SPORT ITALIA HELLENIC LEAGUE –PREMIER DIVISION

(Played on Saturday 28th October 2006)

THIRD SUCCESSIVE HAT-TRICK FOR ROBBIE

SHORTWOOD UNITED 1 , SLIMBRIDGE 5

Slimbridge striker Robbie Colwell continued his hot streak of scoring form with three goals, his third successive treble. That put the combative striker on 21 goals for the season in all competitive games and swept away any chance of this local Hellenic Premier derby upsetting the form book. Defender Ashley Thomas and substitute Craig Cole were also both on target, with Chris Davis netting the home club's sole reply.

Davis in fact had the first chance of the match on two minutes, snatching a chance wide from the edge of the area with only goalkeeper Ryan Chandler to beat when a rebound fell into his path.

Ewan Prentice in the home goal then saved magnificently from point blank range from the luckless Matt Green, and then diverted a Will Morford shot wide after a mix-up in the Shortwood defence.

Prentice could do nothing about the first goal of the afternoon though, when a quick corner from the left, saw Morford make the byeline and cut back for Ashley Thomas to head in off the underside of the bar on 12 minutes.

Tom Rutter put a free-kick wide of Chandler's goal from 25 yards, but generally the visitors looked the more dangerous and doubled their lead on 32 minutes following a defensive back pass intended for a committed Prentice. The predatory Colwell managed to intervene and roll the ball into the empty net.

Five minutes before the interval it was 0-3 when skipper Leon Sterling made good ground up the left and put in a cross that saw Colwell head back past Prentice, challenging for the ball.

Shortwood came out for the second half looking very positive and after Ryan Preddy and Davis had gone close, opened their account when Davis broke through and drilled low past Chandler from 12 yards on 51 minutes. This proved the best spell of the game for Shortwood with Davis looking particularly threatening, and the Slimbridge defence having to dig deep. Top scorer Davis left all in his wake on the hour, but for once a poor finish let Slimbridge off the hook. After Chris Phillips shaved the visitors post from distance, the play at last moved to the other end where Colwell was denied by a covering goal-line save from a stretching Ben Pugh, Prentice having been grounded.

This heralded the end of the Shortwood fightback, Morford finding the side-netting before Colwell netted but was called back for an infringement in the build-up. The disappointed Colwell didn't have to wait long for his third goal of the match after that however, punching the air after taking on Prentice, seemingly losing the ball but regaining it to toe-poke over the line on 81 minutes. The three successive hat-tricks being a tremendous achievement, was another Slimbridge playing record, several players having previously scored two, according to the record books.

Back came Shortwood with James Coates and skipper Chris Greenough bringing low saves from Chandler, but Slimbridge had the last word with almost the last kick of the match. Cole danced into the home area and slotted past the diving Prentice to secure another valuable three points.

Shortwood United; E. Prentice, J. Coates, B. Pugh, J. Clark, C. Greenough, S. Gage (P. Smith 75), T. Rutter, C. Phillips, J. Singh, C. Davis, R. Preddy.
Slimbridge: R. Chandler, L. Sterling, J. Inch, T. Haddock, Ashley Thomas, A. Axton, Matt. Green (Mike Green 86), J. Meadows, W. Morford, R. Colwell (K. Johnstone 83), J. Cant (C. Cole 80)

Referee: Mr S. Smith (Oxford) Attendance: 121