

NOW BEGINS VITAL, TESTING PERIOD

CARDIFF FIRST OF THREE VISITORS

Town May Make Forward Changes For Tomorrow

By CHILTERN

TOMORROW night begins the vital testing period for the Town, when they face the first of three consecutive home matches, and they can go a long way towards relieving anxiety about the prospect of Third Division football here next season by taking full points from each.

It is no easy assignment, but a certain amount of encouragement can be taken from the fact that they have won four of their last five games, and that the forwards, so goal-shy away, seem to take on a new lease of life at Kenilworth-road.

None of the three fixtures they are about to face will be easy and the somewhat unpredictable Cardiff City will come here tomorrow in cock-a-hoop mood after their crushing 3-2 victory over promotion-seeking Sunderland on Saturday.

I am told that Cardiff as-sounded Sunderland, in the first half when they built up a four goals lead and their triumph was finally sealed by a wonder goal from Mel Charles.

It was achieved without the services of Welsh International, Ivor Allchurch, who has a pulled muscle and who is doubtful for tomorrow.

Forward Changes May Be Forced, Anyway

IN fact, it seems near enough certain that the Welsh club will rely on an unchanged team, with Barry Hole, much sought after left-half, continuing to occupy the inside-left berth.

Probable team — John: Harrington, Edwards; Williams, Rankmore, Baker; McIntosh, Tapscott, Charles, Hole, Hooper.

As for the Town, Manager Bill Harvey must be tempted to make forward changes after the disappointing showing at Grimsby, but the question is, "How?"

It may be that alterations on the wings will be forced on him because both Freddie Jardine and Mike Fairchild were injured at Grimsby.

Prediction Is Impossible Now

YESTERDAY, there was no sort of indication from Kenilworth-road as to what the line-up will be and it may well

be tomorrow morning before a definite decision can be reached. Trouble is, of course, that there is still that gap where a talented inside-left is needed and the loss of Harry Walden is being more and more emphasised in each succeeding match.

I do not anticipate that there will be any sort of disposition to alter the defence, but if there are no forward changes, then I shall be surprised, though what form they might take is impossible to predict.

Strong Wind Was A Vital Factor

WITH two home wins behind them, the Town went to Grimsby with high hopes of gaining some success, but the old bogey of moderate form away from home followed them again and they were well beaten in the end.

As at Walsall, a strong wind had a considerable influence on this match, and Grimsby had their great good fortune to win the toss.

From the start, the obvious thing was for the Town to hang on to level terms, if possible, or at least limit the Grimsby lead to proportions which it would be possible to cut down, when their turn came to have the better of the conditions.

Fairchild's Shot Crashed Against Bar

AS the minutes ticked away with no goal from Grimsby, despite some fiery and determined pressure, our hopes began to rise, and there was even a rising all around, when a shot from Fairchild thudded against the bar.

An inch or two lower and the

whole course of this game could have been changed because the goal that came from Davies in the 27th minute would have meant that the Town were two up and that, surely, would have been sufficient to quench the spirit of even lightning Grimsby.

Had Little Time In Which To Enjoy Lead

DAVIES'S success, a well-taken affair, came from a long free-kick by Daniel, awarded for a foul by Donovan on Fairchild, and the centre-forward coolly side-footed the ball into the corner of the net.

Unfortunately, there was little time for the Town to enjoy that slender advantage, because Grimsby hit back almost immediately, in fact, only two minutes later.

Again a free-kick was the forerunner, and Clifton lifted the ball into the penalty area for the tall Grimsby to jump high and head it into the far corner of the net.

Fought To Stave Off Disaster

THAT seemed to open the floodgates for Grimsby because the centre-forward pressed home in the 35th minute a speculative centre by Hill led to the second goal.

Misguidedly, Baynam followed it, could only just get a hand to it and before he could recover the crash was over.

After that the Town's role became one of fighting to stave off further disaster and, as the interval nearer the second Town goal, the players were feeling fairly happy that their team was no more than one down.

Vital Third Goal In Dying Seconds

HAD matters stayed that way, there could have been a different result, but in the seconds added on for the stoppage caused by an injury to Jardine early on, Grimsby obtained their third and absolutely vital goal.

Yet another free kick caused the Town's downfall with this, time, Cockerill plugging the ball high into the penalty area and Rafferty going up amidst a forest of heads to nod it through.

Even then, the position was not disastrous, could the Town have really attacked in something approaching the forceful fashion that Grimsby had done.

Ragged Attacking Effort By Town

TROUBLE was that they never approached the force achieved by a home team and, in fact, were fortunate that their attacks did not increase because Rafferty missed an open goal soon after half-time.

In fact, the second-half pattern did not work out at all as expected and the best of the few chances that were created by the Town was missed by Turner after he had been put through cleverly by Davies.

With defenders converging on him, Turner shot too hastily with his left foot and sent the ball wide.

All in all, it was a ragged, attacking effort by the Town, who never made the same use of the wind as had Grimsby in the first half.

Grimsby Stronger On The Wings

LONG before the end, I had given up hope of a rally, and the fact that the Town pressed hard in the closing stages was more due to the fact that Grimsby re-grouped their forces and laid more emphasis on defence, than on their own efforts. Victory went to the team that deserved it because Grimsby were stronger, faster and showed the better ideas.

Particularly were they strong on the wings, where the Town

were weakest because Jardine was never in it after damaging an ankle early on, and Fairchild, though he chased about enthusiastically enough, did not contribute a great deal.

Jobling Marked Davies Closely

NOR was McKechnie really a force to be reckoned with, which left Davies and Turner as the most effective forwards, and the latter, for some reason, seems to have been saddled with the mid-field donkey work.

Davies had trouble in eluding the attentions of the tall Jobling, who usually had somebody close at hand to cover him but, even so, he was quite a danger.

There was plenty of fight about a defence that seems to have to carry a heavy burden in each away match because of the ineffectiveness of the men in front.

Morton Took Chief Honours Again

BEST of this department once again was the oldest member of it, Morton, who is playing in remarkably consistent style at the moment, and he was the only one to use with any consistency the through pass that was so obviously needed in the second half.

There was a considerable improvement from Pacey, but Kelly had a difficult time because of the strength of McLean, who wandered far and wide in his search for material.

Daniel never obtained the

FOR THE RECORDS
GRIMSBY TOWN 3
McLean, Pennington, Rafferty
LUTON TOWN 1

GRIMSBY TOWN: Baynam; Daniel, Bramwell; Morton, Kelly, Pacey; Fairchild, Turner, Davies, McKechnie, Jardine.
Referee: N. N. Hough, Litchborough. **Attendance:** 9,289.

mastery of Hill, and Bramwell was more successful on this occasion, while Baynam, though he made some good saves, was not so certain against high crosses as is usual.

Alan Clarke's Part In Reserves' Win

THE Town Reserves found their form again on Saturday with a 2-1 victory over Norwich City Reserves.

Alan Clarke was once again the brightest forward and played a big part in both the goals.

He picked his spot in the net, beating Jones completely for the first, and it was from a well-directed centre from him that Brennan added the second.

The Town defence was solid enough, although Reed was at times troubled by Puntion, and Alan Ross had a first-class game.