

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

**Bristol & West 6 – Ancient Britons 3**

After the previous year's 'motorway fiasco' ABs achieved their first objective of the afternoon in actually getting a full side to the venue in time for the start. The squad, including for the first time new player **David Bedford**, were warmly welcomed as usual by the excellent hospitality of **Merv and Sue Adams** and suitably refreshed after the journey made their way to the pitch in cool, dry conditions.

**Captain Baron** announced his game plan to the somewhat depleted squad shrewdly pointing out the considerable age gap between the ABs squad and the opposition. It was going to be a tough afternoon to match the younger Bristol legs.

The first quarter saw Bristol make the early running dominating possession and territory. Initially the AB defence organised by **Clive Kendall** held firm. Towards the end of the quarter however a lovely move down the right wing resulted in a firm cross into the circle where the Bristol centre forward applied a first time shot into the corner of the goal. ABs finished the quarter going forward and were gradually getting their attackers **Frank Colwill** and **Mike Christie** more on the ball and a penalty corner in the final minute of the quarter brought a decent save from the Bristol GK.

After a few positive words from the **Captain** the second quarter began. ABs now seemed more assured of their touch and patterns of play and some nice moves down the right from Messrs **Read and Bedford** brought some pressure to bear even if clear cut chances were still at a premium. It was somewhat against the balance of play when Bristol extended their lead from a break down the centre. ABs turned the ball over cheaply in the opposition half and were swiftly caught out on the counter attack.

As the second quarter drew to a close Bristol enjoyed the greater possession but all threats were competently handled by **Keith Wills** in the ABs' goal while **Paramjit Hayre** was putting in some sterling defensive work on the ABs left hand side.

**HALF TIME: BRISTOL & WEST 2 ANCIENT BRITONS 0**

Despite being behind the consensus at half time was the side was playing well and coping with the 'age gap'. Chances had been made and the side was certain more would come and would continue to be made.

The third quarter proved to be the most entertaining of the match. Bristol were the first side into their stride and some early pressure saw the ABs concede a penalty corner. The routine was a simple but very effective direct strike to make the score 3-0. The AB goal was now coming under increasing threat and a messy fourth goal was conceded shortly after when a series of half stops and deflections ended with a simple tap in finish at the far post. Four goals adrift, tiring legs and still well over a quarter to play it would have been easy for the side to have totally crumbled at this point but no, a stirring team revival ensued in true AB

fighting spirit. A nice move down the left hand side saw the ball moved from the back through **Paul Woodward** in midfield up to **Frank Colwill**. **Frank** worked his way into the circle and unleashed a powerful drive past the goalkeeper's right. ABs were finding energy from somewhere and next it was a right sided move started from **David Read** and worked through **David Bedford** to **Paramjit Hayre** in the circle. His effort on goal was stopped illegally on the line by a defender and a penalty stroke awarded. The captain's detailed pre match preparation had not extended to nominating a stroke taker but after a brief discussion **Paul Woodward** was given the job. **Paul's** penalty was interesting and rather unusually occupied several seconds but this clearly confused the opposition goalkeeper and the ball eventually crossed the goal line – 4-2 as the third quarter ended.

The final quarter was similar to the third. The game was now very open and stretched but with ABs having to chase the game the team became increasingly exposed at the back. It was therefore no surprise when Bristol went further ahead from a swift counter attack after an AB move had broken down deep in the Bristol half. A sixth goal was conceded shortly after following a communication breakdown in the AB defence which allowed the Bristol centre forward to nip in and push the ball past **Keith Wills**.

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 wide down the left hand side. The ball went out for a side line hit deep in the Bristol half. **Frank Colwill** spotted **Bruce Baron** unmarked just outside the top of the circle and found him with a powerful accurate pass. The **captain** controlled the ball and moved into the D and placed a powerful drive into the corner of the goal.

With time running out ABs continued to throw everything forward but there was to be no more goals and Bristol ran out deserved winners.

FULL TIME: BRISTOL & WEST 6 ANCIENT BRITONS 3

In summary; an excellent game between two competitive 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 **Paul Woodward** for his tireless running and considerable skill (rather than his penalty taking) shown all afternoon across the midfield.

The squad retired to the nearby clubhouse to dissect the afternoon's event and enjoy Bristol's hospitality with a promise to return next year and reverse the result.

**Keith Wills**, **Clive Kendall**, **Paramjit Hayre**, **Mike Christie**, **Sukhdev Dhesi**, **Paul Woodward**, **Bruce Baron** (**captain**), **David Read**, **David Bedford**, **Dudley Walker** and **Mike Christie**.