

## **Hellenic League Premier Division**

**Saturday 1 October 2011**

### **Slimbridge 4-2 Wokingham & Emmbrook**

The Swans triumphed over Wokingham & Emmbrook on a sweltering afternoon today at Wisoe Road.

After falling behind to an Ashley Mitchell strike, four goals from Micky Bryant, Alex Higgs, a Karl Nash penalty and Marvin Roberts put the home side in the driving seat.

A late goal for the visitors from Sam Wyatt proved only consolation for the visitors.

With the side back to league action after their FA Vase exploits last weekend, Manager Leon Sterling made a couple of changes, recalling Karl Nash and Jamie Martin to the side. Marvin Roberts moved to the bench, and Brad Martin moved into the left back slot in place of Will Wellon.

The Swans started a blisteringly hot afternoon with a 4-3-3 formation - Nash, Jamie Martin and Alex Higgs making up the front three, but it was the visitors who made the more assured start.

With less than three minutes on the clock, the visitors had three decent efforts on goal, but a combination of wayward shooting and Swans' Keeper Dave Evans kept the scoresheet blank. Slimbridge replied with some good work from Higgs in the seventh minute, bringing a good save from Wokingham stopper Stuart Harris, who then made a good leap to claim the resulting Fred Ward corner.

Evans was put under pressure by a dangerous Jack Broom corner on eight minutes, but matched Harris with another good catch under pressure.

With 16 minutes gone, the home side had probably the best chance of the game so far - Jamie Martin's cross was fumbled by Harris, but he recovered to gather the ball before Nash could pounce. The striker then played in Martin with a good through ball, but the striker's shot was blocked before he could capitalise on the opportunity.

Wokingham were playing the ball around neatly, and on 22 minutes, took the lead - After Luke Lee's shot had been deflected for a corner by Leon Cornwall, the resulting scramble in the Slimbridge box saw Ashley Mitchell prod the ball past Evans to put the visitors ahead.

The goal acted as a wake up call for Slimbridge, who started keeping the ball down and passing, exploiting the dangerous runs of the pacey front three, and the momentum of the game started to shift. After Nash had shot wide after a penetrating run, and Harris had once again been called on to punch another dangerous corner away, the home side levelled the scores on 30 minutes.

A Wokingham clearance was picked up by Micky Bryant on the edge of the box, and his strike left Harris no chance as he was comprehensively beaten to his left.

Four minutes later, the home side scored again, Alex Higgs' powering header from a Nash corner leaving Harris no chance, as the Swans started to control events on the pitch.

It took a good piece of work from Rob Hine to halt a promising cross from Tom Williams as Luke Lee closed in a couple of minutes before the interval, but there was still time for the home side to fashion another good opportunity, as Bryant's impressive run and pass played in Nash, who saw his shot blocked for a corner, leaving the difference a single goal at the break.

With eight minutes of the second half gone, Leon Sterling replaced Alex Higgs with Shane Anson, and reverted to 4-4-2. Wokingham briefly regained some momentum as The Swans settled into the new formation, and Brad Martin needed to be alert to deal with a dangerous ball from the left flank from Tom Williams, heading the ball back to Dave Evans who cleared the danger. Dean Thomas also created a decent chance when he

held off Jamie Inch, who with Rob Hine looked solid all afternoon, and crossed with no-one there to take advantage for Wokingham.

As Slimbridge settled, the chances began to arrive again, and with 61 minutes gone, Jamie Martin's header brought a magnificent save from Harris, who turned what looked like a certain goal for a corner which came to nothing. However, 2 minutes later, Brad Martin advanced into the Wokingham box, and was felled by Alex Walton. After waiting to see whether any advantage was gained, Referee Kevin Barnett, who had a very solid afternoon, awarded the home side a penalty. Karl Nash sent Harris the wrong way to notch The Swans' third and put Slimbridge in control.

After Broom's header drifted just wide of the Slimbridge goal, the introduction of Marvin Roberts into the fray, replacing Nash, paid dividends almost immediately when he nudged home Jamie Martin's cross following a good break down the Slimbridge right flank to record the home side's fourth goal of the afternoon on 75 minutes.

To their credit, Wokingham continued to press and Sam Wyatt's run and shot on 83 minutes brought a classy save from Evans, who also worked hard to keep out a goalmouth scramble when it looked as if Dean Thomas would score on 86 minutes. With 89 minutes on the clock, Wyatt's thundering drive beat Evans to reduce the deficit, but the home side played out time to record a well deserved and hard earned victory.

The Swans now entertain Fairford Town in the Floodlit Cup on Tuesday at Wisloe Road (7.45pm), before travelling to the same opponents next Saturday for a League fixture (3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Cornwall, B. Martin, Hine, Inch, Wood, Ward, Bryant, Higgs (Anson 53), Nash (Roberts 68), J. Martin

Goals: Bryant 30, Higgs 34, Nash (Pen) 63, Roberts 75