

TT No.108: *Mike Latham* - Sat 23 February 2013: Gwynedd League:
Llannerchymedd 1-3 Holyhead Town; Attendance: 30 (h/c); Admission: £2; no programme; FGIF Match Rating: 4*.

It was a dry afternoon but cold, bitterly cold. Even Anglesey was feeling the effects of the February weather and the temperature gauge never rose above two degrees as occasional sleet showers came down from leaden skies. There were plenty of games to choose from but I decided to venture once more into the Gwynedd League, level five of the game in Wales and was rewarded with a beautiful ground in a scenic location.

Llannerchymedd is a small village in the heart of Anglesey with a population of around 1,200. It is close to the island's large water supply reservoir, Llyn Alaw. The disused Anglesey Central Railway runs through the village. The station was opened in 1866 but sadly closed in 1964, another victim of the infamous Beeching Axe; its goods yard is now a car park. What a disastrous policy Dr Beeching pursued, draining the life-blood away from many small communities.

In the 18th and 19th centuries Llannerchymedd was a much grander place, home to over two hundred shoemakers who sold their wares at fairs and markets around the area. The village also hosted the island's biggest market and there were several corn mills in the vicinity. There is a beautiful village church and a memorial to the villagers who lost their lives in the wars. Gradually Llangefni became the predominant market centre in the area and Llannerchymedd's importance declined.

These days it is a quiet place, even on a Saturday afternoon but I was fortunate to find one local emerging from the village shop and he kindly gave me directions to the ground. Tan Parc, home of the village football club, isn't particularly easy to find, located down a country road and set amidst rolling countryside with some scenic views. The entrance to the ground is just after the yard of a sheep farm and the farm buildings form a backdrop along one side. The farm dog, obviously well known to the locals, ambled around the ground and made himself known to several spectators before going back home again.

There is plenty of parking and an excellent tea bar was up and running in the changing pavilion. The playing area is slightly up a level from the car park and is surrounded by a neat post and rail fence and has a small three-stepped stand on the far side straddling the half-way line.

The pitch was one of the best I've seen at this level and obviously has a loving groundsman or two. It was flat, well grassed and in pristine condition, a huge credit to the officials at this friendly club. The game was hard-fought and vigorously contested to say the least with the veteran referee doing well to maintain control. Some vigorous challenges resulted in half a dozen bookings and there was a big pushing and shoving melee just before half time. On the balance of

play the visitors deserved their win, sealed by two finely-taken goals by their centre-forward in the closing stages.

It was so cold the home goalkeeper gulped from a hot cup of coffee brought to him by a kindly spectator early in the second half. I couldn't blame him. It reminded me of a visit I made to a junior ground in Ayrshire many years ago. I was the only spectator behind the goals on a similarly cold afternoon. 'Can you do something for me?' the home 'keeper suddenly enquired of me. 'Yes, no problem,' I said, slightly taken aback. 'Can you get us a Bovril,' was his reply. I duly did, had one myself and then saw my new found friend make several fine saves to secure a home win. On this occasion the home 'keeper was eventually beaten by two strikes fit to win any game as the visitors emerged with the spoils from an entertaining afternoon.

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