

Third time lucky as Lions get first win of 2012

Ice Hockey news

National League

Lee Valley Lions 7

Slough ENL Jets 3

Lee Valley Lions made it third time lucky in 2012 after they recorded their first win of the calendar year at home to bottom of the league Slough ENL Jets on Saturday.

After beginning the year with two heavy home defeats, the Lions were keen to avoid further embarrassment and got off to a great start when Blair Dubyk impressed with skilful work that confused Jets' netminder Daniel Milton by taking the puck behind his net, but James Hatfull was unable to capitalise on the pass.

However, Richard Hodge made no mistake moments later, scoring an unassisted short-handed goal.

Milton then came under a barrage of shots from the hosts, but the netminder was able to deflect everything aimed in his direction, and it wasn't until 17:23 that Dubyk fired an immense slapshot into the back of the net, to double the Lions' advantage.

Slough stepped up their game during the second period and came close to scoring several times themselves.

And the visitors' efforts were finally rewarded at 32:22, when Lee Hardy put the puck past Lions' netminder Steve Grout.

Lee Valley then responded by widening the score to 4-1 less than two minutes later, when Philippe Mueller scored the team's second short-handed goal with Hodge getting the assist, before Dubyk took advantage of a clear line to goal to score his second of the game, as Slough's defenders looked on in vain.

The third period opened with the Lions leading 4-1 and Mueller extended his side's lead with an incredible wraparound goal while the team were short-handed once more, just over a minute in.

Mueller then struck again to complete his hat-trick at 47:19, at which point Slough opted to rest netminder Milton in favour of Jonathan Lemongelli.

A shot from Dubyk then appeared to have been stopped by Lemongelli, but the puck was dropped and landed over the line, awarded the Lion his hat-trick.

With the score at 7-1, Slough refused to give up and in the dying minutes, Kirkland Rhys-Evans and Nathan Darmanin combined well to score two goals, before seeing a third disallowed.

This Saturday, the Lions host Wightlink Tigers at Lee Valley, with face-off at 5.15pm.



■ Phippe Mueller scored a hat-trick for Lee Valley Lions on Saturday

Pic: Julianne Bonner