

ARREARS WERE TOO MUCH FOR TOWN

Forwards Never Looked Like Wiping Them Out

By Chiltern

GRIMSBY TOWN 3, LUTON TOWN 1

IN many ways it seems a pity that a match of such vital importance as this should have to be decided in such conditions as prevailed at Blundell Park on Saturday.

A strong, easterly wind straight off the sea was driving heavy rain down the pitch and it was the misfortune of the Town that they had to face it in the first half.

Maybe that took some of the steam out of them, but the plain fact is that when they had it at their backs later, they gave little indication that they had the ability to wipe out their arrears of two goals.

Inevitably, Grimsby had more of the play during the first half when Baynham could achieve mostly a range of only about 40 yards with his goal-kicks and defenders often found their clearances blown back at them.

Yet, there was a period, with the score-sheet still blank, when the Town, keeping the ball on the ground, managed to have a dangerous spell during which Fairchild thudded the ball against the bar and it rebounded to safety.

Then, DAVIES gave the Town a tremendous fillip by putting them ahead after 27 minutes when he side-footed the ball coolly past Wright from a long free kick by Daniel.

Had the Town really had time to consolidate after this, there could have been a more favourable result, but before they could really reap the benefit of the goal, Grimsby were on terms again.

Another free-kick was responsible because, after the old trick of one player feinting to take it and another actually doing so, Clifton lifted the ball over and McLEAN was on the spot to head the equaliser.

GRIMSBY PROSPERED

From that point onwards, Grimsby prospered and the Town had to hang on like grim death in order to keep in the game with a chance.

However, with 10 minutes left for half-time, the home team went ahead when Baynham erred in following a long centre from Hill which he never seemed to have a real chance of grasping. In the event, all he could do was reach the ball with his finger tips and PENNINGTON promptly banged it under the bar.

Even then, the situation was certainly far from desperate but a doubt certainly crept up into my mind when, with the referee looking at his watch, Grimsby secured their third goal in what I made to be seconds added on to normal time.

Again a long, high free kick did the damage, this time from Cockerill. With so many players going up for the ball, it was difficult to see exactly what occurred, but there was never any doubt that it was the head of RAFFERTY that steered the ball through.

NEVER MASSED PRESSURE

What the Town needed was the encouragement of an early goal in the second half, but Grimsby made the early running, and Rafferty should have settled the issue beyond all reasonable dispute when he missed an open goal after Baynham had been unable to hang on to a shot from Hill.

From the Town there was never the massed pressure that Grimsby

exerted in the first half, and they failed signally to make the most of having the wind behind them, though Turner missed an excellent chance from Davies's good work.

Much of the trouble stemmed from the fact that the Town were weak on the extreme wings, where Jardine faded out completely after being hurt in the early stages, though he showed no obvious ill-effects afterwards.

Fairchild did much running about, but Donovan usually had his measure, while McKechnie, not thrustful enough, again persisted in running with the ball.

That left Davies, rather a blunted spearhead through the close marking and lack of support, as the most dangerous forward, and Turner next in line, though his present deep-lying role seems to me foreign to his nature.

Again, no-one did better in defence than Morton, though Pacey was better than in the holiday matches, which lessened the burden on Bramwell, who, even so, had enough to contend with in holding Pennington.

With tremendous dash and exuberance, McLean led the home attack, which meant that Kelly had a harassing afternoon, while Daniel could never subdue Hill, a dangerous winger whom several First Division clubs have been watching.

Though Baynham made some excellent saves, he punched at high crosses more than is usual, though it must be admitted that he did have some difficult stuff with which to contend.

GRIMSBY TOWN: Wright; Thompson, Donovan; Cockerill, Jobling, Clifton; Pennington, Foster, McLean, Rafferty, Hill.

LUTON TOWN: Baynham; Daniel, Bramwell; Morton, Kelly, Pacey; Fairchild, Turner, Davies, McKechnie, Jardine.

Referee: N N Hough, Littleborough. Attendance: 9,289.