

Slimbridge 1-2 Cinderford Town

Saturday 19th August 2017

It is an immense credit to Freddy Ward's young Slimbridge side that, for the second time this week, they more than matched, and at times outplayed opponents that last season were playing Southern League Premier standard football - However, once again, the Swans were taught a harsh lesson about what happens when you don't take your chances at this level.

Cinderford took the lead early on with their first shot on target through Craig Norman, and with delicious irony, it was Swans' Player of the Season last year, Nick Grimes, who stepped up to convert an 89th minute Free Kick to win the game for the visitors after Adam Mace's penalty had levelled things up.

Slimbridge started the better side, and Max Harper-Emerson's cross early on caused a massive scramble in the Cinderford box, before the ball was eventually bundled clear.

Cinderford hit straight back, and, with five minutes on the clock, took the lead when Craig Norman was allowed far too much space, and beat Slimbridge Keeper Ollie Hall with a neat finish.

The home side were creating the best opportunities though, and Joe Stokes was just wide with an effort on ten minutes after good work from Marley Thomas.

Five minutes later, Thomas saw his effort cleared off the line after a good run and shot down the Swans' right flank.

After Stokes was fouled on the edge of the box, his Free Kick was tipped over by Cinderford Keeper Cameron Clark as the home side pressed forward.

The resulting corner was cleared to Henry Birkett on the edge of the Cinderford box, but his effort was just off target.

Although being pushed back, Cinderford still looked dangerous on the break, and on 22 minutes, Declan Morley-Lynn went close after another mazy run, after again being given too much space by the Swans' back line.

Just before the half hour, Morley-Lynn was again close with a header before Slimbridge equalised from the penalty spot.

Henry Birkett was fouled as he attempted to ride out a tackle in the Cinderford box, and Adam Mace stepped up to convert the spot kick.

With the break approaching, Slimbridge were again bossing things, with Harper-Emerson's cross just too far in front of Thomas, before Stokes and then Thomas were off target with good chances, leaving the sides even at the half.

The Swans came out of the blocks again for the second half, and Sam Turl's run and shot saw him hit the Cinderford crossbar, with Stokes unable to convert the follow up as the team continued to create good opportunities. On 49 minutes, Harper-Emerson's cross was just missed by Rich Thwaite.

The Foresters gave a reminder they were still dangerous going forward, when Nick Humphries played a peach of a ball across the Slimbridge goal, only to find no-one on the end of it. While at the other end, Harper-Emerson saw his effort beat Clark, but roll agonisingly the wrong side of the Cinderford post.

With eight minutes remaining, Ollie Hall made a super stop from Sammie Hicks' effort, before Stokes and Joe Wilton combined to create another opportunity which was blocked by a good Cinderford challenge.

On 89 minutes, the visitors were awarded a Free Kick on the edge of the Slimbridge box, and Grimes got the ball around the wall and into the net to clinch the tie for the visitors.

Slimbridge make one of their longest trips of the season next Saturday when they travel to AFC Totton (3.00pm), before hosting Shortwood United (3.00) on Bank Holiday Monday at Thornhill Park.

Team: Hall, Turl, Mace, Thwaite, Hoyle, Luke Payne (Nathan Payne 69), Twyman, Birkett (Turner 60), Stokes, Harper-Emerson (Wilton 64), Thomas

Supporters Man of the Match: Henry Birkett