



Cambridge United Website

Match Report

Cambridge United tasted a first Sky Bet League One defeat in five as Wycombe Wanderers travelled home from the Abbey Stadium with a narrow 1-2 victory...

Despite creating the best opportunities of the first half, the U's found themselves two goals down following Ryan Tafazolli's volley and David Wheeler's close-range header. Despite serving up a consolation through the in-form Sam Smith on the hour mark, the hosts couldn't conjure a leveller, but importantly still remain on the tails of their relegation rivals.

Having attained an applaudable 10 points from a possible 12, Mark Bonner's men approached the penultimate fixture of the campaign rejuvenated. Enjoying their best form of the season, the U's looked to stretch their unbeaten run and climb further up the third tier ladder. In their way, a Wanderers side holding onto slim play-off hopes following a streak of the solitary victory in six.

Following the scintillating derby day success three days earlier, the Head Coach felt no need to change a winning formula, opting with the same starting XI and substitutes. Notably, James Brophy made his 100th appearance in amber, whilst Sam Smith was set for his 40th start of the season.

Delightfully knocking the ball around the park, a slick passing sequence between Brophy and Jack Lankester in the 3rd minute resulted in the latter invitingly teeing up Harvey Knibbs to his left, who pulled the trigger from 10 yards but was denied at a firm Max Stryjek stop.

The U's number one was tested for the first time on 11 when a short corner was played to Joe Jacobson, who picked out a lurking Chris Forino inside the six-yard box, with the centre-back nodding towards the collected Dimitar Mitov.

An end-to-end introduction continued when, three minutes later, Brophy played in Knibbs down the left who did well to control inside the box before an accurate attempt was deflected and pawed behind from Stryjek.

Straight up the other end, an impeccable deep cross from Jacobson was introduced to the head of Sam Vokes who fired on target, before the former Wales international struck wide of the near-post seconds later.

On the verge of the half an hour mark, Smith latched onto a defensive error from Forino, beating him for pace and, despite working in a tricky angle, blazed towards an inspired Stryjek.

Deadlock was broken on the 32nd minute when Lewis Wing's free-kick from the far right was inch-perfect for the advancing Tafazolli, who volleyed in from close proximity.

With half-time looming, the hosts continued to do everything but find the back of the net. Following a neat one-two inside the box, the ball was cut back to Lankester from 12 yards - who drilled inches past the post as another clear-cut attempt went begging.

Bonner's men were handed a sucker-punch in the next attack after Vokes clattered the crossbar from long-distance, falling on a plate to Wheeler who nodded home to double the visitors' lead.

A lightning start to the second half saw Brophy direct an attempt at goal from outside of the area on the 45th minute, showcasing the energy the side still had at their disposal.

Before making their mark, United had to see off a scare with an hour gone when Forino attempted the spectacular from 15 yards to conclude a dangerous final third spell, with the fierce shot prevented by Mitov's dive.

The U's breached the Chairboys' defence on the 61st minute when industrious running from Lankester and a tee up from Knibbs in the process of getting hacked down helped present Smith with the opportunity to poke home for the fifth match in a row.

With the atmosphere ramped up, Bonner immediately went for the proactive approach of bringing on four players to add the impetus to claw it back.

Frustratingly, the game started to peter out for the men in amber, who couldn't quite find that killer pass to open up a tight backline despite valiant attempts.

They came closest on the 88th minute when Liam Bennett's impressive cross swung to Joe Ironside who jumped superbly to power the header, but Stryjek was on hand to catch.

Despite being all amber in the final minutes, they couldn't nestle the equaliser with the side forced into defeat following a spirited streak. Nonetheless, with four games to go and a one-point gap to bridge, the U's will continue to fight for survival.

Up next, the U's make the voyage down to Devon on Saturday afternoon (22nd April) to take on title-chasing Plymouth Argyle – be sure to back the boys in any way you can.