

U13 Leeds Girls earn first victory in the ESFA Champions League

In their inaugural season, Leeds Schools U13s girls got off the mark with their first win ever.

They emerged victorious in the first round of the English Schools FA Cup against a very good West Lancs side on Friday night.

After a frenetic start under the floodlights at Cockburn, West Lancs edged the opening exchanges and deservedly went ahead from a corner. This seemed to galvanise Leeds and they went up a gear, seeing the game finally balanced for the next 5 to 10 minutes.

That was until Leeds won a corner. It was swung in left-footed by Phoebe, picking out Leeds striker Thea who sent a bullet header flying into the back of the net.

This was the newly-formed Leeds Schools U13s girls first competitive goal.

After a tough start last week in a convincing defeat away at Barnsley, the girls really got into their stride after the equaliser - knocking the ball about and showing good poise both in and out of possession.

Both teams went into halftime level pegging at 1-1 after a very entertaining encounter in South Leeds.

The second half was similarly finely balanced with both teams testing each other from distance as well as sending crosses and balls into their respective boxes.

Leeds keeper, Scarlett, kept the West Yorkshire side in it with a brilliant save with the score still level at 1-1.

Then a few minutes later came the breakthrough. After winning the ball back in midfield and exchanging passes, Leeds pressed forward and striker Lola was sent racing free.

After drawing a good save from the keeper in the first half, she made no mistake this time with a low right foot shot into the far left corner to make it 2-1 to Leeds.

The following 10 minutes were then pretty even with West Lancs playing some great football. Leeds keeper Scarlett had to make some good saves and the defenders in front of her put in several last ditch challenges to keep the door bolted shut.

Just as nerves were jangling, Leeds finally sealed victory.

Again it was another through ball, this time with some air on it, that picked out Lola who raced through to get on the end of it. After steadying herself, she powered home a half volley with her right foot to make it 3-1 to Leeds, handing them the win.

Coaches Matt and Cisco praised the girls' effort and togetherness.

Coach Matt said: "I'm absolutely buzzing for all the girls - so great to see them play so well and the enjoyment they all got from it."

Coach Cisco added: "The girls were outstanding, every player played great. Defence never stopped running, keeper was solid and pulled off a massive save at 1-1, midfield covered every inch of the pitch and strikers looked dangerous. It really was a team performance." Leeds now travel to the Keepmoat this week to take on Doncaster in the league, hoping to capitalise on their first victory in their debut campaign.