

Bootroom Bulletin

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Y4 Cup Final Special!

Shadwell Y4 had their two biggest games ever, both in the same week! It began on Tuesday as they made the 40 minute trip to Middleton for their Leeds semi-final against St Philip's.

Despite a few corners and a deflected free kick in the first half, the team were able to minimise the opposition's chances. Defensively we looked solid and were also unlucky with our own shots; both Ruben and Freddie H had near misses just flashing wide.

As the game progressed into the second half so did the team's performance. Fantastic wing play from Ilyas and Freddie H resulting in the only goal of the game where a cross was played in and fell to Noah at the far post, who was able to bundle the ball over the line!

It was no less than the team deserved and were able to claim a priceless 1-0 victory to set up the ultimate showdown against St Urban's in the Leeds cup final later that week....

Friday couldn't come quickly enough for the heroic Y4s; the atmosphere a mixture of excitement and anticipation throughout the week as game day drew nearer. The opposition was St Urban's, the team who knocked Bramham Y4s out of their semi-final before Easter and who were just as motivated as you'd expect with some strong, physical players they were definitely up for the battle!

With a crowd of about 60 spectators waiting on the side lines the two teams walked out onto the pitch as if it was the Champions League Final, only more epic! The snooker table-like playing surface, which had obviously been managed and prepared just for this game was everything the team could ask for so they could play their fast-paced style.

Despite Shadwell having the ball early on, it was St Urban's who took the lead through the cruellest of fates; as the ball was drilled into the area from point blank range, poor Arthur could do nothing about the ball striking his shoulder – Penalty! The referee blew his whistle to the dismay of the Shadwell faithful who were bemoaning the lack of VAR at such a prestigious event. Technology would surely have overturned the decision

and the Y4s were on the wrong end of the council's decision to invest in maintaining the city instead...

Nevertheless, this is a resilient bunch, and so it proved just before half time when captain Ilyas turned the opposition defender inside out and took the ball to the by-line. Ilyas, who'd been working on shoelace tying in training, was clearly too focused on the occasion to check whether they'd been done up this time as his strike saw his shoe fly off the end of his foot, distracting the goalkeeper whilst his disguised shot went straight into the far netting! Forget iconic sporting moments such as England lifting the World Cup and Harrogate Town getting promoted to League 2, the sight of Ilyas running back to the centre circle, boot in hand, with his team mates around him tops them all!

Credit to St Urban's, they certainly had their chances and put on a lot of pressure to the Shadwell goal but when you've got a goalkeeper like Ajeet you always have a chance. If they got past the brick wall of Ruby and Rory then Ajeet was there to either gather the loose ball or make tremendous reaction saves!

The team were looking good going forward too with excellent combination passing plays from both Freddie and Arthur leading to some great counter attacks and near misses. As the clock ticked down to three minutes to go Shadwell were able to grab themselves a corner; quickly worked by Ruben and Arthur the ball was played

into the box and there it found Noah, who had ignored Mr B's instructions to come back and cover (what does he know anyway!), and slam the ball into the net to spark uproar in the Shadwell end of the stadium!

Deep into shoe-lace tying time and the clock winding down, Shadwell were able to capitalise on a loose ball in the middle of the park; too far out for your average player, but not Ruben who sized up the goalkeeper and cracked a looping shot that was too hot to handle and smashed in between keeper and crossbar to seal the victory!

The final whistle blew soon after and the players were swarmed by local and national media as they held the trophy aloft. The crowning achievement for a magical cup run that had pretty much everything along the way!

Credit to the players for their attitude and perseverance; we're very proud of them!

