

**TT No.55: Mike Latham** - Saturday 24 September 2011: Welsh National League (Wrexham Area) First Division: **Glyn Ceiriog** 0-4 Lex XI; No admission or programme; FGIF Match rating: 3\*.

The Wrexham Area League comprises many contrasting grounds and has become a favourite haunt of mine these past few years; I decided to venture to one of the league's outposts and was suitably rewarded by a game played in good spirit amidst beautiful scenery on a grey and drizzly afternoon.

Glyn Ceiriog is the largest village in the beautiful Ceiriog Valley about six miles from Chirk to the south of Wrexham. In the late 19th century the village was a centre for the working of slate and other minerals and a tramway was constructed to link the remote area with Chirk, the terminus being outside the 'New Inn' now known as the Glyn Valley Hotel. The tramway closed in 1935 after the slate mining industry in the area ceased; these days the memories of its industrial past are distant and the area is notable now for its breath-taking scenery.

I had long put a visit here on my list of grounds to tick-off and with only 13 teams in the second tier of the league there are only 12 home league games in a season. The car journey from Chirk was pleasant and I was surprised to find that the village had far more facilities than I envisaged: with a Post Office, a Spar general store, several independent shops, a café and a pub. I was informed that it is hoped to open a Tramway and mining museum to commemorate the village's past.

Glyn Ceiriog play at the Ceiriog Memorial Institute in the centre of the village opposite the Glyn Valley Hotel. The players change in a building formerly used for the tram terminus and walk the short distance to the ground through a children's playground. Facilities for players and spectators are limited but the lovely scenery more than compensates.

The playing area is undulating and narrow; with a big banking on one side affording the best view of play. Beyond the far side goal is a lovely view up the tree-shrouded valley; the far side is also bordered by trees. There are no dug-outs and no attempt was made to collect a donation from the twenty or so spectators present, a shame as every little helps small clubs such as these with essential expenses such as referee's fees.

Lex XI looked much the more proficient side from the outset of a free-flowing and competitive game. They had a core of experienced players who served them well and their no10 looked a class apart; he scored a well-taken hat-trick. The Wrexham Area League is one of my favourites and my visit to Glyn Ceiriog was well worthwhile.