Played Tuesday, 15th August 2006
SPORT ITALIA HELLENIC LEAGUE – PREMIER DIVISION

SWANS OVERCOME 'SHRIVY' IN EXCITING MATCH

JOHNSTONE AND BADHAM GOALS SECURE WIN

SLIMBRIDGE 2 , SHRIVENHAM 0

A first half strike from Kacey Johnstone and a late goal from Steve Badham was enough to win the game for Slimbridge, but visitors Shrivenham played their part in a high tempo game full of good football and honest endeavour.

Slimbridge took the game to Shrivenham from the kick-off with Robbie Colwell bringing a good parrying save from goalkeeper Anthony Betterton, before Johnstone netted on six minutes only to turn and see the off-side flag raised. He was unlucky again a couple of minutes later when he brilliantly took down a long diagonal cross from James Cole and half-volleyed just over the bar from the edge of the area.

The first real Shrivenham attack saw Michael Silvanus chase through and get clear of the home side's back line, but Slimbridge skipper Leon Sterling did extremely well to make a recovering tackle inside the area, as Silvanus was about to shoot with only goalkeeper Adam Thomas in his way.

Shortly after, on 20 minutes, Slimbridge went ahead. Colwell went on a run down the right, cut the ball back to Johnstone who drilled low into the net.

Previous matches between these two sides have always been keenly fought, and this was no exception. Back came the visitors with the speedy Dave Toomey and the experienced head of Tate Hulbert combining with a quite breathtaking passage of play from the half way line into the Slimbridge box before being thwarted by the attentiveness of firstly Allton Axton and then Cole.

On 32 minutes an inswinging corner from the left was headed off the Slimbridge line at the back post by Fred Ward and it was the home side's turn to soak up some pressure, as Silvanus was grounded on the surge by an emphatic Ashley Thomas tackle.

With the half time whistle beckoning, Shrivenham were still hammering away but could not find a clear opening for all the good build-up play they demonstrated.

Hulbert did not come out for the second half, being replaced by Terry Moore as Slimbridge opened as they did the first, with John Cant on the left and Fred Ward on the right stretching the four man Shrivenham back line. They so nearly doubled their lead when Colwell saw his drive deflected to Johnstone, who just could not keep his rising shot below the bar from some 16 yards.

Then followed a Shrivenham break-out that saw Liam Thompson make ground down the left and neatly find the motoring Silvanus who managed to get a good cross in, but the defending Cole was happy to turn it for a corner when under severe pressure.

For much of the second period the ball was going from end to end without any real chances being forged, but the high tempo from both sides was admirable to behold. For Slimbridge, Ward, Jamie Inch and Tim Haddock were having to work extremely hard in the middle of the pitch in particular, with the visitors skipper, Mark Peters looking so commanding at the back and urging his troops on. Russell Byrne was covering a fair bit of ground in the Shrivenham cause, but as it proved, to no avail.

With five minutes left on the clock, Slimbridge made the game safe when substitute Badham, who had only been on the pitch nine minutes after replacing the tiring Cant, drilled a low shot past Betterton's near post from a quickly taken, rolled free-kick from Ward, on the right edge of the area. It did look for all the world that everyone was expecting a ball in to the packed far post, a training ground routine that made certain of the three points on offer for the Wisloe Road side. The free-kick being awarded after the twisting and turning Colwell was impeded on a dangerous looking run.

Slimbridge; Adam Thomas, L.Sterling, J.Cole, T.Haddock, Ashley Thomas, A.Axton, E.Ward, J.Inch, K.Johnstone (B.Dibden 79), R.Colwell, J.Cant (S.Badham70)

Shrivenham; A.Betterton, L.Thompson, M.Silvanus, P.Carson, M.Peters, D.Imrie, R.Byrne, J.Peters (C.Flanagan 79), D.Toomey, T.Hulbert (T.Moore 45), S.Bellinger (M.McNally 70)