

Western League Premier Division

Saturday 25 April 2015

Slimbridge 2-1 Willand Rovers

For a game between two sides both hoping to make a mark in the top three of the Western Premier League at the end of next weekend, this was a curiously low key affair.

Two first half strikes from Brad Martin saw the Swans well in control at the break, and, despite Brett Worbey pulling a goal back for Willand through a second half penalty, the home side comfortably held on to record the victory, which moves them back up to fifth in the table, two points and a single place above their visitors, who have a game in hand.

The final week of the season will now determine the final order of the group of sides behind top two Melksham Town and Buckland Athletic, who are assured of the top spots between them.

Slimbridge started well, and were ahead with just three minutes on the clock - Paul Fahy's break down the left flank saw his dangerous cross swept home by Martin to put the home side a goal up.

The home side dominated the first period - Ryan Thwaite went close a couple of minutes later when his lob beat Willand Keeper Kurtis Parkin, but his effort was deflected just too high by a tackle as he struck the ball.

Willand looked sluggish and struggled to make much of an impact on the game, a shot from Dean Stamp which was well wide the sole decent early effort from the visitors.

On 24 minutes, Slimbridge doubled their advantage. Parkin failed to gather a relatively simple free kick from Martin, and allowed the ball to slide under him for the Swans' second of the afternoon.

Martin had a great opportunity to notch his third five minutes later, but he stumbled as he went to collect a through ball from Sean Lawson and the chance was lost.

Dean Turner went close on two occasions before the break - firstly, a long range effort on 34 minutes which drifted just wide, and then an effort five minutes before the half, which was deflected over.

In between, Stamp had made another chance for himself, but again, his effort was well off target and the home side went in deservedly two goals to the good at the break.

Fahy went close a couple of minutes into the second half, but his effort found only the side netting, and the game developed into a stalemate.

On the hour mark, Rich Thwaite was penalised for a push in the box as a cross came over and Referee Mark Lawrence awarded a spot kick to the visitors. Despite going the right way and getting his hands to Worbey's penalty, Dave Evans was unable to keep the shot out and the deficit was reduced.

The goal did little to change the tempo of the game, whose only other moment of note was a disallowed strike from Jamie Martin on 70 minutes, as the game petered out tamely to see Slimbridge claim the spoils.

The Swans have two trips to Devon next weekend to complete their fixtures for this season - On Saturday, they travel to potential title contenders Buckland Athletic (3.00pm) before another trip back down the M5 on Bank Holiday Monday, to play the return fixture against Willand Rovers (3.00pm)

Team: Evans, Turl, Brown, Odiero, Rich Thwaite, Ward, Turner, Ryan Thwaite (Parrott 76), Lawson (Hammond 80), B. Martin, Fahy (J. Martin 68)

Supporters Man of the Match : Brad Martin