

Match Report 12/10/24

U13 Harrogate 3-4 LSFA U13

After suffering their first defeat of the season last weekend at home to Rotherham, it was important that Leeds Schools FA U13 Boys quickly returned to winning ways. This week they took on Harrogate and Craven in their second group stage match of the ESFA Cup.

After having already beaten Harrogate 5-1 in a preseason friendly, hopes were high but it was an illness and injury ravaged side that took to the field today.

Leeds enjoyed much of the possession in the early stages and looked a technically better side throughout. The attacking midfield players began to combine nicely showing exciting glimpses of what they could go on to produce as the season progresses. The deadlock was eventually broken after some brilliant work down the left-hand side by Lucas Horne. It looked like Andres Iniesta had come out of retirement as he left the Harrogate full back for dead and got his shot away. Although his effort fully deserved a goal, the keeper just about got a glove to it. Ethan Alam, doing what any good forward player should do, tapped in the knock down.

After a number of chances went begging, Billy Marsden showed his strength up front by shrugging off two defenders and slotting home from a long ball over the top.

At 2-0 Leeds were cruising and should have been out of sight but, as everyone knows, if you don't take your chances, you could pay the price. Harrogate grew into the game and started to look dangerous on the counter and they forced some decent saves from Spencer Grand in the Leeds goal. One of the highlights of the game was defender Ernie Browes' perfectly timed 'Bobby Moore' tackle that denied Harrogate a goal scoring opportunity. Unfortunately, Leeds did eventually yield to the pressure and Harrogate came in level at the break after punishing Leeds with a couple of quick counter attacks.

The second half started more nervously than the first but Billy Marsden scored two more to complete his hat trick and put Leeds in control. Both finishes coming from tight angles down the right with moves started by great passes out from the back by Ethan Alam.

As the second half became increasingly scrappy with both sides picking up knocks, Leeds showed great character to hold on. There were great performances all over pitch. Ollie Grayston read everything Harrogate threw at him with ease and both Leeds' goalkeepers Spencer Grand and George Marsden had great afternoons.

Harrogate nicked another one two minutes from time but it wasn't enough to prevent Leeds from taking all three points and finishing deserved 4-3 winners.