

DRAB SHOW BY TOWN, BUT SAVES THE DAY

Second-half chances missed by forwards

By CHILTERN

LUTON TOWN 1, GRIMSBY TOWN 1

THE doubts expressed yesterday about the fitness of Ron Baynham to play in today's home game with Grimsby Town—rated then as 6 to 4 against—were fully justified, because it did not take long to rule him out of the reckoning. Colin Tinsley came in for the first time since he had seven goals scored against him at Queen's Park Rangers on November 6.

In the past month Baynham has been most unlucky as far as leg injuries have been concerned and he told me just before the start that he found difficulty in running and kicking when he had his final test.

So the Town's changes compared with last week numbered five, but three of them were positional.

Gibson, making his first appearance before the home crowd, was brought forward from right half in an endeavour to add some thrust, and Tommy McKechnie switched to inside left.

Vacancy at right half was filled by switching John Reid and that paved the way for a return by John Bramwell for the first time since he played at Bristol on the Saturday before Christmas.

CENTRE-FORWARD DROPPED

Like the Town, Grimsby have been worried about their lack of scoring power and they made something of a sensational move by dropping George McLean, former Glasgow Celtic and Norwich City centre-forward.

Instead they relied on six-foot-tall Ray Lancaster, signed recently from Rotherham United, who is principally regarded as a wing half.

The Town lost the toss and were set to face a fairly stiff breeze. Although the pitch was soft it had been well rolled and was in pretty good condition for so late in the season.

GOAL IN THREE MINUTES

Grimsby were away with a rush, earning a corner in the first minute from which Foster, who had a plaster over his right eye, shot somewhat sketchily and Tinsley was able to watch the ball go wide.

With only three minutes gone the Town paid the penalty for leaving a yawning gap down their middle which was exploited to the full by Foster, who pushed the ball through to COCKERILL who raced on to the ball at top pace and beat Tinsley with a shot that ricocheted into the net off the underpart of the bar.

It was a well-planned goal but I had the feeling that that

TEAMS

LUTON TN: Tinsley; McBain, Jardine; Reid, Fincham, Bramwell; Harber, Gibson, O'Rourke, McKechnie, Whittaker.

GRIMSBY TOWN: Wainman; Thompson, Taylor; Cockerill, Clifton, Jobling; Pennington, Haydock, Lancaster, Foster, Hill.

Referee: G. Martin (Whitchurch).

tell-tale gap should not have existed.

The small crowd was a bit shaken by the turn of events but cheered up a bit when O'Rourke made a determined bid to find a way through the packed defence before being up-ended by Clifton—at which he looked suitably aggrieved but failed to impress the referee.

SPECULATIVE SHOTS

So far it had been a pretty drab show from the Town, struggling to find some semblance of smoothness. A couple of long-range shots by O'Rourke and McBain could only be described as speculative.

Then a free kick to the Town when O'Rourke was fouled nearly brought an equaliser when McKechnie, from just outside the penalty area, produced a low cross shot which Wainman, at full-length, just managed to push around the post.

A better effort came from Gibson with a header from Whittaker's corner that sent the ball over the top.

O'Rourke had his first clear-cut chance when McKechnie cleverly headed on to him a pass from Gibson, but the centre-forward was too high.

Once again Foster exploited the gap down the Town middle, this time in an endeavour to find Lancaster, and Fincham made a desperate sort of clearance for a corner.

Generally the crowd was

quiet—which was not surprising because there had been little from the Town about which to shout.

McKECHNIE INJURED

McKechnie hurt his left knee when Cockerill fouled him inside the centre circle and there was a hold up while he was attended to. The damage turned out to be a good deal more serious than seemed likely at first sight because McKechnie was led off the field, limping heavily, and leaning on the shoulders of both trainers.

After two or three minutes McKechnie returned on the left-wing, still with a pronounced limp.

Meanwhile Grimsby gained a corner on the left which Hill placed badly and Bramwell, who was now tucking himself in behind Fincham, made a comfortable clearance.

GRIMSBY BETTER IN MID-FIELD

McKechnie was soon able to move back inside again. Generally speaking the standard of football was pretty low with Grimsby showing the more constructive ideas in mid-field but giving no real hint of finishing power.

There was a threat to the Grimsby goal from a long free kick by McBain for a foul on McKechnie.

Then with the Town beginning a spell of pressure Wainman made a sketchy sort of save from a half-hit shot by McKechnie, then rather tempted fate by chasing after the ball which took him to the verge of the penalty area.

The incidents involving spectators were the most exciting of the afternoon. Afterwards the Town began to have more of the play, only for their old failing of lack of finish to creep in. Half-time:

LUTON TOWN 0
GRIMSBY 1

During half time I was told that the Grimsby manager, Jimmy McGuigan, was kicked during the fracas that developed during the first half.

LONG-RANGE SHOT BY FINCHAM

First incident of the second half was a long-range shot by Fincham that very nearly

caught Wainman unawares, and the goalkeeper was probably pleased that the ball dropped just over the top.

Now, the Town had the breeze behind them and it remained to be seen whether they could produce anything of a more constructive nature in attack. The portents were not very bright because Cockerill got himself into a position uncomfortably similar to that from which he scored. This time Tinsley just managed to fingertip the ball over.

O'ROURKE GETS EQUALISER

With 52 minutes gone the Town's fortunes took a turn for the better when O'ROURKE, left unattended for once in a way by Clifton, secured an equaliser. It was from a through pass by McKechnie and O'Rourke lobbed the ball just too high for the clutching hands of Wainman.

Straight from this there was another heavy Town raid in which McKechnie featured, but this time Wainman went low to cut out his cross. He could not hold the ball, but Gibson, following up, was un-



Town centre-forward John O'Rourke scored the equaliser in the 52nd minute.

able to force the ball home before the goalkeeper recovered.

The referee came in for more criticism from the crowd when Haydock went in to challenge Tinsley. A free kick followed, but obviously some of the crowd were looking for some stronger action.

O'ROURKE NEAR AGAIN

When McKechnie was pushed in the back by Thompson the Town had a free kick which Whittaker placed well and O'Rourke headed just wide.

Although the Town were now having more of the play than in the first half their attack was still tending to break down before anything conclusive could be achieved.

BALL ROLLED WIDE

Chance of the match was missed by Gibson, who was left with only the advancing Wainman to beat from a pass by McKechnie. Steadying himself from just inside the penalty area he looked certain to score but the ball rolled tantalisingly just wide of the post.

It was a bad miss for which Gibson tried to atone in the next minute, but he succeeded only in heading the ball into the hands of Wainman.

How The Goals Came

COCKERILL for Grimsby after three minutes.

O'ROURKE for Luton after 52 minutes.

flashed the ball just wide of the post.

Other than that it was pretty much of a scramble, with not much imagination being shown by either team and certainly the stormy passage of the first half had passed.

The referee came under fire again when he got in the way of Whittaker as he shaped to take a pass from O'Rourke, which produced some pretty caustic comments from the crowd.

Tinsley took a chance when he came right out of his goal to deal with a long free kick, failed to gain possession, and it was as well that Bramwell had covered up as the ball ran loose in front of goal.

CHANCE OF A LATE WINNER

The Town were still having plenty of the play without producing the goal punch that was necessary and in the main the Grimsby defence was able to cope without a great deal of trouble.

A chance of a late winner to Grimsby fell down when Haydock, from close in, put the ball over after a through pass had pierced the defence.

A foul by Hill on Harber gave the Town a free-kick which McBain placed into the goalmouth, but O'Rourke's determined bid to meet the ball with his head was frustrated.

Then came a free kick to Grimsby for a foul by Reid on Foster, who had to receive attention.

As the game drew to its close Wainman raced out to snatch the ball away from Whittaker. Result:

LUTON TOWN 1
GRIMSBY 1

Police in stormy scene

Police had to remove a spectator who ran on to the field and appeared to take a kick at a Grimsby player during the first half.

The incident began when Cockerill, the Grimsby right-half, was preparing to take a throw-in. He was struck by a missile thrown by someone in the enclosure. The linesman picked up the missile and showed it to the referee. He in turn had a word with Town trainer Charlie Watkins, who called up a steward.

At this, a spectator ran appeared to take a kick at Cockerill. Police were on the scene immediately to remove the offender and there was a further melee just inside the railings in which a Grimsby player seemed to become involved. Eventually a man was carried away from the scene headlong by six or seven policemen.

Altogether it was a most unseemly scene, the like of which I do not recall happening on this ground before, writes Chiltern. There seemed to be very little call for it.

The Grimsby player who was involved with the crowd was right winger Pennington, and apparently he went over the fence of his own volition and was pulled out of the crowd by the police.

After this things looked distinctly stormy. Order was restored and the 20 policemen who had converged on the scene dispersed.