

Match Reports

AFC Toton 0-3 Slimbridge **Pitching In Southern League Div. One South** Saturday 18th September 2021

Swans upset leaders with surprise win on the road

Slimbridge returned from Hampshire with three points having pulled off a fantastic defensive effort to beat league leaders AFC Toton. Despite conceding an early penalty, the Swans held firm and kept a clean sheet for the first time this season, while handing the unbeaten Hampshire side their first defeat of the season.

Having lost Toumani Sidibe to injury during the victory at Evesham and with Jamie Martin and Mike Ford unavailable the Swans gave reserves captain Liam Harper a spot on the bench with Edjidja Mbunga taking Sidibes spot in the starting line-up.

Having scored eight goals past Cinderford last weekend the signs looked ominous for the visitors with two minutes on the clock Sam Griffin got in behind the defence and forced Ben Deakin into a block at the near post, Griffin then lobbed the ball goal ward with Nathan Dennis well positioned to hook the ball off the line and Deakin clearing the ball out of the box.

On five minutes the lively Hisham Kasimu broke through the Swans defence and raced in on goal, Lewis Adams attempt to claim the ball failed bringing down Kasimu in the process with the home side gifted a penalty. Luckily for the Swans Adams guessed correctly saving Jack Hoey spot kick down to his left.

After Will Hawes had given the ball away in midfield, Dennis conceded a dangerous free kick on the edge of the Swans box, Kasimu hitting the side netting from a well worked move. The home side continued to put pressure on the visitors with Kasimu in particular firing shots from the edge of the box with Adams well placed to save on a number of occasions.

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Slimbridge having spent much of the first 25 minutes soaking up the pressure from the hosts, found space through Hawes on the left his cross found Johan Flo but his shot was blocked and out for a corner, Ben McLean floating the corner onto the roof of the net.

On the half hour mark, Kasimu broke through the defence under pressure from Ben Hands fired his shot for Adams to save once again. Two minutes later the Swans took advantage from a free kick on the left corner of the box. Marley Thomas chipping the ball into the box where Hawes was lurking to tuck the ball past Lewis Noice from close range and give the visitors an unexpected lead.

The goal gave the Swans a lift, Ben Prictor's cross being tipped over the bar by Noice, then Noice punching the resulting corner clear under pressure in the box. Another free kick on the left for the Swans with just over 5 minutes of the half remaining saw Noice saving point blank with his feet from Hawes overhead kick, Myron Turner saw his follow up blocked under appeals of a Swans penalty. Hawes suffered a knock when landing from his overhead kick but was able to continue after treatment.

As half time approached Adams did well to claim the ball at the feet of Ethan Taylor as the hosts looked to get a goal back on the break. In injury time the Swans gained a corner at the other end. The corner was played short to Hawes who turned and pushed the ball into the box allowing Dennis to stab home his first goal for the club and in doing so giving Slimbridge a two goal lead at the break.

Jordan Annear replaced Hawes at half time with Hawes suffering from the effects of a knock late on in the first half. Five minutes after the break Kasimu's effort was blocked by Dennis and Adams then saving Griffins follow up with the off side flag up.

Two minutes later the Swans were again forced into some heroic defending, Jordan Ngalo's long range shot being deflected over the bar by Adams and from the resulting corner a header struck the bar as the home side looked to get back into the game.

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Thomas forced a point blank save out of Noice a few moments later after a great run down the left from Mbunga. Adams yet again was called into action saving from Kasimu with Dennis clearing for a corner.

As the home side continued to pressure the Slimbridge defence Kasimu was stopped by a Ben Hands last ditch tackle. A raft of corners just past the hour mark saw the Swans hold firm at the back to the frustration of the home team.

Toton did manage to put the ball in the net on 71 minutes through Kasimu but the assistant referee's flag was up for offside. Myron Turner then came off after suffering a slight niggle.

With the home side continuing to throw the proverbial kitchen sink at the visitors defence, deep into injury time Annear robbed the ball just inside the Toton half and raced through on goal tucking the ball past Noice for his first Slimbridge goal to send the visiting supporters wild.

There was still one last effort from the home side to gain a consolation with Adams making a point blank save on the final whistle.

The win moves the Swans up the table and the confidence going into next week's trip back down to Hampshire to face second place Sholing. The Swans reserves remain unbeaten with a win at home and with another home match next Saturday with New Dales Vale the visitors.

Slimbridge: L Adams, B Deakin, B Prictor, B McLean, N Dennis, B Hands, E Mbunga, M Turner, W Hawes, J Flo, M Thomas

Subs Used: J Annear, A Price, T Lawrence

Attendance: 270

Supporters player of the match: Lewis Adams