

Slimbridge 1-2 Winchester City

Saturday 7th March 2020

Swans go down fighting

After a three week layoff due to the weather, the Swans fell to a narrow defeat at home to promotion chasing Winchester City. With 5 games to be played in a period of 14 days the management duo made a number of changes to make use of the clubs strongest squad in many years. Will Hawes made the starting line-up for his first game since July after returning from travelling in Australia, Christien Turner, Jack Horrell and James Spruce also returned to the side along with Joe Wright taking the gloves with Lewis Adams rested.

Despite the home side having much of the early play, it was Winchester that took the lead after 12 minutes when a ball sent in from the left found striker Oliver Bailey who controlled the ball and slotted it past Wright into the bottom left corner.

A couple of minutes later Slimbridge had a flurry of corners Horrell and Hawes having shots cleared before Will Peck headed wide of the goal. It was a battle between two even teams but with very few chances up front as the Swans played some neat football in the middle of the park.

Just on the half hour mark, Sol Wanjau-Smith forced a save out of Ryan Pryce in the visiting goal, Spruce followed by clearing the bar from 6 yards out.

Winchester should have made it two on 37 minutes, Bailey escaping the offside trap but fired his shot into the side netting with only Wright to beat. Hawes did well down the left flank beating a defender before his cross into the box was cut out for a corner which Spruce headed over.

In first half injury time Christien Turner made an important tackle on Bailey inside the 6 yard box to deny a goal scoring opportunity.

Early in the second half a good chance to pull the scores level went begging when an unmarked Spruce failed to get his head to Pecks cross from the left.

A free kick on the right of the Winchester box on 56 minutes was chipped into the box but cleared to just outside the box hitting a visiting players arm in the process. The second free kick was fired towards the top left corner by Wanjau-Smith but was tipped over the bar by the acrobatic Pryce from 25 yards out.

A second goal came for the visitors on 65 minutes Kieran Douglas heading home from a corner. Five minutes later Pryce did well to tip Pecks long range shot from the left over the bar.

For the last 15 minutes, Slimbridge were camped in the Winchester half looking at trying to salvage something from the game having brought on all three substitutes. With 4 minutes remaining Marley Thomas made a lively run across midfield to find Myron Turner in space on the left. Turner fired in a pin point cross to Hawes who controlled the ball well and riffled it past Pryce into the net to give the Swans a chance.

Despite a flurry of corners deep into injury time Winchester held on to all three points to keep them in the playoff hunt.

Slimbridge travel to Larkhall Athletic (near Bath) on Tuesday then head down to Somerset next Saturday to face Willand Rovers.

Slimbridge: Wright, Nesbeth, Peck, Ford (Price 73), Chambers, C Turner, Spruce (Thomas 73), M Turner, Hawes, Horrell (King 73), Wanjau-Smith

Unused subs: Brennan, Sarson

Supporters man of the match: Christien Turner

Attendance: 73