

MATCH REPORT 20

Saturday 18th February 2017 Away to Barnsley Schools in a friendly.

Brad W, Jack, Ben, Jamie, Max, Russell, Sam, Charlie, Jake, Alfie, Harvey, Brad P and Ben. Olly P and Ian were absent whilst Zach continues to be injured. Also making an appearance in preparation for the forthcoming tournament were guest players Joe O'Toole and Sam Appleyard.

Coach Olly was still away having fun, sorry working, on a School skiing trip and so Bobby was once again 'Top Dog' in the dugout.

Period one lined up as Harvey, Ben, Leo, Russell, Sam A, Charlie, Jake, Alfie and Brad W.

A steady start for Leeds began with Alfie and Charlie causing Barnsley to work hard at the back before Barnsley broke forward via the nippy lad who'd caused them problems in the league but Harvey denied him as he came racing out to the edge of his box in order to dive at his feet.

Russell was working hard in an unfamiliar left back position and had a couple of good defensive manoeuvres early doors.

The nippy kid was almost presented with an opportunity when Leo scuffed his back pass but again Harvey was quick and commanding in his box.

A throw in by Leeds eventually fell to Brad W who shimmied and turned to shoot but it lacked power and was cleared off the line. In the same passage of play Jake crossed the ball and it cannoned off the crossbar.

Alfie then had a shot as did Sam A. Leeds were looking the stronger team in a largely scrappy game that was lacking the fluidity of passing that Leeds are capable of.

Russell then lost his man as Barnsley looked to break but a strong challenge by Leo stopped them in their tracks. It was role reversal then for Leo as he was robbed on the half way line by the nippy kid but Sam A was tracking back and he recovered the ball.

Brad W was then put away and his shot forced the first real save of the game on eleven minutes. The resultant corner was clipped in to the side netting courtesy of a Barnsley foot and the next one was marginally wide via Leo's head.

Moments later Charlie took the ball down before volleying just over the bar. From the goal kick the nippy lad was away and Ben made an enforced error that allowed him through. There were calls for a penalty as Ben put himself in the way of the loose ball after Harvey's save but the ref waved them away.

Barnsley followed this up with a wayward shot before Charlie tried to release Jake. The game was flipping from end to end but it was, on occasion, more hit and hope than champagne football from both sides.

The nippy kid was off again as Barnsley broke and had three v two as they fired in a couple of crosses that ultimately Leeds defended well. At the Barnsley end Jake went on a run and pulled it back to Brad W who had the ball in the net but the ref has already blown up as Jake had run it out of play. 0-0 at the end of the first period.

Period two lined up with Joe, Sam, Leo, Ben, Jack, Max, Russell, Brad P and Jamie. It was Leeds who surged forward first through Russell before Sam W stopped Barnsley breaking away.

A few more bursts forward by Leeds, with Russell and Jamie leading the charge, resulted in a soft shot by Russell whilst Sam W and Ben both made important defensive interventions.

Max was busying away in the middle of the pitch and constantly looking to set Jamie free and he had a couple of decent balls which did so.

Barnsley then broke forward and as Joe played out a back pass his ball was wayward and only found a Barnsley player. Just as the lad was about to release the trigger Leo slid in and made an excellent tackle.

A fantastic sweeping cross field ball by Jack found Russell in space. The ball eventually made its way to Jamie but his shot was charged down. A moment or two later Brad P poked the ball through to Jamie in the box who whistled it across the keeper and in to the bottom corner for 0-1.

Barnsley nearly equalised as they immediately went on the hunt as Joe slipped trying to get off his line but he recovered well. It was soon to be 1-1 though as a harmless back pass by Leo was allowed to run across his body by Joe and into his own goal. There was no pressure on Joe but it was an opportunity for a lesson to be learned; you should never play a back pass between the sticks. It was harsh on Leeds who were the better of the two teams but worse was to come. Seconds later after being gifted a corner Barnsley scored with a bullet header to lead 2-1.

Beautiful feet from Jack on the edge of the Barnsley box were followed by a thunderous shot which had the Barnsley keeper flying through the air like Billy the Fish to make a great save. The following corner was met by Jamie at the back door but his shot clipped the base of the post and out for a goal kick.

A great ball by Max curled out to Russell on the wing created time and space but Russell hesitated a moment too long and the danger receded.

Another soft corner conceded, this time by Sam W, gave Barnsley another opportunity that Ben almost turned into his own net with Joe unsighted.

Leeds had overall been the better team but seemed to want to be the architects of their own downfall in this period as the referee brought the whistle to his lips.

Period three saw Harvey, Sam, Leo, Max, Jack, Brad W, Alfie, Jamie and Brad P pouring forward with intent as Jack and Sam W both played inviting balls into the danger area. There were a few early half chances as a Leeds looked to try and camp themselves in the Barnsley half.

Jack whipped in a corner that was an in-swinger and which stung the keepers hands. Moments later Leeds equalised via the boot of Brad W to make it 2-2.

There was definitely a lot more pass and move now from Leeds but Barnsley had the next shot with Harvey diving low to turn away a vicious shot. Sam W headed clear the corner before Harvey saved the return.

Play then switched and Barnsley's keeper had to save from Brad W and Alfie's follow up was cleared off the line. Shortly after this a Leeds corner was fired across and Alfie shot wide at the far stick with his third effort of the day before Sam W and Max tidied up a Barnsley break.

Both teams were searching for the next goal as Sam W and Alfie were combining well once more down the left flank. Jamie was the benefactor of this combination on several occasions with one header flying just wide of the mark not long after Barnsley had fired over the Leeds bar.

Barnsley tried their luck again but were once more wide of the target. Max was having a solid performance at right back giving Barnsley little or no change down the right hand side.

Barnsley were soon scampering back to stop Brad W and then Brad P narrowly missed a great cross by Alfie. With three minutes of the period remaining Leeds were awarded another corner that was met by Alfie's head but with the keeper beaten all ends up a defender nodded it off the line. Alfie had been really close to breaking his duck that's for sure.

A sweeping move by Sam W, Alfie and Brad W nearly saw Leeds take the lead as the whistle signalled an end to the period.

Period four pitched Joe, Sam W, Leo, Max, Jake, Sam A, Charlie, Jamie and Alfie against the lads from South Yorkshire and they soon broke forward with Jamie crossing over to Jake who's shot was saved and Alfie clocked up shot number five as he was denied once more with the follow up.

From a Leeds throw-in Sam A was afforded an opportunity but it was straight into the keepers arms although in a flash it was 2-3 as Jamie raced through. It looked like the keeper may save it but he collided with his own defender leaving Jamie to tap it into an empty net.

Charlie had an opportunity that went over the bar and then Leeds created another opening as Jamie shot forward and crossed across an open goal with Alfie arriving like a steam train at the back door. With the headlines beckoning and his dad wondering if six was his lucky number Alfie connected with the ball but the shot somehow flew over the top.

Another shot came from the foot of Sam A but this was wide and not long after he took a punt from distance but was, this time, denied by the keeper.

It was 2-4 before long as Sam W hit a pass to Alfie who lofted an inch perfect cross to a Jamie who tucked the ball away with consummate ease and had Coach Bobby telling Alfie that 'that was better than a goal' although I'm not sure the Leeds winger was fully agreeable.

A flurry of Leeds corners followed with one swung over by Charlie allowed Alfie to get his just desserts in front of the now expectant crowd as he headed it home to make it 2-5 and his dad re-assessing his lucky lottery numbers to include '7'.

From the kick off Barnsley went forward and hit the bar before firing in the rebound to make it 3-5.

With five minutes to go Charlie lofted through a ball to Jamie and the panic in Barnsley's back line was visible as the gave away a corner. Leo came close to getting a touch but the keeper easily collected and panic over.

Barnsley once more motored forward and fired across Joe in the Leeds goal for 4-5 and game on!

Leeds tried to reply through Charlie but with better options in front of him he opted to shoot into the keepers arms from a tight angle.

Russell then came on for an injured Alfie just before Barnsley struck the Leeds bar.

It was then the turn of Leeds and Jamie made no mistake to make it 4-6 with his 34th of the campaign and thus settled the nerves.

Jake was then frustrated by the linesman and his flag although it was immaterial as his shot was saved by the keeper as the curtain was brought down on a Leeds victory and I swear I could hear Cilla Black asking 'What's it all about?'