FA Cup Extra Preliminary Round

Saturday 17 August 2013

Cheltenham Saracens 0-0 Slimbridge AFC

The Swans fought out a goalless draw at Petersfield Park in this FA Cup Extra Preliminary Round tie, earning a replay on Tuesday night at Wisloe Road.

After surviving a first half onslaught from the hosts, which saw superb performances from all of the Swans' back four, Slimbridge had the better of the second period, and were unlucky not to nick the tie in the end.

Slimbridge started well, and almost from the start Dominique Njoya played a neat ball into Jamie Martin, but he was tackled and the resulting corner came to nothing. As the vitors pressed, Dean Turner and Martin both created opportunities which came to nothing, while Jack Oldham saw a couple of decent chances blocked or go wide in the opening ten minutes.

Sarries began to take control of the game, and Jamie Hammond and Jordan Bryan both worked Dave Evans in the Slimbridge goal, as the home side turned the screws.

Lee Bolger was beginning to be areal threat to the Swans, and went close with a free kick on 23 minutes, but Sarries still couldn't break through a determined Swans backline, with Adam Hughes and Will Wellon impressive, Niall Halford shrugging off his groin injury from midweek to put in a strong performance, and Dominique Njoya bringing his calmness and stability to the Swans' play.

Slimbridge had a rare opportunity on 34 minutes, when Marv Roberts played a 1-2 with Hughes before drilling his shot over the bar, and the sides went into the break goalless.

Slimbridge were greatly improved going forward in the second period, and Martin and Roberts began to look dangerous as the Swans went forward - Martin went close on 54 minutes, and Roberts had probably the closest effort all game, when his glancing header from Dean Turner's cross drifted just the wrong side of the upright.

On 71 minutes, Roberts again caused all sorts of problems from the Sarries defence, and it took a superb tackle from Luke Finch to dispossess him as he shaped to shoot. From the resulting corner, Martin played the ball back into the box, but Freddy ward's header was wide of the target.

Two minutes later, an Aaron Nash shot went too high, and Roberts again went close, but the goal wouldn't come for the visiting side.

On 83 minutes, Sean McKeon led with his elbow going into a challenge with Njoya, and was shown a straight red card by Referee James Whittington. The decision was not disputed by anyone on the Sarries side, and they were left to play the game out with ten men.

The introduction of Jack Twyman for the final minutes saw Slimbridge create some more good chances, but they were unable to take advantage of Twyman's running and a draw was probably a fair result on the day. The replay is this Tuesday, August 20th at Wisloe Toad, 7.45pm Kick Off.

Team: Evans, Hughes, Njoya, Halford (Bernard 65), Wellon, Cole, Turner, Ward, Roberts, Martin, Nash (Twyman 75)

Supporters Man of The Match: Will Wellon