

TOWN LOSE THE TOSS

THE TOSS of a two bob piece late last night sends Luton back north on another League Cup trek. After a wet and windy goalless replay, Luton retrace their steps next Tuesday to fight out this second round tie a third time with Grimsby.

Town chairman Robert Keens lost the toss with his opposite number to give Luton a repeat of their three-match tussle with Birmingham in last year's competition, and throw their League fixtures into turmoil.

The two clubs decided to flip for the venue rather than take the match to a poorly patronised neutral ground. "It's a bit of nuisance having to go all the way up there again, but I thought it was a good hard game," said Luton manager Harry Haslam.

It was, but the biggest share of the thrills were saved for four minutes of mysterious injury time at the end of extra time. Towards the end, Grimsby had the ball in the net twice, but both efforts were disallowed to the anger of the crowd.

The referee, Mr H. Powell of Stourport was jostled by angry fans as he left the pitch surrounded by policemen.

But his decisions, that came in Grimsby's final spurt, seemed to be correct. First Barton netted but was flagged

It's another trek north next week

Grimsby 0 Luton 0 (after extra time)

By ROGER DUCKWORTH

offside long before he shot, and then Hickman bundled the ball in with a fist.

It was that sort of breathless night, with a cruel east wind clutching at the ball, and the North Sea slopping into exposed Blundell Park in waves of sleet.

With the players slipping and skidding, good football was not always easy. But Luton tried their best.

This was the pattern of the night with Luton endeavouring to put their usual game together, by use of the short ball, and Grimsby tearing in for possession and using the

long ball and buccaneer running at Luton's dependable defence.

The Town's back four of Shanks, Faulkner, Garner and Thomson was outstanding, and the height and big hands of goalkeeper Horn earned him the man-of-the-match tag.

Big Graham was at full stretch a couple of times, but always came out on top. The ball was like a ping pong ball in a wind tunnel but he didn't drop it all night.

And he made the save of the match in the second half, when he dashed out to spread himself in front of break-away

Hubbard from whom he'd made a diving catch minutes earlier.

In the first half, Luton had the best of the goalmouth incidents and near misses, but Grimsby were ahead on quick breaks from midfield.

The ball passed over Luton's midfield trio of Anderson, John Ryan and Hindson too often. It was like watching a tennis match.

But there was no lack of effort anywhere, and Anderson had Luton's best chance after Butlin had headed against the bar in the 41st minute. The ball rebounded to him in front of goal but he lifted it over the top.

He said afterwards: "It seemed to hang on the wind and I was there too early."

In attack, there was a great



Luton's Anderson (4) heads over after Butlin, partly hidden, had hit the bar

amount of work from Butlin, and the insistent running of Aston made him Luton's best forward. He was also prepared to help out at the back when the going got tough.

Peter Cruse also showed some nice touches, calling for the ball intelligently and using the open spaces whenever possible. He had hard luck with three efforts, one of which brought a fine save from Wainman.

Thrills

Anderson put one in the net, but was offside, and John Ryan was booked for unnecessary handling, but as in last week's meeting Grimsby's dash and fierce competition just about gave them the second half.

They began extra time in a similar fashion, but Cruse almost headed in an Aston cross.

The real thrills were saved for the very end. With a minute of extra time to go Barton put in his offside effort.

Then came the phantom injury time. There were no stoppages in the second half of extra time, and Mr Powell had added time at the turn-around for an earlier injury to Horn, who was barged into the net by Hubbard.

But he added four minutes in which Hickman fisted his "goal", and substitute Lewis had hard luck with a low shot.

Grimsby: Wainman, Beardsley, Booth, Chatterley, Wigginton, Gray, Barton, Hickman, Hubbard, Czuczman, Sharp (Lewis 104min).

Luton: Horn, Shanks, Thomson, Anderson, Faulkner, Garner, Hindson, John Ryan, Butlin, Cruse, Aston. Sub: Price.

Referee: Mr H. Powell, Stourport.

Attendance: 13,643.



Wainman punches clear as Aston, right, moves in