

# No way through for Hyde

Hyde Utd.....0

Altrincham .....1

by DAVID JONES

HYDE'S first league clash with their Cheshire neighbours, for two decades, ended in frustration and disappointment on Monday.

In front of 989 fans – the Tigers lacked imagination and, at times, composure.

Although Ilkeston referee Andrew Page turned down one of the most blatant penalty appeals I have ever seen, the Tigers were the architects of their own misfortune.

Once again, the absence of Lutel James was critical. Without him, too much was expected from Ged Kimmins, and Hyde's attack suffered.

There were too few of the razor-sharp moves the Tigers are noted for and, until Alty scored – after a defensive mistake – the game seemed certain to end as a goalless draw.

In the opening stages, however, Hyde looked sharp. Val Owen skimmed one wide, and Dave Nolan had a shot cleared off the line.

Fans tasted the agony when a Paul Snape shot beat keeper Matt Dickens – who once cost Blackburn £250,000 – before crashing the crossbar.

With defences on top, the game ambled along without raising anything in the way of excitement.

Then, two minutes after the break, came the unthinkable. There seemed little danger when Andy Brown put over a cross, and Martin Jones looked to have it covered.

However, Chris Sharratt nipped in as Jones was reaching for the ball, and headed low into the net.

The Tigers tried to pull their game together and, minutes later, Kimmins smashed a shot off the post.

The penalty that should have been came on the hour, when Keith Russell appeared to check Kimmins in the box. Players and fans screamed for a spot kick, but Mr Page waved play on.

Altrincham officials later admitted, privately, that it should have been a penalty.

But it was not and, despite buzzing around the box for the rest of the game, Hyde never looked like scoring.

Hyde: Jones 6, Raffell 6, Annan 6, Wilson 7, Gerton 7, Lambert 6, Kimmins 6, Owen 6, Brockie 6, Snape 7, Nolan 7. Subs: Smith 6 for Brockie (20), Shaw 6 for Snape (75), Donnelly for Smith (84).

Altrincham: Dickins, Shepherd, Adams, France, Maddox, Taylor, Brown, Russell, Hardy, Sharratt, McGoona. Subs: Moore for McGoona (86), O'Donnell, Waring.

Ref: Andrew Page (Ilkeston).