

TT No.243: Rob Champion - Sat 15th May 2010; **Treharris Athletic Western v Llangeinor**; Welsh League Division 2; Result: 1-2; Admission/Programme: no charge; Attendance: 55 (head count).

An offer from *FGIF* Photo supremo Gary Spooner (plus along with some clubs kicking off at 12 noon) has given me the chance to take in two games today in South Wales. My only other game in Wales came earlier this season @ Newcastle Emlyn back in September. Gary picked me up at 7.15am and we set off to pick up the "Merseyside 2" - Pete and Ian from Coleshill Parkway station at 8am. From there we went to Bromsgrove for a breakfast at the Pit Stop Cafe on the A38 - excellent value for money with the food being excellent as well. Thankfully the roads were clear and we made the journey without problems and arrived at the Athletic Ground with about an hour before kick-off.

Treharris is a small town with a population of over 6,000 located between Cardiff (17 miles to the south) and Merthyr Tydfil (10 miles to the north). The town was formed around Harris's Deep Navigation Colliery and coal mining excavations begun in 1878. Originally known as Harris's Navigation Pits the Deep Navigation shafts were, at the time the deepest in south Wales, some of them at a depth of 760 yards. Ownership was transferred to the Ocean Coal Co. Ltd in 1893 and remained in production until 1991. Most of the land where the Deep Navigation was situated has been landscaped and is now part of the new Millennium Park where many local football and rugby teams play and train.

The football club are, according the cover of their programme "South Wales Oldest Football Club". The club were formed in 1889 and were founder members of the South Wales League. The club became the league's first champions. In 1906 after dominating the South Wales League Treharris became one of the first clubs to play over the border when they joined the Western League. Four years were spent in the Western League and in their final campaign they became champions, and along with Cardiff City were elected to the Southern League. Just four seasons were spent in the second division of the Southern League before they resigned / were not re-elected in 1914. I stand to be corrected but I believe the club has been ever present in the Welsh League ever since. In 2008 they merged with local Merthyr League club Treharris Western to give us their present title. This season both Treharris and Llangeinor sit in mid-table with only three places and four points between them at the start of play. The two sides played each other three days ago @ Llangeinor with Treharris recording a 2-0 victory.

The ground is certainly one of the most interesting ones I have ever come across and one that I felt oozes character and charm in a rustic kind of way. We were not charged any admission or any money for the programme, though anyone who turned up nearer to kick-off was charged an admission though how much I don't know. The game was fairly even and played in the right spirit, with the visitors I would say shading affairs overall. Despite being an end of season game both sides

had plenty of chances, though the majority did not trouble either keeper. Llangeinor took the lead on twelve minutes when following a double save from the Treharris keeper Jordan Mortimer headed the ball home from five yards out. Both sides continued to create chances but the not further scoring occurred. The second half continued in the same vain as the first but following a spell of possession and territory for around ten minutes Llangeinor hit Treharris on the counter attack with Josh Ellis coolly slotting the ball into an empty net following a good save from the home keeper who injured himself in the process. The home side never gave up and got, what turned out to be a consolation goal in stoppage time when Ross Porter hit an unstoppable shot into the top right-hand corner from fully thirty-five yards.

Overall a good game played in glorious sunshine at a superb ground that would have the health and safety brigade in England having a hissy fit!!!!

Next up a short drive towards Merthyr for the Troedyrhiw v Corus Steel game in division 3...

06/20