

Lions' Maslak in Pole position



Lee Valley Lions 7
Swindon ENL Wildcats 7
(ENIHL South Lge)

THE Lions faced new team, Swindon ENL Wildcats, and the renewed optimism following the swift signings of Ben Williams, Andy Watt and Andrzej Maslak prior to the game proved correct as the east Londoners recorded their first point in over a decade.

Maslak arrived with the biggest reputation, with the Pole having played for his country at U18 and U20 level before making an impact last season with Streatham Redskins.

And it was Maslak, who made the first impression, with a stylish unassisted goal to put the Lions into the lead just three minutes into the game.

Swindon soon equalised at 04:58, thanks to veteran Scott Gough.

Lee Valley retook the lead once more at 10:30, new boy Williams striking home, but again Swindon were quick to prevent the Lions from dominating with their second goal coming from Jamie Newton.

The Wildcats then stole the lead at 18:09 with a shot from Robin Davison.

The hosts however continued to match their opponents in both strength and consistency throughout the second period. Michael Jacobs began to shine, scoring twice in just over five minutes.

Swindon still had tricks up their sleeve and pulled themselves back into a 6-5 lead with goals from Adam



Andrews and Dave Lovejoy.

The last period had only just begun when Michael Jacobs scored his hat-trick for the Lions, this time assisted by Mark Saunders and James Hatfull.

Tension was rising, both on and off the bench, as Lee Valley realised that league points were within their grasp for the first time since their reformation the previous season.

That optimism was briefly shattered when Neil Rouse broke through to score Swindon's seventh goal at 45:21.

However, for the first time this season, the Lions did not let their heads go down.

They persisted with their attack, focused on achieving a positive result and Williams duly scored the

BIG NAME: Pole Andrzej Maslak, who scored on his Lions debut

(Photo: Julianne Bonner)

equaliser, unassisted at 50:13 to leave it all square.

For the Lions this was not only their first league point since reformation, but their first since the original Lions beat Paisley Pirates 6-5 on March 18 1995.

Delighted manager Deryk Beeson said: "For the first time we played the majority of the three periods as a team and we reaped our reward.

"We didn't quit when the going got tough and we showed ourselves to be Lions with an almighty roar."

The Lions now play at Oxford on Sunday.