Dan Lewis

**GLAMORGAN men’s football 1st team have pulled off the ultimate great escape – defeating rivals Swansea on the final day of the season in the battle to avoid relegation.**

A crushing 5-0 victory against the Swans on the last day of the season was enough to claw Glamorgan out of the bottom two – with their south Wales opponents replacing them in the relegation zone and dropping out of the division.

The result means that Glamorgan will have a side in the Premier South Division for another season – a huge tribute to the university, which doesn’t boast the same budgets as the likes of league champions Hartpury.

It has been a gruelling campaign for the Blue & Yellows, but manager Steve Savage believes that his group of players can now push on next season and challenge the likes of Hartpury, thanks to some of the links already in place.

Speaking to *The Phoenix,* Savage said: “We are hoping to push on next season. We’ve had a few years in the Prem so it will still be tough to survive, but we will look to target footballers with the links that we have with Welsh football clubs and the Cardiff City academy, and try to target specific players to come in and have a real go at it.

“The league is too easy for Hartpury in my opinion - they have it their own way every year, so I would like to have a real go at them next year.

“We picked up a point away at Hartpury this season, so we are not a million miles away - it is just a case of one or two very good footballers coming through the Glamorgan doors.”

That point away at Hartpury was picked out by the Glamorgan manager as one of the highlights of the season, along with the one-sided affair with Swansea to round off another year of football for the men’s team.

Though despite these memorable highlights, it has also been a season that has seen many low points with the side battling relegation throughout, something which ‘Sav’ – as he is affectionately known by his players – believes was inevitable.

He said: "I was realistic in the sense that I felt with this squad of players we would struggle, so to get that win against Swansea on the final day and cross the finish line was crucial – relief more than joy because it has been a tough season.

“The reality is, without the top players – and we don’t recruit football players, we rely on students coming through the doors from all over – we will always struggle. But overall it was a good season and a huge tribute to the university to survive.

“We lost eight of our starting 11 from the previous season, so from the outset we knew it would be a challenge and that we would have to give time to allow the side to gel and for us to get our message across to them.”

When Savage, David Gough and the rest of the coaching staff did get their ethos across to the new players in the side, it was all systems go with victories away at Swansea and at home to Brighton which acted as a springboard for the side to push on.

Though Glamorgan failed to find any real consistency in their season, and this was highlighted in the 6-0 mauling at the hands of Chichester in the first round of the BUCS Championship, which meant the campaign of many ups and downs ended on a rather sour note.

“The Northumbria game was a tough one for us,” Savage said in his frank and honest interview in this month’s issue of *The Phoenix*.

“We took the decision to play our same squad players, taking four players that would normally start out of the side. This included our holding midfielder and goalkeeper as well as some other midfielders.”

“Because our squad wasn’t always the strongest, these players were always going to be challenging, and this competition was a chance for those who have been loyal to us and trained every week to get their chance.”

“We always said the league was our main priority, so this competition gave some of the other players a chance of playing.”

**Relive the highs and lows of the Glamorgan men’s 1st team’s season with match-reports and reaction on pages\_\_\_\_**