

FIRST EVER F.A.CUP WIN FOR SWANS

TEAM EFFORT WINS DAY AT WESTBURY

Westbury United 2 , Slimbridge 3

Goals from Mike Green, Steve Badham and Robbie Colwell proved enough to give Slimbridge their first ever F.A.Cup tie success at the second attempt, but 'Toolstation' Western League Division One side, Westbury United, made sure the visitors didn't have it all their own way though, with goals from Tarick Yachou and Wayne Wheeler keeping the contest alive right until the final whistle.

The early play saw Westbury's Aaron Billett make a couple of good runs up the right with crosses into the box that goalkeeper Adam Thomas was forced to take under severe pressure. This heralded some eager working of the mid-field by the home side, backed up by some strong defensive tackling, that certainly put Slimbridge on the back foot for a while.

On 18 minutes Slimbridge broke out of what had become a stifling mid-field battle and Fred Ward put through Colwell to net with aplomb, but the effort was ruled out by a very late offside flag. However, the stimulation of the effort seemed to help Slimbridge settle more and they went ahead on 33 minutes when Colwell forced a corner on the left. Badham's resultant kick being headed firmly into the net by Mike Green from six yards, unchallenged. It was a sweet return to the side for mid-fielder Green, playing his first game of the season in place of Tim Haddock, who failed a late fitness test.

The lead only lasted two minutes though, as a swift ball up the right saw Wheeler outrun the retreating defence and square for a stretching Yachou to net via the post, giving Thomas no chance.

Westbury were not surprisingly, rejuvenated, and twice within the next few minutes Yachou was only denied by the off-side flag, before the hard-working Badham made progress along the Westbury right flank and cut in, only to see his cheeky chip over goalkeeper Nick Evans drift away from the far top corner of the goal. This escape seemed to restrain the home side as the first half closed without any problems for either goalkeeper.

After the break, Slimbridge came out strongly and took the game to the home side, and on 51 minutes regained the lead. A surging run from Colwell was brought to an end in front of goal, just outside the area, by a clumsy looking tackle from defender Lee Morgan, who was lucky to only see yellow for his effort! In a flash, the alert Ward flicked the ball to Badham, who placed the ball inside the post with Evans grasping air, and the Westbury defence still organising themselves.

Another late off-side flag denied Kacey Johnstone from getting on the score-sheet when he headed in a Leon Sterling cross from the right. Then, Colwell's run and cross from the left saw the ball elude the stretching Evans and reach the on-rushing Jamie Inch to head downwards at the open net, but unfortunately for him, the wrong side of the post!

On 67 minutes Slimbridge went 3-1 ahead when Johnstone held the ball up just inside the area for the predatory Colwell to seize his chance and drill in low past the un-sighted Evans amid a packed area.

Almost immediately the excellent, but tiring Green gave way to John Cant who brought a good save from Evans, but then, at the other end, a good break-out saw David Thompson receive the ball ten yards out from goal but mis-cue a good chance over the bar.

With seven minutes remaining, Westbury took advantage after a slip from Ashley Thomas on the greasy surface, Wheeler taking full advantage of his chance, to fire across brother Adam from eight yards and reduce the deficit to just the one goal.

An expected barn-storming finish didn't materialise, mainly due to some good possession football from the visitors, closing the game out in something of a cloudburst, the exact way that the game had started, but which did at least relent for the majority of the game.

A disappointing afternoon for a game Westbury side who battled extremely well, but the friendly Wiltshire club certainly made Slimbridge work hard for their first ever F.A.Cup tie success at the second time of asking, the Swans having fallen at home by a 1-0 scoreline last season to Wimborne Town at this same stage.

The afternoon's success at Westbury has earned Slimbridge a 400 mile round trip into deepest Cornwall in the next round, when they will visit South Western League, Penryn Athletic in a fortnight's time on Saturday, 2nd September.

Westbury United; N.Evans, D.Whyte, L.Morgan (R.Parker 78), A.Billett, S.Seals, J.Dowd (P.Beavers 72), N.Beales, D.Thompson, T.Yachou, W.Wheeler, M.Smith (M.Smith 45).

Slimbridge; Adam Thomas, L.Sterling, J.Cole, Mike Green (J.Cant 69), Ashley Thomas, A.Axton, E.Ward, J.Inch, K.Johnstone (B.Dibden 77), R.Colwell, S.Badham.

Referee; Mr. W.S.Gemmell (Southampton)

**Assistants; Mr. S. Graham (Southampton)
Mr. R. Hughes (Tidworth)**