

TT No.207: *Richard Panter* - Friday 6th April 2007; **Grantham Town v North Ferriby United**; Unibond Premier; Result: 0 - 5; Attendance 210; Entry £6; Programme 52 pages £2; Match rating **.

Player-manager Adrian Speed was making his 661st appearance for the beleaguered Gingerbreads this afternoon. Rock bottom of the division with just sixteen points and not having won a league match for almost four months the team managed to show spirt and application, but sadly these qualities were not matched by any player with the skill and craft of the visitors' Gary Bradshaw.

The Meres Stadium is owned by South Kesteven District Council, Town are the principal tenants at the venue which has an Athletics track and related paraphernalia surrounding it. I accept that many do not appreciate this arrangement given the distance to the pitch. The Meres offers as a compensation a large main stand and covered terrace which are both cantilever designs, in addition there are two large open terrace sections each side of the main stand. Therefore, plenty of space and elevated viewing options are available.

The men from the north bank of the Humber opened the scoring in the fifteenth minute and to all intents and purposes the match was over as a contest. The Man of the Match, Gary Bradshaw, jinked through on the left side of the box to provide Joel Hartley with a simple tap in. Minutes before the break the slippery Bradshaw created an opening for left back Michael Price, Price hit the ball full on the volley and gave debutant 'keeper Chris Jones no chance.

The half-time introduction of substitutes Anthony Howell and Tom Byrne livened things up for Grantham Town briefly but Ferriby soon extended their advantage through Chris Bolder after Bradshaw-esque trickery from Hartley created the opening, this was exactly on the hour. Bradshaw enjoyed a just reward for his efforts in the eightieth minute when he netted a free kick from twenty-five yards. United sub Leon Wainman had a couple of half chances which led to nothing but captain Paul Foot emphatically headed home a corner five minutes from time to complete the scoring.

Relegation to the Unibond First division awaits Grantham at the end of the season, they will be members of a new eighteen team league. The Gingerbreads will be big fish in a small pond and all of their opponents will be out to scalp them, so a swift return to the higher level must be their top priority. On this evidence the team will need a major overhaul. On the positive side the ground is well up to the job as is the home support who despite their tribulations this season still proudly give good voice to their cause.

No visit to Grantham Town is complete without obtaining a copy of the Graham Cowell edited fanzine 'Winston Churchill Picked an Army'. Winston is now 128 editions old and is still going strong offering 36 pages for a quid...you can't fall off. The official Matchday Programme costs twice as much but for this the reader gets

52 full colour glossy pages packed with statistics, reports, photographs, articles and news. Editor Mike Koranski does a magnificent job. Gateshead and Hednesford Town programmes must be stupendous because these two club's offerings pushed Grantham down to third in the annual 'Programme Monthly' Awards, no mean achievement.

It would be nice to think that this time next year Winston is well into the 130s, the programme wins the divisional award and the Gingerbreads are heading back up the non-league pyramid with crowds are back to the five hundred mark.

06/20