

Hellenic League Premier Division

Saturday 27 April 2013

Ardley United 2-2 Slimbridge

The Swans and Ardley played out another very entertaining encounter yesterday, with shared points being a fair result for a game that swung towards both teams during the ninety minutes. Having said, Slimbridge will be disappointed they failed to convert one of their good late chances which would have nicked the points for the visitors. The result leaves Slimbridge sitting in fifth position in the UHlsport Hellenic Premier League, and they can now only wait until other teams complete their fixtures to see their final position, which will not be until next Thursday (May 2nd).

After a very even start, when Liam Harding went close for the visitors after good work by Jamie Martin, and Troy Bryan had brought a good save from Swans' Keeper Dave Evans, the game turned into an end-to-end affair, with both sides playing some good football and creating decent opportunities for themselves.

With 20 minutes gone, a good spell of pressure from the visitors saw Jamie Martin go close on two occasions, and the striker will have been disappointed not to get on the scoresheet after some good openings.

The closest Ardley came to taking the lead was a precision Free Kick from Callum Convey on 27 minutes, following a foul by Tom Speers. The Ardley man's strike was just over the bar, and the best opportunity of the first period.

Martin continued to work hard without success, and was unlucky again after being played through by Liam Harding a couple of minutes later. At the other end, Convey brought another good save from Evans as the game approached the half.

On 37 minutes, the home side took the lead - John Gardner picked the ball up in midfield, and his penetrating run brought him the space to drill the ball past Evans for the first goal of the afternoon.

Not surprisingly, Ardley continued to press, with Joe Eyre going close, although Dominique Njoya nearly equalised for the Swans, when he shot over after turning his man neatly in the Ardley box. But the first period ended with the hosts a goal to the good.

With the half time replacement of Dean Bernard, who sustained a painful looking knock on his ankle, with Marv Roberts, and the Swans now playing down the notorious Ardley slope, it was no surprise when the visitors started with renewed momentum, but Martin's luck continued to desert him, as his next effort brought a superb stop from Ardley Keeper Joe White on 51 minutes.

Ardley regrouped and the game evened out again - Martin and Dan Holloway went close for the Swans, while Gardner, and then Eyre had opportunities for the home side.

Slimbridge gained an equaliser on 64 minutes, when Marv Roberts turned his man in the Ardley box, and was felled as he turned. Tom Cole stepped up to convert the penalty and bring the scores level.

A couple of minutes later, the Swans were ahead - Martin's corner was cleared back out to him on the right flank and his cross found Roberts in the Ardley Box. Roberts neatly turned and placed the ball firmly past White to give the visitors the lead.

The game continued to flow from one side to the other, and on 73 minutes, Ardley levelled things up. Callum Convey's 25 yard free kick eluded the Slimbridge wall and gave Evans no chance.

The final 15 minutes saw more opportunities to win the game for both sides, with Eyre's cross just running too far in front of the incoming Ardley attackers, while the last ten minutes saw Slimbridge squander four good opportunities to steal the game - Roberts hit the side netting after a good 1-2 with Njoya, and Martin failed to convert three good opportunities, the

final one coming on 87 minutes when he lobbed White when through on goal after a mistimed back header by Ardley's Dean Smith, but saw his effort drift past the far post.

Team: Evans, Wellon, Njoya, Sterling, Speers, Cole, Twyman, Harding, Martin, Bernard (Roberts 45), Holloway (Ward 61)

Goals: Cole (Pen) 64, Roberts 66

Supporters Man of The Match: Jack Twyman