

Hellenic League Premier Division

Friday 17 August 2012

Slimbridge 3-0 Ardley United

In a game moved to Friday night to accommodate our visitors, the Swans consolidated their perfect start to League season with an impressive display which sees them currently top of the UHlsport Hellenic Premier League, with three wins and no goals conceded.

After a second minute opener from Shaun O'Connor, two further first half goals within a two minute spell from Liam Harding and Karl Nash saw the home side well ahead at the break. Ardley regrouped and put in a far better second half performance, but were unable to make any inroads against a well marshalled and determined Swans back line.

The game started at a fast pace, and it only took a couple of minutes for the home side to take the lead, in the first real attack of the game. A storming run by Jack Twyman saw him round two men, and although his shot beat Ardley Keeper Joe White comprehensively, it struck the base of the post and bounced back into play. O'Connor was first to the rebound and swept the ball home to give Slimbridge the early advantage. Ardley had one of their few chances of the first period on nine minutes, after Jamei Inch mistimed a back header intended for Keeper Dave Evans. Although Adam Beckett picked up the loose ball for the visitors, he could not find his way past Evans, and the chance was cleared.

As the clock reached 15 minutes, O'Connor had a chance to double his tally after being played through by Nash, and he hit a superb dipping shot, which brought an equally impressive save from White. With the home side well on top, O'Connor and Nash combined again, this time Nash seeing his effort drift just wide of the far post. On 26 minutes, two goals in quick succession emphasised the home side's superiority - Liam Harding drove home a neat finish to register the second, and then two minutes later, Harding's cross found Nash who scored the third of the evening.

As the first half closed out, the home side were playing some lovely football, with Nash, O'Connor and Harding especially causing no end of problems for Ardley, but despite Nash and O'Connor both having chances before the break, the score remained at 3-0 as we went to the Half.

The second half continued in much the same vein as the first, although Ardley put in a far stronger performance which reduced the amount of chances for the home side, but it was pretty much all one way traffic from the off. O'Connor nearly picked up another quick goal on 46 minutes, his shot was just wide of White's post, and on 54 minutes, another strong run from Nash saw his cross rifle across the goalmouth, with no-one quite able to take advantage of the opportunity.

Slimbridge felt they had a good shout for a penalty when Chris Fower, who had come on for O'Connor, was felled in the box by a clumsy tackle, but Referee Kornasiewicz was having none of it and waved play on. As the game continued at a frenetic pace, Dan Holloway and Nash combined well, Nash's cross being met by Fower's header, which agains was just wide.

After Twyman's free kick had brought another fine save from White, Nash again was off target after a corner broke to him on 69 minutes, as chances continued to be made by the home side. Holloway's mazy run on 72 minutes saw him beat three men, and be denied when his shot went just the wrong side of the upright into the side netting. Ardley had one decent chance in the second period, but were reduced to long range efforts, which Evans comfortably dealt with.

The Swans now travel to Reading Town on Tuesday (22nd) for a game which Kicks off at 7.45pm. They are on the road again on Saturday (25th) when they make the trip to Binfield (3.00pm), before entertaining Newbury at Wisloe Road on Bank Holiday Monday (27th, 3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Anson, Wellon, Inch, Speers, Ward (Turner 48), Twyman, Harding, Nash, O'Connor (Fower 56), Gates (Holloway 51)

Goals: O'Connor 2, Harding 26, Nash 28

Supporters Man of the Match : Karl Nash