

Justice deserts Tigers

Hyde Utd.....1

Bish Auck.....2

by DAVID JONES

LUCKY Bishop Auckland survived a second-half battering on Saturday, only to grab the points with a last-gasp goal.

Second in the table, they should have had it easy - at least in theory - against inconsistent Hyde ... but forget the scoreline. The Tigers did enough to have won this match outright. Only bad luck, and the form of Simon Bishop, denied them.

Hyde hit the woodwork three times, and Ged Kimmins had what looked a great goal disallowed for offside. In between, Bishops' keeper produced saves that should have won him the freedom of the borough.

Critics will rightly note that the Tigers still lack a cutting edge up front, and that both Bishops' goals were down to sloppy defending.

I would not argue. However, on Saturday, Hyde were much better than in recent weeks, in a match that was high on entertainment.

Fast and fluent Lutel James saw a goalbound shot deflected after 25 minutes and, seconds later, another cracker crashed the bar.

Dave Nolan headed wide, and Billy Garton ballooned one over as the Tigers sought to put a series of unsatisfactory showings behind them.

However, it was not all one way. Gary Finley had to head off the line after Andy Shaw took the ball off Jon Scargill, who was trying to dribble the ball out of the box.

The Tigers looked on song but, 20 minutes after the break, Shaw headed on to David Banks. Scargill got his hand to the shot, but it was too hot to hold.

Four minutes later, Hyde were level. Paul Varden was pulled down as he dummied into the box, and Nolan stroked home the penalty.

From then on it was the Tigers all the way, and Simon Bishop had a blinder. However, he knew little about a 30-yard James chip that hit the bar, and a Paul Snape shot that found the same target.

Or a right-footer from Kimmins, that threaded into the bottom corner but was judged offside.

Auckland looked lost but, with three minutes left, disaster struck. Banks put over a corner and, in the ensuing melee, Jon Milroy bundled home.

Hyde: Scargill 6, Finley 8, Switzer 7, Wilson 7, Garton 7, Lambert 6, Kimmins 7, Varden 6, James 9, Snape 8, Nolan 7. Subs: Henshaw for Varden (88), Gallagher, Brockie.

Bishops: Bishop, Waller, Taylor, Driscoll, Lobb, Milroy, Banks, Bayles, Shaw, Ellison, Gallagher. Subs: Lowe, Moore, Osborne.

Ref: Stephen Coffey (Liverpool).