

Sunday 15th April 2018

Chipwrecks 3 - Ancient Britons 2

On a rather breezy and chilly spring afternoon the ABs assembled for one of their most popular fixtures down in Chippenham. A warming pre match coffee in the clubhouse and then the 14 strong squad and the doughty contingent of supporters decamped to the astro.

Captain Baron announced his game plan again pointing out as seems to be the case in every game we play that we are getting older and the opposition ever younger. Chipwrecks are always tough opposition and it was clear this year they were keen to avenge last year's defeat.

The first quarter started at a brisk pace with both sides having decent possession without any clear chances being created. **Brian Hopkins and Mike Wingent** were leading the line well and being supplied nicely from midfield by **Peter Reid and Paul Woodward**. Defensively ABs looked solid with **German Singh** organising Messrs **Read, Hayre, Dhesi and Kendall** in front of him so that all Chipwrecks forays were adequately dealt with. Towards the end of the quarter however a Chipwrecks move down the right wing resulted in a penalty corner. Chipwrecks went for the direct strike option and a powerful shot gave **Keith Wills** no chance and the first goal was on the board. ABs finished the quarter going forward but had still not managed to trouble the opposition keeper.

After a few positive words from the Captain and a couple of personnel changes the second quarter began. ABs now seemed more assured of their touch and patterns of play and some nice moves down both flanks brought some pressure to bear even if clear cut chances were still at a premium. **Brian Hopkins** and **Chairman Peirce** were now our main goal threat and **Paul Woodward** was becoming more influential in midfield. It was somewhat against the balance of play when Chipwrecks extended their lead with a hotly disputed second goal. ABs were undoubtedly the victim of some poor indecisive umpiring at this point but Chipwrecks took advantage of the confusion this caused by taking a quick hit from the wrong place which caught the ABs defence out of position. The ball was moved into the circle and **Keith Wills**, outnumbered, had the ball worked round him for a simple tap in finish.

An aggrieved ABs responded splendidly and exerted more pressure on the Chipwrecks playing some lovely possession hockey. Ultimately it was the more direct approach that was to bring rewards. **German Singh** fired a long ball from the back to **Paul Woodward** who collected the pass 22 metres from goal. **Paul** had plenty to do from here, but skipped past a couple of defenders before rounding the keeper and applying a cool finish for an outstanding individual goal.

There was still time for Chipwrecks to enjoy a couple more attacks before half time but these were both broken up by **Paramjit Hayre** who was having an outstanding game at the heart of the AB defence.

HALF TIME: CHIPWRECKS 2 ANCIENT BRITONS 1

Despite being behind everyone agreed we had responded well to going behind and that the side was playing well and producing some entertaining hockey. Chances had been made and the side was certain more would come, although we were aware that the younger age profile of the opposition would make the second half difficult.

The third quarter was very entertaining and the standard of hockey remained high from both sides. Chipwrecks were the first side into their stride and some early pressure saw the ABs concede a penalty corner. The AB defence dealt well with this and cleared their lines.

ABs then enjoyed some of their own pressure and half chances were missed. However **Russell Gates** and **Mike Wingent** were working well in the AB midfield and **Brian Hopkins** was working tirelessly in linking midfield to attack.

It was still difficult to predict which way the game would swing as the quarter entered the last few minutes.

Unfortunately for ABs it was the Chipwrecks who were to strike next and restore their two goal advantage. A well worked move down their left wing followed by an accurate cross into the circle found an unmarked attacker. With time and space the chance was straightforward and ABs found themselves 3-1 adrift.

The AB side again responded well to going further behind and reduced the arrears in the final minute of the quarter. Some delightful approach play down the right hand side by the **Read/Reid** brothers worked the ball to the ever dangerous **Mike Wingent**. **Mike** fired a beautiful cross into the circle where **Paul Woodward** had timed his run to perfection to apply a first time deflection at the near post which gave the keeper no chance – 3-2 and all to play for.

The final quarter was nervous stuff with both sides having pressure and possession. ABs pushed forward for the equaliser which often left them depleted at the back but any danger was superbly thwarted by **Paramjit Hayre** and **German Singh** who were pillars of strength in the centre of the AB defence. The game was now very open and at the other end ABs forced a penalty corner which **German Singh** pulled narrowly wide – although supposedly it was a switch back to the injector **Brian Hopkins**. This was of course news to **Brian**! Clearly this was a move straight off the Midlands Over 65s training ground.

Still the AB side refused to give up and kept up the pressure on the Chipwrecks goal and with time running out continued to throw everything forward but there was to be no more goals and Chipwrecks ran out deserved but the narrowest of winners.

An excellent, entertaining game between two competitive sides played in a great spirit. It was a fine team performance with every team member playing his part. It was hard to select an individual for Man of the Match, but the verdict went to **Paramjit Hayre** for his exemplary tackling and all round defensive play which broke up so many opposition attacks.

FULL TIME: CHIPWRECKS 3 ANCIENT BRITONS 2

The squad and supporters (thank you for your attendance and encouragement) retired to the cricket clubhouse to relive the game and enjoy Chipwrecks' magnificent hospitality.

Keith Wills, Clive Kendall, Paramjit Hayre, Russell Gates, Sukhdev Dhesi, Paul Woodward, Bruce Baron (**captain**), David Read, Brian Hopkins, Dudley Walker, Peter Reid, John Peirce, German Singh and Mike Wingent.

Supporters: Julia Greenhough, Tony Perryman, Jasbinder Kaur Hay, Angela Castleton, Hazel Hopkins, & Sharon Wingent.