

Merciless Tigers scent blood

Hyde United	5
Knowsley United	0

by **MIKE PAVASOVIC**

scented blood, but worse was to come for the beleaguered keeper.

On 81 minutes, he made a total hash of a kick, slicing it straight to Colin Little. The Hyde man did not ask twice. Then, to bring the curtain down, Thompson had to pick the ball out of his net twice during injury time.

Little slotted the first one home, picking up the pieces after another Hyde raid. Then, the unfortunate Thompson sliced another clearance, and Carroll got his name on the score-sheet.

You had to feel sorry for the keeper, but the Tigers were in no mood to show mercy to anyone.

Yet it had all been so different in the first half, when Knowsley defended in numbers, and relied on pumping long balls upfield in the direction of Mick Jones and Paddy Wilson.

These tactics had restricted Hyde to a series of long-range efforts, and their only real chance of the half was created on 36 minutes. Paul Cox swept the ball in from the right, and David Nolan got high in the air to power in a header.

On this occasion, however, Thompson produced a superb save.

Hyde: Williams 7, Cox 8, Switzer 7, Wilson 8, Garton 7, Owen 8, Kimmins 7, Camilleri 7, Little 8, Carroll 7, Nolan 7. Subs: Esdaille for Owen (86), Donnelly for Nolan (83), McLellan for Garton (70).

Knowsley: Thompson, Esdaille, Clarke, Halliday, Murphy, Hughes, Gouldbourne, Barton, Jones, Woods, Wilson. Subs: Gibiliru for Jones (78), Siddell for Murphy (71), Orr.

KNOWSLEY keeper Alan Thompson is probably still having nightmares about this game. It's so easy to imagine him rolling about in bed, dreaming that he is being mauled by a group of tigers.

That, in effect, is what happened in the last 25 minutes of Monday's game. He made a series of horrendous mistakes, and the Ewen Fields Tigers gleefully gobbled up every morsel thrown their way.

On 65 minutes, there was just a suggestion that Thompson was not as keen as he might have been as he charged out to deny Ged Kimmins. There was no doubting the striker's determination, however, and the Tigers were one-up.

Twelve minutes later, Thompson fluffed a ball into the box from Tony Carroll, and Val Owen - who had a tremendous game - blasted it home.

It was bad enough now that the Tigers had