

# **Hellenic League Premier Division**

**Saturday 5 November 2011**

## **Slimbridge 1-2 Reading Town**

The Swans hosted a very dangerous looking Reading Town side, who, despite falling behind, rallied and ended up with a victory that was fully deserved on the balance of play. Jamie Martin's goal saw the home side go into the break a goal to the good, but strikes from Michael Bartley and Dave Stevens gave the visitors the spoils on the day. Slimbridge now face a 7 game run of away ties, before they return to Wisloe Road on December 13th, when they entertain Fairford Town.

Slimbridge made a lightning start to the game, with Jamie Martin chasing a through ball which ended up belted out of the ground with less than 30 seconds on the clock. But Reading also started very brightly, in a first period which proved very entertaining - Ben Spence's probing cross with two minutes on the clock saw Michael Bartley's shot kept out by a combination of Swans' Keeper Dave Evans and the woodwork, and the scene was set for an end to end encounter.

Reading thought they may have had a shout for a handball in the Slimbridge box on three minutes, when Graham Lewis' shot was deflected off Will Wellon for a corner, which was cleared.

At the other end of the pitch, Brad Martin's cross saw a Karl Nash shot deflected for a corner to the home side, but Micky Bryant was unable to make the most of his opportunity, and Reading broke, with Pedro De Barros forcing a corner for the visitors which came to nothing.

Jamie Martin had a great opportunity to break the deadlock on 14 minutes, following good work from Btryant and Ben Wood, which saw Jamie Inch heading a dangerous cross back across goal, but the Swans' striker hit the ball high and wide.

Slimbridge continued to create chances - the next decent opportunity falling to Karl Nash, who shot wide after a lovely lobbed pass from Marvin Roberts had presented him with some space.

Reading, who were playing some high tempo, very neat passing moves had a second penalty shout turned down on 25 minutes, after Jamie Inch went up for a cross with Lewis, but Referee David Sallis, who had an excellent afternoon, decided that no foul was committed.

Reading continued to press hard, and it took a superb stop from a combination of Evans and the excellent Will Wellon to foil a good opportunity for Marcus Richardson on 27 minutes.

Slimbridge then went down the other end and scored - Nash's cross eluded both Reading Keeper Garry Aulsberry and Rob Hine who challenged him as the cross came over, and the ball fell to Jamie Martin, who swiveled and drove the ball high into the Reading net to put the home side ahead on 28 minutes.

Martin had a good opportunity to double the advantage four minutes later, after a foul on Bryant gave the home side a free kick in a dangerous position, but his shot was well saved by Aulsberry.

A lovely move ten minutes before half time saw another good opportunity for the visitors, but Richard Witt saw his shot go high and wide.

Martin had one more chance to increase the lead before half time, but again could have done better after Bryant and Wood had played him into space with a neat move down the right flank.

Reading continued the tempo they had brought to the first period, and started to gain the upper hand as the second half developed - A superb 1-2 between Dave Steven and Marcus Richardson forced an impressive save from Evans, while at the other end, Brad Martin's cross was just too far ahead of Micky Bryant as the home side responded to the pressure.

On 56 minutes, parity should have been restored when a sweeping Reading move saw Stevens lob the ball over Evans, but his shot also cleared the crossbar to leave the home side ahead.

The visitors got the game back on an even keel on 67 minutes, when Graham Lewis swung across a probing cross which was swept home by Bartley to level the scores.

Naturally, momentum swung to the away side, and seven minutes later, they took the lead - after a scramble in the Swans' box, Stevens drilled home past Evans to put Reading ahead. After a sloppy second half display from the home side, with plenty of misplaced passes, it was hard to argue with the score line.

Slimbridge had their own appeal for a penalty turned down on 83 minutes, after Tom Cole appeared to be felled in the box, but again Referee Sallis decided that play should continue.

In the last four minutes, the Swans could have nicked a point when both Jamie Martin and Rob Hine saw efforts cleared off the line, but Reading hung on to record a victory that was deserved on the balance of play.

Team: Evans, Cornwall, B Martin, Wellon, Inch, Wood, Bryant( Cole 65), Hine, Roberts (Wilton 73), Nash (Higgs 61) , J Martin

Goals: J Martin 28