

## **Leeds Schools FA U11's Midlands Tour 2014**

Leeds City Boys' U11's annual tour to the West Midlands ended in more success for the talented young squad as a late, late goal by Cassidy Hanakin ensured an aggregate draw across two concurrent high quality games against a Birmingham City Schools select squad and a deserved share of the inaugural **Bernard Day Memorial trophy**.

The tour kicked off on **Hallowe'en** at Wednesfield High School with friendly games against Solihull and Wolverhampton for the touring Leeds A and B squads respectively.

In a case of 'trick or treat', Leeds B team struggled against and were ultimately devoured by a tricky Wolves side 4-1, whilst the Leeds A team provided a treat of a performance in scaring off Solihull 5-1.

Leeds B team had started brightly against Wolves and stayed in the game for the first two thirds of the game with Ross Allison continuing his hot goal-scoring streak for Leeds with their only goal of the game. However, the visitors faded in the final third of the game and conceded two late goals to end up three goals down and comfortably beaten.

Leeds A team had no such trouble against a highly-rated Solihull side and put in an excellent performance to run out 5-1 winners.

Dylan Youmbi netted the first for Leeds as he lashed home a Cole Roberts through ball with his deadly left foot.

Saul Kane went agonisingly close to making it two-nil with a 25 yard chipped lob over the Solihull keeper which just drifted onto the upright and was desperately cleared away and the first period ended 1-0.

Striker Josh Stones was unlucky not to get a hat-trick in the second period as he caused havoc within the Solihull defence. His deserved goal finally came as he sent the Solihull keeper the wrong way on one of his trademark bursts through the middle.

Solihull were proving very combative and were certainly no mugs and Leeds had to stand up to some tough challenges to earn the right to play their football.

A set-back for Leeds came late in the second third of the game as a crisp shot just inside the box bounced unkindly in front of GK Fin Wade and Solihull reacted first to the re-bounce to make it 2-1 at the break.

The final third saw Leeds move into overdrive as Solihull struggled to cope with the electric pace of forwards Cassidy Hanakin and Dylan Youmbi.

First Hanakin raced onto a high through ball and bravely headed the ball round the stranded Solihull keeper before firing home from an angle. Hanakin again raced through the tired defence and checked inside to set-up Youmbi for his second and Leeds' fourth of the day.

The final goal of the game completed Youmbi's hat-trick as he skipped down the right wing evading several challenges before driving the ball home with the aid of a deflection.

So mixed fortunes for the two Leeds teams with a 5-1 win and 4-1 reverse and an even tougher test anticipated the following day against Birmingham.

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A rousing minute's applause was delivered by all sets of players and supporters in honour of the late Bernard Day in tribute and recognition of his massive contribution to Birmingham primary schools football community.

This annual fixture between the touring Leeds U11 squad and the select Birmingham District sides has now been given its own trophy in the form of the **Bernard Day Memorial Trophy** to be awarded based on the aggregate result score of the two 'A' and 'B' team games played side by side.

Leeds' B team provided a much improved performance from the previous day as they ran a talented Birmingham side very close for most of the game before finally losing out 3-1 with Striker Ross Allison scoring what proved to be a vital goal for Leeds.

Leeds A team were up against the toughest test of the season so far as a very skilful and fast Birmingham side matched the visiting side blow-for-blow in a goal-less first period.

The second period continued in the same way as the first with two evenly matched teams creating few chances between them and a fierce battle ensued in the midfield area.

Birmingham were unlucky not to take the lead as they finally broke through the Leeds defence and rattled the crossbar, but it was Leeds who managed to break the deadlock.

Defender Billy Carroll launched a free-kick forward from his own half over a high Birmingham defensive line and Josh Stones latched on and coolly lobbed the keeper to open the scoring. Route-one stuff but effective nonetheless.

Leeds quickly doubled their lead as a superb through ball from Alfie Wilkinson released Cole Roberts who slotted the ball home with aplomb to end the second period 2-0.

The final third saw some re-organisation of both teams and Birmingham came back into the game strongly with two quick goals to even the scoreline. The first was toed into the top corner following a scramble in the box and the second an unlucky own goal from Billy Carroll as he attempted to clear off the line from a corner under extreme pressure.

With the other game drawing to a close at 3-1 to Birmingham, Leeds needed to find another gear and claw back two late goals if they were to be able to get one hand on the **Bernard Day Trophy**.

The young Leeds boys showed great character and team spirit as they forced their way back into the lead with another great finish from Cole Roberts this time from a Dylan Youmbi cross and danger man Youmbi again was denied a clear penalty when he was scythed down when through on goal in the box.

As the minutes ticked down and with some Birmingham players losing their cool, Leeds kept theirs and Saul Kane found some space in midfield and released Cassidy Hanakin through on goal expertly and his first time finish under pressure sealed the result for Leeds 'A' 4-2 and brought the overall aggregate score to 5-5 and perhaps fittingly the inaugural Bernard Day Memorial Trophy was shared between the Leeds and Birmingham squads.

A great bonding trip for the young Leeds boys who can look forward to a really promising season ahead if they can continue the great early season strides they have made as a whole squad.

