

Tigers take time in asserting authority

GOALKEEPER Lee Pratt fought a one-man battle against Hyde, on Saturday, and it was only thanks to him that the Tigers took 70 minutes to score against a team they easily outclassed.

They should have been 4-0 up at the break, but a combination of bad luck and bad finishing gave the Northern Counties East League side a lifeline.

Louth's only efforts were a handful of long-range shots that sailed high or wide, and a drive that Martin Jones easily saved.

However, they might have gone into a shock lead, on the hour, when Jones had to perform aerial acrobatics to block a Gus Wilson back header.

Hyde ran the game from start to finish. After eight minutes, Dave Nolan fired against the post, and Lutel James missed the rebound.

Seconds later, Snape, met a low cross, but could only sweep the ball over the bar.

Scouts from Bury and Blackpool - said to be watching James - were as surprised as the rest of us as penetrating Tigers raids continually came to nothing.

Pratt dropped a Richard Annan free kick, and then spread himself to deny James, as the striker made another decisive cut down the middle.

Hyde's domination continued well into the second half, and frustrated fans were looking towards a

Hyde Utd.....3
Louth Utd.....0

by **DAVID JONES**

*F.A. Cup
first round (qualifying)*

replay. Then, two goals in three minutes, left Louth reeling.

The first came on 68 minutes, after a series of shots were blocked. Annan floated a corner from the left, and Colin Lambert outjumped defenders to head home.

Three minutes later, Snape made it two goals in two games. He beat three men on the edge of the box, before burying a low shot past Pratt.

Now relaxed, the Tigers turned on the heat and, with ten minutes to go, James squared a ball from the right for Ged Kimmins to stab in at the near post.

A good enough win, but double the scoreline and you would have a true reflection of the game.

Even so, the Tigers are through to the second round (qualifying) on Saturday, September 27, where they will be Tame-side's only representatives.

Stalybridge enter the Cup at the fourth round (qualifying).

Hyde: Jones 7, Gallagher 7, Annan 7, Wilson 7, Garton 7, Lambert 8, Kimmins 7, Owen 8, James 7, Snape 8, Nolan 7. Subs: Varden for Snape (80), Shaw for James (82), Donnelly for Nolan (82).

Louth: Pratt, Thomas, Lee, Nicholson, Wheatley, Bolton, Unsworth, Stables, Fitchers, Wirtarah, Wood. Subs: Allenby for Unsworth (75), Drinkell, Newby. Ref: Paul McGuffog (Stretford).



SCORER ... Ged Kimmins (left) who netted Hyde's third goal. Picture: Tim Holt