



"The oldest football club in Wales 1872"

# CEFN DRUIDS



**Association Football Club Ltd**  
**THE ROCK, RHOSYMEDRE**  
**Rock Road Rhosymedre LL14 3YF**

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**WELSH CUP WINNERS 1880, 1881, 1882, 1885, 1886, 1898, 1899, 1904**

## HISTORY OF CEFN DRUIDS AFC

The origins of soccer in the area can be traced as far back as 1869 when Plasmadoc Football Club was founded by the Thomson brothers.

Three years later Plasmadoc became Druids when the various colliery and quarry teams in the hills around Ruabon and Cefn Mawr were brought together under one banner. Six Druids players were in the first Welsh international side which played Scotland on 25 March 1876 - the most from a single club ever to play for Wales.

In addition to being the first Welsh club to play in the English FA Cup, Druids also played in the very first Welsh Cup game at Newtown on 13 October 1877, just a week after playing Scottish giants Queens Park at Hampden Park.

In 1876 Druids entered the English FA Cup for the first time with little success. But in 1882/83 they defeated Bolton Wanderers in the fourth round, losing to eventual winners Blackburn Olympic in the quarter finals.

Runners-up to Wrexham in the first Welsh Cup Final in 1877/78, Druids were finalists in the first six years of the competition and became the first club to win it three times in succession by lifting the trophy from 1880-1882. In all Druids won the Welsh Cup eight times and were runners up on eleven occasions.

Between 1880 and 1904, thirty Druids players were capped for Wales and a total of 44 internationals played for the club. The first secretary of the Welsh FA, Llewelyn Kenrick, was also an ex-Druid.

The club joined the first Welsh League in 1890 and rose again towards the end of the nineteenth century with more silverware.

After many years competing in the Welsh League and the Football Combination, Druids became the first Welsh club to join the Birmingham & District League in the company of teams such as West Bromwich Albion, Wolverhampton Wanderers and the now Birmingham City.

By the onset of the First World War Druids had struck a bad patch, having lost many players to Football League sides and, by 1918, were back playing in the North Wales Alliance League. It was not until the 1930s that they began to restore the reputation of the club in North Wales amateur football circles.

In 1920 the club left Wynnstay Park to combine with Rhosymedre to become Rhosymedre Druids, playing at Church Field. They merged with Acrefair United in 1923, becoming Druids United, but were perennial strugglers in the Welsh National League (North) until stepping down to the Wrexham & District League in 1930, moving to yet another new ground, this time in Acrefair.

During the 1950s Druids built links with Monsanto, the chemicals conglomerate whose belching towers loomed over the town. League placings improved and, in 1957, Druids United reached the Welsh Amateur Cup final, losing to Porthmadog in a replay at Bangor. In that same season the club won the first of two consecutive Welsh Youth Cups.

Profit from the Amateur Cup run enabled the club to fund the layout of a new ground on derelict land in

### **Board of Directors**

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**Vice Chairman Mr. G. Jones**

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the centre of Cefn Mawr, which became the club's home for over 50 years. A young George Best was part of a Manchester United XI that provided the opposition for the first match there.

But enthusiasm at Druids had waned by the 1980s when Druids were being outstripped by arch rivals Cefn Albion, who were formed in 1967.

Albion played initially at The Bont, then at Rhostyllen, Ty Mawr and Church Fields before settling back at Ty Mawr, scooping numerous pieces of silverware as they climbed the Welsh National League (Wrexham Area).

A merger between the two clubs was resisted until former Chester manager Ken Roberts intervened to convince the rival factions that an amalgamation was in the best interests of everyone. Thus, in 1992, Cefn Druids FC was born, playing at Plaskynaston and carrying the white and black colours of the original Plasmadoc club.

The club steadily consolidated in the Cymru Alliance, helped by a renewed youth policy and, in 1998, investment from Flexsys resulted in a five-year sponsorship agreement with the firm.

Cefn Druids, under Gareth Powell, strolled to the 1998/99 Cymru Alliance championship, scoring over 100 goals in the process.

The club marked its arrival in the League of Wales with a 1-0 win at Inter Cardiff, the previous year's runners-up, in its very first game and, in 2001/02, reached the semi-finals of the Welsh Cup.

During the summer of 2003, the club announced an arrangement with NEWI, the Wrexham-based college, which saw the name being changed to NEWI Cefn Druids.

A succession of managers were unable to prevent the Ancients from finishing in the second relegation spot at the end of the 2004/05 season but with only one team from the feeder leagues being promoted, Druids survived the drop.

Another change of manager in 2007 saw Lee Jones and Wayne Phillips guide the club to their joint-highest finish of 12<sup>th</sup> position.

In March 2009 the club announced a sponsorship deal with Elements Europe, whose name was incorporated into the club's banner but delays to the start of construction to the new ground meant the club was going to struggle to meet the criteria for the revamped 12-club Welsh Premier League. The club cut its cloth accordingly as relegation appeared certain with the club battling at the wrong end of the table.

Jones and Phillips departed as the inevitable relegation struck with former Druids defender Huw Griffiths replacing them assisted by Terry Ingram, who previously coached Druids' Academy in their promotion season. They have also been joined in the coaching set-up by ex-Druids striker Dave Taylor.

With construction of the new stadium almost completed, Druids will be moving to The Rock to play the first competitive match there on 4 September 2010.

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