

SHOCKS AT HOME

CLAPTON ORIENT GOT THE ONLY GOAL LAST NIGHT

Rennie Misses Penalty, and then Ordered Off

(By Crusader).

CLAPTON ORIENT 1
LUTON TOWN nil

LUTON:—Harford; Kingham, Smith; Clark, Richards, Fraser; Heslop, M'Nestry, Brown, Rennie, Bryce.

ORIENT:—Wood; Jennings, Broadbent; Lawrence, Edmonds, Bolton; Dudley, Cropper, Tricker, Fowler, Fletcher.

Referee:—Mr. L. E. Gibbs, Reading.

LAST night CLAPTON ORIENT were visitors to the Town Ground, and sprung a surprise by scoring the only goal of the match. The game was very similar to those of the early part of the season, for there was little combination, and though the defensive elements were fairly sound, the Town team seemed to lack the steady influence of Hodgson. Someone was required to lend assurance, and to pull the team together when things were not going well. On the run of the play, the Town should have won with comparative ease, for, giving full credit to the Orient for their dangerous raids and their determination generally, they were almost over-played at times in mid-field, and but for the rugged work of their halves and backs, and, even more valuable, the skill of Wood in goal, they would have been well beaten.

RENNIE GOES OFF

The two outstanding incidents of the game concerned Rennie. He had the opportunity to equalise from a penalty kick, but failed; and then, after a scuffle with Lawrence, he was ordered off the field. This occurred when the Town left wing were making headway, and Lawrence tackled, not for the first time, in a dangerous fashion. It was not clear what happened at the particular moment, but it seemed as though Rennie retaliated on Lawrence, and then both players assumed threatening attitudes as the referee appeared on the scene. He spoke to both players, but with arms outstretched they approached each other, and apparently Rennie tweaked Lawrence's nose. Certainly it could not be called a real blow, but the referee was on the spot, and he promptly ordered off the Town forward. I don't see how he could have done otherwise, though Rennie seemed surprised by the decision. The crowd also resented it, and for a long time the official, who had certainly allowed matters to go too far for a long time, was loudly heated.

A POOR GAME

It was a very poor game, for the ground was hard and the light ball not easy to control; the ball was in the air a lot too much, and the kicking from the middle men was usually too strong to be of much use to the attack. The Orient lived up to tradition, for they began vigorously, and their halves and backs never hesitated to go for man and ball, and with the Town defenders taking a similar line, the play was moderate in the first half, and gradually became scrappy. In their eagerness to equalise, the Town forwards, even with their absent, allowed many chances to pass, and the most dangerous player on the side in the closing stages was Richards, who tried his utmost to pull the side together, and took the right wing in rushing into the forward line, and making many attempts to pull the side out of the fire. He had as many hits in the last ten minutes as any other forward had during the game, and that is a cause he kept going and went into the thick of the fight as ardently in attack as in defence.

HESLOP GOING WELL

The Orient lost the toss and started towards the Kenilworth-road end. Kingham had to deal with the left wing once immediately, and then Fowler and side. When the Town made pro-

gress on the right, Wood had no difficulty in accepting Heslop's centre, and then in taking a straight drive from M'Nestry. A hard shot from Brown struck a defender and went for a corner, and then Wood twice punched away centres from the right wing. Rennie opened out the play with a fine pass to Heslop, who sprinted down and centred grandly, and Wood had to go down to it; he dropped the ball, but there was no one up quickly enough to take advantage of the situation. A run by Dudley was checked by Smith, and then Richards and Brown enabled Heslop to run through, but Brown diverted the centre behind. A pretty movement by Fowler and Fletcher ended with the former shooting wide, and then Cropper spoilt another effort by running offside.

TOWN'S AGGRESSION

A sharp assault at the other end brought a long shot from Richards, and Jennings headed over the bar, but the corner kick was wasted. M'Nestry was a foot too high with a strong shot, and the Orient were kept on the defensive for some time. Rennie and Brown each had fierce shots rebound from a packed goal, and a further bright bit of work by Heslop ended with a shot into the side net. Bryce raised hopes with a tackle that dispossessed Jennings, and his centre went across to M'Nestry, who headed well, but Wood was safe. In an Orient burst Tricker put in a ground shot for Harford to turn round the post, but the flag-kick was fruitless. In another assault by the Town, Broadbent was injured, but soon recovered. Once more Rennie fed Heslop, but the winger lifted his centre right across the goal, and it fell harmlessly behind. Kingham came up the field and took a shot from forty yards' range, but the ball went wide.

WOOD'S WORK

Heslop was getting plenty of work, and twice he centred well, but the ball was scrambled clear of goal. Wood saved finely in another attack engineered by Richards and Brown, and Clark twice dropped the ball among a crowd of players in the goal area, but the Orient defenders refused to be beaten. Smith failed in an attempt to meet a centre from the left, but Fraser was too sharp for Dudley, and got the ball away. There was not much combination from either team, but hopes were renewed for the Town when Brown passed nicely to M'Nestry, but Wood anticipated the rapid shot, and a moment later saved brilliantly at full length from the same player. Wood saved a neat header from Heslop, and Bryce was given a chance by Rennie, but he badly pulled his pass behind Brown when the latter had the goal at his mercy. The Town maintained the offensive right to the interval, and Wood made fine saves, notably from M'Nestry, and a pile-driver from Clark's free-kick. So the interval came:

LUTON nil
ORIENT nil

Immediately the Town went to the attack, and the Orient goal escaped narrowly several times. Heslop got through, but was forced to put behind, and his corner kick went behind after a tussle in the goal-mouth. The Town left wing, backed by Fraser, made a strong attempt, but with Rennie waiting for the pass, Bryce sent the ball into the goal, and Brown was not quick enough to take the chance before he was tackled. Then Rennie just missed with a fine shot. Suddenly Fletcher broke away on the left wing and drove the ball across to the other wing; DUDLEY met it and returned it, apparently as a centre, for Harford appeared to think the ball was going behind; however, it struck the upright, and though Harford tried to

catch it from the rebound, he could not hold it, and into the net it went.

THE PENALTY KICK

The Town resumed the attack, and M'Nestry shot over following clever work by Heslop. Clark and Heslop put in some fine passing, and the former skimmed the bar with a terrific shot. Heslop again got through from a nice pass by M'Nestry, and the ball went across the goal-mouth; Bryce retrieved close to the line, and had beaten Lawrence when the latter swept his legs from under him. There was no alternative but a penalty kick, and Bryce had to be carried off for attention, though he soon returned. Rennie took the penalty, but drove the ball straight at Wood, who beat it down; Rennie secured and a goal seemed certain, but he sent it well wide when such a feat seemed impossible.

RICHARD'S EFFORTS

Play was more than vigorous now, and it came to a head with the dismissal of Rennie, referred to above. Still, the Town continued to have the better of the exchanges, and from a corner won by Heslop the ball left M'Nestry's head and travelled just wide. Bryce tested Wood after good work by Clark, and Smith and Kingham drove their forwards to the attack time after time. Richards joined in, too, and M'Nestry's shots from foot and head troubled Wood. Richards also shot splendidly after a rush into the goal-mouth, and then Clark took a free kick and shot hard for goal; a defender's leg turned the ball, and it seemed a certainty until Wood flung himself across and managed to turn it round the post. He was hurt in the effort, but remained on the field. Wood made several saves, and Richards put over the bar three times in a brief period. Try as they would, the Town could not beat Wood, and the game ended with the Orient victors.

DEFENCE

Harford had not much work in either half, but there were not a few centres that crossed his goal-mouth and gave him some anxiety. Kingham was the best back on the field, and very nearly the best player. I know of none better. He kicked and tackled cleanly and judiciously, and more than held his own with an enterprising and speedy wing. Smith could not be blamed in any way, though I thought he was too vigorous at times, even though he was meeting violence with violence. Clark played finely at right half, and on this form could never be dislodged from the position, while Fraser and Richards made up a strong line. There was never any lack of vigour from the Orient forwards and halves, and it was perhaps as well that the Town middle men were able to check it. Richards, who was captain, undertook the duties nobly, and made desperate efforts to save a point.

ATTACK

The forwards have seldom played worse. Brown was too light against such hefty opposition, and was probably feeling the effects of Saturday's game. He did not do so well, but he got little assistance worthy of the name. Now and then we had a glimpse of the real Rennie and M'Nestry, but generally they

were below par, and they had to put up with a good deal of heavy and dangerous tackling. Bryce was good in parts, and Heslop played one of his best games, though his tendency to lift the ball under the bar instead of to his colleagues requires alteration. Still, he was the pick of the line.

The Orient owed nearly everything to Wood, who kept goal grandly, while his backs, though not clever, shirked nothing and booted the ball very hard. The middle men were reckless workers, and of the forwards Fowler and Fletcher comprised the best wing on the field.