

Whitchurch (Cardiff) Hockey

[With accreditation to the National Library of Wales – Newspaper Archives]

Hockey in Whitchurch has a deep rooted history that goes way back, over 120 years. The current club's website however introduces the club as follows:

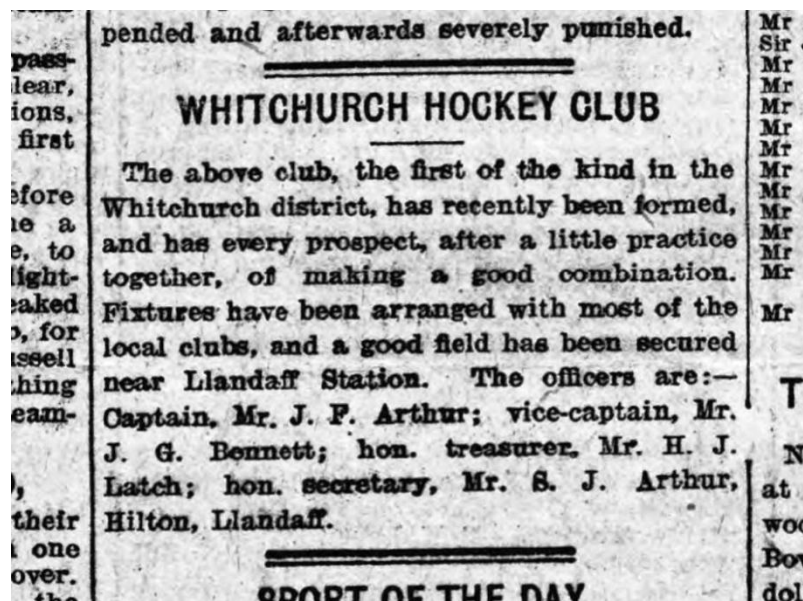
"Whitchurch Hockey Club, based in Cardiff is the largest field hockey club in Wales. We run seven men's sides, six ladies sides and twenty youth sides (run between the men and women) – offering social, development and performance hockey, for all ages & whatever your ability.

Throughout our 72 year history Whitchurch Hockey Club has developed a culture of success. From the early days on Caedelyn Park, to St Fagans and now with our newly laid sand-dressed pitch at Whitchurch High School and purpose-built clubhouse at Whitchurch Rugby Sports & Social Club".

The 72 year history places the origin of the present club to 1952 (writing this in June 2024).

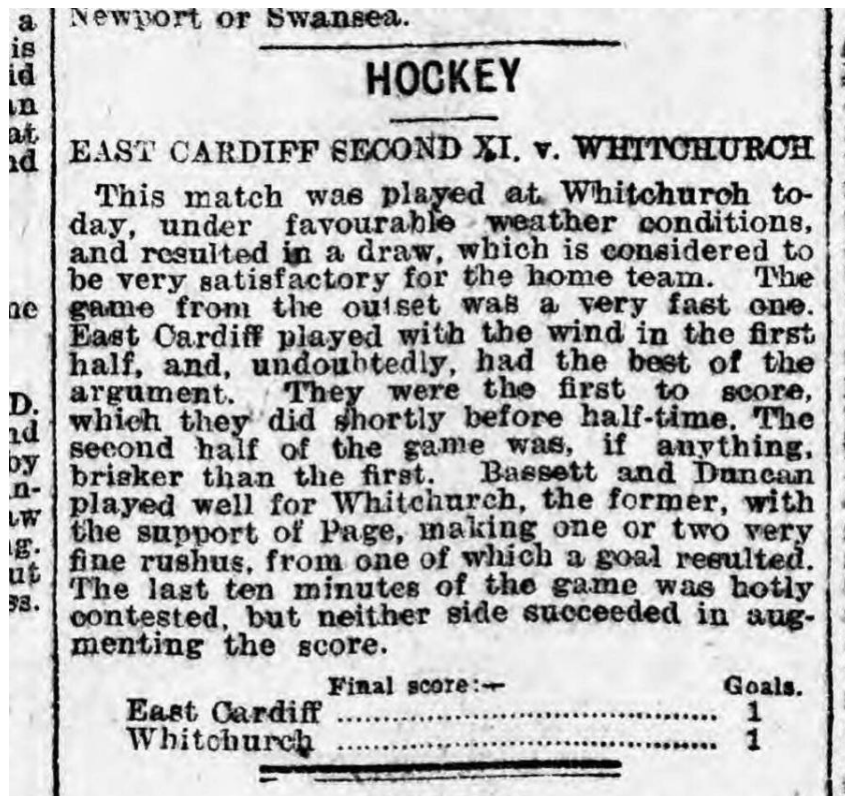
No doubt there's good reason for the club establishing this date as being its origin, after all there were two world wars in the 20th century, but it could be understating its history. This research was carried out so that a deeper record of the sport in this part of Cardiff can be disclosed and appreciated, not just for the benefit of the club, but, for the wider heritage of sport in our village.

On the 2nd November 1903 The Evening Express published the following article:



Not only does it provide us with dating evidence, but it gives us the names of the early movers and shakers in this sport, locally and it's clear that the Arthur family played a big part in it. (Take a bow if this was your family). It also gives us something of a feint clue as to the location of their pitch, as imprecise as it might be at this point.

The extent of competition is clearly shown in what follows as the research unveils the playing schedules, the type of fixtures played and the locations of the matches. One of the earliest games was that of Whitchurch playing against an East Cardiff second XI, printed on 5th December 1903 by The Evening Express, the game ending in a draw:



One notable aspect of these newspaper cuttings reveals that a good many games were played during winter months and you have to wonder just what the conditions and playing surfaces were like at that time.

On 8th January 1904 The Barry Dock News published an article listing the player's names for the Barry St Mary's' hockey team fixture with 'Whitchurch Seconds'. Unremarkable in itself other than it tells us that the Whitchurch club was sufficiently strong at the time to be able to run a 2nd team.

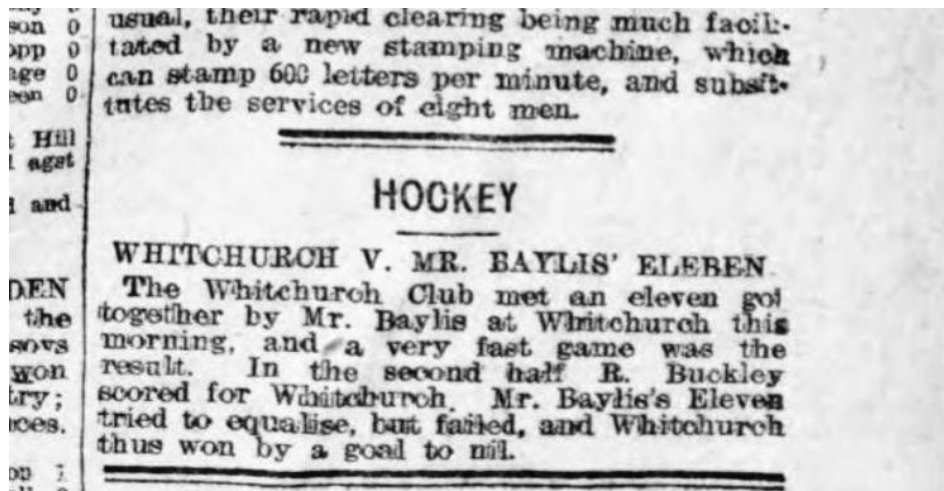
Another interesting article highlighting Whitchurch Hockey Club was printed in The Evening Express on 12th September 1904 showing that the club had joined the South Wales Association as one of eight new clubs, along with Swansea, Penarth, Mid-Rhondda, Barry St Mary's, Crickhowell, Swansea Eaton and Sudbrook.

On 5th October 1904 The Evening Express published a report on a match between Risca and Whitchurch, stating that "The Whitchurch Hockey Club opened their second season with an away match against Risca" clearly confirming that the club had started playing in the 1903/04 season and that October seems to have been the season start date. They lost this particular match 1 – 0.

No luck the following week either, when Whitchurch played against Llanishen, again losing 1 – 0 (10th Oct 1904 The Evening Express).

On 2nd January 1905 Whitchurch lost 2 – 0 to Cardiff. It's not fair to assume that the club was struggling and not enjoying any success at this stage, only that the available newspaper evidence is not there to find, sufficient to know that that they were playing the likes of teams such as Cardiff and others such as Pontypridd. On 27th October 1905 The Barry Dock News published a report describing Barry Hockey Club had previously beaten Whitchurch Seconds but had then played Whitchurch first XI and were "decisively beaten" 10 – 1 with the comment "Whitchurch are undoubtedly a very strong team this season". A few days later they beat Penarth Trinity 5 – 1. On 21st December 1905 the Evening Express published the score of a hockey match between Whitchurch Ladies and Aberdare (at Whitchurch), Whitchurch winning 1 – 0, so not only do the

club successfully run a second XI, but they also have a ladies team and a clearer picture of the success of the club and the popularity of the sport in the area emerges. The club apart, the Whitchurch ground (playing pitch) was also the venue for representative games and a popular venue for other teams, more on this later. On Boxing Day 26th December 1905 (The Evening Express) seemed to have had a run out amongst themselves, with a team arranged by Mr Baylis, no doubt a committee man, or a local worthy, continuing the impression that things are healthy within:



Such was the level that the Whitchurch Club had achieved that a report in The Barry Dock News 2nd March 1906 stated "Whitchurch are regarded as one the leading hockey teams in South Wales".

On the 12th Nov 1906 The Evening Express showed a scoreline of Penarth Trinity 1 goal; Whitchurch nil, going on to state that Whitchurch lost their ground record since 1904. In the Barry Dock News on 14th December 1906 the newspaper published a brief report on a match between Barry and Whitchurch 2nds in which the 2nds "gained a handsome victory of five goals to one".

On 2nd December 1907 The Evening Express published a scoreline of Whitchurch 11 goals; Barry, nil.

On 17th December 1908 The Evening Express announced the team selections for an East Wales vs West Wales preliminary Welsh trial match being played at Llanelli on January 7th (1909). The East team included: right back - G. Bennett (Whitchurch) and inside right - W. J. Duncan (Whitchurch).

The Barry Daily News published a brief account on 18th March 1910 stating "The Barry first eleven found their superiors in a game with Whitchurch at Barry Island on Saturday last. The visitors led by three goals to one at half time and increased their lead before the close, registering three further goals while Barry added another couple to their single point. The homesters were this defeated by six goals to three. Pallot (4), Tuckett and Gunson scored for Whitchurch; and Dyer, Meggitt and Clarke for Barry. Rev J. O. Roberts, Cardiff. Late captain of the Barry Club played for the visitors". This report also included the scoreline "Whitchurch Seconds six goals; Barry Seconds nil – At Whitchurch on Saturday last".

There was a good account in The Glamorgan Gazette on 30th September 1910 reporting on a Bridgend fixture against Whitchurch which Whitchurch won 2 - 1:

penses last year or the year before.

HOCKEY.

BRIDGEND v. WHITCHURCH.

These teams met at Bridgend on Saturday. Whitchurch brought down a strong side, including the Internationals, F. Pallow, W. Shepherd, and S. J. Arthur, and they were skippered by the veteran, Reg. H. Thomas. Pallow and F. Bennett scored for the visitors in the first quarter of an hour, and Roy Jenkins scored for Bridgend within ten minutes of the final blow of the whistle. Roy Jenkins, S. Jenkins, and Gaylard played well in the forward line. The outside right was out of form and the inside left is more accustomed to play back. Among the halves Mules came out with credit to himself in having to mark Pallow. W. Edwards and A. G. Davies were good in defence, and kept their forwards well fed. They initiated the movement which led to the Bridgend score. Piercy was resourceful at back, and made scarcely a mistake, while Jordan played a dashing game, but showed a weakness for flying hits. B. J. Jones used good judgment in coming out to meet some of the Whitchurch rushes and cleared nicely, his hitting being remarkably clean. Mr. A. Hesling as umpire gave satisfaction to both teams. To-morrow Neath pay a visit to Bridgend, the bully off being at 3.45. The Bridgend team will be composed as under:—Goal, B. J. Jones; backs, V. A. Piercy and T. C. P. Mules; half-backs, Alan Edwards, W. E. Rees, W. T. Edwards; forwards, F. C. Coath, Roy Jenkins (capt.), A. Gaylard, S. Jenkins, F. Lawrence. Umpire, Mr. A. Hesling.

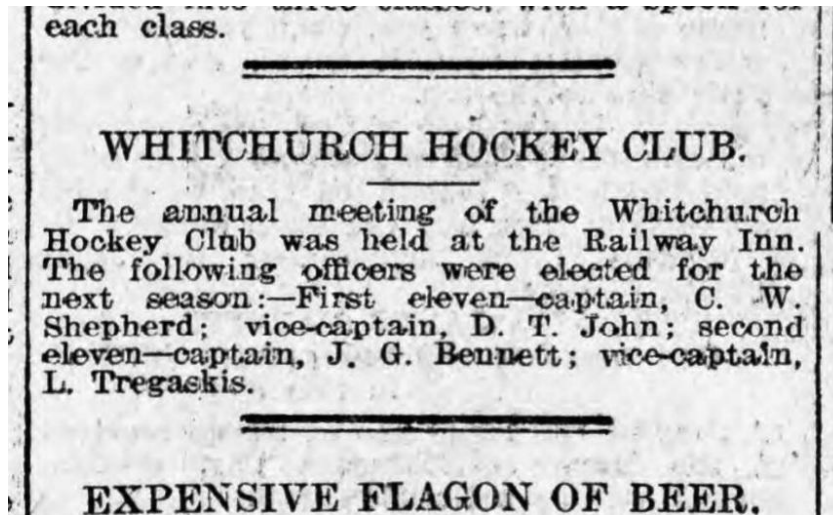
COUNTESS OF DUNRAYEN.

(Presumably, the Whitchurch player of note here was Pallot and not Pallow, more on him later).

Whitchurch match records covering the few following years couldn't be found until 1913 when The Barry Docks News printed a brief article, on their team, on 5th December: "Barry were unfortunate in being defeated by Whitchurch last Saturday. They were leading at half time by a goal to nil, but had bad luck on several occasions. Whitchurch played a vigorous game in the second half and ultimately ran out winners by two goals to one". They separately reported that "Barry 2nds met Whitchurch 2nds at the Polo Ground, Whitchurch and were defeated by seven goals to two. Barry 2nds are practically a new team this year and did very well against such a strong side".

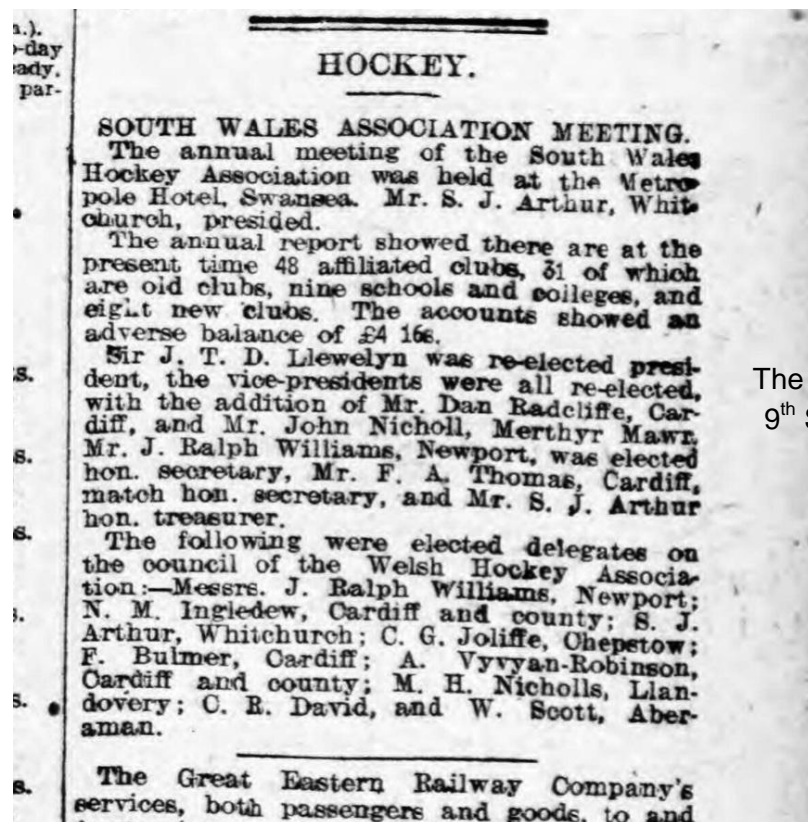
Management and Administration

No club could, or, would survive without good people and good governance, but the first suggestion of any type of committee meeting is that on 22nd September 1906 in The Evening News:



It's interesting to note that the favoured venue for the club at this time was the Railway Inn (Llandaff North), but also worth noting that earlier that year 24th Feb 1906 the club held an annual whist drive and dance to raise funds 'at the Llandaff City Schools' with 140 people attending despite inclement weather – (The Cardiff Times).

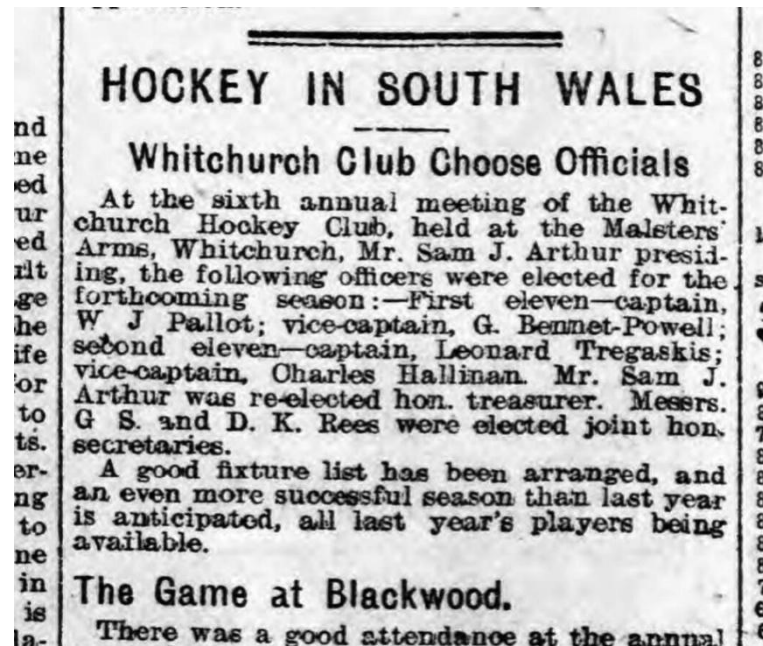
One of the earliest names to crop up in the club's history is that of S. J. Arthur a man clearly dedicated to the sport and his name crops up again as the club's representative presiding



The Evening Express
9th September 1907

over a South Wales Association Meeting at the Metropole in Swansea, as a council delegate. It's also interesting to note the strength of the association and the slight shortage of available capital.

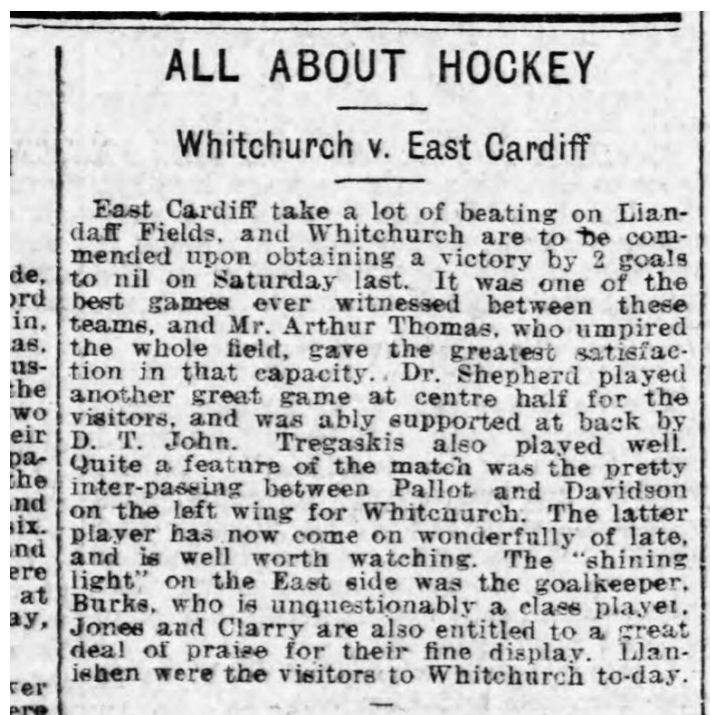
On 18th September 1908 The Evening Express provided a short passage on the club's AGM.



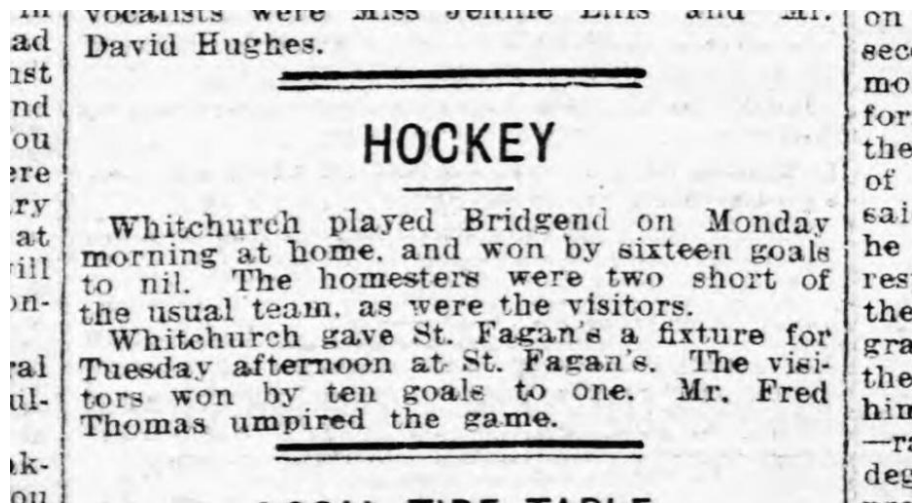
As the 'sixth annual meeting' it clearly confirms the club's official formed date as 1903, however, at this time the club had seen fit to hold this meeting at The Maltsters Arms in Whitchurch with the captain W. J. Pallot being a notable player in the first team and Mr Sam J. Arthur still 'doing his bit'.

One creditable performance was reported on 10th December 1910 in the Evening Express, when Whitchurch beat a very strong East Cardiff team, described as "one of the best games ever witnessed between these teams" naming some of the stand out players in the process and once again 'Pallot' took some of the plaudits.

An interesting part of this is the use of Llandaff Fields as a match venue at that time.



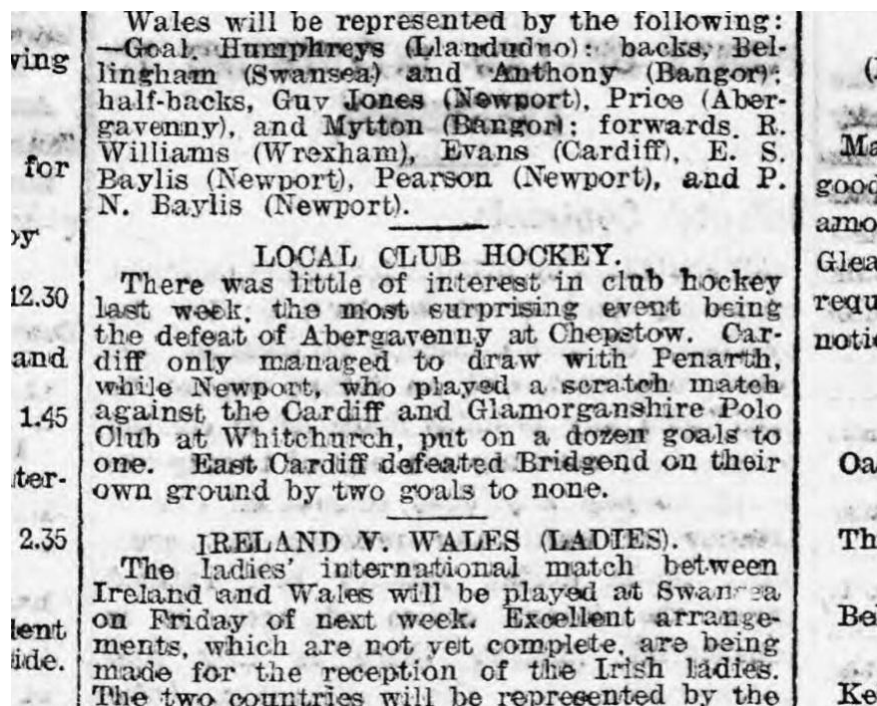
Clearly the Christmas celebrations in Bridgend and St Fagans on Christmas 1910 played a big part in these results published in The Evening Express on 28th December 1910



The Home Venue.

One of the early references for hockey facilities locally was provided by The Evening Express on 28th February 1906 for a Ladies Hockey match involving Cardiff and County Ladies v Penarth Trinity Club Ladies 'at Whitchurch, Cardiff winning by 10 goals to nil.

The first real evidence for what was the home venue for the club's games was found in an article published by The Evening Express on 8th March 1905 when we find that it was in fact at the polo field, the venue of the Cardiff and Glamorganshire Polo Club. The polo ground is now no more but it was in a location now occupied by the housing estate around Ty Nant and Maes Glas (Whitchurch), built c. 1950. It was well known by locals as being so and it was also the home venue for Old Monktonians RFC who became Glamorgan Wanderers RFC and for a short period this ground also had tennis courts on the site.



It's quite possible that the hockey club and the polo club were linked, perhaps by personnel, but, regardless, they would have needed to work in harmony in order to share the facilities together, particularly so if the seasons overlapped. It becomes clear that, at this time, with the amount of use this venue attracted it would have been quite a centre for sporting and recreational use.

On 6th January 1906 The Evening Express printed a brief article on a match between Whitchurch and Cardiff "Played at the polo ground Whitchurch", in which Whitchurch won 4 – 0 with goals from Buckley (2), J. Arthur and H. Page. The article went on to say "The Whitchurch Club has now beaten Cardiff, Newport and Swansea".

An interesting article was printed in The Evening Express on 2nd April 1906 relating to a match in which a 'South Wales Scratch XI' beat 'The Welsh Team'. Having been defeated in their international matches a challenge was put out to the Welsh team who had been criticised for the 'mode adopted in the selection of the team'. A challenge match was arranged between the Welsh XI and a 'Rest of South Wales' team and it was played "at the Whitchurch polo grounds in the presence of a fair attendance of devotees of the game". The 'Rest of South Wales' team included D. T. John; R. Thomas; W. Shepherd; R. Buckley; T. Page and W. Pallett, all from the Whitchurch club, with some of these also jointly representing Cardiff University. The 'Rest of

South Wales' team eventually won 1 – 0 with the report proclaiming that some of them were 'easily superior of the internationals'.

Having mentioned Cardiff University, The Evening Express published the score of a match played at Llandaff Fields – Cardiff College 8; Whitchurch Polo Club 3 and so it seems that the clubs connection with the polo ground was deeply entrenched. (26th October 1906 The Evening Express).

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HOCKEY.

WHITCHURCH V. CARDIFF.

At the Polo Field, Whitchurch. A fairly even game resulted in a win for Cardiff by 4 goals to 3. Whitchurch missed Shepherd at half. The Whitchurch forwards played a smart game. Evans, Turnbull, and Escott were the pick of the Cardiff eleven.

Yorkshire, 5; Lancashire, 2.
 Machen, 7; Bargoed, 3.
 East Cardiff, 3; Cardiff and County, 2.
 Newport, 1; Redland Park (Bristol), 0.
 Pontypool, 7; Aberaman, 2.
 Hay, 8; Knighton, 0.

AUSTRALIA'S INVITE TO THE

On 14th January 1907
 The Evening Express

The polo ground, as a hockey venue, was held in high regard with an international trial being played on it at the end of January 1907, North vs South Wales (The Evening Express 28th Jan 1907), even though the ground was hard and frozen. Oddly enough a few players didn't turn up and for the South "J. Arthur of Whitchurch was sent home to change" to take part for the South team. The popularity of the venue was demonstrated once again by it being chosen for an international hockey match to be played on 22nd February 1908 (Ref The Evening Express 24th December 1907) "Wales v. Ireland, at Whitchurch". The Welsh team that day included half backs – C. W. Shepherd and R .P. Lyne (both Whitchurch) and one of the forwards was W. J. Pallot (Whitchurch) - Ref The Evening Express 21st Feb 1908.

A more light-hearted event took place on the ground in the early part of 1907 when a theatre company challenged Cardiff and County Hockey Club to a football match, making good use of the ground's pavilion afterwards.

1st February 1907
The Evening Express

The three-quarters on either side brought off some nice bouts of passing, but generally the final passes went wrong. The visitors were pressing hard when time was called.

Final score:		G.	T.	P.
Merthyr Thursday	1	0	0
Cardiff College	0	0	0

"BEAUTY OF BATH" ELEVEN BEATEN.
Mr. Leslie Holland challenged the Cardiff and County Hockey Club to play Association football against "The Beauty of Bath" Company, now performing at the New Theatre, Cardiff. The match was played on Wednesday afternoon at Whitchurch, and ended in a win for the Cardiff Club by one goal to nil.

Leslie Holland was much the best player on the field. He plays all games well. He was ably supported by R. Redford, jun., and by several others of the team. For the home club, Fergusson defended well, and Cecil Robinson and the Rev. A. C. Darley were conspicuous among the forwards. The visiting team, and all the other members of "The Beauty of Bath" Company, were entertained to tea after the match in the pavilion.

Canton "War Office," 10 points; Empire Orchestra, nil. At Llandaff Fields. From a scrum Norris got the ball clear away and

On 22nd Feb 1908 The Evening Express reported on the Wales Ireland match "It would be hard to imagine more miserable conditions than prevailed at Whitchurch this afternoon for the international hockey match. There was a terrific wind blowing straight across the polo ground towards the road and when the teams reached the ground it was taking with it a driving soaking rain". Wales winning the game 4 – 2, being 3 - 0 up at half time. The following week, on 25th February 1908 the Evening Express printed the team selection for the team to play against England.

HOCKEY INTERNATIONAL.

WELSH TEAM TO MEET ENGLAND.

The team to represent Wales in this match at Bath, on March 7, has been chosen as follows:—Goal, B. Turnbull (Penarth); backs, G. W. Foxbery (Bangor) and E. W. G. Richards (Abergavenny); half-backs, C. W. Shepherd (Whitchurch), R. Lyne (Newport), and F. Connor (St. Asaph); forwards, T. W. Pearson (Newport), F. Gordon Phillips (Newport), P. B. Turnbull (Cardiff), G. R. Williams (Newport), and W. J. Pallett (Whitchurch). The team differs materially from that which was beaten by Ireland last Saturday.

SCOTTISH LADIES AT BRIDGEND.

Scottish "A," 10 goals; Bridgend, 0.

Later that year, on 21st Sept 1908 The Evening Express reported on the annual meeting of the South Wales Hockey Association, held the previous Saturday, in the Royal Hotel, Cardiff. A meeting once again chaired by S. J. Arthur (Whitchurch) with him being described as Hon. Treasurer and also being re-appointed onto the 'eastern selection committee'. The East v West Wales trial match that year to be played at Llanelli and the North v South trial match at Barry, with the selection committee, the following week, appointing the eleven men to represent Wales at the Olympic Games on October 29th.

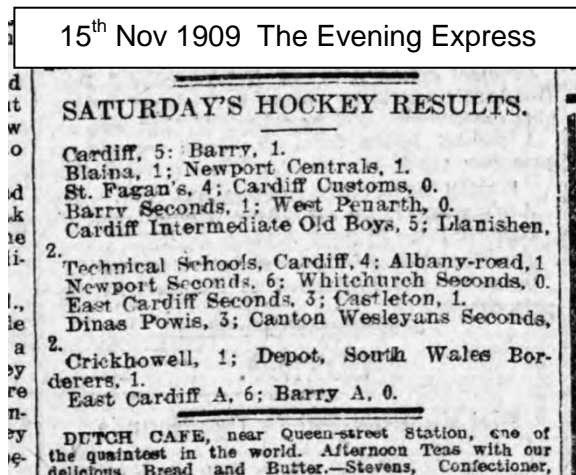
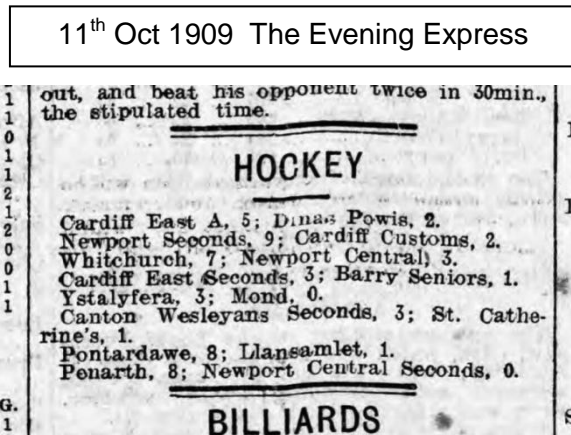
On 25th April 1909 The Evening Express printed a short article for the match against Barry:

HOCKEY.

	Goals.
Whitchurch	2
Barry	1

Barry Club finished their list of home fixtures on Saturday, when they encountered the Whitchurch team on the Barry Island Cricket Ground. The game was a good one, very fast and keen, Whitchurch being superior in their backs. Whitchurch scored soon after the start through Kenny Rees, Barry equalising just before half-time through Charlie Meggitt. Whitchurch scored the winning goal through Johns.

Barry Seconds, 3; Cardiff Seconds, 1.
Pontywaun County School (Girls), Risca, 2;
Canton Secondary School (Girls), 2.
Cardiff, 7; Llanishen, 0.
Ross Girls' High School, 6; Gloucester High On



On 4th February 1910 The Glamorgan Gazette published a brief account of match between Bridgend Ladies Hockey Team against Merthyr in the first round of the Glamorgan Cup Competition which took place on January 28th, rather strangely, “on the Whitchurch Ground”.

Another, different team played at the venue in an account published by the Barry Dock News on 21st October 1910 when Barry 1st XI played Cardiff Y.M.C.A. at Whitchurch and won 7 – 2. The game was apparently as one sided as the score suggests, but it did state that the “Whitchurch forwards broke through the Barry defence on a few occasions”, the statement suggesting that the venue was the home base for the Y.M.C.A. club.

On the 2nd Dec 1910 The Barry Dock News mentioned that the Glamorgan Ladies trial match took place at Whitchurch, going on to list two of the Barry team taking part in the trial.

On 7th March 1913 The Barry Docks News announced that “Wales play the last of their International matches on Saturday at the Polo Ground, Whitchurch when they meet the strongest of the four countries in England. This is a rare opportunity of seeing first class hockey and anyone wanting tickets can obtain same from the Hon. Secretary of the Barry Hockey Club. The bully off is timed for 3 30pm. Frequent Motor Buses leave North-road, Cardiff, for Whitchurch. Tickets are 1/- and 2/- each. (1/- = a shilling = 12 old pennies = 5p now)


Another accolade for the Whitchurch venue was that of a match between Glamorgan Ladies and a touring London Columbines side reported in The Cardiff Times on 2nd April 1913 although no Whitchurch ladies made the team. On the day the London side “showed superior tactics” and ran out 5 – 1 winners.

The ground accommodated another ‘guest team’ when The Barry Docks published a brief account on 28th November 1913 announcing that “Barry and East Cardiff played a drawn game of two goals each last Saturday on the Polo Ground Whitchurch” and in the Cambria Daily Leader on 5th January 1914 it was announced that the Western team together with the reserves for the Welsh Hockey trial match at Whitchurch was reselected. The West Wales team was listed, but nothing could be found on the East Wales team.

W. J. Pallott (Player)

W. J. PALLOT

Is 23 years of age, and is a well-known old Cardiff Soccer player. He first played hockey for Cardiff Intermediate School, captaining the School team. In the season 1905-6 he joined the Whitchurch Hockey Club, and has done yeoman service for them since in the position of outside left. He was selected for



W. J. PALLOT (Whitchurch).

the Rest of South Wales team, which defeated Wales by one goal to nil in the season 1905, and the following season played against England. He played in both Welsh trial matches this season. Pallott is extremely popular, and is one of the cleverest hockeyites in the Principality. He is 5ft. 8in. in height, and weighs 11st.

The Evening Express 8th February 1908

This man was highly regarded, he's mentioned many times in some of the reports within this script and he played for Whitchurch for many seasons. The account below from The Herald of Wales, which seemed to have covered the Swansea region, was published on 21st February 1914, showing him as the only Whitchurch player in the Welsh team for the game against Scotland.

Aberdare	15	2	12	2... 17	46	...	6
Trenarris	23	2	18	3... 18	78	...	7
Ton Pentre	20	3	14	3... 18	48	...	9

ONLY ONE SWANSEA MAN.

The Welsh Hockey team to oppose Scotland at Aberdeen on Saturday next will comprise W. Burke (East Cardiff); H. C. Stephens (Llanishen) and C. T. M. Davies (Rugby and Aberystwyth); P. G. Elias (Llandudno), J. D. Knowling (Swansea), and R. Stratton (Newport); R. C. Cocke (Llanishen), G. M. Tucker (Llanishen), and W. J. Pallot (Whitchurch).

Whitchurch Ladies Hockey

Although we know that the club had a successful ladies section the first ladies international hockey match played in the neighbourhood of Cardiff was that published in The Evening News on 10th March 1906 for a 'Wales v Scottish Ladies' match which took place at the "Cardiff and County Polo Ground, at Whitchurch" (ref also The Evening News on 8th March 1906) and in the ladies team that day was (Ms.) A. Lewis of Whitchurch as one of the Backs along with E Knowling of Tenby. Both Backs having played against Ireland earlier that year. 'Special buses were arranged running from North Road. The results of previous matches were shown as:

1903 At Edinburgh Scotland won 4 – 1

1904 At Newport Scotland won 8 – 1

There was no match in 1905

Unfortunately it didn't go well, Wales getting 'thumped'.

On 15th November 1907 a report with the heading "South Wales Ladies Hockey Association" was published in The Glamorgan Gazette between 'Glamorgan and Monmouth' the match having been played "on the Polo Ground at Whitchurch....under excellent conditions", Glamorgan winning 3 – 2.

In another representative match, South Wales Ladies played Hereford ladies at Whitchurch in 1908:

LADIES' HOCKEY.

HEREFORD OUTPLAY SOUTH WALES.

Hereford ladies met the South Wales ladies at Whitchurch on Thursday. The weather was all that could be wished, and a good game resulted. The teams were:—

Hereford Ladies: Goal, N. Careless; backs, N. M. Beltington (captain) and A. Pearce; half-backs, J. Horton, N. Oatfield, and M. Hawkins; forwards, C. Wilton, R. Oatfield, J. Carver, M. Edwards, and A. Bishop.

South Wales Ladies: Goal, E. Stanley Jones; backs, E. Lloyd and A. Josephs (captain); half-backs, R. Home, N. Littlehales, and D. Gibbs; forwards, F. Dribble, M. Randall, C. Singer, N. Biddle, and E. Kinlock.

Referee, Mr. Robinson.

After about ten minutes' play, following a splendid run by Miss Oatfield, Miss Edwards scored for Hereford. South Wales retaliated, and, after some scrambling play, Miss Littlehales scored. In the second half South Wales did most of the attacking, but were lamentably weak in the circle. By good play, however, Miss Edwards scored the winning goal for the visitors.

Final score:		Goals.
Hereford Ladies	2	
South Wales Ladies	1	

During the greater part of the game the South Wales ladies were pressing, but were too weak in the circle to do effective work. When Hereford did get away they were far more dangerous. For the winners Miss Oatfield was most prominent among the forwards, her splendid play being accountable for the victory. The best player in the South Wales team was Miss Littlehales, who was good both in attack and defence.

Llandovery College Students, 4; Masters, 2.

13th March 1908 The Evening Express

Again, in terms of the venue, a few days prior to 18th December 1908 (Ref: The Glamorgan Gazette), South Wales Ladies met Hereford Ladies “on the Whitchurch ground”, this time losing six goals to two.

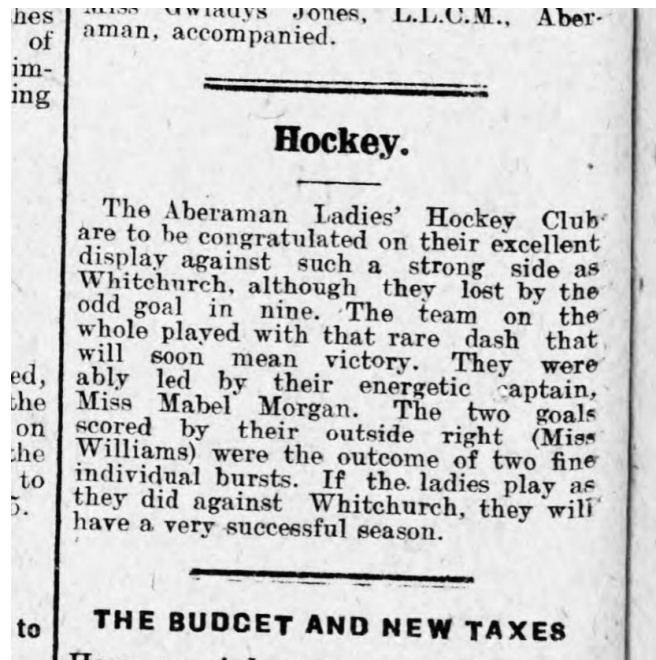
1910 was a mixed year for the ladies. On 7th October 1910 The Glamorgan Gazette published a brief account of a match between Bridgend Ladies and Whitchurch Ladies naming a few of the stand out performers on the day:

Ladies Hockey.—Bridgend Ladies experienced considerable difficulty in fielding a representative team to meet the Whitchurch Ladies at Bridgend on Saturday. After a hard and well-fought game Whitchurch won by one goal to nil. Miss Randall played an excellent game at centre forward for Bridgend. Miss Probert and Miss Alexander played good games at right back and goal, and cleared well for Bridgend. Miss Southern, right back, played a fine defensive game for Whitchurch, while Miss Gibbs was very useful at centre half. Miss Templeton (captain) played excellently as right inside, and kept the forwards well together. The goal was shot for Whitchurch by Miss Shepherd, centre forward.

On the 18th October The Evening Express showed the scoreline Porthcawl First XI 4 goals Whitchurch First XI 2 goals. Miss Templeton and Miss Latch scoring for Whitchurch. The Glamorgan Gazette 21st October 1910 reported “Ladies Hockey – Whitchurch visited Porthcawl on Saturday, the result was reported as a Whitchurch win, four goals to two. The weather was very bad and the ground not in good condition”. Unfortunately, for the records, The Glamorgan Gazette reported the following week that “an error occurred” in that report and that “Porthcawl not Whitchurch were the winners”.

On 16th November 1910 The Evening Express announced that Whitchurch ladies beat Porthcawl ladies at Whitchurch in an evenly contested game, Whitchurch winning 2 – 0, both goals being scored by ‘Miss Templeton’ and on 10th December 1910 The Merthyr Express printed a brief report announcing that Whitchurch Ladies Hockey Club was beaten by Merthyr Ladies Hockey Club, 3 – 1, at Pentrebach.

It’s clear that Whitchurch Ladies were held in high regard with The Aberdare Leader publishing this brief account on 17th October 1914.



After these 1914 publications the archive source peters out, with no further evidence available to support the early history of the club. Little doubt that world events in 1914 would explain that. It might also be thought that local hockey was confined to the club playing just a small circle of local clubs, Barry being one of them, but this would not be correct, only that the research material is restricted to the available, digital newspaper archives, some of them reporting only on the relevant local club. What it does reveal is the very early history of Whitchurch Hockey Club, both Men and Ladies and just how much the club was respected throughout the region.

The National Library of Wales is a fantastic resource providing good access to newspaper archives, but it makes you wonder just where researchers will look for the Whitchurch Hockey records in 120 years time. The old newspapers provided up to date information when they went to print and covered a wide variety of local interest topics. Now that they are archived it gives them a level of permanence. In today's digital world it begs the question, just how much of the more recent history will be meaningful and accessible in the future and will those names and match records still have the same appeal?

Terry Chard
Whitchurch
Cardiff