

Hatters spoil the party

BRISTOL ROV 2
LUTON TOWN 1
(Aggregate 4-2)

A TIE against Premiership Derby County was the least the Town deserved for their Coca Cola Cup second-half performance at the Bristol Memorial rugby ground.

In their first cup-tie, and the first soccer game to be played under lights, Rovers wanted a party to celebrate their tenancy of a new home. And they might have had one if the Town had not got a grip after an awful first 45 minutes.

The defence was cut open by quick direct passing, and goals by Andy Gurney and Lee Archer in the first 18 minutes raised local hopes. One more strike would have levelled it, and then, who knows? But manager Lennie Lawrence

made a crucial change at the break, taking off Paul Showler and sending on Andrew Fotiadis, with Bontcho Guentchev dropping into midfield.

The Town settled to play a good passing game, and the tie was decided in the 63rd minute when David Oldfield took a pass from Fotiadis, skipped round a defender and the goalkeeper, and carefully put his drive into the net away from opponents desperately trying to get back to cover.

Manager Lennie Lawrence said that if it had been a league game the Town would have tried to push on for an equaliser, but at 4-2 up with less than half an hour to play it made sense to hold on to earn a place in the second round for the first time in seven years.

Match facts

 **TOWN:** Feuer; James, Davis, Johnson, Thomas; Linton, Alexander, Hughes, Showler (Fotiadis HT); Oldfield, Guentchev. Unused subs: Thorpe and McLaren.

 **B R I S T O L**
ROVERS: Collett; Martin, Clark, Tillson, Lockwood; Gurney (French 70 mins), Holloway, Browning, Archer; Parmenter (Low 70 mins), Miller.

 **GOALS:** Andy

Gurney, 6 mins, and Lee Archer, 18, for Rovers; David Oldfield for the Town, 63 mins.

 **OTHER STRIKES:** Town four saved and five wide; Rovers five saved and four wide. Corners: 4-1 to Rovers.

 **REFEREE:** Andy D'Urso, Billericay.

 **ATTENDANCE:** 2,320.

 **ENTERTAINMENT:** Painful for Town fans in the first half, excellent after that.