

**TT No.7: Ian Brown** - Sat 30th July 2011; **Abbey Vale** v Creetown; South of Scotland League; Result: 3-3; Admission: By Donation; Programme: N/A; Crowd (Liverpool HC): 55; Badge: £3; Coffee: 50p.

The Club - Abbey Vale Football Club are a football club based in the town of New Abbey in the Dumfries & Galloway area of Scotland. They started life as an amateur side called Lochvale FC in 1971 but as more players joined from the village of New Abbey, the committee decided to change their name and move to New Abbey in 1974. However, to maintain their place in the Dumfries Amateur League the new side had to maintain the "Vale" in their title, hence the new club became known as Abbey Vale FC. In 2001 the club took a step up in competition and joined the South of Scotland Football League. They play their home matches at Maryfield Park in New Abbey, which is situated behind the Primary School. The pitch is roped off on two sides, with no posts behind the goals; there are no hard standing or seating areas. The only cover available is found behind the goal at the Primary School end of the ground where the David McNeil Pavilion houses the dressing rooms & tea bar. The pavilion was named in memory after one founder players who died tragically at a young age.

The Place - New Abbey is a village in Dumfries & Galloway, south-west Scotland. It is around 8 miles south west of Dumfries. The summit of the prominent hill Criffel is 2.5 miles to the south. The village has a wealth of history including the ruined Cistercian Abbey, Sweetheart Abbey, founded by Lady Devorgilla in 1273 to commemorate the death of her husband John Balliol. The monks named the abbey 'dulce cor' (Sweetheart Abbey), however, the village was named New Abbey because of the nearby Dundrennan Abbey. The village has a watermill, the New Abbey Corn Mill. Loch Kindar has a crannog and the remains of Kirk Kindar (this was the parish church until just after 1633 when it was transferred to the refectory of the suppressed Sweetheart Abbey) on an island just outside the village.

The Match - For the 2 Scousers it was our first foray into the South of Scotland League and what a belter it turned out to be. The match ebbed and flowed, Creetown nearly took the lead from a penalty from Chris Mellon but the striker screwed his spot kick wide. Abbey Vale took the lead when a mix up in the Creetown defence let in Stuart Cameron on a one-on-one with the visiting keeper. Creetown equalised through a fine effort by Fraser Henderson. After the break two quick strikes from Stephen McDill and another from Stuart Cameron put the hosts in charge. To their credit Creetown never let their heads drop and with strikes from Andrew Houston and Alan Johnstone gave the visitors a well-deserved share of the spoils. 3-3 the final score.

As a parting gift, we were literally given the shirt off the back of the Creetown Chairman, who was running the line, as a memento of the day. The only downside to the day was that I was unable to get a signal on my mobile!

