

DEAR FOOTBALL FANS

BY DFF STUDIO / THE BEAUTIFUL GAME. THE UGLY DRAMA. THE GLORIOUS BANTER.

PREMIER LEAGUE / LEEDS 1-1 MAN UNITED

THREE DRAWS. ZERO DEVELOPMENT.

Dear Football Fans, Manchester United have drawn 1-1 again. Fulham, Tottenham, now Leeds: three consecutive Premier League draws, one exhausted punchline. At this point, the score graphic deserves a permanent contract. United are collecting points like supermarket stamps: slowly, painfully, and still nowhere near the prize.

Bryan Mbeumo put them ahead at Elland Road; Dominic Calvert-Lewin levelled after the break. Leeds 1-1 United. Michael Carrick's side are now five league games without a win. Calling this a rebuild is generous. The scaffolding has been up so long it should be paying council tax.



02 / THE LEAD THAT VANISHED

MBEUMO CLOCKS IN. AGAIN.

Mbeumo scored in the 35th minute, finishing a move involving Amad and Youri Tielemans. An actual football move, with an actual end product. For a moment, United looked capable of submitting something other than an apology.

Then Calvert-Lewin equalised in the 51st minute following a corner. Another lead, another invitation. Mbeumo keeps putting the team in front; the rest of the operation keeps treating that advantage like a free trial. Cancelled before anyone gets comfortable.

03 / MAX TURNER / OPINION

BRUNO: CLOSE THE HELP DESK.

Our take: Bruno Fernandes needs to lead the response, not become the complaints department. There is history here: after April's defeat to Leeds, he complained that refereeing rules were applied differently. That was April, not a new quote from today.

Today's problem needs football, not a customer-service escalation. A captain's armband is not a queue-jump pass to the referee's manager. Bruno has the talent to change games. United need the delivery version, not the angry email with everyone copied in.

04 / 18 OCTOBER / ARSENAL

ARSENAL FOUND THE WIN BUTTON.

Arsenal won 1-0 at Nottingham Forest, Noni Madueke striking in the 80th minute. One goal, three points. United scored once too, but apparently bought the subscription without the winning feature.

Forest held out until Madueke ruined the afternoon. Arsenal left with the points; United left with another discussion topic. On Saturday, City beat Ipswich 3-2 and Chelsea beat Everton 2-0. Everyone else brought results to the group chat. United brought a detailed explanation of why results are complicated.

05 / 17 OCTOBER / EUROPE

EUROPE ORDERED IN BULK.

Also on Saturday, Barcelona beat Betis 5-2 and Bayern dismantled Leipzig 6-1, with Luis Diaz scoring a hat-trick. Some clubs need three games to collect three points. Others apparently need a bigger scoreboard.

Leipzig travelled for a football match and left with a six-part documentary about their own defending. Betis scored twice and still finished three behind. That is not keeping it competitive; that is contributing snacks to your own leaving party.

NEXT UP / THE GROUP CHAT IS OPEN.

United fans, what needs fixing first: defending, finishing or the complaints department? Arsenal needed one goal for three points. United needed three matches. Same sport, wildly different checkout experience. Defend your club; the receipts are here.

Jade Cole's verdict: Madueke supplied the winner. Mbeumo supplied a lead. United supplied another instalment of a series nobody asked to renew.