

Cloud over the Tigers

Hyde Utd.....0
Radcliffe.....1

by DAVID JONES

BILLY GARTON protected his nose operation with a mask on Saturday, but the former Manchester United kingpin was one of few Tigers who did not have to hide their faces after this shambles.

Borough came to Ewen Fields looking like a side without a win in their last 17 outings. Unfortunately Hyde, despite creating a few half-chances, looked worse.

They were a shapeless, sorry, sad reflection of last season's side and, on recent displays, one or two players are fighting for their Ewen Fields futures.

The Tigers were without Lutel James, absent after a training ground injury, and defender Jason Gallagher. However, against the likes of Radcliffe it should not have made too much difference.

In fact, the pattern of the the game might have been different if James' replacement, ex-Curzon Ashton midfielder Ged Manning, had not poked a good chance badly wide after 20 seconds.

The next bit of excitement came 35 minutes later, when a flashing header from Phil Ioannou was brilliantly tipped away by Steve Berryman.

Borough's only go at goal had been a cross cum shot from Shaun McHugh, which Jon Scargill scooped from under the bar.

He also blocked a beauty from Ian Lunt, minutes later, but knew little about Borough's morale shattering goal, three minutes into injury time.

For once, ex-Hyde favourite Tony Carroll slipped Garton on the edge of the box, and smashed in a shot that crashed off the post and rebounded across the goalmouth.

Defenders stood like statues as Andy Brown tucked the ball in at the far post.

The Tigers fared better in the second half, when Richard Annan started to weave his magic in midfield. Suddenly, Hyde were looking like a team.

Val Owen saw his header saved at the post, and Berryman appeared from nowhere with a diving save to block an Annan beauty.

However, it was a false dawn. Macca's men retreated into their shells, and fans responded by making for the exits.

Hyde: Scargill 6, Wilson 6, Switzer 6, Tucker 6, Garton 6, Lambert 5, Kimmins 5, Owen 5, Manning 5, Ioannou 5, Nolan 6. Subs: Annan 6 for Ioannou (46), Megram, Edgington.

Radcliffe: Berryman, Astley, McHugh, Farrelly, Bean, Edwards, Lunt, Brown, Carroll, Allen, Lyons. Subs: Senior for Farrelly (46), McCrory, Glendon. Ref: James Waring (Bolton).