

Hellenic League Premier Division

Wednesday 16 February 2011

Shrivenham 1-2 Slimbridge AFC

A late winner from Slimbridge Captain Marvin Roberts saw the Swans nick the points in an entertaining encounter at Shrivenham this evening. Rob Hine put the Swans ahead ten minutes into the second half, Shrivenham levelled shortly after courtesy of a penalty needlessly conceded by Tom Speers, but Roberts header, finishing off a classy move involving Leon Cornwall and Jamie Inch saw the visitors triumph. Slimbridge moved up to third place in the UHlsport Hellenic League as a result of the victory.

With Manager Leon Sterling making numerous changes, the return to the front line of Marvin Roberts brought an additional dimension to the Swans play, and allowed Craig Cole, freed from being the target man to put in a man of the match performance as he was given license to drop a little deeper and run at the Shriveham defence. Ryan Chandler made this third successive appearance since his arrival from Cirencester, this time on the right side of midfield.

Slimbridge gave notice of their intentions early on, when Roberts shot wide after an early cross from Will Wellon, although Roberts was flagged offside during the move and the goal would not have stood. As the game settled down, it became clear that Steve Robertson and Michael Silvanus would pose the main threat for the home side, as they started to make some real inroads down the Swans left flank, causing all sorts of problems for Chandler and Leon Cornwall. Robertson should have done when he played a neat 1-2 with Silvanus after 12 minutes, but scuffed his shot well wide.

With just under 15 minutes on the clock, Will Wellon mistimed a tackle on Chris Cox, which resulted in the Shrivenham winger leaving the field on a stretcher. Wellon was booked for the foul, which appeared more mistimed than vindictive, although the home bench were understandably upset at the challenge. Robertson and Silvanus were again causing problems on 19 minutes, when their interplay gained the home side a corner, which

brought a good strong punch from Swans Keeper Dave Evans to clear the danger.

Slimbridge nearly took the lead after 21 minutes, when a Ross Langworthy corner was met superbly by the head of Roberts, only to see his effort cleared off the line and away to safety. Four minutes later, it seemed as if The Swans had taken the lead, when Langworthy converted a Chandler cross, but the goal was ruled out for offside against Roberts. As the game neared the interval, Slimbridge were left frustrated by two incidents - firstly, Roberts was pulled back just outside the box after being played in by the increasingly influential Cole, with the free kick coming to nothing. Just before the half, Cole himself appeared to be pulled down in the box, but Referee Matthews saw no foul and ruled that play continue.

Slimbridge continued to press in the second period, with Cole and Langworthy setting up Micky Bryant on 46 minutes, but his shot skipped just past the Shrivenham post. The home side replied with a spell of pressure of their own, at one point earning four corner on the bounce as they applied pressure to the Swans defence. Superbly marshalled by Leon Sterling and Jamie Inch, Slimbridge held firm, and took the lead themselves on 56 minutes - after another foul on Roberts, who was causing all sorts of problems for the Shrivenham back four, Paul Carter's free kick into the box was met sweetly by Rob Hine to put the Swans ahead.

The lead was not to last long however, as seven minutes later, Tom Speers dived in needlessly into a tackle on the left hand side of the Slimbridge box, and Robertson tucked away the resulting penalty to level the scores. as play went from end to end, it still seemed as if the visitors were more likely to pull ahead again - Carter shot over with a dangerous free kick following yet another foul on Roberts, and the Slimbridge captain was brought down by Shrivenham Keeper Ian Gill just outside the penalty box with 13 minutes left. Fred Ward's free kick was saved by Gill, who received a yellow card for the foul.

A good move involving Wellon and Carter was Langworthy head just wide with 11 minutes left, but the youngster was penalised for a push on the a defender. At the other end, Rory Sproule hit a screamer from the corner of the Slimbridge box, which just missed the target with Evans stranded.

With five minutes remaining, Slimbridge scored the winner - Leon Cornwall advanced down the left flank, and put over an inch perfect cross to the back post. Jamie Inch rose above his man to head the ball back across the box, for Roberts to convert with his head and pinch the game for the visitors, to the delight of the away contingent.

Slimbridge face another trip to the Swindon area on Saturday when they travel to Highworth Town (3.00pm), before entertaining Wokingham & Emmbrook next Wednesday (23rd, 7.45pm), and Kidlington (26th, 3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Cornwall, Wellon, Sterling (Speers 56), Inch, Hine, Chandler (Carter 49), Bryant (Ward 56), Roberts, Cole, Langworthy

Goals: Hine 56, Roberts 85