

Northwood 1-1 Slimbridge (L 4-2 Pens)

FA Cup Preliminary Round

Saturday 12th September 2020

Swans Exit Cup in Penalty Shootout

After a late comeback in an entertaining FA Cup tie, the Swans suffer the heartbreak of losing on penalty kicks.

After much anticipation Slimbridge started their 2020/21 football campaign with a long trek to Northwood in the FA Cup. The long journey seemed to have an effect on the team as the first few minutes of the game they hardly got sight of the ball as Northwood knocked it around smoothly and the Swans looking very nervous at the back.

Despite this it was the visitors who had the first chance, a long clearance from Lewis Adams found Rhys Sarson his touch to Danny King allowed the striker to run through however his shot was saved by keeper Hafed El-Droubi with the goal in his sights. The home sides continued to play the ball around frustrating Slimbridge at time but failed to make any impression moving forward.

Northwood gained a corner on 25 minutes, Dave Thomas striking it wide at the near post a let off for the Swans. The home sides spell of pressure did pay off when they took the lead after 32 minutes, Ben Deakin giving away a free kick on the corner of the box. Richard Wards kick found the unmarked head of Calvin Dickson who looped the ball in to the corner of the net to the delight of the home support.

The goal seemed to wake Slimbridge up, Myron Turner sending a long range shot over the bar and Owen Giles heading over from a Corner. A late spell of pressure from the Swans failed to gain any reward however home stopper El-Droubi picked up a yellow card for needless time wasting on the stroke of half time.

Adams made a routine stop from George Isaac early in the second half as the Swans upped the tempo and put pressure on the home defence. A Slimbridge corner was quickly moved forward by Northwood but the break resulted in a weak shot for Adams to easily collect.

The entry of substitute Jamie Martin replacing Rhys Sarson on 60 minutes appeared to spark the visitors into second gear, debutant Jay Malshanskyj firing a shot over the bar and 5 minutes later an attempt at an overhead kick also failed to hit the target.

King took a free kick just on the edge of the box but his shot just sailed over the bar on 73 minutes as the Swans piled forward in search of an equaliser.

The deserved equaliser came on 80 minutes, Ben Deakin linking up with Joe Stokes on the right, and it was Stokes pin point cross that found Jamie Martin in space to head home. There was still enough time to get a late winner with Slimbridge camped in the visitor half for much of the last few moments of the game.

El-Droubi in the home goal pulled off a fantastic double save on the stroke of normal time first blocking Martins fierce shot then beating away Edjija Mbungas follow up effort.

In injury time Nick Humphreys kept the Swans in the tie heading the ball off the line from a Northwood corner sending the game straight to a penalty shoot-out.

The penalty shootout to decide the result of the game started off with Richard Ward of Northwood finding the back of the net sending Adams the wrong way. Joel White levelled the scores after the first round of kicks. Charlie Kuehn stepped up to put Northwood back into the lead, before Myron Turners kick was deemed to have been saved having appeared to cross the line and bounce back. Adams saved Northwoods third kick from Amin Belaid's attempt next up Mbunga for the Swans fired over the bar to keep Northwood in the lead 2-1. Isaac extended the home sides lead netting his effort while Johan Flo also scoring to maintain a one goal difference. In the fifth round of penalties substitute Ryan Phillips outfoxed Adams to give the home side victory of 4 penalties to the Swans 2.

The Swans start their Pitching In Southern Football League campaign next Saturday 19th hosting Basingstoke Town at Thornhill Park kicking off at 3pm.

Slimbridge: L Adams, B Deakin, N Humphreys, M Turner, O Giles, J White, E Mbunga, D Turner (69 J Stokes), R Sarson (60 J Martin), D King, J Malshanskyj (69 J Flo)

Unused Subs: B Prictor, K Pring, J Twyman, E Parker (G/K)

Goals: J Martin 80

Attendance: 153