



Qualifying Cup semi-final replay special

Stage set for Huntly to cash in

PETERHEAD..... 1
HUNTLY..... 2
by Mike Tremlett
HUNTLY winger John Brown is convinced the 58th minute of Saturday's Qualifying Cup semi-final replay at Recreation Park will go down as the moment he came of age as a Press and Journal Highland League player.

Brown, 23, signed on with the league champions from Aberdeen United just over a year ago and he believes his crucial winner at Peterhead has finally put him back in full his reported £5,000 transfer fee.

yard left-foot volley finally settled an evenly balanced tie which looked to be heading for extra time after Colin Milne's 49th-minute header cancelled out Martin Stewart's opener for Huntly six minutes before the break.

Stewart's 23rd goal of the season — a close-range effort after Peterhead keeper Ivor Frie had done well to parry Dave Morland's deflected shot — came against the run of play in a first half which had seen fired-up Peterhead look the more likely winners.

Rethink

Blue Toon boss Dave Watson, forced to rethink his selection plans when midfielder man Paul Bridgford was called offshore in midweek, studied everything on all-out attack.

He included winger Paul McKenzie and striker Derek Smith in his starting line-up and gambled on a three-man defence anchored by Steve King with Ray Cormack and Mark Simpson detailed to man-mark the prolific Stewart and dangerous Gary Whyte.

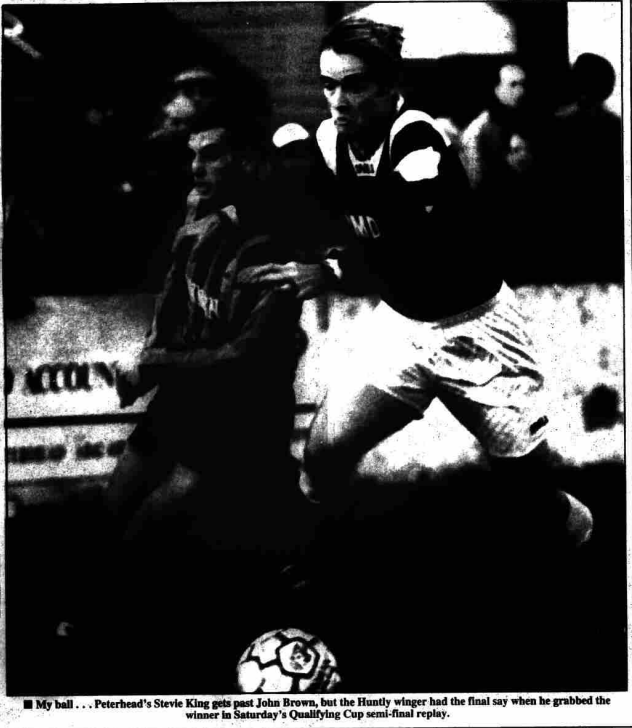
And for an hour his gamble looked like paying off as Peterhead caused Huntly to look uncomfortable playing with Andy Paterson and player-manager Doug Rougrie side by side in a

flat back four, all sorts of problems. There was plenty for the 600-odd crowd to talk about after the final whistle, notably Rougrie's lucky escape from a red card in the first half for a penalty box back-hander which almost took off Milne's head and a Peterhead penalty claim which might have sent the game into extra time late in the second half.

The home contingent were utterly convinced that Peterhead boss Watson was set to return to the 37th-minute clash with Milne.

Instead the Edinburgh official, who sees off Fife and Milne a week earlier for a lot less, settled for booking six players — Peterhead's McKenzie, Whyte and Milne and Morland, Brown and Rougrie of Huntly — in Saturday's replay.

At the final whistle, Huntly duly marched into their fourth Qualifying Cup final appearance in five seasons — against Elgin City at Knoch Park on November 16 — and Peterhead boss Watson was left to reflect on what might have been.



My ball... Peterhead's Steve King gets past John Brown, but the Huntly winger had the final say when he grabbed the winner in Saturday's Qualifying Cup semi-final replay.

Red card may cost Mone final spot

ELGIN CITY..... 2
FORRES MECHANICS..... 1
ELGIN CITY sweeper Dave Mone could miss the Borough Buggie side's first Qualifying Cup final appearance in six years after he was sent-off during the Black and Whites' win over Forres Mechanics.

Mone, one of the survivors of City's 1989-90 Qualifying Cup-winning line-up, was harshly given his marching orders for virtually his first foul on Forres flier Charlie Brown an hour into Saturday's game.

The 28-year-old City stalwart is automatically suspended for this weekend's trip to Buckie and he now faces an anxious wait to see if a further ban, which would rule him out of City's final clash with Huntly at Knoch Park, is imposed by the FA.

Despite the setback, which came when they were trailing 1-10-man City rolled up their sleeves for the last half-hour against the Can-Cans to stage an impressive comeback and snatch an unlikely victory.

"We actually played our best football of the match with 10 men," said assistant manager Colin Keir, who was experiencing his first game in charge with manager Chico McFarland on holiday.

"The lads knocked down and worked very hard for each other. We created far more chances than Forres and we certainly did enough to get a win."

"With half an hour to go, I thought I might be ruining Chico's holiday with some bad news, but it all worked out well in the end."

Changes

Injury-hit Forres were forced to change their five-man defence in his first game as sweeper and, with Dave Brennan effectively man-marking the influential Doug Green, the visitors looked in with a chance of chalking up their second league win.

They defended well in the first half and took the lead early in the second when Gary Watt was allowed time to cut in from the left to deliver a perfect cross. The marked Mark Holmes tapped in.

Mone's sending-off and the introduction of substitute Alan Dunstrie changed the game. Iain Polworth dribbled across the centre of the box and when the ball broke kindly for Dunstrie, he coolly picked his spot.

The Green brothers combined to produce the winner when Mike's corner kick found Doug, who took full advantage of a free header from close range.

"We always looked vulnerable at the end of the game and when our own goal was scored, I was thankful," said Mechanics manager Dave Milroy.

Don't say he didn't play too badly. He just didn't exploit the extra space when they lost a player. The situation was tailoring the game with some defended too deeply and paid the price.

Forres had former manager George Cowie at the game as a guest as they said farewell to the ex-Hearts and West Ham player, who leaves for Brisbane today to take up a coaching position.

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ROTHES..... 0
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Maroons happy to be on top

WICK ACADEMY..... 0
KEITH..... 2
NEW Keith No. 2 Alan Lyons will hand back the Knoch Park reins to boss Martin Allan with big grin on his face tomorrow night, after a dream debut at Aberdeen Park.

Former Don Lyons joined the Maroons' management team last Tuesday and found himself in charge against Wick Academy, while newly appointed manager Allan took a short holiday

Throw in at the deep end, Lyons saw two goals from striker Kevin Will, a sixth-minute goal and a penalty on the hour, steer the Maroons to a comfortable win in Caithness.

That lifted Keith back to the top of the Press and Journal Highland League table.

A relieved Lyons said: "We came back from Wick at the top-of-the-table, but I'll be delighted to see the boss back for Wednesday night's Aberdeen Shield tie against Fraserburgh at Belliesa."

Wick fans saw striker Alan Murray make his long-awaited first-team return and manager Don Cowie blood three youngsters from the Caithness club's under-18 side, but they had little to cheer.

"We came off a distant second best to a very slick, very busy and very confident Keith side which is as good as any side we've come up against this season, so far," said Wick assistant manager Derek McArdie.

Battling Broch boys have a bright future

CLACHINAUCUDDIN..... 3
FRASERBURGH..... 3
A SORRY sequence which has seen Fraserburgh not win a game since September 11 has virtually eliminated them from title contention. Yet bright promise for the future was shown by the fact that they could successfully draft in three lads who had played in their BP Youth Cup tie Tannaic earlier in the week.

With five regulars out, including 27-goal strikeforce Paul Keith and Kris Hunter as long-term casualties, Broch brought in 17-year-olds Duncan Summers, Andrew Stephen and Russell McBride — and all looked the part.

Fraserburgh looked to have ended their wait for a win when they led 3-1 then Mike McCafferty handed pass a gapping goal instead of making it 4-1.

But Clach hung in there and a brace enough left to make a rousing rally in which they saved a point and almost won it.

The Inverness side hit back with goals from Bruce McCraw and Philip Lamb to force a draw after Norman

Brora end losing streak

BRORA RANGERS..... 1
LOSSIEMOUTH..... 1
HAPPY Brora Rangers player-manager John Suttar spent yesterday hunting through his Douglas Park scrapbook after watching his side draw with high-flying Lossiemouth on home turf, which he confessed: "I can't remember the last time we took a point off Lossie at home or away."

After beating Peterhead and Elgin City convincingly in our previous two league matches, taking on Lossie was a big test for us and we had to come from 1-0 down to get a well-earned point.

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Striker Steve Murray's 74th-minute penalty helped Brora hold Lossie, who went in front four minutes earlier, thanks to Gary Keith's tidy close-range finish.

But Coaters assistant manager Mike Cormack was far from happy to settle for a point after seeing Lossie make as many far too many chances.

He said: "We're looking on the result as two points dropped rather than one gained. You have to kill sides like Brora off when you get the chance and we just didn't do that."

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But manager Alan Scott, who has keeper Ian Grant sidelined by an ankle injury, has his eye fixed on this weekend's clash with Huntly and Wednesday week's Aberdeen Shield semi-final against Peterhead or a Buckle Thistle.

He said: "We've used two different Dundee-based amateur keepers in our last two games because Ian has been out injured, but I could have a difficult decision to make before the end of this week."

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Cove are lucky to escape

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JUNIOR FOOTBALL

TURRIF UNITED are the new leaders of the Evening Express Bow Accord Premier League following Saturday's narrow victory at The Haigles against bottom-of-the-table East End.

Turriff take over top spot after an inspired fightback

by Dave Macdonald
TURRIF UNITED are the new leaders of the Evening Express Bow Accord Premier League following Saturday's narrow victory at The Haigles against bottom-of-the-table East End.

cards at the break, with the visitors ahead through Greig Milne and Doug Scully. However, a great fightback saw Stuart Mitchell, David Innes and Stewart Wynnes all find the net to snatch the three points.

Cutter failed to move clear at the top after going down heavily to Sunnaby at Heatherfield Park, Paul Paton (2), Bruce Campbell and Martin Gray found the net for Bobby Gray's side, who move into second place in the table.

Martin Low's brace helped FC Stoneycroft to an easy win at Polo Park, where Stonehaven were the visitors. Brian Bryes and Paul Johnston also scored for the home side, with John Caird replying for Hive.

Skipper Mark Elmist showed the way with a double in Bon Accord's 3-1 success over Stoneycroft at Keith Park. Steve McEath was also on target, with Gibby Stephen scoring a consolation for the visitors.

Banchory St Ternan fought back to earn a share of the points after visitors Hail Russell United had gone two up thanks to Dave Ritchie and Malcolm Duncan.

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