

Bluefin Insurance Brokers Challenge Cup Round 2

Saturday 29 October 2011

Shrivenham 0-1 Slimbridge

For the second time in five days, Shrivenham were put to the sword by Alex Higgs. In a turgid and eminently forgettable encounter hampered by a blustery wind, it seemed the game was destined for extra time, and probably penalties, when Higgs struck with eight minutes left on the clock to settle the tie and put The Swans into Round 3 of the Bluefin Insurance Brokers Challenge Cup.

Neither team were able to settle into any kind of rhythm as the wind whipped across The Recreation Ground, but it was the hosts who had the better of the early exchanges - Dave Evans was called into action twice in the first 15 minutes, firstly saving from Shane Davies after good work by Lewis Page had set him up for a shot, and then making an acrobatic save from Martin Stratford's free kick.

It was 20 minutes before Slimbridge fashioned their first real opportunity - Jack Goodenough in the Shrivenham goal making a good stop from Micky Bryant, after neat interplay work between Karl Nash and Marvin Roberts. Ten minutes later, Rob Hine's header from a Freddy Ward free kick was the only other notable opportunity of an incident free first half.

The second period followed the same pattern as the first, with neither team able to produce flowing football in the conditions. Steve Robertson nearly broke the deadlock on 46 minutes when he shot across Evans' goal with no-one to apply the finishing touch. and Rob Hine was called into action when he made a superb block as Aaron Maximen was about to pull the trigger.

Alex Higgs brought a good save from Goodenough on 53 minutes before his shot when the ball was played back into the Shrivenham box hit the side netting, but chances remained elusive for both sides - possibly the best opportunity of the game came with an hour on the clock, when Brad

Martin's run down the Swans left created some space for Roberts. The Big Man's outside of the foot cross created havoc in the Shrivenham defence, but Micky Bryant blasted the ball over, and the game remained scoreless.

With Ross Langworthy, back from college temporarily, replacing Nash on 63 minutes, the youngster's pace started to cause problems for the hosts, and he should have found his name on the scoresheet on 71 minutes, but shot weakly at Goodenough, who saved easily.

As the game entered the last 15 minutes, extra time seemed inevitable, with Maximen's high and wide effort following good work from Page seeming to sum up the way chances were being wasted all afternoon.

However, with eight minutes remaining, the deadlock was finally broken - Langworthy created a decent chance for Roberts, who was robbed by a Shrivenham defender. As he went to clear, Higgs nicked the ball back and poked it under Goodenough to put the visitors ahead.

Referee Livingstone managed to find more than six additional minutes to be played on the 90, but the visitors held on to progress to the next round.

Team: Evans, Cornwall, B Martin, Hine, Inch, Wood, Bryant, Ward, Roberts, Nash (Langworthy 63), Higgs

Goal: Higgs 82