

**TT No.56: Keith Aslan** - Sat 13th February 2016; **FC Nomads** v Llay Welfare; Welsh National (Wrexham) Premier; Kick-Off: 13.58; Result: 5-0; Admission: Free; Programme: £1.20; Attendance: 29 (24 home, 2 away & 3 neutral).

With a temporary rainfall cessation, the world was my oyster card today and I ventured to foreign climes. Being Wales, they spoke in a strange tongue, known locally as "Scouse". Everybody I met came from Liverpool, with the notable exception of the home secretary who was Scottish, and I would imagine the Connahs Quay chapter of the Welsh Language Society could comfortably hold their meetings in a phone box without undue overcrowding.

F.C. Nomads is a 25-minute walk from Shotton station. There is an hourly bus from outside the ground that goes back to Chester. Eventually. The ground is situated at the entrance to Wepre Country Park, a local beauty spot that was very popular even in the middle of February and well worth exploring if you have the time, which I didn't. It's fully enclosed and railed with the dressing rooms 40 yards away up a small incline. Indeed, some people chose to watch the game from a higher vantage point outside the ground. For the hungry hopper, 100 yards on is the Park café which does full blown meals at reasonable prices and is close enough to get a half time cuppa.

F.C. Nomads are currently well clear at the top of the league, but have played considerably more games than any of their rivals, and if they maintain top spot, they intend to be in the Cymru Alliance next season. Their current ground won't cut the mustard but they will be playing at the 3g pitch adjacent to Gap Connahs Quay which the ground grading committee has inspected and a path round the pitch is all that will be required to bring it into line with a higher level, it already has floodlights and covered seating. This is worth bearing in mind in the unlikely event we get some wet weather next winter. The Nomads have already played a number of games there during the rainy season hence why they are so far ahead with their fixtures, and today's match was the first one back "home". Their opponents today from the lower reaches of the league come from the model mining village of Llay. The whole place was built by the colliery in the '20's and at its height the mine employed 3,000 people. What do they all do now I wonder? F.C. Nomads have been around for 5 years and are a breakaway team from Connahs Quay Nomads whom I seem to recall were mired in controversy when they changed their name to "Gap".

The home secretary very kindly gave me a lift back to Chester, and while he was a bit vague as to his actual destination, I got the impression he was going some way out of his way to drop me off. He was with Connahs Quay Nomads for many years before becoming one of the founders of the new club. Before that he was a referee up to North West Counties League standard, and before that he had a very impressive playing CV which encompassed three years as a semi-pro in South Africa

as well as lengthy spells with Alloa Athletic and Hamilton Academicals. A man steeped in football.

A routine home win for the league leaders with L Lay's very young keeper doing well to keep the score down, the game finished at 3.43pm. Ah the nostalgia. Thanks to the secretary's lift to Chester I got back home to my Broadstairs dacha much earlier than anticipated and indeed the only downside to the day was getting home to find the postman had left all of my Valentines cards back at the sorting office. Again!

04/20