

ESFA 7-a-side Northern Finals

Super Leeds U11's reach National 7-a-side Finals!

Leeds City Boys U11's took on and beat all-comers at the ESFA North of England 7-a-side Finals to book their place in the National Finals for only the second time in the last 15 years.

Representing West Yorkshire, the young Leeds team braved dreadful north-east weather to produced 5 fantastic performances against other regional champions from across the north at the Academy of Light, Sunderland.

Pitched in a tough qualifying group, Leeds' first aim was to score their first goal in three previous years of trying in this prestigious youth tournament.

They didn't have to wait long as Dylan Youmbi netted straight from the kick-off in the first group game against South Northumberland and this set the tone for a high scoring day for striker Youmbi and the rest of the Leeds team.

South Northumberland were eventually dispatched 3-1 in this first game of the day with Leeds comfortably in control throughout the game.

Next up, an exciting, end-to-end game against a strong Preston side boasting 7 Academy players in their squad. Leeds this time started slowly though and found themselves 2-0 and then 3-1 down early in the game before rallying strongly and scoring 4 late goals to run-out 5-3 winners. An amazing score-line considering the group games lasted only 15 minutes.

The third group game produced no such drama as Leeds produced a classy performance and some great attacking football to see off Redcar & Cleveland 3-0.

York represented the final hurdle in reaching the semi-finals and as always produced a resilient display. Leeds had to dig deep in the driving rain to overcome their Yorkshire rivals and whilst the football was not as pretty as in the previous games Leeds ran out worthy 3-2 winners to deservedly top their qualifying group and in doing so managed to avoid another high quality side, Liverpool in the semi-finals.

With the winners of each semi-final guaranteeing their place in the National Finals, it left only 2nd place qualifiers from the opposite group, Chester, in the way of the Leeds team achieving their goal.

Chester have been Leeds' nemesis in the past, narrowly beating them 2-1 in the semi-final three years ago but this Leeds team are really something special and the young boys showed no sign of tiredness despite a long and wet day, turning in a Rolls-Royce performance to win the game 5-0!