

Saturday 1st October away v Sheffield Schools FA at St Georges Park (Graves, Sheffield).

Zach, Big Brad, Little Brad, Leo, Max, Jack, Charlie, Jake, Sam, Jamie, Ian, Russell and Alfie. Olly P and Ben were absent.

The Leeds Boys strode proudly out onto the 4G surface, which was provided courtesy of a £7m+ grant from the FA. They looked resplendent in their new royal blue kit sponsored by PIA Wills & Estates and looked ready to face the Sheffield team that had won the tournament at St Therasas's 2 weeks ago without conceding a goal in 140 minutes.

Ian, Big Brad, Alfie and Charlie started on the bench as Leeds kicked off. Leeds won an early corner after a great clearance by Sam but it came to nothing. Jake came close after winning a strong challenge on the edge of Sheffield's box. Jack then sent a perfect ball through to Little Brad who beat the keeper but not the bar as it sailed over. Jack forced the first save of the game before Russell sent Jamie away who has pace to burn but on this occasion not enough to get a meaningful shot away. With around 8 minutes on the clock it was five shots to two, an impressive start from Leeds.

Zach took a comfortable catch and a great throw found Jack in space before the attack broke down. Russell was the next to send Jamie away who played a beautiful lay off to Little Brad who made the keeper work. The game was fast moving as both teams tried to play the 'beautiful game'.

Jack was working very hard down the channels and he set Jamie away who squared for Jake but the pass was intercepted by Sheffield. Sheffield then broke away and had the ball in the back of the net but the referee judged, correctly, that the ball had gone out of play in the build up. Soon after Russell conceded a tackle with a great recovery tackle. The whistle blew at 0-0 with Zach making a good save following a knee injury sustained when he landed awkwardly making a good save from a corner moments earlier.

Little Brad, Jack, Jamie and Russell made way for the subs at the start of the second period.

Big Brad had the first strike on goal after good work from Jake out wide. It was the first of several teasing through balls Jake would play in quick succession. He also came close with a shot after fine work from Charlie.

It was proving a solid team performance with Sam and Leo commanding at the back.

Ian then broke from the wing and pulled back a wonderful ball for Charlie to side foot in from the middle of the box. 0-1 to Leeds!

A gorgeous ball from Charlie set Ian free who jinxed and looked for Big Brad but couldn't quite find the final ball. Sheffield then broke but Alfie and Leo were on hand to tidy up. A fair exchange followed for a few minutes before a throw in caused confusion in Sheffield's box and Big Brad found himself unmarked in the box. He kept his composure and smashed it past the despairing keeper. 0-2 Leeds.

Some fantastic play down the line found Big Brad who fed Ian. Ian's shot was well saved and Jake only just fired over from the rebound.

The ref brought the second period to a conclusion. In truth a period that Leeds were totally dominant, especially in the air picking off Sheffield's attempts at moving forward with consummate ease. Zach was a virtual bystander as Leeds were fluent with their movement.

Period three saw Sam, Jake, Max and Charlie take their seats on the bench. Moments after the restart Zach was unfortunate as a shot went under his diving body and rolled over the line. 1-2.

Sheffield were keen to make amends and soon had the ball in the back of the net again but it was ruled out for offside. It must be said that the referee was having a great game with yet another correct decision.

It seemed to be a different Sheffield that had come out of the traps as Alfie made a great tackle and Leo was also called into action. Olly made a tactical substitution bringing back Sam and Jamie in place of Jake and Big Brad.

Sheffield were the dominant force now but Leeds squeezed a corner and a perfect delivery found Jamie's head but he could only hit the corner of the crossbar and the upright. Play switched and Zach atoned to turn a shot around the post. Ian then sent Little Brad away who twisted and turned but couldn't find the end product. It was end to end now as Jamie almost beat the advancing keeper with a header and again from a corner after Alfie, Leo and Sam had all made clearances. Sheffield then equalised as Zach misjudged a shot that squirmed through his hands and into the net, 2-2 as Olly raced onto the pitch to deliver words of encouragement to his keeper.

Sheffield were now pressing and Leeds were making some solid but last ditch challenges. Olly made another change bringing on Charlie for Jack, as Leeds seemed to have resorted to the long ball game. They really needed somebody to put their foot on the ball and take control.

Sam made a great clearance before Leo showed continued faith in Zach with a back pass under pressure that Zach dealt with well. Leeds then broke and Jamie put Little Brad through and he shot across the keeper and into the net. 2-3 Leeds.

Alfie made two more clearances before the final whistle. The whistle not only signalled the end of the game but also the opportunity for the Leeds team to rush over to their keeper and to display a wonderful show of support for Zach.

It has been a 'game of 3 halves' with Leeds dominant in the first two and Sheffield looking like a different team in the third. A well deserved but hard fought victory which in part was down to the managers tactical genius switching from his favoured 3-3-2 to a 4-3-1 when they were under the cosh.

TOP SCORERS CHART

Jamie 6

Ian 5

Little Brad 3

Big Brad 1

Charlie 1

Jack 1

Olly P 1

Russell 1

