

These Boots Are Made For Walking

Can you guess who has walked over five hundred miles for the benefit of Bargod Rangers AFC. He is over 21 years of age and played left back for the club years ago. You will see him most Saturdays on the Parc Puw pitch watching football matches although his regular Saturday chores are finished well before kickoff time. He is rarely thanked for his work and indeed looks for no accolades, yet without him competitive football would not take place . Any guesses??. It's none other than octogenarian Thomas Alan Campden, Head Groundsman, line marker, dog “mess” remover and everything else which other people think are too difficult to achieve. Alan has either played for or supported the club most of his life, and everything he does for the club at Parc Puw reflects his obsession with accuracy and perfection. His motto is simple – “If it's worth doing, do it well” . On rare occasions, when he is not around to undertake the pre match tasks, particularly the line marking his critical eye will be at Parc Puw at the earliest opportunity to study the quality of the work undertaken on his behalf. The quality of his line marking ,even in adverse weather is legendary and to watch him nursing his faithful line marker "Isabel" around the field is an education in itself . The mixing of the ingredients which precedes the journey, and which he deposits in Isabels belly before sending her on her way is a work of art requiring a minimum of a five year apprenticeship. Alan enjoys his football and appreciates some special moments which he fondly recalls, such as Duncan Lewes's goal against Pencader some five years ago from thirty yards which left the goalkeeper stunned, or Dr Eurfyl Williams's goal against LLandyssul when he caught the keeper off his line and chipped him from twenty yards, or Mark Woolford's League Cup hat trick in the victory over Division one leaders Dewi Stars in 1996. Alans contribution in the back room, deep in the bowels of Bargod Rangers Football Club has been immense for more than half a century. It happens to be work he enjoys doing and we all hope that he will continue for another half a century doing those rare and highly skilled tasks he has acquired over the years .