

# Lions are cut down by the Swindon Wildcats

Swindon Wildcats 6

Lee Valley Lions 4

(English National League, South Two)

THE Lee Valley Lions slipped up in their first ice hockey game of the new year last weekend.

The English National Ice Hockey League South Two outfit travelled to take on the Swindon Wildcats, their close rivals in the lower reaches of the division.

The game started well for the Lions as they tested Swindon's resolve in defence and took the lead.

Michael Jacobs broke through for the visitors with nine minutes gone. He buried the puck in the net with a strong slap shot from a break away.

This galvanised the Wildcats and they came back with their claws out. The equalising goal came quickly when Andrew Boot in goal was beaten by a deceptively strong strike from the stick of Jamie Newton.

The Lions lost their momentum after this and they gave away a second in the 15th minute when Sam Feeny dispatched the puck after a period of physical play.

The goal left the Lions reeling and the Wildcats leapt at the chance to increase their tally. Newton struck again on 25 minutes to make it 3-1.

Lions' keeper Boot produced two fine saves from a power-play, but he was left scrambling in the 35th



Man of the match Michael Jacobs celebrates his goal in the defeat by Swindon

minute by Swindon's Joe Oliver. From the right he managed to get his shot past the plucky keeper.

But the Lions kept plugging away and were rewarded on 35 minutes with a long range snap shot goal from Stas Prokofiev.

It shortened their deficit to two goals heading into the final period but Swindon

struck again through Jamie Newton, who wrapped up his hat-trick in the 44th minute.

And the Lions looked buried in the 49th when Grant Richardson made it six for the hosts.

But the Lions refused to go out with a whimper. Nick Alley knocked the puck past the Wildcats' keeper late on to make it 6-3, and Joe Berry

added another with a power-play goal, but the team's late heroics were not enough to salvage something from the game. The result hoists the Wildcats up on to 11 points, level with the Lee Valley Lions.

The Lions take on Chelmsford Chieftains on Saturday, who sit top of the pile in South Two.