

Hellenic League Premier Division

Saturday 29 September 2012

Marlow 2-0 Slimbridge

A scrappy and at times bad tempered affair saw Marlow regain top spot in the UHlsport Hellenic Premier League at The Alfred Davis Ground at the expense of the Swans.

The hosts were reduced to ten men just before the break when Richard Witt was dismissed after an altercation with Freddy Ward, but Slimbridge ended the game with nine men after Tom Speers and Ward both saw red in the same incident as the game went into it's final stages. Two strikes from Ben Gladwin secured the points for the home side. The defeat sees Slimbridge slip to fourth in the table, although with games in hand on two of the sides above them.

Marlow made the early running, and Gary Smith and Marcus Mealing manufactured the first decent effort of the game on four minutes, when they combine down the right flank. Good work from Will Wellon made sure their only reward was a corner which Dave Evans collected comfortably.

Slimbridge settled early on, and their first opportunity came when a Dan Holloway corner was punched clear by Marlow Keeper Jorden Eggleton, and the ball reached Jack Twyman on the edge of the box, but he skied his effort with six minutes gone.

The scrappy start to the game continue, and Marlow created the best chance of the game so far on 10 minutes, but Smith's header following Gladwin's cross went wide.

Marlow upped the pressure, and Slimbridge were relieved to see Mealing's 13th minute shot cannon back off the post following Richard Witt's corner.

It was not all one way traffic though, and Gavin Lang went close with an effort for the visitors, as the game began to settle into a rhythm.

The best chances were still coming for the home side, though, and after Ian Davies had been closely marshalled by Wellon to prevent him getting a shot in, Gladwin and Mealing again combined to create a chance for James Knight, but again his shot was high, to the growing frustration of the home crowd.

Slimbridge's best chance of the half came on the half hour, when Liam Harding's 25 yarder brought a superb save from Eggleton, who tipped the ball over the bar for a corner which Marlow cleared.

On 39 minutes, Harding's tackle on Chris Hatton provoked a melee on the half way line, and the ensuing pushing and shoving saw Richard Witt Red Carded for what appeared to be a headbutt on Freddy Ward. Harding was booked as result of the incident.

As tempers rose, Ward then found himself in the book for a late tackle on Danny Lingwood as Referee Lee sought to control matters, but the first half finished goalless.

The second period began in much the same manner as the first, with the home side stringing the better passing moves together - Wellon did well to block a shot from Gladwin, and at the other end, Saul Williams forced a save from Eggleton after neat work by Holloway down the left flank.

Marlow began to control the game, and the chances started to come for the home side - Davies had two good opportunities in the 51st and 52nd minutes, but a wayward header and scuffed shot kept the scoresheet blank.

With 58 minutes gone, a bad clearance by Dave Evans found Mealing 35 yards or so out, and his attempted lob was a little bit too close for comfort as Evans scrambled back towards his line.

On 64 minutes, the goal that had looked like it was coming duly arrived - Gladwin stuck a powerful drive from 25 yards which eluded Evans and put the home side in front.

Shaun O'Connor was the next in Mr Lee's notebook, picking up a yellow for a tackle on Aaron Baker as tensions again began to rise on the pitch.

By now, all the chances were coming for the home side, as Slimbridge failed to get out of their own half, and were put under increasing pressure - Smith was the next to try his luck for the home side, but his header went over the bar on 77 minutes, after a corner created by a good run from Chris Hatton.

With seven minutes remaining, the game took a farcical turn. Speers was fouled as he brought the ball out of defence, and ended up in the Referee's book after complaining that advantage was not played. Two minutes later, Speers and Seve Mayberry were chasing a Marlow through ball - Speers got to the ball first to knock to safety, but Mayberry then went over his leg. Mr Lee deemed that Speers had committed a foul, and dismissed him for a second yellow card.

As the Swans lined up in the defensive wall to face the subsequent free kick, the protesting Fred Ward also picked up a second yellow for something he said, and went as well.

Just to round things off, Gladwin steered the free kick past Evans to double the home side's advantage once the free kick was eventually taken.

Chris Fower managed to go close in the second minute of additional time with a shot that just cleared the Marlow bar, but it was too little, too late for the visitors, who had two more chances before the final whistle, with Baker going close, and then Mayberry forcing a good save from Evans in the last minute of added time.

The Swans are back at Wisloe Road next Saturday when they entertain Binfield (3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Anson, Robinson, Wellon, Speers, Ward, Tywman (Bryant 62), Harding, Lang (Fower 67), Williams, Holloway (O'Connor 59)

Supporters Man of the Match: Shane Anson