

## Nottingham 1 Leeds 1 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010

Leeds arrived at the university sports ground in glorious sunshine and were so impressed by the lush playing surface that Mr Tonge decided on a Wembley cup final style pitch inspection with the boys checking out the pitch in full Leeds schools uniforms, although waving to relatives in the crowd would have been difficult as most of the parents were tucking into an early morning breakfast courtesy of the bacon sandwich van.

Leeds record at Nottingham doesn't read well over the years and the feeling at the end of the game was one of disappointment that Leeds didn't win the game because on balance of play they deserved to. Leeds started well with wide players Joe Gardner and Lewis Firbank looking sharp, Lewis even received compliments at half time from the match official, down the middle midfield dynamo Dom Healey was forming a good understanding with the Leeds speed machine that is Clifford Konadu, twice putting the striker through on goal, the first chance going inches wide the second stopped by the onrushing keeper. As in previous weeks teams don't always have to work too hard to score goals against Leeds as goals are often gifted, an innocuous corner from the left saw Leeds have three chances to clear before a forlorn Chris Littlewood was picking the ball out of the Leeds net 1-0 Notts. Leeds still looked the team with the more potent goal threat although it would be unfair on Nottingham to say they were no threat at all, particularly down our right hand side where a tricky winger was allowed too much room to run from midfield, full marks to left back Joel Haley for marshalling him superbly and preventing any crosses coming into the Leeds area. With three minutes to go before half time Joe Gardner was unceremoniously clattered inside the Nott's penalty area, penalty screamed the Leeds parents, offside decided the ref, the very jovial official telling us he hadn't been wrong in 20 years and he wasn't going to start now (priceless). So Leeds left the field with work to do but confident of turning it round. Half time 1 - 0 Notts.

For the first fifteen minutes of the second half Leeds completely dominated proceedings. The warning signs were there for Nottingham well before Rhys Walker's slide rule pass opened up their defence to release Clifford who fired past the keeper for the Leeds equaliser, a real striker's finish. The confidence of a goal saw Clifford net again but this time he was judged offside. Bradley Reynolds shot wide after busting a lung to reach a Clifford cross after good work by Joe Gibson who again impressed down the left hand side, then Dom Healey rounded the keeper but couldn't quite finish from a very acute angle as Leeds surged forward. Even though Leeds were dominating the play they could easily have lost the game with three minutes to go if it had not been for the superb reflexes of Fletcher Paley who pulled off a save that goes down as one of the best I've seen in schoolboy football, with the Notts striker bearing down on goal from 5 yards out and the Leeds parents waiting for the net to ripple, Fletcher dived to his left and miraculously managed to palm the ball over the bar, superb. Final score 1 - 1.

Disappointment that we didn't win the game but like last week still more positives than negatives, the players' commitment level was good particularly midfield and the impressive Matthew Hambleton and Cameron Dyas forged a good central defensive partnership, roll on next week.