

# **The Ancient Britons**



# **AGM Weekend 2016 Lilleshall**

**8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> July 2016**



### **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

Some ABs arrived after an easy journey, others like Tom & Chris Ettling had a 9 hour journey. One did feel really sympathetic – especially for Chris trapped in such a small space with Tom for so long, without a drink.

Some on arrival had a bite in the café, followed by a couple of beers, but eventually people retired to bed to catch up on lost sleep. Others would have liked to retire to the bar, but closing time soon saw that idea failing. Some did see a famous face – Louis Smith the Great Britain Gymnast in the café, but nobody managed to beat him on the Floor.

### **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

This morning was apparently even more uneventful as breakfast for the few was in the Dining Room in the Main House. Slowly but surely ABs arrived in their droves (no; not drones – that's what Phil does on the pitch – on and on and on).

### **The 1<sup>st</sup> match v Bridgnorth 1 - 6**

**The “Games” are off and Paul Sharratt passes the ball to the opposition, who keep it!! A good cross by Bridgnorth was intercepted by Phil Hall but prolonged pressure led to a shot narrowly missing the far post. Several misplaced AB passes gave Bridgnorth possession leading to an unmarked player scoring 7 yards from goal in the 5<sup>th</sup> minute. ABs hit back**

immediately and a right wing cross from Mike Wingent gave Russell Gates a chance which sadly went wide. In the 7<sup>th</sup> minute a ball to a Bridgnorth player on the top of the circle fooled Clive and with Richard Boutcher trying to close the opponent down, the ball was lifted into the empty net.

ABs then lifted their game and after a spell of good possession Paul Sharratt had a shot saved. A further chance arrived after a great ball from Clive Kendall found Paul Sharratt in space but his pass into the circle was intercepted and the danger was averted.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> minute a good move down the Bridgnorth left saw a cross reach the far post and the chance was duly taken, giving Bridgnorth a 3 goal cushion. Prior to the goal a call from keeper Richard Boutcher “they’re behind us all over there” could only be interpreted as being correct. Prolonged pressure from Bridgnorth saw great tackling back from Richard Turner as all the ABs were on the defensive and the half ended with a great save by Richard Boutcher.

Colin Newman came on to give Russell Gates a rest after Russ had been chased up and down by a younger opponent. Bridgnorth seem to be 20 years younger and this could be telling.

Paul Sharratt starts the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter with an aerial to the opposition which was missed. ABs soon regained possession and Robin Conway showed how to send up the aerial which reached its destination. Play was back and forth and Phil Hall came to the rescue with a great tackle as Bridgnorth had the overlap; followed by a diving save by Richard Boutcher. This was followed by good interplay between Mike Wingent and Paul Sharratt but the final shot was wide. ABs then had nearly 60 seconds of possession in the Bridgnorth half, but then they broke free and a “great” pass to their centre forward from Phil Hall led to a penalty corner and subsequently goal 4. Twenty seven minutes had passed and 2 minutes later it was 5-0 as a cross into the circle was deflected by Phil Hall, but only into the path of the Bridgnorth forward who volleyed home. Bridgnorth were now in total control as ABs tried the long ball to Paul Sharratt and Mike Wingent but there was no way through as the half came to a close.

**Time for beers, but for the players it was water. It was duly noted at half-time that Phil had 2 assists but sadly both were for Bridgnorth (see below, apologising also).**



**The 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter began with the usual aerial which Richard Boutcher comfortably saved. Even though the younger legs were still active ABs kept pressing and nice interplay between Mike Wingent and Paul Sharratt saw another save from their keeper. ABs were soon back on the defensive but slick triangular play from Mike Handley, Phil and Bruce calmly averted the danger and they brought the ball out of defence. This led to good interchanges down the left as Lee, Mike Wingent, Clive and Robin made inroads into the Bridgnorth half. Bruce Baron was slowly regaining control of the midfield with Clive defending stoutly behind him. An unfortunate tackle from Bruce saw a hit against; the glare at the Umpire was 9 out of 10, but the resulting shot was well wide. A break from Russell showed promise but the final pass was to a Bridgnorth player, with a cry of “Oh Bugger”. Fourteen minutes into the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and no further goals, perhaps the beers are working after all. So a 0-0 draw in this quarter as the next opposition began to arrive – “they look even younger” was the cry. Clive’s team talk was all about “whittling down” the opposition, so Robin marched back onto the pitch full of determination, along with his water bottle, which he then realised might get in the way.**

**The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter began with the proverbial aerial start which was followed by an 11 pass move by the ABs but the final shot from Mike Wingent was just wide. Then another ABs move broke down and Bridgnorth broke. Richard Boutcher seemed to have it covered but a deflection gave him no chance at the near post. Bridgnorth then won another penalty corner and after a double switch, Richard Boutcher saved well with Clive clearing the ball away. ABs broke quickly and Mike Wingent walked round the keeper and calmly pushed the ball**

into the empty net. Not long to go but Bridgnorth gained a last minute penalty corner but the ABs defence held firm. In the end Bridgnorth had won 6-1 but ABs had drawn the second half. A thoroughly tired side left the pitch for a few deserved beers.



Man of the Match was Bruce Baron.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> match v Bridgnorth 1 - 0

One look at the team sheet said it all, namely one Paul Woodward back on the hockey pitch. ABs settled quickly and a half chance fell to John “poacher” Peirce but he put it just wide. The 1<sup>st</sup> quarter was fairly even but evasive action was needed by Doc Tom Ettl as a pulled clearance from Colin Newman saw 6 runs added to the score. ABs approached the first break with confidence as they kept possession but sadly the final pass failed to reach the desired destination.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter saw the ABs on the back foot but guesting keeper Keith Wills saved well and the danger was averted. Dropping back into midfield to assist, John Peirce was dispossessed by a player probably young enough to be his grandchild. Russell Gates set off on a mazy run showing off his silky skills

along the baseline, pulling the ball back perfectly for JP who again was just wide.

Good ABs pressure produced a penalty corner. Russell injected, Bruce Baron calmly stopped then switched the ball right to Woody who scores =====



Gggggggggooooooooooooooooooooaaaaalllllllll.

Bridgnorth didn't take too kindly to this setback and upped the tempo pushing ABs deep into their half but stout defending by Bob Jameson, Allan Sutton and Colin Newman kept Bridgnorth at bay. A long clearance found Dudley in space but his pass found an opponent. Bridgnorth pressure soon gave Clive Kendall something to think about as he decided to "ring the changes" and use his strong bench to "put the game to bed". Further ABs pressure led to another penalty corner and this time Bruce switched back to Russell but his shot was cleared off the line. Half-time duly arrived with ABs having a slender 1 goal lead.

Robin Conway came on for Colin at half-time, but Clive's master plan of having 12 on the pitch was duly spotted. The game became a little scrappy as tired legs became the order of the day but a mesmeric run by Robin into the opposition circle led to the final pass to JP who again shot wide. Robin was then surprisingly dispossessed in midfield and Bridgnorth looked dangerous but Keith Wills in goal calmly dealt with the situation. ABs broke again and after good approach play won another penalty corner. Another well worked switch between Bruce Baron, Paul Woodward and Robin Conway created a further chance but again the final shot was wide. Bridgnorth immediately counter-attacked but the AB defence played a risk ball across the circle and got away with it as the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter drew to a close.

ABs "kicked" off the final quarter in determined fashion and a move via Bruce Baron to Robin Conway to Richard Turner led to the final pass back to Robin, whose hard shot was blocked by the Bridgnorth keeper. John Peirce pounced and tapped the ball into the empty net but the whistle had gone for a penalty corner, depriving JP of his much deserved goal. The injection was to Phil Hall, who had given Bob Jameson a well-deserved rest, a switch left to Bruce Baron but he shot wide, wrong - WELL WIDE as he stood hands on hips in disbelief.



**JP scores non goal**



**On target Bruce – NO!!**



**How wide, surely not!!**

ABs kept up the pressure and a through ball from Phil Hall into the circle just evaded Richard Turner. Robin was slowly gaining control of the midfield but as Bridgnorth attacked down the wing, the cross was calmly blocked by Paul Woodward. Further attempts to breach the AB defence were stoutly defended with Allan Sutton at centre back, standing firm. Robin kept pushing forward and passed to Richard Turner, who attacked the circle then found John Peirce inside the D but ABs failed to finish but won another penalty corner. Another attempt by Phil Hall was saved by the keeper and Dudley's attempt to cash in on the rebound failed, but as Robin picked up the loose ball, the keeper reacted well and saved.

Bridgnorth now broke again and their youngest and definitely smallest player tried to take on the whole AB defence and won a penalty corner. Keith Wills saved comfortably as ABs broke quickly. Robin cruised into the circle but again their keeper saved. The game was now end to end and Bridgnorth gained a lucky deflection giving them a half chance but yet again Keith Wills stood firm. Bridgnorth then tried a different route into the circle but the aerial ball was well read by Phil Hall who cushioned the ball safely to ground and cleared the danger. As the game came to a close ABs mounted one last effort and the ball into the circle gave Dudley yet another chance but he narrowly missed. A game which was far more even than the first had seen the ABs gain victory.

**Man of the Match was Paul Woodward.**

After both games it was time for the ABs to congregate in the Bar/Café to socialise with the opposition over sandwiches, tea and the proverbial beer or two. Some had showered and changed, others from the 2<sup>nd</sup> game just needed a beer before showering in the privacy of their room prior to the evening's entertainment.

Phil was down a tad earlier than others as he had to set up the Portugal 2015 slideshow in the Bar area. Sadly this wasn't the largest area and the screen was at the window end of the room so not quite as clear as expected. The main thing was that there was time for a beer prior to

the AGM and its 5.30 start. The aim was to finish at 7pm and then have half an hour pre-dinner drinks. Unfortunately the AGM took a tad longer and didn't finish until 7.40 so it was pick up chairs and move to the adjoining room. Right at the end JP made a presentation "Thanking" Sandie for her work as Minutes Secretary. Trevor had cleverly put a copy of the pre-ordered menu choices on each table so no excuses for forgetting



what one had ordered; and believe me there were a few. Starters were either a trio of melon or Liver Pâté. Comments were that the melon won hands down, the Pâté didn't appear to be home-made. Main course was either Chicken Supreme, Pave of Salmon or Rolled Sirloin of Beef. For dessert it was Peach Tatin or Toffee Cheesecake. The wine was already on the table but soon disappeared. Our table included Paul Sharratt who had already spotted an alternative red behind the Bar, so this was duly acquired. Robin Conway not to be outdone also acquired one if not two later in the evening. As the dinner progressed so did the level of conversation, but there were times of quiet as members "took wine" with others using any excuse, with Phil welcoming those new to the ABs and AGM. Many could see in the corner of the room an area with more than 1 guitar. Some thought it could be Status Quo on their Memorabilia Tour or could George Formby be back. It was Rich Evans from Wolverhampton. It started quite tamely but soon the atmosphere changed as the ABs warmed to the musician and Rich worked out the ABs. Several playing requests were shouted out and in time Rich played as many as he could. Rich played The Monkees and even Status Quo along with a clever version of a song by Adele. After about an hour, which was supposed to be the whole set, Rich took a break and his girlfriend took up the guitar. Trevor then used his charm and Rich came back to unanimous acclaim from the ABs. I am not sure how long he played for in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half but the ABs were on the floor – dancing not resting!





Eventually Rich knew he had to finish but the ABs showed their appreciation in their usual manner with a standing ovation. Time for the port, so fortunately Phil had brought some with him. As the evening came to a close it was noticeable that morning had arrived. As more and more succumbed it was left to a final few to finish off the port and then there were two. Strangely enough both smoked so that limits it a tad, but they put the world to rights for a couple more hours before retiring as the dawn chorus began to rise.

### **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

This morning saw a few tired ABs down at breakfast. I have to say that poached eggs already in the Bain Marie didn't instil me with confidence, and they were more hard than soft boiled. Some didn't quite make the first sitting, some not even the second but the general consensus was the previous evening had been an undeniable success – WELL DONE TREVOR & ANGELA FOR THEIR ORGANISATION.

### **The 3<sup>rd</sup> match v Old Wulfs 0 - 0**

One look at the weather gave the impression that the ABs might just get away with a clear day but sadly it wasn't to be. For the players – they can cope, but the sympathy is for the supporters who braved the elements.

ABs soaked up early pressure from Old Wulfs by calmly passing the ball out of defence and unusually for ABs, accurately. But it was obvious that Old Wulfs had come with a purpose and after 6 minutes duly won a penalty corner, but the resulting shot was too high. ABs quickly countered but the final shot didn't come as the final ball just missed its destination. Old Wulfs won a further penalty corner which Richard Boucher saved well; the resulting follow up shot was cleared off the line by Phil. At the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter it was still 0-0.



ABs started the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter in confident mood and put the pressure on the Old Wulfs defence with Mike Handley getting an opportunity to move the ball down the right side. On one occasion Mike Handley found Mike Wingent in space, who skipped past German Singh (playing for Old Wulfs) but the ball ran on for the Old Wulfs' keeper to calmly clear. ABs looked good as they continued their attacks but they created very few chances in the circle. At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter and half-time it was time to analyse; Clive and Phil solid at the back; Colin and Mike Handley were supporting the midfield; Mike Wingent, Robin and Bruce utilising the space with good interplay in midfield; and Jan Ahmed and Paul Sharratt dangerous up front. As for the opposition there was good interplay between John & Benny, Martin Hall working hard in midfield and German Singh sending guided missiles from the back.

At the start of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter Russell Gates and Paul Sharratt came on for Colin Newman and Jan Ahmed, with Paul Woodward moving across to right midfield. After 5 minutes a great through ball from Robin into the gap gave Paul Woodward a chance and he won a penalty corner. The ball was worked wide by Phil to Paul Woodward but the shot was pulled well wide (perhaps he had been watching Bruce).



Shoot like this Bruce



Oh, just inside the far tyre Woody!!

Two minutes later Robin again lost the ball (twice in a game!!), but his revenge tackle was clean and precise. Old Wulfs then won a couple of penalty corners but ABs stood firm and Richard Boutcher forced them wide and out of danger. Five minutes before the end of this quarter, Paul Woodward broke down the right and aimed for Paul Sharratt who was gliding into the circle. Sadly the anticipated acceleration by Paul just failed as he stretched to reach the ball. In the final minute ABs won another penalty corner and this time a good shot by Russell was well saved. Russ subsequently retrieved the ball himself and a great cross around the penalty spot was missed by all. Old Wulfs regained possession and took off towards the AB defence but the final chance of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter went wide.

The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter started where the 3<sup>rd</sup> left off as Old Wulfs kept control of the ball and after concerted pressure they won a penalty corner; a great save by Richard Boucher averted the danger and the loose ball was cleared. ABs countered with Paul Woodward and Mike Wingent but German cleared for the Old Wulfs. A typical aerial from Robin Conway found Jan Ahmed who rode the incoming tackle but the ball ran away to safety.

The game then swung back the other way and Old Wulfs played the ball onto an AB foot and as the whistle went for the penalty corner, Old Wulfs sadly pushed the ball home. From the resultant corner ABs defended well and broke quickly. A quick break from Russell saw a cross into the circle but sadly Mike Wingent was just wide. Russ then broke down the left and this time his cross found Jan Ahmed whose shot was well saved, resulting in a long corner. Bruce Baron forced the resulting corner into the circle winning yet another long corner which turned into a free hit right on the edge of the circle. As the supporters became a little raucous Jan Ahmed went on a run to eat up the 5 metres but the resultant pass into the circle was soundly cleared by the Old Wulfs.

Just before the end ABs won yet another penalty corner and this time the planned move nearly came off as the ball to the far post saw Mike Wingent in space but not enough hard enough to deflect home. A thrilling end to the game which was well umpired and fought hard by both sides resulted in the proverbial 0-0



draw. The overall feeling was there was lots of good play by both sides, especially in midfield, but 2 good defences well marshalled by Phil and German respectively in the end nullified the attacks.

Man of the Match was Mike Wingent but Mike Handley was mentioned in dispatches (after consultation with our Lady Supporters). Further checks with a postal vote found that Lee Baron and Phil Hall tied for Man of the Match also.



## The 4<sup>th</sup> match v Old Wulfs 1 - 1

This game started with a great run by Mike Christie down the right wing ending with him winning a free hit on the edge of the D. Two further runs by Mike Christie in the first few minutes led to confusion in the Old Wulfs defence. The latter saw a great cross from Jan Ahmed and in time honoured tradition John Peirce turned the ball home from 8 inches, or was it 9. It was difficult to say exactly how far from goal JP was, but it seemed quite a distance. “Poacher” Peirce at his best. ABs were now passing accurately to each other and again Mike Christie won the ball just inside the Old Wulfs half and nearly set up Richard Turner but the ball bounced wide. Jan Ahmed also linked well with Mike Christie as they cut the defence in two but the chance went begging. A final chance before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter was smashed into the circle, but Tom Ettling’s snap shot just went wide of the near post. Time for changes at the beginning of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter saw Dudley Walker, Paul Woodward and Mike Heywood replacing Lee Baron, Colin Newman and John Peirce.



Old Wulfs suddenly broke free from the ABs vice-like grip and Allan Sutton was forced to give away a penalty corner. Allan Sutton then made up for it as he ran out first and blocked the shot, which Colin Newman then cleared. Old Wulfs had a further chance when a quick shot was well saved by an unsighted John Chong. Another further shot from Old Wulfs brought the best out of John Chong as he spread himself to save one handed. The pressure from Old Wulfs increased but fortunately Phil Hall was alive to the 3 against 2 attack with a great tackle to deny any shot at goal.



The Old Wulfs were not to be denied and a great move down their left hand side saw them evade a despairing tackle and as John Chong went down to cover; the opponent ran in and slotted the ball home.



Old Wulfs kept rolling forward but John Chong was aware of the danger and calmly dealt with the final shot. Great defending by Allan, Phil and Colin saw the half come to a close. The 2<sup>nd</sup> half / 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter began with ABs under a lot of pressure but the defence held firm as the effects of the night before was starting to slow them down. ABs were hardly getting out of their half as Old Wulfs applied more pressure but the shot went wide of the far post. A rare opportunity arose after Dudley Walker applied pressure and won a push-in. Mike Christie took over and fired the ball into the circle, winning a penalty corner. A 1-2 between Phil and Jan was stoutly defended and the danger was cleared. The game was beginning to stagnate; time for fruit pastilles and samosas for the patient supporters. Then the game suddenly sprang into life as a mazy dribble by Dudley left defenders in his wake. Weaving in and out he approached the circle, his eyes on fire and concentrating on the ball in front of him. Turning sideways Dudley got into position and crashed the ball into the corner of the net with the keeper speechless. The bench rose as one and spectators on the other side began the Mexican wave. It seemed like forever; but was in fact only a few seconds as the goal was disallowed!!!!??? Dudley had struck the ball from 2 yards outside the circle. Time for the whistle to end the quarter.

The last quarter and ABs make more changes to inject life into the game. Richard Boucher on at right back, Paul Sharratt at sweeper and Richard Turner, Russell Gates and John Peirce all returned to the fray, replacing Bob, Phil, Paul Woodward, Lee and Mike Heywood. A good interception from Allan Sutton led to a break down the right but the final cross was intercepted. ABs quickly regained possession and Russ found John Peirce inside the circle whose shot was well saved by the keeper. A further stab at the

rebound went wide. Russ then attacked down the middle and passed left to Tom Ettling. Tom made ground and found John Peirce who then returned the ball to Russ but his reverse shot also went agonisingly wide. A quick short shower kept players cool and did not stop our intrepid supporters who either upped the umbrella, put on a hat or just said "it's only water" and refused to leave with only minutes remaining. A further penalty corner was won and a snap shot from Jan Ahmed was well saved and the follow up by Russ was also kept out. Old Wulfs were now on the defensive but a breakaway looked dangerous; but Paul Sharratt stood firm and calmly averted the danger. In the final minute ABs won their last penalty corner and an attempt by Paul Sharratt was saved by the keeper. It was time for the final whistle, game over, 1-1, a fair result.

Man of the Match was Allan Sutton but Mike Christie was mentioned in dispatches for his unstinting efforts (after consultation with the Lady Supporters).

After both games it was time for the ABs to shower and leave Lilleshall with a short journey to the Pheasant Inn at Newport where Quinney was the Host. A meal of chilli or mild chicken curry, rice or chips was waiting. ABs watched the British Grand Prix, then the Wimbledon Men's Final before all made their merry way home. Can all ask that all ABs in future ensure that they take their jackets home. Thank you to all attendees and I hope you enjoyed the weekend.

**I need to "THANK" all the note takers over the weekend. Without you this report would have been a tad impossible. Not only notes but some of you wrote 2 pages per game, so the best part about all of this is:- YOU CANNOT BLAME ME THIS TIME. Tom Ettling, Russell Gates, Trevor Denison, Paul Sharratt, John Peirce, Lee Baron, Richard Turner and Paul Woodward.**

**Also sincere thanks to Tom Ettling and Diane Boutcher for the photographs.**

**Attendees:**

Richard & Diane Boutcher; Trevor & Angela Davies; Phil & Sandie Hall; David Read; Lee & Teri Baron; Chris & Jane Kitto; Russell Gates & Angela Castleton; John Peirce; Colin Newman & Tara Simms; Paul Sharratt & Karen Daly; Robin & Ruth Conway; Trevor & Brenda Denison; Tony & Margaret Perryman; Paul & Jackie Woodward; Mike & Lynne Christie; Tom & Chris Ettling; Bruce & Alison Baron; Richard Turner; Tom & Beryl Darlington; Mike & Sharon Wingent; ; Dudley Walker & Ann Lewis; Mike & Chris Heywood; Mike & Lou Handley; Bob & Sandra Jameson; Clive Kendall; Julia Greenhough; Allan & Pam Sutton and Steve Hoban (Umpire).

