

Slimbridge 1-0 Thatcham Town

Saturday 5th January 2019

A great team performance today by the Swans to beat last season's FA Vase winners Thatcham Town with a late 25 yard strike.



A game containing very few clear cut chances saw a frantic last 10 minutes of action in which Slimbridge hit the bar then took the lead through a Will Hawes 25 yard effort and Thatcham denied a goal at the end of normal time by a wonder save from Lewis Adams.

The first minute saw Thatcham break with a 4 on 3 scenario, finishing in Scott Rees shot straight at home keeper Lewis Adams. Slimbridge then took command of the game for a 15 minute spell knocking the ball around and looking confident in the midfield but could not quite carve out a chance up front.

The visitors Josh Helmore's shot was deflected into Adams arms before a 30 yard free kick was driven at the Swans defensive wall and cleared up field. On 21 minutes a long throw in from Dan King found Will Hawes but his headed effort drifted wide.

Dean Turner pushing forward fired his shot straight at keeper Chris Rackley from 15 yards out. Mid way through the half Thatcham were forced into a substitution when Rees took a knock and was replaced by Tom Moran.

Moran soon got into the action firing wide then moments later Shane Cooper-Clark audacious chip sailed closely over Adams bar. With ten minutes of the half remaining Curtis Angell broke down the left and into the box but Adams was positioned well to make the save. Only four minutes later Moran in space got his head to a corner which hit the bar and cleared to safety by the Swans defence.

The second half period continued much in the vain of the first with both sides playing good attacking football along the ground trying to keep the ball and push forward in search of a goal. King was tripped 30 yards out from the visitors goal, Hawes stepped up to take the kick and fired just wide of the left hand post.

Slimbridge were then forced into a substitution when Korey Pring appeared to hurt his ankle in a tackle when running through the middle from the back. He was ably replaced by Joe Noakes slotting into the left side of the back three. Moment later Dean Turner getting forward once again forced a save out of Rackley in the visitor's goal. At the other end a Thatcham free kick 30 yards out was driven against the Swans wall and follow up shot fired over.

On 64 minutes Hawes cross from the right was deflected over the bar for a Swans corner, Noakes directing his header from the corner just wide. With 15 minutes remaining George Jeacock fired a dangerous cross in from the right that flashed past the Swans goal and out for a goal kick.

As the game entered the last 10 minutes both sides continued to press for an all-important winner. A free kick for visitors deep in their own half was fired long into the Slimbridge box and headed wide out for a corner. Noakes headed the corner clear to the visitors who held the ball up well pressurising the home defence before firing it in again with Noakes deflecting the ball wide for another corner. It was Christien Turners block that cleared the danger for yet another visitor's corner as the Swans rode out a spell of pressure finally cleared by Dean Turner.

It was Dean Turner that proved pivotal in a Swans move that saw Hawes head against the bar with the ball looping over the goal to safety. With only five minutes of normal time remaining a neat passing move in the middle saw the ball fed to Hawes who controlled the ball with his back to the goal turned and unleashed a strike into the bottom left corner of the net from 25 yards out to the delight of the home players and supporters.

The visitors did not give up; two minutes after going a goal behind Helmore headed a cross destined for the top left hand corner only for Adams to get his hands to the ball making a wonder save to preserve the Swans lead. A final flurry from Thatcham saw Noakes head a cross out for a corner and on the final whistle Adams claimed the corner with all 11 visiting player inside the home side's 18 yard box.

A well-deserved victory for the Swans sees them now 9 points clear of the relegation zone with a number of crucial games starting with a visit to Highworth Town next weekend.

Slimbridge: Adams, King, Brennan, Pring (Noakes 55), C Turner, Richards, D Turner, M Turner, Magee (Martin 74), Hawes, Jackson

Attendance: 102

Supporter's man of the match: Dan King