



LUTON TOWN 1
Gray 60

BRABIN FACE OF

ACROBATIC: Andre Gray scores the opener for Luton

PICTURES: Corin Owen

MATCH STATS	
LUTON v GRIMSBY	
9 SHOTS ON TARGET	5
4 SHOTS OFF TARGET	2
10 CORNERS	4
2 OFFSIDE	2
16 FOULS CONCEDED	19
2 YELLOW CARDS	2
0 RED CARDS	0

STAR MAN: Godfrey Poku (Luton)
ATE: 6.4/10
ENTERTAINMENT: ★★★★★
REF RATING: Andrew Davies 4/10

LUTON: 4-4-2: Tyler 7; Osano 6; Kovacs 7; Pilkington 7; Howells 6; Puckett 90; Lawless 7; Keane 7; Poku 8; Willmott 6 (Blackett 81, 7); Gray 6; Crow 6. Subs not used: McAlister, Bourcaud, Watkins.
GRIMSBY: 4-5-1: McKeown 6; Sisk 6; Pearson 7; Miller 6; Townsend 6; Coulson 6; Wood 6 (Hughes-Mason 73, 6); Wright 6; Disley 7; Winn 6 (Searns 63, 5); Duff 5 (Kling 62, 8). Subs not used: Thano, T'Acson.

GRIMSBY TOWN 1
Hughes-Mason 87



DEFIANT IN ANGRY FANS



By Stuart Hammonds

LUTON manager Gary Brabin pleaded with angry fans to judge him at the end of the season after a late Grimsby equaliser made it six games without a win.

After describing himself in his programme notes as "ashamed" at the 3-0 midweek defeat at Forest Green, Brabin was satisfied with the response of his team, who led through Andre Gray's debut goal until Kiernan Hughes-Mason struck three minutes from time to keep the Mariners' play-off hopes alive.

It was the first league goal the Hatters had conceded at home since November, but seven clean sheets counted for nothing with irate fans booing the former Cambridge boss down the tunnel.

Calls for a change to be made a week shy of a year since Brabin replaced Richard Money in Non-League's hottest of seats were aimed at the directors' box.

But the manager remained defiant, saying: "Obviously I'm disappointed with the response (of the crowd), but I can understand.

"We are still on course for promotion. Grimsby haven't gained any ground on us and we've gained a point on York and Mansfield. Forest Green beat us and now they've gone and beaten Wrexham.

"As I keep saying, it's a tough league. We've got no divine right to win games.



MARINERS DELIGHT: Grimsby players celebrate the equaliser

We all want the same thing and I can assure everyone I'm trying my hardest to achieve that

"I just ask the fans to be patient, keep supporting us and to stick with us for the last eight games.

"I know I'm bound to say it, but I think any change would be pressing the self-destruct button at this stage of the season."

Brabin added that he views the appointment of former Luton player manager Lil Fuccillo as technical director as "a positive for the club", providing the "football experience" the fan-led board have sought for a while.

And it was the club's

other new signing Gray, a £30,000 capture from Hinckley, who looked to have lifted the metaphorical storm clouds gathering over Kenilworth Road.

The 20-year-old frontman had a nervy start on his step up from Blue Square Bet North, although he wasn't alone in a Hatters side that dominated first-half possession, but created few chances.

Alex Lawless had the best in injury-time, but James McKeown parried his volley from Robbie Willmott's left-wing cross.

Gray had headed a Jake Howells centre over the bar, and after the break he burst into life to dig

out a cross from the right byline, but Craig Disley smuggled Willmott's effort away from the goal-line.

His 24th goal of the season came on the hour, when after the visitors failed to clear a corner, Keith Keane's shot ricocheted up for Gray to acrobatically volley into the roof of the net.

McKeown had to make a double save after flapping at Lawless' 78th-minute corner, first from Gray's lofted volley and then Keane's header.

The keeper's quick roll-out then put Gary Silk under pressure, with Crow dispossessing the right-back only to see his deft chip beat McKeown and the crossbar.

Grimsby finally found some attacking intent in the last ten minutes when Elding directed a cute ball around the corner, allowing Hughes-Mason to run at George Pilkington from 30 yards.

The ex-Millwall, Tooting and Kettering livewire shot across Mark Tyler and into the far corner from inside the box to keep the Mariners "tagging on

there" – according to joint-boss Rob Scott – in ninth, just four points off their fifth-placed hosts. "We had a game plan and it was a dogged performance that produced a worthy draw," said Scott.

"We'll keep going until the last day of the season whether we're in there or not."



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GARY BRABIN, Luton manager

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ROB SCOTT, Grimsby Joint manager

