

TT No.283: Ian Brown - Saturday 14th May 2011; **St Martins** 1 v 2 Malvern Rangers; West Midlands League Div. 2; Att: 60 (h/c); Admission: FOC; Programme/Raffle: £2.

Trying to find a fixture which had something on it, instead of a meaningless kick about, was proving difficult until it was noticed by Messrs. Leigh & Brown that there was a title shoot-out not far from our patch, in St Martins. However, when we were discussing it at a game earlier in the week a hopper (high up in the echelons of the hopping fraternity) poo -pooed this informing us otherwise that another team had already won that league.

To get to St Martins by public transport we chose to get the train to Gobowen and catch the No 53 bus from Gobowen to St Martins. A couple of pints of Banks' Original were quaffed whilst watching the Blackburn - Man Utd game, before the 10-minute journey to St Martins.

The border village and parish of St Martins (Welsh: Llanfarthin) is in Shropshire, just north of Oswestry and to the east of Chirk.

The ancient parish of St Martins was made up of the townships of Ifton, Wiggington, Bronygarth and Weston Rhyn. Each of these townships bordered Wales with the River Ceiriog and the River Dee forming the border. However, in 1870 the townships of Weston Rhyn and Bronygarth were formed into the new parish of Weston Rhyn.

The church of St Martins is dedicated to St Martins of Tours and was part of the Welsh diocese of St Asaph until 1922, when it was transferred to the English diocese of Lichfield.

The area was, for centuries, under the influence of Chirk Castle and later the Trevor family of Brynkinallt (Welsh: Bryncunallt).

The playing fields are merely a railed off pitch behind Stan's Supermarket on the northern edge of town opposite Ifton Miners Welfare Institute, offering a vista of rural Shropshire.

St Martins shaded the first half and were unlucky not to be ahead at the break. In the second half St Martins took the lead when the Malvern Rangers' keeper spilled a cross and it was gleefully slotted home by the homesters number 7 Thomas on 67 minutes, sparking scenes of jubilation. Despite being a goal down Malvern were looking likely to level matters and with just over 10 minutes left got the equaliser from a corner from Paulo Edwards, again sparking scenes of jubilation this time from the visitors. With a couple of minutes remaining Ed Lyons put the icing on the cake with a second goal, thus securing the title.

On the way back we stopped in Wrexham to imbibe some liquid refreshment at the Elihu Yale 'Spoons, where the Brains Dark went down well. Whether or not it was

drink induced a man was seen walking into said 'Spoons with a small white horse in tow - due to health & safety the man was asked to leave!!

07/20