

History - Guilsfield Football Club

Football has been played in Guilsfield since the early part of 1930's but little is known of the teams of that era. A team was known to have played in the village at the end of World War 2. One game played was their version of an international when they played the local Italian prisoner of war camp side. One player of note from the early 50's was Wyn Nicholls who later played for Newtown, Welshpool and gained Welsh Caps at under 18 level, he later signed professional forms for Wrexham.

The present club was formed on August 6th 1957. Mr. Bill Laker and several other men folk of the village got together to form a local side, with seven or eight local lads playing for surrounding villages it was felt that the village needed to form a team of its own. The club entered the Montgomeryshire Amateur League and matches during this early period were played on local farmer's fields and during the summer months the committee and players would help the farmer with his harvest to cover the ground rent for the season.

During the mid sixties the village doubled in size and the local Community Centre was built with room to accommodate a football pitch, which is where the club plays today. Throughout the 60's, 70's and 80's the team was almost all local players of a good standard but honours eluded the club except for the occasional runners-up in cup finals. Players of note from this period who moved to higher standard of football were David Jones, Welshpool and Oswestry who also gained a Welsh Amateur Cap. Former Llanidloes, Cardiff and Welsh Amateur goalkeeper, Lyn Meredith, who finished his career with the club. Adrian Lloyd went on to score goals for Welshpool, Berriew and Montgomery in the Mid Wales League. Brothers Gareth and David Williams went on to play League of Wales football with Llansantffraid (TNS) and Caersws.

At the beginning of the 90's a grandstand was built and the dressing rooms refurbished at a total cost of £34,000. By now the team was starting to show potential and the 1994/1995 season saw the club win the Montgomeryshire Amateur League, First Division. The club took advantage of the Welsh F.A. pyramid system, was promoted to the Mid Wales League and duly finished in a creditable 4th spot in our first season. The 2000/2001 Spar Mid Wales League campaign was brought to a premature conclusion following the foot and mouth crisis that broke out in mid February 2001. At the time of abandonment we were well placed in the league and fighting for promotion to the Cymru Alliance League. As a result of the merger of two existing Cymru Alliance League clubs (Llangefni Town and Glantraeth) an extra promotion slot was available and our application to join the league for 2001/2002 was accepted.

In our first two seasons we finished in 15th place. It was during our second season that Mike Barton was appointed as manager. Mike soon got to grips with the standard of football in the league and began to strengthen the side. This rebuilding led to Guilsfield finishing in sixth position in 2003/04.

The next league campaign saw us occupying a top half position throughout the campaign finally finishing in seventh spot. Our highest ever league position came three seasons ago and culminated with a 4-0 victory against Tywyn/Bryncrug in the Central Wales Challenge Cup Final. The 2006/07 season saw Guilsfield in a mid-table slot but disappointingly unable to retain the Central Wales Cup, losing to Llanfyllin Town in the final.

During that summer, Mike Barton was tempted with a new challenge and was appointed as manager of Caersws and so a new management team in experienced Mid-Wales manager Graham Evans took over the helm with respected coach Bernie Jones as no2. This 50th anniversary season of the club saw it achieve its greatest thrill with a Welsh Cup run finally ending at the Quarter Final stage versus eventual winners Bangor City. Guilsfield had beaten three Welsh Premier League sides in Airbus UK, Connah's Quay Nomads and Caernarfon Town in previous rounds. We will never forget the sight of our ground hosting S4C's "Y Clwb Peldroed" on television and being honoured to hold the draw for two rounds of the Welsh Cup at a packed Community Centre. Our top scorer for the season, Tim Nunnerley was rewarded for a fabulous year by being named the League's Player of the Year.

At the beginning of the 2008/9 season, Mike Barton was re-appointed as manager with Bernie Jones remaining as coach. It was to be a season of consolidating our membership in the League with hopes of another good cup run. The club finished 13th in the League and we enjoyed a Welsh Cup clash at WPL giants The New Saints. A good League Cup campaign ended with the semi-final loss on penalties to Holyhead.

Last season was full of interest, with the focus on the FAW controversial plans for the re-structure of the Welsh Pyramid system. Our aim was to remain in this league but we struggled with our inconsistent play up until Christmas. However, the New Year brought a change in fortunes and the players put in a great League run in 2010 to secure our place in the Cymru Alliance League, despite ten clubs being relegated. This achievement was recognised by the Cymru Alliance League with Mike Barton receiving the League's Manager of the Year award.

This year we will be welcoming a host of new clubs to Guilsfield, together with renewing our acquaintances with old colleagues throughout the league. It should be a terrific and, as always, competitive league to be a part of. Our Cymru Alliance League history has been thoroughly enjoyable both on and off the pitch. The club has gained new experiences and has met new challenges each year. We have successfully made the transition to our new ground, with grandstand and refreshments area, together with excellent Community changing rooms and car park. We are very proud of these facilities and we look forward to extending a warm welcome to all football supporters and clubs once again in 2010/11.