

Bishops Cleeve 1-1 Slimbridge

Saturday 4th November 2017

This was a typical local derby - it was frantic, bad tempered at times, contained little football of note, and featured two penalties and a sending off.

For a long time, it looked as if Cleeve were on their way to a second win on the bounce, after Elliot Kennedy's first half penalty. However, a second spot kick ten minutes from time, stuck away for the visitors by Adam Mace level led things up. The result suited the Swans far more than the Mitres, who remain five points from safety at the bottom of the table, while Slimbridge remain in mid table, albeit only three points away from a Play Off place.



Following an impeccably observed minutes silence for Swans Committee Member John Ashplant, who sadly passed away this week, the tempo of the game started high and never dropped, as the players scrapped for local bragging rights - Slimbridge thought they had made the first breakthrough on 11 minutes, when Max Harper-Emerson converted Marley Thomas' cross, only for the goal to be ruled out for off side.

The Swans were having the better of the early exchanges, and Dean Turner brought a good stop from Mitres Keeper Sam Gilder five minutes later as the visitors sought to drive home their territorial advantage. Thomas' effort from Ollie Hall's clearance was agonisingly off target as the Swans pressed forward.

It was 23 minutes before Cleeve created their first real opportunity on goal, when Kennedy found himself through one on one with Hall, but the Swans Stopper made a good save at the striker's feet.

On the half hour mark, the visitors took the lead - Jack Watts broke down the Slimbridge left flank, and collided with Hall as he looked to shoot. Referee Jack Shephers awarded a spot kick to the hosts, and yellow carded Hall. The penalty was well tucked away by Kennedy to put Cleeve ahead.

Bouyed by the goal Cleeve had a spell of pressure, and Hall made a good stop to deny Watts a couple of minutes later.

The Swans lost influential midfielder Dean Turner to a knock ten minutes before the break, as Freddy Ward replaced him as the Swans held on to reach the break.

The second half saw more of the same - Jack Twyman was just wide for Slimbridge after turning his man five minutes in, while Kennedy, Watts and Ben Hands were all well off target for the home side.

On 63 minutes, Ben Tunnicliff went up for a header with Ward leading with his elbow, and was lucky to escape with just a yellow card, after a robust exchange of views between both sides had settled down.

The resulting Free Kick saw Ward head home Mace's cross, only to see his effort ruled out again for offside.

With ten minutes remaining, the scores were evened up - Marley Thomas was brought down by Gilder as he raced into the Cleeve box, and Mace held his nerve to convert the spot kick to level things up.

as both teams pressed for a winner, Tunnicliff came in late on Ollie Hall during a scramble in the Slimbridge box, prompting another session of handbags, and a second yellow card for the Cleeve defender.

Slimbridge had a great opportunity to win the game in the fourth minute of stoppage time, but Twyman was just off target with a header from Thomas' cross, to see the side sharing the points at the final whistle.

Slimbridge next host two league games at Thornhill Park - Evesham United visit next Saturday (3.00pm) before Yate Town make the short trip up from Bristol the following Wednesday (15th, 7.45pm)

Team: Hall, Turl, Mace, Thwaite, Hoyle, Turner (Ward 35), Twyman, Birkett, Lawson, Harper-Emerson (Squires 80), Thomas

Supporters Man of the Match; Adam Mace