Evo Stik Southern League South & West

Tuesday 27 October 2015

Tiverton Town 1-0 Slimbridge

The Swans may have gone down to another top six team, this time one on an eleven game unbeaten run, but emerged with pride intact after a hardworking and committed display at Ladysmead.

After more than matching their hosts for the first period, Slimbridge were undone, yet again, in the first 15 minutes of the second half, which saw them concede the all important goal two minutes into the half, and then lose Captain Alex Hoyle to a straight red card on the hour mark.

With Keeper Adam Thomas making some impossible looking saves, the home side will argue that the margin should have been greater, but Slimbridge proved yet again that they can compete with teams at this level as they get used to the tempo of the League.

The visitors could have used the excuse for a late arrival after an accident on the M5 for a slow start, but he game itself was played throughout at a barnstorming pace, which was maintained for the whole 90 minutes, and the Swans more than matched their opponents for workrate. In fact, Slimbridge made the better start, and in their first attack Jack Twyman's good work set up Paul Fahy for an effort that was blocked for a corner, and Sean Lawson's subsequent effort was blocked and cleared.

The first chance for the visitors came with seven minutes on the clock, but James Mudge's effort from outside the box didn't particularly bother Adam Thomas, who completed a routine save. Three minutes later, Fahy made another good opportunity, but no-one managed to get on the end of his dangerous cross.

Although the hosts were playing the better football, they were continually on the back foot with the pace of Fahy and Lawson causing them problems, but the highlight of the first period went to Tivvy, when James

Richard and Mudge set up Owen Howe for a header from about three yards out. From nowhere, Thomas made an astonishing point blank save to keep the visitors in the game.

This fired up the home side, and Ben Mammola had a shot deflected wide before Mudge was close with another effort from just inside the Slimbridge box.

As the game entered the last 15 minutes of the half, the Swans started to create their own chances again having ridden out the storm - Lawson's cross somehow eluded the onrushing Jamie Martin, before Dean Turner was just inches away with a great effort just before the break, that dipped at the last minute and went over by just a whisker.

The goal that decided the game came just two minutes after the break, when Mike Williams and Dan Smith combined well to waltz through the Swans' back line - Smith played the ball back across the box where Owen Howe converted a simple chance to put the home side ahead.

The loss of Alex Hoyle on 60 minutes, penalised for an elbow as he went up for a free kick in the Tivvy box could have seen the visitors crumble, but to their credit, they regrouped, and although they obviously did not create as many chances, the workrate from the remaining ten men didn't drop, and they made things very difficult for the home side.

Thomas was again called into action as Tivvy pressed to close the game out, making further good stops from Smith and Rob Norrish, while James Richards also went close with an effort that was just too high.

The Swans now turn their attention to Saturday, when they entertain Bridgwater Town at Wisloe Road (3.00pm)

Team: Thomas, Turl, Ry Thwaite, Hoyle, Greening, Ward, Turner, Twyman (Blackie 74), Lawson (Mace 75), Martin (Brown 61), Fahy

Supporters Man of the Match: Adam Thomas