

## **Garden Village Player Profiles – 2011 / 2012**

### **Mark Snell (Goalkeeper)**

Mark is in his second spell with the club having rejoined during the summer of 2009 from Pontardawe Town. A great shot stopper and very experienced at this level. His constant talking will always keep the defence on their toes! Probably one of the top 3 goalkeepers in the Welsh League, if not the best! 1st team captain.

### **Liam Chambers (Goalkeeper)**

Liam is in his second season of senior football and will be looking to gain more experience this season in the 1st team. A great shot stopper for a big lad and will definitely be one for the future.

### **Steve Bater (Defender)**

Steve signed from Pontardawe Town in November 2007, his second spell with the club. Steve is a player that is comfortable in defence or in midfield. A confident player in possession and a great reader of situations. An influential and important member of the squad.

### **Dai Rimmer (Defender)**

Son of former Manchester United, Arsenal and Swansea City goalkeeper Jimmy Rimmer, Dai is strong in the air, good ability and lethal in front of goal. Regularly finds the net and made a big contribution to the goal scoring statistics, often finishing with double figures - a good return for a defender. A former youth team player with Swansea City and Llanelli.

### **Paul Lenihan (Defender)**

Paul joined the club during pre-season from local rivals Pontardawe Town. Lenny is an accomplished defender who can operate at full back or in the centre of defence. He has great ability and passing range and his experience will be invaluable to the club and younger players. Lenny has collected a number of winning medals in his career to date, hopefully this winning mentality will extend to the rest of the squad.

### **Scott Appleyard (Defender)**

Another young player who has come through the club's youth system, Scott looked comfortable at reserve level last year with some exceptional performances. His hard work has been recognised and Scott has been given the opportunity at first team level during pre season. Scott is tenacious and great reader of the game, bags of energy with a great touch. Definite one to watch for the future.

### **Luke Thomas (Defender)**

Luke is another young player to come through the club's youth system and has comfortably made the step up to senior football. Over the last couple of years he has played in the club's third and reserve team but after some excellent performances in pre season has been given the opportunity to make the step up. A strong central defender, Luke is

commanding in the air but equally as good on the floor and has been ever present in the starting line up since making the step up.

### **Sam Handy (Defender / Midfielder)**

Sam joined the club in the summer of 2011 having moved to the area to take up an internship with The Scarlets. Sam prefers to play in central defence but is also comfortable in central midfield. He is a big, strong and quick defender, comfortable in the air; Sam has played at a higher level with Forest Green Rovers.

### **Craig Matthews (Defender / Midfielder)**

Craig has come through the club's youth ranks and will be looking to establish himself in the senior squads this season. Craig can play at full back or in more advanced wide position. Exciting prospect with great ability and will be looking to make the right back position his own this season.

### **Rhys Whitelock (Defender / Midfielder)**

Rhys joined the club in the summer of 2010 from local rivals Pontardawe Town. Having spent most of his career to date at reserve team level, Rhys will be looking to make his mark at the club and achieve a regular first team spot. A young talented footballer who is comfortable in the left full back or wide midfield positions.

### **Dayle Selvage (Defender / Midfielder)**

Dayle returned to the club in the summer of 2010 after a season at Swansea league side Gowerton Juniors. Dayle can play at full back or in the central or wide midfield positions and will be looking to prove that he has the ability to perform at this level. Dayle is an accomplished footballer with natural ability and great pace.

### **Richard Howell (Defender / Midfielder)**

Richard joined the club last season from Briton Ferry Llansawel. Another experienced Welsh League campaigner having played for Porthcawl, Ton Pentre & Neath. Richard is a great passer of the ball and is comfortable in a number of positions. A great trainer and first class attitude to the game.

### **Jak Shannon (Midfielder)**

Jak is an accomplished passer of the ball who prefers to be in the thick of the action in central midfield. He joined Garden Village in January 2010 in a loan deal from Neath and signed permanently for the club in the summer of 2010. Jak will be looking to play a much bigger part this season. He has the potential to play at a much higher level.

### **Chris Thomas (Midfielder)**

Another player with bags of experience that Village can call upon in midfield. 'Taz', as he's known, was signed back in March 2005. A tenacious and well respected player who loves a tackle has previous experience with Swansea City, Llanelli, Haverfordwest, Merthyr Tydfil, Goytre Utd and Neath.

**Richard Cleverley (Midfielder)**

Richard has vast experience in the Welsh League having previously played for Ton Pentre, South Gower, Pontardawe Town & West End. Clevs has great technique and vision with a first class attitude. He has a winning mentality and is comfortable playing in any midfield position. Richard is a great trainer and works hard on his fitness. Away from football he is a part time model!

**Craig Spring (Midfielder)**

Springer joined the club from local Division 1 rivals Pontardawe Town in 2009. He was previously the club's youth team captain but his opportunities in the Ponty first team that season were limited. Craig has a great attitude to the game, is tenacious, competitive and has a great engine. Craig was last season's player's player of the year.

**Kurtis Morgan (Midfielder)**

Another player who has come through the club's junior section. Kurtis is a strong player with a great engine and looks to get on the ball at all times. He has great vision and his ability has been recognised and rewarded with an involvement in the first team this season. Youth team captain.

**Matthew Harding (Midfielder)**

Matthew is a strong, confident midfield player with good feet and a good engine. He can play in the centre or out wide, started to add consistency and goals to his performances.

**Liam Samuel (Midfielder / Forward)**

Liam joined the club in November 2011 from fellow Division 2 side Newcastle Emlyn. Liam had terrorised us during the 2 games this season, scoring on both occasions. Liam has great ball control and electric pace which frightens defenders.

**Michael Morris (Midfielder / Forward)**

Another player to come through the youth set up, graduating from last under 16's. Mikey was involved with the reserve team last season and made a really good impression in his first season. A tricky wide midfield player with a great appetite and loves a tackle. Mikey will be looking progress into the first team this season.

**Richard Jones (Midfielder / Forward)**

Promising young striker who came through the club's youth ranks. Has made a number of senior appearances for the first team over the last couple of seasons and will be looking play on a more regular basis in the coming season. Richard finished last season as joint top scorer after coming into the team after Christmas. Can also play on the left hand side of midfield and has natural balance, pace and is a threat going forward to any defender.

**Ashley Richards (Forward)**

Made the switch to Stafford Common after playing for Skewen in 2004/05, Ashley is a very tall striker with an eye for goal and has a great touch for a big fella an can cause problems in the opposition's box. 'Horse' as he is known left the club in 2007 to play for Pontardawe Town but returned to the club in 2008 where made a big contribution with some important goals in the promotion season.

**Craig Burgess (Forward)**

Craig signed for the club from Tredegar Town in 2008. He made a big impression in his first season finishing top scorer including a hat trick at home against local rivals West End. Craig is a hard working and powerful forward with eye of goal with a first class attitude towards training. I am confident that Craig will find his scoring boots this season and his experience will help the younger players in the squad.

**Ashley Savage (Forward)**

Ashley is a young player who joined the club in the summer of 2011 from Welsh Premiership club Carmarthen Town, having previously served his apprenticeship at Hereford United. Ashley has great pace & technique and he will be looking to play a big part in senior football having had limited opportunities to date. Ashley has also represented Wales at Boys Club level.

**History of Garden Village Football Club**

Garden Village A.F.C. was founded in 1922 and started playing football at Swansea League level before joining the Carmarthenshire League mid-way through the 20th century. After a number of league and cup successes over the years, Village gained promotion into the Welsh Football League at the end of the 1998/99 season after finishing second in the Premier Division of the Carmarthenshire League, and successfully beating Neath League team Cwmamman United in the Welsh League promotion play-off for West Wales.

In only their first season of Welsh League football, they secured promotion by finishing third in Division 3 behind Garw and Ely Rangers - one point ahead of fourth-placed AFC Llwydcoed - and also fared well in the Welsh Cup; a run that saw them dispose of Pontyclun and Ely before being knocked out by then League of Wales side Inter Cardiff 5-0 at Cardiff Athletics Stadium.

They did, however, manage to secure promotion at the second attempt when they won the Second Division championship at the end of 2001/02 with a 3-2 win in their final game of the season at relegated Chepstow Town.

Village had just one short spell in the top flight of Welsh League football before they were relegated at the first attempt. They've recorded top-10 finishes in their time back in Division 2 under the leadership of long serving manager Bob Lloyd. In the summer of 2008, the club made the decision to recruit the new management team internally after the resignation of Bob Lloyd. Ceri Griffiths, Paul Lewis and Gerry Neal who the previous season had tasted success in lifting the Welsh League Reserve Division West title became the new management team and enjoyed a great first season in charge.

In the 2008 / 2009 season, the club got promoted to Division 1 for only the second time in their history by finishing third behind West End & Ely Rangers; they also set a new club record for the amount of points achieved in the Welsh League.

Back in Division 1 for the first time in 8 years and with the previous experience in mind, the club set about the task of establishing themselves as a Division 1 outfit. With a number of new players added to the squad, the club made history by avoiding relegation and exceeding the number of points they had achieved the previous time they had played in Division 1. The task was made even harder by the decision of the Welsh League to relegate 6 clubs but excellent victories away at Aberaman Athletic, Caldicot Town, Ton Pentre & Barry Town coupled with outstanding performances at home against Afan Lido & Barry Town provided us with a platform which helped us achieve our objective and retain our Division 1 status.

The 2010 / 2011 season proved to be a much harder task and the club struggled to produce consistency in their performances. Although the club battled right to the end producing some excellent results along the way, unfortunately, it was not enough to avoid relegation back to Division 2. At the end of the season, due to personal commitments, manager Ceri Griffiths stepped down to be replaced by his long time assistant Paul Lewis. His first task will be to retain and assemble a squad capable of mounting a strong challenge to return to Division 1 at the first time of asking.....watch this space!

The club's Stafford Common ground is greatly admired by visiting teams and their supporters and has been credited as having an exceptional playing surface. In the summer of 2010, the club completed the first phase of works for the installation of floodlights for the main pitch. This work was completed in February 2011 and the hard work was rewarded as the first game under the floodlights resulted in a 3.1 win over local rivals West End.