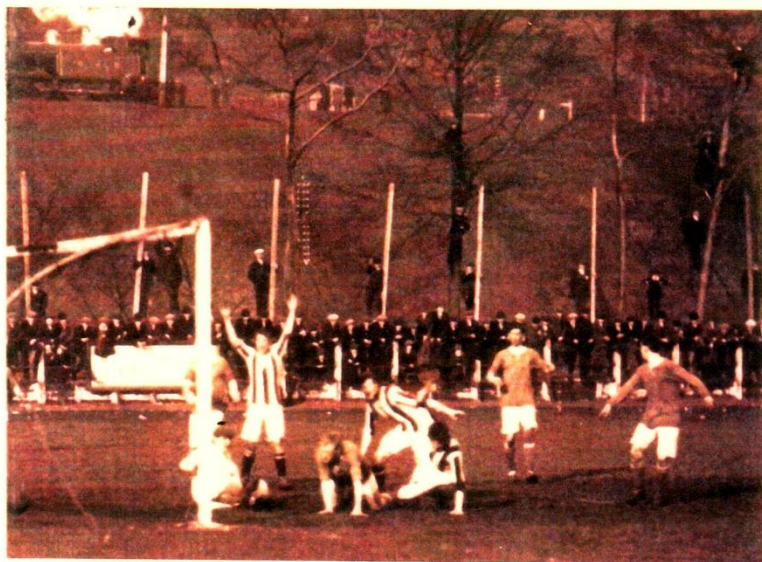


PONTYPRIDD AFC (THE DRAGONS)

BY

GARETH HARRIS



THE GLORY YEARS

at Taff Vale Park

Seasons 1911-12, 12-13 & 13-14

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**The GLORY YEARS
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FORWORD

BY DAVID GWYER

(Assistant Curator, Pontypridd Museum)

While rugby has been the most enduringly popular sport in Pontypridd from the late 19th century until the present day, it was never alone in capturing the imagination of the town's sporting public. It might be heresy to say, but Association Football was always popular in the town and sometimes attracted larger crowds than the oval-ball game. Football teams were often set up in connection with collieries, pubs and districts, but it was the formation of the Pontypridd A.F.C. (the Dragons) in 1911 which gave the town a professional team to cheer.

Gareth Harris is well-known as the foremost chronicler of Pontypridd rugby. With this new book he turns his attention to the meteoric rise of the dragons in the years before World War One, years which saw them reach two Welsh Cup finals, play to packed stands at Taff Vale Park and travel to compete with teams such as Stoke and Luton in the Southern League. Sports fans will enjoy learning about the highs and lows of following the Dragons during this exciting period, while for social historians the book illustrates how important sport in general was to Pontypridd. Quite simply sport, and especially team sport, provided one of the means by which a society in the making could achieve a measure of collective identity and local pride.

The first incarnation of the Dragons came to an end just after the outbreak of World War One, but they were to rise again in the 1920s. I look forward to the next installment of their colourful story.

David Gwyer
February 2004

INTRODUCTION

by the Author

Having published a book on the history of the Taff Vale Park, Treforest, Pontypridd, in the year 2000, I became fascinated by the history of the Pontypridd AFC, or the 'Dragons' as they were better known in the district. However, their story is a long one, spanning from 1911 until 1926, and no matter what I deleted from the manuscript, there was no way that I was ever going to get it all into one book. It was not until late in 2003 that I discovered Parchment (Oxford) Ltd, whose competitive printing prices inspired me to make another attempt to get a book published. With encouragement from David Gwyer of the Pontypridd Museum, I decided that it would be worthwhile doing the first three glorious seasons of the Dragons in their entirety, that though long and detailed, truly gives the atmosphere of the sporting public of the Pontypridd district of the time.

This period, however, saw newspapers carry very little in the way of sport photographs, so few photos of the Dragons before the First World War exist, but all those in existence I have included in this book.

The majority of reports are recalled as seen through the eyes of newspaper reporters who sometimes wrote detailed accounts of the games, some running into thousands of words. Due to the amount of fixtures played, which averaged around an amazing sixty each season, some reports have had to be left out or edited, but the reader of this book is given all the interesting games and newspaper reports that will truly give the him or her a chance to relive this exciting era in the history of sport in Pontypridd. I hope that you enjoy this book.

Gareth Harris

PROLOGUE

In the early part of the last century there were many street soccer football teams, but players were slow in forming themselves into properly organised teams, and the lack of playing fields was a strong handicap. Land was at a premium in urban areas. What vacant or underutilized space that did exist was expensive and usually owned by rich individuals or large companies. The region's aristocratic landowners were not opposed to sport, and some actually encouraged it in an effort to foster social and industrial harmony. However, with rugby having developed first, it had already secured much of the available land, either on lease or as a gift from paternal landowners.

In 1890 the Pontypridd RFC had leased a field in Treforest, just south of the town of Pontypridd from Councillor James Roberts, Taff House, and after removing the spoils from the old Ironworks that had a few years before stopped working, 'levelled and titivated' the ground and built a stadium that became know as the Taff Vale Park. In 1901 the lease was taken over by the Pontypridd Athletic Syndicate, who immediately fell out with the town rugby club, who during the next ten years moved to and from Taff Vale Park several times, including 1910, leaving the field free during the Winter.

In 1911, however, local businessmen, led by David Williams, took out a lease on the Taff Vale Park, and proceeded to form a team by signing professional footballers from all over the county to play for a new club that was to be called the Pontypridd Association Football Club, and who were later to become know as the 'Dragons', and wore a badge with the mythical animal was worn on the team jerseys. Soon, crowds numbering in their thousands were watching home games, while train loads of their supporters sometimes traveled on special excursion trips to follow the club all over the country, much as the followers of Pontypridd RFC have done by coach throughout the latter part of the twentieth century.

It is hard to imagine the impact that the 'Dragons' made on the local population. Soccer, at a high level had never been seen in the town, though hundreds regularly traveled down the valley to watch Cardiff City play. The 'Dragons' were immediately a success, and in their first season reached the Welsh Cup Final, an unheard of feat for a new club. However, from the beginning the club struggled to be financially viable in a district that was suffering due to coal strikes etc; and it was this that would have a major bearing in the history of the club.

CHAPTER ONE

Season 1911-12

The football Association of Wales was formed in 1876 in Wrexham by a group of businessmen who wanted to see a Welsh team formed to play against Scotland and thus emulate the matches between England and Scotland that had begun four years before. Association Football remained very much a north Wales sport for the first ten years with Wrexham, Oswestry and Chirk to the fore. In 1877-78 the Welsh cup competition was introduced, initially as a means to look at players with an eye to forthcoming internationals. Wrexham were the first winners, and soon the tournament became a force in itself, sparking great rivalry between the teams of the day.

Football finally began to take hold in South Wales in the 1890s. The South Wales and Monmouthshire FA being formed in 1893. The South had always been a rugby stronghold but with the influx of workers to the South Wales coalfields and ports at this time, the 'gospel' of football was brought in by those from Yorkshire, Lancashire and Scotland. In 1902 the Welsh Association was formed but many Welsh teams began to join English leagues in search of a higher standard of football.

The town of Pontypridd has always been sports loving. The miners who flocked to the South Wales valleys from the mid 1800s onward worked hard and played hard, and sport often took up a major part of their limited leisure time. However, from the mid 1870s it was rigger that gripped the imagination of sportsmen, but this was mostly confined to middle-class young men who had picked up the game while away at college or university. But around the streets of Pontypridd it was soccer or football association as it was known, that most of the kids played, using the proverbial pig's bladder, and street teams existed everywhere.

The problem facing people who wanted to organize proper fixtures, was the lack of playing grounds. Despite the many fields in the rapidly growing district, there was great difficulty in renting somewhere to play, and even the local rugby club, with all its connections, found difficulty in getting a ground. Early in the 1900s the local colliery owners and industrialists began to take a greater interest in their employer's welfare, even so, proper soccer pitches were rare and makeshift mountain-top fields were more often used. From this period the game began to slowly grow, though proper grounds and official soccer leagues were still a long way off.

Reports of local soccer games at this period were very rare, but the '*Pontypridd Observer*' in 1906 recording the formation of a Pontypridd Printers Association

Club commented: "The association code has been very slow in making progress in south-east Wales, but during the last four years wonderful strides have been made in East-Glamorgan. In Treharris, Aberdare, Llanbradach, and Rogerstone we have clubs that are slowly forging their way into the first-class category of clubs, and Barry, Cardiff and Newport are making the same progress. Rugby has always been the popular game in Wales and this code clings hard in Pontypridd. This year association will probably come more to the front and we are pleased to report new clubs will be formed."

Over the following years the game continued to grow in Pontypridd and by January 1911 a Pontypridd & District League was already being planned when a few sports loving businessmen, who included County Councillor David Williams, who was the leading figure in the Pontypridd Athletic Syndicate that held the lease for Taff Vale Park, and had introduced professional sports, including the famous 130 yard sprint, known as the 'Welsh Powderhall,' decided that they would attempt to run a professional association team in the town that would play on Taff Vale Park. However, to do this they would have to find the finance to buy and pay the professional players that they would need, and also cover the expenses involved in traveling to long away games, and so it was decided that a limited company would have to be formed, and on May 13th 1911 the following report appeared in the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' newspaper:

SOCCER CLUB FOR PONTYPRIDD

A new and important venture

As exclusively announced in last week's Pontypridd Observer, a meeting was held in connection with a scheme to float a professional soccer organization in Pontypridd on Tuesday. Mr. Harry Bradshaw, General Secretary of the Southern League, attended the meeting and assisted the promoters on various points. Councillor David Williams (Graig) presided, and there was a good attendance of prominent local businessmen. It was decided to form a limited liability company with a capital of £1,000 made up of 10/- shares and these were to be offered to the general public. Shareholders would have preferential advantages in the matter of season tickets. Mr. J. W. Kinsman, of Alexandra Buildings, Pontypridd, had been appointed secretary. It was stated that the Taff Vale Park had been secured as a ground and that the officials of the Football Association of Wales and of the Southern League had promised to lend the new club every support they could. The new club would probably compete in the Southern League Second Division; South Wales Senior Cup and possibly the English Cup competitions.

The matter is being pushed forward with all possible speed and it is understood that endeavours are now being made to secure the early signatures of players from

all over the country. Now that it has been definitely decided to float the new venture, it seems that Pontypridd will make its debut in the world of professional football at the commencement of next season. It is obvious that to obtain any conspicuous degree of success and command extensive patronage, a good winning team will have to be secured. There is no doubt that games against keen local rivals such as Merthyr, Aberdare, Ton Pentre, Treharris and Cardiff City will be spectacularly attractive and that the visit of the teams of the calibre of Portsmouth, Southend United, Croydon and Kettering, will arouse keen interest and attract large gates. To counter balance this is the heavy expense entailed in lengthy rail journeys, which will be rendered necessary, and also the amount involved in the transfers of players and the wages of the professionals.

There is also the fact to be remembered that the Pontypridd Rugby Club team has climbed considerably up the ladder of fame during the last season and they are tolerably certain to have a good following at the commencement of next season. These circumstances considered, if Pontypridd is to have star exponents of both codes it would perhaps be to the best interests of the two clubs if an amicable understanding could be arrived at, and the home fixtures of the one club should not clash more than could be avoided with those of the other. The new club is prepared to receive applications from local players to participate in their trial matches at the end of August and are asked to apply in writing to J. W. Kinsman, Alexandra Chambers, Pontypridd before July 24th.

THE PROSPECTUS

The following items were included in the prospectus that was issued to induce people to invest in the new Company: -

“The company has been formed to promote first-class Association Football in the Pontypridd District. The team will play on the excellent ground known as the Taff Vale Park, Pontypridd, and owing to the fact that the same is already enclosed, leveled, and turfed, there will be no necessity to make any capital outlay upon the improvement of the ground, and undoubtedly the club will have a playing pitch eminently suited to its requirements. Added to this there is accommodation, including stands and natural banking, for nearly 25,000 people, which guarantees every spectator an excellent uninterrupted view of the games. There are five separate entrances to the ground, all of which are provided with turnstiles, and there are also large exits, so that a large crowd could enter and leave the ground without any discomfort in a very short time. The ground is within easy reach of the town, the tramcars running right up to the entrance, and it is also within five minutes walk of both the Pontypridd and Treforest T.V.R. Stations, and two minutes walk from the Caerphilly Line Motor Station. The new club has been invited to join the Second Division of the Southern League, the Glamorgan League,

and the South Wales League, and in order to obtain promotion to the first Division of the Southern League a first-class professional team is being engaged.

There is undoubtedly a great demand for good Association Football in the District, and those who are at all dubious should turn their attention to what has happened in South Wales during the last season, in those cases where the association clubs without the natural facilities which Pontypridd possesses have been able to obtain enclosed grounds and run professional teams. Practically without exception these teams have been successful, and are continually attracting larger gates, and when it is considered that there is within the radius of seven miles of Pontypridd a population of about quarter-of-a-million, one is justified in anticipating a very successful career for the club.

The *'Daily News'* of Aug. 12th 1911 reported that 14 professional and about 10 good class amateurs had signed on for the Dragons that week and soon two trial matches would be played, the final trial taking place on Sept. 2nd. The scene was set for The Pontypridd Dragons to make its first serious game, and the secretary had been fortunate in getting the London club, Queen's Park Rangers to be the clubs first opponents .

The first Pontypridd team selected was: Goalkeeper, Bob Turner; fullbacks, Ted Dalton & Charlie Murray; halves, Beren, Len Shelley & Marr; forwards, Barlow, Wood, Archie Walker, Dave Christie, McCall. The *'Glamorgan Free Press'* carried this report about this historic match played on Monday, Sept. 4th 1911: -

Pontypridd's new soccer club's debut

"Isn't this a good ground for football!" said a soccer enthusiast as he entered the Taff Vale Park on Monday evening to see the match between our new soccer club and Queen's Park Rangers. I readily agreed with the enthusiast. There was quite a classic look about the ground. Most of the South Wales grounds have a disorderly dishevelled appearance; but Taff Vale Park looks like the ornate private enclosure of a Duke.

The spectators were dribbling in goodly numbers at the moment the enthusiast spoke and the attendance eventually reached 4,000. Not bad for a "friendly!" Sparkling music from a band, combined with the bright rays of a mid-summery sun served to put everyone in the best of humour. The unrest in the labour world was for once forgotten, domestic troubles were relegated to oblivion and everyone's fancy was full of - football. And here come the players! The Pontypriddians skipped out first and were received with a lusty cheer; the proud Londoners

followed and were likewise given a hearty greeting. The Rangers had the full Southern League team out, with only two changes from the eleven that appeared at Plymouth two days before. And how did Pontypridd's new team shape up against the seasoned Southern Leaguers, who only four years ago were the champions? To put it briefly : we were all satisfied. The Rangers were quicker on the ball and more skilful in their passing in the first half, and some of their fancy footwork delighted the crowd by reason of its deftness and elusiveness. But their steely forward line found themselves pitted against an earnest and determined defence.

The Rangers were more businesslike in the first half-hour, and the home defenders were given plenty of opportunities to display the 'stuff' that is in them. Ted Dalton, the home right-back, proved himself a safe kicker and fearless tackler. His partner, Charlie Murray, backed up his efforts in tireless style, and Bob Turner, was a masterful goalkeeper. The home custodian had no chance of saving the only goal scored in the first half. Barnes, placed a corner-kick well in and Mackee deflected the ball with his head into the distant corner of the Pontypridd goal, well out of Turner's reach, and when there was a struggling mass of players in front of him. Turner 'double-fisted' dangerous dropping shots in approved style, and the quick manner in which he dealt with stinging straight drives from Mackee evoked cheers. Len Shelley, the Pontypridd centre-half, was good in defence and also in his forward passing. He had the build of a footballer and his movements were marked by the coolness of a veteran. This is an important position, and Shelley could fit in with credit. The wing-halves, Beren and Marr, were both workers of the never-say-die type.

Taking the game all through, the Rangers halves were too bustling in their methods to enable the home quintet to settle down to an effective combination. They advanced best when the wing-men were served long, swinging passes, but only when the inside men took it into their heads to follow up with 'straight lines through' runs instead of indulging in close inter-passing. They were met, however, by two stubborn backs, who were powerfull enough physically to charge the light home forwards off the ball whenever danger threatened. Our men were too slender to return the compliment with robust shoulder charges. The Rangers defenders too, did not hesitate to resort to questionable tactics when hard pressed. Considering that it was an exhibition match they were often unnecessarily rough. Wood, the home inside-right, had to be carried off in the second half, and was absent for about fifteen minutes. He was going through in great style and was about to shoot when he was deliberately tripped. Soon after half-time Walker was deliberately brought down in the Rangers penalty area. Christie took the kick and made no mistake. After this both teams strove hard to obtain the winning goal, and eventually Turner was beaten by a smart shot. The

players must have found the weather very tiring, and they are to be congratulated in keeping up such a pace under the circumstances. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 1 QPR 2.

Complimentary Dinner

Following the match with Queens Park Rangers, both Pontypridd and their opponents were entertained to dinner at the White Hart Hotel by the generosity of

This Prospectus has been filed with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies.

The List of Applications will open on MONDAY, 22nd May, 1911, and will close on or before WEDNESDAY, 31st May, 1911.

The Pontypridd Association Football Club
(LIMITED).
(Incorporated under the Companies (Consolidation) Act, 1908)

CAPITAL - - - £1,000.
Divided into 2,000 Shares of 10/- Each.

2,000 Shares of 10 - Each now Offered for Subscription at Par.

ARE PAYABLE AS TO—
2s. 6d. per Share on Application — 2s. 6d. per Share on Allotment.
5s. per Share on 15th July, 1911

Directors :
DAVID WILLIAMS, "Greyhound Hotel," Pontypridd, Licensed Victualler.
WILLIAM HAROLD GOWER, Mackintosh Avenue, Pontypridd, Organizer.
EDGAR POWELL, "White Hart Hotel," Pontypridd, Licensed Victualler.
WILLIAM R. ROBERTS, Taff Street, Pontypridd, Ironmonger.
FRANK THOMAS, Taff Street, Pontypridd, Hosier.

Bankers :
LONDON CITY & MIDLAND BANK, LIMITED, Market Street, Pontypridd.

Solicitor :
H. LEONARD PORCHER, Duffryn Chambers, Market Street, Pontypridd.

Honorary Secretary :
J. W. KINSMAN, A.C.A., Alexandra Chambers, Pontypridd.

Registered Office :
ALEXANDRA CHAMBERS, PONTYPRIDD.

THE PONTYPRIDD
ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL CLUB
LIMITED.



TAFF VALE PARK,
PONTYPRIDD.

OFFICIAL
PROGRAMME

PONTYPRIDD
vs
Queen's Park Rangers.

MONDAY, SEPT. 4th, 1911.

Price: One Penny.

Gates open 4 p.m. Kick-off 5.0

Councillor David Williams (Graig), the Chairman of the new soccer club. Unfortunately Councillor David Williams was unable to be present, but an able deputy for the genial Councillor was found in Mr. Willie Roberts, who occupied the presidential chair at the festive board. Earlier in the day the footballers had demonstrated that they were capable exponents of the Association code, and at dinner they displayed equally as much skill and still more avidity in handling the knife and fork. All of whom as Mr. Frank Thomas 'My Hatter' pointed out, went to show that the culinary achievements of the White Hart Hotel were appreciated, and incidentally furnished a compliment to Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Powell, the host and hostess. Dinner over, the honouring of the loyal toast made way for Mr. Banner to give "Queens Park Rangers." He was sure that they were all grateful to them for making the long journey to Pontypridd.

Mr. Hart, a director of the Rangers, responded. He thanked them for their very courteous reception and kind hospitality. He congratulated the Pontypridd Club on the game that they had put up - and considering the short notice at which they had been got together - was a good augury for the future. They had started the season in an excellent manner. (applause.) At this stage Mr. Roberts apologised for the absence of Councillor David Williams, who should have occupied the chair. He did not know whether he had strained a muscle by kicking off that afternoon, but they would hear later. (laughter.) Mr. Wood, a Queens Park Rangers director, gave 'The Pontypridd AFC.' He was much impressed by the possibility that Pontypridd had as a football centre since the railway station was the feeder for about five valleys. He offered congratulations to the officials of the club including Mr. Roberts and Mr. Kinsman. They had been able in a short time to secure both a ground and an excellent team. With a little bit of practice the latter would be if not at the top of the league, very near it. (applause.) The public ought not to expect that Pontypridd would carry the universe right away, for those things were very gradual. Soccer football had made enormous strides in south Wales, and with ordinary luck Pontypridd in the future would be a name to conjure with in the football world. (applause.)

Mr. J. W. Kinsman responding, thanked Queen's Park for coming down. When the idea of forming the club was mooted some four months back, it was scoffed at and thought ridiculous. It was at a time when the rugby club was at its zenith, and the Glamorgan League Cup had come to Pontypridd. The directors of the club had realised that if anything came to Pontypridd it must be of the best, for the people of the district would have nothing else. It may be too soon to exult, but after the game that they had today the directorate were justified in the confident hope that Association football had come to stay and they would make a name in Welsh football. At Pontypridd, if they did not produce the best of anything, they would not produce anything at all; it was a characteristic of the place. The directors were

imbued with a great deal of ambition, and their object was to provide the locality with the very best football. After they had been playing for two or three weeks he thought they would be able to "hang up" all the local teams and those who had fallen back to the first division. The Pontypridd Club had a long fixture list, probably the longest in South Wales - something like 58 or 59 games certain to be played, and they hoped that their team would make a good stand against even the best in the Kingdom. Next year or perhaps the year after they might be able to visit Park Royal and "put it about them" in the same way as they had about Pontypridd that day. (applause). An impromptu musical programme contributed by the players of both clubs followed. The singing of God Save the King brought the evening to a close.

Cardiff City fail to beat Pontypridd Splendid Contest At Taff Vale Park

On Saturday, Sept. 9th 1911 Pontypridd were again at home when Cardiff City were the visitors for a friendly game. Cardiff City sent their best team to Taff Vale Park and although the visitors strove their hardest to gain the victory, they failed. As a matter of fact, Pontypridd deserved to win on the run of the play. The home forwards showed improvement in combination as compared against their form against Queens Park Rangers, but the inside men showed a lack of the necessary dash in front of goal. It was very warm once more for football, but the players disregarded the rays of the sun, and the spectators, of whom there were over 4,000 were delighted with the game. It was as keen a struggle as any fastidious devotee could have desired; it bristled with exciting incidents and clever individual feats, and if the Pontypridd team could serve up such "fare" regularly, soccer would be all the rage in the town before the winter was over.

The defensive play of both teams was the great feature of the game. Dalton and Murray, the home backs, were again in fine trim, tackling resolutely and kicking with strength and judgement. The manner in which they frequently kicked the 'tricky sphere' when it came to them in awkward fashion reminded one of 'class' football. They were not bulky physically, as backs go, but they had grit; they had also developed a mutual understanding; and with a skilful goalkeeper like Turner behind them, it would take a forward line of greater renown than Cardiff to out manoeuvre them often in an hour and a half. The home halves hurled themselves into the fray as if they did not give a "brass button" for the reputation of the Cardiff forwards. What cared they about the "Welsh Metropolitans?" It was only an incentive to them to display their prowess. Shelley got through a lot of spoiling work, and frequently set his forwards going with neat passes. Beren, the right half, who had to leave the field for a short while owing to an injury, had a brilliant winger pitted against him in Evans, but he stuck to his task to the end.

Marr never seemed to tire. Now for the forwards. The two wingmen, Barlow and McCall gave a good account of themselves. They were quick to snap up passes, and knew how to make headway. They sent in plenty of serviceable centres, and although they had stout defenders to overcome in Waters and Duffy, two more goals at least ought to have been scored. Walker, in the centre, was slow. He missed one easy opening in the first half by fiddling with the ball, and in the second half he dallied when he should have banged the ball in the net. Wood, inside-right, did not turn out, his place being taken by McDonald. The whole five played well in mid-field; but they must learn to hustle the defenders when near goal and shoot without hesitating. There was no score at half-time, and after the interval Pontypridd settled and looked certain winners. Once, Barlow netted smartly, but was given offside.

Both teams continued to play stubborn football. The Cardiffians did not seem to relish the prospects of being vanquished by the 'babies' of the Southern League, and their forwards made some desperate rushes. Eventually the right-wing got close and a Pontypridd defender running across the penalty area to save, banged himself into Burton, who fell 'all of a heap.' The referee, Mr. Jones of Treherbert, awarded a penalty, and Waters shot straight at Turner, who saved. It was such a swift shot, however, that the Pontypridd goalie failed to hold the ball, which rebounded to his right, and Waters rushing in placed it in the net.

"Hard Lines Pontypridd!" was how the spectators expressed themselves. They deserved really to be level, but quarter of an hour still remained, and nothing daunted the homesters went at it as if they were fully determined to pull the match out of the fire. They swooped down upon the Cardiff goalkeeper, Husbands, who had plenty of work to do in the second half, although he had no serious shots to repel, and the Dragons displayed a 'lust for goals' that was bound to bare fruit. Only a minute or two remained when the home forwards swarmed around their opponent's goal, and all the spectators panted for breath. Christie suddenly found the ball at his feet close in, and in a twinkling it was in the net. Hurrah! What a scene followed. That goal had a dramatic touch and gave a rare finish to a splendidly fought match. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 1 CARDIFF CITY 1.

On Sept. 13th 1911, Pontypridd drew 2-2 at Plymouth before 3,000 spectators. Pontypridd's scorers were Barlow and Walker. The Pontypridd team was Turner; Dalton & Murray; Marr, Shelley, Beren; McCall, Christie, Walker, McDonald, Barlow. Final score: PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 2 PONTYPRIDD 2.

**Pontypridd Association
Football Club, Ltd.**

**FIRST XI.
FIXTURES
1911—12.**

Ground - TAFF VALE PARK

SEASON TICKETS NOW READY

Grand Stand	-	10/-
Enclosure	-	7/6
Ground	-	5/-

Shareholders having Shares to the value of 10/- or upwards in the Company, are supplied with Season Tickets at the following rates :—

GRAND STAND	-	7/6
ENCLOSURE	-	5/9
GROUND	-	3/9

For further particulars apply to the Secretary, J. W. KINSMAN, Alexandra Chambers, Pontypridd.

FIXTURE LIST.

FIRST XI.

SEASON, 1911-12.

DATE.	OPONENTS.	PLAY- ED.	RE- SULT.
1911			
Sept. 2	Trial Match	H	
" 4	Queens' Park Rangers ...	H	
" 9	Aberdare S.L.	H	
" 13	Plymouth Argyle ... S.W.L.	A	
" 16	Treharris S.L.	A	
" 23	Cardiff City S.L.	H	
" 30	Cwm Albions S.L.	A	
Oct. 2	Ton Pentre G.L.	A	
" 7	Merthyr G.L.	A	
" 14	Aberdare G.L.	H	
" 21	1st Rd. S.W. & Mon. C'ps	X	
" 23	Plymouth Argyle ... S.W.L.	H	
" 28	Chesham S.L.	A	
Nov. 2	Mardy G.L.	A	
" 4	Ton Pentre S.L.	H	
" 11	Risca G.L.	A	
" 18	Portsmouth S.L.	H	
" 22	Exeter City S.W.L.	A	
" 25	Treharris G.L.	H	
Dec. 2	Cwm Albions S.L.	H	
" 9	Aberdare S.L.	A	
" 16	Barry District G.L.	H	
" 18	Walsall S.L.	H	
" 20	Croydon Common ... S.L.	A	
" 23	Merthyr G.L.	A	
Xmas Day.	Rhondda Assoc. League	H	
Boxing Day.	Newport & Dist. League	H	
Dec. 30	Tredegar G.L.	H	

S.L.—Southern League.

FIXTURE LIST.

FIRST XI.

SEASON 1911-12.

DATE.	OPONENTS.	PLAY- ED.	RE- SULT.
1912			
Jan. 1	Norwich City	H	
" 6	Cardiff S.W.L.	A	
" 13	Treharris S.L.	H	
" 20	Portsmouth S.L.	A	
" 22	Walsall S.W.L.	A	
" 25	Exeter City S.W.L.	H	
" 27	Barry District G.L.	A	
" 29	Croydon Common ... S.L.	H	
Feb. 3	Kettering S.L.	A	
" 10	Merthyr S.L.	H	
" 17	Southend United ... S.L.	A	
" 24	Mardy S.L.	H	
" 26	Tredegar G.L.	A	
Mar. 2	Treharris G.L.	A	
" 4	Brentford	H	
" 9	Mardy S.L.	A	
" 11	Leyton	H	
" 16	Cardiff S.L.	A	
" 23	Merthyr G.L.	H	
" 30	Ton Pentre S.L.	A	
G. Frdy	South Bank Amateurs	H	
April 6	Risca G.L.	H	
E. Mon.	Cwm Albions ... G.L.	H	
E. Tues.	Cwm Albions ... G.L.	A	
April 13	Southend United ... S.L.	H	
" 15	Ton Pentre G.L.	H	
" 20	Aberdare G.L.	A	
" 22	Chesham S.L.	H	
" 27	Kettering S.L.	H	
" 29	Cardiff S.W.L.	H	
" 30	Mardy G.L.	H	

G.L.—Glamorgan League.

S.W.L.—South Western League.

"All's well with Ponty."

On Saturday, Sept. 16th 1911, the Dragons journeyed to Treharris for a Southern League engagement. This was to be a real test of the team's merit. Well, how did Pontypridd fair against the clever Treharris team? They played a goal-less draw, but, according to all good judges of the game, they ought to have won by 2-0. They held their own although they had a blazing sun to face in the first half, and over-played their opponents in the second half. How is it then that they failed to score goals? It was due to the grand defensive work of Wetter and Hancock, and the resourceful goalkeeping of Bailiff.

It was one of the keenest contests imaginable. From the beginning to the end the 4,000 spectators were on tenterhooks of excitement. For the first twenty minutes, Treharris were often on the aggressive, but their onslaughts only served to give our defenders opportunities to display their calibre. Once more Dalton and Murray kicked with unerring accuracy and tackled as if the fate of the Empire depended on the result, whilst Turner was as safe as the bank of England in goal.

Another pleasing feature from Ponty's point of view was the manner in which Rowe 'bottled up' Pickett. Billy Rowe, the Dragons team trainer, displaced Beren at right-half for the Dragons, and he had a stiff task for Pickett was an old Tottenham Hotspur player, and was recently transferred from New Brompton, for whom he played regularly in the first division of the Southern League last season.

Rowe, a player of fine physique, who knows not the meaning of fear, had Pickett at his mercy from the start to the finish, and his policing of the agile winger was no mean factor in upsetting the attacks of the home forwards. Shelley was superb at centre-half. He played 'fast football.' Shelley is never flurried; he is coolness personified, and the ease in which he tricked an opponent was delightful to watch. All experts admired his neat ground passes to his forwards. Marr, the left-half, gave a sound exhibition, his heading of the ball being beautifully timed. He had a thorough understanding with the wing in front of him. The three in fact, gave a better exposition than in any previous match.

In the second half they completely subdued the home forwards, who never looked like scoring after half-time. When they did occasionally get past the halves, the Ponty backs and goalkeeper had no difficulty in overcoming them. There were many exciting incidents. In the first half Walker once tripped a back, and, with only Bailiff close in, shot a few inches wide. Soon afterwards the home goal had a miraculous escape. Bailiff threw himself on the ball when Christie was about to shoot, and he no sooner had got rid of it when another forward pounced on it and promptly shot. The ball seemed to be spinning into the net well out of the

goalkeeper's reach, when he threw himself full length along the ground and just managed to tip it outside as it was bouncing into the net. Everybody thought that it would be a goal, and what a sigh of relief the Treharris spectators heaved! On another occasion the ball ran across the goalmouth from the right, and was just missed by Walker. The Pontypridd goal, too, had its dramatic scenes in the first half. But in the second half the visitors were attacking almost continuously, and it was evident that they were better trained than their opponents. They possessed superior stamina. The weather was again warm, but how the Treharris goal failed to be penetrated in the second half will always remain a mystery.

The excitement was intense in the last ten minutes when the visitor's forwards fought furiously for a goal. Treharris were not in it; the proud Dragons were all over them. Every kick was watched as if it meant 'death or glory.'" Again and again the visitors rushed forward towards the Treharris goal, only to be beaten back even as the eternal rocks beat back the waves of the sea. Rough - and tumble scrimmages followed one another in quick succession. The least luck and the ball would have been in the net, and Ponty would have won. But it was not to be! The whistle went for time and a Treharris enthusiast who was sitting behind me exclaimed: - "By Jove, I'm glad it's over; Treharris have had a very lucky escape!"

So determined were both teams to secure victory that occasionally individual players were at loggerheads, but the referee, Mr. Jones of Llandridnod Wells, always succeeded in pouring oil on troubled waters, and the game could be described as clean and sportsmanlike. It was a match worth going a long way to see. The pace never slackened, despite the summery weather, but, as I have said, Pontypridd lasted better. Hundreds of their supporters followed them, and our boys had no lack of encouragement. There is a spirit of comradeship within the players that augurs well for their future. They worked together whole-heartedly, and there isn't a shirker amongst them. Final score: TREHARRIS 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Pontypridd v Cardiff City Sept 21st 1911

Woods was introduced to the centre, and McKinley as his inside. Before the interval only one goal fell to the home side, but the score did not justly indicate their superiority. Woods was the scorer, and it might almost be termed as a singular effort by the centre-forward, for he was near the halfway line when he received the pass from McCall. Cleverly tricking, he safely got past the backs, and then put in a high shot, which beat Husbands, the Cardiff goalkeeper. The ball, however, was not quite in the net, for it glanced against the bottom of the crossbar and went into the net before Husbands could reach it.

The second goal obtained by the home side was also gained by Woods, but it was

the result of a combined movement of Pontypridd's forwards, who passed and inter-passed in such a way that it made the visitors look like a lot of schoolboys, and when the centre-forward eventually reached the ball for the last time he made no mistake in putting it in. Their final goal was the outcome of a fine piece of work by McCall, who, beating Lawrie and Duffy in turn, centred. McKinley met the ball and diverted it in the right direction, Husbands having no chance to prevent the ball beating him for the third time.

But the glorious uncertainty of football asserted itself for Pontypridd were now taking things easy, seemingly fully satisfied with their three goal lead, and Evans, who had been trying a long time, managed to get round Dalton, and lost not a minute in sending the ball to the centre. Burton met it and without hesitation he shot hard into the Pontypridd net, beating Turner all ends up. Success is borne of success, and with only ninety seconds to go, the line bore down on Turner from the kick-off. They swept through the opposition, who fell like chaff before the wind, and Hittle, gaining possession, closed in with a fine shot and made Cardiff's defeat a little more creditable.

Time was getting on, and it looked impossible for the City to reduce the lead. Pontypridd supporters certainly had a bit of fright at the sudden change that came over the game, and it was a great relief when almost immediately after the restart the referee blew for time. Notwithstanding the sudden lapse in their play, Pontypridd certainly deserved to win, as they played the better football for quite three-fourths of the game. Doubtless the Dragons would profit by the lesson, and not be caught napping in future, and play the game right up to the final whistle. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 CARDIFF CITY 2.

First defeat in Southern League

On Sept. 30th 1911, Pontypridd were defeated for the first time in a Southern League fixture, when they lost 1-2 at Cwm Albion. The '*Glamorgan Free Press*' carried this report: "The Dragons have been beaten, but these little 'incidents' will happen to the best of teams, and there is no reason that the team should be in the least discouraged. Discouraged! why, considering that they only came into existence a few weeks ago their performances have exceeded the most sanguine expectations. There are fourteen club in the Southern League Second Division, and of these only two remain unbeaten, and of these two, Walsall have only played one match, while Southend have taken part in only two.

No, the Dragons can afford to look radiant even after the little contretemps at Cwm. Considering that the men only played together for the first time in their lives about a month ago, the Directors ought to be highly delighted with the form that

has been displayed. They began their Southern League career by picking up a point at Treharris, and Treharris at the present time are at the head of the second division table; they followed up this feat with a magnificent victory over 'proud Cardiff;' and - well, Cwm came next, and at Cwm they fell. And what can one say about Cwm? The great thing one can say about Cwm is that the ground suits crude footballers better than 'class' footballers; and so, of course, the crude footballers won."

The playing pitch was 'lumpy,' and you can never really get a skilful footballer to play so well on such a ground as the rush-to-and-fro type of athlete to whose haphazard movements the turf makes no difference. The Pontypridd players have been used to playing on good grounds, and they found the Cwm enclosure anything but to their liking. For all that they gave a good account of themselves, and did not deserve to be beaten on the run of play. The match excited an exceptional amount of interest, for Pontypridd was already a famous team in the land. Final score: CWM ALBION 2 PONTYPRIDD 1. - On Monday Oct. 2nd 1911 Pontypridd lost 3-2 at Ton Pentre in a Glamorgan League match.

Pontypridd's glorious victory at Merthyr

"Yes, it was a famous victory!" proclaimed the '*Glamorgan Free Press.*' The hundreds of jovial excursionists who travelled to Merthyr on Saturday Oct. 7th 1911 to see the Southern League match between Merthyr and the Dragons seemed to have an instinctive feeling that the "babes" would win. They wouldn't hear of defeat. They burst into song as soon as they had settled themselves down in Penyarden Park and they continued to blurt out snatches of familiar airs for half an hour before the kick-off. The crowd numbered 6,000 and a very happy crowd it was. Both teams were led on by their mascots at the outset, and this tended to increase the radiant mood of the spectators.

It was a grim struggle. The great stirring incident of the match was reserved to the last ten minutes, when the Dragons scored the memorable goal that gave them the victory. Let me describe this event. Ever since the resumption of play after half-time the Dragons forwards had been going great guns. It sent the Pontypriddians' heart pumping with wild delight to see them sweeping down the field and make valiant effort to get the ball into the net. The Merthyr goal had two or three miraculous escapes before the goal came. Then, McCall made play on the left and tried to centre, but the ball struck a Merthyr back and rebounded over the line. A corner resulted, and McCall who took the kick sent the ball in so accurately that Powell, who was standing two yards away from the near post, got his head to the ball and in a twinkling it was in the net. And that was how the Dragons won a victory that will not soon be forgotten. Final score: MERTHYR 0 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Marathon Cup tie against Barry

Barry District were the visitors to Taff Vale Park On Saturday Oct. 14th 1911, for a Welsh Cup tie, which was watched by about 2,000 spectators, all of whom expected the Dragons to win, but had to settle for a 0-0 score-line. On Thursday, Oct. 19th Pontypridd traveled to Barry for the replay. The Pontypridd team for this game was: - Turner; Dalton & Murray; Beren, Rowe, Marr; Barlow, Dave McKinley, Walker, Christie & Powell.

After 30 minutes play the game was halted because of a terrific storm that passed over the ground. A few minutes later they resumed playing. A few minutes before the final whistle the Dragons supporters thought their 'pets' had scored the only goal, but Barlow's shot had found its way through the side-netting, and the referee disallowed the goal. Fifteen minutes extra time was played. Christie hit the bar for Pontypridd. Final score: BARRY 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Barry maintained that the third game should be played on their ground, but Pontypridd claim that the 'Buttrill's' ground was not of the required size. Barry retorted that the cement cycle track around Taff Vale Park, which was only inches from the touch-line on either side of the field, was dangerous to players. The Welsh FA however, decided the third game should be played at Taff Vale Park.

The Dragons quickly rehabilitated themselves. On Thursday evening grumbling's were heard when they had failed to beat Barry District at the second attempt in a Welsh Cup tie. The teams met for a third time on Saturday Oct. 21st 1911, and the Dragon's critics were silenced, for not only did they gain a handsome victory by 3-1, but they also proved that they can play the sort of football that is calculated to delight a crowd. Barry gave a strong exhibition in the first-half, but Thursday's gruelling game had obviously told on them, for in the second-half, Turner, the Pontypridd goalkeeper, only handled once, and during the last half-hour the Dragons had the game so well in hand that they were able to indulge in as much fancy- work as they liked.

The Dragon's supporters had a fright in the first-half, the homesters penned in their opponents at the outset, and Llewellyn effected a wonderful save from Barlow, and his goal had several lucky escapes. Then the visitors forwards went on one of their speedy rushes, and an astonishing mistake by that usual safe custodian Turner, enabled then to score. Turner ran out to field the ball when it was almost stationary some ten yards from goal, but he failed to pick it up and over-ran himself leaving the ball to Haggard to place the ball in an empty goal. Barry was playing like demons now - and so were the Dragons. In ten minutes, Christie,

playing at inside-right, juggled forward, and with a brilliant shot from 25 yards range, equalized. In was the best shot seen at the Taff Vale Ground this season, and Christie had a rousing cheer.

The Dragons, having 'tasted blood,' now went at it with increased vigour, and 'ere long they had taken the lead. Barlow got in a nice centre, and after an exciting goalmouth struggle, Christie scored a second goal from close quarters. Before time there was a remarkable incident. The visiting forwards made desperate efforts to draw level, and whilst about a dozen players were struggling together in front of goal, a Barry forward got his foot on the ball. The ball seemed to be rolling into the corner of the net with Turner at the other end and no defender near it, when Murray threw himself full-length in its direction, and, somehow or other stopped its progress and got it out. The Barry players were convinced that Murray threw the ball away with his hands and appealed for a penalty. There were so many players between the referee and the goal that the referee could not have seen what had taken place, and Barry had to be satisfied with a corner kick. This was just before half-time, and the spectators talked about nothing else during the interval.

Having regard to this incident, it was a good job that the Dragons won by more than one goal. The home forwards were in fine form in the second-half, and the Barry men were tired out long before the end, and towards the end the Dragons tricked and outwitted them just as they liked. Marr obtained the third goal at half, who sent in one of those surprise shots that so often beat goalkeepers. It was a fast, low shot, and the ball was in the corner of the net before Llewellyn knew really what had happened. Half an hour was still left, and now the Dragons began to show the spectators what they could do in the way of cinquevallian feats of football artistry. And didn't the spectators enjoy it! Delighted laughter broke out all over the ground. The spectators got their money's worth.

Barlow sparked on this occasion. He seemed to make headway more rapidly than in any match this season, and he centred accurately. He owed much to his partner, Dave Christie, who is a very thoughtful player. He is never flurried and also finds player with the ball. He was in great shooting form, many of his efforts just missing the mark. Walker was not a success at pivot. He had no command over the ball. In the second-half, when three yards from the goal, he shot over the bar when a gentle tap would have placed the ball in the net. McKinley played a clever game, and one sharp shot of his that in the second-half grazed the cross-bar, deserved a better reward. Powell, at outside-right, had plenty of "go". Shelley played one of his cool, calculating games at centre-half, and he was well backed-up by Marr and Beren. Carrier was tried at right-back instead of Dalton (injured). He showed lack of understanding with the half in front of him; but otherwise gave a good account

of himself. Murray, was as safe as ever. Barry's defenders once more played pluckily and intelligently, but three strenuous matches in the course of seven days proved too much for them, and the whole of the team. The Dragons had proved themselves the superior combination in both previous encounters and the quality of the Barry defence might be gauged from the successful manner in which they prevented the home team scoring until the third game. They are a plucky lot and their experience at Pontypridd will do them good. It might be said that they 'died fighting' after a five hour battle. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 BARRY DISTRICT 0.

Pontypridd put another fine performance to their credit on Monday, Oct. 23rd 1911 when they defeated a First Division Southern League team, Plymouth Argyle, at Taff Vale Park by 1-0. The fixture was in connection with the abortive South-western League. The weather affected the attendance and the quality of the football. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 1 PLYMOUTH ARGYLE 0.

Points for the Dragons

Climbing up the Southern League ladder

Pontypridd traveled to Chesham on Saturday Oct. 28th 1911, and secured two Southern League points. They now occupied as good a position, as any club in the league table apart from Southend, who have an advantage of just one point. It must be remembered, too, that out of the five matches the Dragons have played, four had been away from home. Play up, the Dragons! It was generally expected, that the Dragons would gain victory at Chesham, and on the run of play they ought to have won by a bigger margin than 3-1. The home goalkeeper saved a penalty from Christie and a thoroughly legitimate goal from Wood was disallowed for offside. The Pontypridd players strongly protested against the referee's decision, and even the home spectators expressed the opinion that the goal should have been allowed. "But never mind" wrote the '*Free Press*.' "The Dragons came away with the full points, and that's what we want, eh, boys?" It was an interesting match, with Pontypridd always holding the upper hand. Final score: - CHESHAM 1 PONTYPRIDD 3.

Aberdare marathon not resolved

On Thursday, Oct. 26th, Pontypridd drew 2-2 at Aberdare in a Welsh Cup match and on Nov. 2nd 1911 they met again at Taff Vale Park for a replay. There were 2,000 spectators present who saw Wood score the only goal of the match. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 ABERDARE 0. However, at a Welsh FA meeting at Cardiff on Nov. 9th Aberdare successfully protested against the proximity of the cement cycle track to the playing pitch, and a replay ordered at Merthyr on Nov. 11th 1911.

Great struggle between Pontypridd & Ton Pentre

Ton's goal disputed

Ton Pentre came to Pontypridd on Nov. 4th 1911, saw, - well, no, they didn't conquer, but they shared the honours 1-1, wrote the Glamorgan Free Press. The air was electrical with excitement sometime before the kick-off. The sky was overcast, but the rain kept off, and the hearts of the Pontypridd directors must have palpitated with joy as they watched the spectators rolling in. The time arrived for the kick-off and the cry was "still they come." Ton Pentre had a devoted lot of followers and there were Rhonddaite's present in their thousands. Some who had attended most matches at the Taff Vale Park since the beginning of the season, thought that it looked like a record gate. There must have been over 5,000 spectators present, and when the referee blew his whistle for the kick-off, it was amid that tension of feeling which is experienced when a Cabinet Minister is about to make an important announcement.

The Dragons did not quickly get into their stride. They seldom do. They prefer to take the measure of their opponents first, and it is not sure whether this policy is to be deprecated. The Ponty forwards must have said to themselves "Let those Ton forwards knock up against our defence for a few minutes and see what it's like." Of course, we all know what the Pontypridd defence is like. And the Dragons forwards gradually found their feet and gave Percival, the Ton goalkeeper, a warm time of it.

During the first twenty minutes of the first-half the Dragons forwards were all over their opponents, whose goal had one or two marvellous escapes. A stinging shot by Christie was only stopped by a Ton back happening to be in the line of fire, and a long drop-shot from Walker was only just tipped over the bar by Percival, and the same player, from a corner kick, shot just over the bar. A swift first-time shot from the foot of Shelley went hurling past Percival's head, but went wide. "Could these things could go on for ever?" the locals asked themselves. No, it couldn't. A goal was bound to come. Everybody knew it; it was only a matter of time. It was only in accord with the fitness of things under the circumstances that it should be a grand goal, and it was!

The Dragons swooped down on the Sphinx-like Percival, and the ball slid to the foot of "Yank" Powell. Without a moments hesitation Yank acted, and with a swift cross he left Percival helpless. Cheers? You could have heard them at Pentre, and in regions beyond Pentre, even to the land of Nod or Jericho (wherever they are). This was a great wind-up to flashes of splendid football, which sent a thrill around the ground. The thrill, of course, did not touch the boys from the Rhondda, who lapsed into a state of dumbness. "The Dragons will now be all over them," quote a

Pontypriddian, none other than "*Ye Old Soccerite*," the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' reporter. Everyone thought so, certainly, for it is wonderful how a goal, coming late in the second-half, after fruitless attacks, stimulates a team. But they were mistaken on this occasion. For once the science of psychology deceived them. The goal, instead of galvanizing the Dragons into a more vigorous mood, had the opposite effect. In short, it had the effect of awakening the Rhonddaïtes, who for the next few minutes gave the Pontypridd defence no end of trouble. Try as they would the Dragons forwards could not get going, and the Ton men were hell-bent on equalising.

And sure enough, there was a surprise packet in store for the spectators. Ton did get the equalising goal, and it was one of the most curious goals one could imagine. It was scored some ten minutes before the end, and this was how it all came about, for it was a goal that would be talked about for many a day. With nearly all the players in midfield, the ball was seen to roll towards Murray, who stood some fifteen yards out from goal. It appeared that the Pontypridd players at that moment were appealing to the referee for some infringement in midfield; in fact, they thought that he had already blown his whistle. Murray seemed in two minds whether to kick at the ball or listen to the referee's decision. He certainly essayed to kick at the ball, and he completely missed it. At the same time the Ton outside-right, Roberts, dashed up. Turner immediately ran out and got to the ball in the same second as Roberts, but in trying to pick the ball up, fell, and the leather slipped from his grasp, and Roberts had nothing to do but place the ball in an empty goal.

What a hullabaloo followed! The Pontypridd players all rushed to the poor referee with arms flying; the Ton players also surrounded him, and he was so confronted by both teams that it seemed that it would send poor man off his head. The referee decided in the favour of Ton, and consulted the linesman, who was of the same opinion, and the goal was allowed. The Ton players and supporters, naturally, received the decision with feeling of rapture; but a groan went up from some of the Pontypridd enthusiasts. The contention of the Dragons was that the whistle was actually blown for a free-kick before Roberts shot. Both teams certainly appeared to stop playing. But if the referee had whistled, could he be so ignorant of the elementary rules of the game as to grant a goal afterwards? I can hardly conceive that of any referee. An exciting incident followed. The game was no longer restarted when Walker and Curtis got at loggerheads, and both were ordered off the field. The Dragons certainly deserved to win. Their forwards played the more effective combined game especially in the second-half, and Percival had much more difficult work to get through than Turner. Shelley played a great game at centre-half for the Dragons, and the backs of both teams displayed splendid form. Pontypridd afterwards decided to put in a protest against Ton's

goal, but this was rejected at a later Welsh FA meeting, which stated the referee was the sole judge. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 TON PENTRE 1.

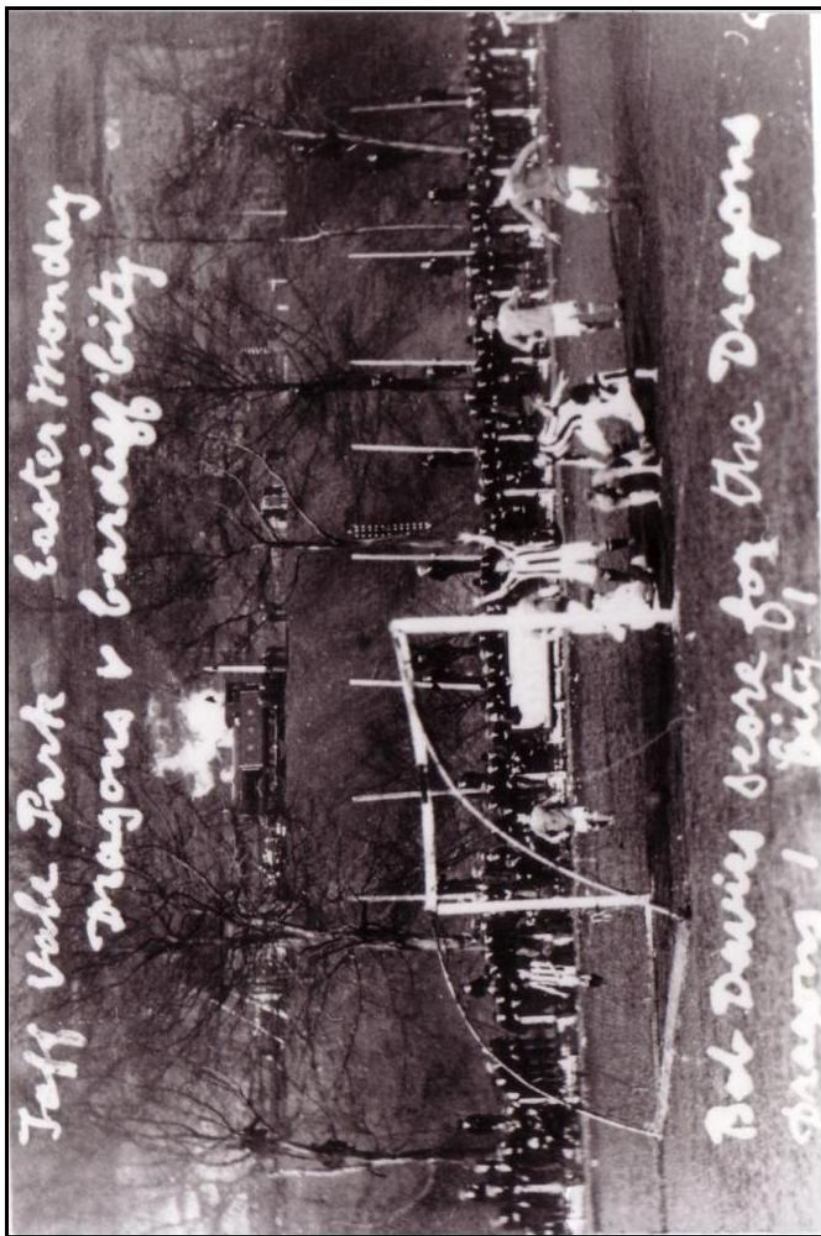
The Dragon's revenge!

Aberdare beaten in Welsh cup tie- But win in Southern League

The uncertainty of football has been brought home again to us in this part of the world. On Thursday, Nov. 9th 1911, Aberdare beat Pontypridd 2-0 in the Southern League although the Dragons were playing at home, but on Saturday Nov. 11th the two teams met at Merthyr in the Welsh Cup tie replay and the Dragons won by 1-0. Thus the Dragons quickly had revenge. It was hard lines on the Dragons that they should have met the 'darians in the Southern League after so many cup ties - three against Barry and two against Aberdare. It will be remembered that the match was originally fixed for the first Saturday of the season, but the sleepy 'darians directors had not been able to get a team together. The Dragons, were then fresh and victorious and would have whacked them at that time, and they have been robbed of two valuable points by the unbusinesslike methods of the Aberdare directors.

On Nov. 2nd Pontypridd met Aberdare for the third time in a Welsh cup tie replay on Saturday and won 1-0. It will be remembered that the first meeting at Aberdare ended in a draw 2-2; the replay at Taff Vale Park resulted in a victory for the Dragons 1-0, but Aberdare protested against the result on the grounds that 1: That the goal was not a legitimate one. 2: That the close proximity of the cycle track to the touch-line made the ground dangerous and unfit for a cup tie. At the second point the protest failed, but the first claim was upheld and a replay was ordered at Penydarren Park, Merthyr on Saturday. Aberdare won the toss and had the advantage of the wind, but the Dragons were the first to attack, and quickly scored a sensational goal. The forwards went away in a line and McCall got in a nice centre, which was only partly cleared. Walker pounced on the ball, and dribbling forward, scored a clever goal that proved to be the only score. Final scores: PONTYPRIDD 0 ABERDARE 2 (Nov. 9th); PONTYPRIDD 1 ABERDARE 0 (Nov. 11th at Merthyr).

At a Welsh FA meeting on Nov. 15th the Pontypridd Club applied to have their ground approved as being fit for Welsh Cup ties, but the council said that they would not interfere with the right of clubs to protest if they chose, though it was explained that the replay last week was ordered owing to the condition of the ground on the day when Pontypridd met Aberdare, and that each case would be dealt with on its merits.



Pontrydd 1 Cardiff City 1 at Taff Vale Park September 9th 1911

Pontypridd's grand performance

Pontypridd achieved their best performance of the season on Saturday, Nov. 18th 1911 when they vanquished Portsmouth at Taff Vale Park by 3-1. That they thoroughly deserved their victory not one of the 4,000 spectators would deny. The Dragons' forwards combined more effectively than Pompey's front line, and shot more accurately; the halves were quite as good as the visitors trio, and the fullbacks defended in first-class style, especially during the first thirty minutes of the second-half, when the visitors strove to save the game. It was a splendid contest, in which sparkling football was seen despite the adverse meteorological conditions. The Dragons had shown signs of staleness against Aberdare, but a week's rest had left them fit and vigorous, and they rose to the occasion in a manner which brought undiluted joy amongst the supporters.

Pontypridd tried a bold experiment. 'Yank' Powell was entrusted with the centre-forward position owing to the suspension of Walker. Powell is a 'handy-man' who has a knack of adapting himself to any position, there was no dilly-dallying about his movements; he always went bang for goal, his dashing, straight through runs caused the Pompey defenders no end of worry. He fed his wing judiciously too, and he ought to be given another trial or two in this exacting position, where it has not been satisfactorily filled, although Walker has recently shown sign of improvement. The visitors kept the Dragons out for 25 minutes, and then their citadel fell. Christie, the sure footed, got possession twenty yards out, and with a swift "grunder" beat Sanderson all ends up. Pompey during this time had done a good deal of attacking, but the Dragons were the more dangerous lot, and they merited their lead. The Dragons kept up a hot attack after this, and warm shots from Christie and Powell narrowly missed the mark. Eventually McKinley sent in a centre kick from the right, and the ball was blown by the wind into the distant corner of the net. The goalie, doubtless thought that it would go right across, but it banged against the inside netting, loosened a portion of it, and slipped through to the other side. It was well inside the uprights and there was no mistaking the legitimacy of the goal. Thus the Dragons led at half-time by 2-0, but they were by no means certain of victory as the visitors would have the aid of the wind in the second half.

During the interval the rain began to fall and fall and during the first twenty minutes of the second-half it poured down in torrents. Driven by a furious wind it beat down remorselessly in the faces of the Pontypridd players, but the Ponty boys cared not a jot, and went about their work just as if the sun was shining from a bright blue sky. Ponty were continually on the aggressive now, and the work of the home defenders prevented them from scoring under the circumstances could not be too highly praised. Dalton and Murray seemed to be here, there and

everywhere after the ball, and the halves with Shelley as the shining light, lent them useful assistance. Turner brought off one fine single-handed save, and his quick fielding of a greasy ball was admired. With quarter of an hour to go the rain ceased and the wind moderated, and the Dragons got going again. Many a sweeping movement forward did the Ponty forwards bring off, but "Pompey" also kept "knocking at the door" at the other end, and with ten minutes remaining Jones scored with a clever cross-shot, there being so many players in front of Turner that he probably could not judge the flight of the ball. "This will never do", thought the lively Dragons, and they sped towards Sanderson. In a minute or two McCall worked an opening and put the result beyond doubt by smartly scoring a third goal. This was a rousing wind-up to a stirring match, and the spectator's enthusiasm knew no bounds. It was a clean sportsmanlike game, the sort of game that would help to make "soccer" still more the rage in the district. Final Score: PONTYPRIDD 3 PORTSMOUTH 1.

Dragons march on in Welsh Cup

Pontypridd had already played no fewer than six matches to reach this stage of the Welsh cup competition when they traveled to play the amateur club, Cardiff Corinthians on Nov. 23rd 1911. The Dragons were the first to score, S. C. Parr, the home back placing into his own net with a mistimed back pass. This was followed directly afterwards when Christie scored for Pontypridd from a free kick. Another mistake by Parr later gave another goal to Pontypridd when he headed the ball into his own net. Tait replied with a penalty for the Corinthians, and before half-time the same man added a second. In the second-half the play was far keener and more evenly contested. Eventually, after a corner by McDonald, Shelley scored Pontypridd's fourth goal. Final score: CARDIFF CORINTHIANS 2 PONTYPRIDD 4. The gate money was nearly £17.

The '*Glamorgan Free Press*' of Nov. 24th 1911 carried this report about a conversation between someone called "Sage" and another person called George, and gives an insight into the local interest in soccer, and the type of spectators that were watching games in Pontypridd at this period:

Magnetism of football

The Sage spends an afternoon at Taff Vale Park

"There's an extraordinary magnetism about football, George," said the Sage. "Do you mean rugby or soccer?" asked George. "I'm talking about soccer now," replied the Sage, "but for all I know there might be the same magnetism about rugby." The matter of fact is, I know very little about that game, except that Gwyn Nicholls was a fine fullback." "He was a threequarter back, " explained George. "That

means he was a quarter short of being a fullback," laughed the Sage. "I once remember watching a rugby match when I was a youth. One side was short of forwards, and I volunteered to play. I shall never forget that match. It was all scrummaging from the beginning to end, and it was a wonder that I wasn't scrummaged to eternity. But that's irrelevant. I was talking about the manner in which football has captured popular imagination. The masses are simply mad on it, and the popularity of the game is one of the most remarkable phenomena of these days. Did you see the game between Pontypridd and Portsmouth on Saturday?"

"Rather!" answered George; "What did you think of the Dragons?" "The Dragons!" explained the Sage; "Who the Dickens are the Dragons?" "Why, that's what they call Pontypridd," said George. "Ah! I see! A very good name for them too," reflected the sage. "I'll call them the Dragons too. I watched Saturday's game from my coigen of vantage, and at half-time I looked around me, and my thoughts passed to the human units that made up the crowd. Every class, every section of the community, seemed to be represented. Take those who stood within a few yards of me: Here to my left was Dr. Chalke, of Porth, representing culture; in front of him was a Pontypridd curate, representing the church and Christianity; To my right was Mr. David Phillips, secretary of the Cymrodorion, representing Welsh nationalism; in front of him, again, was Mr. Godfrey Phillips, representing the law; not far away was an urban council official, representing -- "the ratepayers", put in George. "Don't make silly remarks," snapped the Sage. "He represents officialism". "In front of him was a well dressed lady, representing - "suffragettissm", suggested George. "How you are!" thundered the Sage. "I was going to say that she represented her majesty - women. Not far away from her, again, was a J. P. In short, I venture to say, George, that every profession, every calling, every interest, was represented on that ground on Saturday. And the masses were there in their hundreds. It showed you the universality of football's appeal."

"Did you see my friend Bill Jones of Treharris there?" asked George. "What did he represent?" demanded the Sage. "Pugilism," replied George. "I've not the least doubt that the noble art of self-defence was represented" proceeded the Sage. "All these people, George, came to see a ball kicked about for an hour and a half. Wherein, I ask you, lies the fascination of football? Why has it enslaved the multitude? I know a man who would spend the last sixpence in his pocket to see a match." "I know a man who will spend his last fourpence and borrow tuppence!" interposed George. "Wonderful" thought the Sage, "but you are not against football, are you?" queried George. "Against it! Certainly not," said the Sage; "it's the grandest thing that you could imagine to entertain the weary on a Saturday afternoon after a hard week's work. It keeps them from drinking, too. I hope the

Dragons will do well. Turner is a picturesque goalkeeper, with the immortal Roose's weakness for gallery gestures and theatrical attitudinising; Shelley is a modern Stoic, whom nothing will ruffle; Christie is Bloomer-like in snapping up a pass and deadly shooting. I hope the inhabitants of the district will back-up the team, George!" The Dragons were defeated 2-0 at Ton Pentre in a South Wales and Monmouthshire Cup tie on Nov. 25th 1911.

More Southern League points for Dragons

McDonald in form - Christie's great shot

Pontypridd secured two more Southern League points as a result of their home victory over Cwm Albion on Sat. Dec. 2nd 1911. The Dragons had visited Cwm Albion and were unexpectedly beaten by 2-1. Two months had elapsed since then, and yet Cwm Albion had not gained another victory in the competition! Considering the teams that the Dragons have vanquished since that time, it is quite evident that their defeat at Cwm was one of those "accidents" that will happen in the football world. However, we can now afford to relegate this "accident" into the limbo of forgotten things. The Dragons were naturally determined to avenge that defeat on Saturday, and they succeeded, however, they did not win by as big a margin as generally expected.

The visitors turned out to be a much better team than their record would suggest, and it could not be made out how it was that they had only won one match out of twelve. They did not play skilful football, but was a bustling, hard working team and their forwards knew how to make quick tracks for goal. One of the features of their play, in fact, was the dashing manner in which their forwards "followed up" when the ball was flung their way, and the home defenders were hard put to keep them out. Their right-wing was very persistent all through. Murray's kicking was anything but safe at the start, and he all but let the Dragons down.

Curiously enough, the Dragons scored their two goals in the first-half, when playing against a strong wind. The game had been in progress for some time and both teams had been subjected to hot attacks when McDonald, who figured at outside-right for Pontypridd, got possession, and sprinted quickly along the touchline. Before the visiting defenders had time to collect their thoughts, the winger had centred, and the ball going to the foot of Christie beyond the distant post, the inside-left, with a super oblique shot, gave the Cwm goalie no chance.

Christie seldom missed scoring chances these days, but his shot was nothing compared to one of his second-half efforts, of which more anon.

This goal resulted in more life being infused into the Dragon's attack, and before long a second goal was obtained. The players were swarming around the Cwm goal when McDonald shot hard and low from close quarters. The goalie advanced a foot to save, but the ball struck one of the defenders and was deflected into the net out of the custodian's reach. Two goals against the wind - what would happen in the second-half? The spectators doubtless saw visions of a harvest of goals, for not only would the Dragons have the benefit of the wind, but also there was the additional fact that they always finished strongly. In this half Turner had one or two awkward long dropping shots to deal with, and once he tipped a "stinger" over the bar in clever style.

The players did not retire at half-time. It was a raw, damp afternoon, with rain threatening, and the shades of darkness were already gathering. The Dragons quickly made their way towards goal, but they were driven back by Cwm's lusty defenders, and the visitors' forwards actually gave trouble again! The Dragons, although they were two up, were not reproducing the form they showed against Portsmouth.

The forwards lacked speed, and people could not help thinking that it was a mistake to put young Powell at left-halfback because Marr was indisposed, in view of the dash he displayed at centre-forward against Pompey. Walker was again slow at pivot, and if Powell had been in that position, two or three more goals might have been scored in this half. The game was even for some time, and it is true, that in the concluding twenty minutes the Dragons were all over the visitors and how they failed to add to the score will ever remain a mystery.

A shot from Christie during this period will be remembered for a long time by all that saw it. The ball came to him when he was standing thirty yards out; turning around quickly he sent in a lightening shot, which was the swiftest ever seen on the ground. Luckily for Cwm, the goalkeeper happened to be in the line of fire, and with the aid of a pair of sturdy legs he managed to keep the ball out.

A custodian of lighter build would have been flung into the net with the ball - there was such dynamic force behind it. On another occasion Walker headed an inch over the bar when the custodian was out of goal. Yes, there were some exciting moments experienced before the end. It was fortunate under the circumstances that the Dragons put on two goals in the first-half. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 2 CWM ALBION 0.

Pontypridd's eyes on Welsh Cup

Pontypridd met Mardy in the second round of the Welsh Cup on Saturday, Nov. 9th 1911 and gained a victory by 3-1. Despite the cold, rainy weather, there was a goodly crowd of spectators, Mardy bringing with them numerous spectators, who made their presence felt. Mardy quite held their own in the first-half, when nothing was scored, but they failed to stay the pace afterwards, and in the end the Dragons won comfortably. A heavy downpour of rain and sleet during the first-half rendered the ground sodden and slippery, and it was not surprising that under the circumstances that many good openings went begging. Final Score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 MARDY 1.

Norwich City visited the Taff Vale Park on Monday, Dec. 11th 1911 for a friendly game, but the attendance was affected by the unfavourable weather which prevailed. In their Glamorgan League encounter with Barry District on Saturday, Dec. 16th 1911 Pontypridd scored more goals than in any previous matches this season, and moreover, with a substitute for Turner in goal, prevented Barry District from scoring, the final score being 5-0. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 5 BARRY DISTRICT 0.

Splendid victory over Walsall

Pontypridd advanced their reputation for consistency on Monday, Dec. 18th 1911, when they defeated Walsall in the Southern League at Taff Vale Park by 3-1. This was no mean performance, for the Midlanders' came with a fine record. They beat Stoke a fortnight ago in the final qualifying round of the English Cup, and would meet Aston Villa in the first round proper on January 13th. The Dragons, therefore, knew that they had a stiff task on hand, and they emerged with flying colours. There is no doubt about it, that the Dragons are displaying great form just now, and their supporters are on the best of terms with themselves.

It was a pity that the weather was so wretched for such an attractive fixture. It rained all day without intermission, and as a consequence the ground was in a very bad state for football. Despite the adverse conditions the game was a thoroughly interesting one. It was keenly contested - and the best team won. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 WALSALL 1.

The Pontypridd team: Turner; Dalton & Murray; Brenen, Shelley, Marr; McDonald, McKinley, Stallworthy, Christie, McCall. On Dec.. 20th 1911 Pontypridd travelled to play Croydon, but when they arrived at the ground ten minutes before kick-off time, they found the ground under a foot of water.

How we stand after four months

The Dragons' record so far

The '*Glamorgan Free Press*' of Dec. 29th 1911 carried this end of year review of the Dragons soccer club: -

"Four months of the football season, or just half - have slipped away, and at this juncture we might not unprofitably review the situation at Pontypridd from the soccer standpoint. It was a bold venture to start a professional soccer club in a town where rugby had hitherto held sway, but the venture has been thoroughly justified. The club is fortunate in having an ideal Hon. Secretary in Mr. J. W. Kinsman. The gates have been as good as could be expected, and we have had so many splendid exhibitions of football on the Taff Vale Park that the club supporters are more than satisfied. Many people who knew little or nothing of soccer last September are now enthusiastic in its praise, and they will tell you with a twinkle in their eye that they now know how to spend a happy Saturday afternoon in winter. The ground provides splendid accommodation, and strangers have gone away eulogizing the park."

Merry Merthyr gain revenge

On Dec. 23rd 1911 Pontypridd were defeated 3-0 in Merthyr in a Glamorgan League match. "Merry Merthyr Gain revenge Upon Dragons!" Such was the heading given in a Cardiff newspaper to the report of this match. Revenge - indeed! Why, it was only a Glamorgan League match! Final score: MERTHYR 3 PONTYPRIDD 0.

A friendly match was played at Taff Vale Park on Christmas Day, in which the home side had a runaway victory over the Rhondda League by 8-1.

Dragons pick up the points at Aberdare

Pontypridd travelled to the New Athletic Grounds to play Aberdare on Dec. 27th 1911 in a Southern League fixture. Too much vigour was imported into the game at times, and fouls were frequent. The Dragons combined very effectively at times and Stallworthy, at centre-forward, was a great success. He scored both goals and showed great opportunism. Shelley marred his good play by over-vigorous tactics. Demmery, the home goalkeeper had a poor game and was at fault with both goals. Final score: - ABERDARE 0 PONTYPRIDD 2.

Tredeggar had made a fairly good reputation for themselves in the football world of South Wales, but they were no match for Pontypridd in the Glamorgan League

match that was played at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Dec. 30th 1911, when the Dragons ran out winners 6-0. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 6 TREDEGAR 0

Pontypridd played the Newport League at Taff Vale Park on Monday, Jan. 1st. 1912, consequent on the abandonment of the fixture arranged for Boxing Day. Pontypridd made several changes and gave a trial to McDonald, the brother of their outside-right. Although the game did not reach a high standard, play was interesting on account of the frequent scoring, and at no time did the Dragons have more than a goal lead. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 NEWPORT LEAGUE 3.

How Connah's Quay were pulverized

Yes, the Dragons of Pontypridd have their eyes on the Welsh Cup. Having biffed Barry District out of the way; given Aberdare quietus; and ousted Mardy the company of the elect, they went forth on January 6th 1912 in battle array to beat the Connah's Quay on Saturday, and they routed the gallant men from North Wales to the tune of 8-0! And they would have put on a few more goals but for the safe goalkeeping of Evans. The wretched weather adversely affected the attendance. If it had been a dry day there would have probably been 5 or 6,000 people present. But the dismal rain poured down, and the wind blew, and only the most enthusiastic followers of the game ventured out.

These numbered over 1,000, and they had the satisfaction of witnessing a pleasing exhibition of football despite the fearful conditions in which the game was played. The visitors from Flintshire were handicapped in the first-half. A pelting rain driven by a gusty wind faced them, and they could seldom make any headway. As a matter of fact they rarely got beyond the halfway line, and the Pontypridd forwards monopolised the play. So one-sided was the play that Turner stood in goal with folded arms all the time, calmly gazing at the hubbub at the other end.

Only once or twice did he handle the ball before half-time, and it then rolled towards him so leisurely that he could have counted up to fifty before getting rid of it. After half an hour's play the ball actually rolled over the home goal-line, and by way of marking the memorable event the spectators raised an hilarious cheer. We had been led to believe that Connah's Quay were a good team. Hadn't they beaten Treharris and Mardy in previous years in the same competition? Yes, and that makes the Dragons' achievement all the more meritorious. Now for the next round! The Dragons are not afraid of anybody, they fear no foe. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 8 CONNAH'S QUAY 0.



**A large crowd for a Dragon's game at Taff
Vale Park including Dragon mascot**

The Dragons play much better football than Treharris

The Dragons were still winning! On Saturday, January 13th 1912, they defeated Treharris 1-0 at Taff Vale Park, and thus secured two more valuable Southern League points. They only gained victory by a goal, but they had three-fourths of the play, and were unlucky not to have won by three or four goals.

It was a fine afternoon - for a change - and the spectators numbered between 3,000 and 4,000. The Dragons supporters were in high spirits. The great victory over Connah's Quay was still fresh in their memory, and roars of cheering greeted the Dragons attacking movements. There was only one change in the home team, Yank Powell taking Marr's place at left-back. Treharris were at full strength. The football from the start, was keen and fast, and the spectators greatly enjoyed the swift fluctuations of hostilities. There was no mistaking the superiority of the Dragons. Both as regards individual skill and collective excellence they were far ahead of the visitors, but for all that Treharris proved themselves doughty opponents, and compelled the Dragons to play for all that they were worth from start to finish.

It was Stallworthy who won the match, because the solitary goal of the contest came about through his own individual effort. It was about ten minutes before half-time. Bailiff was about to clear, with no-one near him, when Stallworthy suddenly dashed towards him. It was a 10-1 chance on Bailiff getting the ball away when the home centre-forward made a sudden dart for him, and many forwards under the circumstances, would have simply looked on. But Stallworthy is not built that way. He always keeps his eyes open, and is ever ready to seize opportunities. He charged into Bailiff, not roughly, but in businesslike fashion. Bailiff, who was then just outside the goal-post, half fell, and dropped the ball. Stallworthy side-touched it, and coolly placed it in the unguarded net, with Bailiff an helpless looker-on. The Dragons deserved to lead by two or three goals at half-time, but 1-0 in remained until the end. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 1 TREHARRIS 0.

Pompey's revenge

On Saturday, Jan. 20th 1912 Pompey defeated the Dragons in a return match at Fratton Park by 3-1. Turner, the Pontypridd goalkeeper, was taken ill on the journey, and Rowe, the trainer, kept goal. Rowe was not to be blamed for the defeat, but it is probable that Turner's absence under such circumstances had a disconcerting effect on the team as a whole. There were 9,000 spectators, a special excursion taking a large contingent from Pontypridd. The ground was on the soft side, and the game opened at a great pace, Pontypridd being the first to attack, opening with a strong burst. After Wardrope had at first cleverly stopped

Stallworthy, the Dragons right-wing dashed down the field at great speed, and Warner tried to clear with a flying kick but did not get the ball away, and it dropped dangerously near the Portsmouth goal, and Wardrope had no alternative but to concede a corner, and this being placed accurately by McDonald, McKinley got a header in which Saunderson saved splendidly amid cheers.

The Portsmouth defence for a time was kept exceedingly busy. It was a fast, vigorous game, and Pontypridd renewed their attack from a free-kick, but the ball was got away smartly. Eventually Portsmouth broke away in characteristic style, but finding the opposition in great form, Shelley did the clearing. Thereupon the visitors dashed away on the left, and from a centre Stallworthy was left in possession right in the goalmouth, and although Saunderson made a great effort to save, the ball was rushed past him and into the net, Pontypridd thus taking the lead after twenty-five minutes play. The game continued very fast and exciting and though both teams made strenuous efforts to improve their position, they met with an impregnable defence, both teams kicking splendidly. Just before the interval Pompey took a corner and from the clearance Stringfellow put in a lovely piece of work, and, kicking the ball over the heads of the Ponty backs, enabled Jones to go through and equalize after a really brilliant individual effort. Half-time then arrived.

In the second-half play was equally exciting. Portsmouth continued to attack, the forwards putting in some spirited work and being well backed up by the defence. Except at rare intervals Pontypridd were kept on the defensive and Portsmouth maintained a hot pressure and were playing up splendidly in all departments. Five minutes from the end a brilliant piece of combination between Stringfellow and Hemstock led to Dowling scoring a magnificent goal. There was no further score. Final score: PORTSMOUTH 3 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Dragons march on in Welsh Cup

Llandudno beaten in North Wales

By defeating Llandudno in the fifth round of the Welsh Cup on Saturday, Jan. 27th 1912, Pontypridd qualified for the semi-final of that competition. This was a splendid achievement, considering that the club only came into existence at the beginning of the season, and it speaks volumes for the "football aptitude" of the founders and the skill of the players. It will be seen that they have scored 21 goals in this competition, while only four goals have been obtained against them. Owing to injuries and other causes, they had to journey to Llandudno without five of the regular players - Shelley (centre-half), Marr (left-half), McDonald (outside-right), McKinley (inside-right) and Turner (goalkeeper). Turner, who it will be

remembered, was taken ill on his way to Portsmouth on the previous Saturday. Fortunately, the team had a capable deputy in Cyril Jones, who, although he had only acted as custodian once previously for the premier team, gave abundant evidence of his soundness. Barlow and Walker constituted the right-wing, whilst Rowe (the trainer) came in at centre-half, with Powell on his left.

From the start of the match there was no doubt about the supremacy of the Dragons in all departments except goal. The football of the visiting forwards was neat and effective, the passing accurate and well timed. The forwards shot at every conceivable opportunity with force, but without much precision. Stallworthy was a great offender in this respect, for a little steadiness would have availed his side better. Many a shot was sent sailing over the bar that should have found work for Stallard, who kept a splendid goal for Llandudno.

The Dragons were one up after ten minutes play owing to a misunderstanding between the home backs, which allowed Walker to nip in and touch the ball through. Then, followed the amateur's best attack of the afternoon, and Jones was called upon several times. He saved, but his work was not at all clean or convincing. The remainder of the first forty-five minutes was brimful of incident, but nothing further was scored. The second-half was similar in character, the outstanding feature being the stubborn defence of the home backs. So well did it perform that the visitors were kept at bay until a minute of time, when Stallworthy made amends for previous failures by heading through from a corner.

Barlow was the pick of the visiting forwards, his touchline runs and centres being a feature of the game. The defence was very solid, and quite too good for the less experienced amateurs. Murray kicked well all through, and Rowe was the pick of the halves. There was only one unpleasant incident, and that was when Rowe fell on G. Petrie and lay on him for a minute. Brother Joe came to the rescue of George Petrie in rather a threatening manner, but the referee calmed the turbulent spirit and penalised Rowe. Clearly, the amateurs were up against a better team, but made a gallant fight, and had no reason to fear being humiliated. The main difference was at centre-half and forward, but the work of the home quintet, although good at times, compared unfavourably with that of the visitors. The taking were a record for the town, totaling £70. Final score: - LLANDUDNO 0 PONTYPRIDD 2.

The Dragons unexpectedly beaten
Southern League points lost at home

Football is a game of surprises; that, in fact, constitutes one of its charms. There was a great surprise in store for the spectators that turned up at Taff Vale Park on Monday, Jan. 29th 1912, to witness the Southern League match between

Pontypridd and Croydon Common, for the Dragons were unexpectedly beaten by a goal to nil. The ground was very hard and slippery, and players had to exercise great care, but this could not be advanced as an excuse for the Dragons lapse. After all, the conditions were the same for both teams, and there is no denying the fact that on the day's form the visitors deserved to win.

The Pontypridd forwards showed unmistakable signs of staleness. Even allowing for the state of the ground, they were slow and lacked vim. The journey to Llandudno and back in bitterly cold weather, with a cup tie thrown in between, seemed to have taken it out of them. There were two changes in the team that did duty at Llandudno, Turner resuming his position in goal and Carrier supplanted Dalton at right-back.

Both these players gave satisfaction. It was the forwards that were at fault. Walker was woefully slow, and Christie failed to get in any of his characteristic shots. The wingmen completely failed to control the ball, and Stallworthy alone showed any real determination. Of the home halves Powell was easily the best. He was energy itself, and defended valiantly. The other two woke up in the second-half, and it was a good job that they did, for the visitors set up many dangerous attacks towards the end of the match, and if their inside forwards had shown a little more resourcefulness in front of goal, they would have added to the score. As it was they had to be content with one goal, which was scored by Sparrow after smart work by Romaine in the first minute.

The Dragons came within an ace of equalising before half-time, McCall, after tricking the defence cleverly, sent in a sharp cross, which Price, the Croydon goalkeeper, just managed to tip out. Stallworthy dashed up, but unfortunately he overran the ball, otherwise he would have easily netted, as Price was at the distant corner. Soon afterwards the Dragons were awarded a free-kick just outside the penalty area for a foul on Stallworthy, and Christie treated the spectators to a shot which, should it have been a little lower, would have clearly broken the crossbar - at least, that is what some spectators said. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 CROYDON COMMON 1.

The Dragons in form again Smart away victory against Kettering

Those who saw the Dragons beaten by Croydon Common knew that it only meant a temporary loss of form. They have quickly shown that they are still the same vigorous Dragons that they have been all along, and their victory at Kettering on Saturday, Feb. 3rd 1912, was a meritorious performance. Kettering had begun the season badly, but they had been exhibiting very good form of late, and they were

not an easy team to beat on their own ground. But the Dragons managed to get the best of them by 3-1, and the victory was thoroughly deserved on the run of play. Pontypridd made two changes in the team that lost to Croydon, Shelley and McDonald being reintroduced. Kettering, losing the toss, set to kick down the slope on a hard snow-covered ground.

Pontypridd were the first to become dangerous, McCall opening up a movement for them, Styles having to save a threatening shot. McCall came through again directly after, and only the smartness of Styles prevented the ex-Norwich man from scoring. Turner was next called upon, and a journey into the Kettering territory ended in the ball going into touch. Play hovered in mid-field for a period. The visitors goal underwent a narrow escape from a shot which just missed the billet. A shot by Sullivan looked as though it must score, the ball going just over Turner's head, to the mortification of the home crowd. The visitors more than held their own, although kicking up the slope. Ten minutes before the interval Walker, following a break away on the left, scored for Pontypridd, the ball passing between Style's legs. The visitors deserved their lead.

In the second-half Pontypridd kept up a very hot pressure, and the game became very fast and at times exciting. Twenty minutes had elapsed when the Dragons scored their second goal through Walker. It was something in the nature of a gift, the home goalkeepers kick rebounding off the winger's back into the net. Moggs reduced the lead after some nice combination. The visitors third goal was through the agency of Christie, who converted a penalty given against a Kettering back for handling. Final score: - KETTERING 1 PONTYPRIDD 3.

'Yank' v World Champion

There was a large attendance for the Fifth Annual Assault at Arms (Boxing) in the first week of February 1912 in aid of the St. Michael's Homes, Treforest, at the Pontypridd Town Hall. For the first time Pontypriddians were able to see Matt Wells, the boxer who took the Lonsdale Belt from Freddy Welsh. Jim Driscoll, the World Featherweight Champion, also appeared. His adversary in a three round exhibition bouts over three nights was "Yank" Powell, of the Pontypridd AFC, who despite Driscoll's care, ran into a stiff left which resulted in him getting cut over the eye. Tom Cousins and Sid Raynish, both Pontypridd RFC players, took part in other contests. The Abercynon Gymnastic Team also gave a display.

The Southern League table Feb 9th 1912

	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
Portsmouth	17	11	3	3	43	11	25

Cardiff City	14	9	2	3	34	14	24
Pontypridd	15	9	4	2	24	15	20
Merthyr Town	12	9	2	1	27	8	19
Southend Utd.	13	9	4	1	43	7	18
Kettering	18	9	9	0	30	33	18
Treharris	15	6	5	4	23	22	16
Walsall	13	7	5	1	23	19	15
Ton Pentre	14	6	7	1	26	22	13
Aberdare	15	5	9	1	21	28	11
Cwm Albion	17	4	12	1	23	52	9
Croydon Com.	12	4	8	0	20	24	5
Mardy	10	2	6	2	10	22	6
Chesham Town	16	1	15	0	13	81	2

Keen struggle between Dragons and Merthyr

Dragons unlucky to Lose - Goal disallowed

There was a record crowd at Taff Vale Park on Feb. 12th 1912 for the visit of Merthyr and the ground presented quite an animated appearance. There must have been over 5,000 spectators present. It was seen that the terrace had never been so full. Usually there was plenty of room to move about in the aristocratic enclosure, but on this occasion the spectators were closely wedged together. Merthyr brought hundreds of supporters with them, who boldly displayed their colours and made their voices heard.

The weather was spring-like, the gay sun shining from a sky which was predominantly blue, and the ground was in fairly good condition, although it was on the heavy side. When the band took up its stand in the centre, everybody was on their tip-toe of expectation, and when the Merthyr team, smartly clad in green, red and white, tripped on to the field, every heart palpitated. Anon. the Dragons strode forth, and the welkin rang. We were in for a memorable afternoon.

After a quarter of an hour of sparkling football, Merthyr scored, and no-one was surprised. McKinley had just missed by inches at the other end a minute previously; then the visitors forwards quickly bore down on their opponents citadel, and Turner fell in stopping a warm handful from Draper. He failed to clear properly, and Dodds, dashing forward, banged the ball into the net from close quarters. The visitors continued to show greater cohesion in attack than the Dragons, and the early goal appeared to have a disorganising effect. Gradually the Dragons found their feet, and the forwards set up many hot attacks as the interval approached. They deserved to equalize, but luck was against them. Once, the Merthyr goal had a miraculous escape. During an exciting goalmouth struggle

Stallworthy found himself almost on the goal-line with the ball at his feet and with Lewis, the Merthyr goalkeeper out. Somehow or other the ball was "touched" sideways, and Craig kicked away. Everybody sighed and groaned with wonder how the Dickens it did not slip into the gaping goal.

As a matter of fact, the Pontypridd players appealed for a goal, and spectators who were in the grand stand said afterwards that the ball was over the line before Craig kicked it away. On another occasion Stallworthy got away and dribbling forward, wound up with a rousing high shot, which all but found the mark. There was yet another thrilling incident, when a home forward charged into the Merthyr goalie as he was trying to clear. The goalmouth was full of struggling footballers, and Lewis, in trying to evade one and then another, failed to bounce the ball and appeared to carry the ball too far before getting rid of it. The referee granted a free-kick, but nothing came of it.

The Dragons' admirers were confident they would "turn the tables" in the second-half, and, sure enough, they had so much the better of the play that it appeared that they would not only equalize, but win. So well sustained was the Dragons' attack, that the downfall of the Merthyr citadel seemed only a matter of time. The minutes slipped by. Twenty minutes of the second-half gone; twenty-five minutes - still no equalizer! Occasionally the Merthyr forwards were making lightening dashes to the other end, but Murray, was not to be beaten, and Turner, although he did not field the ball with his usual crispness, was splendid in the clearances. It really seemed as if all hope must be abandoned, when McCall took a free-kick from a favourable position. The ball crossed the goalmouth, and Walker, throwing himself forward, just missed it by an inch, when it would have been in the net. Did ever a team experience such cruel luck? If Merthyr played the more convincing football in the first-half, the Dragons dominated the game in the second-half, and deserved, at least, to draw. But they had the remorseless fates to fight against as well as Merthyr. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 MERTHYR 1.

The Dragons lose by a goal at Southend

The Dragons had gone in for a good deal of team changing of late. They were irresistible when the same forward-line operated week after week; but of late injuries and other causes compelled the directors to make changes, and the results had not been favourable. The forward line had not shewn that effective combination which enabled it to penetrate every defence up to a few weeks before, but during the late two Saturdays not a goal had been scored. It must be born in mind, however, that Merthyr and Southend possess the best defences in the league, as the number of goals scored against them shows. The only goal of the game at Southend on Feb. 17th 1912 was scored midway through the first-half,

Park putting in a shot which caught Turner unawares after he had left his charge. The visitors were seen to better advantage during the opening of the second-half. Then they pressed the "Seasiders" backs hard, but the most difficult shot the custodian had to keep out was a thirty yard drive from Shelley. Both defences were sound, but the Southend vanguard sadly lacked a leader. In the visitors ranks, no-one played better than Yank Powell, the left-half. The game became rough at periods, and the referee had several times to caution players. Play on the whole was disappointing for such an important fixture. Final score: - SOUTHEND 1 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Benefit Show

There was a crowded attendance at the New Town Hall, Pontypridd, on Tuesday night, Feb. 20th 1912, for the benefit kindly arranged by Mr. Wood, proprietor of the Royal Canadian Pictures. The opening item was a selection from "Maritana" by the Penrhiw and Maritime Band. Next came a first-class series of pictures, the first being a fine drama, "The New Superintendent". Next, a very amusing film, "The Smokers Dream." Another fine drama "A Woman's Revenge" was followed by a magnificent production "The Calcutta Pageant," with gorgeous scenes of pleasure. "The State Opening Of Parliament" proved to be a very fine film, and an exceptionally good film followed entitled "The Cowboy Pugilist," showing a very fine exhibition of boxing. A very amusing and clever comic "Wily's Camel" completed the pictures.

The variety part of the programme was opened with a illustrated song, "Anchored", by Mr. Bob Roberts, a local singer. Next came Mr. George Rostron, the secretary of the supporters' club, with funny song and patter, interspersed with remarks from the left-hand box, in which were seated some of the AFC directors. Next item, was Mr. Jack Granfield, with a catchy parody on "Asleep in the Deep," which was applauded, and as an encore he gave us "London Stars". After more various acts Mr. Frank Thomas, a director of the Dragons AFC; made a short speech expressing his desire to thank Mr. Wood, the proprietor of the Canadian Pictures, for promoting the benefit on behalf of the AFC. He remarked that the fine house was a criterion of the interest taken in the club, and he was very pleased to say that said club was progressing by leaps and bounds - (loud applause) - and before long he hoped they would be at the top of the tree. (applause). He again referred to Mr. Wood as a thoroughly sportsmanlike by placing the hall at their disposal. Mr. Kinsman, secretary AFC, then spoke very enthusiastically on the AFC; and said that it was their intention to bring the Welsh Cup to Pontypridd. After a great deal of controversy, he said that it was quite possible that the semi-final would be played at Pontypridd. (loud applause). He remarked that the supporters must not be surprised if on Easter Monday they brought the Welsh Cup

to Pontypridd for the first time. (loud applause). He seconded the vote of thanks to Mr. Wood for his generosity.

Mr. Mason, picture manager, on behalf of Mr. Wood said he was more than pleased with the splendid house they had this evening. The programme then continued. Dai Morgan, the Welsh club Tragedian, giving his famous sermon "Mother Hubbard", which created roars of laughter. Jack Harries, whistler and mimic followed next item, "Baby" Watkins, a clever child artiste, who sang "yeddee-on-your-fiddle," Madam Williams-Penn rendered "Dear Heart". Then came Mr. Tom Jenkins, local comedian, who was a fine turn, and who gained an encore song and received a tremendous ovation. Next came Mr. Alf Bryant on the piano in a selection of "Welsh Airs", followed by Mr. Dai Thomas with a song and dance. "God save the King" ended a fine night's amusement.

Dragons fail to beat Mardy

The Southern League match between Pontypridd and Mardy at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Feb. 24th 1912 was played under favourable conditions, and before a fairly good crowd but ended as a goal-less draw. The homesters had the best of the following play, Mardy only being dangerous by occasional breakaways which were checked without troubling Turner. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 MARDY 0. Pontypridd had an easy task on Monday, Feb. 26th 1912 when they traveled to Tredegar for a Glamorgan League match, and which they won by seven goals to nil.

Second draw with Mardy

The Dragons journeyed to Mardy on Monday March 4th 1912 for a Southern League match. Mardy had been showing good form of late on their own ground - didn't they whack Kettering by 13-0? And Pontypridd did well to effect a draw 3-3. Rain fell freely and the ground was very heavy, but the game, which was witnessed by a large crowd, was interesting until the end. Ten minutes after the start Mardy was awarded a penalty, and Coates opened the scoring. This early success roused the visitors, who attacked vigorously but they were unable to overcome the defence, Cottle's offside tactics being carried too far. Corners fell on both sides, but still the defences prevailed. A miskick by Jones gave Walker an opening, but he fell. Then Potter accepted a neat pass from Coates, and centring accurately, Osborne put on Mardy's second goal. Thomas then cleared a free kick by Mardy. Shortly before half-time Walker dribbled close and beat Thomas from a scramble.

The match continued to be fought out energetically in the second half. The Dragons strove hard to equalize, but Mardy were again the first to score, Summers putting on their third goal after fifteen minutes play. It was now thought that

Mardy, with a 3-1 lead would run out winners, but the Dragons recovered in great style and displayed characteristic vim, and they obtained two goals before the end, and thus succeeded in securing a point. Walker put on the second goal and McKinley the third. It was a smart performance under the circumstances. Final score: - MARDY 3 PONTYPRIDD 3.

The Dragons at Cardiff

A creditable draw

The Dragons and Cardiff had played twice in the Southern League, and the Dragons had now secured three points out of a possible four, and yet the Cardiff scribes would have it that the city are the better team! Cardiff did not relish the licking that they got from the youngest team in the league at Taff Vale Park the previous September, and were out for revenge at Ninian Park on March 16th 1912. But they failed! The Dragons proved more than a match for them, and considering all the circumstances, it was a very creditable performance on their part to come away with a point.

In spite of the weather and the strike the Dragons were accompanied to the Welsh Metropolis by hundreds of enthusiastic supporters. A special excursion was run to Grangetown Station, which is near the ground, the engine being decorated with flags, with a Dragon rampant in the foreground. The sight of it put the excursionists in a militant mood. These lively Pontypriddians made things hum before the kick-off by singing their war song, and the teams' mascot, the white Pomeranian added to the fun by welcoming the Dragons as they tripped onto the field, in the truly canine fashion. There were about 8,000 spectators.

The Dragons, who lost the toss, went away with a bang, and McKinley finished weakly when he had a good opportunity. Play proceeded at a fast pace, each side attacking in turn. Things looked promising for Pontypridd when McDonald got possession and raced away with a free course, but he failed to keep the ball in play. Turner dealt with an awkward shot from Hardy smartly, and then the Dragons threatened danger again. McDonald outwitted Waters, and going close, sent in a swift high shot which Husband saved by jumping up promptly. Evans forced a corner for the city, and after a goalmouth struggle Turner cleared.

Play became very keen, and the referee had to admonish several players before half-time. Nothing untoward happened, however, and the game continued to be well contested. Clever work by McDonald after the resumption enabled the Dragons to get away, but Cardiff drove their troublesome opponents back, and Powell and Shelley did some fine spoiling work. The struggle continued in ding-dong fashion - now one goal being visited, then the other. Christie was once going

through when Duffy held him, and the Pontypriddian promptly appealed for a penalty, but the referee was deaf to his entreaty. Cardiff set up a very hot attack at one stage, and once Turner saved a lightening shot from Evans in a very skilful manner. The Dragons quickly retaliated, and the Cardiff citadel almost fell when Shelley skimmed the bar with a shot that Husbands would not have saved had it been lower. The Dragons strove desperately for the winning goal towards the end, and Cardiff got a fright when the vigorous Dragons forced two corners, but try as they would they could not score, and so the game ended in a 0-0 draw. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The match arranged between Pontypridd and Llanelly for the following Monday had to be abandoned, Llanelly being unable to make the journey owing to the inconvenient train service consequent upon the strike. Pontypridd arrived just 10 minutes before the arranged kick-off on their visit to Croydon on March 20th 1912, but were disappointed to find the field under a foot of water. Pontypridd, after a period of ill-luck through injuries to players, were going strong once more and on the Saturday, March 23rd 1912, beat Merthyr at Taff Vale Park in a Glamorgan League match by 4-2.

Dragons great Welsh Cup victory

Dramatic transformation - Huge crowd at Taff Vale Park

Pontypridd and Cardiff to meet for the Welsh Cup at Ninian Park on Easter Monday! That is the momentous fact that sent every follower of soccer in Pontypridd and district into wild hysterics of delight. The mighty Dragons met Ton Pentre in the Semi-final at Taff Vale Park on Thursday, March 28th 1912, and gained a most remarkable victory - remarkable because of the sudden and dramatic transformation that the game underwent in the last quarter of an hour. Up to fifteen minutes of the end the Rhondderites were leading by 1-0, and the Pontypridd forwards had so far shewn such indifferent form that their supporters were despairing of their even equalising. Then, in the twinkling the wily Dragons made a terrific rally that made every heart throb with excitement, and, scoring three goals in ten minutes, ran out winners by 3-1.

There had never been such a crowd at Taff Vale Park before. It must have numbered over 8,000 and the scene just before the kick-off must have buoyed up the hearts of the Pontypridd directors. The mascots duly made their appearance - Ton's Bulldog and Ponty's white Pomeranian - and so did two bands, which in turn sent martial strains quivering into space. On every branch of the trees skirting the riverside daring men and boys had perched themselves and hundreds had squatted themselves on the slopes of the embankment on the other side of the river, from whence they obtained a good view of the game without paying! All of a sudden

the Dragons lilting war-song burst from fifty lusty throats from the Cardiff end of the ground and anon. Out came the Dragons. They had a rousing reception, so had Ton Pentre, who followed them, for they had brought with them hundreds of lusty-lunged supporters.

The visitors won the toss and had the advantage of a strong breeze in the first half. The pace was a "cracker" from the outset, but while both sets of forwards continued making rapid tracks towards goal, the defence on both sides was so strong that during the first-half neither goalkeeper was given anything in the nature of a difficult shot to deal with. Although the ball always came to the two custodians in a comparatively easy fashion, they were given plenty of work and their clearances were always clean and prompt, Turner being the most skillful executant. The backs played finely.

A quarter of an hour before half-time Ton scored. The forwards were attacking in force when a home defender handled inside the "dreaded" area, and the referee had no hesitation in awarding a penalty. J. Williams was entrusted with the kick, and with a swift low shot he beat Turner, who, however, all but saved it. He stopped the ball, but there was such force behind it that rolled just over the line. A great piece of cheering from the thousand (or more) lusty Rhondda throats greeted the performance. The fat was in the fire now, and roars of cheering signaled every aggressive movement on the part of the visitors, while the home supporters were sunk in the depth of doom and felt relieved when the whistle sounded for half-time. Those who knew the Dragons were quietly confident that, with the breeze in the second half, and a superior stamina, they would pull the match out of the fire.

The tension amongst the Dragon supporters when the second half was entered upon can be better imagined than described. They now attacked more frequently than Ton, but the defenders tackling was so quick and resolute that they were never provided with a real opening. They were now showing the combination which their supporters all knew they were capable of, but there was a lack of vim about the movements of the inside men, especially McKinley and Walker. Twenty minutes went by and still no goal! Anxiety shadowed the faces of the home supporters, and when only quarter of an hour remained for play, a good number of them were sunk in the depths of gloom, for the Rhondda defenders were now striving like Trojans to keep them at bay. These men thought they had victory within their grasp and they were going to make heroic efforts to achieve it.

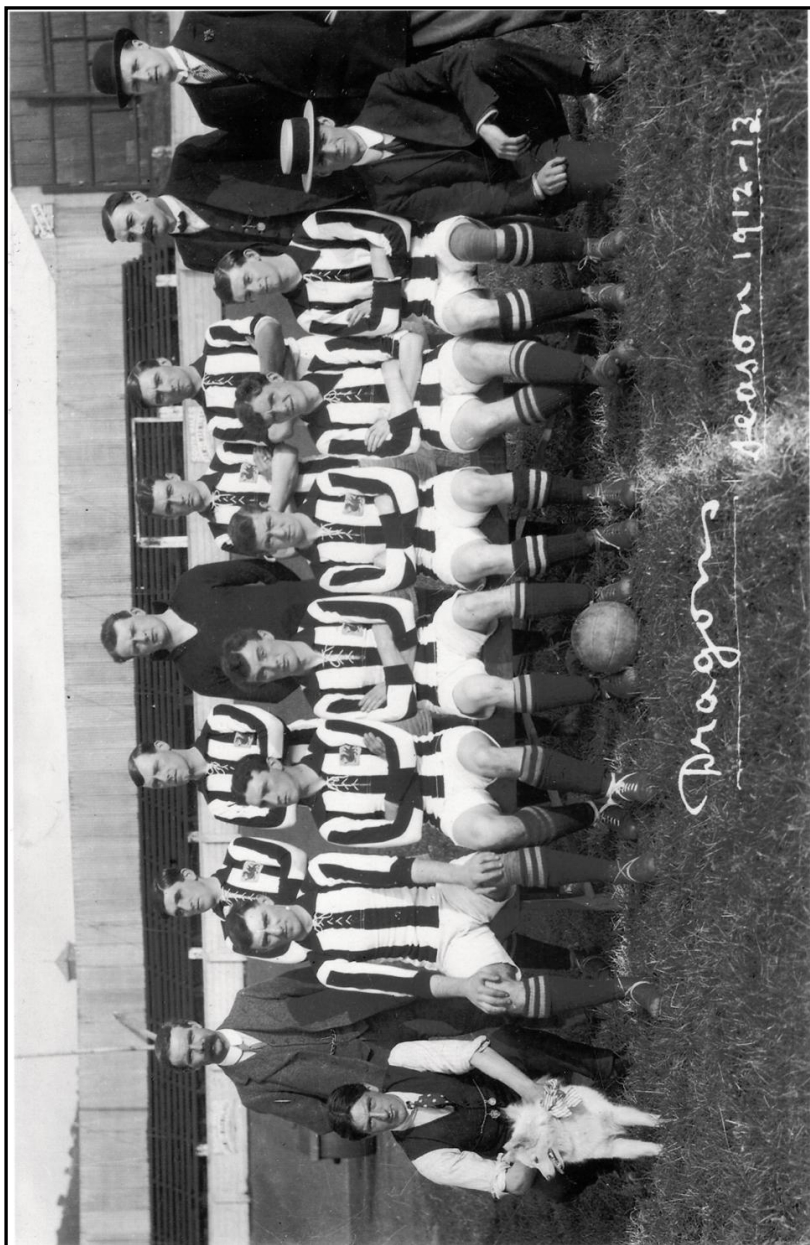
When the Dragons supporters were thus beginning to bemoan the defeat of their pets, something happened, and like the sudden crack of a musket on the night air, or the crash of thunder at midday, it rose them from sleep into life. This

something was - a goal from the Dragons! The home forwards advanced on the left, McCall swerved inwards, and when he was about to shoot from close quarters, Percival rushed out, and McCall banged the ball into the net. Instantly the air was rent with vehement cheering. Every Pontypriddian present shouted, hurrahed and laughed in their joy. But it was only an equalizer, and the scene was nothing compared with the tornado of vocal delight that followed a few minutes afterwards when the Dragons took the lead.

The Dragon forwards swept down the field towards Percival again; McCall swerved inwards, and slipped between the backs. The ball was rolling towards Percival when he dashed out and kicked it with extra vigour. It banged against McCall's body - and rebounded into the net. What a scene followed! Young men danced with joy, women squeezed other women with delight, hats and caps were thrown in the air, sticks and umbrella's clattered against woodwork, and 6,000 voices (or thereabouts) sent a hurricane of enthusiastic shouts to the uttermost ends of the earth. In the distance a youth was seen to fall from a tree in his excitement, and a sedate Rhondda curate bit his lips in disappointment.

The end was not yet. It never rains but it pours. There were five or six minutes remaining, and the Dragons thought they might just as well continue to entertain the multitude. Once more they swooped down on poor Percival with their eyes aflame with fury, and the cheering from goal number two had not died away when they got a third - three in ten minutes. The welkin rang again. The air became electrical with thrills. The Pontypriddians had never experienced such a glorious ten minutes. In the words of the poet "To be alive was very Heaven". The strike was forgotten; nothing to them was industrial chaos; all was well with the world, for the Dragons had qualified for the final of the Welsh Cup! There was no holding the Dragons after the second goal, Barlow got in a nice centre, and in a twinkling Walker had the ball in the net; and thus the Dragons were wound up by winning in a most dramatic fashion. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 TON PENTRE 1. The gate receipts amounted to £220-17s-9d; 7,300 people paying for admission.

Now for the cup final against Cardiff on Monday. The Dragons would take with them thousands of supporters who ought to be overjoyed to think that a club that only came into existence at the beginning of the season should have got into the final of the Welsh Cup. They had knocked-out in turn: Barry District, Aberdare, Mardy, Connah's Quay, Llandudno and Ton Pentre. Would they knock out Cardiff? They had beaten the Welsh Metropolitans in September in the Southern League, and effected a draw at Ninian Park three weeks ago, so they had the best of the argument so far. Cardiff achieved a fine feat in defeating Wrexham at Wrexham after Merthyr had failed, but they would have to go all the way to get the best of the mighty Dragons from Pontypridd.



**Pontypridd A.F.C. (The Dragons) Season 1912- 13
pictured at Taff Vale Park.**

Dragons draw at Ton Pentre

Pontypridd met Ton Pentre again two days later, on Saturday March 30th, when a Southern League match was played at Ynys Park. Both teams were quite fit in spite of Thursday's grueling cup-tie, and a keen contest was witnessed, the result being a 2-2 draw. The ground was in good condition and there was a large crowd. The Ton team was eager to have their revenge for Thursday's defeat, and showed great determination at the start. After twenty minutes play Murray fouled Roberts in the "forbidden" area, and J. Williams taking the penalty kick, scored. The Dragons woke up after this and before the interval Walker equalized.

In the second half the game continued to be fought out in spirited fashion, and there were plenty of exciting incidents. When McKinley obtained the lead for the visitors the Ton supporters looked very glum, but Ton strove strenuously for the equalizer that arrived eventually from the foot of Chetwood. Final score:- TON PENTRE 2 PONTYPRIDD 2.

THE WELSH CUP FINAL

Strenuous game between Cardiff City and Pontypridd

The outstanding event locally on Easter Monday, April 5th 1912 was the Welsh Cup Final between Pontypridd and Cardiff City at Ninian Park. It is seldom that has soccer match has excited such widespread interest in these towns previously, and there were no less than 18,000 spectators present. The huge stand extending almost the entire length of the ground was packed to its utmost capacity and the new uncovered stands at the end and on the cheap side were crowded out. The previous record gate for the final was when Connah's Quay and Chester opposed each other, but this gate beat that easily, the gate receipts amounting to £500. This constituted a record for a Welsh cup final, the previous best being at Wrexham, when £430 was taken. The Dragons, of course, got a share of the spoils. The two teams:

Pontypridd: Goalkeeper, Turner; backs, Dalton & Murray; halfbacks, Beren, Shelley and Powell; forwards, Barlow, Christie, Walker, McKinley, and McCall.

Cardiff City: Goalkeeper:, Husbands; backs, Douglas & Hardy; halfbacks, Abley, Laurie and Thomson; forwards, Tracy, Pinch, G. Burton, J. Burton & Evans. Referee: Mr. O. Postle, Ruabon.

History was made this season in this competition, as for the first time since its inception in 1878 the final was contested without one of the teams hailing from North Wales. The match was unique also in that it was the first of its kind to be

arranged to take place in south Wales. Although the final had been played at other towns, the cup rules stipulated for many years that the Wrexham should be the venue. In the past few seasons these rules had been modified by the action of the southern clubs in compelling recognition of the rapid increase in popularity of the code in the lower half of the Principality.

Pontypridd had fought hard to secure the right of entry to the final, and they had played an unusually large number of games. It took them three matches for them to overcome Barry District in one of the preliminary rounds, and a replay was necessary to defeat Aberdare, but they had since beaten at the first time of asking Cardiff Corinthians, Mardy, Connah's Quay - by the huge score of eight goals - and Llandudno - away from home by a couple of goals. In the semi-final they brought off a remarkable victory over Ton Pentre, after the Rhonddaitees had practically got the game in hand.

Cardiff City had played but four matches, but in each they had been opposed by sturdy sides. Exempted until the third round, they had since beaten Treharris by a single goal at Ninian Park, and covered Wrexham's colours on the latter club's ground - a memorable match on a hard-frozen pitch. The semi-final, which was played at Ninian Park against Chester, resulted in the score being equal, but the replay, on Wrexham Racecourse, left the city winners.

Both teams were given a rousing reception on fielding, and it was clear that many thousand's had accompanied the Dragons from Pontypridd. It was expected that play would be effected by the high wind which was blowing at the time at gale strength, and there was also a dazzling sun to further interfere with the players judgement. Pontypridd looked exceedingly fit, as well they might have having undergone a special course of training at Porthcawl for this match.

The game described

The great feature of the match was the saving of a penalty by Turner, the Dragon's clever goalkeeper. But for this feat Cardiff would have won by a goal to nil. It is so seldom that a goalkeeper saves a penalty that this achievement on the part of Turner is deserving of special mention. The game had not been in progress long when Christie handled in the explosive-laden area, and the referee promptly ordered a penalty. Tracey was entrusted with the kick. So strong was the wind that some difficulty was experienced in getting the ball to remain stationary on the spot. Tracey banged in a hard shot, but so nicely did Turner anticipate its direction that he managed to turn it around the post. Turner jumped for joy and his colleagues warmly congratulated him, whilst the cheers of the Dragons supporters lasted long after play resumed. Bravo, Turner!

Laurie, who at once decided to play with the wind, beat Christie, the Dragons captain, in the spin of the coin. It was immediately seen that the players would be greatly bothered by the wind, which played strange antics with the ball. In spite of this unfavourable circumstance the teams gave an interesting exhibition. Powell quickly dispossessed Pitch and passed to McKinley, but when the ball went to Barlow the right-winger failed to keep it in play. Cardiff attacked, but Murray and Dalton were as safe as a rock and drove them back. A swift movement on the part of the Dragon's forwards threatened danger, Walker having a good chance of getting through the defence, but when he was checked by Laurie, who fouled him, a free-kick resulted.

Turner was next conspicuous for a characteristic clearance, and soon after the penalty already referred to was taken. The game continued to be strenuously fought, the valiant Dragons more than holding their own in spite of the gusty wind that blew in their faces. The football was very good despite the adverse conditions, and the spectators had more than their moneys worth. Clever work by Evans, the Cardiff left-winger, who was freely fed, ended in Cardiff assuming the aggressive, but once more Murray and Dalton proved too resourceful for the Cardiff forwards. Eventually Shelley got possession and sent Barlow on the move, but Tracey got in his way and the Dragon's right winger responded by fouling him. Turner then had to fist away the ball in the goalmouth.

A moment later Shelley and Christie were seen arguing with the referee, who had awarded Cardiff a free-kick, but he waved them aside, but Pontypridd got out of difficulties when Thomas's kick was charged down. Then the Dragons had a free kick for a foul on Walker. A clever tackle by Thomas next stopped Christie from putting in a pass to Barlow. Pontypridd made a brief incursion into Cardiff's goal area, and although the home backs badly misjudged their kicking at that moment, relief was eventually gained and the venue changed.

Then McCall was given possession by Shelley and worked his way towards mid-field, closely followed by Abley, who naturally expected to pay attention to the opposing wing. McCall suffered from a foul tackle, and for a few minutes the game was stopped so that the wing might receive attention. A free-kick for Pontypridd led up to Walker trying to make headway, but they were repulsed by Douglas; and Jack Evans afterwards tried his best to stop a fast pass from going over the line near the corner-flag. Dalton held him well, and what might have been a good chance for Cardiff was not utilised. With play in the Pontypridd half the unusual sight was witnessed of five men in quick succession missing their kicks owing to the tricks of rude boreas. Half-time arrived with no score.

The Dragons and their supporters, who numbered thousands, were in high glee at

half-time, for knowing that they would have the wind in the second half they were expecting to win. Pontypridd, who had undergone special training at Porthcawl, had already proved that they were very fit by the way that they had battled against doughty opponents and the buffeting wind in the first half. The Dragons, after a rest, tripped quickly onto the ground with a confident air, whilst the Cardiff players walked slowly out with downcast looks. The excitement was now intense, and it was felt that the first goal would settle it. Hands against Laurie allowed the Dragons to make headway. Their forwards brought of a swift burst, Walker and Christie baffling Thomson, but Hardy cleared. The lively Dragons, however, returned to the attack, and showed fine judgment in keeping the ball low.

McCall had a fine opportunity after a kick by Douglas had been charged down, but he sent forward too strongly, and the goal kick gave Cardiff the chance to clear. Burton cleverly tricked Shelley and cut across to Evans before he put in a pass; but Beren shadowed the winger and danger was averted. However, Abley gave a chance to Pinch, and the latter trickily eluded Yank Powell and passed to Tracey. A centre was put in and there was a chance for inside-forwards to follow-up, but Turner covered them, and only a goal kick resulted. In attempting to head the ball Burton caused it to go back to Hardy, but the wind carried it beyond the reach of the home left back. Had Barlow made use of his opportunities, he would have done some good to his side at that moment, but luckily for city touch was found and the ensuing play in the Cardiff half brought an attack by Pontypridd to a close when Christie tried a long-shot which Husbands easily dealt with. The Dragons again swept down in determined fashion on the city's goal and two hook shots were put in quick succession by McKinley. Husbands saved the first and the second went right over the bar.

Pontypridd were adopting different tactics to that characterized the city play in the second half, and they tried to shoot from all angles. On the other hand, Cardiff were disappointing in not keeping the ball low against the wind, and their prospects of making headway were weakened thereby. A pretty dribble by Burton, however, gave the city a fine chance, but after he had made headway his transfer to Tracey was handled by Murray, and although Tracey and Pitch had centred to Burton, who, in turn, was confronted with an open goal, the referee, yielded to the appeals of the linesman, who claimed a free-kick to Cardiff for a Pontypridd infringement.

The Pontypridd forwards did not forget to shoot at every opportunity with the wind behind them, but Husbands was very safe in goal and they failed to beat him. The Dragons would have probably, however, put on two or three goals in the second half had it not been for the stirring display of Hardy, a little back who is "great" in every sense of the word. As a pair, however, Murray and Dalton were

more skilful in their methods than the two Cardiff backs. The Pontypridd halves - Powell, Shelley and Beren - gave satisfaction, and all the forwards worked hard. Abley, the Cardiff half, did not please the referee with some of his tricks. It was a typical cup-tie, bristling with exciting incidents, and the spectators were glad that they had come out. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The '*Free Press*' commented: - "And now for the replay at Aberdare next Thursday: Kick-off at 4.30 p.m. Who will win? I fancy the Dragons will just manage to 'bring it off'. They have proved themselves dashing cup fighters. In as much that the Cardiffians were playing on their own ground on Monday and failed to win, they can't hope to do better at Aberdare. Ergo, the Welsh Cup is going to be brought to Pontypridd!"

This small item appeared in the gossip column of the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' of April 12th 1912: -- "Big crowds of supporters walked all the way from Pontypridd to Cardiff to witness the Welsh Cup Final. On the return journey a small party of about 200 called at a Whitchurch shop and bought eight loaves of bread and 3lbs of cheese, washing this down with the pure mountain dew. There were no fragments to be gathered up. At the match the wind blew so strongly that it was necessary on several occasions for Murray, the fullback, to place a finger on the ball to hold it in position for Turner, the goalie, to kick out. A correspondence wants to know if this was "hands" in the penalty area, too! The cup that is of course coming to Pontypridd, was carried around the field at half-time, bedecked by the colours of both teams who were engaged in fighting to win it. It was greatly admired by the partisans of both sides, with both perhaps a tinge of 'green eyed monster' asserting itself here and there."

For a Glamorgan league match at Mardy on April 11th 1912, Pontypridd fielded the complete reserve team, the first eleven having returned to Porthcawl directly after Monday's Cup Final draw to prepare for the replay at Aberdare. The visitors were no match for Mardy and at the interval were losing 6-0. Final score: - MARDY 7 PONTYPRIDD 2.

THE WELSH CUP FINAL REPLAY

Victory for Cardiff 3-0 over Pontypridd

What really happened at Aberdare

Pontypridd lost the cup final replay with Cardiff 3-0 at Aberdare on Thursday April 18th 1912, before a crowd of 6,648. '*Arthurain*,' reporting in the '*South Wales Daily News*' the following day wrote: -

"At Aberdare yesterday, in the replay final tie for the Welsh Cup, Cardiff gained a

signal victory over Pontypridd. To win by three goals to nil is sufficient in itself to suggest superiority, but when it is mentioned that there was not a semblance of a fluke attached to any one of the scores, and that extremely hard lines were experienced on several occasions, Cardiff's right to the honour will be appreciated. There was tremendous enthusiasm on the 'darian's pitch, and the gate realised a little over £225. There was some wind blowing, and again a dazzling sun was calculated to interfere with the players judgement. The two teams were:

Pontypridd: goalkeeper, Turner; backs Dalton & Murray; half-backs, Beren, Shelley & Powell; forwards, McDonald, McKinley, Walker, Christie & McCall.

Cardiff City: Goalkeeper, Husbands; backs, Lathom & Waters; half-backs, Abley, Thompson & Hardy; forwards, Tracey, G. Burton, Featherstone, J. Burton & Acrefair.

It was Cardiff's good fortune that Arthur Waters, their caution, gained the choice of ends, and Pontypridd were set to face the wind and sun. Christie was dispossessed before the centre-circle could be got through, and there was no hesitancy with the city forwards in breakaway away and soon a brief tussle with Beren ended in a corner for Evans, and from his centre kick Tracey got hold and drove the ball at goal, which went only inches over the bar.

Cardiff were the more ready to find their stride, and again the Dragons were placed on the defensive. Dalton eased the pressure and a momentary lapse by Abley, who allowed McCall a little too much freedom, gave Powell a chance to set the Dragon's left-wing going, and smart passing transferred the venue to the city half. Lathom and Waters were given some work to stop Husbands being tested, though he had to run out to clear from a long pass by Shelley. Cardiff then forged ahead and some well-judged cross-passing ended in G. Burton driving at full pace to the corner of the net, but Turner jumped, and saved cleverly.

The game was increasing in pace, and if Cardiff were showing the greater cleverness, Pontypridd sought to counteract it by determination and bustling tactics. Three times in quick succession were the Dragons penalised for fouling. Quick changes from end to end followed sound tackling by the backs of both sides and lengthy kicking. Cardiff's front line were moving along quite up to their usual form, but they met powerful defenders in Dalton and Murray. Their sharp passing more than once, however, enabled them to get within shooting distance, and then it was that Turner proved his metal. He cleared away from a well-placed corner, and Powell once stepped back and prevented Featherstone shooting from a good position. A breakaway by Christie looked dangerous for a time, but he was overhauled, though he had cut in slickly between the Cardiff backs. Before the

interval the persistent attack work of the city paid off and from that moment when Featherstone, after clever play, beat Turner, Cardiff never looked back.

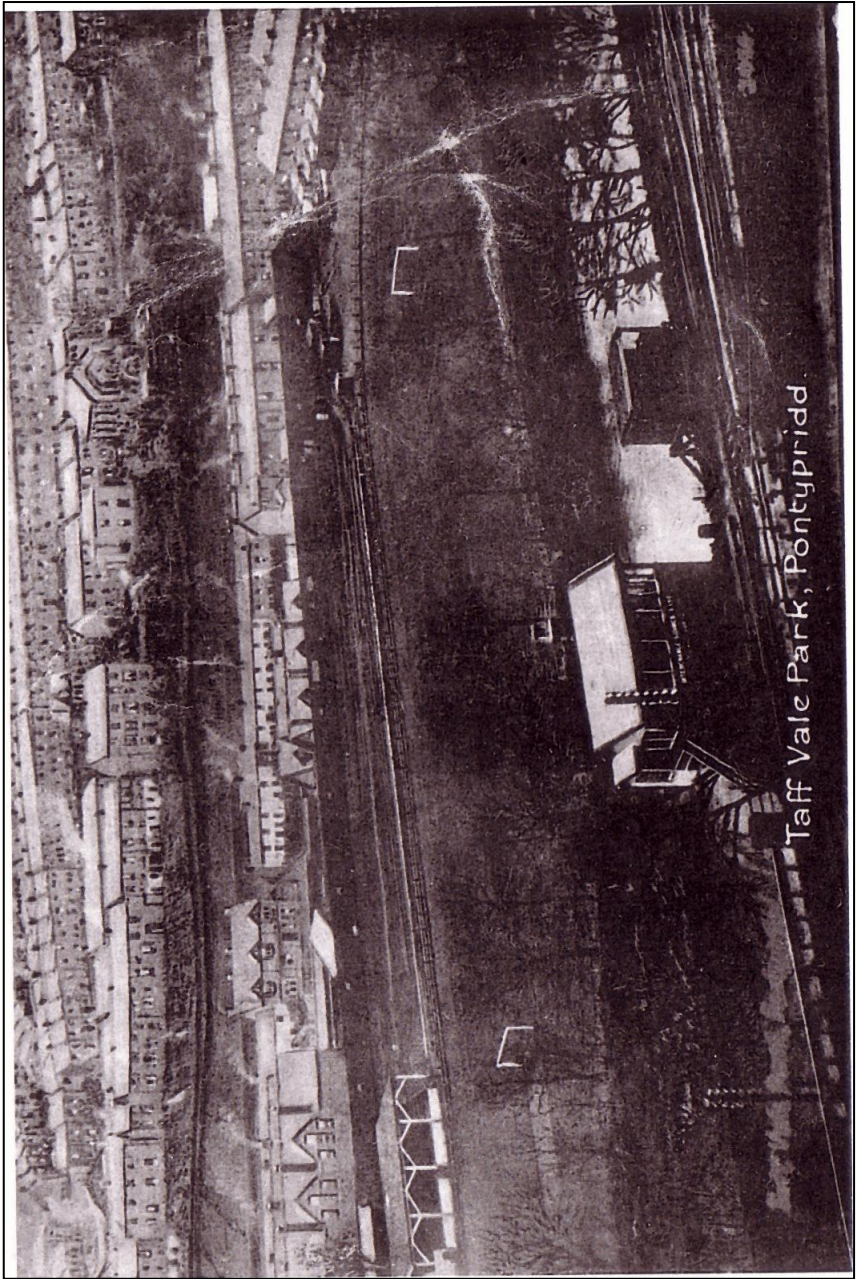
In the second half the Dragons realised that they were a beaten team, and they further weakened their chance of drawing on level terms through too great a desire to play the "man" and not the ball. Following a good effort from the Dragons with McDonald and McKinley most prominent, Husbands cleared and Harding set Evans going. A run along the line and sharp pass to G. Burton was the prelude to the latter forcing his way through with one of his characteristic dribbles. He took the ball well up to the goal-line and screwed it back towards the centre. Tracey came in, and to trap the ball and shoot was the work of a moment, Turner not being given a possible chance to stop the score.

Another sharp attack should have given Cardiff a penalty, but after consulting with the linesman the referee altered his decision. Pontypridd were lucky to escape in this way as Shelley actually saved the situation just previously through handling. The Dragons occasionally brought some pretty movements, but while a few of their number were playing well the others neutralised all advantages gained, and they were accepting defeat with bad grace. The referee was extremely lenient, and although he awarded more than a dozen free-kicks to Cardiff in the second half it was thought that he could have been justified in acting with more severity. The last goal of the game was gained when Thomson placed the ball across and Tracey netted.

PLAYER CAUTIONED

McCall once had a good chance of getting through, but he was followed and robbed of the ball. There was a kick, but beyond a warning and a free-kick to Cardiff, no further action was taken, Later in the game Beren was cautioned by the referee and a keen, vigorous cup-tie, with Cardiff ever showing superiority, ended in the city being the first south Wales club (Excepting Aberystwyth) to become holders of the Welsh Cup. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 3 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Pontypridd's best men were at fullback, but their forwards were weak. Cardiff had no failures, but if their backs had been equal to their half-backs and front line they would have routed the Dragons. At the conclusion of the match the cup was presented to Arthur Waters, the city captain, by Mr. E. J. Morgan, chairman of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Association."



Taff Vale Park in its prime

THE PONTYPRIDD VIEW

"Old Soccerite" in the "*Free Press*" had several complaints about how the game was reported by the Cardiff newspapers, etc.; and gave this report: -

"I am going to tell you a true and unvarnished account of the great Welsh Cup-tie between Pontypridd and Cardiff, which was played at Aberdare on Thursday evening, April 18th. The Cardiff scribes, who appear to labour under the impression that their team is the greatest in the world, left out many vital facts. Let me give you them, to go on with. The game started at 5 o'clock, and the Cardiff Captain, winning the toss, set the Dragons to play against a blazing sun, which flared on the players from a sky of speckless blue. By the time the second-half was entered upon the blazing sun had disappeared, as far as the field of play was concerned, so that Cardiff did not have to face it.

But not a word of this important fact was given in the Cardiff papers, whose readers were left to infer that the conditions were the same for both teams. Then, the referee favoured Cardiff all through. He continually penalized the Pontypridd players for what were nothing but pure accidents, and this was had a deleterious effect morally on the players. Then again, Cardiff's first goal was a "gift" goal, but according to the Cardiff papers all three goals were the production of dazzling genius. Let me explain how the first score was obtained. This was how the *Western Mail* described it: "The ball finally reached the left-wing. It was then sent to Featherstone, who, drawing Turner out, ran the ball into the net."

The '*Daily News*' was vaguer, stating: 'From the moment when Featherstone, after clever play, beat Turner, Cardiff never looked back.' Now, what really happened? When the ball was taken down on the left, Yank Powell slipped back into the goalmouth to cover Turner. The ball came to Featherstone, who, with Burton in close attendance, played it slowly towards Turner. Turner came out to meet it, and if Yank Powell had left it to him he would have easily have picked it up and cleared. But Yank kicked tamely at it, and only half getting hold of it, it rolled to the foot of Featherstone, three yards away, and he banged it into the net with Turner two yards out. If Yank had got in a proper kick, or left the ball to Turner, the situation would have been saved.

Thus you will see, that the first goal was, as I have said, a gift goal, and let it be born in mind that the team that scores first in a cup-tie always secures a great advantage. A goal emboldens them in the same proportion that it depresses the other side. In spite of having the sun and stiff breeze and the slope in their favour, Cardiff could only secure this gift goal before half-time, and the general opinion was that the Dragons, who had shown good form so far, would be able to snatch a

victory in the second-half, for are they not distinguished for their stamina? But something happened immediately after the interval, which upset all calculations. The Cardiff left wing went away with a bang. The ball was swung wide to the right, and Tracey, tearing up at fine pace, turned with a swift shot, which gave Turner no earthly chance. What with being two goals to the bad when they did not deserve to be, and having to endure adverse decision after decision on the part of the referee, the Dragons appeared to lose heart, and their play deteriorated to such an extent that there was never any doubt as to the result. Tracey scored the third goal in fifteen minutes.

Taking the game as a whole, Cardiff deserved their victory but luck was on their side. Their play improved in the second half in the same ratio that the play of the losers degenerated. The Cardiff forwards display fine dash in making tracks for goal, whereas the Pontypridd quintet, with the exception of McCall, lacked vim, and the inside men failed to trouble the goalkeeper, Husbands, with any effect shots. The Ponty men played as if the luck was against them. In the first half the whole team had played excellently. Their footwork was more sure and accurate than that of Cardiff, and there was more strategy about the movement of the halves and backs, and they certainly ought to have scored. Before Cardiff had obtained their first goal there was a thrilling incident which sent the hearts of the Dragon supporters palpitating with excitement. A Cardiff defender missed his kick in midfield, and Christie, slipping between the two backs and running his fastest, with only Husbands to beat when he let go. Alas! he sent the ball wide, and what a relief for Cardiff!

On many occasions in the first-half, too, the ball was sent right across the Cardiff goalmouth with no inside-forward up, and Husbands was given a lot of work to do in fisting out corners kicks and clearing form goalmouth struggles. Just before half-time he was slightly injured in one of these melees, but he quickly recovered. Turner, however, had a much more difficult task than Husbands all through, and the clever Pontypridd custodian brought off some superb saves. In the first half a swift surprise shot from Burton was turned round the post in lightening style, and his fisting out, clearing, and fielding were always executed with ease and confidence. Turner is truly a first class goalkeeper. He could not have possibly saved one of the three goals obtained by Cardiff; no could any other goalkeeper.

It was a pity McDonald was playing outside right instead of Barlow, who had to be content being a spectator, for 'Mac,' usually such an elusive winger, was a failure. There was some prettily executed passing movements between him and McKinley in the first half, but he lacked thrustfulness, and in the second half he missed two good chances of scoring.

Once he had the ball all to himself on the right several yards from goal, but instead of shooting straight away he lifted the ball in front of the two Cardiff backs, who easily cleared. On another occasion he got possession in a similar position, but a little further out. Instead of shooting promptly he dilly-dallied and a Cardiff back dashed across and robbed him. McKinley, his partner, dribbled in delightful style at times, but finished weakly too frequently. He is a stylish player is McKinley and good to watch.

McCall was easily the best of the Pontypridd forwards. He beat the defence time after time in his own cool, facile style, and he seldom failed to wind up with serviceable centres. As an instance of the prejudice shown by the Cardiff scribes let me give a sentence from the '*Western Mail*': - "A disagreeable incident occurred in which McCall was prominent. He was stopped by Abley, and obviously did not like it." Stopped by Abley, indeed!

The reader is left to infer that McCall was stopped legitimately. The fact of the matter is Abley deliberately tripped McCall after the latter had parted with the ball, and sent him sprawling on a hard ground. McCall jumped to his feet and remonstrated with the Cardiff man, and Walker came running up and joined in the 'row.' The referee soon managed to pour oil on the troubled waters. Who was the originator of the scene? The Cardiff paper said all sorts of unkind things about the Dragons on Friday, but when a Cardiffian indulged in fouling - not a word of criticism. The '*South Wales Daily News*' dealt with the same incident thus: "McCall once had a good chance to go through, but he was followed and robbed of the ball. There was a kick, but beyond a warning and a free to Cardiff, no further action was taken." There's a charmingly evasive paragraph! Not a word of about the violent foul on McCall, which caused all the hubbub!

Christie and Walker tried hard until Cardiff secured a two-goal lead; and after that they and their colleagues made the mistake of fighting half-heartedly. Did they forget that three goals were put on against Ton Pentre in the semi-final in the last quarter of an hour? Some folks will say, "the fullbacks and goalkeeper must have been at fault; as how did Cardiff scored three goals?" This is not so. Turner has been mentioned. Murray and Dalton played splendidly, especially in the first-half, and were far superior to the Cardiff backs. It was the halves that were at fault. Shelley and Beren allowed the Cardiff forwards, especially in the second half, too much rope, and were baffled by their speed. Powell displayed characteristic energy all through. The dry ground appeared to suit Cardiff better. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 3 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The team for this replay was: Turner; Dalton & Murray; Beren, Shelley, Powell, McDonald, McKinley, Walker, Christie & McCall. Two days after the Cup Final

defeat, a tired Dragons team was defeated 2-0 at Aberdare in a Glamorgan League fixture.

Dragons easy win

Chesham were the visitors to the Taff Vale Park on Monday, April 22nd 1912, in the Southern League. The Dragons were fully represented with the exception that Carrier played instead of Powell, where the visitors relied upon the same team as met Mardy . The home side completely monopolized the play, and goals were scored in the first half by Christie and McDonald. Turner was only twice called upon. After the interval McKinley twice pierced the defence, and Walker scored a goal from a centre by McDonald. The Pontypridd forwards were erratically shooting, otherwise the score would have been heavier. The Chesham forwards occasionally broke away very quickly, but the home defence was always equal to the occasion. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 3 CHESHAM 0.

Adieu football!

How the Dragons wound up the season

The Dragons had Kettering as visitors on Saturday April 27th 1912 in the Southern League competition. In the match at Kettering the Dragons won handsomely by 3-0, and so it was generally thought they had a soft thing this time. But the visitors proved a hard nut to crack, their defenders giving a most plucky exhibition. But for the skillful work of their goalkeeper, Draper, Pontypridd would have won by four or five goals.

The Dragons rearranged their team. In the absence of Murray, Carrier partnered Dalton at half-back, whilst Christie was tried at left-half with Powell. From the forward line McCall was missing, and Howard Evans took his place on the left-wing. It was a glorious afternoon, and there were a good number of spectators present. What with a blazing sun and a hard ground, the teams found it difficult to play attractive football, but they performed creditably under the circumstances. Howard Evans made an auspicious debut, and it was from his centre that Walker scored the only goal of the match. This happened in the first-half.

Although the Dragons monopolized the play in the first-half they failed to penetrate the defence more than once. The two backs, Lee and Deacon, tackled and kicked with power, and the manner in which they repulsed the attacks of the Dragons excited admiration. In the second-half Kettering had the wind in their favour, and showed a little improvement, but still the Dragons were far ahead of them in aggressive movements, and would have added to the score had the

forwards shown more accurate marksmanship. The Kettering forwards sometimes bore down swiftly on Dalton and Carrier, they, however, were equal to all emergencies, Turner being given very little to do in goal. Although they only won by a goal, this goal meant two points, and enabled the Dragons to occupy a splendid position in the Southern League. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 KETTERING 0. On Monday April 29th 1912, Pontypridd beat Mardy in a Glamorgan League match by 4-1, the scorers for the victors being H. Evans (2), F. Evans and Z. Evans. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 MARDY 1.

Defeat at Walsall in last Southern League fixture

Pontypridd played their last Southern League match of the season on Tuesday, April 30th 1912 at Walsall. It was a fast game, and Pontypridd suffered by reason of rough play, and towards the end cracked up badly. Pontypridd showed all the football, but the latter half opened roughly and several visitors had to receive attention. The first goal was somewhat lucky, but the second goal, by Izon, was a real beauty, Turner being fairly beaten. The defence on both sides was exceedingly sound, but the work of the forwards lacked method. Both sides were at fault in this respect. It was hard lines on Pontypridd; a draw would have been a true reflection of the play. Final score: - WALSALL 1 PONTYPRIDD 0.

"The football season is over" wrote '*Ye Old Soccerite*' at the beginning of May 1912, "tomorrow every athlete will be talking about cricket, so its no use writing about the great winter pastime."

The verdict

A highly successful first season for the Pontypridd AFC had come to an end, and the '*Free Press*' commenting at the conclusion of the season rightly praised them: "Have not the team brought honour on themselves and the town of Pontypridd by getting into the final of the Welsh Cup during the first year of their existence? In the disappointment let us not forget that momentous fact. Is there such a parallel for such a feat? I think not. Think of the number of teams they had to overcome before qualifying to meet Cardiff! And don't let us forget, either, that Cardiff failed to beat them at Ninian Park, where honours were even.

Yes, the Dragons have given a grand account of themselves in the Welsh Cup competition. And their record in the Southern League is one of which we are all proud. They would have been in the position to make a bold bid for promotion but for injuries to players. We are all satisfied with the Dragons after providing us with a season's exhilarating football. Why, only eight months ago Pontypridd was a rugby stronghold, how stands it today? Well, the crowds that turn up at Taff Vale Park when the Dragons are at home furnish us with an answer to that question.

They have popularized the game in the district as if they had wielded a magic wand, and in the name of all soccer followers I move that our best thanks be accorded Captain Christie and his merry boys, to the enterprising directors and officials, and to all others that have in any way helped to make the club a success."

Completed tables were rarely published and this is the last Southern League Division Two table published this season as appeared in the '*South Wales Daily News*' on April 29th 1912: -

Pontypridd AFC Results Season 1911-12						
	Date	Opponents	H or Away	Result	Score	Comp.
1911						
Sept	4 th	Q. P. R.	Home	Lost	1 - 2	F
	9 th	Cardiff City	Home	Draw	1 - 1	F
	13 th	Plymouth Argyle	Away	Draw	2 - 2	S.L.
	16 th	Treharris	Away	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	23 rd	Cardiff City	Home	Won	3 - 2	S.L.
	30 th	Cwm Albion	Away	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
Oct.	2 nd	Ton Pentre	Away	Lost	2 - 3	G.L.
	7 th	Merthyr	Away	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	14 th	Barry District	Home	Draw	0 - 0	W.C.
	19 th	Barry District	Away	Draw	0 - 0	W.C.R.
	21 st	Barry District	Away	Won	3 - 1	W.C.R
	23 rd	Plymouth Argyle	Home	Won	1 - 0	S.W.L.
	26 th	Aberdare	Away	Draw	2 - 2	W.C.
	28 th	Chesham	Away	Won	3 - 1	S.L.

Nov.	2 nd	Aberdare	Home	Won	1 - 0	W.C.
	4 th	Ton Pentre	Home	Draw	1 - 1	G.L.
	7 th	Aberdare	Home	Won	1 - 0	W.C.R.
	9 th	Aberdare	Home	Lost	0 - 2	S. L.
	11 th	Aberdare	Merthyr	Won	1 - 0	W.C.R.
	18 th	Portsmouth	home	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	23 rd	Cardiff Corinthians	Away	Won	4 - 2	W. C.
	25 th	Ton Pentre	Away	Lost	0 - 2	SWMC
Dec.	2 nd	Cwm Albions	Home	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	9 th	Mardy	Away	Won	3 - 1	W.C.
	11 th	Norwich City	Home	Won	3 - 1	F
	16 th	Barry District	Home	Won	5 - 0	G.L.
	18 th	Walsall	Home	Won	3 - 1	S.L.
	23 rd	Merthyr	Away	Lost	0 - 3	S.L.
	25 th	Rhondda League	Home	Won	8 - 1	F
	27 th	Aberdare	Away	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	30 th	Tredegarr	Home	Won	6 - 0	G.L.
1912						
Jan.	1 st	Newport League	Home	Won	4 - 3	F
	6 th	Connah's Quay	Away	Won	8 - 0	W.C.
	8 th	Aberdare	Home	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	13 th	Treharris	Home	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	20 th	Portsmouth	Away	Lost	1 - 3	S.L.
	27 th	Llandudno	Away	Won	2 - 0	W.C.

	29 th	Croydon Common	Home	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
Feb.	3 rd	Kettering	Away	Won	3 - 1	S.L.
	10 th	Merthyr	Home	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	17 th	Southend United	Away	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	24 th	Mardy	Home	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	26 th	Tredegar	Away	Won	7 - 0	G.L.
Mar.	2 nd	Treharris	Away	Lost	0 - 2	G.L.
	9 th	Mardy	Away	Draw	3 - 3	S.L.
	14 th	Cardiff Corinthians	Home	Won	2 - 0	F
	16 th	Cardiff City	Away	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	20 th	Croydon Common	Away	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	23 rd	Merthyr	Home	Won	4 - 2	G.L.
	30 th	Ton Pentre	Away	Draw	2 - 2	S.L.
Apr	8 th	Cardiff City	Away	Draw	0 - 0	W.C.F.
	11 th	Mardy	Away	Lost	2 - 7	G.L.
	13 th	Southend	Home	Won	3 - 0	S.L.
	18 th	Cardiff City	A/dare	Lost	0 - 3	W.C.F.R
	20 th	Aberdare	Away	Lost	0 - 2	G.L.
	22 nd	Chesham	Home	Won	5 - 0	S.L.
	24 th	Treharris	Home	Lost	0 - 1	G.L.
	27 th	Kettering	Away	Won	3 - 0	S.L.
	29 th	Ton Pentre	Away	Lost	0 - 1	G.L.
	30 th	Walsall	Away	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.

Playing record: - P61 W32 L17 D12. S.L. = Southern League Div. 2; G.L. = Glamorgan & Monmouthshire League; S.W.L. = South Western League; W.C. = Welsh Cup; WCSF = Welsh Cup semi-final; WCF = Welsh Cup Final; WCFR = Welsh Cup Final Replay; SWMC = South Wales & Monmouthshire Cup; F = Friendly. Trainer + William Rowe; Captain, David Christie; Ground, Taff Vale Park.

Southern League Division 2 – Final table							
Teams	P	W	L	D	F	A	Pts
Portsmouth	26	19	4	3	73	20	41
Merthyr Town	24	18	3	3	54	12	39
Cardiff City	26	15	7	4	55	26	34
Southend United	26	16	9	1	73	24	33
Pontypridd	25	13	6	6	34	22	32
Treharris	26	11	10	5	44	46	27
Walsall	23	11	11	1	40	40	23
Aberdare	24	10	11	3	37	41	23
Ton Pentre	25	11	11	3	48	38	22
Kettering	26	11	15	0	37	62	22
Croydon Common	25	8	15	2	43	45	18
Mardy	23	15	12	6	35	50	16
Cwm Albion	21	5	13	1	27	65	11
Chesham Town	26	1	25	0	18	131	1
Rel. from Div.1: Brentford London and Stoke Newly elected: Barry, Abertillery and Caerphilly.							

Chapter Two

Season 1912-13

The first season of the Dragons' existence had been a huge success, reaching the Welsh Cup Final and finishing a creditable 5th in the South League, but could the club live up to their supporters expectations during the second season? During the summer of 1912 several influential players, who must have only been on a one season contract, left the club. However, early in August 1912 the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' carried the following report, which startled many people in Pontypridd:

"Frank Hawkins, the well known Pontypridd rugby forward, has signed on for the Pontypridd Association Football Club. The news caused no little surprise, and while it was received with jubilation by the Dragons' supporters, it made the devotees of the rugby game in the town depressed. Hawkins was the mainstay of the local rugby club last season, when he displayed such form that he was selected to play for Wales against Ireland. He will add weight and speed to the Dragons forward line, but how will he shape up as a 'shot?' We shall see."



By mid-August the Dragons supporters were eagerly looking forward to the new season. The "*Free Press*" carried this report : -

The Dragons prepare for a hard season

Football enthusiasts in Pontypridd have started to talk in earnest about football. A bold move was made last season, when a soccer club was established in a rugby stronghold, but the venture was thoroughly justified, and the team that became known throughout South Wales as the 'Dragons' covered themselves with glory. So good was the form that they showed throughout the season that they gathered around them an enthusiastic body of supporters, and it is no exaggeration to say that "soccer" became the rage at Pontypridd.

How stands it with them at the beginning of the second season of the existence? All is well. Some of the last seasons' players will not be seen in the Dragons' colours on September 7th, when the season opens, but the majority of those that did duty last season have been retained, while several new men with a good reputation have been signed on to take the place of departed warriors. Perhaps the three most conspicuous figures that will be missing will be David Christie, Len Shelley and 'Yank' Powell. The directors are acting wisely in introducing 'new blood.' Spectators like to see new faces, and to watch the form of new players. Last year's defenders, whose brilliancy no-one can deny, will again be available. Bob Turner proved himself a thoroughly expert goalkeeper; Charlie Murray, the left-back, proved a real discovery, and his exhibitions often reached a 'classic', standard, and he had a worthy partner in Ted Dalton, whose pluck is unquestionable. And what of Frank Hawkins, the Welsh rugby International? We must wait and see. He ought to be a tower of strength to the team. The half-backs will be all new men, Marr, Beren, Powell and Shelley having gone elsewhere.

Bob Davies (Manchester City) comes with a fine reputation, and great things are expected of George Fell (Norwich City). Amongst the forwards two new men will be seen in the person of Charlie Doran (Everton) and Fred Morley (Blackpool), and there may be others. Negotiations have been in progress for an outside-right and a centre-half from First Division league teams, and this week John Hardman, centre-half, who last season played for Oldham Athletic has been secured at a high transfer fee. He was recommended by Evan Jones, the old Trehafod boy. A number of local players will also be available. The players have gone into training under the supervision of Billy Rowe, who has been re-appointed trainer. The team will figure in the Southern League Second Division, Welsh League, English, Welsh, and south Wales Cup competitions. The following is a list of players who have signed on: -

Goalkeepers: Bob Turner & Elliott; Backs, Charlie Murray & Ted Dalton, Frank Hawkins, & Bull (Nelson); Half-backs, Bob Davies, George Fell, M. Owen (Nelson), Gilbert Hemmings; Forwards, McCall, Walker, Ned Stallworthy, Fred Morley, Charles Doran and Barlow.

A week later it was announced that the Dragons had signed John Hall, of Preston North End as outside-right. Hall had previously played with Brighton and Hove and Barnsley. He was 25 years of age, stood 5 ft 9 ins and weighed 11 st 7 lbs. A local newspaper wrote: -

Football season opens at Pontypridd

Finding local talent - a word about Councillor Williams

"Football! there is magic in that word," commented the *'Pontypridd Observer.'* "Mention it to professional men, and it cheers them up; whisper it in the ears of working men, and it makes their eyes glitter with delight; mention it to small boys, and they will look up into your face eagerly and mutter "Gov'nor, when are the Dragons starting?""

"Football! Yes, the word has a thrill of its own about it for thousands of people in the Pontypridd and district. Even on Wednesday evening, August 21st 1912, about 300 enthusiasts turned out at Taff Vale Park to see teams composed of local players play a game. At the entrance to the park I saw Councillor David Williams, the doyen of Pontypridd sportsmen. Where would the cause of athleticism stand in Pontypridd but for the zeal and assiduity shown for years and years by 'mine host' of the Greyhound Hotel? Attractive athletic events take place frequently at Taff Vale Park, and Mr. Williams has always been the moving spirit. The sport-loving public owe everything to him. Last year, thanks to his initiative, a soccer club was started in the town, and we know how successful it has been. What about the coming season? New players of 'class' have been signed on and I fancy that they will give a good account of themselves, and that the team will cover themselves with glory in Division Two of the Southern League."

The trial match was not a great affair. The object was to try and discover talent amongst the local lads. 'Blacks' were opposed by 'Stripes' but the 'Blacks' ought to have really been called 'Blues' because blue was more conspicuous than black in their jerseys. Turner was the only professional to turn out, but the Dragons goalkeeper in his glaring red jersey and his imposing physical frame, was a host in himself. He played for the losing side! He held the fort for the 'Stripes' and the 'Blacks' won by 2-0. Bravo Blacks! It was a fine fete to beat the mighty Turner twice. The first incident of note was a miss by Turner when fisting out a centre from the right, but luckily there was no-one in position to put it in the net.

In the second-half the 'Blacks' forwards went to work with a will and there was more incisiveness about their attacks than their opponents. In half-an-hour they put on two goals, the first being a penalty. The ball was greasy and the shooting suffered as a consequence. The spectators on the river side had more than their monies worth, for besides the football they had satisfaction of witnessing two dog-fights!

The '*Free Press*' of Aug. 12th 1912 reported that 'Yank' Powell, the Dragons' halfback, had journeyed to Portsmouth the previous Thursday, where he signed on for the First Division Southern League team. Frank Hawkins, the Welsh international rugby player did not appear in the trial, and was never mentioned by the Dragons again. Surely this had been a publicity stunt?

At a meeting of the Welsh Association at the beginning of August 1912, it was stated that the Welsh Cup competitions had been a good source of income though it had only been in the finals that the association had taken a share of the gate. More than £644 was realized in the final and replay between Cardiff City and Pontypridd, and the club's share, together with match expenses and use of grounds, amounted to £466.

On Thursday, Aug. 29th, the Dragons held their final trial match at Taff Vale Park, when a 'Probable' team defeated a 'Possible' team by four goals to nil. The scorers were Stallworthy (2) and Walker (2). Hall, the new outside-right, gave a most encouraging display. In the forward line Doran and Morley proved themselves dangerous shots. The halfbacks now had a sound set of men in Hardman, Fell and Davies.

Dragons' first match

Barry District easily beaten at Taff Vale Park

"What sort of team have the Dragons got this season?" That was the question all followers of the soccer code in Pontypridd were asking at the start of the new season. It seems that they had a sound, balanced team and the weakness apparent in the forward line in the closing months of last season had been remedied. Providing no accidents or other misfortunes happen, they should have a successful season.

Barry District, who were the Dragons' opponents in the Welsh League in the first match of the season on Monday, September 4th 1912, were a hard nut to crack as we know from experience. Did they not compel the Dragons to play three games in a Welsh Cup tie last season before yielding to their superior prowess? To be sure they did. They had a smart 'darkie' in their forward rank last season, but he

was missing on this Monday. The Dragons had out all their new men of 'class.' Pontypridd: Goal, Turner; fullbacks, Dalton & Murray; halfbacks, Davies, Hardman & Fell; forwards, Hall, Morley, Stallworthy, Doran & McCall. The weather was ideal for football and the spectators were numbered about 2,500. There was - wonderful to relate! - a blue sky overhead, and the turf was in splendid condition. The Dragons had the wind behind them in the first-half, and started as if they meant business. The forwards slipped through the Barry halves with delightful ease and fluency and the two Barry backs were perspiring and panting for their breath owing to the lively Dragons fierce onslaughts, while Wright, the Barry goalkeeper, never had time to say 'mum.'

"They are bound to score if they keep at it like this," the spectators said, and the inevitable soon came. A swiftly executed attack on the left ended in the ball rolling to the foot of Stallworthy, and the Dragons clever centre-forward, without a moments hesitation, banged the ball into the corner of the net, giving Wright no chance. The Dragons continued to have everything their own way, and the visitors seldom crossed the halfway line; and when they did so Dalton and Murray repelled them without difficulty. Charlie Doran the inside-left, who came from Everton, scored a second goal with a beautiful shot. Before halftime McCall all but headed a third goal, but at the interval the score stood at 2-0, although the play had been so one-sided, that the Dragons, with a little luck, could have piled on two or three more goals. Turner had absolutely nothing to do. Only once he handled the ball, and then it came too him so softly that he could have counted up to twenty before clearing. There were those that said at halftime that "Barry will score goals in the second-half with the wind." Ah! They didn't know much about the Dragons. Stamina is one of the Dragon's strong points, and it was felt that the defence would easily hold the Barry attack, and the forwards would continue to carry the 'war' into the enemy's camp.

And that is what happened. The visitors, of course, had more of the play than in the first-half, and their right-wing made valiant attempts to break through the defence, but the combination of their line was not effective enough to circumvent Dalton and Murray, who were in splendid form. Turner handled frequently, though he did have one difficult shot to deal with. Wright, on the other hand, was given work of an entirely different description to do. He did well to tip a pretty measured shot from Morley over the bar, and Doran had hard lines when he hit the bar from close-quarters with an oblique left-footer, but there was no further scoring.

The Dragons made two appeals for a penalty in the second-half, but the referee was deaf to their entreaties, and the spectators did not relish some of his decisions. To sum up, Turner, Dalton and Murray we know. They may be relied

upon to form a stubborn defence. The half-back line had lost Yank Powell's dash providing much energy, but the line, as a whole would be equal to last seasons. Davies, the right-half, from Manchester City, plays with his head. He never acts without thinking, and knows how to feed his forwards. Hardman, the centre-half, who comes from Oldham Athletic, is sturdily built, a strong tackler, and would prove a serviceable player. Fell, left-half, of Norwich City, was on the light-side, but are many 'little men' that are good footballers. The forwards were fast and clever. Morley is a fine dribbler and Doran a neat shot. Barlow, the outside-right, is a tower of strength and a 'class' player. His centres were very accurate, and in this respect so were McCall's, who sometimes sends them behind, but he sends in so many centres that this is easily forgiven. Stallworthy was in fine form in the centre, and altogether people looked forward to great things from the forward-line. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 BARRY DISTRICT 0.

Presentation of gold medals

A Smoking Concert in connection with the Pontypridd Association Football Club was held on the same Monday evening as the Barry District game, September 4th 1912, at the Bridge Inn, Pontypridd, under the chairmanship of Mr. Banner, of Cardiff. Councillor David Williams was to have presided, but owing to a prior engagement he was unable to attend. The chairman was accompanied by Mr. Frank Thomas, Mr. Kinsman, Mr. Sidney Hill, and Mr. Rostrome.

The Chairman in opening the concert explained that he had come expecting to see their good friend councillor Williams present, but unfortunately that gentleman was unable to attend. His object in coming was to pay honour to him as chairman of the Pontypridd Association Football Club and who had recently been elected a member of the Welsh Association (applause).

During the little time that he had known Mr. Williams he had always found him one of the best sportsmen in South Wales (applause). The speaker next referred to the experience he had had when he first visited the various clubs in company with Mr. Bradshaw to try and induce them to join the Southern League. They went to Aberdare, Ton Pentre, Barry and Cardiff and the flame of enthusiasm was then kindled and spread, and they were now opening the most sensational football season that Wales had ever known. They had well established clubs in the Rhondda Valleys in the South Wales colliery districts, but it meant a great struggle to establish them. Coming to the Pontypridd Club, he might speak of them as 'infants' (laughter). It is their second year, so he took it they were walking too early (more laughter). They were most precocious boys (laughter). They had had a wonderful success, and from what he had heard he really thought they were going on better this season (applause). They ought to be satisfied if they did as

well as last year. They had the 'cheek' to nearly win the Welsh Cup; that from a parcel of 'infants' was nothing less than pure cheek, they must admit (laughter and applause). He had been certain, that he could not find another club that had ever succeeded in their first season in doing as well as they had (applause).

What struck him chiefly last season was the good sportsmanship shown by the Pontypridd team; that was the real secret of success in football. There was no room in the first-class clubs for those that did not 'play the game' (applause). He had not supposed to know very much about their players, but he wished to say a word or two. He knew that there was a good deal of unpleasant talk at the end of last season respecting certain players, and he was rather afraid that it was seriously effecting one or two players. A great injustice had been done to at least one man. The statements did not originate from any of the directors, players, or officials of the Pontypridd Club (applause).

He believed that every player had endeavoured to do credit to the club (applause). They were at the start of what he thought would be the most sensational football season that they had ever seen in South Wales, and he went on to speak of some of the district clubs. Merthyr had moved up to better company, and he trusted that they would remain there as they wanted two more Welsh clubs to join Merthyr next season (applause). He was not going to prophesy but he would say that with Merthyr and two more clubs they would be in a position to show some of the English clubs whether or not they could play football in Wales (applause).

He said that he could not pay too high a tribute to the chairman and directors of the Pontypridd Football Club and their excellent secretary. He had known Mr. Kinsman for many years and he felt that if any man could start and work a club in Pontypridd or anywhere else it was Mr. Kinsman (loud applause). Just a word as to the Supporters Club; from what he could gather they had the largest and most successful Supporters Club in Wales (applause). They had a very good membership and hoped to make it 1,000 strong (applause). The supporters were a great help to any football club. Their presence and encouragement at away matches often turned a possible defeat into a victory (applause). In conclusion, he wished the club the most successful season (applause).

Mr. Kinsman, who was very well received, said he did not know why the Chairman had asked him to speak, but he had pleasure in being present and hearing the encouraging remarks made by their genial Chairman (applause). He quite agreed that they had a most sensational time before them for soccer in South Wales. The gathering had for one of its purposes the presentation of gold medals given by the Welsh Association to the Pontypridd players as runners up in the cup final. Mr. Kinsman went on to give an outline of the matches the team had played and

commented that he regarded the Pontypridd team as one of the most unlucky teams in South Wales last year. He believed that everyone would acknowledge that they gave all the teams a fair run for their money (applause). Mr. Sidney Hill presented the medals, before mentioning the following players had been retained: Charlie Murray, captain of this year's team; Bob Turner, Teddy Dalton, Archie Walker and McCall. Mr. Charlie Murray on the part of his fellow players, expressed their pleasure at receiving the medals.

Mr. Frank Thomas, one of the directors, said he was exceeding glad that the team had been successful in drawing 'first blood' that afternoon (applause). He sincerely hoped that they would go on adding victory to victory (applause). They would not be satisfied until they had beaten all the Welsh Leaguers (applause). He was very sorry that the Welsh Football Association had not been generous enough to present two more medals, one to the trainer, Billy Rowe, and one to Mr. Farnow, as they were two gentlemen who fully deserved the honour (loud applause). He hoped something would be done to call the attention of the Association to this matter (applause). He hoped also that the team would provide a success next Saturday as they had that afternoon (applause). During the evening there was an excellent programme of songs given by friends and members.

Vigorous match between Dragons and Llanelly

Player ordered off! - spectators demonstrate against him

On Saturday, September 7th 1912, Llanelly were the visitors at Taff Vale Park. This was the Dragons first Southern League match, and the 'Tinplaters' visit had been eagerly looked forward to, for they were a new team in the league, and the Dragons had not met them previously. At 4.30, the time for the kick-off, the sun shone blithesomely from a blue sky, and the bright scarlet of the visitors contrasted vividly with the sober colours of the Dragons. The spectators numbered between 4 and 5,000, and amongst them were many supporters of the Scarlets.

It was a vigorously-contested game, brimful of exciting incidents, and there was plenty of clever, attractive football to boot, so that the spectators were well repaid for coming. True, it was marred towards the close by rough play and one very unpleasant incident, but more of that anon. Llanelly struck one straight from the start as a strong, bustling, determined team, and one instinctively felt that the Dragons would have to go all the way to get full points. They quickly got away on the right, but the ball went behind, and in a twinkling it was at the other end, where it came rolling across the goal-mouth, for McCall to miss an easy opening.

The excitement continued when Bailiff, the Llanelly goalkeeper fell with the ball,

with Stallworthy bearing down upon him. He managed to throw away when on the ground, and then Llanelly made a dash on the left, and before the spectators had realised what was happening Alden had planted the ball safely in the net. This was after ten minutes play. Both sides now went at it in earnest. There was no mistaking the joy of the visitors at their early success, and their forwards now played like very demons. Dalton and Murray, however, were very resourceful in their kicking, and eventually the Dragons came along and worried the Llanelly defence. Barlow was twice given offside in quick succession - an old weakness of his. The little winger was brought in place of Hall, who was suffering with a slight injury. McCall, accepting a pass from Hardman, shot strongly when well placed, but the ball went wide.

The game had been in progress 25 minutes when one of those dramatic incidents occurred that rouse spectators to a frenzy of enthusiasm. Davies got possession about the halfway line, and after a dribble placed the ball forward to the boot of Morley, who stood 25 yards from goal. Without a second's delay Morley shot, and the ball was in the distant corner of the net before Bailiff had time to move a muscle. It was a magnificent shot, and worthy of the First League, and never have many seen such a swift 'grounder.' It was not from an easy angle, either, Morley being well out on the right. That shot made Morley's reputation as far as Pontypridd is concerned. What can be said about the cheers that greeted the effort? There was a touch of patriotic fervour about them. That was the outstanding incident of the first-half before one of which all other incidents were dwarfed into nothingness.

The goal had an inspiring effect upon the Dragons, whose forwards during the next ten minutes displayed greater incisiveness in attack than at any other period of the game. In a few minutes Morley, tested Bailiff with a clever first-timer, which would have found the net had not the goalie happened to be at the right spot. Then Fell grazed the bar, and McCall got in a centre across the goalmouth which went a-begging, and Doran manoeuvred an opening only to fail badly with his shot. Before half-time Llanelly set up another hot attack - so hot that the referee had to say a word or two to their inside-left, a big fellow, and a hustler who feared no foe. At the other end Stallworthy got in a sharp oblique shot which Bailiff had some difficulty in saving. Just before the whistle went for halftime Turner daringly picked up the ball from the foot of an onrushing Llanelly forward and saved a critical situation.

The second-half opened disastrously for the Dragons. The Llanelly forwards were soon on the move, and in two or three minutes there was a sharp struggle for possession between Fudge and Murray. Try as he would Murray could not rob him of the ball, and Fudge beat Turner from within a few yards of goal and scored with

ease. There was no mistaking the enthusiasm of the Llanelly players now, and enthusiasm often carries a team to victory. To secure a lead over the Welsh Cup finalists on their own ground in the second-half, with the end in view - was no mean feat, and they would retain it or perish in the attempt! That was doubtless the feeling that seized them, and they proceeded to carry out their task with a thoroughness that left nothing to be desired - from their point of view.

The game was now frequently stopped due to injuries to players - and every time it was a Dragon on the ground. Not once during the whole game did a Llanellyite find himself in that position. The visitors were a heavier lot than the Dragons, and there was no doubt that the Pontypridd directors should introduce more weight into the halfback line. But a few more words about the second-half. Hardman was limping long before the end, and the result was that the Llanelly forwards, whose endurance was something to be admired, were continually 'playing on' Dalton and Murray, whose clever kicking when in difficulties had seldom been more useful. Still the Dragons continued to have a fair share of the game although the combination of their forwards deteriorated. They were very anxious to win their first home Southern League match, and anxiety is not a good thing for the team.

Many corners were forced by both teams, but the feature of the second-half was the missing of a penalty by Llanelly, and but for this they would have won the match. About twenty minutes from the end with Llanelly leading by 2-1, one of the Llanelly players was brought down in the 'explosive laden area' when going for goal, and a penalty was promptly awarded. It was entrusted to Bailiff, who shot many inches over the bar. Oh! What a relief! The Dragons, by way of showing their gratitude, went away at a fine pace, and Morley shot over, whilst an exciting goalmouth struggle followed a centre by McCall. Towards the close the Llanelly forwards were going great guns, and it was during one of these furious onslaughts that the sensational incident occurred.

Turner had kicked out with a cluster of players around him, when Peters, the Llanelly centre-forward, deliberately kicked him. With a sharp agonised "Oh!" the Dragon's popular goalkeeper fell on his back and looked in pain. Peters also lay on his back, but it was all pretence, for when Dalton, sharply told him to get up he immediately sprang to his feet and assumed a threatening attitude. Members of both teams swarmed round him and the situation looked ugly till the referee, having with others attended to Turner, ordered Peters off the field for his cowardly action. With a lot of unconcern he proceeded towards the pavilion. Immediately there was a rush on the part of the spectators towards the entrance, and the offending player found "the way out" completely blocked by a crowd, who expressed their opinion of him in no unmeasured terms. There he stood, 'thinking his thoughts' while the crowd hurled their anathemas. Luckily for him they were

the 'season ticket folks' and 'shillingites' for his actions had kindled such indignation in the middle of the whole of the spectators that hundreds of them would not have been able to restrain themselves had he been within reach of him. Taking in the situation the referee stopped the game while some officials attempted to clear a way for the 'footballer.' The crowd surged around him as he tried to force his way through them, and trembling hearts expected something exciting to happen any moment. Eventually they managed to get him to the dressing room, and the game proceeded.

Peters had no sooner left the ground than the Dragons gained the equalizer, and saved the match. There were only five minutes to go when the Dragons' forwards made their way towards Bailiff and McCall headed a neat goal amid terrific cheering. That goal meant a point, and the spectators were pacified. It had been a fine game up to the interval; in the second-half there was too much aimless kicking and rough play. The Dragons forward line was not in a happy mood. Both the wing-men were off colour, and Stallworthy was not himself. One must not, however, be too critical this early in the season, and as stated before, the Dragons found themselves pitted against a live, virile team, and Llanelly would no-doubt cause more surprises this season. The gate receipts amounted to £84. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 LLANELLY 2.

New Mid-Rhondda team at Taff Vale Park

The Dragons played their second Southern League match at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, September 14th 1912, and again the weather was glorious and the spectators radiant. The newly formed Mid-Rhondda team were the visitors and they brought with them hundreds of supporters who helped to swell the crowd to the dimensions of the previous Saturday. If the 'Mushrooms' were only born yesterday, the Dragons would not make the mistake of thinking that they had a 'soft thing' on. Had not Mid-Rhondda given Cardiff City a fright a few days previously, when the proud Welsh Metropolitans were only able to scrape home by a goal? And did they not have in the person of Annan, the fullback who played for years at Bristol City, a leader who is capable of inspiring a team of youngsters with confidence and enthusiasm? To be sure, and the crowd did not forget to remember these things.

Mid-Rhondda proved themselves a team of triers. They made the Dragons play, and no mistake. If they showed no glimpses of science, they showed energy; if they were inferior to the Dragons in the art of combination, they made up for it with individual pluck; if they failed to get a goal, they kept Turner wide awake; if they were beaten, they were not disgraced! They owed a great deal to the generalship of the veteran Annan, who figured at right-back, in which position he

was a tower of strength. The old warrior was as calm as the Sphinx. He was frequently 'in the wars' and always emerged with unruffled temper. But for his strong defensive play, the Dragons might have gained a more handsome victory. His kicking was most reliable. The presence of Annan in this part of the world would do good to soccer football.

Hall, the Dragons outside-right, who did not play against Llanelly due to a slight injury, played well. He caught the popular fancy as soon as he got the ball. He is a clean, fair player, and the home supporters liked his style. The manner in which he beat one defender after another by those deft football touches which only an expert footballer is master of made all the world wonder. He can trick an opponent with delicious ease, and like Annan, he always remains placid amongst all the hubbub and turmoil. His 'square' centres were a feature of the match, but not one of them was accepted by the inside men. In the second-half Hall tried more than once to cut in goalwards from the right, but he failed to get in very good shots owing to the vigilance of the defenders.

The Dragons had a strong wind in their favour in the first-half and they were always superior to their opponents in attack. In the first 25 minutes, after a swiftly executed passing movement started by Hardman, the centre-half, Morley banged in a splendid rising shot which Jones, the Mid-Rhondda goalkeeper, saved very smartly. Walker soon afterwards got in a fast grounder which deflected off the fullback against the post and almost found the net. Jones was laid out in the ensuing goalmouth scramble, and there was a long stoppage. At length the visitors got going, Murray twice distinguished himself by his skillful clearances when pressed. What a consistent player is the Dragons Captain! His kicking was beautifully timed and accurate. Turner was twice called upon hereabouts, but nothing difficult came his way. Once Walker had nothing to do close in, but head the ball into the net with no-one in front of him, and how he managed to head it outside the post in the circumstances is a mystery.

The game had been in progress twenty minutes when McCall got possession and made headway on the left. He was dribbling goalwards when he kicked the ball too hard, and Jones running out got to it before him and kicked away. Luckily for the Dragons the ball hit McCall and it rebounded towards Morley who was standing some twenty yards from goal. Steadying himself, the Dragons inside-right sent in a neat high shot which entered the net before Jones could get back. Thus Fred Morley again opened the scoring for the Dragons as he had against Llanelly. He is a useful sort of forward to have a team, isn't he? There is no mistaking Morley's capacity as a shot. There had been no element of luck about his goals. They had all resulted from accurate calculations of his bearings, and a quick appreciation of the whereabouts of the net. The rest of the first-half was comparatively uneventful. Mid-Rhondda made occasional raids, and once Turner

sent shivers down the backs of the spine of the supporters by running out and kicking away a bouncing ball with two forwards bearing down on him - a somewhat unorthodox action for a goalkeeper. The Dragons tried hard to add to the score before half-time, but the visitors defence held out. Mid-Rhondda were doubtless on good terms with themselves at halftime, for with the wind against them, they had kept the score down to a goal and they ought to do better in the second-half! Their numerous supporters were seized with a similar sentiment, for no sooner had the second-half begun when they sent up shouts of encouragement from all over the field, and the excitement became infectious when it was noticed that every player on the Mid-Rhondda side was infusing into his work all the energy he possessed. For some time the pace was faster than it had been in the first-half, and the spectators were kept on tenterhooks. The Dragons still continued to show superior skills as footballers, but the rock-like Annan always seemed to be in the way, and there was no knowing when one of the sudden breaks in which the Mid-Rhondda wings might result in an equalizer.

Fifteen minutes slipped by, and still no addition to the score, and the Mid-Rhondda enthusiasts were all the time egging on their pets with vocal advice. They had a left half-back - a short, thick set, dark-haired athlete - who proved himself a little wonder. He was here, there, and everywhere, and it is seldom that one sees such a tremendous footballer. It did one good to watch him. What energy, what pluck, what wholehearted endeavour! He worried the life out of McCall. The visiting supporters were brought to a high pitch of vocal delirium when, with twenty minutes gone, Turner cleared with two forwards dancing around him with the light of battle in their eyes, and the roar was continued when the Pontypridd custodian the next minute was given a fast grounder to field.

Then something happened, and the Rhondda hubbub subsided. Walker found himself with the ball at his feet some 25 yards from goal. With a quick straight drive he sent the ball into the corner of the net, Jones having no chance of saving. Cheers? Let it be taken as read. What could enlarge on such commonplace thing? The Dragons deserved to be two goals up on the run of the play all through. The Dragons' followers heaved a sigh of relief for the match was now won. The 'Mushrooms' continued to display determination, but we all knew that they did not have the skill or combination to penetrate the Dragons defence twice, so our hearts ceased to palpitate. The game continued to be well contested. Once the Mid-Rhondda goal had a remarkably narrow escape. McCall took a corner-kick, a forward got his head to the ball, and it was slipping into the net near the post when Jones stuck out a hand in the nick of time and just kept it out.

Where the Mid-Rhondda forward line suffered in comparison with that of the Dragons was its combination; and yet it was hoped to see the Dragons

combination much more effective in the immediate future. Morley made a good partner for Hall, and Doran and McCall were developing a nice understanding; but Walker was not an ideal connecting link. He was far too fond of sticking to the ball while the wisest thing was to pass it out to an unmarked winger. People like to see a centre-forward endeavouring to bring through on his own account when there is a chance of 'getting there,' but Walker was continually trying to do this with two or three opponents ready to tackle him, and with comrades either side of him waiting for a pass. Still Walker, who took Stallworthy's place, made up for this deficiency by obtaining a much needed goal. The home halves displayed a better conception of their duties to their forwards than on the previous Saturday, but they will require more of the "hustling" style when pitted against a more dangerous line of forwards. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 MID-RHONDDA 0.

Newport County defeated

A Welsh league game at Taff Vale Park, Pontypridd, on Monday, September 16th 1912, against Newport County, provided interesting football for about 2,000 spectators. Pontypridd gave a trial to Free, a Barnsley District player, at centre-forward. Pontypridd deserved a bigger win, for although in the first-half Newport had a fair share of the attack, the Dragons were continually on the move in the second-half. The importation of Free in the home attack added strength to the line. The Newport defence was great throughout the game. The scorers for the Dragons were Stallworthy and Fell. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 NEWPORT COUNTY 1.

Dragons beaten by disputed goal

Murray Misses Penalty

"*Old Soccerite*" wrote this report after Pontypridd had visited Treharris on Sept. 21st 1913: - "I went up to see how the Dragons would shape up in their first Southern League match away from home. Not that I am sorry that I went, for, if the Dragons were defeated, the match palpitated with excitement, and what's more satisfying than a little excitement to wind up the week with? Besides, the match had some remarkable features. The legitimacy of the goal awarded to Treharris - the only goal of the match - was strongly disputed by the Pontypridd players. Turner, the Dragons goalkeeper declared most emphatically that the ball was not over the line; the backs were equally certain that it wasn't, and apparently so sincere was their opinion that they and their colleagues immediately surrounded the poor referee and ridiculed the idea of a goal.

At halftime nothing had been scored and the above 'incident' happened in the first few minutes of the second-half. When the referee had given his decision the

Dragons, after protesting vigorously, dispersed to several places and the ball was placed in position in mid-field, but so astonished was Charlie Murray, the Dragons Captain and left-back, at the verdict that he again returned to the referee and protested. But it was no good! The ball was set in motion again and in a few minutes the other memorable incident of the match occurred. Walker, the Dragons' centre-forward, was brought down in the penalty area when the visitors were strongly attacking, and the referee promptly awarded a penalty. "Now for the equalizer!" the Dragons supporters shouted. Alas! it was not to be. Murray took the kick and sent the ball just an inch or two outside the post. Ah! The pity of it, in view of their opponents goal being disputed! But we must take these things as they come, as Mr. Balfour would say.

I have begun my account of the match, you will see, readers, by my reference to the historic happenings in the first ten minutes of the second-half, and I will now continue my description of the second-half for it was in that half that all the "fun of the fair" was crowded. The last half-hour or so resolved itself into more a less one long struggle between the Dragon's attack and the Treharris defence, and what a tussle it was! I should explain, here, that the Dragons had rearranged their forward-line after the interval. McCall figured at centre-forward, with Doran at outside-left and Walker as his partner. It was a case of "full steam ahead" from now until the end, with every player exerting himself as if the fate of the Empire depended on the result. It was real Cup-tie football, in which every minute throbbed with swift movements, and you could see the crowd behind Downes swaying with the flittings of the ball.

The Dragons could do anything but score. The halves subjugated the Treharris forward-line, and were feeding their own forwards with judgement, and then the forwards were continually hurling themselves again the home defenders only to fail to do the needful at the crucial moment. Numerous corners were forced, the wingers got in centre after centre, the halves kept swinging the ball goalwards, but there was no forward who could get the leather into the net. Downes was continually handling, but there was no sting in the shots. Once, Morley all but scored. Promptly meeting a centre from Fell, he headed smartly into goal, but Downes happened to be at the right spot and saved. It could have been a pretty goal had it "come off."

On another occasion a rapid run down by Walker and McCall ended in the ball being forced through, but the whistle had gone for offside, and the Pontypriddian cheers quickly evaporated into chagrin. Even with only three minutes to go, the Dragons kept pegging away as resolutely as ever. They would not give in. They were showing real British grit. The pace had been terrific, but their stamina was equal to all demands. The luck was against them; but a mead must also be

accorded the Treharris defenders, who displayed a splendid coolness in withstanding such an onslaught. The goalkeeper, too, did some good clearances, although, as I have said, he was not given any difficult shots to deal with.

A word as to the first-half. Curiously enough, although the Dragons did most of the attacking work, it was Turner who had all the awkward shots to save. This would imply that the Dragons inside-forwards failed to seize openings. And so they did. On the other hand, when the Treharris forwards got away one of them generally managed to get in a sharp shot. Three times in the first twenty minutes did Turner effect fine saves, the third one being brilliant. The ground was against the Dragon's style of play. It was so short that some of Turner's goal-kicks nearly reached their opponents goal, and added to this drawback its unevenness - 'lumpiness' - I ought to say - it will readily be realised how difficult the Dragons found it to carry on such combined movements as are calculated to baffle defenders. The ball played strange tricks and mis-kicks were frequent. Hall, the outside-right, was completely lost. Speedy touchline sprints are impossible on such a turf, and the only way to score goals at Treharris is for inside-forwards to adopt thrustful methods - to bang for goal, heedless of consequences. Of course, the Treharris players were accustomed to the ground, and in this respect had the 'whip hand.' The Dragons were strangers to its peculiarities and had to make progress warily at first, like men treading on thin ice. The Captain was naturally upset when he missed the penalty, but let him not be disheartened on that account! No-one is going to blame so consistently sound a back because of that "accident". Treharris were very lucky to 'bag' both points and they will be the first to admit it. The attendance was said to be a record one. The '*Glamorgan Free Press*' commented: - "There were more Pontypridd people in Treharris than there are people in Treharris!" Final score: - TREHARRIS 1 PONTYPRIDD 0.

In cold, but pleasant weather, Pontypridd defeated Cardiff Corinthians 2-1 at the Taff Vale Park on Thursday, Sept. 26th 1912. The Dragons tried a new centre-forward in Burt, of Stockport County. Pontypridd: Goal, Turner, fullbacks, Dalton & Murray; halfbacks, Davies, Hemmings & Fell; forwards, Davies, Burt, Walker, Barlow & McCall. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 CARDIFF CORINTHIANS 1.

English Cup-tie at Taff Vale Park

Stallworthy scores four!

It has been the fate of Lysaghts Excelsior (Newport) to go through the sort of fire and brimstone that Connah's Quay did last year at the hands of the fierce Dragons in Taff Vale Park. The match with Connah's Quay on September 28th 1912 was a Welsh-Cup tie; that with Lysaghts Excelsior on this Saturday afternoon was an English-Cup tie, and in each case the Dragons piled on eight goals. Once-more we

had glorious weather for football, - or rather, for spectators; I am not sure that the atmosphere was not rather too mild for footballers, and considering the Dragons opponents were a bunch of amateurs unknown to fame, the gate was quite satisfactory, the spectators numbering over 3,000. This was Pontypridd's first venture into the English Cup competition, and they had to participate in the preliminary qualifying round. They were drawn to play away, but for a financial consideration Lysaghts consented to come to Taff Vale Park.

The visitors had a strong wind in their favour in the first-half, but the Dragons were masters of the situation right from the kick-off, although it took them some 25 minutes to get their first goal. Everyone knew that it would only be a matter of time before they would wear down their amateur opponents - and then the fun would be furious! This is exactly what happened.

Morley grazed the upright with a beauty, Barlow fired in a stinger which just missed the mark, and Morley again got possession and sent over. Thus play proceeded, with the visitors making occasional raids towards Turner, until McCall got in a nice centre along the ground, and Hardman, with a high shot close in, opened the scoring. Five minutes afterwards the visitors came very near to equalizing. The outside-right shot hard along the ground, and the ball just missed the distant post with Turner standing near the near post. This incident roused the Dragons, who attacked with vigour for the remainder of the first-half. Barlow was delighting the crowd with his nippyness in outwitting opponents, and it was the result of clever work by the little winger that the second goal arrived. After beating three opponents he centred right in front of Stallworthy, who headed a nice goal in the last five minutes. Just before the whistle went, the goalkeeper saved a rasping shot from Walker.

The next incident was after the interval, when a thrilling run by Stallworthy, who wound up with a dramatic goal, which stirred the imagination of the multitude. Getting possession in mid-field the Lithe and lusty athlete from Machen decided to try a run through on his own. Slipping through the backs with the ball at his feet, he outpaced them in great style, and when nearing the goalie he banged in an unstoppable shot. From now until the end it was a case of shots being poured in on the poor goalkeeper from all directions. What a trying time the poor boy had of it! Barlow netted, but was very properly given offside, and then the spectators experienced the sweet sensation of witnessing the irresistible Stallworthy again breaking away from midfield, sweeping everything before him like a chaff before the wind, and finishing up with a rousing shot which Giestmall stopped because he came out a few yards and got in the line of fire. It was kept out because his body happened to be in the way! It was left to Walker to get the fifth. The Dragons swept once more wildly down the field, looking as warlike as the ancient Britons

and ended in Walker beating Giestmall with a shot from an oblique angle.

Wonderful little Barlow again had a turn, sending his admirers into raptures by getting in a tremendous drive, the ball sailing an inch or two over the bar. Then McCall had a word or two to say in the matter. He dribbled inwards from the left, beating man after man, until he faced the goalie, who again happened to be in the way of a stinging shot. Poor goalie! However did he survive all the leathery stings? He must have had a sort of 'Jack Johnson' hide. Still the Dragons continued to run riot. Walker struck the post with a swift grounder and in a twinkling the ball was in the net, Stallworthy meeting the rebound and netted with ease. That was number six. They were coming now at a goal every five minutes. Barlow hit the post with another terrific drive and by way of affording the spectators a little variety Morley shook the crossbar with a beauty.

Still the voracious Dragons were not satisfied. They were like 'wolves on the prowl.' Their lust for goals appeared to turn the forward line into a whirlwind. It fell to the lot of Fell to cause the fall of the Excelsior's citadel for the seventh time, and the visitors faces fell still more. Fell is the Dragons left-half, and he essayed a long-shot which the poor goalie - now feeling tired, - tried to hold, but failed. This was the only goal that he had a chance of saving.

In the last five minutes the Dragons were going as strongly as ever, and they wound up a memorable afternoon's work with an eighth goal, Stallworthy seizing on a centre from McCall and scoring from close in. During this very lively time the Excelsior's had, of course, an occasional look-in at the other end, but the Dragons defenders had the easiest of tasks in repulsing them. With a little luck the Dragons would have been accredited with a bigger score. The uprights were hit three times and the crossbar once, while shots that just missed the mark were very numerous. The visitors' goalie, although somewhat crude at times in his clearances, was not to be blamed for the heavy score against his side, all the shots - with, perhaps one exception - being unstoppable. Some people say, "But, they hadn't very smart opponents." In reply to such people I would point out that of the 130 English Cup ties played North, South, East and West on Saturday, Pontypridd were the only team to score eight goals. There ought to be no change in the forward line to do duty against Mardy. Let us hope such sharpshooters get a chance to see what they can do against professional defenders. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 8 LYSAGHT'S EXCELSIOR 1.

Dragons beat Mardy
Determined struggle at Taff Vale Park

The Dragons met Mardy at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, October 5th 1912, in a

Southern League match. Once more we had a glorious day for football, and the faces of the Pontypridd Directors were agleam with delight. Never has a football season opened so auspiciously from the weather point of view. Every Saturday since the beginning of September the sun had shone from a bright-blue sky without making it too warm for the spectators. In spite of a great attraction at Cardiff there were about 4 or 5,000 spectators. Mardy, with the famous John Goodhall as manager, had strengthened their team and although they did not come with a good record, it should be borne in mind that three of their Southern League matches had been played away, and they were only beaten at Luton by 1-0.

The forward line which scored eight goals in the English Cup tie was adhered to. The game was started at a fast pace, and was keenly fought out until the end. In fact, it was one of the dourest struggles seen in the Park, and the spectators were kept in a state of feverish excitement from the beginning until the finish. It was the sort of contest that is calculated to make soccer popular with the crowd, and if only such wholehearted strenuousness was shown in every match! These Rhondda boys, they are devoid of science, but know how to go for goal - and that is half the battle. They proved this early, and it was evident that they were bent on making the Dragons go all the way.

Mardy opened with an attack on the left, but the Dragons got away, and Stallworthy was pulled up for offside. After some even exchanges - Coates, the Mardy centre-forward, broke away strongly and ran between the backs, but Murray failed to prevent him shooting when he was only a yard or two from Turner. He got in a clever shot, however, and Turner saved cleverly. At the other end Walker fired over the bar with only the goalkeeper to beat. Jones, the Mardy right-back, was penalized for tripping Morley, but Jenkins brought relief, and Coates led another raid to the other end. Stallworthy transferred operations, and Hardman put in a rare shot from long-range, which went just wide. The Dragons now attacked vigorously, and the Mardy defence was severely tested. Eventually Walker was about to shoot when well inside the penalty area when he was fouled by Jenkins. The referee promptly awarded a penalty, which was entrusted to Morley, who crashed the ball against the crossbar.

Mardy woke up and another run through by Coates ended in Murray handling in the penalty area. Jenkins took the penalty kick and scored. The Dragons were roused now and quickly forced a couple of corners. Once more the irresistible Coates got away and beat the backs. When twenty yards from Turner, he let fly, but the goalie, who ran out to meet him, succeeded in turning the ball round the post. At the other end Barlow sent in a great shot which Thomas tipped over the bar. McCall grazed the uprights, and just on halftime Thomas saved smartly from Stallworthy. At halftime Mardy led 0-1.

The Dragons supporters did not chew the cud of satisfaction during the interval, but hope was expressed that their stamina would tell. It was some time before the Dragons got dangerous, but eventually they got going and McCall was provided with a clear opening ten yards out. He sent in a stinger, which Thomas saved at the expense of a corner. The Dragons monopolized the play, but once more the defence was unshakeable. A corner to Mardy looked like ending disastrously for the Dragons, but the ball was got away and at the other end Thomas ran out and kicked away from Walker after Jones had been beaten. Coates and Tebbitt led an attack on the Dragons goal, but Dalton kicked away and Morley getting possession ran through in fine style and wound up with a shot that completely baffled Thomas. The cheers that followed were loud and long.

The equalizer was well deserved. The goal put fire into the Dragons play, and in two minutes they had secured the lead. "Play up Dragons," shouted their supporters, and play up they did with Dragon-like fury. McCall got in a shot and Thomas saved it, but he failed to get the ball away, and Stallworthy nipping in banged the ball into the net. What a scene followed. When your team equalizes and then takes the lead after being down at the interval it gives you a delicious sort of feeling, and the Dragons did not forget to vent to this delicious feeling. The game continued to be fought out in a resolute fashion, both sides attacking in turn. Mardy were game until the end, but the home defence was too strong for them. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 MARDY 1.

Pontypridd journeyed to Aberdare on Monday, October 7th 1912, when they opposed the town team for the first time this season and won a Welsh League match by 2-1. A Cardiff newspaper reported that "the 'darians obviously felt the effect of Saturdays game with Luton." That was the excuse given for their defeat. As if the Dragons had not played an equally gruelling game on Saturday! The Dragons deserved their victory, as they displayed superior combination to their opponents, and were quicker in seizing opportunities. Play up the Dragons! We have forgiven you for that little lapse at Treharris. You'll whack Barry on Saturday, of course, Hey, What? Pontypridd scorers : Morley and Walker. Final score: - ABERDARE 1 PONTYPRIDD 2.

Another English Cup-tie at Pontypridd Dragons too good for Barry District

The Dragons were home again on Saturday, October 12th 1912, when they met Barry District in the first round of the qualifying competition of the English Cup. Once more we had a glorious Saturday - the sixth Saturday of the sort since the beginning of the football season. It was, in fact, a bit too glorious. Not a breeze

blew from anywhere, and under the circumstances people could not blame the players for not sustaining a cup tie pace to the finish. Barry gave the Dragons some good games last season, but judging from the form displayed on Saturday they are not as an effective combination this season as they were last. They had lost the 'darkie,' and the ladies were all wondering what had become of the dear boy.

For the first ten minutes the exchanges were fairly even. Then McCall threaded his way in from the left, eluding all opposition, and when a few yards from the goal banged in a sharp, cross-shot, which would have beaten any goalkeeper. It was a smart individual effort. 'Mac' was in form today, for a minute later he all but repeated his feat, his final shot just going over, and he followed this up by getting in a fine centre from a bouncing ball with a back trying to tackle him. Then 'wee' Barlow came into the picture. Hardman gave him a long pass, and the twinkle footed 'nick' grazed the cross bar with a characteristic drive from the right. The visitors occasionally got over the halfway line, but their forwards were too easily kept in check by the home defenders to be often dangerous. After fifteen minutes Turner handled, but was given plenty of time to clear, and then Barry forced a corner. The ball rolled across the goalmouth, but no shot resulted and it was cleared quickly up to the other end.

Then did Walker rouse the spectators by kicking a magnificent goal. He found himself with the ball at his feet some thirty yards out. He deceived the defenders into thinking that he was going to pass out to McCall, but turning quickly he got his right foot to the ball and drove it with lightening speed over the head of the goalkeeper into the net. The ball hit the underside part of the crossbar, and there is no goalkeeper in the land who could have saved that sort of shot when the ball is travelling at the speed of a Swallow. Walker's grand effort was enthusiastically cheered, as it deserved to be. This was after the game had been in progress twenty minutes, and the Dragon's supporters were looking very happy.

Barry continued to struggle hard, but try as they would they could not get in any decent shots, and at the other end Hardman headed an inch over the bar from a centre by Barlow. Then with five minutes of the first-half to go, Morley, with a stinging shot from a difficult angle on the right, beat Llewellyn for the third time. Before halftime Walker got in another swift drive, but again the goalie happened to be in the line of fire, and saved at the expense of a corner. When the whistle went the Dragons were attacking. There was never any doubt at the result of the issue, and the spectators were in a very placid mood!

In the second-half the game settled down into a dreary affair. It was too one-sided to be interesting. The Dragons kept pummeling away at the Barry citadel at their leisure, and if it had not been for two or three smart saves on the part of Llewellyn

they would have won by a bigger margin than they eventually did. Early on, Walker had the ball all to himself fifteen yards out and sent in a lightening shot, which Llewellyn managed to beat down, an effort which was duly cheered. Barry gave a little trouble occasionally. Once Turner went out to meet the forwards, picked up the ball, and accidentally and lackadaisically kicked the ball against the body of one the attackers. It might have rebounded into the net, but it did not, and so pleasantly were things going that Turner could afford to 'smile aloud' at the incident. On another occasion a shot deflected off Murray's body when standing close to Turner, who would have been beaten had he not been standing at the right spot. The spectators went on smoking their pipes as if nothing in particular was happening. They would not have cared if Barry did score!

After fifteen minutes of the second-half had elapsed the Dragons obtained their fourth goal, Stallworthy shooting in from close quarters. The Dragons appeared to be content with their lead after this, and the game resolved itself into a pleasant sort of affair. There was a bit of a thrill when McCall, after a fast sprint, cut in from the left with the backs beaten, but Llewellyn came out at the right second and kicked away. Towards the end the visitors made strenuous efforts to get a goal, and they forced two or three corners, but the forwards again showed a lamentable lack of shooting powers. But there! They were tired. The Dragons had taken it out of them in the first-half.

Turner did plenty of kicking and punching and I fancy that he must have said to himself many a time "give us a decent shot, boys!" Once in the second-half, when there was a stoppage, Turner relieved the tedium by placing the ball on the penalty spot and shooting! The ball entered the net, and perhaps Turner will take the Dragons next penalty, but most would rather see Walker given a chance. Neither Murray nor Dalton appeared up to last year's form. The home halves were too good for the Barry backs, and kept their own forwards on the move in good style. Barlow got in some lovely centres when there were no defenders near him, but he did not display the same control over the ball when on the run than he had done in previous matches.

The more people see of Morley the more they like his style of play. He is always keen on the ball, never stoops to questionable tactics, and is generally dead on the target when given a good opening. Stallworthy is a young man of moods. In the cup tie against Lysaghts Exelsiors there was no holding him; on Saturday he allowed himself to be robbed of the ball so frequently that it became quite irritating to watch him. He opened out the game very nicely in the first-half, but the only decent shot that he got in was the one that he scored with. Walker, on the other hand, was banging them in continually, and would have scored two or three had it not been for the excellent goal keeping of Llewellyn. Walker has

improved out of all recognition; and is now a mighty force in himself. McCall gave a thoroughly good exhibition. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 BARRY DISTRICT 0.

Who is for Southend-on-Sea on Saturday week, October 26th? It is understood that members of the supporters club are going in their hundreds, and the special excursion that the Great Western Railway Co. are running ought to be well patronized. Southend have played two matches in South Wales this season. They beat Aberdare 2-1, and drew with Mid-Rhondda 1-1. They also secured a point at Croydon and have only played three matches in the Southern League and their record is not such that it will cause the Dragons to fear and tremble.

Notes on some important impending matches

In the '*Free Press*' of Oct. 24th 1912 '*Old Soccerite*' gave his views on some forthcoming important matches that the Dragons were due to play: -

"Two months of the football season have elapsed, and Pontypridd have only sustained one defeat, and that defeat at Treharris was not deserved on the run of play. The Dragons, however, have not, as yet, met any of the tip-top teams, with the exception, perhaps, of Llanelly, and they will be put to a severe test on Saturday at Southend and on Saturday week at Cardiff. At Southend they will receive vocal encouragement from hundreds of their supporters, and if the Dragons produce their real form they ought not to be beaten. Last Saturday Mid-Rhondda were only defeated at Southend by a penalty goal and that was disputed! The '*Mushrooms*' however, appear to have developed into a sound combination, and since Bain was introduced as Annan's partner at fullback the defence has been as solid as a rock. The English Cup tie at Cardiff on Saturday week between the Dragons and Cardiff overshadows all other impending matches as far as Pontypridd enthusiasts are concerned, and there is likely to be a tremendous crowd at Ninian Park, since thousands will journey from Pontypridd, and the Cardiff supporters are in such high glee just now that they are likely to turn up to a man.

When the same teams met on the same enclosure last season in the final round of the Welsh Cup the game was spoilt to a great extent by a high wind. But the conditions were the same for both sides, and the Welsh Metropolitan failed to get the better of the plucky Dragons. The Welsh Cup is not so magnetic as the English Cup, and I fancy Saturday's cup tie will be more resolutely fought than last year's. Just think what it means. The victorious team will have more than a sporting chance of being pitted against one of the crack English teams in the First Division in the First Round proper in January. Imagine a First Division League team at Taff Vale Park! There will be a titanic struggle at Ninian Park, boys! A Cup-tie is a Cup-tie, and a teams previous record stands for nothing.

What if Cardiff did whack Merthyr by 4-1 at Penydarren Park in the same competition? Football is a game which is full of surprises, and if its Cardiff's turn to cause a sensation one day, it may be the Dragons turn to astonish the world another day. There is nothing like an English cup tie to upset the form. In a Cup tie much depends on which team scores first. A cup tie goal is a rare tonic. Let the Dragons get the first goal at Cardiff, and they will be swept along by the cheers of their supporters for the rest of the game. So far this season the Dragons have only failed to score in one match. Cardiff's defence was penetrated twice in the first-half by Mardy last Saturday and what Mardy can do the Dragons should have no difficulty in accomplishing. But there! It is not much use speculating as to what might happen in an English Cup tie, and we leave the matter there for the present!

Then there's the South Wales and Monmouthshire Cup, in which competition the Dragons have been drawn to meet Mardy at Mardy on Nov. 23rd. The Dragons experienced no difficulty in ousting Mardy from the Welsh Cup competition last season 3-1, but the contest took place in Taff Vale Park. Mardy have a very tough customer in Coates, their centre-forward, but it is quite possible he will have made his departure from the Rhondda Fach by Nov. 23rd, for the Tottenham Hotspur representatives were watching the doubtful young man at Cardiff last Saturday. But whether he is with Mardy or not, one man does not make a team, and the Mardy defence, I fancy, will be found of too fragile a quality to withstand the Dragons clever forward line. On the only occasion that the Dragons have appeared at Mardy they effected a draw 2-2, but that was last season, and no criterion should be formed from the result. If the Dragons are vanquished by Cardiff in the English Cup competition, they will be all the more determined to make a good show in the other Cup competitions, and if they do not beat Mardy outright they ought to draw and win the replay at Taff Vale Park."

Still getting points

Dragons draw at Merthyr and beat Llanelly

Pontypridd were to have met Newport County on Saturday, October 19th 1912 at Taff Vale Park in a Southern League match, but Newport were engaged in a Welsh Cup tie and the Dragons accordingly arranged a Welsh League match with Llanelly, who they defeated by 1-0. On Monday, October 21st 1912, the Dragons had another Welsh League fixture, this time at Merthyr, where they succeeded in effecting a creditable draw 1-1. Thus they had a better record in the Welsh League than any other club.

Match spoiled by continuous downpour of rain

The visit of the Dragons to Southend on Saturday, Oct. 26th 1912 was spoiled by a continuous downpour of rain during the whole time the game was in progress. The home supporters had the opportunity of witnessing the enthusiasm with which the Welsh enter into their sport. 500 supporters of the Dragons left Pontypridd by excursion soon after midnight on Friday, and although about 100 were led astray from football by the charms of London, the remainder made Roots Hall lively. They had a musical contingent who played '*Men of Harlech*' as their men took the field, which was followed by words to the tune of 'The Old Hundredth.' They had also brought with them a goat. Before the game started the goat was led around the pitch by an enthusiast dressed entirely in the Pontypridd colours - Black and White. Nothing could dampen the enthusiasm of these Welshmen, and even when their pets were led 2-0 their spirits never dropped; while at the end they sung to the home supporters that they would have their revenge when Southend came to Pontypridd.

Southend made several changes from their previous match, while Walker was unable to take his place in the Dragons front-line owing to a damaged ankle, Knight filling the inside position next to McCall. Southend had the advantage of the slope in the first-half, and attacked, but Elliott kept a fine goal. Stallworthy was prominent in individual work, his goal, which was judged offside, being the outcome of a break-away by the right-winger. The Dragons goal at last succumbed to a sustained attack of the forwards, who were in a bunch opposite the goal-mouth, when Park took a pot-shot and scored. Directly afterwards, Dalton, apparently thinking Elliott could get a slow ball away, let it go, and the goalie, expecting Dalton to meet it, was unprepared for it. He managed to stop it, but Frost, dashing up, got his foot to it and put it in the net. The goal that reduced the lead came from a pretty movement shared by the whole front-rank. Kebble, ran out of the home goal, and left a clear course for Hall to net.

The second-half was strenuously contested. Both teams played vigorously, the Dragons having most of the play, but could not break through the defence. For the first quarter of an hour they were all over Southend, and continued to have the better of matters to the end, but they failed to get a goal. The game was played in fine spirit, and was remarkable for the way in which both teams were "all out" despite the depressing conditions. Final score: - SOUTHEND 2 PONTYPRIDD 1.

The great English cup-tie

Alongside the above report in the '*Free Press*' '*Old Soccerite*' gave this preview of the cup-tie against Cardiff that coming weekend: "Everybody is talking about the English cup-tie between the Dragons and Cardiff City which will be played at Ninian Park. I can hear my readers muttering 'Never mind the match at Southend that's past - we want to know your views concerning next Saturday's great Cup-tie! I had

something to say about it in the last issue, but so phenomenal is the interest that it has been evinced in the struggle that it behoves me to obey the popular clamour for more speculation this week. Here goes!"

"I can say it once, on behalf of the Dragons, that they are determined to do their best. They realize that it is a great occasion - perhaps the greatest of occasions since the team came into existence during the summer of 1911 - and they are bent upon putting forth a special effort. Cardiff will have the advantage of playing at home - a great thing in a Cup-tie - but the Dragons will have thousands of ardent supporters to cheer them on, and they will be made to feel that they not on foreign ground. The Welsh Metropolitans may have a better record in the Southern League, but what are league records when Cup-ties come round? They are often swept aside like a chaff before the wind. Reputations count for nothing, and "stars" are made to twinkle only fitfully.

If every member of the Pontypridd team enters Ninian Park on Saturday with winning the utmost idea in their mind, there is no knowing what will happen. It's not science, or individual skill, or machinelike combination that wins Cup-ties, but luck, resolution, helter-skelter, hustling, and stamina. These are the attributes you want to show on Saturday, boys! Cardiff seem to have a goal-scoring forward-line, and our half-backs must hustle them off their game. Devlin, must be watched at all costs - and Davies must dog the footsteps of Evans, the fleet left-winger. If our halves do not give the Cardiff forwards too much room, our backs and goalkeeper can be relied upon to give a good account of themselves. Cardiff appear to have a good defence, too. They have only had four goals scored against them in their seven matches in the Southern League. But if the Dragons forwards show their average form they should do well. They are capable of great things once they get going.

No, no, dear reader, I'm not going to say who will win. Feel disappointed do you? Well, I am not a prophet, nor am I an idiot, and to prophesise the result of a Cup-tie would be the height of idiocy. So there! I shall be satisfied with a draw myself, but I don't predict that it will be a draw - that would be prophesising, and prophesising is idiocy. I hope it will be a sporting match, worthy of the great winter pastime, and I hope that the best team on the day's form will gain the victory. I hear that the Dragons will be accompanied by about 4,000 supporters. I hope they will shout for the Dragons for all their worth, but for heavens sake let there be no referee baiting. A referee's task in a Cup-tie is not to be envied, and we should all remember the strain it involves. Pontypridd football enthusiasts have been so accustomed to the rugby game that many of the Dragons supporters have not yet grasped all the intricacies of the soccer code. I have heard shouts in the Taff Vale Park that would suggest some of them are completely at sea over the

offside rule. If you are not thoroughly versed in the rules of the game don't jeer at the referee. Think of Pontypridd's reputation as a sporting community.

I am exceedingly sorry that the weather turned out so wretched for the Dragons supporters outing to Southend, but the 4 or 500 who went appeared to have enjoyed themselves in spite the dismal rain. It must be said that the Dragons have had the luck against them in the Southern League matches this season. Certain persons for purposes of their own are starting a rumour that owing to the alterations and improvements at Ninian Park, there will be no room for a portion of the very large number expected to attend the match. This is flatly contradicted by the ground authorities, who state that no room has been added and that the erection of the new station by the Taff Vale Railway adjoining the ground will provide a considerable advantage and convenience to those attending the match."

The great English Cup-Tie Dragons too slow in waking up

The great English Cup-tie between Cardiff City and Pontypridd is a thing of the past. The Dragons were ousted from the competition on Saturday Nov. 2nd 1912, but only by the smallest possible margin - one solitary goal. Considering that Cardiff had advantage of ground, it may fairly be asserted that at the close of the match honours were even, inasmuch that the team that is fortunate enough to play on its own native heath before its own supporters in a Cup-tie, starts the game a goal to the good. As any follower of the game knows, this is incontrovertible football philosophy. If Cardiff could only win at home by a goal, then assuredly had the game taken place on neutral ground or on Taff Vale Park the Dragons would have been the victors. There is a vast difference between 'away' form and 'home' form.

The numerous excursions that ran from Pontypridd were crowded with enthusiastic supporters of the Dragons, who must have numbered about 3 or 4,000 and what a gay, boisterous lot they were! They were taken straight through to the new station at Ninian Park, and didn't they make their presence felt! As they swarmed into the ground, all wearing the Pontypridd colours, and mixed with the cosmopolitan multitudes of the Welsh Metropolis, they quickly filled the air with electricity. In other words, they made the scene very animated and filled everybody else with excitement. It was an ideal afternoon for football, and at the start everyone was as jovial as Sam Weller, when he first met the acquaintance of the pretty housemaid (reference to a music-hall song of the time).

The spectators numbered over 12,000 - a rare big crowd for Ninian Park, which proved what an attraction the Dragons have made on football followers since they sprang into existence last year. Cardiff City were first to make their appearance,

and of course their supporters received them with the usual roar. The Dragons immediately afterwards tripped onto the field with buoyant men, and were hailed by a might shout by their ardent followers. Cardiff were said not to be at full-strength, but the four men brought in as replacements were equal to those left out. The Dragons had one change from the team at Southend, Turner returning to goal in place of Elliott.

Stallworthy started for Pontypridd, who faced the Canton end. Newton and Hardy checked the opening movements and a pass out to Gaughan enable the City to make progress. G. Burton then broke through nicely before passing to Tracey. The winger made a run for the ball, but Murray got there first, and sent into touch to save the situation. Doncaster was called on to stop McCall and he did so smartly. A cross by Walker caused Hardy to jump to save, and he collided with Stallworthy. The home man fell, and the referee evidently feeling that the player was injured, whistled. As it happened, this was slightly unfortunate for Pontypridd, as the play at the moment was just outside the Cardiff penalty area. The referee threw down the ball, and Leah cleared.

Gaughan, showing smartness on the left-wing, Pontypridd were placed well on the defensive, and Dalton could do no better than put the ball into touch. A brief excursion into the home quarters, with Morley and Hall, was replied to by Hardy, and there was just a chance that Burton would have got through when he accepted a pass. Davies, the Dragons right-half, pressed him and the ball was sent out again. Morley, supported by Hardman, gained ground for the visitors. There was no danger, however, when Newton cut in and cleared. Then, following a clever movement, initiated by George Burton. Taking a pass from his brother he forced his way down the left, and it gave Gaughan possession, and then accepted the re-pass splendidly. Although the defence was keen George Burton worked the ball into the centre, and after getting into a favourable position, banged the ball past Turner, thus giving City the lead after fifteen minutes play.

There was some excitement during the next few minutes, and Pontypridd hustled and tried hard to draw on level terms, but there appeared to be a lack of understanding between the forwards when they had a chance. The City, a few minutes later, forced a corner from some uncertain kicking by Murray. The Dragons Captain, however, was exceedingly quick in preventing any addition to the score, and he opened an attacking movement that was fraught with danger to the home team. With high lobbing passes, the Pontypridd tried to circumvent the City halves. Showing his pace, Tracey cleverly got the better of Fell, and centred with judgement, Jack Burton headed across to Gaughan, who tried a shot, but sent high over the bar. Pontypridd next sorely tried the home backs, but over-eagerness lost Stallworthy a chance, and Kneeshaw cleared. Morley had a fine chance of

equalizing, but dallied with the ball.

Tracey made the most of an opportunity by beating Davies and Murray by his tricky footwork, and sent in a pass right across the goal-mouth. It was any odds-on a score, but the shot from Jack Burton hit the crossbar and rebounded to Hardman. Gaughan then shot in, only to find the visiting goalkeeper safe. However, the well-judged passing and combination exhibited by the home team gave them a decided advantage and Jack Burton, after a very clever movement, added to the score. Pontypridd showed greatly increased determination in the face of the two goals reverse, and made the pace a warm one. But it was found that the Cardiffian's could do more than hold their own. Half-time arrived with Cardiff leading 2-0.

Soon after the restart Featherstone was given a chance, but he failed to accurately get his foot on the ball. Morley made an opening for Hall, but the latter failed to avail himself of it. Gaughan slipped by Dalton, only to be tripped up, and the free-kick gave the Pontypridd defenders heavy work to do before clearing. In quick time chances were made from end to end, and Pontypridd got nearer to scoring than at any other time during the game. Kneeshaw had to fist away from Morley and Davies. A slight injury to McCall caused the game to be delayed for a few minutes. The Dragons now played up vigorously. The City backs were harassed and became a little wild in their kicking, and Pontypridd claimed a penalty for 'hands' against Leah. Pontypridd were really improving in their play as the game advanced, and each man showing great activity, they forced the pace. In one foray Kneeshaw was hurt. Stallworthy took advantage of a misunderstanding between Leah and the goalkeeper, and dashing through in great style he drew Kneeshaw out and scored a neat goal. The game was very exciting, and it was feared that some of the players were losing their better judgement. The Pontypridd forwards resented a ruling by the referee, which placed Stallworthy offside. Then next Gaughan got going on the left-wing he was tripped by Dalton.

The Dragons had made the mistake of letting the homesters get into their stride early in the game. The Cardiff forwards settled down quickly; the Pontypridd forwards did not, and deferred their great efforts until the second-half. If they had played as effectively in the first-half as they had done in the second the Dragons would not have been beaten. The Dragons defence was sound all through; it was the forwards that lost the match. Murray was seen at his best, and those who have witnessed his play frequently know what that means. Dalton gave a vigorous exhibition, and Turner kept goal with his customary resourcefulness. Hardman was the most useful of the half-backs, his defensive work being splendid. Stallworthy displayed good form and his goal was a neat one. Walker was thrustful, but the other forwards only shone intermittently. They all tried hard in the second-half, but a football match has two halves, and in an English Cup-Tie to allow your

opponents an early goal is fatal. How strange that the Dragons should have been beaten by Cardiff in two Cup Ties, and not once on the three other occasions that they have met! Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 2 PONTYPRIDD 1.

The Dragons now turned their eyes to the Welsh Cup. They reached the final last season; why shouldn't they win it this season? The following Saturday Pontypridd would play their first game at Swansea, and a very interesting match it ought to be. This is Swansea's first season in the Southern League, and so far they had done remarkably well in the competition, having won three matches, drawn one, and lost none. It was evident that they had a good team, and the Dragons would have to reproduce their very best form if they hoped to bring away a point. If they lost on this occasion then their position in the Southern League table would cause their supports to scratch their foreheads and ask how it is that they are not doing so well as last year, when things went on so well that talk of promotion was in the air at Christmas time. The Dragons had gathered around them a mighty band of loyal supporters who preferred victories to defeats. They fancied, somehow, that their team could be full of 'go' at Abertawe, now that the 'great tie' was off their minds, and they may spring a surprise on their lusty supporters. Play up, the Dragons!

Dragons at Swansea

The Dragons, of Pontypridd, played their first match with Swansea on Saturday, Nov. 9th 1912, and came away with a point after a keenly fought game. This was a grand performance considering that Swansea have previously gained nine Southern league points out of a possible ten. The Dragons had Barlow at outside-right, and Knight at inside-left, the team being otherwise the same that did duty at Cardiff. Swansea were at full strength. There were 5,000 spectators.

Pontypridd attacked early, Barlow just being tackled. Nicholas cleared finally to Ball, who was getting away, but the referee blew for offside. Ball was not long in receiving again, and sent in a very hot shot from long range, which Turner cleared. Murray next came to the rescue in fine style and then Turner saved in fine style. Pretty work was then done by Prideaux who passed judiciously to Ball who was again deemed to be offside. The Dragons then attacked in great style, and Morley had a good opening, but he failed to take advantage of it. A free-kick was given against Gepp near the home penalty area. The kick was well placed and Whittaker just managed to tip the ball over the bar. Gepp did some good work for Swansea and then Ball secured in mid-field and passing to Swarbrick, who shot, the ball hitting the crossbar. Barlow and Morley got away smartly again for Pontypridd, and the former beat Nicholas, but the movement was spoilt by another infringement of the offside rule. The homesters again invaded, and the visiting backs were very hard pressed.

When the game was resumed after the interval it was gratifying to note that Dalton was again able to turn out. From the kick-off Knight beat Cleverly, who gave away a corner, which was followed by Prideaux doing the same thing on the other side. Some pretty passing followed between Morley and Stallworthy, who got nicely away, but he ended up with a poor shot. A fine home forward movement followed, Pearson received from a free-kick and put in a fast ground-shot, which Turner only just saved. The visitors were playing a vigorous game as they fought valiantly to defend their goal. At last the visitors got away in the centre, but Nicholas soon put things right again for Swansea and played settled down in mid-field for a time. At this stage the referee blew his whistle and called all the players around him, and he appeared to be giving a general caution. After more mid-field play, thanks to Nicholas, the Swans were awarded another corner and continued to press, which ended with Gepp heading over the bar. After more offside play Swarbrick put in another lovely shot, which just skimmed the crossbar. The visitors tried hard to get away, but failed, and play was continually in the visitors half. Final score: - SWANSEA 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The Dragons played at home against Aberdare in the Welsh League on Monday, Nov. 11th 1912, the result being a draw 1-1. The Dragon's forwards showed good form and ought to have scored more than one goal. The Dragons were still unbeaten in the Welsh League and were at the top. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 ABERDARE 1.

Beaten by Mardy again

"The Dragons supporters, hitherto so enthusiastic were beginning to wax critical" reported the '*Free Press*.' "They are not satisfied with the way things have been going lately. The last six matches had resulted in four defeats and two draws, and its victories that supporters relish. Something of a climax was reached in the middle of November, when the Dragons were beaten twice at "a little place like Mardy," as one supporter put it. On Thursday, Nov. 14th the Dragons sustained their first defeat in the Welsh League, Mardy getting the better of them by four goals to two. It was generally thought that the Dragons would have put forth a special effort and have their revenge on Saturday, Nov.16th 1912, when they journeyed to the same village to take part in South Wales & Monmouthshire Cup-Tie. But again they failed. 'What's the matter with them?' people were asking; They are clearly not doing as well as last season.' They were certainly not. Hitherto the defence had given a good account of itself, but in the two Mardy matches seven goals were scored against the visitors, four on Thursday and three on Saturday. It is no good mentioning the Mardy ground as an excuse. The Dragons must learn to adapt themselves to such grounds, like other visiting teams,

otherwise they can't hope to make much headway in the football world. "

Both Luton and Cardiff had recently gained handsome victories at Treharris, and the Treharris playing pitch was not as good as that at Mardy. Such grounds abound in all parts of the kingdom, and professional footballers, with their physical abilities and resourcefulness, ought to overcome any little difficulties that present themselves in this connection. No, no; that won't do as an excuse. In recent matches the players have dilly-dallied in the initial stages instead of letting themselves go right away from the kick-off, and the result has been shown that they find themselves two goals down before they have gauged their bearing. It was thus at the Cup-tie at Cardiff; and it was thus at Mardy on Saturday. Its the team that 'goes bang at it' the very first minute that wins matches nowadays. It's no use waiting for something to turn up in the first-half and reserving your stamina until the second-half. A team that gets an early lead gets something besides goals; it gets embued with confidence, with determination, with enthusiasm, and in keen contests these emotions, once they get possession of the players, are as valuable as three additional players.

Early in the second-half on Saturday Mardy were actually leading by three clear goals. Their forwards went straight for goal and "piled 'em on" while the Dragons were dreaming dreams, that's the way to win Cup-ties, isn't it? Mardy were evidently egged on to their brave deeds by the frantic shouts of their supporters. They can shout, can these Rhondda Fach spectators! The players that won't respond to such demonstrative enthusiasm do not exist. The Mardy boys seemed to be swept onward by the war-cries, but if the Dragon defenders had kept their eyes on the dangerous men they would not have scored as they did."

The Dragons went away at the start and forced a corner in the first minute, Stallworthy shooting over when well placed, but Mardy quickly retaliated. From a melee in front of goal Coates just missed. Play was very even until Lockett got away splendidly, but his centre went a-begging. Pontypridd removed play to the other end, where Knight was almost through, but D. V. Jones brought off a splendid save. Then away went the home forwards in a line. Lewis sent in a swift shot, but Turner easily cleared. In the next minute Dalton conceded a corner, from which Griffiths scored. The excitement was intense, Mardy pressing hard in quick succession. Turner cleared from Coates. Griffiths, Kinsey, Howard, made attacks, but Murray was playing a great game. Mardy still continued on the attack, Lockett beating Dalton prettily, and passed across a neat centre, from which Lewis beat Turner for a second time. D. V. Jones was playing a fine game, and held Walker and McCall well. The Dragons pressed and McCall centred. Davies later got away well for Pontypridd but put in a tepid cross when getting dangerous. Half-time arrived with Mardy leading 2-0.

The Dragons improved in the second-half, but, as in Cardiff, their effort came too late. Coates put on a third goal for Mardy, and Knight and Walker scored for Pontypridd. Knight's shot was a neat one. Walker's goal arrived just before time, and it enabled the Dragons to emerge from the fray with greater credit than at one time seemed likely. Jones, gave a splendid exhibition at back for Mardy and Coates, Lewis, and Lockett were always conspicuous amongst the forwards. Murray was in form for the Dragons, and among the forwards Knight and McCall did well. It was a very strenuous game, a great pace being maintained all through, and the spectators had a thorough afternoons entertainment. Mardy proved they are a very difficult team to defeat on their own enclosure. It was surprising that Coates still played in the Rhondda Fach, and not for a big team. Final score: - MARDY 3 PONTYPRIDD 2.

How the reserves gave a fright to the Dragons

The Dragons having no fixture on Saturday, Nov. 13th 1912, a match was arranged between themselves and the Reserves, and the Dragons Premier team not only failed to win, but were lucky to effect a draw! Of course, some will say "They didn't try!" "Didn't they?" wrote '*Old Soccerite*' Then they ought to have done. The spectators paid to see a football match, and a match is no match unless both teams try their hardest from beginning to end. If one team 'doesn't try' then the match is reduced to a farce. The Dragons are paid to play, and professional players who 'don't try,' no-matter who their opponents happen to be, are not acting in a sportsmanlike spirit.

I made my way to Taff Vale Park on Saturday afternoon in order to see a bit of fun. In other words, I went to see the Dragons put on half-a-dozen goals or so; for who would have thought the Reserves could hold their own against the Premiers? But instead of seeing the Dragons piling in, I saw the Reserves leading by 2-1 until the last few minutes, when their formidable opponents managed to scramble an equalizer in semi-darkness. There were many good spectators present in spite of the dismal weather, and the end saw everybody smiling - and cheering the triumphant Reserves. A humorist suggested that the contestants should change places in future - that the Reserves should become the Premiers, and the Premiers should transform themselves into the Reserves.

The Reserves front line had three players named Evans - H. Evans, F. Evans, and T. Evans. The other two were T. Jones and West. West is the one-armed player of which the reader will previously have heard. He is a dashing player, and what a pity it is that he should be handicapped in this way! The halves were T. Williams, Hemmings, and Owens. Behind them were Downes and Downes, with Elliott in

goal. The Premiers team consisted of Turner, Goal; Dalton and Murray, backs; Davies, Stallworthy and Fell, halfbacks; Barlow, Doran Knight, Walker and McCall, forwards. It will be seen that Hardman and Morley were not included, but the whole of the above have played in the Premier team during the present season, so it might be described as a fairly representative combination, although, of course, not the Dragons strongest.

The Reserves went away with a bang, and a crowd of boisterous spectators who clustered together on the riverside of the ground kept other people in good humour by their raucous shouts. "Go on the Blacks,!" they roared, and the Blacks did go on, Turner having to field a fast grounder in the first five minutes to the huge delight of the "Riversiders." Then did McCall make one or two fast sprints on the left-wing, winding up eventually with a "stinger" against the uprights. 'Mack' looked very determined, and everybody expected "fireworks" in that quarter, but after opening vigorously fell away and did little more in the first-half. For a long time the exchanges were even, both sides attacking in turn, with the Reserves always displaying greater dash.

The 'Rangers' goal was the great incident of the first-half, but there were other happenings that sent the 'Riversiders' buzzing. 'Micky' Barlow, of course. caught their fancy. He is popular with the 'boys;' that's why they call him 'Micky.' It is a term of endearment, and when 'Micky' banged in one of his very own 'specials' from the right didn't they roar! It was a good too many yards high, but what did that matter? Its the speed of Micky's specials that thrills. Most of them go over the bar, but their "Micky's" and that's enough. If an eagle had got in the way of this particular shot it would have been killed instantaneously and been knocked clean through into the Tramroad - or there about. Its no wonder therefore, that the 'Riversiders' laughed and hoorayed uproariously, and that their sides nearly split. It's only in Pontypridd that Micky's 'specials' are to be seen. Another mighty shout went up when the Reserves scored. The outside-right, T. Williams, beat Murray and sent the ball right across the goalmouth. Turner was then standing by the near goal post and the ball rolled to Tom Evans, who tapped it easily into the other corner.

Of course, everybody said during the interval that the Dragons would make up for it in the second-half. But they found their task a difficult one. The Reserves, having tasted first blood, were now keener than ever, the forwards, halves and backs all putting forth efforts that did them credit. Rowe, changed places with Stallworthy in order, presumably, to put more life into the attack. After ten minutes play Walker got in a sharp rising shot from near in on the left, which hit the underside of the crossbar and dropped into the net. Elliott had not previously to this had one troublesome shot to deal with, but he had all along shown

quickness and certainty in his clearances. The Reserves continued to peg away pluckily, and when eventually they took the lead again after clever work on right-wing there was quite a hurricane of cheering, for the end was near and this looked like victory. It was Tom Evans again who got the goal.

The best shot of the match came from Hemmings, the Reserve centre-half. Pouncing on the ball from a corner-kick, when twenty yards out he promptly 'booted,' a fast, high shot which almost caught Turner napping. The giant managed to "double-fist" the ball down just in the nick of time. On another occasion West missed the easiest of openings. He stood within three yards of Turner with the ball at his feet, but instead of shooting promptly he allowed the goalie to pick up the ball and throw it away. The Dragons obtained their equalising goal in the last five minutes, when it was so dark that the spectators could not see what was happening. Walker shot, and Elliott appeared to save, but the referee awarded a goal, the ball evidently being over the line. It would have been very humiliating if the mighty Dragons had been actually beaten by the Reserves, and a draw was not displeasing under the circumstances. A defeat would have effected the moral of the team at a time that they should be imbued with confidence. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 PONTYPRIDD RESERVES 2. On Thursday, Nov. 21st, 1912 the Dragons played a 0-0 draw with Ton Pentre in a Southern League match at Taff Vale Park.

Dragons revival

At the end of November 1912 "*Old Soccerite*" wrote: - "I felt very happy when I left Taff Vale Park on Thursday afternoon, Nov. 28th, because I saw the Dragons give a special exhibition of football against Merthyr. It was a Welsh League match, Merthyr, of course, did not bring their best team, but when one talks of Merthyr's best team ye ought to reflect thus: Merthyr have such a large number of first team players that it would be difficult to say who are the 'Premiers' and who are the 'Reserves.'" They have signed on many new men in view of their promotion to the Southern League First Division, and in their case Premiers of yesterday are the reserves of today. And it must also be borne in mind that the Dragons took the field without McCall and Walker, H. Evans of the reserves being given a trial at outside-left. It was a splendid match, keenly contested from beginning to end, and some really good football was witnessed. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 5 MERTHYR 1.

The Dragons continued their 'new career' on Monday, Dec. 2nd 1912, by beating Swansea in a Welsh League game by 1-0 at Taff Vale Park. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 SWANSEA 0.

Pontypridd maintain their good Form

The visit of Pontypridd to Luton on Dec. 7th 1912, had been looked forward to with much interest, and in spite of the wretched weather a good crowd assembled. The Dragons made no change in their team, and Luton had their strongest combination out. It was realised by the "Strawplaiters" that they must get the full points if they were to bid for First Division honours. The visitors nearly scored in the first minute owing to the Luton defence getting tangled up, and Henderson saved on the goal-line.

A free-kick set Luton going, but the Pontypridd halves played a bustling game and kept the home forwards off the ball. The Welsh forwards made frequent raids, from one of which Knight shot well. For a few minutes Pontypridd were penned, but they defended brilliantly, and Turner had nothing to do. The visitors goal had a wonderful escape when Stephenson missed a centre from Streeton almost on the goal-line, while from the corner that followed Thomson shot just wide. Hall made two creditable attempts to get going, but offside intervened, and for a while the ball was kept in the Pontypridd half. Twenty minutes from the start Stallworthy, accepting a pass from Davies, tricked Henderson, and running through, scored a brilliant goal as he was tackled by Potts. This encouraged the visitors to further efforts, but they wasted a good chance presented by a free-kick. They still pegged hard away, however, but their tendency to get offside discounted their good play. Fine work by Henderson and Hawkes at length raised the siege, but while centring threw away every opening. There was no holding the Pontypridd halves at this point, and Luton could do nothing against them. A fine dash by Stallworthy looked promising, but again offside prevented a score. Luton were also at fault in this respect when they got going. The visitors also tried 'kicking out' tactics, and by dashing methods kept Luton at bay. A fine centre by Hawkes was fisted away by Turner, and Dalton blocked a shot by the same player.

In the second-half the game continued to be strenuously contested, and good football was played despite the treacherous state of the turf. It was well on in the second-half when Luton equalized, Hawkes heading into the net. The Dragons played up in great style towards the end, and when five minutes before time Knight gave them the lead, it was generally thought to be the winning goal. However, Luton made desperate final rally, and in the last minute Hawkes again equalized. Lucky Strawplaiters! Stallworthy was regarded as the best centre-forward seen at Luton this season. The Dragons were the best team on the day's play and should have won. Final score: - LUTON 2 PONTYPRIDD 2.

The Dragons form against Merthyr, Aberdare and Swansea was not a flash in the pan affair, it was the real, genuine, form of the team, and the form that their

supporters knew them capable of as soon as they displayed co-operation and determination. The draw at Luton was quite as creditable a performance as any of their recent victories, for let it be borne in mind that Luton, who were only relegated from the First Division of the Southern League last season, had not previously this season dropped a point on their own ground, and their record in the competition before this game was won 6, Lost 1, Drawn 1. The 'Strawplaiters' as they are called, have been running a 'neck and neck' race with Cardiff for chief honours.

They are evidently on the way back to the First Division and the loss of a point at home must have been a serious matter for them. The Dragons played with splendid resolution from start to finish, because they would not yield an inch with the prize they had in view. Bravo, the Dragons! You'll make things hum yet! If you continued to show this form you'll yet make a bid for promotion. A good deal will result on the Christmas holiday matches. Pity is that they should have so many Southern League engagements in the course of one week. Still, I fancy trainer Rowe knows how to keep the boys "fit".

Dragons defeated at Vetch Field

On Dec. 12th 1912 Pontypridd were defeated 3-2 in a Welsh League fixture at the Vetch Field, Swansea, before a rather poor attendance. A series of corners fell to Swansea midway through the first-half and eventually Messer beat Turner with a shot from close range. The Dragons made a good response, and quickly retaliated, Hall banging the ball past Whittaker after some brilliant work by McCall down the left-wing. Just before the interval Hall scored the Dragons second goal from another scramble in front of the home goalmouth. Almost immediately in the second half Ball headed Swansea's second from a fine header. A little later Swansea scored the winning goal. The Dragons rallied but were unable to equalize and the final whistle arrived with the Dragons still in the danger zone. Final score: - SWANSEA 3 PONTYPRIDD 2.

Keen game between Pontypridd and Treharris

Despite the dismal weather and fact that it was a Welsh and not a Southern League match, there was a very big crowd at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Dec. 14th 1912 to see the Dragons tackle Treharris. The Dragons recent doings had excited a heightened interest in their supporters, and it was unfortunate that the ground was in such a sodden condition owing to the rain, that a polished exhibition of football seemed out of the question. In spite, however, of a greasy ball and a heavy turf, the Dragons gave a really clever exhibition in the first-half, although they failed to secure a lead, and if the quality of football deteriorated after the

interval, it was not altogether surprising considering the trying conditions that the players had been battling against. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 1 TREHARRIS 1.

The Dragons secure a point at Croydon

The Dragons were still maintaining their fine form, and their performance at Croydon Common on Saturday, Dec.21st 1912, following their draw at Luton, stamps them as one of the best in Division Two of the Southern League. How many teams are there that will secure a point both at Luton and Croydon? If McCall had not missed the chance of a lifetime then the Dragons would have won at Croydon. There was no change in the Dragons team. The weather being fine and a big crowd assembled. A goal-less draw was not an unjust result, but had the Dragons experienced the least luck they would have secured both points. Luck never comes the Dragons way. They have to play hard for their victories, and draws, and "merit" is their motto. The Dragons forwards showed up well, the "Robins" defence having to display unceasing vigilance to keep them out. It was a most interesting match to watch and the spectators formed a very high opinion of the calibre of the Dragons from Pontypridd. Wait 'till you come to Taff Vale Park, you Robins! We must have our revenge on you for that 1-0 defeat on that frost bound ground last season. Final score: - CROYDON COMMON 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

A fateful week

'*Old Soccerite*' in the '*Free Press*' wrote: - "Yes, the Christmas holiday week will be a fateful one for the Dragons. Three Southern League matches within the course of four days! But if they come out of the ordeal with flying colours it will brighten their prospects of promotion, especially if they beat Luton, who, with Cardiff are their most dangerous rivals. The result at Ninian Park on Christmas Day is no forgone conclusion. It is quite true that so far the Cardiffians can claim the best record in the league, but their form during recent weeks has been anything but convincing. Cardiff may strike a 'bad patch' I wrote three weeks ago. They have done so.

To be whacked at home by 3-0 by Southend after their rousing Cup-tie victories over Merthyr, Llanelly and Exeter City, is humiliating, and one of those experiences that often have a depressing effect on a team, as witness Merthyr after their crushing defeat by Cardiff themselves in the English Cup competition. It took Merthyr some weeks to recover from that little surprise, and all things considered I shouldn't be a bit surprised see the Dragons cause a sensation at Ninian Park. If the Dragons reproduce their tip-top form they are quite equal to defeating Cardiff even at Ninian Park. And then it must be borne in mind that holiday matches never fail to yield astonishing results. This is a time when home teams are frequently

beaten by weaker opponents. Cardiff will find that the Dragons are not weak opponents, but formidable foes, and if the luck is not against them they ought to exact a draw at least.

There will be a big crowd at Taff Vale Park on Thursday, Boxing Day, to see the Dragons tackle Ton Pentre. Mention of Ton Pentre conjures up a vision of that tremendously exciting Welsh Cup-tie last March, when the Dragons after being a goal down until the last quarter of an hour, wound up a stirring match by putting in three dramatic and glorious goals before the whistle went for time. There were 8,000 spectators, and what a scene there was when the Dragons secured the lead. The ground shook as it were an earthquake, for men - and women, too - were mad with enthusiasm. Ton Pentre were a dashing team then, but they have been very quiet since the beginning of the present season and the Dragons ought to beat them hands down. But still, we ought never to take anything for granted in the football world. 'Ton' may rise to the occasion and the Dragons must go bang for goal at every opportunity. The 'Reds' from the Rhondda have always played well at Taff Vale Park. There will be another big attendance on Saturday, when Luton will be the visitors. It will be a contest worth going miles to see.

Luton have some very famous footballers in their ranks, including Frank Hawkes, the former English amateur international. The spectators will know him by his auburn hair. Watch him and you will see brains at work! From all accounts the Dragons had the best of the home team at Luton a few weeks ago, and I am sure that they will win at home. What a lot we shall know at the end of the week, and how we shall talk! We'll know for one thing, what teams have improved their prospects of promotion, and what teams have spoiled their chances, and tongues will wag as they never have wagged before."

Splendid feat at Cardiff

The 10,000 spectators at Ninian park on Christmas Day were rewarded for their pluck on braving the most dismal weather conditions by being given one of the most sparkling exhibitions seen on the ground. The continual rains had left the surface of the ground in an awful condition, and how the players managed to keep their feet as they did passed all understanding, and congratulations had also to go to them for fouls were conspicuous by their rarity.

The result - a draw - is to a great extent the correct reflex of the game, for either side would have been unfortunate had the other side gained two points. Cardiff City's cherished league record was as near being besmirched as possible, but they saved their bacon in time, and the wonder is that they did not gain the two points, for the last ten minutes were brimful of excitement as the other seventy minutes

put together, and those seventy minutes were by no means devoid of excitement.

It was a game where the defence on both sides triumphed over the attack. At the start the Dragons' backs were weak, Dalton in particular showing a weakness for kicking out. At the same time the City pair were no great shakes, mis-kicking being a feature. 'Heads' had more to say, so to speak, than 'feet,' and both sides showed much cleverness in this department. 'Ponty' were accompanied by quite 3,000 partisans and gave the crowd plenty of thrills. Their forwards were, to a certain point, better than the "Citizens" front rank, but they gave Kneeshaw practically nothing to do, and for the greater part was a spectator. Apart from the one shot that beat him, he was only tested on one occasion, while Turner in the other goal was cheered time after time for his clever clearances.

It was from the wing that the Dragons got their goal. McCall met a fine cross from the right to score, just as a heavy storm of rain beat across the ground. A few minutes later Dalton committed an infringement and from the free-kick Evans kicked across the goalmouth for Featherstone to send past Turner. Two minutes later Featherstone again netted, but offside was given, and rightly too, and City just escaped the two points. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 1 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Boxing Day at Ton Pentre

Pontypridd's match at Ton Pentre on Boxing Day saw the weather seriously interfere with the game. Pontypridd attacked from the start, Morley sending a shot just over the bar. Aided by the wind the Dragons got going again and Knight headed the ball just wide of the goal. Directly afterwards the Dragons took the lead from a corner. Hall centred to Bob Davies, who found the net with a shot which completely beat the defence. Morley next scored for Pontypridd from a well-judged centre from Hall. Twice the Dragons again netted the ball, the goals in each case being disallowed for offside. There was no scoring in the second-half. Final score: - TON PENTRE 0 PONTYPRIDD 2. The Pontypridd team : Turner; Murray & Dalton; R. Davies, Hemmings & Hardman; Hall, Morley, Stallworthy, Knight & McCall.

Dragons perform finely against Luton

Pontypridd's ground record was broken on Saturday, Dec. 28th 1912 - and it was to a certain extent their own fault, for had better tactics been adopted the great defence of the 'Strawplaiters' would have been circumvented. With the tactics Captain Charlie Murray's men selected the sturdy pair of Luton defenders had little

trouble in booting the ball away, and this they did to the admiration of the crowd, who took the defeat very well indeed, considering what was at stake. The behaviour of the crowd was admirable, for the game was vigorous to the extreme - but there was an absence of dirty play. Both sides gave and took knocks, which delighted the crowd, who look with disfavour upon a game of the drawing-room flavour.

The Dragons should have had the lead at the interval. Hardman's work was brilliant, and he set his men in front going time after time, only to see the wing forwards centring to the feet of Potts and Henderson. Twice at least Pontypridd should have scored in the first-half. How Henderson managed to divert Hardman's free-kick from entering the net was a wonder. Then there was Stallworthy's chance. He put too much sting in his kick when beating Thompson, with the consequence that Abbott reached the ball before he could shoot. And Morley's header before the close of the first-half! What a sample of luck!

It was not long before the Dragons made things lively in the second-half. Abbott luckily saved Stallworthy's shot, and Potts was equally lucky in getting his head to a shot from Morley. A tight pressure was maintained on Luton, but the Dragons could not get the better of Henderson and Potts, and the Dragons would not have scored in any way but by a penalty, which Hall made no mistake with. This reverse had a wonderful effect on Luton. They went at it 'hammer and tongs,' and their pressing was such that Dalton and Murray were kept on tenterhooks all the time.

It was from one of the latter's clearances that the first Luton goal came. Murray's face got in the way of the ball - it was a wonder he was not knocked out - which went to Worth. Turner had run out to meet the ball, but he misjudged the flight, and Luton thus equalized. Their second goal was prettily worked. Bob Hawkes shot, and Turner, going full length on his side, saved, but he failed to hold the ball, and Worth gained possession. This player, could not shoot, for Turner was in the way, but he passed to Wilemman, who scored into an open net. This was the last score of the game. Finals score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 LUTON 2.

Rhayader annihilated

Few people expected an amateur team like Rhayader would prove themselves worthy of the Dragons steel, but on the other hand no-one dreamt that they would be trounced by nine goals to nil. The Dragons having reached the final round in the Welsh Cup competition last season were exempted from the earlier rounds this season, and this was their first match. Rhayader had already ousted Llandrindod and Llanidloes, but they were no match for the Dragons. It was unfortunate that the weather on Saturday, January 4th 1913, should have been so wretched, the

gate suffering greatly in consequence.

The Dragons tried experimenting with the forward line, the formation being: McCall, Morley, Knight, Walker and Davies. McCall, it will be seen, was transferred from outside-left to outside-right. Hemmings, of the reserves, figured at centre-half, Hardman taking Davies's place on the right. The fact that the team scored nine goals against Rhayader is not to be taken as proof that the new formation is an improvement on the old, for the simple reason that the defence exposed to them was not of professional calibre. Still, it was an occasion when experiments could be made without risk, and experiments are always useful.

The Dragons were quickly on the warpath. Morley sent McCall going and the new right-winger centred, Walker just missing heading into the net. From the kick-out Rhayader took up the attack and Harley gave Turner a good shot to deal with. Both ends of the field were visited in turn, and Wilde dealt with two shots from Morley. Walker, after some tricky work, sent the ball to Knight, who opened the scoring for the Dragons after fifteen minutes play. It was but a minute later that Knight again scored from a centre from McCall. The visitors next went away and Turner was called upon to clear. Hemming headed the ball down nicely for McCall, but Morris headed away. The Dragons were having all their own way despite the heroic efforts of the opposing defence.

Walker broke through, and it was only through the ball stopping in a pool of water that a goal was averted. Clever movements by the Dragons defence neutralised an attack. Rhayader were by no means discouraged, and attacked hotly with swinging passes, and Murray was taxed to get the ball away. Wilde, the Mid-Walian goalie, who was playing a grand game, took three steps with the ball in his possession. The free, however, was of no avail to Pontypridd. The rousing cheers that were raised whenever the visitors broke away showed that they had followers present. Bob Davies and Hardman distinguished themselves, and Walker again netted, but the goal was disallowed for offside play. A free to the visitors placed them temporarily in an attacking position, but the visitors now asserted themselves, and a loose kick by Murray nearly let them in.

Play was transferred to the opposite end by an individual burst on the part of Walker, who shot a yard over the bar. A nice passing movement by the visitors was cut short by Dalton kicking away. Play for several minutes was in neutral ground. The Dragons again attacked through Hemmings, who just missed scoring. Offside play cut short repeated attacks by the home quintet, but despite that Walker forced two successive corners. From the latter their opponents took play to half-way, but were then again placed on the defensive. Hemmings with a long shot just sent over the bar. Goal number three for the Dragons was at the same

time the hat-trick' for Knight, who placed in the net with a beautiful shot from an awkward angle. The trickiness of the Pontypridd forwards non-plused their opponents. A minute later Walker just missed with a great shot. The visitors were applauded for a clever move on the right, but Jones relieved. The Dragons contributed an excellent movement, while carrying the ball to the other end of the field, but no goal resulted. At the interval the Dragons were three up. Immediately on the restart the Dragons rushed away, and Morley with a terrific shot increased the score. The ball went through the net, and the goal was cause for some dispute. Pontypridd continued to attack, but met with stubborn defence. Hemmings shone in getting the home forwards away, and Morris, the visitors' left-back defended valiantly. Chances were lost to the Dragons through the players getting out of position in their eagerness. Symondes, the visitors' outside-left, once clean beat the defence, and a shot was only saved in the nick of time by Turner. After a short period on the defensive the Dragons again attacked through McCall. Wilde saved smartly from McCall, and an exciting moment in the visitors' goal was followed by another great effort from Symondes. Murray kicked clear.

The visitors kept up the pressure, and Dalton and Hemmings were responsible for its repulse. The Dragons made headway on the left but Wilde was not called upon. The visitors were now playing much better, and continually broke away. Shortly after, the visitors goal had several lucky escapes. Walker and Morley got away, but were quickly driven back. The visitors' supporters hooted when the Dragons defence kicked out, but evidence was soon forthcoming that the home team were far from being satisfied with their lead. A centre from McCall was put into the net by Walker. The visitors deserved to score from their ensuing efforts. At the other end the Dragons had bad luck in not increasing their lead. Yet another score fell to the Dragons from Knight, who scored from a well placed corner. Following this a great chance to reduce the lead fell to Williams, who shot wide. A movement by the Dragons again took play to the vicinity of the Rhayader goal, where Fell scored the Dragons seventh goal.

The record score for the ground of eight goals was equalized by Walker, and just on time Hemmings created a new record by scoring the ninth. It will be remembered that the Dragons beat Connah's Quay in the same competition last season by 8-0, and ousted Lysaght's Excelsior from the English Cup this season by 8-1. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 9 RHAYADER 0.

Dragons supporters night

On Saturday night, Jan. 11th 1913, at the Bridge Inn Hotel, Pontypridd, a meeting of the Pontypridd AFC Supporters Club was well attended and the ways and means of making the club more interesting and attractive to its members were considered.

Mr. P. Kenward ably presided. Proposals were put forward to be considered further included: (1) The club should be open every night and games of all sorts be provided, including Bagetelle, Billiards, Etc; (2) That the newspapers should be provided; (3) That the committee be empowered to approach the Dragons directors with a view to building a covered Grand stand at the Taff Vale Park at the Supporters expense; (4) That the secretary gets in touch with other supporters clubs with a view to a general linking of all such clubs in the Principality. "Micky" Barlow was presented with a gold medal by the club as a recognition of his services and a token of regard. The secretary, Mr. Rostrom handed same over to him. A vacancy having occurred in the committee Mr. J. Birkett was elected to act in future. Mr. Birkett, who was in office last season makes a welcome return.

Will Pontypridd win the cup?

"Will the Dragons win the Welsh Cup?" wrote a local newspaper. "That will be the great problem in the local football world for the next few weeks. Last year, the first year of their existence, they reached the final and Cardiff City failed to beat them at the first attempt. On present form the Dragons are a more dangerous team than they were at any time during the season 1911-12, and with ordinary luck they may win the cup."

Having trounced Rhayader by 9-0, the Dragons met Hadley Castle in the fourth round at the Taff Vale Park on Saturday Jan. 18th 1913 and ran out winners by 6-1. Hadley Castle, a Shropshire team had previously defeated Aberystwyth and Wellington Street G's. The game had been drawn at Hadley Castle, but they were induced to play at Taff Vale Park for a consideration. They brought with them their strongest team and were confident of giving a good account of themselves.

The Dragons reverted to the old order, Hall resuming at outside-right and McCall at outside-left. The weather was once more unfavourable, but the ground was not in so bad a state as one might have thought. A splendid match was witnessed, a rare pace being kept up from the start. The Dragons quickly settled down, and Morley, the inside-right, getting away on his own, scored a great goal, completely beating Roberts. The visitors then took a turn at attack, which was rather easily repulsed by the home backs. Hardman and Knight came into prominence with some smart individual work, and the former made a great effort to add to the score. Morley took another shot at long range which Roberts got away. Pontypridd got a corner and after some fumbling Stallworthy almost headed in.

The Dragons continued to attack vigorously, and but for the fine defence shown by Hill and Bennett, they would have taken a further lead. Hall centred a beauty in the goalmouth, and Stallworthy had the hardest of luck in not finding the mark.

Pontypridd continued to press, and from successive corners the ball was headed over the Castlemen's net. The forwards besieged Roberts' goal, and Morley nicely found the net. The Dragons could not be repulsed, and close on halftime Hall passed to Stallworthy, and the centre-forward got Pontypridd's third goal. Hardman was here injured, and had to leave the field. Half-time score 3-0.

Directly on the restart Pontypridd got the fourth goal, Stallworthy starting with a dribble, and Hall, taking it up, beat Roberts easily amongst great cheering. With such a lead the Dragons slowed down a little. They, nevertheless, continued to attack, and Morley experienced hard lines in not scoring when in a favourable position. The visitors became aggressive, but lacked cohesion, and appeared at times quite at an utter loss to know what to do. Bradburn and Hinton were the chief offenders in this respect. There was some exciting play around the Castles goal in which Roberts was kept busy defending. Once he was nearly at fault at handling. Presently, however, the Dragons forwards in a hot attack got right up to the Castle end, and Hall notched a fifth goal. In a vigorous aggressive movement Stallworthy was obstructed, and Dalton taking the kick, made the score 6-0. Before the end Dean broke through and succeeded in defeating Turner. This goal was well deserved. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 6 HADLEY CASTLE 1.

The Dragons and Mushrooms in earnest

In September last Pontypridd beat the 'Mushrooms' in a Southern League match at Taff Vale Park by 2-0. On Saturday, January 25th 1913 the Dragons met them for a second time, at Taff Vale Park. On this occasion it was a Welsh League match, but it was quite as vigorously contested as a Southern League match would have been, and afforded keen excitement to 3,000 spectators. The Dragons just managed to win by 2-1 and the result should invest the Southern League encounter between the two teams at Tonypany on next Saturday, Feb. 1st with tremendous interest.

We had a fine afternoon for once, which was a pleasant change after the recent rains, and the ground was in fairly good condition. The pace was a cracker from the start. In the first-half the Dragons were superior in that they were quick to seize openings, and before halftime Knight and Hall scored for them. In the second-half the Dragons did not play so well, while the Mushrooms improved, and when Renwick scored for them there was great enthusiasm amongst the hundreds they had brought with them. This goal made the Mushrooms play up with greater vim than ever, and in the closing stages when they made super-human attempts to draw level the crowd was wound up to a high tension. So keen was the defence of both sides that free-kicks became frequent and at times the referee had difficulty in restraining the players, some of whom looked as if they would lose their tempers. Eventually, with a few minutes to go, the visitors forwards forced a corner, and in the goalmouth struggle that followed the ball went into the net,

whereupon the Mushroom supporters, setting up a howl of triumph literally kissed each other in their delight. Murray, the Dragons' Captain, however, promptly appealed against the goal on the ground that the ball had been fisted in, and the referee thereupon disallowed the score. There was a little hubbalo for some time but eventually the calm was restored and the game proceeded, nothing further being scored. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 MID-RHONDDA 1

On Thursday, Jan 30th 1913, Pontypridd were home to Risca in a Welsh League match. However, with the Dragons leading 2-0 at the interval, owing to the heavy rain Risca refused to take the field for the second half, much to the disappointment of the crowd, and the game was therefore abandoned.

'Mushrooms' revel in the mud at Tonypany

The Southern League fixture between Pontypridd and Mid-Rhondda at Tonypany on Saturday, Feb. 1st 1913 had been looked forward to with an exceptional amount of interest. On the previous Saturday, the Dragons only managed to win a Welsh League match at Taff Vale Park by 2-1, and the Mushrooms were determined to have their revenge before their own supporters. And they succeed, the Dragons being defeated 2-1.

It was unfortunate that the weather should be so inclement for such a match. The rain poured down at midday and the ground was turned into a quagmire. Yet there were over 3,000 spectators. At halftime the state of the pitch was so bad that the officials and referee consulted whether it was advisable to abandon the match. The referee decided to go on with it, and the players had a fearful time of it.

Some amusement was caused when the captains tossed for choice. The coin got lost in the mud, and there was a lengthy search by the referee before the coin was recovered. Following the kick-off McCall got possession and sent in a corner, which Morley trapped and sent over the bar. The homesters eventually found relief through Annan and Baine. Mason essayed to send a cross to Evans, but the ball stuck in the mud and failed to reach the outside-left. Rennick and Evans got going in fine style, and forced Dalton to kick to stop further progress. A free-kick was given to Mid-Rhondda near the corner, but the cross was sent behind. Baine failed to clear at once, but afterwards gathering he failed to break through, but was pulled up by Knight, who sent out to McCall. Walker trapped his pass nicely and beat the goalie from close in for the opening score.

McCall then made a dashing run, and ended up by sending in a beautiful shot, which Pearce cleared brilliantly. Rennick now had a splendid chance ten yards out, and through both Murray and Dalton missing the ball, only had the goalkeeper to

beat, but the ball stuck in the mud, and the chance was lost. Stevenson sent in a well directed shot, which Turner cleared. Dai Evans was proving a thorn in the side of Dalton, and Davies, breaking through time after time, Stevenson was fouled just outside the area, but Dalton cleared. The same player worked well up, but lost a splendid chance by holding on a second too long. Michael sent in a good shot, and there was an appeal for a corner on the ground that Turner had over-stepped the line in clearing. After some uninteresting play Dai Evans started another break away movement, which led to the equalizer. Bain in good style sent to Rennick who had fallen to the outside-right position. Turner failed to hold the latter's shot Mason rushing the ball into the net and scored amidst tumultuous applause. At half-time the score was 1-1.

The Dragons were first to attack when play resumed, but a fine clearance by Annan changed the venue, and Stevenson sent in a shot which struck the bar. Continuing the pressure the home inside-men combined well, and after the Pontypridd backs had saved Ludd found the net from close-in, thereby giving his side the lead. The pace the game had been played now began to tell on the Dragons, who were continually called upon to defend. From now on, play degenerated considerably, Mid-Rhondda continuing to have much the best of matters. Pontypridd tried hard to equalize, but Ludd and Dai Evans were responsible for placing the home side in a fine position. Turner ran out, but Murray at the expense of a corner saved the position. The visitors were tired as the game drew to a close through the hard attempts to equalize and at the close seemed much the worse for the encounter as compared with the Mushrooms.

Ludd was getting away and in twice beating Walker was tripped by that player, the Pontypridd man being spoken to by the referee. Play in the closing stages became "snappy", but what football there was in favour of the homesters. Mid-Rhondda were full value for their victory, and there would have been little to complain of had the margin been wider. Final score: - MID-RHONDDA 2 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Dragons below form

Croydon Common forwards worry Dragons defence

What a change there was in the weather there was on Saturday, Feb. 8th 1913. For weeks the spectators had been shivering under continuous downpours of rain, and players had not been able to do themselves justice under the awful conditions which prevailed overhead and underfoot. On this date, however, the sun shone from a bright-blue sky, and it was a delight being at Taff Vale Park. Owing to the heavy rain that fell on Friday, the ground, however, was very 'sticky.' The match proved a great attraction, Croydon Common being a team of no mean reputation,

and there were over 4,000 spectators. The Dragons failed to produce their best form, and if they had won they would have been lucky. As a matter of fact the visitors were superior as a combination in the forward line - until the last twenty minutes, when the Dragons suddenly roused themselves and all but snatched a victory.

Bob Davies not being fit, Stallworthy was tried at right-half, and Knight was entrusted with the centre-forward position, with Walker at inside-left. Stallworthy did well. He worked hard, tackled fearlessly and assisted his forwards. The forwards did not shine in combination and appeared all the more ineffective when compared with the Croydon attack, who were speedy and exceptionally clever at passing. The inside-men fed the swift wingers with splendid precision in the first-half, the result being that the home defence had a very busy time of it. When a goal eventually arrived it was no surprise. And it was somewhat of a soft goal, and if Turner had shown good judgement he would have saved it. With the 'Robins' forwards attacking in the formation they did, Turner should have remained in the centre, instead of slipping into a corner. As soon as he did so, Barnfather headed the ball into the other corner. If Turner had been standing in the centre he would have saved it with the utmost ease.

Still, the 'Robins' thoroughly deserved to gain their lead, since they had shown much greater vision in attack than the home forwards, who relied more on individualism than the combined movements that have served them so well in the past. The Dragons were really lucky not to be two down at the interval, the home goal having an extraordinary escape. That was when Upex crashing cross-shot hit the inside of the post and bounded back into play. Turner was completely beaten by the shot and stood well away from that particular post. On the whole the shooting of the two sides was poor, and many good chances went a-begging. With only twenty minutes to go the Dragons were still behind, but with only ten minutes left they equalized. Stallworthy put in an ideal centre, the ball dropping and the feet of Walker ten yards out, shot accurately and beat the 'Robins' goalie. What a difference a goal made to the Dragons! They continued to attack with vigour, and the Croydon defenders were hard pressed to keep them out, and had they scored there would have been a vociferous scene, but the game ended as a draw. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 CROYDON COMMON 1.

How will the Dragons fair ? - The match at Llanelly.

The fight for promotion among the South Wales clubs to the First Division of the Southern League was getting more and more exciting. The Dragons, however, were out of the running and would now reserve themselves for the battle for the Welsh Cup. They got into the final last year; so it would only be "poetic justice" if

they were to capture the much envied trophy this year. The holders, Cardiff, had been ousted by the all conquering Swansea team, and if the Dragons beat Chester at Wrexham on March 8th, they would have the Swans as opponents in the final. It goes without saying that the match would be played at Cardiff, where the Dragons had generally given a good account of themselves. Football "mathematics" however, were against them. Cardiff City defeated them at Ninian Park in the English Cup competition; Swansea trounced the Dragon's conquerors on Saturday at Ninian Park; ergo, Swansea should get the better of the Dragons. That's how some people argued, but that sort of logic counted for nought in cup-tie football. But there, the Dragons hadn't met Chester yet!

Chester would have the advantage of playing near home, where as the Dragons would have to make a long journey, but it was fancied that the men from Pontypridd would prove themselves of too fine a calibre for the "Cestrians." Chester only managed to scrape through by a goal in their tie with Troederhiw, and who were Troederhiw anyhow! They were not up to the Dragons' standard. Still, the Dragons would have to perform a great effort if they were to pull through. Connah's Quay and Llandudno were not of the same class as Chester. It would be a bit of an anomaly if Chester were to win the Welsh Cup, for the famous city on the Dee isn't in Wales at all! But the Dragons were not going to let them win it! No, the Dragons were going to win it themselves. They had the men, they had got the skill, and they would rise to the occasion and find themselves face to face with the 'Swans' in the final. Play up the Dragons!

The Welsh League match between Pontypridd and Mardy on Thursday, Feb. 13th 1913, was played in a dense fog at Taff Vale Park. At threequarter time it was quite impossible to follow the game and after consultations between the referee and players the match was abandoned with Pontypridd leading 3-0.

The Dragons displayed good form in their Southern League match at Llanelly on Saturday, Feb. 15th 1913, and it was a creditable performance to come away with a point from the 'Tinplate' town, where the visitors as a rule, don't get much change. The Dragons played in determined style, and deserved to share the points. The game was very keenly contested. The scoring was confined to the first-half. Payne obtained a goal for Llanelly, and Davies equalized for Pontypridd from a centre by McCall. The Dragons made several changes in their team. Rowe partnered Murray at fullback, and Shelley figured at centre-half, and the forward line was composed of Barlow, Downes, Pickett, Walker and McCall. Shelley was the regular centre-half last season, and he has returned to Pontypridd after a sojourn at Llandudno. Pickett, who has been secured from Ton Pentre, created a very favourable impression when he played his first game for the Dragons against Mardy on Thursday. Turner was in fine form on Saturday, saving many sharp shots

in great style and McCall and Walker made an effective left-wing. Final score: - LLANELLY 1 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Swansea at Taff Vale Park

Swansea town visited the Taff Vale Park on Thursday, Feb. 20th 1913 in a Southern League fixture, before one of the biggest gates of the season. Except for a keen wind, the conditions were perfect. Swansea were the first to attack, but being repulsed, the Pontypridd forward line made a dash and F. Thomas, the inside-left, sent a shot just wide. Murray and Dalton then defended splendidly, and Shelley and Fell took play to halfway. Bob Davies was conspicuous with a great run, and centred to Pickett. The new recruit, however, lost a great chance to give his side a lead. The game continued at a great pace and the 'Swans' with their headwork and close passing, made repeated efforts to bring off a score. The home eleven, however, showed fine defensive tactics, although Thomas on one occasion had the hardest of luck, the ball striking the crossbar. In the second-half Pontypridd kept their opponents hemmed in, and gave the Swans a lot of trouble. Had the home forwards utilised to the full their chances they should have at least got a couple of goals. On the days game the Dragons were clearly the better side. When time was called, however, there was no score. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 0 SWANSEA TOWN 0. The Pontypridd team: - Turner; Dalton & Murray; Hardman, Shelley, Fell; Bob Davies, Downes, Pickett, F. Thomas & McCall.

Pontypridd having an open date on Saturday, Feb. 22nd 1913, arranged a friendly with Walsall, and 2,000 spectators turned up at Taff Vale Park to see the Dragons win by 2-1. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 2 WALSALL 1. On Thursday, Feb. 26th 1913 Pontypridd visited Llanelly for a Welsh League match of which table Llanelly were the leaders. Llanelly were unlucky in not winning. The Dragons, on the other hand, could thank Turner, their goalkeeper, for staving off defeat, for his display between the posts was really great. Final score: - LLANELLY 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Victory at Mardy

Everybody was talking about the Cup-tie between Pontypridd and Chester at Ninian Park, and the '*Free Press*' commented: - "The Dragons must take nothing for granted. They will find Chester formidable opponents. In the same competition last year Cardiff only beat them by 2-1 at Ninian Park. It should prove a rare tussle for supremacy, but I fancy that the Dragons will emerge victors. Our boys will revel in a Cup-fight! Thousands of enthusiasts will go from Pontypridd to cheer the Dragons to victory. Their shouts will go a long way, although a footballer philosopher tells us that no good footballer takes any notice of the shouts of the crowd. Doesn't he, though! The football philosopher knows not what he is talking

about. A footballer is only human after all, and he should be sensitive to vocal encouragement. The Dragons are in a happy mood, as a result of the Southern League victory they gained at Mardy on Saturday. The two points enabled them to take up a respectable position in the Southern League. The game was a very keen one. The Dragons had Shelley at centre-half again, the forward line being composed of Davies, Knight, Pickett, Walker and McCall. How will the forward line be composed against Chester?"

The Dragons deserved their goal victory at Mardy in a Southern League match on March 1st 1913, because they lasted better than the home team. Mardy opened spiritedly, and there was plenty of life and skill in their efforts. Twice in as many minutes Turner was called upon to save, Pinny, once striking the post. As a matter of fact, Mardy were attacking for the greater portion of the first-half, and a little more steadiness in front of goal might have resulted in more than one score. It was either erratic shooting or the splendid efforts of Turner - more often the former - that kept the Dragons goal intact. Mardy slowed down the speed in the second-half, and Pontypridd, who relied upon a steady game, had more opportunities to become dangerous. After Griffiths had tried Thomas with a shot that nearly found the net, Walker gave the Dragons the lead after a smart movement, and this proved the winning goal. Mardy's collapse was surprising. And although they rallied after Walker had given the Dragons the lead, they found the Dragons sufficiently strong in defence to keep them out. It was a clever win by Pontypridd. Final score: - MARDY 0 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Brilliant Welsh cup-tie win over Chester

"Hail! The Dragons!" Exclaimed the '*Free Press*.' "Once more they have reached the final of the Welsh Cup! Last season - the first season of their existence - they achieved this feat, and were beaten in the final by Cardiff City after a draw. Their opponents in the final on April 18th next will be Swansea, and the match will be played at Ninian Park. Who'll win? The 'Swans' will find formidable opponents in the Dragons, and it will be a great struggle. There were 8,000 people present at Wrexham on Saturday. There will be a much bigger gate to see the final - given fine weather - for the 'Swans' will bring thousands of spectators with them."

Chester, the Dragons opponents on Saturday, March 8th 1913, had previously taken part in three finals - in 1908, 1909 and 1910 - and were the winners in 1908. It may be well understood, under the circumstances, that the Dragons and their supporters were fully aware that that they had a stiff task on. The spectators numbered over 8,000 and the gate was £170. Chester had their best team out. The Dragons defence was as usual. The Pontypridd team: Turner; Dalton & Murray; Hardman, Shelley and Fell, Knight, Pickett, Walker and Davies.

Chester won the toss and Pickett started the game. The Northern forwards with the wind behind them quickly got away and had the best of the exchanges at the start. Turner saved from Wynn. From Murray's kick Hall got possession and the Dragon's right-winger, after beating the defence, tested Fletcher, who cleared. Wynn was very prominent for the "Cestrians" and clever play on his part ended in Brogden giving Turner a warm shot, which was safely dealt with. The Dragons left-wing had hitherto done little, but eventually Davies got moving and sent in a centre, but there was no-one to meet it. The Dragons were greatly bothered by the wind.

Play continued to be from one end to the other. After half-an-hours play Chester, whose forwards were very nippy, forced three corners in quick succession, but the Dragons defence was not to be caught napping. Turner saved well from Anderton and Brogden. The Dragons woke up, and a shot from Davies might have taken effect had it not been accidentally obstructed by the referee. Davies ought to have been fed more, as he was playing a forcing game. With only two minutes to go, Matthews, a Welsh International, gave Turner an awkward shot to deal with, and a corner resulted. Nothing came of it, and half-time arrived with no score.

The 'Cestrians' opened the second-half in spirited style, the forwards causing the Dragons defence to be on the alert, but the Dragons got going 'ere long, and Fletcher was twice called upon to save. On a third occasion he was rather lucky in getting on his knees to a shot from Hall. We have all heard about the Dragons stamina, and their supporters noticed here about that they were gradually wearing down their opponents and improving in their aggressive work. From a corner an appeal was made from the Dragons for "hands," but the referee was against them. Chester had another look-in, but their shooting was not of much class.

Then did the Dragons score, and then did their supporters send up a shout that was heard at the uttermost parts of the earth! From Turner's kick-out the Dragons got away on the left. Walker getting possession, he sent in a sharp cross-shot which really baffled Fletcher. He managed to save, but failed to get the ball away, and Hall rushing up netted with the utmost ease. A goal for the Dragons! Hurrah! They'd win! Yes, they'd win, for everybody knew there would be no holding them now. And there wasn't! Their forwards displayed more thrustful tactics, and the Chester backs had their work cut out to keep them at bay. Shelley sent in a stinger, and Hall failed when he had a splendid chance.

Thus far the Chester forwards had pleased the spectators with their neat footwork, but when it came to beating the Dragons defence they were generally all at sea. Then Walker hit a characteristic high shot which struck the inside of the net just

inside the bar, and scored the second goal for the Dragons, completely baffling Fletcher. All was now over, bar the shouting. The Dragons continued to sweep everything before them and only another two minutes had gone when Walker again scored with a rattling good shot, which took Fletcher completely by surprise. 'Time' arrived a minute or two later, with the Dragons brilliant winners. Final score: - CHESTER 0 PONTYPRIDD 3.

The Dragons thoroughly deserved their handsome victory. They failed to settle down to their usual game in the first-half, but the way that they scored their goals after the interval did them credit. They were all smartly obtained, and Walker did a glorious afternoon's work, for as well as shooting two goals he enabled Hall to get the other. Dalton and Murray, at fullback, after an indifferent start, gave a fine exhibition in defence. Turner had plenty of work to do, but it was not of a very exacting nature, and the shooting of the "Cestrians" left much to be desired. The Dragons' halves were not seen at their best. The whole team, however, displayed real Cup-tie tenacity and endurance, and if their supporters were not given much to "enthuse over" in the first-half, Walker's goals brought a dramatic change in their demeanour, and there was a cheer towards the end that could be heard miles away. Now for Swansea! Play up the Dragons! Bring the Cup back to Pontypridd!

Mardy journeyed to Pontypridd on Thursday, March 13th 1913 to replay the Welsh League game that was abandoned a few weeks before. The Dragons appeared very jaded after the Welsh Cup semi-final. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 MARDY 3.

Dragons draw at Aberdare

What a crowd there will be at Taff Vale Park on Easter Monday to see the Dragons tackle Cardiff City in the Southern League! Will the Dragons beat the prospective champions of the Second Division? They are going to make a great effort. The Dragons had been showing good form of late and effected a creditable draw in the Southern League at Aberdare on Saturday March 15th 1913. It was played in a storm of wind and hail, and the players found it very difficult to give anything like a good exhibition of football. It was nearly 5 o'clock before the teams turned out, and there was only a small attendance. The 'Darians attacked strongly at the start and Turner was soon in the wars, having a number of shots to deal with from Bennett. On one occasion Murray blundered badly and enabled Bennett to open the scoring for the 'Darians. Pontypridd had a long turn at attacking after this, and it was only good defensive play by Belson and Davies that averted scores. The Dragons improved towards the interval, and McCall equalized for his side with a shot that went in just under the crossbar, while out of the reach of Jeffreys. Pontypridd attacked strongly on restarting. Phillips was given a chance of putting Aberdare ahead, but when in front of the Pontypridd goal he fumbled and the

visiting backs cleared. It will be remembered that in November Aberdare were badly beaten by the Dragons at Taff Vale Park, but the 'darians had come-on since then. Final score: - ABERDARE 1 PONTYPRIDD 1.

On Monday, March 7th 1913 the Welsh F.A. met and discussed a protest by Chester against Pontypridd, who had beaten them in the Welsh Cup, the protest being that a Pontypridd player, Shelley, had played in the same competition earlier in the season for Llandudno. The council upheld a previous decision that Shelley was eligible to play for Pontypridd, but the latter club was fined two guineas for not sending in the usual list. The protest fee was returned.

Record takings at Taff Vale Park

Football history was being enacted in South Wales in these days, and Pontypridd was doing its share. On Easter Monday, March 24th 1913, the record sum of £350 was taken at Taff Vale Park in the Southern League match between the Dragons and Cardiff City. This is all the more remarkable in that nothing depended on the result, Cardiff City having previously made themselves certain of promotion, and the Dragons had no chance of honours in that direction. There is the Welsh Cup-tie with Swansea yet to come, so that the Dragons looked like having a prosperous season from a financial point of view.

The directors decision to have a shilling gate on this date was fully justified. Owing to the wretched weather before and after Christmas the club had suffered greatly, and it was felt that football enthusiasts in the district would not object to parting with an extra 'tanner' (6d) under the circumstances, especially with such attractive opponents as Cardiff City, the prospective champions. People ought to feel grateful to the promoters of the soccer club at Pontypridd, who enable them to witness football of a very good class at Taff Vale Park, and they ought to be glad of any opportunity of helping the club. They seized this opportunity on Monday, when they willingly parted with a shilling, and the directors, at the head of whom was that popular sportsman, County Councillor David Williams, who desired to thank them for their generous attitude. The 'gate' would help to provide summer wages for the players. The crowd numbered 7,500.

The Dragons were very lucky in the matter of weather this time. This was their first holiday match at home, and it was the first fine day of the holidays. On Good Friday the Dragons had journeyed to Ton Pentre for a Southern League match, but so persistently had the rain fallen that the ground was converted into a quagmire, and the match had to be postponed. Saturday was another stormy day, and it was fortunate that the Dragons had no match. They were given a well earned rest.

Then came Monday, March 24th, and the match with Cardiff City, to which football devotees had been looking forward to with eager expectations. It was quite an ideal day for football, and the rain having kept off on Sunday, the ground was in good condition. Everything was, in fact, favourable to a good match, and the holiday crowd was in a most merry mood. The gates were opened an hour before the kick-off (3.30), and from the outset there was a steady flow of spectators, who freely wore the colours of their of their respective sides. The Dragons' supporters, of course, predominated, but the Welsh Metropolitans brought train loads of followers with them, and undoubtedly made their presence felt. Several excursions were run from Cardiff, including one by a new route via the Rhymney Railway, through Caerphilly. It was interesting to recall that the two sides had already met seven times - four times at Cardiff, once at Aberdare (Welsh Cup Final), and twice at Pontypridd. Of these matches two victories had been gained by Cardiff and one by the Dragons, the remaining four matches having been drawn. This record would indicate that there is nothing much to choose between the two sides.

The Dragons were determined to make a great effort to lower the colours of the champions on this occasion, and play was keen and fast from the very start. Cardiff won the toss. The visitors attacked at the outset, and Cassidy wound up a passing movement with a long-shot which was wide of the mark. The Dragons quickly found their feet, and a speedy run by Bob Davies put the Cardiff defence on their guard. The ball went to Walker, who promptly shot, but Leah got in the way. Both sides were now putting forth tremendous efforts, and the spectators followed a fine struggle 'without taking their eyes off'. Hall was fouled just as he was making for the goal, but Davies again got possession in the centre, with the result that McCall missed an easy chance. Then Cardiff opened the scoring through Hardy, who sent in a splendid shot which baffled Turner. This livened up matters, the Dragons being egged on by their supporters, but the Cardiff forwards were in great form, and the Dragons defenders had to exert themselves to the utmost to keep them out for the next few minutes. Devlin was very conspicuous in the centre, and the other City forwards showed rare dash and speed. The Dragons defence, however, proved equal to all emergencies, and although the visitors had the best of matters there was no further scoring up to the interval.

When the game was restarted the Dragons now took up the attack and were seen to much better advantage. Knight gave Davies a chance, but the ball rolled into touch. It was now the turn of Cardiff's defence to be continually on the alert, and in a tackle Bob Davies was injured, the game being delayed for a few minutes. When the game was resumed the Dragons took up the running and all but scored. Davies met a centre from Hall and shot over. The Dragons forced the pace, and eventually equalized. The forwards swooped down on the Cardiff goal, and Davies

tricked Kneeshaw and equalized amid terrific cheering. This made the contest keener than ever, and the Dragons' supporters were delighted to see them showing better combination and maintaining their thrustful tactics. It really looked now as if the Dragons would win, so spirited was their movements. No player spared himself, and the excitement was intense.

When the Cardiff forwards got away they found Shelley and Murray perfect stumbling blocks, and Turner was very safe in goal. Towards the end the Dragons roused the spectators by putting in several dashing movements, and the downfall of Cardiff's goal was expected at any moment, but their defence proved impervious. If Cardiff had the best of the game in the first-half the Dragons out shone them in the second-half, and once Walker experienced the hardest of luck in not scoring and putting his side ahead. The Cardiff goal had another narrow escape a minute later when Knight headed over from a pass by Hall. Altogether it was a stirring wind-up to a dour struggle, and if the Dragons had snatched a win - they deserved to - what a scene there would have been. In spite of its keenness it was a very clean match. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 CARDIFF CITY 1

Revenge over Treharris

The Dragons had another Southern League engagement at Taff Vale Park on Easter Tuesday, March 25th 1913, when Treharris were the visitors. There were 3,000 spectators, and they were in high glee before the end, as the Dragons were handsome winners by 2-0. Treharris were often dangerous in the first-half, but Turner and the home backs were not to be beaten, and it was the Dragons that led at the interval, Walker being the scorer. In the second-half Fell and Hardman started a movement which resulted in the ball going to Hall, who centred and Knight put in the second goal. The Dragons were now superior to their opponents, who, however, gave a good account of themselves. It will be remembered that in the first match of the season Treharris beat the Dragons in an exciting match at Treharris by 1-0. The Dragons have now had their revenge. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 TREHARRIS 0.

Dragons continue to pick up points

On Saturday, March 29th 1913, the Dragons engaged in a Welsh League match at Treharris, and won by 3-1. There was another Southern League match at Taff Vale Park on Monday, March 31st 1913, when Newport County were the visitors. At the outset play was very even, the Newport attack showing up well. Turner saved well from McDougal. Pretty combinations by the Dragons nearly brought about the downfall of the Newport goal, Walker twice being unlucky not to score. The game on the restart was again even. Pontypridd did the attacking in the opening stages

and McCall and Morley tested Husbands. At the other end the visitors failed to utilise three corner-kicks. Husbands came through a busy period with credit, saving finely. The Newport defence was hard pressed in the final stages but no score was registered. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 NEWPORT COUNTY 0.

At a meeting of the Welsh League on April 2nd 1913, Risca were ordered to replay the match that had been abandoned earlier in the season at Pontypridd. An application was made whereby Ton Pentre could play their home Welsh League fixtures against the Dragons on Pontypridd's ground, with a view of improving their financial position, seeing that "gates" at Ton Pentre were very meagre. This was turned down, however, it being held that Pontypridd would be given an unfair advantage over its opponents who were in the running for the championship.

Home defeat by Southend

There was another big crowd at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, April 5th 1913 to see the Southern League match with Southend. The Dragons had been very lucky of late with the weather, a strong wind blew, but that does not keep spectators away from football matches. It was largely due to the vilest of luck on two occasions that Southend were enabled to secure the two points. They deserved their victory, for they were always the more polished side; yet the Dragons had more of the game. In the first-half, against the wind, they did the most pressing, but their great fault was their absolute failure in front of goal. If they had one 'shot' in the front rank two points would have been theirs. It was a fine piece of work that led to Southend getting the goal that gave them victory. It was originated by the Wileman-Wilson combination, these two managing to get into the corner under the stand. Once there the Dragons defence altogether failed to hold the visitors, for the ball passed from one to the other repeatedly 'ere Bradshaw finally got hold of it and placed it in the net in the easiest fashion possible. Turner cannot be blamed, for at that moment he was anticipating the ball coming from Wileman, who saw in a twinkling saw that the manager was in a better position, and dapped it across to him, and thus did Southend win.

After this, although Pontypridd pressed repeatedly, they never appeared to convince the on-lookers that they were going to equalize, for, though they were quite as good as the "Shrimps" in mid-field, when they got in front of Kebbell, well, it was sometimes pitiful. It is to be hoped that the forwards will be in better shooting form on April 19th, when the Welsh Cup Final takes place. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 SOUTHEND 1.

On Monday, April 7th 1913, the Dragons visited Mid-Rhondda and played against the 'Mushrooms' in a Welsh League match. The game was one of the brightest

seen on the ground, and the Dragons deserved their victory by the solitary goal of the match, though a wider margin would have flattered them. There was a crowd of fully 3,000 present and excitement ran high throughout. Final score: - MID-RHONDDA 0 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Supporters Club first Annual Dinner

The members of the Pontypridd Supporters Club held their first Annual Dinner on Saturday evening, April 12th 1913, at the Park Hotel, Pontypridd, when over 100 sat down to Dinner. In the unavoidable absence of Mr. A. J. Newbold, who recently left the town to undertake the secretarial duties of the players' union, the chair was taken by Mr. A. Banner, GWR; Cardiff. Mr. A. C. Rostrom who was secretary of the club, stated that the club membership was steadily increasing, and if it was not actually the largest it was next to any in the United Kingdom. (applause). On the behalf of the club he heartily welcomed Mr. E. J. Petch of the '*Football Express*' who had come to them this evening to give an explanation regarding the Federation of Welsh Supporters Clubs. Later, the toast of the Pontypridd AFC was proposed by Mr. Petch, who explained the object of the proposed federation. There was, he said, an estrangement between directors and supporters of several clubs, which was undesirable, and he hoped that the new Association of Supporters Clubs would improve matters. Mr. P. Kenward, chairman of the club, in the course of replying to the toast stated that it was the duty of every loyal football follower to join the supporters club with the object of keeping their fields clean from unhealthy sport and undesirable language. (applause)

Secretary Rostrom led the company in the Pontypridd war-cry, "Ponty's on the ball, dribbling on!" The supporters club Glee Party then rendered "Comrades in Arms," followed by a Tenor solo by Mr. Tom Perry, the items being received by loud applause. Mr. J. Lancaster (treasurer) proposed the toast of "the visitors," expressed his pleasure in so large number of members being present. Mr. A. Banner responded. Mr. Sam Butt, comedian, gave a very good rendering of a comic song entitled: "Wire in, my boys, wire in!" Mr. J. Jones gave a sentimental song followed by Mr. J. Fowler, vice-chairman of the club, who proposed "Success to the Dragons and the Welsh Cup." All he asked for was a fair field and no favour, with a straight man with the whistle (applause). He was quite confident that under those circumstances the Welsh Cup would this year be where it ought to have been last year - Pontypridd (applause).

Captain Charles Murray was too bashful to respond, and he therefore requested his co-worker, Mr. Billy Rowe, to undertake the task, which he did most successfully. The titbit of the evening was the rendering of "I've been out with Charlie Brown" by Mr. Len Shelley, the popular centre-half. Mr. Ivor Foster also

gave songs. The proceedings came to a close with expressions of good will to the hosts for the capital spread provided, and the company dispersed with the singing of "Hen wlad fynyhadau." On the same day, Aberdare defeated Treharris at Taff Vale park in the final of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Senior Cup Final.

Defeat at Somerton Park

To have captured both Southern League Points in the game against the Dragons on Saturday, April 12th 1913 was the just reward of the general superiority of Newport on the day. Neither side could set up claims of having played brilliantly, though there were touches of well-worked out movements on both sides. Two of Newport's goals at any rate, were the result of pure opportunism. Had the Dragons front-line been more accurate in shooting they may have drawn level, even when three goals down. Both Morley and Stallworthy had missed a couple of chances each before the first named scored from a mix-up in front of goal. Final score: - NEWPORT COUNTY 3 PONTYPRIDD 1. On April 14th 1913 Risca met Pontypridd in a Welsh League fixture at Risca, the game ending in a goal-less draw.

Pontypridd Secretary - Manager

At this time, the directors of the Pontypridd AFC were advertising the post of Manager-secretary and received 44 applications for the post vacated by Mr. Harry Newbold.

THE WELSH CUP FINAL

On Saturday, April 19th 1913, Swansea and the Dragons met at Ninian Park, Cardiff, for the Welsh Cup, but its resting place for the next twelve months still remained undecided as the game ended in a draw, and a replay was to take place the following Thursday. One thing was proven conclusively though, and that was that Cardiff people were not partial to the game starting after 3.30. Whilst late kick-offs are the correct thing in the mining districts, it would not do in large towns. The F.A. of Wales were also ill-advised to advertise 'A limited number of tickets at 6d,' for there was room for 30,000 at that figure. The stands, too, were none too well patronized, and more money would have been taken had the ideal prices been adhered to. The attendance was 8,319; the receipts £248-13s-6d.

During the week leading up to the Cup Final the Dragons players had undergone a special preparation under an experienced trainer, and it was thought they were fit to take the field for a hard and grueling game. There were doubts on the morning of game as to the composition of the team. Fourteen men had initially been selected, including a few reserves. The whole lot traveled to Cardiff that morning, and the final selection was made then. It was unfortunate that Stallworthy, the

regular centre-forward, broke down under trial. He had appeared against Risca on the previous Monday, but had to come off after only ten minutes play, and his place was taken by Walker, but the forward line looked as if it needed strengthening badly. Turner as usual would be in goal, while the fullbacks, Dalton and Murray were fit and were the stalwarts of the team. The halfbacks were the regulars, while the forward line would consist of Morley, Walker, Downes, Hall and McCall. Altogether, the club, as a result of recent successes in the Welsh Cup and League matches, was making remarkably good progress, and had received every possible assistance from the directors, notably Mr. Gwilym Morgan (Chairman) and Mr. David Williams (Treasurer).

Pontypridd should have won by the odd goal. There was little in the game to enthuse over, and the 'thrills' experienced by the crowd could be concentrated into five minutes. There was little unnecessary vigour shown, but there was a great deal too much elbowing made when men charged each other. The referee, however, prevented it degenerating too far. There was not too much of the whistle, and there was no explaining the why and therefore of every foul he whistled for. It is a pity there were not more referees like Mr. Baker.

Both teams badly wanted a man in the forward line with some scoring ability. The goalkeepers had the time of their lives, for neither was seriously tested. Swansea had the better of the argument in the chances given them, and had they not been up against such a clever back as Charlie Murray, who knows what the result would have been. Murray was quite the hero of the match, and made the usually effective left-winger of the 'Swans' look small. Nicholas, the 'All Whites' left-back too, made a fine show, but Sutherland was very weak, and had the Dragons left-winger had a more capable man inside him and understood him, Fisher would not have had so easy a game as he did. There was very little shooting, though Grierson struck the Dragons upright. In the second half Walker, almost right under the Swansea posts, skied the ball over the bar. Which side would win the replay was open to question

Reserve team fielded

Two days after the cup final, on Monday, April 21st 1913, the Dragons fielded a reserve team that defeated Risca 7-0 at Taff Vale Park. Final score:- PONTYPRIDD 7 RISCA 0. Two days later, on Wednesday, April 23rd 1913, the day before the cup final replay, Pontypridd again fielded a reserve team at the Ynys Park when they were defeated 6-0 by Ton Pentre in a Southern League engagement. Final score: - TON PENTRE 6 PONTYPRIDD 0.

WELSH CUP FINAL REPLAY

Dragons miss penalty

The Cup final at Ninian Park had apparently been a poor affair, in fact, hardly worth reporting. Therefore, the decision to hold the replay on the Mid-Rhondda, on Thursday, April 24th 1913, which was well known as the worst field in the district, seemed a strange one. However, it turned out to be a much better game. The South Wales Daily News carried this report :

At the second time of asking Swansea succeeded in securing possession of the Welsh Senior Cup. The conditions were bad for the players, but play was good, and the difference between the exhibition given in this game and the one at Ninian Park was most marked. Each side adapted itself to the heavy going, and it was the readiness with which this was done that really decided the issue, for the game was but fifteen minutes old when Swansea gained the lead. It had been a near thing before that time to a score being registered, both sides having secured favourable opportunities. Swansea had secured an opening directly from the start, and a foul tackle placed the Dragons in a tight corner. However, the Pontypridd defence extricated themselves in a manner worthy of their best days, and one could not but help noticing how clever Ted Dalton and Charlie Murray were. The half-backs, too, were responsible for some smart defensive work, but it was George Fell who impressed most at the outset. The forwards took up the attack, and both wings moved along with fair speed. A chance to score presented itself to Morley, and he made the most of it. A sweet drive had all the appearance of beating the defence, but the ball hit the upright and cannoned over the line wide of goal.

Had Pontypridd secured the lead on that occasion it might have altered the run of play. It was an escape for Swansea, and they immediately pulled themselves together. They hit the ball about from wing to wing, never once pausing to allow their opponents time for tackling. Messrs made ground prior to centring from the corner-flag. Weir touched the ball towards Turner, who was so closely pressed that he was unable to hold it, and Anderson promptly netted. Of the subsequent play Swansea did not rest on their laurels. The backs also exhibited smartness in attack, but they would have been a fortunate side had their aggressive play been on a par of that of their defenders. Once, in the subsequent play, Bob Davies came within an ace of equalising when he manoeuvred for an opening, and tried a shot at close range. Fisher was alert and a save was effected. A splendid run by Hall for Pontypridd, in the second-half, appeared likely to develop into a score. He was fouled in the penalty area - and badly too - but he showed lack of judgement, probably due to over-eagerness and excitement, when he attempted to beat the defence with a penalty kick, which Fisher saved at the expense of a corner. There was no further scoring. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 SWANSEA 1.

On the heavy ground Swansea were immeasurably the superior side to the Dragons, and but for the stalwart defence of Dalton and Murray the 'black and whites' of the Rhondda Coalopolis must have suffered a severe defeat. It was only in the last two lines of defence that the Dragons could compare favourably with the visitors.

Their half-backs never held the opposing attack, while the Dragons forward-line never at any stage of the game showed up equal to the Swansea quintet. Shelley, the Ponty centre-half, throughout, was weak, and in addition, to failing to hold Weir, the Swansea centre-forward, was of no help to his men in front. He never settled down to the conditions - naturally as a centre-half he had all the worst of the heavy ground to contend with - and his inability to play his usual game threw a lot of unnecessary work on the men behind him. It was through a failure to hold Weir that the winning goal came. The Pontypridd team in the replay was : Goal, Turner; Fullbacks, Murray and Dalton; halfbacks, Hardman, Shelley and Fell; forwards, Morley, Walker Knight, Davies and Hall.

Ton Pentre & Pontypridd in mud bath

The day after the Cup Final replay, there was no rest for the Dragons, for they travelled to play Ton Pentre at Ynys Park on April 25th 1913. Seldom had a Welsh league game been played under such adverse conditions. The ground was inches deep in mud, and for the most part the game was played in a rainstorm. Chances to score were missed by Clarke for Ton and Doran on the Dragons side, the greasy ball being difficult to control.

After the interval Ton monopolized the attack, and ten minutes from the restart Alf Williams gave the 'Reds' the lead after Turner had partially cleared from Johnny Williams. Ludicrous attempts to score in the mud were made by the Ton forwards, and just at the close Clarke put his side two up. Final score: - TON PENTRE 2 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Good win over Barry and a draw with Cardiff City

A day later, Saturday, April 26th 1913, Pontypridd won a Welsh league game at Jenner Park, Barry, by five goals to one, the home side being made up chiefly of recruits. Considering the wretched conditions, play reached a very high standard until the very heavy rain in the second-half. Final score: - BARRY 1 PONTYPRIDD 5.

Pontypridd met Cardiff City at Taff Vale Park on Monday, April 28th 1913, in a Welsh League fixture. Despite the fact that the weather had cleared somewhat,

there was only a moderate attendance. Both sides were without several of their regular players. Play opened at an easy pace, and after fifteen minutes Douglas scored for the City. The Dragons tried hard to equalize, and just before the interval Bob Davies found the net, but the goal was disallowed for offside. Walker eventually scored with a long drive. The Dragons continued on the aggressive but the game ended in a draw. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 CARDIFF CITY 1.

Pontypridd defeat Newport County

On Tuesday, April 29th, the Dragons ended another long season with a Welsh League encounter at Newport. Play opened in conditions defying description. There was an early interchange of attacks, both custodians being tested. Things then settled down to floundering in the slush. Nevertheless, there were glimpses of good football. Final score: - NEWPORT COUNTY 0 PONTYPRIDD 1

In the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' of May 1st 1913, the '*Mustard and Cress*' column remarked: "So the Dragons did not bring the Welsh Cup to Pontypridd after all! Never mind! If at first you don't succeed try, try, try again. They ought to capture it next year at the third attempt. It was hard lines to be beaten by just one goal, and miss a penalty! But that's how football all over, and the Dragons must bow to fate. If they did not win the cup the Dragons had the satisfaction of sharing two good "gates" in the two matches with Swansea of £250 taken at Cardiff and £213 at Mid-Rhondda. Its not worth writing another thing about football as all interest in the great Winter pastime has gone. This is May 1st. Lets turn our attention to the click of the cricket ball."

The verdict

Another season had at last drawn to a close, the Dragons and their supporters could look back with pride. Reaching the Welsh Cup Final for the second year running was an outstanding achievement. They had managed to maintain their support at Taff Vale Park, though bad weather was always a problem, the weather throughout mid-season being particularly bad. Their play in the Southern League Division Two, after a bad start, returned to the standard that they had set the previous season, however, they were never really challenging for promotion, but, were comfortably placed in the top half of the division.

The backbone of the team had once again been Ted Dalton and Charlie Murray, already the stalwarts of a club that had once again been rebuilt. Financially, to all appearances the club was sound, but they were still in financial difficulties, the directors being very quiet about its actual position, but this was storing up problems that would be revealed during the summer of 1913.

But for now, as far as the followers of the Dragons were concerned, everything in the garden looked rosy. It appears that the Directors still selected the side, with the Supporters Club secretary, Mr. Harry Newbold, acting as manager. However, at the end of the season Alex Maley was appointed the first official manager of the Dragons.

This is the last Southern League Division Two table published this season as appeared in the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' on April 24th 1913: -

Southern Football League Division 2 1912/13										
Pos	Club	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GA	Pts	Notes
1st	Cardiff City	24	18	5	1	54	15	3.600	41	▲ Champions
2nd	Southend United	24	14	6	4	43	23	1.870	34	▲ Runners Up
3rd	Swansea Town	24	12	7	5	29	23	1.261	31	
4th	Croydon Common	24	13	4	7	51	29	1.759	30	
5th	Luton Town	24	13	4	7	52	39	1.333	30	
6th	Llanelly	24	9	6	9	33	39	0.846	24	
7th	Pontypridd	24	6	11	7	30	28	1.071	23	
8th	Mid Rhondda	24	9	4	11	33	31	1.065	22	
9th	Aberdare	24	8	6	10	38	40	0.950	22	
10th	Newport County	24	7	5	12	29	36	0.806	19	
11th	Mardy	24	6	3	15	38	38	1.000	15	
12th	Treharris	24	5	2	17	18	60	0.300	12	
13th	Ton Pentre	24	3	3	18	22	69	0.319	9	

Pontypridd A.F.C. - Results Season 1912-13

	Date	Opponent	Venue	Result	Score	Comp
1912						
Sept.	2 nd	Barry District	Home	Won	2 - 0	W.L.
	7 TH	Llanelly	Home	Draw	2 - 2	S.L.
	14 th	Mid-Rhondda	Home	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	16 th	Newport County	Away	Won	2 - 1	W.L.
	21 st	Treharris	Away	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	26 th	Cardiff Corinthians	Home	Won	3 - 1	F
	28 th	Lysaght's Excels	Home	Won	9 - 1	E.C.
Oct.	5 th	Mardy	home	Won	2 - 1	S.L.
	7 th	Aberdare	Away	Won	2 - 1	W.L.
	12 th	Barry District	Home	Won	4 - 0	E.C.
	19 th	Llanelly	Home	Won	1 - 0	W.L.
	21 st	Merthyr Town	Away	Draw	1 - 1	W.L.
	26 th	Southend	Away	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
Nov.	2 nd	Cardiff City	Away	Lost	1 - 2	E.C.
	9 th	Swansea	Away	Draw	0 - 0	W.L.
	11 th	Aberdare	Home	Draw	1 - 1	W.L.
	14 th	Mardy	Away	Lost	2 - 4	W.L.
	16 th	Mardy	Away	Lost	2 - 3	S.W.C.
	21 st	Ton Pentre	Home	Draw	0 - 0	W.L.
	23 rd	Pontypridd Reserves	Home	Draw	0 - 0	F
	25 th	Merthyr Town	Home	Won	1 - 0	W.L.

	30 th	Aberdare	Home	Won	5 - 1	S.L.
Dec.	2 nd	Swansea	Home	Won	1 - 0	W.L.
	7 th	Luton	Away	Draw	2 - 2	S.L.
	12 th	Swansea	Away	Lost	2 - 3	W.L.
	14 th	Treharris	Home	Draw	1 - 1	W.L.
	21 st	Croydon	Away	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	25 th	Cardiff City	Away	Draw	1 - 1	S.L.
	26 th	Ton Pentre	Away	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	28 th	Luton	Home	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
1913						
Jan	4 th	Rhayader	Home	Won	9 - 0	W.C.
	18 th	Hadley Castle	Home	Won	6 - 1	W.C.
	25 th	Mid-Rhondda	Home	Won	2 - 1	W.L.
	30 th	Risca	Home	Aband	-	W.L.
Feb	1 st	Mid-Rhondda	Away	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
	8 th	Croydon Common	Home	Draw	1 - 1	S.L.
	13 th	Mardy	home	Aband	-	W.L.
	15 th	Llanelly	Away	Draw	1 - 1	S.L.
	20 th	Swansea	Home	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	22 nd	Walsall	Home	Won	2 - 1	S.L.
	25 th	Llanelly	Away	Draw	0 - 0	W.L.
Mar.	1 st	Mardy	Away	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	8 th	Chester	Ninian	Won	2 - 1	W.C.
	15 th	Aberdare	Away	Draw	1 - 1	S.L.

	24 th	Cardiff City	Home	Draw	1 - 1	S.L.
	25 th	Treharris	Home	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	29 th	Treharris	Away	Won	3 - 1	W.L.
	31 st	Newport County	Home	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
Apr	5 th	Southend	Home	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	7 th	Mid-Rhondda	Away	Won	1 - 0	W.L.
	12 th	Newport County	Away	Lost	1 - 3	S.L.
	14 th	Risca	Away	Draw	0 - 0	W.L.
	19 th	Swansea	Ninian	Draw	0 - 0	W.C.
	21 st	Risca	Home	Won	7 - 0	W.L.
	23 rd	Ton Pentre	Away	Lost	3 - 6	S.L.
	24 th	Swansea	M. Rhondda	Lost	0 - 1	W.C.
	25 th	Ton Pentre	Away	Lost	0 - 2	W.L.
	26 th	Barry District	Away	Won	5 - 1	W.L.
	28 th	Cardiff City	Home	Draw	1 - 1	W.L.
	29 th	Newport County	Away	Won	1 - 0	W.L.

W.L. = Welsh League. S.L. = Southern League. W.C. = Welsh Cup. F + Friendly. S.W.C. = South Wales & Monmouthshire Cup; E.C. = English Cup. Colours: - Black & White.
 Ground: Taff Vale Park. Captain: Charlie Murray, Playing record: P58 W25 D20 L13.



**Mr Alexander Maley - Secretary- manager of the
Pontypridd A.F.C.**

Chapter Three
Season 1913-14

The summer of 1913 would again see the annual clear-out of the Pontypridd players with few of the 'old guard' remaining for the 1913-14 season. At the end of the previous season the Dragons had appointed Alex Maley as Manager- secretary, and soon he began to search for replacement players. Meanwhile, off the field the club was struggling for money to pay its way, and began devising new social events that would be run for the benefit of the club. The Supporters Club were a great help to the directors of the club, and were it not for their support the club would have folded, as Cwm Albion had done at the end of the previous season. Altogether the new season looked likely to be very interesting in many ways.

The Supporters Club AGM

The AGM of the Pontypridd AFC Supporters Club was held on Saturday, Aug. 9th 1913, with Mr. Lancaster in the chair. The following were elected: President, Mr. C. Hinckly; chairman; Mr. J. Lancaster, secretary; Mr. Percy Kenward, treasurer; and Mr. T. A. Thomas. The financial statement showed a balance on the right side, and this was in no small measure due to the late energetic secretary, Mr. Alf Rostrom.

A great effort would be made during the coming season to increase the membership to a thousand. To encourage members to help in the scheme the chairman offered a grandstand ticket, and the club offered an enclosure ticket, also a ground ticket, for use during the season 1914-15, to persons introducing the most new members to the club during the coming season. It was announced that a normal meeting would be held on the following Monday at 8.15, at the new headquarters at the Victoria Hotel. A hearty invitation was given to all interested in the progress of sport in Pontypridd. Mr. Hinckley, of the Victoria Hotel accepted the office of president.

Season tickets were now ready and were priced: ground tickets, 7s-6d; enclosure, 12s-6d; grand stand 15s; ground (ladies) 2s-6d; enclosure (ladies) 5s; ground (boys) 2s-6d; enclosure (boys) 5s. The directors only had a limited number of season tickets and intended to withdraw what was unsold on October 1st, so it was advised that intended purchasers get theirs as soon as possible. The enclosure was being suitably terraced, and crush barriers would be erected which would add considerably to the comfort of the spectators, and arrangements made so that all that went to the ground had a good view of the matches.

An ordinary meeting was held on Saturday, Aug. 16th at the Victoria Hotel, and increased enthusiasm was displayed. Mr. Lancaster again occupied the chair and in an address said that he hoped they would secure promotion this year, and win at the third time of asking, the Welsh Cup. 'Soccerite' of the 'Free Press' then spoke

congratulating the Supporters Club on the progress that they had made during last season. He was bound to congratulate the Dragons directors on having secured such an eminent sports person as Mr. Alex Maley, as secretary (applause). He was the right man in the right place. The speaker wished to appeal strongly to the supporters to refrain from unfair criticism, and went on to say that the elevation of Merthyr and Cardiff City to Division One of the Southern League was a sign of the times, but that the interest in Division Two would nevertheless be keen on that account. Stoke, Brentford, Croydon and Luton were capital drawing teams, and they, with Swansea, Newport, Barry (the dark horses), and other Welsh teams would make the fight for promotion keener than ever. A week before the new season opened the '*Free Press*' carried this report: -

Hail the Dragons

Once more the Dragons are about to enter the gladiatorial arena! Once more they were about to place the 'magic ball' in motion. What sort of Dragons would do duty for Pontypridd during the coming season? That is what enthusiasts were asking. They would soon know, for in a week or so they would see them tripping with athletic ease to the green sward at the Taff Vale Park. There would be many new faces, Bob Turner, the giant goalkeeper, would no more be seen between the goalposts, but a good man would do duty. The old full-backs had been retained, but there would be wholesale changes amongst the halves and forwards. Such well-known figures as Hardman, McCall, Morley and Knight, had sought fresh fields to conquer. Amongst the new men much was expected of Richard Coates, the famous centre-forward from Mardy. The Dragons had never had a really good centre-forward. Coates had a way of his own of slipping past the backs and scoring goals, and he might prove to be just the sharp-shooter the Dragons had been looking for.

A week later the '*Free Press*' reported: "The football season is about to open and there are no indications of any diminution of popular interest in the soccer code in Pontypridd and district. On the other hand the sporting public have appeared to be more eager than ever to see the start. Two years ago when a soccer club was started at Pontypridd there were many folk who shook their heads and said 'Oh yes! There will be a rush of spectators for a few months, but it won't last!' A new secretary-manager of experience in the person of Mr. Maley has been installed in office, and he is the gentleman to whom the Dragon supporters may respond with confidence. There are many old players we shall see no more, and everything will depend on the men who will take their places. It's no use speculating as yet as to how this man and that man will play. Football depends no so much upon the individual merits of this or that player, but as the eleven play as combined. And so I leave the Dragons in the hands of the gods. They are going to make a fight for promotion as they have as good a chance as any team of rising to the heights of

Division One. We will see their doings with more interest than ever."

The players started training on Monday Aug. 18th 1913 and were to be seen indulging in vigorous walking and running exercises under the supervision of Mr. Alex Maley, and trainer, Mr. William Rowe. Mr. Maley hoped that by the beginning of the season to have his men thoroughly fit and in good condition to put in a strenuous bit of work, so as to secure a good record by the end of the season. At the end of August 1913 the 'Free Press' published the following list of new Dragons players:

William Williams, the new goalkeeper, who will wear Turner's mantle, comes with first class credentials. He has played for Kilmarnock and Nithsdale Wanderers for the last four years. Height 5ft-5ins, weight, 11 stone; Alex Purdie, Hamilton Academicals, is a strong, virile, young half-back. Height, 5ft-8ins, weight 11st-4lbs. Plays either right or centre-half; Jack O'Hara, was with Edinburgh Hibernians for four seasons. He was their 'handy man' during his term of play for them and occupied every position on the field as the necessity arose. Although only 5ft-6ins, he weighs 11 stone, and is a most tenacious tackler and a splendid man for forcing the game. He has a breezy style of play, which always commends itself to the spectators; Robert Milligan, left or centre-half, is a young player who Clyde signed on last year as a junior, and who Pontypridd have been very lucky in attaining. He is about 5ft-10 ins, and about 11½ stone, and a thorough grafter.

William Doonin, is a clever young half-back from Third Lanark, 5ft-7ins, and weighs 10 stone. He is a typical Scottish half-back. Intelligence marks his every move in tackling, and his placing is of a high order. He is equally at home at left or centre-half. He is looked upon by good judges in Scotland as a half-back with a great future. He is equally at home at inside-forward. George Fell, is too well known by the Pontypriddians to need any introduction; Charles Pickett, of Treharris, another of the new players, will no doubt go on in his sphere with credit to the team as outside-right. Although small, he has already made a name for himself in Treharris for his speedy runs and accurate crosses. Thomas Laurie, was a Scottish junior at the start of last season who attracted the attention of many leading teams both in Scotland and England. Home ties, however, at the time made him throw in his lot with Glasgow Rangers, for whom he played many good games. Greenock Morton, in a bad way owing to injuries, got his assistance from the Rangers for a few games at the end of the season, and would have liked to have retained him this season. We are glad to say that Mr. Maley used his good influence effectively with the Rangers management and succeeded in obtaining his transfer to Pontypridd. His play is of a thoughtful order. He is exceptionally clever with the ball, and has a wonderful shot, certainly more so than his appearance - he is 5ft-8ins and of slim build - would lead one to suspect. Richard Coates, has made a safe reputation for

himself as the Mardy centre-forward, and hopes to be as successful in the Dragons team as he was in Mardy. John Smith, is another typical Scot, being 5ft-7½, and 11st-10lb, and very powerfully built. He is very fast. He has played for both Glasgow Rangers and Greenock Morton, and will be seen showing his pace in the Welsh Powderhall Sprint at Taff Vale Park. He plays either centre or outside. Dan Ferguson, is the brother of the famous centre-half now at Liverpool, and has seen service with the Edinburgh Hibernians, and Blackpool. He is 5ft-8ins and 11st-4lbs, and has a good turn of speed, is clever with the ball and good as an inside or outside player.

The Dragons at Ynysangharad

The players that had been engaged by the Pontypridd AFC for the coming season indulged in a practice match on Saturday afternoon, Aug. 23rd 1913. In consequence of the Taff Vale Park being prepared for the big sprint (the Welsh Powderhall) on the following Monday, the game was played on the rugby ground at the Ynysangharad fields, and was watched by around 3,000 people. The proceeds of the gate were given to the local rugby club (Pontypridd RFC). Although the weather was warm and more fit for cricket than football, the new men gave a capital exhibition. The team had been re-organised, only three of the old players having been retained, Charlie Murray (captain), Ted Dalton and George Fell. The others, with the exception of Richard Coates and Charlie Pickett, were recruited in Scotland, and the crowd was naturally anxious to see how they would shape. Mr. Alex Maley, the manager, had got two splendid sides together and after an hour's play the game ended in a draw. Of the new players, Ferguson, left-wing, Laurie, inside-right, and O'Hara, centre-half, created a favourable impression. Smith and Coates, the centre-forwards, were clever, the former being very fast and a good shot. Roose, a local amateur, who played inside to Ferguson, showed great promise. Dalton, Murray and Fell showed that they were as good as ever, their defence being one of the features. The forwards are speedier than the former quintet, and it was evident that the Dragons had plenty of talent available to form a strong side.

Benefit concert

The first Football concert or "Singy-sing-song" under the auspices of the Pontypridd AFC Supporters Club, was held at their headquarters at the Victoria Hotel on a Monday Evening at the end of August 1913, when everything went off with a considerable éclat. There was an attendance of 300. It was intended to introduce a new feature in respect to social gatherings. There would be a series of what may be termed 'National Evenings,' when only the songs of one particular nation would be sung. The list would comprise of Scottish, Irish, Welsh and

English. Towards the end of September a Smoking Concert would again be held under the presidency of Mr. Maley.

Trial game v Caerphilly

The players were now in strict training, and to all appearances every man looked in the pink of condition. The second trial match took place on Thursday afternoon, August 28th 1913, at Ynysangharad before 2,000 people. The proceeds were again given to the rugby club for the use of the ground, and it was gratifying to know that the amount obtained was £11. McCall and Barlow, Dragons the previous season now played for Caerphilly

Dan Ferguson struck the crowd as a very useful forward. He has a good turn of speed, controls the ball fairly well, and is not afraid to shoot. Bill Doonin, who figured at inside-left, had few opportunities to show his worth. The most conspicuous player on the field, however, was Bob Milligan, the centre-half. Of fine physique, he is a typical half-back, and his strong point appears to be in defence. He repeatedly broke up the attack of the opposing forwards in a masterful way, and he exercised good judgement in clearing.

Another half-back who took the spectators' fancy was Jack O'Hara. He is a bustling player, keen, and is always on the look-out for an opening for his forwards. Alex Purdie, the left-half, executed the little he had to do with tact and judgement, and his placing of the ball left nothing to be desired. The game revealed the fact, that if anything, the Dragons would be much stronger in the rear division than last season. Ted Dalton and Charlie Murray appeared to have regained their form, and should still prove the best pair of backs in Wales. Then George Fell, who is naturally not yet in his proper stride, is also available, and it will be a difficult matter to keep him out of the team. It is certain that the forwards will be much faster than those that did duty in the previous two seasons. Laurie and Pickett were no quite so successful as Ferguson and Doonin, but they showed they had plenty of football in them, and they are likely to show their true form in time for the real test which takes place at Newport on Saturday. John Smith, who was reputed to be the fastest footballer in Scotland, did not take any part in the second trial as he was saving himself for the Welsh Powderhall Sprint and the fact that his handicap is eleven yards shows that he is a 'typical flyer.' Dick Coates, late of Mardy, was also absent for the same reason (both men lost in the heats of the Powderhall). There was plenty of talent from which to pick their side, and, on the whole, there was no reason why the team should not do big things.

Included in the reserve side were several promising juniors. Downes and Fred Evans, who last season played regularly for the second team, showed up to advantage, while Roose was another promising player, and with a little more

experience he should do well in better company. Billy Rowe, the trainer, showed that he can still be of use at an emergency, and it was mainly due to his keen defence, couple with the fine display of Bill Williams, in goal, that the Dragons only scored on one occasion. After the display in the two trial matches the Dragons friends had cause to hope for a good football season.

Treharris defeated in friendly

The Dragons had an enthusiastic send-off in the opening match at Taff Vale Park on Thursday, Sept. 4th 1913, and although rain fell almost incessantly, there was a crowd of about 2,000 onlookers oblivious to the elements, their patience unruffled, their interest in the play unaffected. Although a friendly, considerable interest was taken in the game, the crowd gathering to see how the new players shaped, and Jack O'Hara, who had been appointed to the captaincy led the side out. Unfortunately, before the call of time Alex Purdie, the Dragons' right-half, fell and injured his knee. This was so severe that it necessitated four stitches, and Purdie would probably be kept out for at least three weeks. The injury is unfortunate, because in him the Dragons posses a clever player, and it would be no easy task to find a substitute for his position from the players already signed.

The forward line was an experimental one, John Smith going to the outside-left position so as to allow Dick Coates to play centre-forward. It was apparent, however, that Smith was out of position for he was not see to advantage on the wing, while Coates was prominent for some good individual bursts, but he gave the impression that he had not yet found form.

The experiment was not a success, and Alex Maley deemed in advisable to change the team for the match against Newport the following Saturday. The game, however, showed that Pontypridd had a lively, promising set of players, and there ought not to be much difficulty in placing on the field a team worthy of the club. In fairness to Mr. Maley, the team were handicapped by the long grass at the Taff Vale Park enclosure, and that it had the effect of checking the pace of the ball, and therefore increased the difficulty for the players. The playing area has since been attended too, so that no further complaint can arise on that score in future. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 TREHARRIS 0

Dragons fail at Newport County

Chelsea let down Pontypridd

The Dragons were unexpectedly defeated in their Southern League game at Newport on Saturday Sept. 6th 1913, by the narrow margin of 1-2. Anyhow, one must not feel keenly disappointed. The Dragons played a game which aroused much enthusiasm and will cause the soccer code to 'catch on' amongst the 'Usksiders.' The home contingent, who failed to secure a win of the Dragons last year, fielded the team that had recently defeated Cardiff City. Newport were home of course, and we do not readily agree with the opinion that Bill Williams, the Dragons goalie, was not to be compared with Flanders, the 'County' goalkeeper, with due reference to the latter. There was a crowd of about 8,000 spectators.

Bob Milligan, the Dragons' centre-half, was prominent in defence, as he was in attack. There were evident signs of his 'engineering capacity' and many attacking movements were set in motion by him, which gave his team opportunities of manufacturing goals, but they were 'down on their luck,' and the forwards were the worse for this. Pickett scored the Ponty goal, while Tomkinson secured both goals for Newport. Final score: - NEWPORT COUNTY 2 PONTYPRIDD 1.

Great disappointment was felt in Pontypridd on Sept. 11th 1913 on the account of the failure of Chelsea to send down a team to fulfil a fixture with the Dragons. It appears that an appreciable number of Chelsea players were injured.

Another point dropped

On Sept. 13th 1913, at Taff Vale Park, the return game against Newport was witnessed with unflagging interest by a crowd of 7,000 spectators. Unfortunately, however, the rain began to pour down just before the interval, and continued to the end, and this had an adverse effect upon the play. A goal-less draw was an unsatisfactory result, but taking all things into consideration the home side should have won. The feature of the game was the capital defence set up by both sides. There was, however, room for improvement at forward as far as the Dragons were concerned, and although there was much misgiving that Dick Coates was not included, he would have to play remarkably well to replace John Smith. On the left-wing Charlie Pickett and Tom Laurie were not very prominent, and as a pair they were really not as effective as Dan Ferguson and Bill Doonin. His friends and supporters welcomed the return of George Fell, the left-wing, who had been on the sick list since the commencement of the season. There was no more popular figure than his in the team last season, and he proved that he was still a bristling little half-back, and when he settles down he would have no difficulty in keeping his place. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 NEWPORT COUNTY 0.

Pontypridd were defeated 3-1 by Llanelly in a Welsh League match at Halfway Park

on Tuesday, Sept. 16th 1913, before an attendance of 2,000.

A splendid Abertillery team beaten

Abertillery brought down a splendid team to play Pontypridd at the Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Sept. 20th 1913, and a capital Southern League game was witnessed by a crowd of about 5,000. The chief interest was centred on McArdle, who two days before had joined the Dragons from Broxben, near Edinburgh. He was an experienced player, and at one time played for Watford, from whom his transfer was obtained by Alex Maley.

The front rank was rearranged so as to allow McArdle to take up his proper position at outside-left. Coates displaced Laurie at inside-right, and it was thought that this combination would considerably improve the attack. Pontypridd's victory was in every sense meritorious, though the Dragons might have done better had they made better use of their opportunities. McArdle is a most resourceful player, and much was expected from him. George ell at half, was a perfect tower of strength. A feature in the game was when McArdle sent in a pretty shot, which Hirst, failed to hold. The leather rebounded from Hirst, and Milligan gave a long pass to Pickett, who did the trick. There was no further scoring before the call for half-time. In the second-half the Dragons forced matters incessantly, and Hirst made some fine saves, but from a corner Smith headed the second goal into the net. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 ABERTILLERY 0.

The '*Free Press*' reported: - "To some extent the changes made in the Dragons were fully justified, and although only two goals up at the finish, Pontypridd were certainly the better side, and the score by no means indicates their superiority. At the same time the Dragons failed to drive home many attacking movements and they displayed a certain weakness in their offensive tactics. There was much room for improvement in this direction, and unless it was shown pretty soon defeats were bound to follow. McArdle made a promising debut. He was well served and made good use of his chances. As a wing he is undoubtedly the best of several who have already been tried in the position, and he only had to keep up the form he exhibited in his first appearance to maintain his place in the side.

Charlie Pickett was often in the picture and gave a very fine display. His opening goal was one of the 'tit-bits' of the match. Smith, in the centre, and also Coates, did nothing brilliant, though at times their solo efforts proved very disconcerting to defensive tactics. The former, however, deserved credit for the second goal, which



Crowd at Ninian Park for Pontypridd v Swansea
Welsh Cup final 1933. The Dog was Swansea mascot

he slipped into the net from a corner. The supporters were delighted in seeing Fell

show a glimpse of his true form. The way in which he dived in and broke up the attacks of the 'tillery quintet was greatly appreciated. Bob Milligan also showed improvement, and did some useful work in attack. O'Hara, however, was disappointing, with the result that Dalton had a larger share of the work than would have otherwise fallen on him. In fairness to the captain it must be mentioned that he was handicapped by the injury he sustained against Llanelly, and as late as Friday it was doubtful that he would be fit."

On Monday, Sept. 22nd 1913, the Dragons went to Troedyrhiw to fulfil a Welsh League engagement, which resulted in a 2-2 draw, the scorers for Pontypridd being McArdle and Coates.

Pontypridd go out at first hurdle English Cup-tie at Taff Vale Park

The weather on Saturday, Sept. 27th 1913 was more summer-like than that of many mid-summer days within recollection. The conditions were more favourable to cricket, and the heat was altogether too much for fast and furious football, though it attracted spectators in their thousands, and the ladies donned summer costumes once more. The match, Pontypridd v Mid-Rhondda, being a preliminary round for the English Cup, was played in ideal conditions at Taff vale Park. For the event there were many excursions, and local trains never seem to have had heavier loads than on this occasion. There must have been fully 6,000 spectators on the park itself. The result, however, was not pleasing to the local and district admirers of the Dragons.

So far as Pontypridd were concerned, it was a game of lost chances. On several occasions in the first fifteen minutes the Dragons had secured most favourable positions, but failed to drive home the attack. They secured a penalty, but Jack O'Hara missed, the ball going a couple of yards outside the post. The failure had a disappointing effect upon the home players, for from then onwards their play deteriorated, and Mid-Rhondda soon gained a goal and maintained their lead until the end of the game.

Of free-kicks there were many for offside, and this served to make a disappointing game still more uninteresting. The Pontypridd half-backs were decidedly off colour, more particularly O'Hara and Milligan. The poor form shown by the forwards was attributable, to a great extent, to the weakness in the middle line. The forwards never seemed to get into any stride, and their attacks were easily overcome by Bain and Annan, the opposing fullbacks. McArdle and Pickett were the only two who tried to mend matters, but then they were not served as they should have been, and the consequence was that they had few chances of opening

up the game. The defence of Murray was superb, and he and his colleague, Dalton, although they had a tremendous amount of work, kicked through with credit to themselves. Neither the goalie, Williams, nor the backs, can be blamed for the defeat, and it is now apparent that what the Dragons need is a set of halves who can make openings for the forwards, and can be relied upon to adopt offensive tactics when necessity calls for it. It will be remembered that last season the Dragoons reached the third preliminary round before their defeat by Cardiff City. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 MID-RHONDDA 1.

Ton Pentre took two Welsh League points on Monday, Sept. 29th 1913, in their home match with Pontypridd. Neither team was at full strength, and a notable absentee from the Pontypridd eleven was the goalie, Bill Williams, on account of a bereavement. There were 1,500 people present. Finals score: - TON PENTRE 2 PONTYPRIDD 0. Pontypridd: Goalkeeper, Elliott, fullbacks, Downes and Murray; half-backs, O'Hara, Milligan and Doonin; Forwards, Pickett, Laurie, Smith, Jones and McArdle.

Exciting draw at Caerphilly

Pontypridd entered their fourth contest in the Southern League with Caerphilly as their opponents on Saturday, Oct. 4th 1913, at the Taff Vale Park. In comparison with the previous two years Pontypridd had done very badly indeed. This indeed was very disappointing and sufficient to may the supporters hesitate as to the result of this match. Caerphilly had played five league games, two having been won, two lost and one drawn. For a first year team they had done very creditably. Interest too, was engendered into this fixture owing to the inclusion of McCall and Barlow, two of last seasons Dragons players now playing in the Caerphilly team, and both players had done some clever things for the Dragons. The weather was fine although rain seemed near, and about 5,000 spectators were present when the teams fielded. It was then noticed that several alterations had been made in the home team. Milligan had been dropped, and his place taken by O'Hara, and Purdie reappeared at right-half. Coates, who was injured last Saturday, was unable to play, and his place was taken by Laurie. Caerphilly were at full strength.

Early on there was some very exciting play and Laurie was conspicuous, and after beating the defence and having only the goalkeeper to beat, foolishly shot when fully still twenty yards from the goal. O'Hara put in a fine shot, which Bateman, the visiting goalkeeper, managed to tip over the bar. Purdie then got possession and passed to Pickett, who beat the defence, but Smith in a splendid position shot over. But try as they would the Dragons were unable to score, although they had numerous chances. Shot after shot went wide, or just over the bar, and Caerphilly were to be congratulated for their excellent defence which kept their goal intact

up to half-time, when the score-sheet read 0-0.

On the resumption Murray had to save several times, and McCall had bad luck in not scoring. A pretty bit of play by Pickett caused some excitement, and a hot attack by McArdle, Doonin, Smith and Pickett, gave the 'Jackdaws' an anxious time indeed. A goal seemed certain. Try as they would Caerphilly could not clear until the ball was kicked over. They then came away with a bang, and had it not been for a remarkable save by Murray, Croft was bound to have scored. Again the Dragons took up the attack, and Laurie drove a trifle wide. It was indeed remarkable that the defence of Peplow and Lean, had not fallen. Much excitement was caused in the Caerphilly goalmouth, and the referee awarded a goal thinking that the ball had been carried into the net by Bateman, the Caerphilly goalkeeper, but on consulting the linesman the goal was not allowed. Long shots were now indulged in by the Dragons, but the proved useless. It was indeed a fine spectacular scene, for fully thirty minutes in the second-half the Dragons bombarded the visitors goal. During the last twenty minutes the spectators witnessed a tussle the like of which has never been before been seen on the Taff Vale Park. Attack after attack was made without success, and it was indeed a miracle that no score was registered.

Those who were in a position to see, later stated definitely that on the occasion the referee stopped the game when Bateman was forced into the net, that a goal should have been awarded. The linesman who was appealed to was not anywhere near and could not possibly see. The referee should have awarded the goal, for in his mind the ball had crossed the line. Some dissatisfaction was expressed by the crowd at the referee's decision when he disallowed the goal by the Dragons. Dalton and Murray, as usual, were perfectly safe, and Murray must be highly praised for the brilliant save he made in the second-half.

Croft had got right through, and about six yards from the goal was about to shoot when Murray dashed up, threw himself at the feet of Croft, and thus saved a certain goal. Williams had an easy time in the Pontypridd goal. Only about three or four shots came anywhere near him. Without hesitation everyone must admit that the Dragons were easily the better team and should have won. Still, great praise was accorded to the visitors for their most remarkable defence. Unless a change takes place there will be no promotion for the Dragons this year, and the support that has been all that could be desired, will be as a consequence withdrawn. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 CAERPHILLY 0. The '*Free Press*' the following week commented:

What is the matter with the Dragons?

Defeat at Mid-Rhondda

Yes, one might ask: What is the matter with the Dragons? This is the third season of their existence, and six weeks ago their supporters were looking forward to achievements that would put their records of 1911-12 and 1912-13 into the shade. The team that did duty for them in the first season did sufficiently well enough to excite enthusiasm for soccer in a town which had until then been regarded as a rugby stronghold; the team that served us in the second season also gave satisfaction, although it did not 'set the Thames on fire.' What about the third season? To put the case in a nutshell, the forwards can't score goals.

No-one expected they would perform marvels during the first two or three weeks of the season, for the forwards and halves were still newcomers and strangers to each others methods. A team does not blend all of a sudden, but now that we are in the ninth week of the football season one might be justified in looking for improvement in their form all round. But instead of improvement - what? It looks like deterioration. Take their last match, played on Monday, Oct. 6th 1913. They journeyed to Tonypany to engage Mid-Rhondda in a Welsh League match and were defeated by three goals to nil.

The 'Mushrooms' who came - or grew - into existence twelve months ago, ousted the Dragons from the English Cup competition at Taff Vale Park a fortnight ago. For a team which created such a stir in the football world two years ago - and last year too - by reaching the final of the Welsh Cup, this is humiliating. The Dragons form on Monday was most disappointing. According to the Western Mail critic, the bulk of attacking in the first-half came from Mid-Rhondda, and though after the interval the visitors showed signs of promise, they were rarely dangerous, two chances being due to mistakes by Annan.

Why can't the forwards score goals? That is what everybody is asking. Monday's defeat, following so closely on the indifferent exhibition against Caerphilly caused something like alarm in the camp of their followers. They ought to have pulverised a new team like Caerphilly, which only came into being a few weeks ago, and which cannot possibly be of much 'class' because of the comparative smallness of the population on which it depends for support. Football devotees like to see their team win matches. Defeats are galling, and draws do not rouse enthusiasm, and if the Dragon's don't 'buck-up' and gain victories the 'gates' at Taff Vale Park are bound to suffer. There is plenty of time yet to repair the damage. The season is young, and there is no reason why the Dragons should not rehabilitate themselves during the next few weeks if each player shows a determination to do his best. Final score: - MID-RHONDDA 3 PONTYPRIDD 0.

What is wrong with Welsh soccer teams?

It wasn't only the Dragons who were struggling, in the Oct. 16th 1913 issue of the 'Free Press' 'Soccerite' was asking another puzzling question: - "What is wrong is wrong with all the - or nearly all - the leading south Wales soccer teams? With one or two exceptions they appear to be in a very lackadaisical mood, and if some of them do not emerge swiftly from their period of listlessness, there will be more than one crisis 'ere long. In the Second Division of the Southern League there are twelve Welsh and four English clubs, and what do we find? After seven weeks of the football season has expired the four English teams are on top. There is one thing to be said in extenuation of the Dragons uninspiring achievements this season. They have been very unlucky in regard of injuries. The club do not possess a superfluity of players, and injuries to two or three players are quickly felt. They have no difficult matches to play in the next couple of weeks, and it is to be hoped that by the time another Southern League engagement is reached that the injured players will have recovered."

Dragons win friendly - fund-raising continues

Pontypridd gained an odd goal victory over Troedyrhiw in a friendly game at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Oct. 11th 1913. The date had been put aside for a cup game, but having been defeated, this game was arranged. Taffs Well. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 TROEDYRHIW 1. On the evening of the same date a public meeting was held at the Victoria Hotel Assembly Room, when it was decided to organise a 'Shilling Fund,' the whole arrangements to be in the hands of the Pontypridd AFC Supporters Club. About £20 was promised in the room, and it was decided to ask the proprietors of the cinemas and theatres to help in the movement.

Another Southern League defeat

Ton Pentre defeated - narrow defeat at Aberdare

The Dragons had now played five matches in the Southern League competition and had only secured four points. During the corresponding period of last season and the season before, they had a better record, but they were not so unfortunate in the matter of injuries to players as they had been this season. The forwards played in such a thrustful style against Ton Pentre in a home Welsh League match on Thursday, Oct. 16th 1913, when the Dragons won by 4-1, that the Southern League match at Aberdare on Saturday Oct. 18th, was looked forward to with a feeling of hopefulness, and the Dragons took 400 enthusiastic supporters with them, who did not forget to make their presence felt. They gave the Dragons all the encouragement they could. The 'darians, however, proved successful. Final score: - ABERDARE 2 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Drawn game at Treharris

On Saturday, Oct. 25th 1913, the Dragons played a Southern League fixture at Treharris, and drew a crowd of about 4,000, and quite three-parts of that number had made the journey from Pontypridd. The Dragons had done a little better than the 'Lillywhites' in this league, having gained previous to this game four points out of a possible ten, while on the other hand, Treharris had played seven matches without gaining a single point, though on the previous Saturday they had been unlucky to lose 2-1 at Luton. Amongst the home supporters it was generally considered that Treharris would open their Southern League account on this occasion, and the result proved that they had been justified in their conviction, the score-sheet after a strenuously contested game, remained blank. Towards the end fouls were frequent, and the latter portion of the game, which was played in semi-darkness, was of a dirty character. Final score: - TREHARRIS 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

Cyclone at Treforest

On Oct. 27th 1913 a cyclone roared up the Taff Valley, damaging house from Treforest to Treharris, leaving two dead. Fencing and tin sheeting from the roof of the grandstand at Taff Vale Park were blown across the river, while the changing rooms at the Northern end of the ground were so severely damaged that they were demolished.

Swansea at Taff Vale Park

Notwithstanding the inclement weather on Thursday afternoon, Oct. 30th 1913, a crowd of between 2 or 3,000 put in an appearance at the Taff Vale Park to witness the match between the Dragons and Swansea Town in the Welsh League. The only goal of the match came early in the second-half from a penalty against Murray, the home back, who fouled Weir in the area. The kick was taken by Ball, and he easily placed the ball out of the reach of Williams. Notwithstanding the fact that the Dragons lost, they were very unfortunate in doing so. PONTYPRIDD 0 SWANSEA TOWN 1.

Jack O'Hara performs the "hat-trick."

The Dragons were at home to Mardy on Saturday, Nov. 1st 1913 in a Southern League game. The date had originally been kept open for the English Cup competition, but both teams having been defeat by Mid-Rhondda and Aberdare respectively, it was therefore mutually agreed to play their Southern League fixture instead of later in the season. With the exception of Purdie, who came into the half-back line, the team was the same as that which performed so creditably

against Swansea Town on Thursday. Prior to this match the teams had played the same number of games in the league, and had scored the same number of points. When the teams fielded, the attendance was distinctly disappointing, there being hardly 500 spectators present. This was undoubtedly due to the fact that although the kick-off had been advertised to take place at 3.45, it was decided at the last moment to commence a quarter of an hour earlier. However, well before the interval, there were quite 3,000 present to witness what ultimately proved to be an interesting game.

The game had hardly been in progress a couple of minutes when Lockett collided heavily with Ted Dalton, the home right-back, but he was able to resume after a slight delay. It was evident from the start that a fast game was in store, play travelling from end to end in quick succession. The Dragons attacked early with Pickett being prominent and Thomas, the visiting goalkeeper, just managed to save one shot at the expense of a corner. The visitors then took up the attack and a splendid transfer from Tebbit to Lockett saw the latter race well up the field, but was unable to get round Dalton, who kicked back to the centre. Ferguson here got possession and sent out to Pickett, who sprinted with the ball at his toes, and, beating the backs in hollow fashion centred beautifully for Laurie to send in a first-timer which almost brought about the downfall of the Mardy goalkeeper., who threw himself on the ground to save. At this point Cordie, one of the visiting halves, was injured, but was soon able to return to the field of play. Resuming, a good centre by Pickett saw O'Hara shoot over the bar from eight yards range, when he had the goal practically at his mercy. For a while play settled down in neutral ground. Just before the interval, Griffiths, the visiting centre-half, had to be carried off, having wrenched his knee badly.

Owing to the fading light the players turned over without an interval. Fast had been the play in the first-half, the second was started at an even greater pace, and it was evident that the Dragons were out for blood. The visitors were greatly handicapped by the absence of their centre-half, and for a time adopted the - one back - game, but the Dragons were not to be denied, and Pickett, who after a characteristic dash, centred well for Doonin to shoot. The shot went straight into the goalkeepers hands, who only partially cleared, and O'Hara netted with a shot that beat him all the way.

The Dragons again returned to the attack upon the restart, and after some smart play on the left, Thomas just managed to reach a shot from Fell, to save at the expense of a corner. The kick was cleared, but O'Hara again came away with a splendid burst down the centre, and when about to shoot was charged by Jenkins, the ball going yards wide. The home men were now outplaying the Mardyites, and a pretty movement between McArldle and O'Hara saw the latter off once more.

The centre-forward sent out to Pickett at the right moment and the latter put in a nicely placed centre while on the run, which O'Hara banged into the net, giving Thomas no chance to save. Success is born of success, and with only ten minutes left, the home forward line once more bore down on Thomas. They swept through the opposition, and Pickett gaining possession, centred in almost faultless style. O'Hara, who was well up, met the ball beautifully, and headed in the Dragons third and last goal. From then until the call of time the Dragons penned their opponents in their own territory. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 3 MARDY 0.

The '*Free Press*' commented: - " The Dragons well deserved their victory no-one will deny. On the day's form they were undoubtedly the better team. They played better football, and might easily have won by a bigger margin had their forwards, during the first-half, used a little more of the judgement that they displayed in the second. That the team can play good football when put to it is self-evident; that they can also play a slovenly game is equally true, as the first-half proved. The team as it is presently constituted is not a bad one, but, well, it does not look capable of setting the Thames on fire. O'Hara and Pickett were the bright stars, the former infusing any amount of dash into his play, and his three goals were real beauties. A collection was made at the game for the Senghenydd Disaster Fund.

Splendid victories for Pontypridd

The Dragons were visitors to Aberdare on Monday, Nov. 3rd 1913, in a Southern League fixture. The 'darians fielded a weak team, most of the premiers being rested in view of Thursday's English Cup tie with Newport County. The Dragons were the better team and ran out winning the game 3-0, thus winning their second league game in three days. Final score: - ABERDARE 0 PONTYPRIDD 3.

The Dragons entertained Luton Town at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Nov. 8th 1913, in another Southern League (Division two) fixture, before a crowd of about 4,000 spectators. The weather was fine, and, notwithstanding the heavy rain of the previous few days, the ground had made a wonderful recovery, and was in capital condition. The home team was re-organized on this occasion when Smith, who had been on the injured list, once more took his position at centre-forward. Jack O'Hara went to centre-half, while a new man, Hodges, formerly of Croydon, was given a trial at inside-right in place of Laurie. Having lost the toss the Dragons started from the Treforest end.

The opening stages were in favour of Luton, who were swarming around the home goal. A succession of corners had fell to the Luton men, one of which was cleared by Ferguson, but a moment later Simms almost brought about the downfall of the home goal, his shot just missing by inches. Shortly after, however, the same player

headed into the sent well out of the reach of Bill Williams from a corner. Restarting, Hodges sent out to Pickett, who centred for O'Hara to shoot just inches wide of the mark. The home forwards again returned to the attack, but Smith lost several good chances to equalize through centres from McArdle and Pickett. Towards halftime the home forwards were now doing slightly better than in the opening stages, but their passing at times seemed to be a trifle wild. The home men tried hard to draw level, but when the halftime whistle blew they were still a goal down.

Owing to the fading light the teams changed round without an interval. The Dragons went off with a dash in this half which rose the spirit of their supporters, and after about ten minutes play Pickett, receiving from Hodges, centred for Ferguson to equalize with a ground-shot which Mitchell made a great attempt to save, but failed. The aggressive work of the home forwards was something to be contended with at this stage of the game, and the Luton defenders had to be on the move all the time. After some pretty play between Ferguson and McArdle on the left, the former again shot, but Mitchell tipped the ball over the bar. A moment later a miskick by Dalton let the Luton forwards in, and Rollinson again gave his side the lead.

This reverse, however, livened up the Dragons considerably, and it was not long before a combined movement between Pickett, Smith and Hodges, ended in the latter beating Mitchell with a good shot, which once more put the sides level. From then on it was a rare tussle for the winning goal, but fortunately success fell to the Dragons, Smith beating Mitchell with a splendid shot. The 'Strawplaiters' strove hard for the equalizer, but the home defence was too good. Murray and Dalton saved splendidly, although a miss-kick by the latter almost drove the ball into his own goal. Towards the final stages the Dragons forwards were again dangerous, and the whistle blew leaving the Dragons winners of a hard-fought game. It had been hinted before, that the Dragons were a better team than their position in the Southern League table would indicate, and this hint was confirmed when they took two points from such a highly-placed team as Luton. The margin was not a great one, it is true, but with a shade of luck it might have been added to, but anyway, there can be no doubt that the points went to the better side. Finals score: - PONTYPRIDD 3 LUTON TOWN 2. Pontypridd: Goal, B. Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, O'Hara & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, Smith, Ferguson, McArdle. The Western Mail of Nov. 11th 1913 reported that the Dragons would give a trail to Dan Clarke, a full-back of half-back from Broxburn; and Davies, a centre-half from Derby.

Dragons aid the Pontypridd YMCA

The Dragons having an open date on Saturday, Nov. 15th 1913, the directors of the club decided to give the local YMCA a 'benefit match.' The Dragons first eleven would play a team of new players who were coming for trials. For the last week or two the directors had been inquiring amongst the teams in the district for 'talent,' and in addition several players from 'away' would take part. The game was likely to be a very interesting one, and as the new players would be all-out to win, the spectators were though sure to get good value for their money. The YMCA hoped to benefit very considerably as a result, and the directors of the Dragons had decided to ask everyone to pay.

The match at Taff vale Park attracted a crowd of about 2,000, and a fair amount was handed over to the association as a result. Included in the ranks of the Dragons were two new men, Clarke, who figured at centre-half, and Samuels (Radyr), who took Dalton's place at right-back. The reserve team was composed of several new men, including King (London Athletic), right-half; W. Hill (Bristol League), centre-forward; Dudley (Gilfach), and the brothers Stallworthy, and Watkins (Radyr). The Dragons were the better team and deserved their 4-1 win. Contrary to expectation, however, the game did to reveal any exceptional talent among the new men. The new centre-half, Clarke, although he had a comparatively easy time, proving himself a bustling player, and would undoubtedly improve after a match or two.

One of the most pleasing features of the game was the good form shown by Hodges, who came into the team on the occasion of the match with Luton. His appearance has greatly strengthened the Dragons front rank, and, although in this game he did not have to cope with any great opposition, he gave a good exhibition in the centre-forward position, scoring all four goals. The only men in the reserve side who showed any promise were Stallworthy at right-back, a brother of last seasons centre-forward; Jones and Hill (Bristol League). The latter scored the reserves goal, and was an exceptionally had worker throughout. In goal, Elliott, who has played several matches in the Mid-Rhondda Reserves, had much more work to do the Williams for the Premiers. He, however, came through the ordeal with flying colours, and could not be blamed for the four goals scored against him, and in him the Dragons have undoubtedly a capable understudy to Williams. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 PONTYPRIDD RESERVES 1.

Pontypridd at Ton Pentre
Another hat-trick for O'Hara

By far the most important soccer match in the Rhondda on Saturday, Nov. 22nd 1913, was that in which the combatants were Ton Pentre and the Dragons. It was

a Southern League fixture, and to attempt to forecast the result was indeed a very difficult task. When the teams had met earlier in the season the 'Reds' were the victors, but the Dragons, who had improved considerably of late were on this occasion, confident of overcoming their opponents, and the run of play and result fully realised their expectations. The Dragons again rearranged their team to make room for Dan Clarke, who was recently been signed as centre-half. O'Hara was also transferred back to centre-forward instead of Smith, who had not been showing great form recently, and the latter took the place of Dalton at right-back.

When the teams fielded there were quite 3,000 people present, and although the ground, owing to recent rains was a bit on the heavy side, a good game was anticipated. Play during the first-half was of a fairly even character, and when half-time was called the Dragons were a goal up. On the trend of play, however, they thoroughly deserved the lead as they showed a decided superiority, their combined efforts being in strong contrast to the spasmodic attacks of the 'Ton' men.

After the interval, however, the Dragons gave a much brighter display, and it was only the splendid keeping of Green, the home goalie, that kept them from adding to the score. The two goals scored midway through this half were the result of some fine open play by the Dragons forwards. Jack O'Hara was the actual scorer, and it was the second occasion this season that he had performed the 'hat-trick.' Ton's goal came as the result of one of the visitors handling the ball when in the penalty area, and Dicky Jones netted from the resulting penalty-kick. By their victory the Dragons improved their position in the league table, and were now place fifth with a total of eleven points to their credit. That the local followers of the game were pleased with the result goes without saying, and the Southern League match against Barry on the Taff Vale Park on next Saturday was looked forward to with considerable interest. The Dragons had certainly got over their bad patch, being now in a winning mood, and should easily succeed in taking the points against the Barryites. O'Hara gave a splendid exhibition at centre-forward, and Hodges at inside-right, again showed that the directors did the right thing in signing him on, for without a doubt he has strengthened the right-wing considerably and, together with Pickett, should prove a decided asset to the team. Final score: - TON PENTRE 1 PONTYPRIDD 2.

Another couple of league points

The Dragons were at home to Barry on Saturday, Nov. 29th 1913 in a Southern League encounter. The early start and the misty rain a couple of hours previous to the start did not assist the attendance, and there were very few spectators on the ground when the teams lined up at quarter to three. The Barry team had

experienced exceptionally bad luck in the competition, and had only managed four points out of a possible eighteen. Notwithstanding this fact, however, the visitors usually put up a good show at Taff Vale Park, but the splendid form shown by the Dragons of late led the home enthusiasts to anticipate a victory for their favourites. With the exception, at right-back, and Ferguson at inside-left whole places were taken by Smith and Doonin, respectively, the Dragons turned out at full strength.

The Dragons had the advantage in the early stages, and at once invaded the 'Lynnetes' territory. however, Barry came back and for some time the home defence was sorely tested. The Barry forwards were doing good work in mid-field, Sheldon and Bates combining effectively. The latter was often dangerous, sending in a good few centres which kept Murray and Smith busy. A huge kick by the former, however, set the home forward rank in motion, the ball going to Pickett, who, after beating man after man, ended up badly by shooting over. Sedgley, the Barry goalkeeper, was called upon to deal with a long shot by Clarke, but he cleared it splendidly, and after some mid-field play Isherwood got away on the left, forcing a corner kick. The resulting kick was splendidly placed, but only partially cleared, and Saunders getting possession found the net with a low drive, which gave the home goalie no possible chance, he being unsighted at the time. The goal was well deserved, for on the run of play they had much the better of the argument. The home team improved somewhat towards the interval, forcing several corners, but Sedgley cleared shots from Pickett, Hodges and McArdle, and when the halftime whistle blew, Barry were leading by a goal to nil.

O'Hara restarted for the Dragons and for a time the Barry men, playing with the confidence of a goal lead, took up the running, and a smart bit of work by Bates placed them in a good possession, but Smith cleared. The visiting forwards at this stage of the game were combining much more effectively than the home lot, and, had it not been for the fine defence of Fell and Murray, they might have added to their score. It was an excellent burst on the part of Fell that led to the equalizer. He sent out to McArdle, who drove across the goalmouth, and Doonin getting possession, sent in a shot between the backs which struck the upright and rebounded into the field of play. Clarke, however, secured, and made no mistake in finding the net. It was a splendid movement, and the goal was well deserved. This success greatly encouraged the Dragons, for whom O'Hara was playing dashing game. Getting possession in mid-field, the latter raced towards the goal, and transferred to Doonin at the right moment for him to beat Sedgley with a shot at close range, which put the home team a goal up.

On the restart the 'Lynnetes' improved and played up pluckily. Isherwood got possession and drove in a shot which Williams managed to save, but in the melee

lost the ball, and Fife dashed up and placed in the net, thus bringing the scores level once again. The home men gradually worked their way down, Hodges and Pickett being prominent with some fine work on the right. When near the Barry penalty area a foul on O'Hara resulted in a free-kick, and Doonin again rose the spirits of the home supporters by adding the Dragons third goal. The game was vigorously contested at this stage, both sides attacking in turn, and fouls were frequent. Towards the end a brilliant run by McArdle saw that player place well across the goalmouth, and O'Hara ended a capital movement by beating Sedgley with a low shot which gave him no possible chance. Owing to the fading light in was now almost impossible to follow the play, and the final whistle went leaving the Dragons the victors of a hard fought game. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 BARRY 2.

Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Smith & Murray; half-backs, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Doonin & McArdle.

A local newspaper reported: "The game, if not of a brilliant nature, in the second portion was full of thrills. In was a vigorous game, in which many minor incidents occurred. Fouls were pretty frequent, but nothing of a deliberate nature took place, the fouls being, no doubt, accounted for by the enthusiasm and determination introduced into the play by both sides. John O'Hara, formerly of Edinburgh Hibernians, has been discovered as a centre-forward by the Dragons, and twice in successive matches he has performed the 'hat-trick. Ben Ferguson, brother of the Liverpool player, was another youth who had much improved his game, Mr. E. S. Maley's influence is apparent in the good play of the team as a whole. Next Saturday the Dragons are due at Luton, where they meet the 'Strawplaiters' in a Southern League match. Having undergone good training during the current week, it is hoped that they will share the points with their redoubtable opponents, if not actually claim the two, and I'm sure all followers of the game locally have this wish."

Dragons go down at Luton

On Friday afternoon, the Dragons, accompanied by a couple of their supporters, left Pontypridd en route to Luton, where they were due on the following day, Dec. 6th 1913, for a Southern League fixture. It will be remembered that when Luton appeared at the Taff Vale Park a few weeks previously that they were beaten by the odd goal in five after a very strenuous encounter. Since that date, however, the Dragons had made still better progress, and their supporters were buoyed up by the hope that their 'pets' would secure at least one point in this, the return fixture. A glance at the league table showed Luton in second place and were in a much better position than the Dragons. Dalton made a welcome reappearance at

right-back, while the forward line was strengthened by the inclusion of Ferguson.

The result, however, was very disappointing indeed for the Dragons, who, notwithstanding the three goals registered against them, had quite as much of the game as their opponents. For quite thirty minutes of the first-half they held their own comfortably, and were decidedly unlucky in being three goals down at the interval. On not a few occasions during the first moiety it was sheer bad luck which denied them at least a couple of goals, Mitchell, the home goalkeeper stopping shots from O'Hara, McArdle, Pickett and Ferguson, in very lucky fashion indeed. Having established such a useful lead, the home backs during the second-half played 'one-back' game so successfully that the Dragons front-line were caught offside on numerous occasions, and this prevented them from being really dangerous. The whole, however, worked hard to save the game, but it was not to be. The swarmed around the Luton goal on many occasions, and Luton were a lucky team indeed to keep their score-sheet clear.

O'Hara led his men finely, and together with Pickett, were the cleverest of the Dragon forwards. The former experienced very hard lines indeed in being fouled in the latter portion of the game when he had almost broken through. The free-kick was taken by Fell, and this player also had bad luck in seeing his shot accidentally charged down by one of the brothers Hawkes. Mitchell, the goalie, was the outstanding player on the home side. His play was brilliant at times, and he stopped shots that would have easily have beaten a less experienced player. Dalton and Murray played consistently throughout, and were ably supported by Fell, Purdie and Williams, the goalie, who, apart from the occasion when he let Hawkes' shot through his hands, did very well, and could not be blamed for the score registered against his side. Final score: - LUTON TOWN 3 PONTYPRIDD 1. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke, Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & McArdle.

Narrow victory over Ton Pentre

On Saturday afternoon, Dec. 13th 1913, the Dragons fielded their strongest side available to do battle for Southern League points against Ton Pentre at the Taff Vale Park. This was the second meeting of the teams this season, the first having taken place a few weeks ago at 'Ton,' where the Dragons were the victors by three goals to nil. O'Hara on that occasion performing the 'hat-trick.' Since then, however, the Dragons had still further improved their play, and although they were defeated at Luton, they were still confident of the result, and on current form it certainly appeared a good thing for them. The visitors had so far fared rather badly in the Southern League competition, previous to this having played ten games, seven of which they had lost, three being drawn, thus securing three points

in the table. The Dragons, however, out of eleven matches had been able to secure thirteen points, thus occupying a more favourable position. The kick-off had been announced for 2.30, and this, coupled with the fact that Merthyr were engaged in an English Cup match at home, accounted for the somewhat sparse attendance on the park when the teams fielded.

O'Hara won the toss, and Ton Pentre kicked off from the Treforest end. Early on play was very exciting, up and down the field, and the home men were not doing so well as expected. Once they rushed down in splendid style, but Pickett was offside and a good chance went astray. O'Hara then got away with a good dash, and transferring to Pickett, who rounded the visiting backs and banged in a timely centre. O'Hara met it nicely, but his shot went directly to Green, the 'Ton' goalkeeper. The goalie had only partially cleared, and a regular mix-up in front of goal took place, the referee finally awarding a 'throw-up.' Ton managed to clear, but the Dragons were soon back again. The home men appealed for a corner, but this did not fit in with the referee's views, who awarded a goal-kick, where upon the crowd began to boo loudly. Later, clever work by O'Hara gave Ferguson a chance to put in a first-timer, but he was too slow, his shot being easily stopped. The visiting halves were not giving O'Hara much rope, and on one occasion he was bowled over in the area. A penalty was claimed, but the referee would have none of it, and so the game proceeded. The Dragons missed several chances in front of goal. McArdle, Pickett and Hodges, all forced corners, but nothing became of them and the interval was reached with the score-sheet being blank.

The number of spectators had considerably increased when O'Hara restarted. The home men, who during the first-half appeared to be taking things too easily, now put more dash into their play, and at once took up the attack. Pickett and Hodges were often dangerous on the right, but the visiting halves bundled into them in rough style on times and were frequently penalised. A slight scene between Curtis and Clarke was ended by the referee giving these players a word of advice. O'Hara was continually breaking through, and, although he was carefully watched, he beat the visiting backs time and again, and had he been better supported by his inside men the Dragons could very easily have opened the scoring.

The 'Ton' goal then underwent many narrow escapes, Green dealing with half-a-dozen shots in rare style. O'Hara was making determined efforts to open the scoring, and twice, after really magnificent bursts, forced the goalie to leave his charge open. Play now waged fast and furious around the Ton goal, where the referee again awarded a 'throw-up' consequent of Green holding. The visitors then took a turn, and Jones forced a corner, which proved abortive.. Fell then gave a chance to McArdle on the left which that player quickly snapped up, and sending in a lovely centre O'Hara met it and gave to Hodges, who this time made no

mistake, placing the ball out of Green's reach, amidst great excitement. A goal up, the Dragons went off in rare style, and fairly monopolised the game until the final whistle sounded, leaving them the victors of a hard-fought game by one goal. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 TON PENTRE 0. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & McArdle.

The Dragons at Caerphilly

Following their victory over Ton Pentre, the Dragons when opposed by Caerphilly at Virginia Park on Dec. 20th 1913, were rather confident of annexing another two Southern League points. It will be remembered that when these sides had met earlier in the season at Taff Vale Park, the 'Jackdaws' succeeded in effecting a goal-less draw. Caerphilly had been more successful in their away games than at home and had not been beaten by any of the Welsh combinations away from home.

The kick-off had been announced to take place at 2.30 at Virginia Park, probably one of the best grounds in the Southern League, but there were barely a hundred spectators present shortly before the kick-off. This, however, was soon altered on the arrival of the Pontypridd train, and shortly after the start there were at least a couple of thousand present. The Dragons never lack support in their away fixtures, and this was most encouraging indeed for the players. The Pontypridd team for this game was: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke, & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & McArdle.

The 'Jacks' were showing good form and for some time giving the visiting defence a warm time. If the Caerphilly men had steadied themselves they could easily have opened the scoring, and indeed there were lucky escapes for the Dragons. The visitors did better in the subsequent exchanges and attack in real earnest, with Pickett and Hodges taking play, by some good passes, right to the home goal. Rounding the backs Pickett centred faultlessly for Ferguson to place in the net well out of the reach of Bateman, the 'Jacks' goalkeeper. The home men appealed for offside, but the referee was deaf to their entreaties, and the goal was allowed. The Dragons halves were placing any amount of chances in the way of the forwards for a while, but then the home men tried to equalize, but the defence of Williams, Dalton and Murray, was much too sound, and the interval was reached with the Dragons leading by a goal to nil.

The sun had disappeared when O'Hara restarted for the Dragons, Batemen being called upon immediately to deal with a first-time shot from Hodges, which he was decidedly fortunate in sending behind. The visiting forwards now made rings around the Caerphilly men, and their short passing in mid-field was exceedingly

pretty to watch, but their shots were well stopped by Bateman. On the wing, both McArdle and Ferguson were continually bringing off smart movements, and it was not long before the second goal came. Clarke got possession in mid-field and sent across to Ferguson, who neatly passed to his wing. This player, running strongly, sent in beautifully for O'Hara, who at the moment was facing his own goal, to outwit Bateman with an overhead shot which found the top right-hand corner of the net. It was a splendid movement and the goal was thoroughly deserved.

The Dragons now completely monopolised the game. Their forwards swept through the opposition and did practically what they liked. Play travelled from wing to wing in delightful fashion, and the third goal came as a result of a splendid movement on the right. Dan Clarke sent out a well judged pass to Pickett, and this player, tricking the home backs easily, drove across a centre which O'Hara met, and seeing Ferguson in a more favourable position than himself, transferred at the right moment. Ferguson made no mistake, and found the net with a left-foot drive which Bateman did not see, thus placing the issue beyond doubt. Caerphilly were now a beaten team and the only man who put up anything like a show was Bateman. Towards the closing stages the Dragons relaxed their efforts somewhat, and the 'Jackdaws' had a turn at attack. Barlow, Lean and McCall strove hard to reduce the lead, but Dalton and Murray defended so well that Williams was rarely called upon to save his goal. Final score: - CAERPHILLY 0 PONTYPRIDD 3.

The long-awaited draw for the first round of the Welsh Cup was made this week, and resulted in the Dragons being drawn away at Abertillery. However, as the Bristol rugby team were due to play at Abertillery on the date fixed for the cup match, and in all probability the game would be played on the Taff Vale Park. Local enthusiasts hoped that the directors would be successful in bringing this about.

Christmas Day in the Mid-Rhondda mud

The special train run by the Taff Vale Railway company on Christmas morning 1913, carried fully a couple of thousand supporters of the Dragons to Mid-Rhondda to witness the Southern League encounter with the 'Mushrooms.' It was indeed a miserable morning, a heavy, drizzling rain having set in, and the conditions were anything but pleasant, and this continued throughout the game. As usual during wet weather, the 'Mushrooms' ground was in a bad condition, and on this occasion it cut up so badly that long before the end it appeared more like a ploughed field than a football pitch, the players finishing ankle-deep in mud.

The Dragons went off with a rush at the commencement, and Ward was called upon to handle. The Pontypridd forwards, ably lead by O'Hara, combined splendidly, and controlled the ball well under such trying conditions. Pickett was well matched by Bain, who seemed utterly lost in trying to stop 'the midget' from

getting in his centres. But get them in he did, and when the interval arrived the Dragons held a lead of three goals. McArdle, Hodges and Ferguson each finding the net. The 'Mushrooms' tried hard to reduce the lead in this half, but the visiting defence was sound. Clark played a clinking game at centre-half, and kept a careful watch on Smith, the home centre-forward, who was not allowed too much room. Both sides were awarded a penalty for handling inside the area, and singularly enough both shots missed the mark, Smith failing for Mid-Rhondda and O'Hara for the Dragons.

Fast as the pace in the first-half was, play during the second portion was faster still, Mid-Rhondda at once making determined efforts to reduce the lead. For the first ten minutes the score remained unaltered, but then a change suddenly came over the scene, and Smith got in a shot which beat Williams after he had partially cleared from Carmichael. Success is born of success, and barely had another two minutes elapsed before the home men had made the scores level - three goals in all - through Dai Evans, who was in fine form. Having secured three goals in exactly twelve minutes, the home men fairly bombarded their opponents goal, and the Dragons had to adopt defensive tactics for some time. The ground by this time had cut-up terribly, and playing upon the worse side the Dragons had great difficulty in keeping their feet.

The struggle for the odd goal was worth going a long way to see, but, though both sides strove hard it did not come. Up and down the field went the play, and although many shots went goalwards Ward and Williams were on the alert and able to clear. Towards the latter stages, O'Hara put in 'a stinger' from close range, but he sent just over with Ward well out of reach, so the game ended with the honours even. Final score: - MID-RHONDDA 3 PONTYPRIDD 3.

Hard fought game at the Vetch Field

As on the previous day, a large number of local supporters took advantage of the special trip to see the Dragons perform against Swansea Town on Boxing Day. The Dragons were able to field their strongest eleven, and hopes ran high that they would snatch at least one Southern League point as a result of the encounter. Wretched weather and fearful conditions generally prevails when Rhondda teams visit the Vetch Field, and the Dragons were no better favoured than the rest of their neighbours. The turf was badly cut-up and sodden with the heavy rain of the previous week, and certain it was that the players would experience great difficulty in controlling the ball. Despite the climatic conditions, however, the attendance was good, and the Stand was packed before the teams fielded. Five minutes before they started there were well over 5,000 present. Both sides began by exhibiting great combination, considering the state of the

ground, and many pretty moments were witnessed. The Dragons were defending in great style, and shot from May, after Fell and Murray had been beaten, was charged down. The opening score came for a pretty rush by Grier on the left, who gave to Anderson. The latter drove in along the ground, and although Williams got his hand to it, he failed to prevent the ball going into the net. On the restart Hodges neatly robbed Nicholas and got clean away. He looked all-over a scorer, but Allman cut across and saved at the expense of a corner. The 'Swans' goalkeeper, Storey, saved the corner, however, and the homesters again got back to the attack, Anderson being unfortunately laid out whilst going through. Excitement ran high when Ferguson broke through with his colleagues in attendance after Nicholas had mis-kicked. Storey was forced to come out, and he was robbed before he could clear. The Dragons had an open goal, but the ball was sent over the goal-line. This was a lucky escape for Swansea. The Dragons pressed very hotly during this period, but their efforts, though good in mid-field, lacked the necessary finish. The Dragons then had a miraculous escape from a flag-kick by Mayo. Anderson got his head to the ball, but just as it was entering the net Fell got his foot to the ball and diverted it. The Dragons set up a superb defence and despite the brilliant work of the 'Swans' in mid-field, they were prevented from scoring. Just before the interval arrived Pickett was laid out and had to be carried off.

Swansea restarted with a great dash and Ball and Weir, after getting through, had their shots charged down. Mayo then made a brilliant run through on his own, and then Anderson, taking his centre, shot towards the corner. Williams, however, stopped the ball on the line, and Murray cleared splendidly. Play now became vigorous, and there were several incidents of unfair charging by both sides, and the referee had to pull up the players. Williams was keeping a fine goal for the Dragons at this stage, and stopped many shots from the 'Swans' vanguard. Storey was then called upon to save from Pickett, when Nicholas was beaten, and shortly afterwards Anderson got a kick in the eye which delayed the game for several minutes.

Pickett was able to beat Nicholas on one occasion, and from his centre Ferguson was able to equalize, amidst great excitement, although Nicholas got his foot to the ball. Play was now intensely exciting and both sides were making desperate efforts to get the lead. Several glorious opportunities were lost in quick succession, and a little steadiness in the area would have enabled the Dragons to have done the trick. Indeed, the Dragons were doing the bulk of the pressing, and Pickett was decidedly unfortunate in failing to put his side ahead with fine shots. Just before time the 'Swans' experienced very hard lines from corners, and in one of the melees Purdie, the Dragons half-back, was injured and had to be carried off. A minute later Mayo was injured, but quickly recovered, and from a free-kick Duffy

sent the ball to him. Then Mayo centred and Weir headed in the winning goal. The closing stages saw the Dragons trying hard for the equalizer, but the home defence was sound, and the final whistle sounded leaving Swansea Town the victors. Final score: - SWANSEA TOWN 2 PONTYPRIDD 1.

The game had been one of the hardest fought matches on the 'Swans' enclosure this season, and the Dragons were decidedly unfortunate in having to retire without taking at least one of the points. It was a memorable encounter, full of thrills, and one in which hard knocks were given and received cheerfully. Consequently there were several injuries, but apart from the kick that Purdie received - he having to be taken off after receiving a kick in the jaw - none were of a serious character. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & McArdle.

Rearranged team defeats Aberdare

Playing at home on Saturday, Dec. 27th 1913, against Aberdare, the Dragons had to rearrange their team through injuries to Purdie, Fell and Doonin; Hodges was brought into the centre-forward position, O'Hara and Clarke going to left and right-half respectively, and the vacant positions were filled by Rowe (centre-half) and Cleeves (inside-right). Being a Southern League encounter, considerable interest was taken in the game. The teams were old rivals, and the visitors generally put up a good show at the Taff Vale Park. The Dragons held a much higher position in the league table than the 'darians, who this season had been able to secure only four points out of a possible twenty.

The weather was fine and dry, and the turf in splendid condition after the recent rain. Notwithstanding the holiday matches at Cardiff there were fully 3,000 spectators when the teams lined up. The Pontypridd team for this game was : Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Clarke Rowe & O'Hara; forwards, Pickett, Cleeves, Hodges, Ferguson & McArdle.

The visitors won the toss and Hodges kicked-off for the Dragons from the town end. The home team were the first to attack through Pickett and Cleeves, the former having easily got round Lewis, but when centring put the ball behind. The Dragons were continually attacking and a dropping shot by Rowe almost caught Jenkins, the Aberdare goalkeeper, napping. Good kicking by Hatton, however, allowed Holden to get away. He looked a scorer all over, but Dalton worried him and his shot went wide of the mark. The wind assisted the Dragons considerable, and although they did not take full advantage of it they kept play well within the visitors quarters. Aided by some good kicking the Dragons forwards got going once more, and a hard drive by Hodges struck the bar. Ferguson secured it on the

rebound, but his shot went yards wide. The Aberdare defence for some time was sorely tried. A succession of corners fell to the Dragons, from one of which O'Hara found the net. Aberdare tried hard to equalize, but the interval arrived with the Dragons leading 1-0.

In the first few minutes of the second-half the Dragons forced a corner, but Lewis used his head to advantage and cleared. The Aberdare men were showing much better form in this half, and, thanks to Hatton and Smith, play was carried to the Dragon's goal. Dalton, however, beat the right-wing nicely and his kick transferred play to the centre. A miskick by Rowe almost let the Aberdare men in, but Dalton came to the rescue and kicked out. Undaunted, however, the visitors came again, and gave the home defence some anxious moments. A confident appeal for a penalty was put forth by them, but referee Hunt, being in doubt, consulted the linesman and decided against them and ordered a throw-in. The Dragons cleared, but a second or two later another appeal was made for hands against Charlie Murray, but the referee rightly awarded a free-kick. This was another lucky escape for the Dragons, the infringement happening only a few inches outside the dreaded area. Hatton took the free-kick, but sent over the bar. From now until the end the Dragons tried hard to increase their lead, but had to be content with just one goal. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 ABERDARE 0.

New Years Day victory over Cardiff City

On New Years Day 1914 the Dragons met Cardiff City in a Welsh League match at the Taff Vale Park. This was the first meeting of the teams this season, and, as usual, a great deal of interest was evinced in the event, and there were close upon 3,000 spectators present when the teams lined out. Owing to the snow and frost of the last few days, the pitch was very hard, but after an inspection in was decided to be playable. The Dragons made several changes in their team owing to injuries. Pickett and Fell were given a well-earned rest. Ferguson was changed to outside-right, Cleeves was brought into the inside-right position, while a trial was given to Craig, Abertillery, their latest capture, at left-half. Elliott also substituted for Williams in goal. The Pontypridd team lined up as follows: Goal, Elliott; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Craig; forwards, Ferguson, Hodges, O'Hara, Cleeves and McArdle. Notwithstanding the hard state of the ground, the game had been one of the best seen on the Taff Vale Park this season, the spectators being treated to a really fine exhibition by both sides. The home men thoroughly deserved their victory, and with a little luck could have added a few more goals. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 2 CARDIFF CITY 0.

Back on the cup trail

Will the Dragons be capable of winning the Welsh Cup at the third time of asking?

That is the question which was exercising the minds of local soccer enthusiasts at this time. For two seasons in succession they had been beaten finalists in the competition. On Saturday Jan. 3rd 1914, they played their first game in the cup competition this season when they travelled to Abertillery in the third round. They were exempt from the first two rounds, and the 'tilleryites qualified to meet them by defeating Rhiwderyn, Bargoed Town and Ton Pentre. Abertillery had been showing good form of late, and it had to be remembered that on the park in a league game at the commencement of the season, they put up a splendid fight, and ran the Dragons to a couple of goals, therefore, a keen game was expected.

The attendance was somewhat disappointing, and this was caused mainly owing to the early start and also to the fact that the local rugby team were at home to Neath. There were barely a couple of thousand present when the game started. Both teams were well represented, the only absentee from the visiting side being Ferguson, whose place at inside-left was taken by Doonin. However, the game ended in a goal-less draw. The first-half was fairly exciting, but play in the second-half deteriorated and a draw was a fair result. Final score: - ABERTILLERY 0 PONTYPRIDD 0

Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton and Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Doonin & McArdle.

Abertillery beaten in replay
Murray ordered off the field

The Dragons replayed their Welsh Cup match with Abertillery at the Taff Vale Park on Tuesday, Jan. 6th 1914, when the weather was wretched. Both teams fielded strong elevens, there being only one change in each team, Doonin substituting for McArdle on the Pontypridd left-wing. The Dragons attacked vigorously at the beginning of the game, and, rushing right up to the visitors area, Hodges nearly drove into the net. A minute later Hirst saved a magnificent shot from O'Hara. The Pontypridd forwards were much too good for their opponents, who were kept continually on the defensive. Clarke got an opportunity to put his side one up, but Hirst was again prominent with a neat field and kick, which changed the game to the Pontypridd half. Hodges and Doonin were able again to attack, and the latter once centred when a goal seemed certain. Jameson, however, came to the rescue with a punt which gave some relief to his side. Then pretty play by Griffiths and Baddeley forced Williams, the Dragons' goalie, to run out, and he tipped the ball over his net, and the corner was cleared rather easily. The teams crossed over at the interval scoreless.

Both sides put in some smart aggressive movements, and Hodges, as well as

Ferguson, sent in stinging shots which just went astray of the net. The Dragons showed neat combination at times, but finished badly. On the left Doonin got away with a spirited run, and tried to get the ball through to O'Hara, but without result, Hirst in the Abertillery goal being impregnable. Once Pontypridd were caught napping, and Abertillery gained a corner. Their stay there was short, and at the other end Pickett made Hirst play his best to prevent a score.

The attacks continued, but the visitors defence could not be broken, and in a stiff tackle Fell was laid out. The Dragons experienced the hardest of luck in not taking the lead, but presently were rewarded when O'Hara banged into the net amidst great cheering, and in doing so knocked out Hirst, and the game was temporarily halted. On resuming the play became very keen, and shortly before time Murray, who was heavily charged, was alleged to have struck an opponent, and was ordered off the field by the referee. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 ABERTILLERY 0.

Llanelly trounced

The Dragons trounced the 'Scarlets' to the tune of four goals to one in a Southern League match at the Taff Vale Park on Jan. 10th 1914. Pontypridd therefore continued to lead the Welsh club in Division Two, and judging by their form in this game they looked likely to maintain that position, although their prospects of promotion to the senior division were remote.

From the start it was evident that the home lot were much too good for their opponents, and at the end could have scored at least half-a-dozen goals. James scored an home goal against Llanelly which went in off him after a shot from O'Hara had rebounded off a post. The second goal came by way of Pickett. The wing man placed it nicely for Hodges, who had no difficulty in beating Cosling in the Llanelly goal. The visitors then had a turn of attacking and Perters scored.

After the interval Ferguson soon scored the third goal for the Dragons. Both sides kept up a terrific pace, in which Clarke figured prominently with some fine heading. James miskicked, and Doonin got away and passed to Jack O'Hara, who sprinted and made a telling shot which Cosling turned behind. In a few more minutes the Pontypridd forwards were attacking again, and from a pass from Pickett, Ferguson notched the fourth and final goal for the Dragons. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 LLANELLY 1.

Abertillery visited again

The Dragons went to Abertillery on Saturday, Jan. 17th 1914, where they met the home men in a Southern League encounter. This was the fourth meeting of the teams this season, and the corresponding league match had ended 2-0 to Pontypridd. A great deal of interest was centred in this event, for a week or so ago the Dragons were only able to enter the Fourth round of the Welsh Cup competition by defeating the 'Haws' after a previously drawn game by a goal to nil. With the exception of Purdie, whose place at right-half was taken by Craig, the Dragons fielded their full team. The team had improved wonderfully of late, and it was confidently anticipated that if the form shown against Llanely was maintained, they would find no difficulty in taking both points. The Pontypridd team for this game was: Goal, Williams; backs Murray & Dalton; halves, Craig, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara & Doonin.

The home team kicked off and were soon on the aggressive, with Radcliffe being particularly active in attack. Then the visitors had a turn of attacking, and after a dash along the right-wing Pickett opened the scoring with a beautiful drive which beat Hirst all the way. Play became very exciting after this, and the home forwards were prominent with some good work. Ultimately Prosser got possession, and driving the ball past Williams, drew the scores level. This success infused more vigour into the home team, and they were soon on the aggressive again, Prosser almost heading the ball through, but Williams saved splendidly high up. Doonin then got away on the left, and ended with a good shot, which Hirst saved. The Dragons continued to attack, but the defence of Adams and Jameson, the home backs, was fine, and when the interval was reached the scores were level.

The home men on the restart, were through Male, Prosser and Jordon, putting in some good work, and experienced hard luck in not taking the lead, but the inside-right was weak. The Dragons rallied, and Hirst was tested on several occasions, but he proved sound, and warded off the attack. Then Jordon, Sangster and Prosser, exhibited pretty play and a good shot by the latter just missed. The Dragons attacked in determined fashion, and O'Hara getting possession, broke through the home defence and gave his side the lead by beating Hirst with a capital shot. This was all the scoring, and the Dragons emerged victors of a well contested game. Final score: - ABERTILLERY 1 PONTYPRIDD 2.

Llandudno at Taff Vale Park

A great deal of interest was evinced in the game that took place on Saturday, Jan. 24th 1914, on the Taff Vale Park in the fourth round of the Welsh Cup competition, when Llandudno were the visitors. The boys from the north were a smart combination, having won their way into this round by beating Dolgalley, Colwyn

Bay and Troedyrhiw, and it was generally expected that they would give the Dragons a good game.

The visitors had given a good exhibition against Troedyrhiw, but the followers of the home men were confident that should the Dragons reproduce the good form shown in recent games, they would have no difficulty in getting into the semi-Final. The Dragons, owing to the colours of the visitors being similar to their own, turned out in green, with white hoops. These colours were famous in Scotland. They had been predominant in the Scottish Cup competition for years, and had been the winners half-a-dozen times, and it was hoped that they would bring good luck to the Dragons in their attempt to annex the Welsh trophy. The adoption of these colours created what was an unique record, where the Dragons were one of three teams wearing similar colours, Bradford Park Avenue, and Glasgow Celtic being the other two. The three teams are managed by the members of the same family, who are all well known in the soccer world as being good judges of the game.

The weather was beautifully fine, the ground in good condition, and the late kick-off enabled a large number of working men supporters to put in an appearance. Five minutes before the start there were quite 3,000 spectators present, and they were still coming in thick and fast when the teams fielded. The visitors were strongly represented, and the Dragons were also able to field their best available side, Purdie, who was a big favourite with the supporters, making a welcome re-appearance at right-half. The Pontypridd team: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & Doonin.

O'Hara started from the town end. The Dragons at once attacked and Ferguson and Doonin got well down, but the defence was too good, and the venue was changed with a well-judged kick. The boys from the north were trying hard to open up the scoring, and for a time penned the Dragons in their own quarters. Clarke, however, raised the siege by sending O'Hara, who, well supported by Ferguson, got down in front of the visitors goal. Here Hodges forced a corner. Pickett placed the ball beautifully, and O'Hara found the net with a great shot, amongst much cheering. This put new life into the home men, who played with rare dash on the restart. Following some pretty work on the right, one of the visitors was injured and play was suspended for a couple of minutes. Resuming, Pickett, receiving from Purdie, put in a great run, covering half the length of the field, winding up with a tremendous shot which beat the goalie all ends up, but which unfortunately struck the upright and glanced outside. The Dragons, however, were not to be denied, and Hodges, receiving from Pickett, put the Dragons two up with a left-foot drive which the goalie did not see.

The visitors got away on the restart and good work by Evans on the right enabled the forwards to get into a favourable position. J. Evans sent across a beautiful centre which was nicely met by Hewitt, whose shot struck the upright, and Gallagher, securing on the rebound, placed the ball well out of Williams' reach. Llandudno again attacked, and J. Williams, getting round Murray, put in a couple of splendid centres, one of which was a gift for Hewitt, who was well placed, but he hesitated, and Dan Clark kicked clear. Getting possession from Clarke in his own half, Fell made a brilliant burst. He beat man after man in his own inimitable style and then centred across to O'Hara, who with a splendid first time drive, added the Dragon's third goal. The game, after some mutual handshaking, continued at a rattling pace, the home forwards showing rare form. Then O'Hara got through with a terrific rush, but Samuels bundled into him and spoiled the shot. The Dragons kept pegging away, however, and were leading 3-1 at the interval.

The crowd had considerably increased when the game restarted. The Dragons at once settled down, the visiting goalie being called upon to clear from Pickett. Again Llandudno tried to make ground on the left-wing, but again Murray was successful in driving them back. Not to be denied, however, the visitors gained a corner, but Dan Clarke headed clear. and then the Dragons got going. The game had slowed down considerably, and the home forwards lost several good chances to score by not overexerting themselves. Hodges then got passed the backs nicely and raced up the field in rare style. He looked all over a scorer, but was violently charged by one of the backs when about to shoot, and the ball went wide.

The Dragons soon returned to the attack, but the absence of a definite understanding on the part of the inside-forwards lost a certain score, when the goal was at their mercy. A free-kick just outside the penalty area was well directed, but went just over the bar. Hodges and Pickett got away on the right and the latter ran well, but when about to shoot was fouled by one of the backs. A penalty was confidently appealed for, but the referee after consulting a linesman, ordered a corner-kick. Fell then came into prominence with a run on the left and getting into a favourable position, the left-half centred, and O'Hara notched his third goal with a beautiful drive which found the corner of the net. The visitors were now a thoroughly beaten team, but the backs were responsible for several brilliant clearances. Shortly before the call of time Pickett once more got away on the right after receiving form Purdie. He managed to get round the backs and centred. A melee took place in front of goal, and Ferguson found the net with a fifth goal. From now until the end the Dragons fairly overran their opponents, but were unable to add to the score. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 5 LLANDUDNO 1.

Dragons succumb in cup competition.

The margin of two goals by which Cardiff City beat the Dragons at Ninian Park in a South Wales Cup tie on Tuesday, Jan. 27th 1914, did not fully justify their superiority. Had the City retired with half-a-dozen goals it would have been a fitting reward. The Dragons' solitary goal was the result of one of the spasmodic breakaways that their forward line was allowed to indulge in. Early play drifted to the Cardiff right, and Ted Murray was prominent in spoiling several raids. After ten minutes play a clever kick by Robertson started J. Burton, and Bennett beating Murray, the City centre-forward met the right-wingers cross, and opened the scoring, giving Williams no chance. The City continued to have the better of the play and Williams made several fine saves in the Pontypridd goal. Following a breakaway by O'Hara, the visitors had a chance when Doonin was left with an open goal, but the left-winger hesitated, and Burton cleared.

Play had not been long in progress in the second-half before Williams was called upon to clear from Robertson, and a little later G. Burton. Then, after fifteen minutes, a foul by O'Hara led to Cardiff getting their second goal. G. Burton placed the free-kick nicely forward for West to run in and beat Williams. Two minutes only went by when O'Hara reduced the lead, the Dragons skipper accepting a centre from Pickett and placing the ball in the net, well out of Kneeshaw's reach. A third score from the City came by way of West, who, taking a transfer from Robertson, broke through in the centre and beat Williams all the way with a ground shot. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 3 PONTYPRIDD 1. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Craig, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & Doonin.

Defeat at Brentford

On Friday, Jan. 30th 1914, the Dragons travelled to Brentford, where, on the following day they were due to meet the home team in a Southern League fixture. Although dismal conditions prevailed, the reputation of the Dragons was responsible for a good attendance, there being 5,000 present when the game commenced. The Dragons were without the services of Purdie at right-half, his place being taken by Craig. Some doubt was also prevalent as to whether Clarke would play at centre-half, but it was found that he had sufficiently recovered from his injury for him to appear. The Pontypridd team: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Craig, Fell & Clarke; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & Doonin.

Play was exceedingly vigorous in the first-half, and when the interval arrived there was no score. The opening score came after twenty minutes play of the second-half, Hendren finishing a neat movement with a pass to Simons, and the latter gave Williams no possible chance with a fast drive. Brentford maintained the pressure

and Johnson added a second goal. Notwithstanding the Dragons were beaten, they had quite as much of the game as their opponents, and on a few occasions their forwards, especially Ferguson and O'Hara, experienced very rough luck in failing to find the net. All through the football was excellent, and much bright play was witnessed. The home team were slightly the better lot, chiefly because of the skill and judgement shown by their halves in feeding the forwards. In the Dragons goal, Williams gave a good exhibition. He made many remarkable saves, and could not be blamed for the goals registered against his side. Final score: - BRENTFORD 2 PONTYPRIDD 0. On the same day at Taff Vale Park, a crowd of between 7,000 and 8,000 were present to witness the contest between Swansea Town and Llanelly in the Semi-final of the Welsh Cup competition.

Pontypridd at Croydon Common

The first meeting of Pontypridd and Croydon Common in the Southern League Second division took place on Saturday, Feb. 7th 1914 at Croydon, in front of about 4,000 spectators, on a sodden ground. The 'Robins' held a much better position in the table than the Dragons, having a total of 32 points from 18 games played, 14 having been won and four drawn. From this it will be seen they had not lost a single match, and the Welshmen were up against a stiff opposition indeed in attempting to lower their colours. Up to date the Dragons had played 29 games, ten of which had been won, four drawn, and five lost, thus giving a total of 24 points.

The fixture was made the annual outing of the Pontypridd AFC Supporters Club, and several hundred members taking advantage of the social trip, left from the town railway station on Friday night for London. The team, however, did not leave Pontypridd until about 9 o'clock on Saturday morning, and travelled via Cardiff via the ten o'clock express, arriving in the metropolis about 1,30 p.m. The Dragons made two changes in their usual team. Purdie till being on the injured list, his place at right-half was again taken by Craig, and a new man, Arthur Pickett - who had recently been signed on, and who earlier in the season had figured in the ranks of the 'Jackdaws' - appeared at outside-left in the place of Doonin. The Pontypridd team: Goal, Williams; backs Dalton & Murray; halves, Fell, Clarke & Craig; forwards, Arthur Pickett, Ferguson, O'Hara, Hodges and Charlie Pickett.

Rain fell heavily when the game was started, and continued throughout to the discomfort of players and spectators alike. The Dragons attacked from the start, and quite early in the game Williamson, the home goalie, had to clear a shot from Ferguson. Croydon then made the running, and got down to the visitors' goal, where Page was only a few inches off the post with a capital shot from twenty yards range. The Dragons then made ground by good passing, but the Croydon

defenders put up a strong game, and prevented them from getting to Williamson. Rain now fell very heavily and the ground became slippery. A very even first-half ended with the score-sheet blank.

On the restart play was for some time fearfully fought out in the Croydon quarters, but the Dragons could not do the trick. Croydon then raised the siege, and shortly afterwards the only goal of the match was obtained, Barnfarther was the scorer, and the little Croydon winger deserved the honour, for he was a hard worker throughout. The goal originated from a free-kick given against one of the Dragons for tripping 'Barney' near the penalty area. Williams made a great, but unsuccessful attempt to save the shot. The Dragons tried hard to draw level, but were unable to get behind Williamson, and the game ended in victory for the home men by 1-0, Final score: - CROYDON COMMON 1 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The Dragons forwards did not combine at all well, and utterly failed to make the best use of the chances which came their way. The new player, Arthur Pickett, did fairly well at Outside-left, and the older player of the same surname on the opposite wing did some clever things. The result was a disappointment to the large crowd of supporters who had journeyed up to see the game, for they were fully expecting to see their 'pets' come away with at least one point.

Treharris switch game

The Dragons appeared on the Taff Vale Park on Monday afternoon, Feb. 9th 1914, when Treharris were the visitors in a Welsh League fixture. The match had originally been fixed to have been played at Treharris, but, for some reason or other this arrangement was altered, and it was decided to play the match on Taff Vale Park (it later emerged that due to poor crowds at Treharris, that they wanted to play all their home games at Treforest, but this was later thwarted by the Welsh F.A). In view of their important fixture at Cardiff the following Saturday, when they were due to meet Wrexham in the Semi-final of the Welsh Cup competition, the Dragons made several changes in the team, Williams, Murray, Fell, O'Hara, Hodges and Ferguson, were all given a much-needed rest, and several local amateurs were given a chance to prove their worth. Treharris fielded a weakened side, but they had eleven players, and that is saying a good deal for them, for on the previous Saturday they had journeyed to Swansea with only nine players, and were defeated 8-0. Pontypridd: Goal, Elliott, backs, Dalton & Craig; halves, Clarke Doonin & Rowe; forwards, C. Pickett, Cleeves, Fuse, A. Pickett & Dunn.

Notwithstanding the late start there were not more than a couple of thousand spectators present to see the Dragons register a comfortable victory. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 TREHARRIS 0.

The Semi-final preview

On the morning of Pontypridd's third consecutive appearance in a Welsh Cup final, 'Citizen' in the 'Western Mail' Newspaper gave this preview: - The game that will attract most interest in South Wales this afternoon, will be that at Ninian park, where the old battle of north v south will once more be fought out, Wrexham and Pontypridd meeting there to decide who will appear in the final. The northerners rather fancy that they will be successful, but I think the advantages are all with Pontypridd, and it will surprise me if they fail to win. They have spent the week in a quiet way, though Mr. Maley, the manager, has been superintending the men in a special course of training, and there is a quite confidence about the players that they will enter the final for the third time, and 'third time lucky' is a byword. They deserve success, with all due respect to Swansea and Llanely, the other Semi-finalists.

This is the Dragons' third Semi-final in the three years of its existence, and the team is now in good fettle, and all the men are sound. Although Wrexham's strength is unknown to Pontypridd, some of the players are not, and they must have improved by their sojourn in Wrexham to be equal to the task of piercing the strong defence of the Dragons. The latter are not by any means novices in the important cup-fighting, and they are eagerly awaiting the opportunity of showing their worth. The same players who defeated Llandudno and Abertillery will take the field.

The Welsh Cup semi-final

Dragons v Wrexham at Ninian Park

The Semi-final tie between the Dragons and Wrexham was played on Saturday, Feb. 14th, at Ninian Park, Cardiff. The Dragons were able to field their strongest team - the team that beat Llandudno so convincingly a few weeks ago. The Pontypridd team: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Doonin & Ferguson. For some considerable time before the start rain fell heavily, and this militated somewhat against the attendance, but there were over 5,000 present - this number included a couple of hundred of supporters of the Wrexham men from the north when the teams fielded.

O'Hara lost the toss, and the Dragons had to play against the wind and heavy rain. The men from the north got going. The ground was in a sodden condition and made it difficult for the forwards to control the ball, the defence of both sides easily holding the mastery. Some pretty play between Hodges and Pickett was

seen on the Dragons right, but the inside man's pass to O'Hara stuck in the mud, and a good chance of opening the scoring was lost. The Dragons goalie was the first to touch, and he did exceptionally well in saving a sharp drive from Goode. The north men kept up the pressure for some time, but eventually the Dragons got away through Ferguson, who sent the ball right across the field to Pickett, but the winger finished up badly by sending a yard wide. Wrexham cleared, and then returned to the attack, Dalton, Murray and Fell having a warm time to keep them out.

The Dragons then had a turn. O'Hara again sent out to Ferguson, who was lying unmarked. The winger sent the ball nicely across the goal-mouth, but the inside men, through the slippery state of the ground, failed to reach it before it rolled over, and a glorious chance was lost. O'Hara got going again, and was almost through, but he failed to keep his feet, and a moment later a similar fate befell Doonin. The Wrexham men were now hard pressed, and their defence was remarkably luckily in clearing some dangerous situations. However, a free-kick against Murray almost brought about the downfall of the Dragons' goal. Williams, However, picked up from the feet of R. Jones, and a moment later following a flag-kick, Fenner grazed the post with a fast drive from 25 yards range, which seemed to have beaten the goalie all the way. From now until the interval Wrexham had the better of the exchanges, but the Dragons' backs were very safe, and the teams retired at the interval with the score-sheet blank.

After a rather lengthy interval both teams turned out in a change of shirts. Following a brief spell of attack by their opponents, the Dragons took up the running, and O'Hara, who was infusing any amount of dash into his play, had hard lines when after nicely tricking Fenner and Davies, the ball struck a bad patch, and his shot went astray. So far during this half play had been very scrappy owing to the ground cutting up badly, and some amount of feeling was introduced, both sides being penalised. Dalton once brought Uren down heavily - though fairly - and the winger jumped up as if to strike the Pontypridd back, but the referee intervened in time. Uren continued to beat Purdie, and occasionally got around Dalton, but Murray was always on hand to back-up he team mate.

Both Ferguson and Pickett got crosses across, but nothing came of them, and Uren with a splendid run changed the venue. When forced by Dalton, however, he sent outside. There were a couple of stoppages owing to minor injuries. and on resuming O'Hara put in a splendid run, but Hodges put in a weak shot after receiving from his captain. Both goals were now attacked in turn. O'Hara worked hard to score, and Hodges and Doonin both tried shots, but the condition of the ball made accurate shooting an impossibility. From a free-kick Fenner almost found the net for the northerners, but Murray saved by giving away a fruitless

corner. Just at this moment play was very exciting, Wrexham attacked hotly, and the Dragons were for some minutes unable to effectively clear their lines. Uren, after a dashing run, sent in a terrific shot, but 'Willie' made a most remarkable save. The goalie safely fielded the greasy ball, but could not hold it. Going down gamely, however, he saved in daring fashion from the feet of the inside men. He was nearly beaten, however, in the next couple of minutes, a shot from Uren dropping on the crossbar, but Charlie Murray kicked clear in the nick of time before Jones could reach the rebound. Play was in Neutral ground when the final whistle sounded, leaving the honours divided, and a replay would take place the following Wednesday. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD O WREXHAM O.

A local newspaper commented: - "What should have undoubtedly been an interesting game had been utterly spoiled by the wretched conditions which prevailed, heavy rain falling during quite three parts of the match. It was a typical cup match, hard and keen, and one in which no quarter was asked or given, and one also in which the defences of both sides were always superior to the attack. There was not a great deal to choose between the teams, the Wrexham lot, perhaps holding a slight advantage over their opponents. So far as their opponents were concerned, the result was about the fairest that could have been arrived at under the circumstances. The Dragons gave a very disappointing display, and did not reproduce anything approaching the good form that they had shown lately. True, they were, in the Wrexham men, up against a stiff opposition, but they did not at any portion of the game shape like a winning team. The great need was for a good outside-left, and the sooner the directors opened their eyes to this fact the better it would be for the success of the club. Doonin tried hard, very hard, but he is a better half-back than he is a forward. One suggestion was to try Fell, the half-back, on the wing, but whether this would be any use was not known. A special word of praise went to Williams, the goalie, as a last line. "Willie" was really great, and he had gone up a great deal in the estimation of the Dragons' followers as a result of this display."

Pontypridd field weak team at Mardy

Two days after the Semi-final, on Monday, Feb. 16th 1914, the Dragons journeyed to Mardy for a Welsh League fixture and fielded a very weak team, reserving their best team for the cup replay two days later at Chester. Final score: - MARDY 3 PONTYPRIDD O.

The '*Free Press*' reported: - "Next Saturday the Dragons are home to Brentford, and the directors have decided to double the price of admission to the ground on this occasion, and some season ticket holders are to be asked to pay the ordinary prices. Whether or not this is a wise step remains to be seen, but it is understood

that extra money is needed by the club just now, and it is sincerely hoped that the general public would turn up in strong numbers. The kick-off would not take place until 3.30, thus giving everyone interested a chance to attend, and in doing so helping the club in this period of financial stress."

Welsh Cup semi-final replay

Pontypridd to meet Wrexham a third time

No little interest was attached to the visit of Pontypridd to Chester on Wednesday, Feb. 18th 1914, when they met Wrexham in the replay of the semi-final of the Welsh Senior Cup. A keen struggle for supremacy was witnessed, and, although half an hour extra time was played, the game resulted in a draw of one goal each. The teams, therefore, would have to play a third time. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, Pickett, Hodges, O'Hara, Ferguson & Doonin.

In the first-half play was of an uninteresting nature, but very keen. Pontypridd, if anything, were slightly the better. On both sides the forward play was poor, and the backs and halves were able to keep the goalkeepers free of work. Neither goalkeeper was called upon to save a difficult shot. After the interval there was a great improvement in the play of the Wrexham forwards. Pontypridd, on the other hand, fell away considerably, and when Wrexham drew level they were playing so strongly that it appeared as though they would win. The Pontypridd defence, however, played exceedingly well, especially Ted Dalton, who all through was a sure defender. In the first-half the Pontypridd half-backs held the Wrexham forwards well, an Clarke was conspicuous. After doing well before the interval, the Pontypridd forwards could make little impression in the second-half. The only forwards to do anything which looked like bringing a goal was Doonin with two centres.

The game had started at a good pace, the Wrexham backs being called upon to clear. Williams, the Pontypridd goalkeeper, then cleared well after the backs had mis-kicked. Jack O'Hara opened the scoring for Pontypridd following a corner, which was well placed by Doonin, and at half-time Pontypridd led 1-0. On the resumption the Pontypridd backs were called to clear. Delaney subsequently brought off a fine save from Doonin, and later Arthur Pickett missed the goal by inches. Goode equalized with a swift shot which gave Williams no chance. Another replay would now have to be arranged. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 WREXHAM 1.

Substitutes hammered by Llanelly

Notwithstanding the heavy rain of the morning, a crowd of about 1,500 gathered at the Taff Vale Park to witness the Welsh league game against Llanelly on Thursday, Feb. 19th 1914. Owing to a heavy list of fixtures during the proceeding days, the Dragons fielded a team of substitutes. Final score : - PONTYPRIDD 1 LLANELLY 5.

Brentford at Taff Vale Park

Despite the increase in the price of admission, there was a crowd of between 4,000 and 5,000 were at Taff Vale Park on Saturday, Feb. 21st 1914, to witness the Southern League game between the Dragons and Brentford. The ground had made a wonderful recovery after the recent rain, and, with the exception of a patch in the town-end goal, was in excellent condition. Brentford, who were in the running for promotion to the First Division brought a full team, and were determined to take at least one of the points away with them. They were a big lot of men, and were yet to have been beaten in the league by a Welsh combination. They showed a total previous to this game of 29 points from 17 played. This was a much better record than the Dragons, who had only gained 24 points from 20 games played.

Owing to the heavy programme of the previous week, and in view of the fact that they had to appear at Shrewsbury the following Thursday in the replay of the Semi-final of the Welsh Cup, the Dragons did not turn out at full strength, but rested both Hodges and Purdie. This arrangement let in Craig, at right-half, and Arthur Pickett into the forward line. These men, however, were really good substitutes, and it was generally anticipated by the home supporters that their 'pets' would give the visitors a hard time. Pontypridd: Goalie, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Craig, Clarke & Fell; forwards, C. Pickett, Ferguson, A. Pickett & Doonin. The Dragons commenced from the town end, and the game had not been in progress a few minutes before O'Hara, getting into a collision with one of the visitors, received a nasty kick on the ankle, and play was suspended for a short time. Resuming, the Dragons at once got into the visitors' area. O'Hara was still limping badly as a result of his accident, but notwithstanding this he made desperate efforts to get through. He was well watched, however, and was brought down very unfairly on not a few occasions. Brentford had a turn to attack and Chapman sent over the bar from an easy position. Not to be denied, however, the Brentford front-line, by some pretty combined play, again got within shooting distance, but Williams was loudly cheered for a full-length save from Chapman, the goalie turning the ball around a post for a fruitless corner.

Getting possession well over the centre line Chapman got around the ball and

drove in a terrific shot, but again Williams fielded magnificently and averted the danger. In doing so, however, 'Willie' had got one of his eyes bunged up with mud, and, as this was no joke, the game was suspended for him to remove the obstruction from his damaged optic. Resuming, the Dragons now took a turn attacking. Fell smartly sent forward to Doonin, and the inside-left made a determined dash to get through, but was badly fouled when well inside the area. A penalty was confidently appealed for, but the referee ordered the game to proceed. The home men continued the pressure for some time, but the visitors were playing the 'one-back' game to some advantage. O'Hara now left the field to have an injured ankle attended to, but resumed after about ten minutes. Charlie Pickett, the Dragons' right-winger, a moment later, put in a terrific shot which the goalie had to fist away. The game had now become exceedingly vigorous, too much so in fact, and the referee had to warn several players. Doonin and Ferguson, shortly before the interval, made brilliant bursts, but the defence was good, and aided by the fine defensive play of their half-backs, they were able to keep their line clear, and half-time came with a blank score-sheet.

When the teams fielded for the second portion of the game, referee Curtis called the players together in mid-field, and laid down the law so far a play was concerned. It was noticed that owing to O'Hara's accident, the Dragons forward-line had been rearranged. The centre-forward was transferred to the left-wing, and Ferguson to the centre-forward position, while Arthur Pickett took the inside-left position. Chapman restarted for Brentford, and he immediately carried play to the Pontypridd goal, but Murray made no mistake in bringing him down, and this diverted his shot.

As the game progressed the home team were playing determined football, and it now seemed odds-on a scoring coming at any moment. Receiving on the left, O'Hara beat this visiting back in rather hollow fashion. The winger sent in a faultless centre, but the inside men were not up to take advantage of it. Thus was a glorious chance lost, for the ball only needed a tap to place it in the net, with Price the other end of the goal. The referee had occasion to again warn a couple of the players, who were getting quite out of hand. He had his work cut out to control them, and would have been quite within his rights in ordering a couple at least off the field. From now until the end play was exceedingly rough, Fouls were very frequent, and everyone was pleased when the final whistle blew, leaving the honours divided.

There was some excitement when the game ended, for a large number of the spectators were under the impression that the referee, owing to rough play and the men getting out of control, had stopped the game before the proper time. This, however, was not so, for it was afterwards stated, that the exact time had

been played. A large crowd, however, congregated outside the dressing rooms, and the Dragons were cheered as they came off the field. A more thrilling game had not been witnessed on the Taff Vale Park this season, the issue being in doubt right up to the final whistle, and the result just about summed up the relative merits of both sets of players. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 BRENTFORD 0.

Defeat at Llanelly

Llanelly and Pontypridd played a Southern League fixture at Halfway Park, Llanelly, on Tuesday, Feb. 24th 1914, two days before the Welsh Cup Final replay against Wrexham, and probably with a several reserves in the team. Llanelly scored two goals in each half to emerge victors. Final score : - LLANELLY 4 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The Welsh Cup semi -final replay

Dragons beaten in extra-time

Notwithstanding the effort put forward by the Pontypridd directorate to induce the Wrexham men to appear in the replay at the Taff Vale Park, the teams failed to come to terms, and so the game took place at Shrewsbury on Thursday, Feb. 26th 1914, as previously arranged, before a crowd of 4,000 spectators. The Pontypridd officials had made the Wrexhamites a splendid monetary offer to change the venue, but the latter were not to be tempted, and the negotiations were broken off on the Saturday before the game. The Dragons fielded precisely the same team which did duty in the two previous cup games.

The game, which was of a typical Cup-tie was played at a great pace the whole ninety minutes. The Dragons, through Doonin, got the first goal after about eight minutes play, and, shortly afterwards, they should have been awarded a penalty for a palpable case of 'hands' in the area, but the referee disallowed it. This was hard luck indeed. Then Uren got the equalizer, and subsequent play was very even, neither team claiming much advantage, and when the interval arrived the score remained level at 1-1.

The second-half opened at a great pace and some splendid open play was seen by both sides. The Dragons were decidedly unfortunate in losing the services of Purdie at right-half, who received an injury to the leg. Doonin took his place in the intermediate line, and the wing-half was transferred to outside-left, where he was of very little use for the remainder of the game. Ferguson lost a tremendous opportunity of giving his side the lead by shooting wide, and shortly before the end of this half, Hodges, the inside-right, after beating the Wrexham backs, instead of getting closer in, foolishly shot from about 18 yards range, when he only had the goalie to beat. It was a glorious opportunity to throw away. The scores being level at the end of ninety minutes, it was decided to play extra-time.

The Dragons penned the northerners in their own quarters for some minutes on the restart, but the pace, and a few injuries had told considerably on the Dragons, and they failed to penetrate the keen defence.. Ultimately Wrexham raised the siege, and Uren gave his side the lead. A few moments afterwards Goode put them even further ahead, and it was all over for the Dragons, the gave ending in favour of Wrexham. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 WREXHAM 3.

The result came as a great disappointment to the large number of followers of the soccer code in Pontypridd and district, for it was thought that the Dragons had a good chance of lifting the Cup this season had they been able to overcome the Wrexhamites in the Semi-final. But they were defeated, and that in a decisive manner, by a better team at any rate on the day's form, and so bid goodbye to the trophy so far as this season was concerned.

The winners lasted much the better than the Pontypridd men, while their forwards were much more resourceful, and gave a much better exhibition all round. The Dragons' forwards had one of their off days, without a doubt, for there was an entire lack of combination amongst them. They had a few glorious chances of pulling the game out of the fire in the latter half of the ninety minutes, but the inside men were woefully weak and allowed many opportunities to go astray. O'Hara and Pickett were the only one's who showed anything like their usual form. The former worked very hard, but his luck was died out. Williams, the goalie, once again gave a brilliant display, and he could hardly be blamed for the last two goals being registered against his side. Dalton and Murray also covered themselves in glory, and Fell, left-half, and Dan Clarke, centre-half, were strong tacklers right through.

A Welsh League fixture between the Dragons and Mardy at the Taff Vale Park on Feb. 28th 1914, did not attract more than 3,000 spectators who saw the game end 1-1.

Defeat at Barry

On Saturday, March 7th 1914 Pontypridd appeared at Jenner Park, Barry, in a return Southern League fixture with the 'Seasiders.' the latter having greatly surprised a few of the Welsh clubs in the competition of late - particularly Llanelly and Newport County - and the present occasion was looked up on as an opportunity for them to augment their total of points in the league table. Apart from this, it was also up to them to make amends for the rather heavy defeat they had sustained at Taff Vale Park earlier in the season.

The Dragons were rather unfortunate in having to appear without Jack O'Hara, their Captain, who was still on the injury list. Apart from his absence, however, and the inclusion of Clarke at centre-half, the team was the same as which appeared against Mardy the previous Saturday. There was a capital gate when the teams turned out. Pontypridd; Goal, Williams; backs, Murray and Dalton; halves Fell, Clarke & Craig; forwards, A. Pickett, Ferguson, Arthurs, Doonin and C. Pickett.

The score was even until a few minutes before the interval when Millard was fouled within the Pontypridd penalty area, and Wrightman opened the scoring for Barry. Just before the interval Millard added Barry's second goal. In the second-half the Dragons tried hard to reduce the lead, and came within an ace of doing so on a few occasions, but the game resulted in a win for Barry by two clear goals, and had it not been for the gook keeping of Williams and the splendid defensive play of Charlie Murray and Ted Dalton, especially the former, the margin against them would have been much heavier. Final score: - BARRY 2 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The Dragons were home against Treharris on Monday, March 9th 1914, in a Welsh League fixture. Both teams fielded several substitutes, the visitors suffering a great deal more than the Dragons in this respect, and a very one-sided game was the result. Finals score PONTYPRIDD 5 TREHARRIS 0.

Pontypridd enthusiasts receive a nasty shock

Pontypridd were away from home on Saturday, March 14th 1914, at Stoke, when they were defeated in a Southern League match by the 'Potters' by five goals to one. This was the first meeting of the teams, and soccer enthusiasts in Pontypridd and District received a nasty shock when the news arrived that the Pontypridd men had been defeated, and by such a heavy score. It was not anticipated that they would win, but a good many had fond hopes of the Dragons returning with a least one point.

It may be said in the Dragons' favour that they did not have the advantage of fielding their strongest eleven. Fell, was on the injured list with a damaged knee, and was unable to travel with the team and the intermediate line had to be reshuffled. Clarke was changed to left-half, Rowe and Craig taking the remaining positions in the line. The only other alteration was Arthurs, who appeared again at inside-right in place of Hodges, and Arthur Pickett filled the outside-left position. As constituted, however, the team was not at all a bad one, and were quite capable of giving a better account of themselves than they did on this occasion. The match took place in squally weather, but this did not prevent a large number attending, and there were quite 6,000 present when the teams lined out. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; Halves Clarke, Rowe & Craig;

Forwards, C. Pickett, Arthurs, O'Hara, Ferguson & A. Pickett.

Although they had won by a substantial margin, Stoke, it appears, were good value for their victory, and were not at any portion of the game seriously extended. The Dragons were kept on the defensive practically throughout, and had but few chances given them to attack. The backs, Murray and Dalton, defended well, but they were badly supported by their half-back line, who were weak indeed and were utterly unable to cope with the combined rushes of the Stoke forwards. The absence of Fell quite upset the line, for Clarke, on the wing, did not give by any means a good display, and it was a pity he was not allowed to remain in his proper position in the centre. Williams, the goalie, was not as effective as usual, and, as the score indicates, must have been chiefly engaged in kicking the ball up from the back of the net. However, the ball was in a very greasy condition, and he was not seriously to blame for any of the goals registered against his side. O'Hara and Charlie Pickett were the best of a poor forward-line, but the former was so closely watched by the home centre-half, Parker, that he was never allowed to threaten any real danger. Finals score: - STOKE 5 PONTYPRIDD 1

A local newspaper reported: "Since their defeat in the Welsh Cup competition the Dragons had fallen away considerably, and had only been successful in securing one Southern League point out of a possible six. They were beaten by Barry on the previous Saturday, and the week before had a hard task to claim one of the points against Mardy at the Taff Vale Park. That the Dragons had struck a bad patch in their history goes without saying, and it is very evident that unless a big improvement takes place in their play, the team would figure nearer the bottom of the table than the top when the end of the season arrives. Another was, if this bad form continued the gates would undoubtedly suffer for the remainder of the season. The failure in the Welsh Cup competition had, naturally, robbed the game of a great deal of interest in the locality, and, with promotion impossible as far as this season was concerned, there seemed little left to play for."

A large number of spectators put in an appearance at Taff Vale Park on Thursday, March 19th 1914, to witness the struggle between the Dragons and the 'Mushrooms' for Welsh league points, and the result, a goal-less draw, just about sums up the run of play. Final score: PONTYPRIDD 0 MID-RHONDDA 0.

Dragons at Mardy

The Dragons went to Mardy on Saturday, March 21st 1914, where they met the local team in a Southern League game. This was the last match of the season's fixtures between these old rivals. Up to this match the honours were even, however, the advantage of playing on their own pitch was calculated to give the

Mardy men just sufficient advantage to enable them to register a win on this occasion. A late start had been arranged at the request of the Mardy officials, and it was quite five o'clock when the teams fielded before a couple of thousand spectators. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs Dalton & Murray; halves, Craig, Clarke & Doonin; forwards, C Pickett, Arthurs, O'Hara, Ferguson & A. Pickett.

Losing the toss O'Hara set the ball rolling, and with a gentle breeze and the fitful glimpse of the occasional bright sun behind them the Dragons attacked almost continually throughout the first-half, but they were not able to score until the last few minutes thereof. True, Arthur Pickett was very prominent on the extreme right; the halves fed the forwards brilliantly, and gave them any amount of good chances, but they were up against a good defence in Jones and Davies, and Idris Thomas in goal was responsible for many clever saves. Ferguson, at inside-left, was in rare fettle, and was extremely unfortunate in seeing a well-directed shot of his somewhat luckily cleared, and a moment or so later Arthurs grazed the bar with a shot from some twenty yards range. The opening score, when it came, however, was a funny sort of affair. Charlie Pickett and Arthurs were busy on the right-wing, and the former sent in a centre which O'Hara met and neatly headed to Arthur Pickett, who lay unmarked. The latter made no mistake and easily placed it in the net. The goal came so suddenly that Thomas had no possible chance to save. Mardy now had a hand in the game, and their forwards, especially the left-wing pair, caused Murray some trouble, but the latter was well covered by Dalton, and together they were so successful in the methods that they adopted that 'Willie,' the Ponty goalie, was rarely in the picture except as an interested spectator.

The Dragon's second goal, scored in the first few minutes of the second-half, was the result of a smart bit of play by O'Hara and the right-wing pair. The ball was centred beautifully, and dropped at the feet of Arthur Pickett, who netted from an easy position. The game was delayed halfway through this half due to an injury to Arthur Pickett, who was forced to leave the field owing to his knee being wrenched rather badly. Only for a brief period during this half did the Mardy forwards show any smartness in attack, and during those few happy moments scored what the claimed to be a goal. Williams fielded right on the line and cleared, but had it entered the net the goal would have been disallowed, for the referee had blown up for offside. The home side made many raids on the Dragons' goal, but they failed to penetrate the key defence of the visiting backs, and were forced to retire defeated. The Dragons appeared, to have regained something approaching their old form. Final score: - MARDY 0 PONTYPRIDD 2.

The Dragons recorded a 1-0 victory over Troedyrhiw at Taff Vale Park, on Saturday, March 28th 1914 in a Welsh League fixture.

Croydon Common victorious

What undoubtedly could be described as one of the biggest crowds of the season put in an appearance at the Taff Vale Park on Saturday, April 4th 1914, to witness Croydon Common, the newly crowned champions of the Southern League Division Two, battle for points against the local team. The visitors were yet to lose a match in the competition. In the match at Croydon the Dragons had been defeated 2-0, and were determined this time to secure at least one of the points. Although rain fell heavily during the morning, the weather, with the exception of a slight wind, took a decided change for the better in the afternoon, and this fact, plus the late kick-off enabled between 7,000 and 8,000 enthusiasts to witness what turned out to be one of the best exhibitions of the soccer code seen on the enclosure during the present season.

Included amongst the large crowd were several hundred Croydon supporters, who had taken advantage of a special trip in order to cheer their team on to victory, and they were loud in their praises of the splendid playing pitch at Taff Vale Park, and the sportsmanlike spirit in which the local team's supporters took their defeat. There was hardly a dull moment throughout, and at intervals the play of both sides reached a high standard. The visitors won by the odd goal in three, and few, indeed, will deny that they deserved their one goal victory, for they were undoubtedly the most polished side, and displayed much more cohesion in their movements when making for goal than did the home side. In the first-half a rather unusual incident took place. In clearing, Fell kicked hard. The ball struck the referee, and the 'Knight of the whistle' went down for the count. He quickly revived, however, and the game proceeded. The visitors scored an early goal, and just before half-time Chester, the inside-right, was fouled in the penalty area and the referee pointed to the spot. Hutchings took the kick and added the second goal. Chester was soon forced to leave the field through injury, and from now until the interval the Dragons pressed, but were unable to reduce the lead.

The 'Robins' turned round with a lead of two goals, and, although outplayed in the first-half, the home men should have drawn level during the latter portion of the game. They had plenty of opportunities given them to pull the match out of the fire, but the forwards lacked the necessary finish to crown their splendid work in mid-field. Time and again they had the visiting defence guessing, and it was ill-luck on a couple of occasions, that robbed them of success. The only goal they scored was a beauty, quite the best of the match, and came after some really excellent work on the part of O'Hara and Pickett. The latter got in a beautiful centre which Hodges met while on the run, and sent into the net at lightening pace. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 CROYDON COMMON 2.

Despite improved results, behind the scene the Pontypridd AFC were in deep

financial difficulties, and slowly things were coming to a head, although the directors were still battling hard to keep the club afloat. In a bid to increase the gate for home fixtures, the '*Free Press*' of April 9th 1914 announced that all spectators paying for admission to watch the Dragons on Taff Vale Park on Good Friday and Easter Monday, would receive a slip which would entitle them to a one shilling Prize Draw for sixpence. The draw would take place on Wednesday, April 15th at 2 Taff Street, Pontypridd, and the result would be published in the newspaper on April 16th.

Mid-Rhondda visit again at Easter

The Dragons commenced their Easter holiday program on Good Friday afternoon, April 10th 1914, when the 'Mushrooms' were the visitors to Taff Vale Park, and as a result of the encounter the home team, by their splendid win, added a couple of points to their total in the Southern League table. The weather was beautifully fine, and this, combined with the fact that the game did not commence until 4.30, enabled a large crowd to put in an appearance. Both teams were well represented, but the Dragons were forced to rearrange their forward line. Charlie Pickett was given a well earned rest, his place being taken by Hodges, while Doonin was brought in to the inside-left position for Ferguson, who transferred to outside-right. The only other change was the substitution of Craig for Purdie at right-half.

The 'Mushrooms' won the toss, and the Dragons were set to face a brilliant sun and high wind. O'Hara started the ball rolling, and play for some time was in favour of the visitors. It was evident from the outset that the visitors were all out to secure the points, and up to half-time it appeared to be a really good thing for them. Their opening score came after some splendid work by Copestake on the right-wing. Securing from McCullum, the winger worked his way from the centre and when well within the penalty area sent in a splendid shot which struck the near upright and glanced into the net. The home goalie did not have an earthly, the shot beating him all the way. It was really a magnificent effort, and the men from the Rhondda cheered themselves hoarse.

The home men did much better after this reverse. They now took a hand in attack, and for a time peppered the visiting goalie, but Ward, although lucky in some of his clearances was equal to the occasion. Fast had been the pace in the first-half, things began to hum in the second. The home men quickly got into their stride, and, receiving very excellent transfers from the immediate line, were giving a much brighter exhibition. The visitors' defence were continually kept on the move. For a long time, however, they prevailed, but the Dragons still kept pegging away for the equalizer, and at last they were rewarded. Hodges, from the right, sent in a beautiful centre, which Jack O'Hara met and dribbling between Main and Bain, he

left them standing. Getting with about ten yards of the goal, Jack steadied himself and then drove the ball into the net, giving Ward no chance whatsoever to save.

The pace on the restart was faster than ever. Both teams strove hard and the struggle for that winning goal was well worth going a long way to see. From end to end went the play, but the Dragons, who were lasting better than the Rhondda men, were now quite masters of the situation. Although long delayed, when the winning goal came it was a beauty, and quite the best of the match. Dan Clarke initiated a movement by sending well down the field to Arthur Pickett. Rounding Main, the winger sent across a splendid centre, which O'Hara helped along to Ferguson, and the latter shot left Ward standing. It was a great effort, and thoroughly deserved the applause of the spectators. It was all over for Mid-Rhondda, who were by this time a beaten team, and the only wonder is that the Dragons did not add to their score in the closing stages. Towards the end the game got a bit rough, and everyone was pleased when the final whistle sounded, leaving the home team well deserved victors. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 2 MID-RHONDDA 1.

Swansea visit on Easter Monday

Dragons fall to ten men

On Easter Saturday the Dragons were without a fixture, but on Easter Monday, April 13th 1914, they entertained Swansea Town on the Taff Vale Park in a return Southern League fixture. Of course, both teams were well out of the running for promotion, but it was fully anticipated that the supporters on both sides wished their 'pets' would put up a determined struggle to secure the points, and thus gain as high a position as possible in the table.

Once again the Dragons rearranged their side. Why? Many were at a loss to understand, for they were firmly convinced that the forward line which did so well against Mid-Rhondda three days before, would have been quite good enough to account for the 'Swans.' On this occasion both Arthurs and Charlie Pickett were brought into the forward line, Ferguson being shifted to outside-left, while Hodges - who showed good form on his last appearance - was left out of the team entirely. In the intermediate line Purdie appeared instead of Craig, another unaccountable change. Pontypridd: Goal, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, C. Pickett, Arthurs, O'Hara, Doonin & Ferguson.

O'Hara was unfortunate in losing the toss, for his side had to defend the Treforest end in the face of a dazzling sun and slight wind. The Dragons at once got away and carried play into the Swansea territory, but Bulcock cleared. The Dragons came again, however, and Ferguson was given an excellent chance to centre on the left, but he was much too slow and Bulcock again changed the venue. Up to now

play had been all in favour of the home side, but gradually the 'Swans' settled down, and the spectators were treated to some splendid short passing movements by their forwards. Ball and Weir were in good form, and they gradually worked their way down to the Dragons' goal, where Dalton was forced to give away a corner. Gilboy placed the kick nicely, and Ball opened the scoring with a header which easily beat Williams. The 'Swans' kept up the pressure on the restart, but the interval arrived with the Dragons a goal down.

The Dragons opened the second-half in a spirited manner, and at once carried play into the 'Swans' goal area. Pickett eluded the watchful Mitchell, and racing away drove in a beautiful centre, but the inside men were at fault, and the chance was allowed to go astray. Not to be denied, however, the Dragons returned, but Storey turned a shot from Arthurs behind. An unfortunate incident happened here, Ball, going for the goal, came into contact with Dan Clarke, and as a result had to be carried off the field with a few of his ribs fractured. It was a pure accident, however, and the centre-half was in no way to blame.

Restarting, the home men forced the pace, and for a long time kept the visitors on the defensive. Up to a certain stage there were playing good football, but the outstanding weakness was their inability to clinch matters with anything approaching a decent shot, and the occasions when Storey was called upon to handle were few and far between. The visitors were greatly handicapped by the absence of Ball, who up to his retirement was the best forward on the field. Towards the closing stages the Dragons gave the visitors a busy time defending. Storey was bombarded by at least a dozen shots, but the goalie made no mistakes and kicked to touch invariably.

The game was contested at a furious pace, and Charlie Pickett forced a couple of corners in quick succession. The kicks were nicely placed, but the inside men were utterly unable to turn them to good account. The game was again delayed, this time through an injury to Fell, who in heading the ball injured his nose, and he was forced to retire. On at least three occasions the home forwards had an open goal, but the shots either went yards wide or high over the bar. On one occasion O'Hara, from five yards out, had the goal at his mercy, but Jack, who is usually very dependable in such a situation, skied the ball, amid the groans of the spectators. From the onwards they sustained the attack, but no equalising goal came to reward their efforts, and one was reluctantly brought to the conclusion that if the Dragons had kept on playing for a week, they would still have failed to find the net, and the result would still have been a goal victory for Swansea. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 0 SWANSEA TOWN 1.

Sharpshooters wanted

Treharris were the visitors to the Taff Vale Park on Tuesday, April 14th 1914, in a Southern League encounter. The weather was gloriously fine, and there were a couple of thousand spectators present. Owing to the late arrival of the Treharris team, the kick-off did not take place until 5 o'clock. Treharris started with only seven men, but the remaining four put in an appearance after the game had been in progress for about ten minutes.

The game was of an even character throughout. Both sides attacked in turn. With the strong wind behind them the visitors were dangerous on a few occasions, but the defence of Murray, Dalton and Williams was too sound for them, and they were frequently driven back. Although this was a Southern League fixture the Dragons did not appear to take things seriously. Pickett and O'Hara drove in some really nice centres, but Ferguson and Hodges failed to turn them into good account. The score-sheet was blank when the interval was reached.

The Dragons pressed continuously during the second-half, but they only managed to score one goal, and that came after a centre by Charlie Pickett, which Arthur Pickett turned into the net. Shortly afterwards O'Hara beating the visiting goalie with a terrific drive, but the goal was disallowed. Why? Nobody knew. Towards the closing stages the home forwards fairly bombarded the visiting goalie with shots. It was really ludicrous to see the direction in which they were sent. Some went yards wide, others, high up over the bar, and not a few went perilously near the children's park on the Treforest end of the field. A couple of sharpshooters would have been worth their weight in gold. However, the game ended in a narrow win for the home team. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 1 TREHARRIS 0.

Fine victory over Stoke

The last Dragons Southern League match of the season took place on Saturday, April 18th 1914 at Taff Vale Park against Stoke. The weather was beautifully fine, more fitting for a great deal of cricket than football, and, as usual, the ground was in excellent condition. The visitors were always a good drawing card, for they invariably played, good, clean football, and many exponents of the soccer code in this era had at one time or another been found in their ranks. On this occasion, however, although the kick-off had been put off until 4.30, the attendance was not as good as it should have been, but this perhaps, may in some good measure be attributed to the counter-attraction which took place at Ynysangharad between the local rugby team and Treorky.

The home men were determined, if possible, to turn the tables on their opponents, and thus avenge the defeat they had sustained in the 'Potteries.' Therefore, they

fielded their strongest available eleven, every man being in the 'pink of condition.' George Fell had made a smart recovery from his mishap against Swansea, and the majority of spectators were pleased to see him appear, in this, the last home fixture of the season. Stoke, were also represented by their strongest side, and came to town determined to capture the points. Pontypridd: Goalie, Williams; backs, Dalton & Murray; halves, Purdie, Clarke & Fell; forwards, C. Pickett, Ferguson, O'Hara, Doonin & A. Pickett.

The Dragons lost the toss, and O'Hara commenced from the Treforest end in the face of a dazzling sun. Pontypridd, it was evident at this early stage, were all out for full points, but a few good chances were allowed to slip when a little steadiness would have enabled them to open the scoring. The Dragons still kept up a good pressure, and Gadsden, the visiting goalkeeper, was given a warm time. He was by far the busiest man on the field, and saved shots at close range in splendid fashion. O'Hara sent in a hot one which struck the bar, and the ball went over, and a moment later Ferguson hooked the ball right into the keeper's hands.

Clarke was playing a fine defensive game at centre-half, and was continually beating Rowlands in mid-field. The Dragons returned to the attack through Clarke, who placed nicely in the goalmouth, but Ferguson's shot struck the upright. Gadsden was only able to effect a partial clearance, and a melee took place in front of goal, but the ball was ultimately sent over. Several corners now fell to the home men, and then, after a determined attack on the left, Arthur Pickett placed nicely for O'Hara to open the scoring with a beauty, which left the goalie no chance to save. The home forwards were almost in again at the restart, and try as they would the visitors could not get through the home defence and half-time was called with the Dragons leading 1-0.

Play had been exceedingly fast during the first-half, but the pace slackened somewhat on the restart. Stoke showed a little better form at this period of the game. Then Forester got going on the left-wing, and, rounding Dalton, the winger sent in a nice centre, and the ball was almost rolling over when Smith rushed up and screwed it into the net, well out of Williams' reach. Nettled by this reverse the home men got going on the right and Charlie Pickett was responsible for many clever runs and centres, but bad shooting at this juncture alone prevented the Dragons from retaking the lead. A clever movement initiated by C. Pickett near the centre, however, ended up in the ball being sent into the net. The winger sailed beautifully along the wing, and when faced by Turner, sent back to Purdie, who put his side up with a beautiful left-foot drive.

The home men played better than ever on the restart. The visiting defence had a very anxious time indeed, and some of the clearances of Gadsden were very lucky.

The Dragons now had the defence well weighed up, however, and after Charlie Pickett had made splendid headway on the right, the winger gave to Ferguson, and this player sent to O'Hara, for the latter to add the third goal with a fast drive. Stoke were now a thoroughly beaten team, and rarely did they carry the play over the half-way-line. The Dragons kept up a strong attack, Arthur Pickett, after running strongly on the left, sending in a beautiful centre. O'Hara met the ball nicely, and after forcing the goalie to leave his charge, tapped across to Ferguson, who made no mistake in sending into the net. This was all the scoring, but the pressure was maintained until the final whistle sounded. Final score: - PONTYPRIDD 4 STOKE 1.

Thus the Dragons wound up their Southern League programme in a right royal fashion by defeating the 'Potters.' Everyone readily admitted that the team, as a whole, had risen to the occasion, and if promotion to the First Division had been invested on the result of the encounter, they could not have put up a better or more determined performance. Quite a feature of the game was the dash and determination shown by every man on the home side, and especially was this the case in the forward-line. Never before had the local team played with such determination, for quite eighty of the ninety minutes play took place in the Stoke half, and, splendidly as Gadsden kept goal, it was only luck that favoured him on many occasions - especially during the first-half - and prevented the home side from scoring, and thus prevented them winning by a very much bigger margin. It was evident, from the very commencement, that the Dragons were out to capture the full points, and for doing so they were to be congratulated. It was indeed a decisive win, but, had the margin been anything up to eight goals in their favour, many people thought that that is what they deserved.

The '*Free Press*' the following weekend carried this report: - "I am sure that my readers will be sad to learn that Mr. Alec Maley, the manager, intends severing his connection with the Pontypridd Association Football Club, but will be glad to here that he has secured a similar post with the Clydebank club, Glasgow, who next season intend entering the second Division of the Scottish League. Mr. Maley has been resident in the town for about twelve months, but during this time he has done some good work in the way of fostering soccer football in the district, and I'm sure everyone locally wishes him success in his new sphere."

On Wednesday, April 22nd 1914, one of the tamest games ever witnessed at Ninian Park, Cardiff, took place between Cardiff City and the Dragons, which resulted in the Pontypridd team sharing the Welsh League points in a goal-less draw. Final score: - CARDIFF CITY 0 PONTYPRIDD 0.

The season draws to a close

With the season drawing to a close, and Pontypridd not having been involved in any cup-finals or relays as per normal, the closing stages were unusually quiet. On Thursday, April 23rd 1914 they secured a good 1-1 draw at the Vetch Field against Swansea in a Welsh League fixture. Dan Ferguson scored for the Dragons and Messer scored a late equalizer. Having an open date on Saturday, April 25th, Abertillery visited Taff Vale Park for a friendly, and were thrashed 5-0. The following Wednesday, April 29th, the Dragons finished the Welsh League fixture list with a 4-0 win over Aberdare. A day later, April 30th 1914, the season was concluded with a 2-1 home win in a friendly against Caerphilly. After the game it was announced that Charlie Murray and Ted Dalton had signed up for the following season. They had been connected with the club since it had been started and were considered the best pair of full-backs in the Second Division of the Southern League. Mr. W. Rowe, trainer, had also signed.

Conclusion

Pontypridd had finished eighth in the Southern League and high in the Welsh League. Undoubtedly the year was not seen as successful as the two previous seasons, but this was only because they had been knocked out of the Welsh Cup at the semi-final. The Southern League performances were the best so far, and if it were not for the slow start to the season and a drop in form after the Welsh Cup KO; they might have been near a promotion spot. Off the field, however, the financial problems of the club were mounting at an alarming rate and there were doubts once again that the club would be viable for another season.

Pontypridd A.F.C. - Results Season 1913-14						
		Opponents	Venue	result	Score	Comp.
1913						
Sept	4 th	Treharris	Home	Won	3 - 0	F
	6 th	Newport County	Away	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
	13 th	Newport County	Home	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	16 th	Llanelly	Away	Lost	1 - 3	W.L.
	20 th	Abertillery	Home	Won	2 - 0	S.L.

	22 nd	Troedyrhiw	Away	Draw	2 - 2	W.L.
	27 th	Mid-Rhondda	Home	Lost	0 - 1	E.C.
	29 th	Ton Pentre	Away	Lost	0 - 2	W.L.
Oct.	4 th	Caerphilly	Home	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	6 th	Mid-Rhondda	Away	Lost	0 - 3	W.L.
	11 th	Troedyrhiw	Home	Won	2 - 1	F.
	16 th	Ton Pentre	Home	Won	4 - 1	W.L.
	18 th	Aberdare	Away	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
	25 th	Treharris	Away	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
Nov	1 st	Mardy	Away	Won	3 - 0	S.L.
	3 rd	Aberdare	Away	Won	3 - 0	W.L.
	8 th	Luton Town	Home	Won	3 - 2	S.L.
	22 nd	Ton Pentre	Away	Won	3 - 1	S.L.
	29 th	Barry	Home	Won	4 - 2	S.L.
Dec	6 th	Luton Town	Away	Lost	0 - 3	S.L.
	13 th	Ton Pentre	Home	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	20 th	Caerphilly	Away	Won	3 - 0	S.L.

	25 th	Mid-Rhondda	Away	Draw	3 - 0	S.L.
	26 th	Swansea Town	Away	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	27 th	Aberdare	Home	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
1914						
Jan	1 st	Cardiff City	Home	Won	2 - 0	W.L.
	3 rd	Abertillery	Home	Draw	0 - 0	W.C.
	8 th	Abertillery	Away	Won	2 - 1	W.C.
	10 th	Llanelly	Home	Won	4 - 1	S.L.
	17 th	Abertillery	Away	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	24 th	Llandudno	Home	Won	5 - 1	W.C.
	28 th	Cardiff City	Away	Lost	1 - 3	S.W.
	31 st	Brentford	Away	Lost	0 - 3	S.L.
Feb.	7 th	Croydon Common	Away	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	9 th	Treharris	Away*	Won	2 - 0	W.L.
	14 th	Wrexham	Ninian	Draw	0 - 0	W.C.
	16 th	Mardy	Away	Lost	0 - 3	W.L.
	18 th	Wrexham	chester	Draw	1 - 1	W.C.

	19 th	Llanelly	Home	Lost	1 - 5	W.L.
	21 st	Brentford	Home	Draw	0 - 0	S.L.
	24 th	Llanelly	Away	Lost	0 - 4	S.L.
	26 th	Wrexham	S/bury	Lost	1 - 3	W.C.
	28 th	Mardy	Home	Draw	1 - 1	S.L.
Mar	7 th	Barry	Away	Lost	0 - 2	S.L.
	9 th	Treharris	Home	Won	5 - 0	W.L.
	14 th	Stoke	Away	Lost	1 - 5	S.L.
	19 th	Mid-Rhondda	Home	Draw	0 - 0	W.L.
	21 st	Mardy	Away	Won	2 - 0	S.L.
	28 th	Troedyrhiw	Home	Won	1 - 0	W.L.
Apr	4 th	Croydon Common	Home	Lost	1 - 2	S.L.
	10 th	Mid-Rhondda	Home	Won	2 - 1	S.L.
	13 th	Swansea Town	Home	Lost	0 - 1	S.L.
	14 th	Treharris	Home	Won	1 - 0	S.L.
	18 th	Stoke	Home	Won	4 - 1	S.L.
	22 nd	Cardiff City	Away	Draw	0 - 0	W.L.

	23 rd	Swansea Town	Away	Draw	1 - 1	W.L.
	25 th	Abertillery	Home	Won	5 - 0	F
	29 th	Aberdare	Home	Won	4 - 0	W.L.
	30 th	Caerphilly	Home	Won	2 - 1	F
<p>W.L. = Welsh League; S.L. = Southern League; W.C. = Welsh Cup; F = Friendly; S.W. = South Wales & Monmouthshire Cup; E.C. = English Cup. Coulours Black & White; Ground, Taff Vale Park; Captain Jack O'Hara. * Away fixture played at Taff Vale Park.</p>						

Epilogue

The week after the 1913-14 season closed a public meeting was called to discuss the financial crisis of the Pontypridd soccer club. Councillor David Williams, taking the chair, told a shocked meeting at the Lesser Town Hall that the club was £750 in debit and unlikely to play again. The chairman kept the audience intensely interested and proceeding he said that although in the first season they had tried to get £1,000 in shares, only £350 had been taken up. Thus they had started from an indifferent basis, and looked to soccer enthusiasts for support. In the second year they had contracted no debits that they couldn't pay - and were solvent at the end of the season were 14/- to the good. At the end of this season, he was sorry to say that they were £188 to the bad. They had hard times at the beginning of the season, when the weather was most unpropitious. The players did not get on very well together, and it had to be admitted that a Pontypridd crowd like to see a winning team (laughter). Then again, some enthusiasts like to watch games from John Gibbons' Quarry, across the river (laughter).

The facts were this; the players wages cost £40 per week, and with incidentals the amount was £58 per week. The takings for the season were £800. This meant an average of £47 a week. and taking the expenditure of £58 into account, there occurred a weekly lost of £11 per week or £418 per season.

The J. E. Brooks (hairdresser) asked it would be a greater expense to form a new club. The chairman said the Association would not allow them to do that, and

rightly too. They wanted to be straight and honest men, and upon that he would always take his stand. The chairman was asked if the transfer of players would realize sufficient funds to liquidate the debt. But the chairman said that there was no asset in a player, as it was only a prospective one. Mr. Maley, the manager, had told him that the price that he would like for each player, but the question was, what would he get? We had an offer of a player for £10, but he had signed to another club for £120. Various schemes were then put forward by different people for raising funds, and ultimately it was decided to make an appeal to local businesses to buy shares, and volunteers were to go around canvassing these people.

Ultimately the club survived and played the 1914-15 season, through increasingly difficult circumstances. On August the 4th 1914 the war against Germany broke out, but it was decided by the soccer authorities that soccer in general would continue. The increasing number of casualties were such that the 1915-16 season did not proceed, and in January 1916 conscription for men between 18 and 41 was introduced across the United Kingdom.

Pontypridd made no impact on the Welsh Cup in 1919/20, losing their opening tie in the third round 1-0 against Barry, but in 1920/21 they reached the final for the third time. Wins over Cardiff City (3-1), Llanidloes (2-0) and Ton Pentre (2-0) in the semi-final at Tonypany led to a meeting with Wrexham at Ninian Park. But after a 1-1 draw Pontypridd lost the replay 3-1 at Shrewsbury in front of 8000 spectators.

1921/22 saw Pontypridd reach the semi-finals again thanks to wins over Bridgend (3-1 after a 0-0 draw) and Brymbo (5-1). The latter game being played in North Wales after Brymbo turned down a large cash offer from Pontypridd to switch the game to Pontypridd's own ground. Pontypridd met Cardiff City in the semi-final at Aberdare, City having beaten Newcastle United 1-0 in the First Division of the Football League the week before, while Pontypridd themselves had applied to join the Third Division of the League this season, only to be turned down. A crowd of 12,000 watched Cardiff record a 3-0 victory. Pontypridd's Taff Vale Park home was chosen to host the final that year as Cardiff City beat Ton Pentre 2-0.

Pontypridd lost their opening game in the Welsh Cup in 1922/23 and 1923/24, going out in the sixth round 4-1 at Newport County, then 2-0 in the fourth round against Aberdare. The final between Wrexham and Merthyr was held at Pontypridd's ground again in 1923/24, a 2-2 draw resulting in a replay which Wrexham won 1-0 on their own ground.

1924/25 saw Pontypridd win 3-2 against Mid Rhondda before a 3-0 exit in the quarter finals against Mold Town, and in 1925/26 Pontypridd lost 3-1 to Ebbw Vale

in a third round replay following a 2-2 draw. At the end of this season Pontypridd pulled out of both the Southern and Welsh leagues and the days of professional football in the town were over forever. The current Pontypridd Town club has no connection with this famous old Pontypridd club.

League Record - Pontypridd Dragons FC

1911-12 > Southern League Division Two > 5th
1912-13 > Southern League Division Two > 7th
1913-14 > Southern League Division Two > 8th
1914-15 > Southern League Division Two > 11th*
1919-20 > Southern League Division Two > 4th
1920-21 > Southern League Welsh Section > 4th
1921-22 > Southern League Welsh Section > 5th
1922-23 > Southern League Welsh Section > 4th
1923-24 > Southern League Welsh Section > 3rd**
1924-25 > Southern League Welsh Section > 3rd
1925-26 > Southern League Welsh Section > 13th

* = Team did not play between 1915-16 & 1918-19 due to 2nd World War

Welsh Cup Achievements - Pontypridd Dragons FC

1912 - Welsh Cup Final (lost 3-0 to Cardiff City after replay)
1913 - Welsh Cup Final (lost 1-0 to Swansea City after replay)
1914 - Welsh Cup Semi-Final (lost 3-1 to Wrexham after two replays)
1921 - Welsh Cup Final (lost 3-1 to Wrexham after replay)
1922 - Welsh Cup Semi-Final (lost 3-0 to Cardiff City)
1924 - Welsh League Champions**

N.B. - The author, after the publication of this book discovered that there was a predecessor to the Dragons. An amateur team called Pontypridd United that according to a report in the '*Glamorgan Free Press*' of January 26th 1906 stated that the club had been in existence for 'several years,' playing on the Ynysangharad Field, but now had to withdraw from the South Wales and Monmouthshire League Second Division. The report stated: "Soccer did not prove popular in the district, and their gates were very meagre, and difficulty was experienced in meeting expenses, and the ground landlord (of the Ynysangharad Fields), Mr. H. M. Gregory J. P, conceded half the arranged ground-rent to assist the committee out of the financial difficulties in which there were placed. This obstacle would have been overcome had it not been for the dissension among the players owing to the introduction of 'strangers' into the team who have recently moved to the district.

It was this disagreement between the players that hastened the end. The team will in all probability be resuscitated next year."

So the Pontypridd United team, probably consisting of amateur players, and lucky enough to play at the Ynysangharad Fields, suffered from the same problems that the Dragons would fight long and hard to overcome, e.g. low crowds and poor finances. But, unlike the 'united' the Dragons brought people into the district, rather than fold because too many Englishmen had joined the team!

Southern Football League Division 2 1913/14

Pos	Club	Pld	W	D	L	F	A	GA	Pts	Notes
1st	Croydon Common	30	23	5	2	76	14	5.429	51	▲ Champions
2nd	Luton Town	30	24	3	3	92	22	4.182	51	▲ Runners Up
3rd	Brentford	30	20	4	6	80	18	4.444	44	
4th	Swansea Town	30	20	4	6	66	25	2.640	44	
5th	Stoke	30	19	2	9	71	34	2.088	40	
6th	Newport County	30	14	8	8	49	38	1.289	36	
7th	Mid Rhondda	30	13	7	10	55	37	1.486	33	
8th	Pontypridd	30	14	5	11	43	38	1.132	33	
9th	Llanelli	30	12	4	14	45	37	1.216	28	
10th	Barry	30	9	8	13	44	70	0.629	26	
11th	Aberillery	30	8	4	18	44	51	0.863	20	Resigned
12th	Ton Pentre	30	8	4	18	33	61	0.541	20	
13th	Mardy	30	6	6	18	30	60	0.550	18	Resigned
14th	Caerphilly	30	4	7	19	21	103	0.204	15	Resigned
15th	Aberdare	30	4	5	21	33	87	0.379	13	Resigned
16th	Treharris	30	2	4	24	19	106	0.179	8	Resigned

Southern Football League - End of Season Notes

Teams Leaving the Southern Football League

- ▼ Aberdare Resigned from the League and Folded
- ▼ Aberillery Resigned from the League
- ▼ Caerphilly Resigned from the League
- ▼ Mardy Resigned from the League
- ▼ Treharris Resigned from the League



The Dragons Supporters Club Committee 1919-20



The Dragons 1921-22



Player-Manager Mayson and his "merry men," who, in the opinion of the Supporters' Club, will give a good account of themselves during the coming season. Back row—left to right: T. Coates (trainer), C. Deacey, J. Anderson, Mr. Maddock Evans (director), Percy Mackrill, Jack Garratt, J. Burson, J. O'Neill (trainer), and T. Mayson (player-manager). Seated: J. Curran, J. Walton, W. Casson, Edgar Saunders, Frank Stringfellow, C. Danskin, and Bob Smith.

The 'New Dragons' for season 1924-25

This book tells the story of the formation in 1911 of the Pontypridd AFC, a team of professional footballers who would soon become famous throughout the Principality

Travel with us back to a time that saw association football arrive in the south Wales valleys with an impact that had the followers of the 'oval ball' standing back with shock and horror as teams at Pontypridd, Mid-Rhondda, Ton Pentre etc. began drawing the sporting spectators away from them.

Widely known as the 'Dragons' the Pontypridd AFC had to struggle to establish itself in a rugby mad town and district, but were soon attracting thousands of spectators to their ground at Taff Vale Park, Treforest. An exciting story soon unfolds, covered by match by match reports on all the Pontypridd games during three seasons that saw the new club achieve unparalleled success in the Welsh Cup competition.

For all lovers of football or Pontypridd history, this book is both entertaining and informative, and might even interest supporters of Cardiff City, who in the days recalled were regular opponents of Pontypridd. Come with us and read about the Dragons playing in Welsh cup finals at, Shrewsbury, Ninian Park and the Racecourse, Wrexham. For Pontypridd soccer, these first three seasons were truly THE GLORY YEARS!

ISBN 0-0536475-3-7

Price £9.95

1919

Old book tells history of the Dragons – Story of Pontypridd’s first professional soccer team (Pontypridd Observer and Leader & Free Press Saturday, April 4th 1959).

A interesting document, dating back 40 years has been brought to light as a result of reminiscences in our columns recently about the old Pontypridd Dragons’ soccer team. It is a book containing the minutes of directors’ meetings in the five years immediately following the first world war. Between its battered covers there are some 250 closely written pages recording, in faded ink, an important period of the club’s history. The first entry is for July, 1919, and it appears, that a new board of directors had just taken over the club’s fortunes, which had been badly upset by the war. “Can we have our ball back?” An early entry informs us that the directors were determined as they were to put the club’s house in order, instructed their secretary to write to Mr. E. C. Gaecon asking him to return the football which belongs to the club.”

Wrote to Aston Villa

The Taff Vale Park ground was leased for the coming season at a cost of £120, and the directors got down to the problem of building up a team, having gained re-admission to the southern league (Western division) and to the welsh league. By August 25th six of the seven players engaged had arrived, and the secretary was instructed to wire to Bushell (selected as captain) to come down to Pontypridd to start training. Training was to be on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2.30 to 8 p.m. It is clear from the minutes that throughout the 1919-20 season the main theme of the directors’ discussions was finding players to keep up the strength of the team. In September, 1919 they were writing to ask Aston Villa “to enquire if they had a couple of good outside men to lend the club. One of the players, J. H. Robins, received a number of payments over and above his wages, which were voted to him by the directors in gratitude to his “scouting” activities. On one occasion he was give £5, an important sum for those days.

Search went on

In this same month, September, 1919, the directors resolved to place an advertisement in the "Athletic News" offering terms to half-backs and outside forwards. It seems that the advertising was successful, for shortly afterwards the directors agreed to engage four players. A. Armstrong, an outside-right from Derby County, for whom a £25 transfer fee was paid; E. F. Millward, an outside-left from Bolton Wanderers; H. Kirkland, a Grimsby Town centre-half and Fred Howarth, a Rochdale left-half, whose services were dispensed with after a month. But the search for players went on. At the beginning of October the directors, worried about finding a full team for a match against Porth on the following Saturday, instructed one of their number, Mr. J. Fowler, to go with Robbins and Armstrong to Birmingham and Derby, "by motor" to sign players. We then note that a Birmingham inside-forward, J. Machin, had registered with the club "at six pounds a week, including work."

Vexed question

The question as to what to pay the various players was another one that vexed the directors, and the minutes for the 1919-1920 season showed that they went into the matter in great detail. The normal fee for the local boys seemed to be 25 shillings a match, but some of them were offered "professional terms" at £2 or £2-10s a week. At the beginning of the season the directors had resolved not to spend more than £20 weekly on their wages bill, but it soon became evident from the minutes that this total was easily passed. Players engaged from elsewhere were usually offered £2-10s a week, the club undertaking to find them work. It was none too easy, however, to find work in the period immediately following the war, with the demobilisation of hundreds of thousands of soldiers still creating a severe problem. The club was compelled to pay an extra £1 a week to two of its players, an extra 30s a week to Armstrong and Millward (presumably the stars), until work could be found for them.

Appeal for work

One entry tells us that a deputation of club directors was formed, their mission to be to visit local collieries appealing for work on behalf of the

players. Those not employed were given jobs working on the ground. In view of the difficult circumstances of the time the directors authorised small loans to be made out of club funds to some of the players. Judging by the wages given E. F. Millward was the most highly prized member of the side, since he was first engaged at the top wage of £3 per week, which was raised later in the season to £5 per week, and then to £5-10s. The directors voted also to give 25 shillings each to players at the start of the season towards football boots, but made them responsible for keeping them in good repair. Throughout the 1919-1920 season the directors reserved to themselves the selection of the team, and so the minutes give us a complete record of the sides chosen. Some of our readers may remember some of the players of that time.

Appeal for work

A deputation of club directors was formed to visit local collieries appealing for work on behalf of the players. Those not employed were given jobs working on Taff Vale Park. In view of the difficult circumstances of the time the directors authorised small loans to be made out of club funds to some of the players. Judging by the wages given to A. H. Millward the most highly prized member of the side, since he was first engaged at the top wage of £3 per week, which was raised later in the season to £5 per week, and then again to £5-10s. The directors also voted also to give 25/- each to the players at the start of the season towards football boots, but made them responsible for keeping them in good repair. Throughout the 1919-20 season the directors reserved to themselves the selection of the team.

Never missed

The regular goalkeeper, who apparently never missed a match, was W. R. Davies. He lived in Treharris, and the directors decreed that he would have to pay his own travelling expenses to Pontypridd. They tempered this decision on one occasion, since an entry records that on Christmas Day a taxi was sent to Treharris to fetch him.

The backs were Charlie Murray and Syd Wilson, and the latter succeeded Bushell as captain in November. Unfortunately for his captain's prestige, within a few weeks he found himself as a reserve, displaced in the team by

Frank Parkes. Amongst those who played at half-back the most consistent was Stanley Hopkins, and others included Harry Foxhall, W. H. Downes and Isaac Parkes. Leading the forward line was a local player Aneurin Evans, at centre-forward. E. F. Millward did not miss a game and others making regular appearances were J. H. Robbins, A. Armstrong, Arthur Foxhall and J. Machin.

Not without troubles

The team travelled to away matches either by train or charabanc, and the directors' discussions were frequently concerned with negotiations with motor-coach firms, then in their infancy. The club was not without other troubles, apart from making up a team and finding work for its players, it seemed to be at frequent odds against the Welsh Football Association, and Welsh League, and a good deal of correspondence was exchanged. On one occasion they were fined £5 - 5s by the Welsh League for fielding a weak team in an away match at Cardiff Corinthians. The club protested against this decision, but it did appear that the club were reluctant to postpone an unimportant away game and had indeed sent a reserve team to Cardiff. The appeal failed.

Distinguished visitors

A proposal that the club should buy the Taff Vale Park for itself was constantly mooted and discussed. The same discussion took place many times over the years but was never realised. Towards the end of the season the directors were discussing arrangements for the reception of their distinguished visitors, Aston Villa. It was finally resolved that the directors would entertain the members of the Villa and Dragons teams to tea, and afterwards to the second house at the Town Hall.

About this same time, the early months of 1920, the directors were having long discussions about the appointment of a player-manager. After advertising, they narrowed down the applicants to a short-list, and eventually chose centre-half Harry Swift, formerly of Burnley and Third Lanark. He was engaged at £6 a week, winter and summer, plus £1 extra until he could get a house. These wages were later increased to £7 10s.

Good season

With this appointment the minutes of the directors' lose much of their interest, for the day-today business of the club was carried on by the manager. The 1920-21 season, however, must have been a good one for the Dragons' supporters, Cardiff City had just been admitted to the first division and one of the directors had a bright idea. He suggested that the club should contact the teams who came to play Cardiff, offering to play them on Monday at Taff Vale Park. The first division sides were offered a half share of the gate, with a minimum guarantee of £60 or £80. Amongst those who accepted were West Ham United, Fulham, Bury, Coventry City, Stoke City, Barnsley and Rotherham United. The Pontypridd club also made an application to join the third division of the English league. This proposal, like that of buying the ground, was constantly discussed over the next few years, but the club were never able to implement it.

Active and enthusiastic

It is apparent from the minutes that the directors enjoyed the benefit of an active and enthusiastic supporters club, who were given two seats on the board. As well as buying shares in the club and helping to steady its rather shaky financial foundations, the supporters also gave much practical help, working at the turn styles and other jobs on match days. Not all Pontypridd supporters were, however, so well-behaved, and public-spirited. At one match against Ebbw Vale someone in the crowd took some personal action (unspecified in the minutes) against the referee, and the crowd generally got into an ugly mood. The F. A. ordered the club to display posters at the ground warning the crowd that the ground would be closed if the incident were repeated.

Coal strike

At this time the local council were trying to raise funds to complete the purchase of the Ynysangharad Park, and deputations of councilors came to the directors to ask the club to play friendly matches to raise money. The directors demurred because of the "unsettled times." Apparently, a coal strike was in progress, and the club was finding things difficult. In fact, it had to reduce its prices of admission during the strike, and it was up against its old difficulty of its players being out of work.

At the end of the 1920-21 season the club dispensed with the services of its player-manager, Harry Swift, and engaged Peter O'Rourke, from Bradford City, to replace him at a wage of £10 a week, plus 10% of the seasons gates. For the time, this must have been a very high wage indeed, for a club like Pontypridd to pay. In the summer of 1921 the directors also had find themselves new office premises at 3 Station Square.

In a bad way

In spite of these examples of munificence, the club was in a very bad way financially throughout the 1921-22 season, not raising enough money to keep going and was the only occupation of the directors. To be ready in August they had formed a deputation which called on the bank manager and asked him to ensure that they could pay out wages until the start of the season, when they hoped to recoup on the gates. The price of admission was raised to 1 shilling for the enclosure and 2 shilling for the ground, but it soon became apparent that they were not getting enough to pay their way. The directors still hoped admission to the third division, as the Panacea of their ills, and tried keep to keep going.

Critical

By November, 1921, matters were critical, and the players were called to a meeting of the board. In view of the financial state of the club every one of them, without exception, agreed to a reduction in wages from 10 shillings to £2. The manager, Mr. O'Rourke, asked that this should also be applied to him, and agreed to accept a cut of £2. Another attempt to improve matters was the transfer of one of the leading players, Ramsbottom, to Sheffield Wednesday for £400, and a further £100 if he proved satisfactory.

Poor time

In 1921-22 season, and the next one started off no better. On two further occasions there was extraordinary general meetings of shareholders, but somehow the club kept going. The manager, O'Rourke, was succeeded by Mr. R. Coates, the trainer. The directors were writing to Manchester United asking for the loan of some players, and in April, 1923, it was decided to apply yet again for admission to the third division. The manager for the 1922-23 season was Mr. T. Mason, and a list of players he engaged was given. The only survivor of the 1919 seems to have been a Isaac Parkes; another name was J. Cullen. R. Coates, A. James, Cambell, Morris, J. Thompson, E. Thomas, W. Price T. Hughes, A. Gillespie, Norton (signed from Swindon Town), D. M. Spence, Heathcott (signed from Notts County), Groves (from Stoke), Hargreaves (Thomas, A. Woodland, McGrill, Hodrett, Deacy, and Barrett.

The Hotspurs

The minutes book ends with making special arrangements for the visit of Tottenham Hotspur, with the whole stand being set aside as reserved. Town personalities went to the directors offering their best wishes for the Dragons' success, and club even to considered selling the film rights.