Western League Premier Division

Saturday 7 March 2015

Bridport 0-1 Slimbridge AFC

It wasn't pretty, and was achieved against a side that Bees Manager Trevor Senior had remarked 'couldn't buy a win at the moment' before kick off, but this win was a morale booster for the Swans after a dreadful spell which had seen them drop six league points and crash out of the GFA Challenge Trophy at Wisloe Road in a week. Although the game will not live long in the memory, Jamie Martin's 51st minute penalty saw the Swans head back to Gloucestershire with three precious points that maintain their position in sixth place, seven points behind leaders Melksham Town.

Although the Swans had the best of the first period, chances were scarce for both sides - Bridport Keeper Ashley Weeks needed to be alert to punch out Freddy Ward's Free Kick on seven minutes, while, a minute later, Rich Thwaite put in a good block to deny Warren Byerley.

The best of the early chances came on 13 minutes, when Jamie Martin's header from a dangerous Alex Parrott corner was just the wrong side of the post, but the visitors were unable to make their possession count, with the game being reduced to long balls from both sides, although the windy conditions didn't encourage a pure football approach from either team.

Sean Lawson went close on 27 minutes, heading wide after Parrott had set up Callum Brown for a cross.

The visitors hit the woodwork twice in two minutes in the last ten minutes of the half - Lawson made space for himself on the edge of the box and saw Weeks divert his effort onto the post, and then Weeks managed to push a cross under his bar onto the crossbar and out for a corner two minutes later, but the teams went in level at the break.

The only goal of the game came six minutes into the second period. Lawson went on a superb run down the left flank, that saw his cross fall to Dean Turner in the Bees box. Turner's shot was blocked by a defender's arm, and Referee Rutter, after consulting with his linesman, awarded a spot kick. Weeks got his hands to Jamie Martin's shot, but was unable to keep it out.

Lawson and Turner nearly repeated their move eight minutes later, but Turner's shot was blocked, this time legally as the visitors pressed for a second goal.

Turner was proving instrumental in many of the Swans' best moves, but shot too high when well placed on the hour mark, while the visitors were reduced to long range efforts - Dan Wise not bothering Dave Evans from distance on 68 minutes.

With the home side pressing for an equaliser, and piling on the pressure, Lawson had a wonderful opportunity to kill the game off with four minutes remaining, but his mazy run and shot was pushed away by an equally good stop from Weeks, and the Swans held on through seven minutes of stoppage time to collect the win.

Slimbridge make the trip to Cadbury Heath on Wednesday (11th, 7.30pm) before returning to Wisloe Road on Saturday 21st, when Bitton make the trip up from Bristol for another League encounter (3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Turl, Brown, Odiero, Rich Thwaite, Ward, Turner, Parrott, Lawson, Martin (Davies 78), Hammond (Mills 70)

Supporters Man of the Match; Sean Lawson