

The Ancient Britons



AGM Weekend 2019

Lilleshall

30th Anniversary

12th – 14th July 2019



Friday 12th July 2019

A few ABs arrived from the North and South, joined by the Southern Westerners Tom & Chris Ettling. After a couple of beers it was time for an early night in preparation of a hard weekend's hockey.

Saturday 13th July 2019

The morning started brightly as ABs arrived from all corners of the globe, even Bradders from Spain; Trevor Davies had as usual organised the refreshments for during and after the games today, ably helped by Tom Ettling, Russell Gates, Richard Turner and Mike Christie - **"THANK YOU"**.

The 1st Game v SAGA A 2 ~ 1

The opposition turned up with 2 small children who aren't even shaving yet == a bad sign. ABs mainly had no need to shave == their heads anyway!! Our usual pitch was being re-laid and the substitute looked very frisky; battle bowlers on. The Gold Medallist from Antwerp, Barcelona and other venues was starting on the bench == a baby-faced assassin in the wings. Due to Chris Kitto's late arrival our President was blowing the first half, blowing being the appropriate word in this context. Nearly time for the off and we could smell the adrenaline. And we are on our way. Tentative opening exchanges were followed by advice from the Note-

Taker but sadly the move fizzled out and so after 5 minutes, no chances at either end. Then a threat down the SAGA left was stubbed out by Mike Handley, whilst the Gold Medallist was pounding the touchline in anticipation, perspiration dripping from his body!! Aaaagggrrrrhhh; a mishit free hit by Paul Sharratt goes straight to their centre forward **Ian Cole** who calmly nets giving Richard Boucher no chance. As this gives the opposition a lift, another penetrating attack finds an unmarked player in the circle but luckily he fluffs his shot. A comment from **Russell Gates** was “lucky we didn’t put him under pressure”. Another attack saw great work in defence by **Steve Taylor** who forced the ball forward as ABs won a long corner but sadly the pass went awry. Another bench comment “do you know what a Royal Enfield is == a place where the Queen keeps her chickens”. Well it made **Tom Ettling** laugh a little anyway, perhaps **Tom** said it. ABs still kept giving away possession as the 1st quarter came to a close.

The 2nd quarter began a little better as ABs attacked down the right, a good cross from **Brian Hopkins** was luckily cleared and the danger averted. At this point SAGA were having more control but **Nirmal Singh** played a clever “nutmeg pass” between the opponent’s legs, he never saw it coming == or going. **Trevor Davies** was now seen preparing the port, perhaps they may be some left for the players, after the **Ladies**. Perhaps the ABs had seen this happening and began attacking and won a penalty corner. A stop on the top of the circle, a switch left but sadly the ball was deflected wide for a long corner, which was also cleared. As SAGA attacked they came up against **Mike Handley** who calmly stuck out his stick on the reverse == “that’s mine”. A **Robin Conway** overhead special led to a free hit but the opportunity was wasted. Not to be outdone SAGA tried the same but **Paul Sharratt** calmly pulled the overhead out of the air and volleyed the ball clear. The opposition then attacked the circle, **Richard Boucher** came out and pushed the shot wide and **Steve Taylor** scraped the ball to safety. ABs then got a hold on the game as the midfield began to pass the ball accurately to each other and ended up camped in opposition territory as the 2nd quarter came to a close.

This now saw the fastest move of the game as ABs moved towards the tray of Port. ABs upped the professionalism for the rest of the game as **Chris Kitto** took over

from **Phil Hall** as Umpire, and **Tom Ettling** joined the fray, **Paul Woodward** took a short break. Sadly this only seemed to annoy the opposition and twice they got into the circle but fortunately **Richard Boucher** was alert making 2 good saves. ABs then counter attacked and a swift move from **Trevor Denison** to **Brian Hopkins** saw his shot just wide; then a similar move between them both again but this time their keeper saved well. Back came SAGA but again **Richard Boucher** was on hand to clear the danger. The 2 **Pauls, Woodward and Bateson** then attempted to break through but too many defenders managed to keep them at bay. **Trevor Denison** then dispossessed a SAGA defender on the top of the circle and won a penalty corner. Injection to **Robin Conway**, reverse switch to **Woody** but his shot was well saved. ABs then pinned SAGA back containing the 16 yard hit and forcing them back, winning another penalty corner but this was also saved as the 3rd quarter came to an end.

A change took place with **Russ** on for **Nirmal**; but this didn't stop SAGA attacking but the cross into the circle was missed by 2 players. **Paul Woodward** then attacked the SAGA defence and pressured them into a mistake which saw the ball end up with **Robin** who calmly won another penalty corner. A sharp shot was saved by their keeper but when the ball became free, and as all players waited for each other, **Trevor Denison** nipped in to fire the ball home. Soon after **Trevor** set off again into the circle and won another penalty corner. This time a sharp shot by **Paul Woodward** was well saved by **Russell Gates's** foot. ABs kept up the pressure and from the next penalty corner, injection from **Brian Hopkins** to **Robin Conway** led to a skirmish; **Robin** regained possession, slipped the ball left and **Paul Sharratt** calmly netted. ABs were now in control and keeping SAGA pressed back; **Woody** tried to beat 2 players but forgot to take the ball with him, but **Russell Gates** picked up the pieces and drove down the right wing before he crossed into the circle and won a long corner. **Robin** played a quick pass to **Brian**, but his mishit shot went wide. A quick change saw **Nirmal** back on for **Russ** and this sparked SAGA into action but **Mike Handley** was awake to the danger with a great interception. A through ball from **Trevor Denison** found **Paul Bateson** in space; he broke quickly into the circle, lobbed the keeper but was saved on the line by a SAGA defender.

As they broke, ABs were left stranded but **Paul Sharratt** was alert to the danger and calmly controlled the situation as the game came to a close, with a 2-1 victory.

The Ladies voted for Mike Handley. Close behind in the voting was Trevor Denison who seemed to be more effective in the last quarter.

Special mentions for Paul Bateson, Richard Boucher and Steve Taylor.

The 2nd Game v SAGA B 3 – 2

Bridgnorth and SAGA joined forces to take on the ABs in the second game of the day as **Phil Hall** came out of his 1 year enforced retirement, thankfully having **Richard Boucher** behind him as he was called into action almost immediately, making a good save. ABs gained control of the ball and a good move saw **Russell Gates** go close but sadly not close enough. The opposition then pushed forward but a good interception by **Mukesh Phakey** regained possession, but his shot went wide. SAGA kept pushing forward but **Phil** showed he was back to form with a couple of good stops, but couldn't keep them all at bay as **Richard Boucher** covered his post as the shot went wide. ABs then pushed forward and **Robin Conway** attacked down the right side but his pinpoint cross was missed by at least 2 players oooooohhh. From deep in their defence SAGA also attacked down their right with the same result, a cross missed by their players = oooohhhh again. ABs then had a free hit just outside the circle, so **Mukesh** attacked, dribbling past 2 players and winning a penalty corner. The first shot by **Robin Conway** was saved, then another from **Paul Bateson** before they cleared the danger, breaking quickly but good defending by **Phil** saved the day. As the 1st quarter came to a close **Mukesh** again dribbled into the circle but his reverse stick shot went wide.

At the break the team discussed tactics and re-emphasized the diamond formation; and from the off **David Read** broke down the right and crashed the ball into the circle which sadly whizzed past the near post, untouched. Back down t'other end ABs managed to withstand the pressure as clever interplay saw the final shot just fired outside of the far post. ABs managed to clear the ball upfield to **Robin** who passed out wide to **Russ**, who attempted to blast the ball D'wards but topped it, which ended up like an attempted chip from a bunker. On the bench **John Carrick** commented that "my ass is probably more interesting than the game" which gained

the loudest applause of the day. ABs then came under the cosh but a great interception by **Mike Christie** saved the day and then a sharp save from **Richard Boucher** as a dangerous through ball found its way into the circle. Another through ball nearly found the opposition's centre forward but quality shepherding from **Phil** ensured that we had a 16 yard hit. Just before half time ABs had a problem when **Richard Boucher** saved the first shot but sadly the rebound fell at the foot of the centre forward who passed to **Steve Parnham** for an easy tap-in at the far post. One minute later an unmarked **Steve Parnham** was able to take another chance to increase their lead, after a smart passing move left ABs flat-footed. ABs were now on the back foot, but a good interception by **Mike Handley** regained possession as he laid the ball expertly wide. Then ABs were left stranded as 2 v 1 against **Phil Hall**, but on trying to lift the ball across to his partner; **Phil "lightening reflexes" Hall** snatched the ball mid-flight to prevent a 3rd goal, as the 2nd quarter came to a close.

The 3rd quarter began with an aerial from **Robin Conway**, well I say aerial, but it nearly hit the opponent's knee. SAGA immediately attacked down the right but their cross into the circle was expertly saved by **Richard Boucher**. Another crash ball into the circle hit a foot giving them a penalty corner, but their shot went well wide. **Nirmal** went off for **Tom** but it appeared that the sun got in his eyes and his memory, as the Blues regained possession. This seemed to filter throughout the side as ABs passes kept going astray. **Robin** then spotted **Russell Speedy Gonzales** set off on a run and attempted the through ball, but sadly the ball won. **Robin** then attempted another cross-field pass but this was intercepted and the chance was messed up. **Woody** then pressurised their defence and won a short corner but this came to nothing as the opposition cleared the danger, straight to **Robin Conway** who drove into the circle only to see his shot drift wide. Further pressure from **Russ and Tom** sadly came to nothing as the quarter came to an end.

Could the ABs come back, well they started seriously and won a penalty corner. This time the system changed and **Phil Hall** went up to receive the injection and slipped the ball left to **Nirmal** who fired home. This seemed to fire up the ABs and a smart move involving **Steve Taylor, Woody and Tom Ettling** saw them win

another short corner, but this time no goal. **Nirmal** was getting control of the midfield and fired the ball into the D, **Tom** saw his chance and calmly evaded the keeper slipping the ball to **Richard Turner** who netted; 2-2; surely the ABs couldn't come back from 2 goals down. **Steve and Woody** then linked well winning another penalty corner. An early break saw 1 defender sent to the halfway line. Again **Phil** played the slip left but sadly **Nirmal's** shot was saved by the keeper; but as the world stood still, **Nirmal** didn't and collecting the rebound smashed the ball home. ABs in the lead!! A final spurt saw ABs on the defensive but fortunately **Phil** cleared the danger. The bench were getting rowdy as they sensed victory or was it the beers they had opened in celebration. Whatever, it worked as the game came to a close. Two great games and massive thanks to the opposition for making them both so enjoyable.

Ladies choices were == Richard Boutcher & Mike Christie. Mentions for:

QTR 1 – **Mukesh** and **Phil Hall**;

QTR 2 – **Richard Boutcher, Russell and Mike Christie.**

QTR 3 – **Richard Boutcher, Mike Christie and Phil Hall**; QTR 4 – **Lots of the team.**

After the game it was time for post-match drinks and sandwiches. The ABs and the opposition mingled outside in the early evening and all agreed that both games had been competitive. Some players from the 1st game had showered and changed whereas some from the 2nd were waiting for the comfort of a bath, preferring a beer first.

ABs began to congregate for drinks prior to the AGM, sadly delayed as **Trevor Davies** was missing, but eventually moved into the requisite room. After the AGM, ABs moved to the Duke of Sutherland Room for their Annual Dinner. The waiters and waitresses had all the relevant orders and all seemed to run quite smoothly.

Trevor also began the usual "take wine with", **the President** duly accepted the challenge and continued. **Trevor Davies** had managed to rehire the 2018 entertainer, Rich Evans who again understood the needs of the ABs. Rich also backed **John Carrick** in a mime version of an Australian tune "G'Day G'Day" (**available on WhatsApp**) and then later singing "A Boy named Sue". During the evening the ABs were presented with 30th Anniversary Brochures and a Results Brochure. As we were honoured with the presence of **John Carrick**, **Phil** left his brochure until last so that **Trevor** could make a special presentation – a 1989 Bottle of Port. As the evening progressed, certain ABs sorted out their own bottles of port and then **Phil** managed to slip in just the 4 bottles of port and distributed accordingly. Ladies and Gentlemen

alike were all included and as the port began to run out, so did the ABs away to bed in dribs and drabs, with the drabs being last, deep into the morning.

Sunday 14th July 2019

The morning duly arrived and ABs met for breakfast. It looked like being another hot day.

The 3rd Game v SAGA 2 - 0

SAGA A passed the ball to **Paul Sharratt** who uniquely passed to one of his own players and off set **Mukesh Phakey** who penetrated the right side – surprisingly selected by his own admission after a fine display yesterday. ABs pressed hard, despite Martin Gupthill hitting Jofra Archer for 10 in an over. What this has to do with the hockey is anybody's guess, my job is just to relay **Mr Ettling's** astute note taking. The Gold Medallist from Antwerp finally finished his warm-up contortions. A dangerous attack from SAGA resulted in a shot over the bar, no **Phil** the crossbar. Sustained pressure from SAGA now, Gupthill LBW bowled Woakes for 19; 29-1 off 6.2 overs. Good work from **Steve Taylor** down the left resulted in **Paul Bateson** winning a short corner. After a lot of fannyng about; ABs won another short corner. **John Peirce** moaning about the weather – too cool; may need extra clothing. **Nirmal** – a cute tabby cat in the Garfield cartoon – controlled the corner and cleverly created a save on the line, but by a SAGA foot. **Paul Bateson** dispatched the penalty stroke into the bottom right corner. The quarter came to a close, ABs 1 nil up and **John Peirce** still going on about the weather.

The 2nd quarter began with an airborne start and SAGA increased the pressure but ABs defended their circle and kept them at bay. SAGA were given vociferous advice from **Quinnie**, but ABs managed to deflect the ball wide for a long corner, but SAGA then upped it to a short. Before this was taken, the injector was sent to the halfway line, but this didn't stop them having a shot a goal, well saved by **Richard Boucher**. ABs then moved the ball the length of the pitch but the final pass was just out of reach. ABs regained possession and **Mukesh Phakey** was clattered winning a free hit and taken to himself, attacked the circle but was crowded out. SAGA broke quickly, but fortunately it came to nothing as the 2nd quarter came to an end.

As the 3rd quarter began it was 56-1 off 14.4 overs and ABs took over the mantle with **Mukesh** breaking quickly and a lovely flowing move with **Paul Woodward** led to an immediate short corner. **Paul Sharratt** scored with a dipping fierce shot. A further break from **Mukesh** saw him win another short corner after an illegal stick tackle. **Nirmal's** initial shot was blocked but the follow up from **Mukesh** went just wide. ABs were still in control and after a sharp cross from **Russell** the ball was kicked dangerously high by the keeper for another short corner. This time **Paul Sharratt's** shot was saved, then the follow-up from **Mukesh** was also saved and cleared upfield. SAGA pushed high to win a penalty corner. Sadly **Peter Reid** was out of the traps too quick and was sent to the hallway line, but SAGA failed to capitalise. With the vocal support of **Quinnie**, SAGA pressed again winning another short; but this time they again wasted their opportunity. Our **Gold Medallist** had disappeared when needed as he had a clicky eye. 70-1 off 17 overs. Eventually the **Gold Medallist** returned and went off to warm-up after a dressing down. A mazy run from **Mukesh** into the SAGA circle as he rode 5 stick tackles, 4 sliding tackles, 3 deliberate trips, 2 calls for passing and a part ridge in an AB, as the 3rd quarter finished. So ABs 2-0; in the other game 77-1.

ABs passed to SAGA at the start of the 4th quarter and they immediately attacked into the 22, but ABs held firm. Tiredness seemed to set in as both teams scrapped in midfield, but ABs won the battle, played it quickly forward through to **Mukesh** who flicked the ball into the top corner. The game now seemed to swing between the two 22s with neither side in control but SAGA repelled the ABs on the edge of their circle. A break by SAGA saw a fierce right wing cross evade everyone in the D. ABs were now trying to hold on with controlled possession but breaks by SAGA still created problems. As the game came to a close SAGA were still pressing but solid defensive work by the ABs saw them hold firm.

For this game the ladies voted for Mukesh for making a goal and then scoring one! Mentions for **Mike Handley**; **Richard Boucher**, **Steve Taylor** & **Paul Bateson** (lots of good running but is usually quite easily dispossessed – has his head down when he is running so may miss passing opportunities).

The 4th Game v SAGA 0 - 1

From the off ABs were on the defensive as SAGA attacked the circle but **Richard Boucher** was wide awake and made a great save to keep ABs level. From the ensuing long corner, SAGA forced a penalty corner but the shot was too high (this time it didn't hit **Phil** on the line). ABs turned the tables and immediately put SAGA on the back foot winning their own short corner but failed to convert. Soon after ABs broke again with **Paul Bateson** attacking down the right; he slipped the ball inside to **Trevor Denison** who attacked the circle, then passed square to **Mike Christie** who won a free hit just outside the D. Sadly the opportunity was wasted. SAGA regained possession and attacked 2 v 1 but **Phil Hall** intercepted the final pass. Just before the end of the quarter **Nirmal** was hit on the back of the head by the ball, but after a quick check from **Doc Tom**, he was deemed fit for the 2nd quarter.

The 2nd quarter started slowly with the effects of the previous night taking their toll and neither side able to take control. ABs did create a bit of pressure by winning a short but were unable to convert. Despite the encouragement of the coach and the supporters very little happened in this quarter (according to the Note Taker!!).

SAGA took control of the 3rd quarter from the off but a cross from **Pat Reilly** from the left was cleared by **Richard Boucher**. Another SAGA attack was repelled by **Mike Christie** who took the full force of a stick in his face, thankfully no damage was done, but a short corner was awarded, and then disallowed for being too high. Not long after **Paul Woodward** was also caught in the face but was up quick and OK. Soon after **Pat Reilly** was back in the ABs' circle but **Phil** cleared the danger. This only temporarily stemmed the tide and a clever 1 = 2 in midfield opened up the ABs and a cross from the right was met by **Chris Nightingale** who calmly netted. SAGA were really in control but a sharp break from the ABs saw them force the ball into the net but honesty from **Tom Ettling** prevailed as it had touched his foot. ABs kept up the pressure winning 2 penalty corners but both were cleared by the SAGA keeper. The 3rd quarter came to a close with the ABs winning a short corner but the shot was too high.

Both teams began the final quarter roughing up forwards and conceded short corners but neither were able to convert. Yet again another mazy run from **Mukesh** created panic in the SAGA half but the move sadly fizzled out. ABs were now running with the ball instead of passing and subsequently losing possession, leading to **Richard Boucher** being called into action on more than one occasion but as always he was up to the task. ABs were now tiring fast and the gap between midfield and defence was widening. SAGA tried to exploit this area but again **Richard Boucher** stood firm. Attack after attack was now hard work for the AB defence but they remained resilient until the end as SAGA ran out worthy 1-0 winners.

The Ladies gave joint Man of the Match == Steve Taylor & Richard Boucher.

Mentions were made of **Mike Christie** – good covering, then injured but returned to the field & **Allan Sutton** – quietly covering in defence with an excellent reach.

“THANK YOU” TO ALL HELPERS ON THE DRINKS TEAMS

I need at this point to “THANK” all the note takers over the weekend from both sides of the pitch, as I am not taking the blame: Tom Ettling, John Peirce, Russell Gates, Mukesh Phakey, Mike Handley, Paul Bateson, Nirmal Singh and Allan Sutton. Sincere thanks also to Diane Boucher for the photographs.

A massive “Thank You” to Tony Swales & Mike Savage for the Bridgnorth & SAGA Teams, especially for their selection of players, so that all games were superbly competitive and so enjoyable.

A special “Thank You” to Umpires Chris Kitto, Graham Reynolds and Phil Hall.

Thank you to all attendees and I hope you enjoyed the weekend.

Our thanks also to Trevor Davies for his organisation of the weekend.

Richard & Diane Boucher; Trevor & Angela Davies; Phil & Sandie Hall; John Peirce; Chris & Jane Kitto; Russell Gates & Angela Castleton; Robin Conway; Clive Kendall; Mike & Lynne Christie; Tom & Chris Ettling; Paul & Jackie Woodward; Paul Sharratt; Richard Turner; Bob & Sandra Jameson; Tony & Margaret Perryman; Brian Hopkins; Allan Sutton; Nirmal Singh; Chris Bradbury (Bradders); David Read; John Carrick; Julia Greenhough; Paul Bateson; Trevor & Brenda Denison; Mike & Lou Handley; Mukesh & Neeru Phakey; Peter & Glynis Reid and Steve Taylor.