

Hellenic League Premier Division

Wednesday 3 November 2010

Slimbridge 1-2 Ardley United

Ardley United leapfrogged the Swans into top place in the UHlsport Hellenic Premier league with a 2-1 victory at Wisloe Road this evening. After Troy Bryan had put the visitors ahead after 53 minutes, Slimbridge struck back through Tom Speers, only to see Bryan score his second to seal the points for Ardley.

Manager Leon Sterling made two changes from the side which won at Thame United at the weekend, with Leone Cornwall replacing John Hazel, and Assistant Manager Fred Ward coming into midfield for Ben Wood.

The game started at a frantic pace, but with neither side creating many chances - Slimbridge were caught napping at the back when a through ball placed bryan through on goal for Ardley, and were relieved to see the offside flag after 5 minutes. The home side's best early chance came on 16 minutes, when Cornwall's ball down the right flank played in Craig Cole. His cross found Ward in space, but the shot was high and wide and didn't trouble Ardley Keeper Kurt Fox.

Ardley continued to play at a high tempo and Adam Richmond set up Danny Bone after 20 minutes, and his shot scorched just the wrong side of the Slimbridge post. ten minutes later, Bryan again saw another chance go begging as the visitors began to boss the game. Slimbridge hit back though, and should have taken the lead five minute when later, when Cole placed a weak shot at Fox when through one on one with the Keeper.

On 37 minutes, slack play by Slimbridge Keeper Dave Evans, when attempting to dribble the ball out his box resulted in him being dispossessed by Lewis Travers, but Evans recovered to clear the ball. As the game approached half time Ardley had another good opportunity, when good interplay between Bone and Bryan saw Rob Hine make a good

clearance for a corner. Slimbridge failed to deal with it properly, and left Ardley Captain Adam Garner with a good chance, but he scuffed his shot and the opportunity was lost.

There were loud appeals for a penalty from the visitors after 48 minutes, when Scott Bridges was through on goal and tacked by Cornwall. However, Referee Simon Wales waved play on and the Swans escaped. The respite was not to last, as after Evans had made a good stop to keep out an effort from Lewis Travers on 49 minutes, Troy Bryan put the away side ahead 4 minutes later, his glancing header from a corner giving the visitors a lead they deserved on the balance of play.

As play continued to go from end to end, Tom Speers headed over after a corner from Paul Carter, and at the other end, Bone headed the ball straight at Evans when maybe he should have done better. On 71 minutes, the home side levelled - Carter's Free Kick on the Slimbridge right flank found its way through a crowd of players in the Ardley box, and Speers was on hand to rifle the ball home. If Slimbridge thought they had retrieved the situation, Ardley didn't take their foot off the gas, and four minutes later regained the advantage - Bryan was played in behind the home defence, and despite the best efforts of Evans, forced the ball home to restore Ardley's lead.

Ardley continued to play at a breakneck pace, and restricted the Swans to long range efforts in the last 15 minutes, and even had the chance to extend their lead, when Bone again found himself through on goal, only to fire the ball wide, but held on for a deserved victory, and one that will give Manager Leon Sterling food for thought ahead of Saturday's trip to Reading Town (3.00pm).

The Swans return to Berkshire next Tuesday, when they travel to Maidenhead United in the Floodlit Cup (7.45pm), before entertaining Wootton Bassett Town in the League at Wisloe Road on November 13th (3.00pm).

Team: Evans, Cornwall, Wellon, Hine (Inch 81), Speers, Ward, Carter, Bryant, Roberts, Cole (Langworthy 86), Wilton

Goal: Speers 71