Evo Stik Southern League South & West

Saturday 1 April 2017

Barnstaple Town 3-1 Slimbridge

Despite the defeat, Swans Boss Freddy Ward was upbeat about the battling display his threadbare team put on during an entertaining match at Mill Road.

'I was very proud of the boys', Ward said afterwards, 'they gave their all under very difficult circumstances, and I felt that in the second half especially, we could have gotten something out of the game.'

On a sunny Devon afternoon, Barnstaple settled quickest, and took the lead on 14 minutes. Jack Jenkins lobbed a cross into the Swans' box, it was headed back across goal by Aaron Harper-Penman, and Shaun Copp gave Marcus Beauchamp no chance from close range.

The home side continued their bright opening, and Jenkins and Lee Francis were both off target before Dean Turner shot wide for the visitors.

Seven minutes before the break, Barum doubled their lead - Kyle Paine was given too much room on the Swans left flank, and he took full advantage to put Barnstaple two goals to the good.

After the break, Slimbridge came out with far more purpose, and Liam Orchard had a couple of early opportunities to pull a goal back, but failed to hit the target when well placed. With Mason Lewis putting in a magnificent shift despite carrying a troubling toe injury, the Swans began to threaten

Barum remained dangerous though, and it took a great goaline clearance from Brad Martin to stop the hosts extending their lead on 63 minutes

With 15 minutes remaining, Adam Mace produced another thunderbolt from 25 yards to reduce the deficit, but as the Swans pressed for an equaliser, in the first minute of stoppage time, James Blake got on the end of a through ball as Barnstaple broke quickly, and lobbed Beauchamp to finish the game off.

Slimbridge are back at Thornhill Park on Saturday when Bideford are the visitors. With both Bridgwater Town and Wantage Town both relegated last week, the Swans have four games left to complete their season.

Team: Beauchamp, Turl, Mace, Prictor, Martin, Turner, Twyman, Ward, Lewis, Orchard, Thomas

Supporters Man of the Match : Mason Lewis