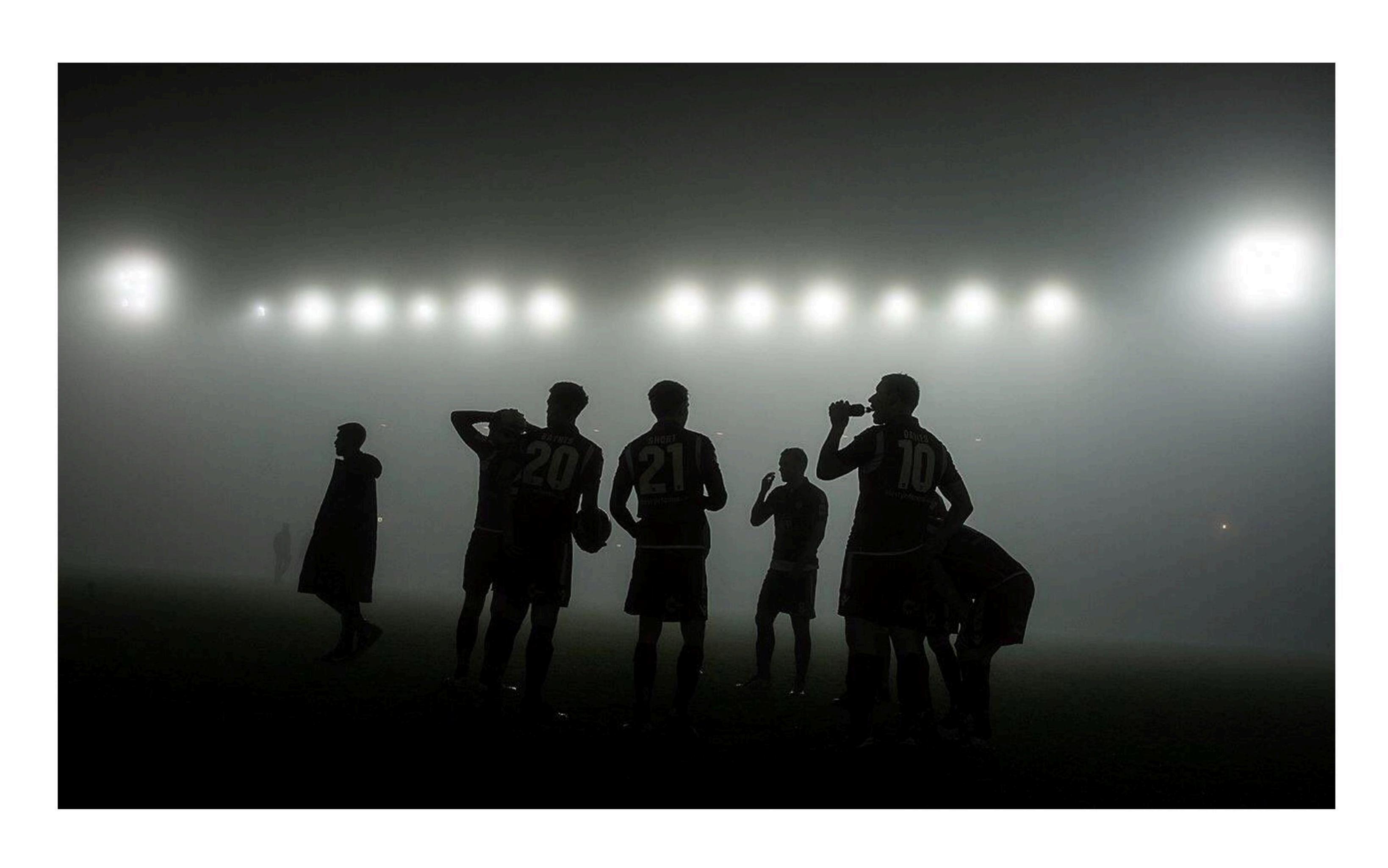
Canon

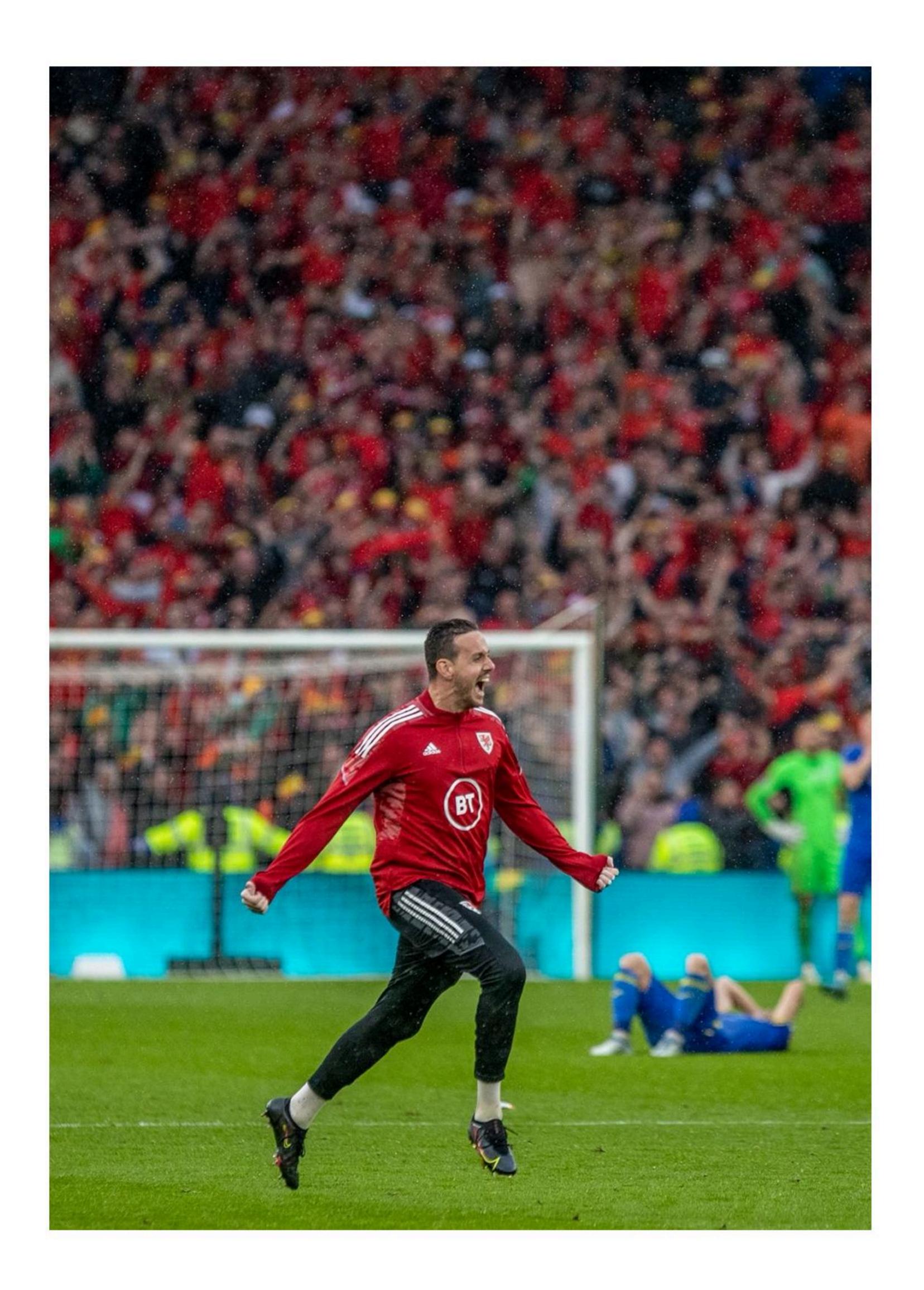
#### One lens you couldn't live without?

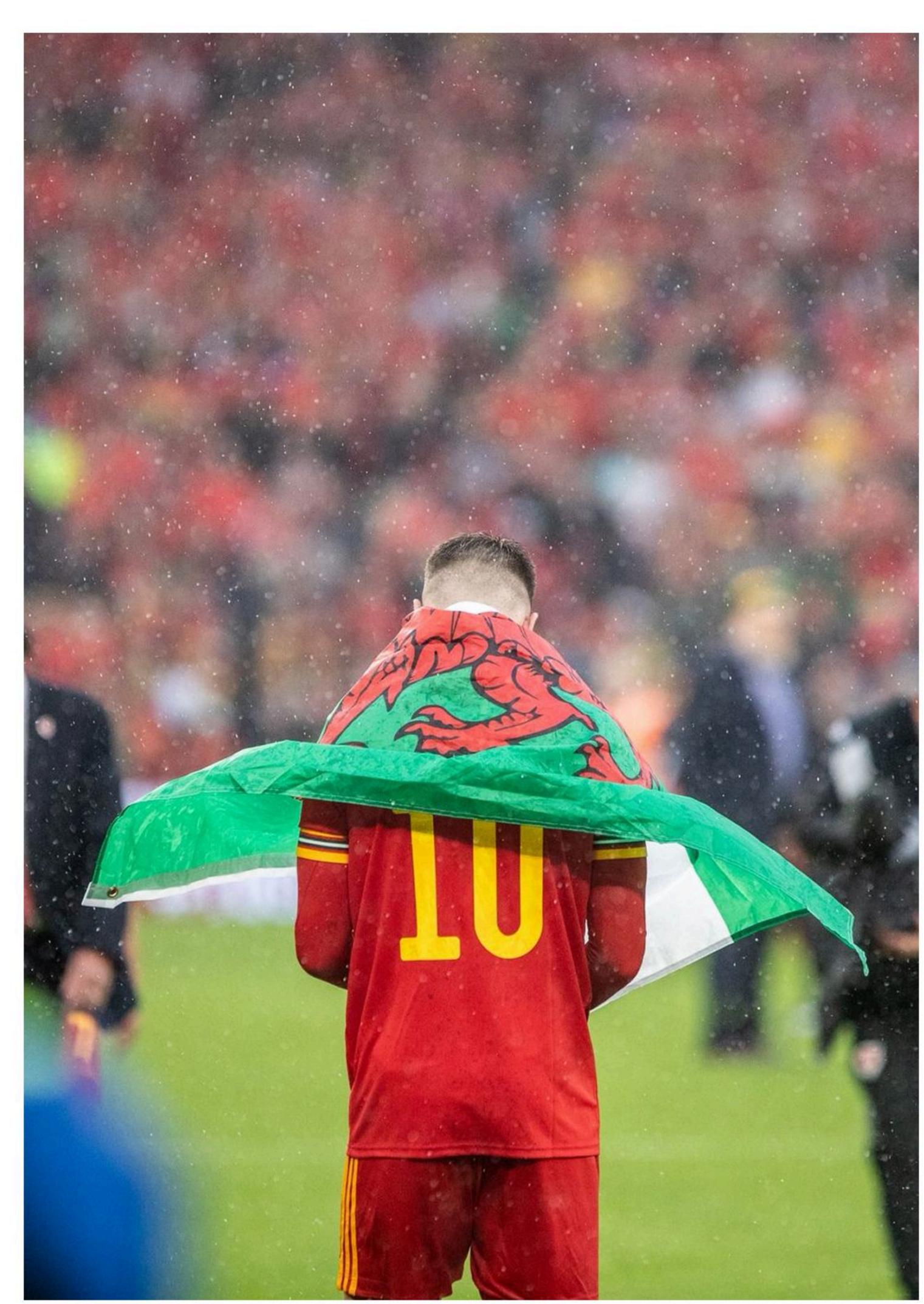
70-200mm

#### Bucket list match or venue in Welsh football?

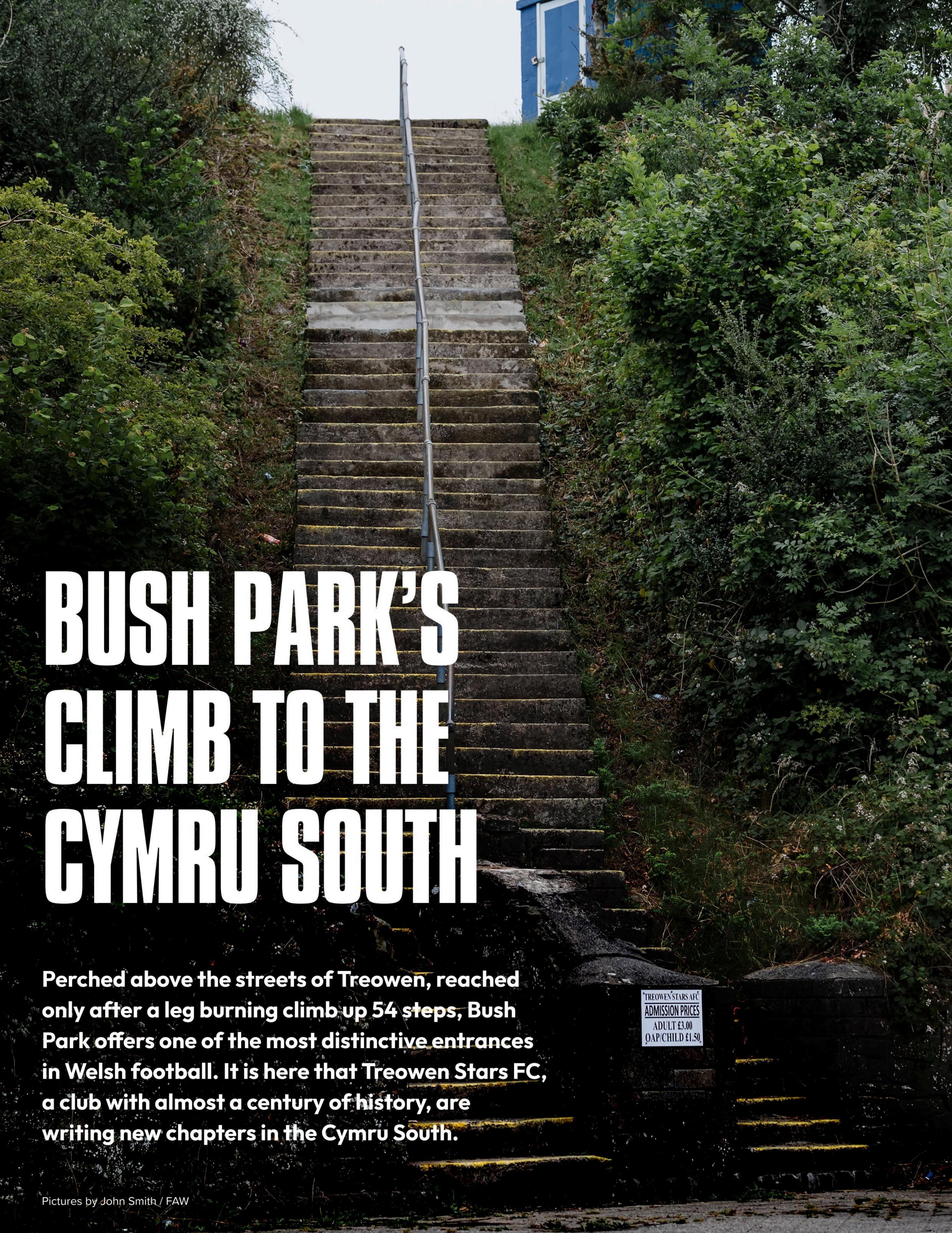
An English Premier League game - I'm a Manchester United fan so if I could get a game at Old Trafford that would be a dream come true











Formed in 1926, the Stars cut their teeth in regional leagues such as the Abertillery & District and West Monmouthshire competitions. The real seeds of progress were sown in the early 1970s when chairman Archie Davies steered the club into an era of development and ambition. The construction of modern changing rooms in 1973, funded largely by the club's own tote, gave Bush Park a lift both practically and in spirit. The introduction of a bar licence in 1984 turned the clubhouse into a community anchor, somewhere victories were celebrated and challenges faced together. When the Gwent County League was established in 1980, Treowen seized the opportunity to test themselves at a higher level. Promotion from Division 3 came in 1985–86, followed by another step up from Division 2 in 1990–91. The following season they won Division 1 at the first attempt, their success backed by rapid improvements to their facilities which were enough to secure a place in the Welsh League. Their debut season in Welsh League Division 3 in 1992–93 ended with the title wrapped up weeks before the finish. Another promotion came straight after, missing the Division 2 crown only on goal difference. That same campaign they went all the way to the Welsh League Cup final, falling just short against Barry Town. Through the mid to late 1990s, Treowen became a fixture in the top half of Division 1, recording four straight top six finishes and twice placing fourth. The highlight came in 1998 when they lifted the Welsh League Cup after a dramatic 4–3 extra time win over BP Llandarcy. They also built a habit of making deep runs in the Welsh Cup, reaching the last 32 four times in six years. Pictures by John Smith / FAW

