

First Cup Hurdle Too High For Town

By Chiltern

LUTON TOWN 3 GRIMSBY TOWN ... 4

There were two main reasons why Luton Town have no further interest in the F.A. Cup this season. One was that their forwards missed chances in the most prodigal manner, and the other that the defence could not prevent Briggs going one better than his scoring feat at Blundell Park the week before.

In the closing stages the game flamed into most violent life when Kiernan scored twice in the space of a minute.

Only a goal behind and with a minute to go, the Town saw an outside chance, and marshalled all their forces in the penalty area for a corner just before the end.

This failed to bring an equaliser, as did a free kick seconds later, and the Town left the field defeated in a match in which they had had nearly 75 per cent of the play.

Which merely served to emphasise the unassessable value of having such a great opportunist as Briggs.

During the whole of the match only half a dozen chances came his way, but he snapped up four of them in that quick, decisive manner of his.

With more than double that amount of openings sprinkled among the forward line, the Town failed signally to force home their territorial advantage.

Starting with their customary sparkle, they could have been leading comfortably before the match was 20 minutes old, but their finishing failed them and, instead, it was Grimsby who turned around with a two goals lead.

TOWN STRUCK BACK

Both came from BRIGGS, the first with a hard, close range shot that Streten half stopped, and the second with a header from a high centre by McStay, which the centre-forward reached before Streten.

Looking rather more workman-

like in the early stages of the second half, the Town struck back with a goal headed by WAUGH after Kiernan had sent Glover away with a perfect pass.

That goal brought more action at the Grimsby end, but the finishing continued to lack decision, and more chances went astray.

Next shock came 19 minutes from the end when, with the Town almost entirely on the offensive and battling away for the elusive equaliser, BRIGGS broke away, beat Hall, and after a long run, planted the ball firmly past Streten.

That seemed to end the Town's hopes, and nothing looked more certain than Grimsby's appearance in the fourth round when BRIGGS obtained a "soft" fourth goal with everybody standing still waiting for the whistle to go for offside.

Following that came the Town's fighting finish in which KIERNAN twice rammed the ball high into the Grimsby net, but these successes came too late to set the example which the other forwards sorely needed.

The Town's biggest need was a strong, hard-shooting centre-forward. for Stobbart did not fill the bill on these lines and failed with the chances which came his way.

Neither did Gardiner provide the answer to the inside-left problem, and he, too, was guilty of hurried shooting.

CLEVER IN MIDFIELD

Both Glover and Waugh were clever in midfield, and the former was the more dangerous of the two, but both tended to delay their centres too long.

The length of time which the moves took to develop was a failing of the forward line, and when Kiernan made those shrewd, quick passes which he produced occasionally, they were a sure pointer to what was required.

Yet the class football in this match came from the Town, for Grimsby's play was devoid of frills, but they made ground with the minimum waste of time.

Luton's man of the match was Billy Cooke, who was up and down the field all through the second half. His strong, determined work and well-made passes caused the Grimsby defence no end of worry, and Owen, too, did his share in keeping the Town attacking in the second half.

Naturally, the all-out nature of the Town's offensive during that period meant that the defence was depleted, and Hall found his hands full whenever Briggs obtained possession of the ball on the ground.

For all that, and Briggs's scoring success, Hall had quite a good match, and so did Aherne, who gave McStay less room in which to work than he did the previous week.

With Cooke adopting an attacking role in the second half, Watkins was content to fall back and cover up, with the result that not so much was seen of him as is usual.

Streten was not the completely confident goalkeeper of a few weeks ago, and he must shoulder blame for the first two goals.

LUTON TOWN: Streten; Cooke, Aherne; Watkins, Hall, Owen; Glover, Kiernan, Stobart, Gardiner, Waugh.

GRIMSBY TOWN: Bircham; Fisher, Harnby; Johnston, McMillan, Duthie; McStay, Shearer, Briggs, Cairns, Hair.