

Slimbridge 2 -2 Barnstaple Town

Saturday 26th January 2019

Swans surrender two goal lead to hang on to gain valuable point in relegation battle.

After Tuesday night's high flying performance against a strong Cheltenham Town side today's performance failed to live up to expectations. After going two goals up early in the second half the home side failed to close out the game allowing Barnstaple to get back into the game and return home to Devon happy with a point.

Slimbridge started brightly, Jamie Martin hitting the side netting after collecting a pass from Will Hawes inside the box. Archie Brennan returning to the Swans side having featured for parent club Cheltenham in midweek did well on the right feeding the ball to Hawes in turn passing to Martin only to have his shot deflected wide for a corner.

The visitors first shot on goal came after 20 minutes when Jack Jenkins attempt fell into the arms of Lewis Adams. Slimbridge were lucky not to find themselves a goal down a few minutes later when a Swans corner was cleared up field allowing Scott Sharp to break his shot was saved well by Adams and subsequent follow-up deflected wide for a corner.

Adams did well again on the half hour saving from Sharp after Liam Smith had given the ball away in the middle. Dan King having a quiet first half put in a decent cross from the left to Hawes but his shot was blocked at the near post.

The Swans took the lead on 43 minutes Finleigh Brown on the right laid the ball into the feet of Hawes with his back to the goal turned and shot, the ball clipping the inside of the post with visiting stopper Steve Oliver unlucky not to get his finger tips to the ball. In first half stoppage time Brodie Montague headed wide for Barnstaple from a corner.

Barnstaple Town made a change at half time bringing on substitute Jack Lethaby-Price and looked a different side knocking the ball around just outside the home side's box putting the Swans defence under pressure but failed to make any clear chances.

With 5 minutes of the second half gone Adams played the ball out to Brennan on the left who knocked the ball down the touchline to King who ran down the flank and into the box. The ball was pulled back to Hawes whose initial shot was blocked by Oliver but Hawes made no mistake second time around to give Slimbridge a two goal advantage.

King sprung to life again down the left passing his man and putting in a teasing cross through the box but failed to find a home player the ball going out for a throw-in on the other side. The Swans two goal lead only lasted 6 minutes when the ball was played across the Slimbridge goal area to Jenkins in space on the left allowing him time to fire home and reduce the arrears with 56 minutes on the clock.

Montague was unlucky 5 minutes later seeing his long range shot sail just wide of the post. However a minute later the Swans were caught napping again this time Lethaby-Price on the right of the box broke free of the defence and shot across Adams goal and into the bottom left corner to bring the score level.

On 76 minutes Adams kept the home side in the game bravely claiming the ball from the feet of the lively Lethaby-Price who was causing the defence all sorts of problems. A few minutes later the Swans made a rare foray into the opposition half, Steve Jacksons cross from the left found Martin to nod down to Hawes but Hawes failed to find the target on this occasion.

Brennan and King linked up well on the left only for Kings cross to evade substitute Ewen Dunbar at the far post. Former Swan Tornado Bello a Barnstaple substitute almost gave his new club the points late on however his goal bound shot was deflected wide.

In the last minute of normal time Hawes played in Dunbar but his first touch was too heavy and allowed Oliver to gather inside his area.

Next up for the Swans is a visit to local rivals Evesham United next Saturday 2nd February.

Slimbridge: Adams, Brown, Brennann, Noakes, Jackson (Magee 85), C Turner, D Turner, Smith (M Turner 81), Martin (Dunbar 81), Hawes, King

Attendance: 102

Supporter's man of the match: Will Hawes