

## **Porthmadog Football Club - Club History**

Porthmadog FC was formed in 1884 although records of football being played in the town go back at least five years before that. The club eventually graduated into the North Wales Coast League and were champions at the first attempt in 1902/03 and runners-up to Bangor in each of the following two seasons, before resigning during the 1906/07 term.

Further spells in the North Wales Coast League after the first world war and in the Welsh National League (North) Division Two (West) during the 1920s, led to the club becoming members of the Welsh League (North) upon its inauguration for the 1935/36 season. Porthmadog won the championship in 1937/38 and, altogether, enjoyed a total of 47 seasons in the league until the formation of the Welsh football pyramid at the start of the 1990s.

Having lost the Welsh Amateur Cup final to Buckley Engineers in 1905/06, Porthmadog had to wait half a century before their name was engraved upon the trophy. In 1955/56, however, the club took the cup by defeating Peritus in the final played at Farrar Road, Bangor. Twelve months later, the cup was theirs again, thanks to a 5-2 victory over Druids in a replay but, in 1957/58, they were defeated in the final by the famous 55th RA Tonfannau.

The 1956/57 season also witnessed Porthmadog gaining the North Wales Amateur Cup, beating Buckley Wanderers at Llandudno, though they lost in the final of the North Wales Coast Challenge Cup to Caernarfon Town. This was one of five defeats suffered in the final of this particular trophy between 1935 and 1972, although Porthmadog have since put the record straight by winning the NWC Challenge Cup in 1974, 1975, 1977, 1978, 1997 and 2003!

During the summer of 1965, Porthmadog made the footballing headlines in North Wales as they abandoned their amateur policy and signed several well-known professional footballers, including the famous Welsh international Mel Charles. This was a well-publicised attempt to attract support to both the club and to the game of soccer in the area.

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In the season that followed, 1965/66, Porthmadog finished second in the Welsh League (North) behind Caernarfon Town, reached the final of the Cookson Cup and won the Alves Cup, beating Rhyl in the final. The club also progressed to the quarterfinal of the Welsh Cup. For each of the following three seasons, however, the championship was taken as the team won 76 of their 92 league fixtures during this purple period and scored a massive 338 goals.

The 1970s was a decade of unprecedented glory for the club as they became Welsh League (North) champions again in 1974/75 and 1975/76 and were runners-up on two other occasions. In addition to the North Wales Challenge Cup wins mentioned previously, Porth also won the Cookson Cup twice, the Ansells Cup three times and the Barritt Cup.

Following those halcyon days, the club had to wait until 1989/90 for their next league title when they won the Welsh League (North) – by now re-titled Daily Post Welsh Alliance – pipping Bangor City Reserves by three points in a nail-biting struggle. Porthmadog became founder members of the Cymru Alliance in 1990 and the League of Wales two years later. Porthmadog performed creditably in the national league, averaging a finishing position of 12th over the first five

seasons. It was 1997/98 that proved their undoing, however, when four teams were relegated and Porth were dragged into the quartet following a poor run of form towards the end of the season.

Nevertheless, after five seasons, Porthmadog were back in the Welsh Premier League following a superb 2002/03 campaign when they lifted the Cymru Alliance title by 19 points, scoring 106 goals in the process. And the club readily consolidated its position in the first season back in the top flight, under manager Viv Williams.

With the departure of Osian to a senior coaching position at the FAW and Viv deciding to call it a day after 7 years at the helm the club entered a period of uncertainty and results consequently suffered. During the three seasons 2007/10 the club had four different managers with Clayton Blackmore being dismissed after a few months and Viv Williams returning to take temporary charge helping the club to retain its WPL status. Paul Whelan became the third manager to fall by the wayside to be replaced by the experienced Tomi Morgan. Though the club once more narrowly retained its WPL place in 2008/09 league reorganisation meant that six clubs were relegated in 2009/10 and this time there was no hiding place for Port as they were demoted to the Cymru Alliance. Tomi Morgan subsequently left the club to become manager of Carmarthen Town. For the beginning of 2010/11 Port turned to Gareth Parry, who has played for the club since 2002, and he will face the challenge of improving the club's fortunes.

One optimistic note at the end of 2009/10 was that the club secured the FAW's Domestic Licence an essential criterion as the club aim to regain their place in the Welsh Premier.