

Leeds City Boys v Sheffield (League)

With the end of the season in sight, Saturday's home match against Sheffield was a crucial one: whilst not quite 'winner takes all', three points for an unbeaten Leeds team would put them six points ahead of their South Yorkshire rivals who still have two games to play.

The team: Backhouse, Barker, Batty, Bostan, Brown, Pearson, Regan, Wilson Gales.

A pre-match huddle before the kick off was an indication of the seriousness of Leeds' intent, and they started the better of the two teams, with Regan Tayler shooting just wide twice in the first five minutes, the second chance coming after a great tackle by Jarvis Barker.

Sheffield's main attacking threat came down their right, with the tall number 15 making a few strong runs out of midfield, but with Brown looking as quick and sharp as ever, those threats didn't come to anything and Donahue wasn't troubled in goal during the first third of the match.

Leeds were winning the majority of the midfield battles, Batty, Pearson and Barker ensuring Sheffield couldn't get through and Backhouse provided some attacking threat down the right. It wasn't long before they started to turn this pressure into chances, with a great cross by Regan being headed just wide by Wilson-Gales.

Finally, just before half time, Leeds managed to get the goal their fantastic play deserved: a perfect corner taken from the right by Wilson-Gales dropped on to the head of Bostan, who scored. 1-0 to the home team and a well-deserved lead.

The second third saw a change of personnel, with Dean and Webb replacing Wilson-Gales and Barker, and it wasn't long before Dean got involved in the attack, running strongly down the right and passing to Bostan whose shot went just past the post.

This third of the match was much tighter however, and whilst Taylor and Bostan worked hard to create opportunities, the Sheffield defence stood firm, only conceding an early corner which came to nothing.

The South Yorkshire team had also changed their line-up at the end of the first third, and the big number 7 started to cause problems for the Leeds defence. He was involved in the first decent chance of the match for Sheffield, as he linked up with the number 15 who smacked a shot into the penalty area that was well-claimed by the Leeds keeper making his first save of the match.

Webb created a chance for Bostan by chipping the ball over the Sheffield defence, but it came to nothing, and the match started to become scrappy as passes went astray and the ball was lost in midfield. Just as Sheffield started to look more lively, Dean received the ball out on the right hand side, took the ball past a few Sheffield players and passed to Bostan, whose shot flashed wide of the left hand post.

The final third started with Jack White and Wilson-Gales on, replacing Bostan and Webb. Sheffield attacked straight from the off and looked much brighter than at any point in the match. A powerful header by Backhouse cleared the ball on the edge of the area and he was soon called into action again as Sheffield broke 3 on 1, but he was quick to break up the attack.

The momentum was definitely now with the away team, and chances were hard to come by for Leeds, despite the best efforts of Regan and Wilson-Gales who were both working hard in the attack. The Sheffield number 7 continued to cause problems and Brown was called into action to break up a move between him and the Sheffield number 3.

In the last ten minutes Woodeson made his return from injury, starting up front with instructions to chase everything. Barker also came on as Regan and Batty were replaced, but the momentum was still with Sheffield, who finally earned their first corner of the match. It was put out by the Leeds defence for another corner and much to the despair of the home team, this one led to the equaliser. The ball wasn't cleared by the Leeds defence, was headed back into the area and seemed to ricochet off another Sheffield player's head and over the keeper. 1-1!

As the minutes ticked by Dean created a great opportunity for himself and his shot was saved by the Sheffield keeper who fingertipped it past the post for a corner that came to nothing, but after that the momentum seemed to shift to the away team as their number 7 forced a save from Donahue and some strong defensive play from Barker.

Despite a few more tactical changes to try and boost the midfield, Leeds were unable to wrestle back control of the match, and the match finished 1-1, much to the disappointment of the home team. The league title's destination now depends on Sheffield's next two games: with four points the difference it's going to be a nervous end to the season for everyone involved.