

TT No.51: Barry Neighbour - Early Season Hopping Travels (Part One)

Groundhopping holiday: I recently completed the first part of my holiday doing some Groundhopping. Here is a brief resume of events (Friday 24th August to Sunday 26th August 2007):

Friday 24th August 2007 - The Welsh Groundhop.

I picked up my travelling colleagues for the weekend, Gerry McGill and Alan Gulliford, at Basingstoke and we headed West. Apart from a diversion down to Hungerford to avoid heavy traffic in Newbury we arrived in Treforest (our base) at around 5 o'clock. A short 3 Mile trip to our first game: **AFC Porth 3 Caerau 0** - A 44-page programme of which 40 pages were adverts was issued for the game!! A tidy little ground with a stand and stepped banking to sit on. A comfortable win for the home side.

Saturday 25th August 2007

Breakfast and onto the coach for the first match: **Llangynwyd Rangers 1 Llanharry 1** - An 8-page programme was issued. This was a basic field job. A tea bar and a rail around the pitch. A competitive game. Onto game two for a local derby: **Brynna 2 Pencoed Athletic 3**. A really competitive local derby with the away side coming back to take the points. Smart little ground but no stand. 20-page programme. The third game was a gem. **Gilfach Goch Athletic 0 Rhose 4**. A very basic 4-page programme for this match. The pitch is built on a plateau with several steps to reach it although they have constructed a ramp way to reach the pitch. A lot of work going on. Lovely scenery. Finally, onto our last game of the day. **Blaenrhondda 0 Ton & Geli BGC 2**. A 16-page programme. The day's biggest crowd of 268 saw the former Welsh League side go down 0-2 after having the keeper sent off. This was a lovely little set up with a stand and stone steps around the ground to offer an unrestricted view of the beautiful scenery, with a clear view of mountains on three sides. We were also treated to the antics of one of the local youths, somewhat worse for wear, deciding it would be fun to pull the Linesman's shorts down! As you can imagine the official was not amused. I could not help thinking of the 'Hoppers reaction if the game had been abandoned!!

Sunday 25th August 2007

On to the Hellenic League starting with a bumper crowd of 434 for **Tytherington Rocks 1 Winterbourne United 1**. A small clubhouse and railed off pitch. A 32-page programme was included in the £3 admission. A short trip to Nailsea for **Shortwood United 2 Lydney Town 1**. This was another nice ground although will be remembered for the steep hill. A 24-page programme sold for £1. Part Two to follow....

