

TT No.86: Mike Latham - 12th January 2013, **CPD Waunfawr 1-1 CPD**
Llanerchymedd; Cynghrair Peldroed Gwynedd League: Attendance: 30 (h/c); No
admission or programme; FGIF Match Rating: 4*.

One thing I've learned from my years of groundhopping is to do my research. In days past I used to turn up at the town or village of the football team I was going to watch and then try and find the ground, sometimes enlisting the help of a friendly local. These days, as I go further and further down the pyramid in search of new grounds I always prepare thoroughly as I always now expect the unexpected.

My old method would have failed dismally had I attempted to visit CPD Waunfawr without research. I knew that after several seasons in the Caernarfon & District League they were newcomers to the Gwynedd League this season and I knew that Waunfawr is a large village on the outskirts of the Snowdonia National Park. There's a famous brew-pub in the village close to the railway station on the Welsh Highland Railway between Caernarfon and Porthmadog. In years past we enjoyed a family holiday in the area and I remember calling in, though at that time there was no football team to visit.

CPD Waunfawr are relative newcomers to senior football in Wales. They began life with an under-17s team in the Anglesey League and then stepped up to join the Caernarfon & District league. After several seasons they made the step-up to the Gwynedd League, level five of the Welsh pyramid in 2012. All this has been achieved on a tiny budget and with the tremendous assistance and commitment of a small committee.

The club has an excellent website which can be found here:
<http://cpdwaunfawrfc.co.uk/about.php> . Helpfully, on here they explain that they have to play their 'home' games five miles away at Aber Foreshore Road, south-west of Caernarfon as there is no playing field in Waunfawr.

So, on a bright but bitterly cold afternoon I headed to Caernarfon, then south on the A487 towards Porthmadog. Just after a Tesco supermarket on the right-hand side is a turning down Coed Helen Road, which becomes Aber Foreshore Road. This small road takes the traveller along the back of the harbour in Caernarfon, to the south of the river Seiont with stunning views of the ancient castle. Then the spectacular views across the Menai Straits dominate the horizon. The road eventually leads to the Royal Caernarfon Golf Club, but before that is a turning into Coed Helen, a 22-acre landscaped site with luxury caravans, luxury lodges and leisure facilities. There are also two football pitches, a bowling green and changing facilities in a pavilion. It was a relief to find one of the pitches marked out, the nets installed and both teams waiting to leave the warmth of their changing rooms and head out into the cold and blustery conditions.

As non-league football goes this is as rudimentary as it gets; the pitch at Coed Helen is just that- there are no spectator facilities at all. But there are ample compensations with the venue providing some of the most spectacular views imaginable, across the Straits towards Anglesey, inland towards Caernarfon and with the castle providing an amazing backdrop. With the light so clear and bright the views were even more awesome, though the wind chill was considerable.

I watched most of the game from the banking behind one goal, the trees providing some shelter from the winds. Both teams were in good form going into the game, Waunfawr having won 7-3 the previous Saturday, their visitors from Anglesey being second in the league. The game was very well contested and played in a really good spirit, well controlled by the veteran referee.

Waunfawr had an early goal disallowed for offside, then fell behind on the counter-attack. But their perseverance paid off when they gained a deserved equaliser from a corner ten minutes from time. Around 30 spectators lined the touchlines and both teams had excellent playing strips and a full complement of substitutes. I thought this was an excellent advertisement for the Gwynedd League and thoroughly enjoyed my visit to this spectacular venue.

04/20