

Bluefin Sports Supplementary Challenge Cup

Saturday 1 December 2012

Hook Norton 1-5 Slimbridge

For the second time this season at the Bourne, Hook Norton and Slimbridge shared six goals in a cup competition.

However, unlike last month's Floodlit Cup tie which ended 3-3 after extra time and required a penalty shoot out for the Swans to progress, this time round, in the second round Bluefin Sports Supplementary Challenge Cup, the visitors ran out comfortable winners.

Three goals to the good after 15 minutes courtesy of Dan Holloway and a brace from Saul Williams, Jamie Wyatt's strike for the home side raised the home side's spirits, but they were unable to make a further breakthrough before half time. A fourth Slimbridge goal just after the break, Holloway's second, sealed the victory, and a further goal from debutant Junior Maderner topped off the day for the Swans.

Niall Halford picked up an injury during the warm up, and was replaced at the last moment by Tom Speers, coming back from suspension and filling the one of the centre back positions. On a pitch naturally very heavy after the recent weather, Slimbridge made a bright start, and could have taken the lead in the first attack of the game, but Alex Higgs put his shot wide after good work down the left flank from Holloway.

It was, however, only three minutes before the visitors struck - Keeper Dave Evans' clearance took two bounces as the ball was lofted forward, and Dan Holloway outpaced his marker to drill the ball past Hooky Keeper Joe Murrell to put Slimbridge ahead.

Four minutes later, the Swans were two up. Higgs played a lovely diagonal ball through the Hooky back Four, and Saul Williams demonstrated great composure to round Murrell and slide the ball home to double Slimbridge's advantage. The home side complained that

Williams was well offside when the ball was played, and they may have had a point, but Referee Jason Smith decided that the goal would stand.

Hooky had their first shot on goal on 13 minutes, when Wyatt scuffed his shot on the edge of the Swans' box, but two minutes later, the visitors were three goals up - Jack Twyman and Holloway combined well to set up Williams, who netted his second of the game.

A minute later, Williams had a golden opportunity to record his first Hat Trick for the club, going on a superb mazy run and beating three men. Unfortunately, his shot was just wide with Murrell beaten all ends up. Just as had happened last time the two sides met, Hooky recovered their composure and started to play some good football. Wyatt's cross on 19 minutes managed to evade everyone as the ball slid across the Slimbridge box, and on 24 minutes, the home side had their best chance of the game so far. Chris Tillcock made room for himself and put in a lovely strike which drifted just wide, as momentum swung to Hooky.

As the game approached the half hour mark, the Swans were getting overrun in midfield, and, despite being three down, Hooky were having by far the best of the play. Another flashing cross wasn't met by any incoming strikers, this time from Dan Watkin.

It was no surprise when Hooky got on the scoresheet with 28 minutes on the clock. A cross from the Slimbridge left flank was flicked on by Mark Dennis, and Wyatt made no mistake to place the ball past Evans.

Just as in the previous meeting, the goal was a the signal for a period of pressure from the home side, and for the next ten minutes, it was backs to the wall for the Swans - Andrew Helbey and Watkin both went close before Williams was again denied his Hat Trick after his shot was cleared off the Hooky line as Slimbridge regrouped.

There were two more goal opportunities before the half - firstly Dave Evans made a point blank save from Ben Tew's header, while at the other end Shane Anson's shot brought a great save from Murrell to leave the score 3-1 at the break, in what was proving to be another very entertaining encounter between the sides.

The game was effectively killed off in the five minutes after play resumed. Hartpury College Debutant Junior Maderner replaced Higgs on 50 minutes, and with his first touch down the right flank played a superb cross in to Holloway, who swept home his second of the game and record a fourth goal for the Swans. Maderner started to torment the Hooky back four, and nearly set up Williams a couple of minutes later, but his cross was just too quick for Williams, who failed to connect.

With the game effectively over as a contest, Manager Leon Sterling brought himself into the fray and moved Dominic Njoya into midfield. Slimbridge were making runs from all over the park, and Will Wellon's foray forward nearly paid dividends on 66 minutes. He played a nice ball into Holloway, but Holloway just overran the ball and the chance was lost.

With 20 minutes remaining, the Swans notched their fifth - Njoya made a powerful run and fed Holloway, whose pass saw Maderner through on goal. He kept his nerve to beat Murrell and record the visitors' fifth of the afternoon. Holloway and Williams were competing for the chance to complete their hat tricks, and a lovely 1-2 between the two on 74 minutes saw Holloway's shot slide across the goal with no-one in a position to finish it as the game played out.

After Njoya had brought another good save from Murrell, the final opportunity of the game went to Holloway. With the game into stoppage time, his Free Kick cannoned back into play off the Hooky bar, but Speers could not take advantage of the rebound.

The Swans entertain Newbury at Wisloe Road on Tuesday, in their postponed Floodlit Cup Tie (7.45pm), before Reading Town visit Wisloe next Saturday for a League game (3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Anson, Njoya, Wellon, Speers, Cole, Twyman (Sterling 62), Ward, Higgs (Maderner 50), Williams, Holloway

Goals: Holloway 3, 51 Williams 7, 15 Maderner 70

Supporters Man Of The Match: Dan Holloway