

Floodlit Cup

Wednesday 2 March 2011

Slimbridge 0-1 Holyport

A 56th minute goal from Aaron Colman gave Holyport a deserved victory against Slimbridge in the A & M Print & Copy Floodlit Cup at Wisloe Road. After the exertions of Saturday's thrashing of Kidlington, Holyport's game plan of playing high tempo football and not allowing the home side to settle on the ball paid handsome dividends, and, on balance, the visitors deserved their passage into the Quarter Finals of the competition.

Swans' Manager Leon Sterling made three changes from the side which triumphed so handsomely at the weekend, with John Hazel and Jamie Inch coming into the back four, replacing Leon Cornwall and Sterling himself. Danny Chandler replaced Craig Cole up front, with Cole starting the game on the bench.

On a bitterly cold evening at Wisloe, the home side made a decent start to the game with Tom Speers' header from Paul Carter's free kick bringing a comfortable save from Holyport Keeper Warren Carter within the first minute of the tie. Carter then combined well with Chandler and Langworthy to create another chance as the home side pressed without success.

However Holyport, who have only lost 2 games all season in the Hellenic League Eastern Division, responded confidently - it took a timely block from Jamie Inch on 11 minutes to put an end to a promising move fashioned by Lee Jerrum's probing run and good pass which set up Jonny Mason with a scoring opportunity. The visitors continued to press high up the field, and it took another good tackle, this time by Speers, to put an end to Lewis Driver's run on 12 minutes.

In a good spell of pressure for Holyport, the next chance came from the dangerous looking Jerrum, who broke down the left flank, and Speers again came to the Swans' rescue, intercepting his cross. The move broke

down when Holyport Captain Carl Reeves was pulled up for a foul from the resulting corner. With 19 minutes on the clock, a very entertaining game swung back towards the home side, with Marvin Robert's header setting up Chandler, whose shot was pushed for a corner by Carter.

A minute later, Dave Evans was called into action again in the Slimbridge goal, picking off Alan Ackerman's cross before it could reach Lewis Driver who was well placed in the Slimbridge box. The best chance of the game so far went to the visitors after 29 minutes - Carter was dispossessed by Jerrum, and it took good defending from Will Wellon to clear the danger for a Holyport corner. From the resulting kick, Colman headed just wide.

As the game continued to veer from end to end, Channing and Carter combined well down the Slimbridge right, winning a corner for the home side. In the subsequent ensuing scramble, Ross Langworthy fired over from just outside the 6 yard box.

It was developing into a very evenly matched tussle, with Holyport continuing to make things very difficult for their hosts. Chandler was the next player to spurn a chance to open the scoring, shooting wide after good work by Micky Bryant, but again Holyport retaliated - a very dangerous cross headed just wide by Ryan Britnell on 42 minutes.

The final chance of the first period went to the home side - Carter and John Hazel fashioned an opportunity on 44 minutes which resulted in a corner. Carter's kick was met by a superb header from Micky Bryant, which was equally well saved by Warren Carter. As the ball ran loose in the Holyport box, Langworthy's effort was blocked as the first half ended scoreless.

At half time, Paul Carter was replaced by Rob Hine after pulling a hamstring. Slimbridge created the first chance of the second period, when, with less than a minute gone, Langworthy and Roberts combined to fashion a great chance for Micky Bryant. His volley brought a great save from Carter. It looked as if the home side were getting the advantage - Bryant was fouled on the touchline, and Carter's free kick was met by Jamie Inch's soaring header, which crept just over the Holybridge bar.

Again, Holyport responded, with Colman and Jerrum combining to bring another fine save from Dave Evans on 49 minutes. As the game ebbed and flowed, Roberts' break down the right flank saw Chandler miskick his cross, but Ross Langworthy pounced, and saw his shot sneak just wide. It was Langworthy's last contribution, as on 53 minutes, he was replaced by Craig Cole.

Holyport broke the deadlock on 56 minutes with a cracking goal from Aaron Colman. The Swans defence cleared a cross to the edge of the box, where Colman's strike gave Evans no chance to put the visitors ahead.

With Marvin Roberts being replaced by Dean Turner, promoted from the Reserves to the Slimbridge bench, Leon Sterling made the last of his substitutions, but Holyport continued to press home their advantage. On 72 minutes, Matt Rolfe had a good opportunity to extend the visitor's lead, shooting wide from 18 yards. Slimbridge continued to press themselves, and Speers was the next Swan to try and get the scores back level, but his header was well taken by Carter in the Holyport goal.

The Swans' best opportunity to equalise came on 81 minutes, when Inch's flick on saw Bryant lob Carter, only to see his shot drift just wide of the Holyport goal. As the home side pressed for the equaliser, Craig Cole failed to convert another chance created by a neat 1-2 between Turner and Wellon, and, with time running down, Chandler shot wide after being played in by Tom Cole. However, it was not to be, and Holyport Manager Derek Sweetman hailed an impressive victory for his side at the final whistle.

Team: Evans, Hazel, Wellon, Inch, Speers, T. Cole, Carter (Hine 45), Bryant, Roberts (Turner 63), Chandler, Langworthy (C. Cole 53)