

Leeds in debt to match-winner Lewis

05/06

LEEDS fans will not be inclined to question how, over an 18-month period, their club have gone from owing over £120million to being more or less debt-free. That was manager Kevin Blackwell's pre-match claim, presumably in an attempt to put United's displays this season into glowing perspective.

Others in the Championship might point out that Blackwell has still been able to spend more than most, Luton's Mike Newell for one, which made his team's willingness to match attack with attack in an

open and entertaining game all the more admirable.

Both teams created so many first-half chances that it was hard to believe it ended goalless. Luton's Chris Coyne almost opened the scoring in the fourth minute, Gary Kelly deflecting his goal-bound volley over the bar.

It then took a fine save from visiting goalkeeper Marlon Beresford to keep out United winger Eddie Lewis's left-foot drive. But the best chance was made by Luton, Kevin Foley somehow managing to head Rowan Vine's perfectly-placed

Leeds	2
Luton	1
Richard Rae at Elland Road	

cross over the bar. Soon afterwards Ahmet Brkovic kept his shot down, but it slipped past Neil Sullivan's right-hand post. The break did nothing to change the pattern.

An unmarked Robbie Blake headed wide of an open goal and Luton had a decent penalty shout for handball turned down before Jonathan Douglas, running powerfully into the area, shot past Beresford in the 49th minute.

Four minutes later Rob Hulse hit a low cross that was turned home from close range by Lewis. Leeds were looking confident and Luton were looking down the barrel. But Newell, typically, brought on two strikers. It ensured a busy final half-hour for Kelly on his 500th appearance and when

Steve Howard climbed impressively high to head Paul Underwood's cross past Sullivan, Leeds wobbled. Had Howard's late flick not been blocked by Sullivan's legs, they might have fallen over.

STAR MAN: Rob Hulse (Leeds)

Player ratings. Leeds: Sullivan 6, Kelly 5, Butler 5, Gregan 6, Crainey 6, Douglas 7, Miller 6, Lewis 6, Healy 5 (Bakke 69min, 5), Hulse 8, Blake 6 (Moore 87min, 5)

Luton: Beresford 7, Edwards 6, Coyne 6, Barnett 6, Davis 5, Brkovic 5 (Feeney 63min, 5), Foley 5, Underwood 6, Morgan 6 (Showunmi 63min, 5), Vine 7, Howard 6

Scorers: Leeds: Douglas 49, Lewis 53

Luton: Howard 83

Referee: K Hill

Attendance: 23,644