

**Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Bridgnorth 2 - Ancient Britons 1**

The ABs completed their season on a warm Sunday afternoon in Shropshire. For many members of the squad the season ended as it had started, in a traffic jam. Not the M5 this time, but the disruption from the 100 mile Birmingham Velo weaving its way through the Worcestershire countryside.

However the ABs are nothing if not resourceful and from all points North, South, East and West the redoubtable squad of 12 assembled just about in time for the 1pm push back.

Captain **Bruce Baron** announced his game plan to the squad shrewdly pointing out the unusual surface that Bridgnorth had prepared and pointing out how this may impact on our normal free flowing, hard running style. There was also a warm welcome back to AB ranks for **Bob Jameson** – it was great to see **Bob** fit and well and ready to spearhead the AB attack.

The first quarter was a quiet affair as both sides adapted to the grass. ABs started brightly and enjoyed plenty of possession with **Trevor Denison**, **Paul Woodward** and **Paul Sharratt** all making breaks from midfield to support **Bob Jameson** and **Frank Colwill** up front. A couple of penalty corners were gained but sadly the Bridgnorth keeper was not troubled to make a save. As the quarter wore on Bridgnorth came into the game more and **Mervyn Adams** was called upon for a timely intervention in the ABs goal. This chance aside the AB defence held firm with **Vince Smith** down the left and **Mike Handley** on the right dealing well with any raids down their respective flanks. Similarly the central defensive pairing of **German Singh** and **Clive Kendall** exuded calm authority in both their defensive duties and their distribution.

After a few positive words from the Captain the second quarter began. Now both sides seemed more assured of their touch and patterns of play. Even so, clear cut chances were still at a premium and much of the action took place outside the respective 22 metre zones. **Frank Colwill** did force a save from the Bridgnorth keeper but the stand out effort was **Dudley Walker's** deflection from **Trevor Denison's** left wing cross. This brought out an even better save from the keeper.

As in the first quarter Bridgnorth improved and from one sharp counter attack **Mervyn Adams** added to the fine goalkeeping skills on display with an excellent reaction stop. Late on in the quarter Bridgnorth again moved the ball nicely forward and after a succession of passes a close range shot from the right side of the D found the net despite a noble effort from **Vince Smith** to clear the ball from the AB goal line.

**HALF TIME: BRIDGNORTH 1 ANCIENT BRITONS 0**

Despite being behind the consensus at half time was the side was playing well and that chances would continue to be made.

Indeed the third quarter proved to be the best one of the match for the ABs. **Mike Handley** and **Paul Woodward** were combining well to get forward on the right and **Trevor Denison** raided frequently down the left. **Paul Sharratt** and **Frank Colwill** had worthy efforts on target but still the Bridgnorth goal could not be breached. **German Singh** and **Clive Kendall** handled the occasional opposition break out well and as the quarter finished ABs were a little aggrieved to still be trailing.

The final quarter was a more even encounter as Bridgnorth's younger legs came to play a bigger part in the game. The match not surprisingly became more stretched and the passes longer. This led to chances at both ends and **Mervyn Adams** again came to the side's rescue to keep the score at just 1-0. Unfortunately as the ABs pushed ever harder and further forward it left the side exposed to the quick counter attack. With about 5 minutes remaining Bridgnorth disrupted an AB attack and moved the ball swiftly forward and with the AB defence outnumbered in the D the ball was worked to the right winger whose shot gave **Mervyn Adams** no chance.

Still the AB side refused to give up and immediately from the restart went back on the attack. This brought instant success when the ball was worked into the right hand side of the circle where **Paul Sharratt** took charge of proceedings and shrugging off a couple of challenges unleashed an unstoppable drive against the backboard.

With time running out ABs threw everything forward. This included **German Singh** and **Clive Kendall** getting themselves into the rarefied air of the opposition half but sadly it was to no avail and a relieved Bridgnorth were pleased to hear the final whistle and ran out the narrowest of winners.

In summary; an excellent game between two evenly matched sides. In true AB tradition it was a fine team effort with every team member playing his part. Trying to pick a stand out player was difficult but the man of the match verdict went to **Trevor Denison** for his tireless running and considerable skill shown all afternoon down the left flank.

The squad retired to the clubhouse to dissect the afternoon's event and enjoy Bridgnorth's hospitality with a promise to return next year and extract our revenge.

**Bruce Baron (Captain), Mervyn Adams, German Singh, Clive Kendall, Paul Woodward, Vince Smith, Mike Handley, Trevor Denison, Paul Sharratt, Frank Colwill, Bob Jameson, Dudley Walker.**

Man of the Match: Trevor Denison.

Supporters: Sue Adams, Jackie Colwill, Karen Daly and Ann Lewis.

**Author: Bruce Baron.**