

Hellenic League Cup

Saturday 23 October 2010

Slimbridge 2-1 Wokingham & Emmbrook

The Swans took their place in Round Three of the Bluefin Insurance Brokers Challenge Cup with a late victory over Wokingham & Emmbrook at Wisloe Road this afternoon. After Marvin Roberts' first half opener was cancelled out by Sam Duffelen's equaliser with ten minutes remaining, it seemed as if the game was set to go into extra time. Wokingham thought they may have nicked a winner with a couple of minutes remaining, but Referee Pete Cobby ruled that the ball had not crossed the line in a goalmouth scramble, and the home side then responded with a Micky Bryant strike to send the home side through.

Manager Leon Sterling made three changes from the side which triumphed over Abingdon Town in the League in midweek, recalling Ben Wood and Paul Carter to his midfield, in place of Fred Ward and Matt Sysum. Danny Chandler was replaced up front by Marvin Roberts.

After a cagey opening from both sides, the first real opportunity came Carter's way on six minutes, but the Slimbridge man blazed high and wide after a good turn on the edge of the Wokingham box. Slimbridge continued to have the edge early on, and a good move involving Craig Cole, Lewis Wilton and Carter saw Wokingham scrambling to clear the ball after 11 minutes. Two minutes later, a Carter free kick was headed wide by Rob Hine.

The Swans were stunned in the 14th minute, when a mistake by Wilton allowed him to be dispossessed in his own penalty box by Johnny Summers, and Wilton then fouled the Wokingham man as he bore down on goal, leaving Referee Cobby with an easy decision to award the visitors a penalty kick. Shaun Wanklyn struck the ball well, but Dave Evans moved sharply to his right to make a fine save and keep the game scoreless.

Smilbridge continued to press, and Cater continued to cause all sorts of problems for the Wokingham defence - on 21 minutes, his piledriver free kick brought a good save from Wokingham Keeper Stuart Harris, but he failed to hold on to the ball, and it came out to Wilton, who blazed the ball over the bar. It was another Carter free kick which brought the first goal on 25 minutes. His cross from the left flank was deftly flicked home by Marvin Roberts to put the home side ahead.

Shane Cooper- Clarke was beginning to look lively for the visitors, but he was well marshalled by Will Wellon and Rob Hine, both of whom had impressive outings for the home side. Wokingham began to gain the upper hand as the second half developed, but were unable to make their increased possession count as they searched for an equaliser. With Sam Duffelen replacing Cooper-Clarke after 65 minutes, the Wokingham Substitute brought a good save from Evans on 72 minutes. As the ball was crossed back into the Slimbridge box, Wanklyn missed a good opportunity to make up for his penalty miss, but failed to hit the target.

Slimbridge very nearly doubled their advantage on 78 minutes, when Hine's shot was cleared off the Wokingham line, and The Swans were made to pay for the miss when the visitors finally got the goal their play deserved. On 80 minutes, Slimbridge failed to deal properly with a cross from the left flank, and Duffelen forced the ball home after a scramble in the box to restore parity.

As the game seemed to be edging towards a further 30 minutes of play, two incidents decided the ultimate outcome of the tie. With 2 minutes remaining, Wokingham thought that they had stolen a winner after another scramble in the Slimbridge box, but Referee Cobby decided that the ball didn't cross the line, and the visitors had to be content with a corner.

As play went back up the other end, the ball broke on the edge of the Wokingham box to Micky Bryant, who drilled home a superb strike to put the home side ahead again. There was still time for one more opportunity for the visitors - Luke Lee' break being halted firstly by a superb block from Hine, and then a good save from Evans, and the home side hung on to progress to the next round.

The Swans are back at Wisloe Road on Wednesday when they entertain Pegasus Juniors in the League (7.45), before travelling to Thame United on Saturday for another League encounter (3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Hazel, Cornwall, Hine, Wellon, Wood, Carter, Bryant, Roberts, Cole, Wilton

Goals: Roberts 25, Bryant 89