

TT No. 159: Steve Hardy - Sunday 16th June to Friday 22nd June 2019; Inter Island Games 2019 - Football Tournament played on Anglesey.

The Inter Island games are held every two years on some of the smallest Islands in the world. This year's tournament is being held in Gibraltar, but as they only have one football pitch there, they were unable to host the football section of the games. Instead, Anglesey offered to host it in a sort of practice run for 2025 when they are due to host the full games themselves.

Rather than bore you with details of all the matches I saw, I will just give a brief summary (of my itinerary) and a few comments to end on.

Sunday 16th June 2019: Clever staggering of the kick off times enabled the groundhopping hordes to see four men's games:

Jersey 5-0 Orkney - 11am Kick-Off at Llangefni Town FC (Attendance: 247).

St Helena 1-6 Shetland Islands - 2.00pm at Aberffraw FC (452)

Ynys Mon 2-1 Western Isles - 5.00pm at Holyhead Hotspur FC (1025) and

Alderney 2-4 Hitra - 7.30pm at Cemaes Bay FC (206)

Monday 17th June 2019:

Guernsey 2-1 Shetland Islands - 3.30pm at Bodedern FC (208) and

Jersey 7-0 Western Isles - 6.30pm at Glantraeth FC (91)

Tuesday 18th June 2019:

Western Isles Women 1-0 Hitra Women - 12 noon at Bro Goronwy FC (116).

Sadly, I had to come home after this game. I would have loved to have stayed until the end and seen the semi-finals and finals of the Men's and Women's games, but it wasn't to be.

Overall, it was a wonderful holiday for me, with, seemingly, the whole island turning out to watch the Ynys Mon boys and girls in action. The national anthems played before each game caused much confusion, there was a dreaded team sheet shortage at the first game at Llangefni, the horizontal rain and wind at the Cemaes Bay game meant that even though the ground has cover on three of its four sides, every single spectator got absolutely drenched. The official crowd sizes were, shall we say, generous, I thought. My final match at Bro Goronwy for instance, had an official crowd figure of 116. My headcount was 51, with a large proportion of these being groundhoppers.

The warmth of the locals was superb, the scenery staggering and the banter with the groundhoppers I knew was top notch.

I will conclude by asking this question. Only one team had '*God save the Queen*' as it's national anthem. Which one do you reckon?

04/20