

ESFA Round 2

Leeds A Schools FA 0 - 2 Liverpool Schools

Saturday 26th November 2022

After their performance against Chesterfield the previous week, Leeds needed to step their game up against a formidable Liverpool team.

Unfortunately, it was the visitors who came out of the blocks faster for the first few minutes when they dominated possession but struggled to create any clear-cut chances. It took a number of excellent crunching, but well-timed tackles, from Stevie Cochrane to keep Liverpool at bay which then seemed to inspire the rest of the Leeds players.

Some excellent energy and battling in midfield by Charlie Eteen then led to Billy Marsden attacking the Liverpool defence and a gaining well-earned corner that was unfortunately wasted. Leeds continued to press Liverpool back and this time a through ball from Billy was just over hit when Flynn Pryde looked to be through one on one.

Liverpool then attacked Leeds at pace and their number 3, who was excellent throughout, attacked down the left-side beating a couple of players before delivering a cross that was volleyed in with composure by an oncoming Liverpool striker, leaving Spencer Grand no chance.

It was Leeds again who were on the front foot with a dangerous corner delivered by Lucas Horne which was there to be finished but disappointingly no-one attacked the out-swinging corner. Some great long throws from Spencer tried to get the team on the attack quickly but often came to nothing. Then with just a few minutes remaining a quality cross ball from Blazej Staszkiwicz sat up nicely for Flynn to hit a shot that sadly went wide.

It was the Liverpool's turn to go on the attack and it took some great battling and a last-ditch tackle from Rafael Burton to ensure the score line remained at 0-1.

The half time whistle blew at 0-1. The story of the first half was that although Leeds probably edged it overall and worked extremely hard, they created very little in the final third whereas Liverpool always looked dangerous when moving the ball quicker and running at Leeds with real pace.

The second half started in similar fashion to the first half and Liverpool scored early on to make it 0-2 which was the exact start Leeds wanted to avoid. They continued to press and forced a frustrated Leeds to start giving away needless freekicks, one which hit the bar.

The remainder of the game was much less eventful for Leeds compared to the first half performance. The best move of the half involved some skillful dribbling from Jonah Reed followed by some slick passing but led to a threatening cross which came to nothing.

Whilst they continued to battle hard and show great energy, particularly from Lucas Horne and Joe Secker on the wings, sadly Liverpool showed more quality when in possession.

If Leeds can find the form they showed against Rotherham a few weeks ago and the first half of today's match, they will be able to compete with any team. Some more self-belief and better quality when moving the ball going forwards will surely push these boys on to more wins over the remainder of the season.