

ODD GOAL TO ORIENT

LUTON'S RALLY CAME TOO LATE

Mistaken Methods

(By Crusader)

CLAPTON ORIENT 3
LUTON TOWN 2

CLAPTON.—Wood; Broadbent, Evans
Lawrence, Edmonds, Dudley; Jack
Fowler, Tricker, Mills, Fletcher.

LUTON.—Harford; Kingham, Hodg-
son; Clark, McGinnigle, Fraser; Heslop
M'Nestry, Yardley, Slicer, Bryce.
Referee, Mr. E. E. Small, Bristol.

When I saw Mr. Ernest Small arrive in a taxi-cab at the Lea Bridge-road ground on Saturday afternoon, I was well satisfied that on the score of control there would not be much to cavil about at the end. Some of the Town players felt otherwise when they had been beaten, but beyond an occasion when Fowler handled the ball to get it away from a scrimmage in the Orient goal region, I saw no incident that was to the discredit of the little referee. On that occasion he was not to blame, for Fowler is not transparent, and the referee was close in the Town goal, and the offence took place quite out of his vision. The match was not lost through any official fault, and it certainly should have been won in the closing stages. The long and the short of the story was that the Town were too long in settling down; there was a lack of determination, especially in the middle line, and a want of care and vigilance; and perhaps the most unsettling thing of all, failure to grasp the deadness of the ground.

WRONG TACTICS

There had been many loads of sand on the ground during the season, and the ball sogged as soon as it dropped and long before the end its weight was such as to knock out players who attempted to head. The Orient never waited to get the ball under control properly, but simply "socked" it for all they were worth in the opening half. The Town tried to play the scientific game, and had there been a longer period to play they must have won, for they finished much the fitter, and were going great guns at the cease fire signal. The Orient's fierce and energetic play in the first half hour won the match though they had a gift in the first goal. There was little to admire in their defensive work except pluck and courage, but the forwards were quick when they got on the move, and their rushes gave little peace to the Town rearguard.

TRICKER TOUCHES

Immediately after the start we had a sample of the Orient's intentions, for a speedy skirmish on the right found Jack's nippiness almost too much for Hodgson, and Harford was a trifle lucky to get the ball away twice within a few seconds. The first goal was the result of a very bad blunder by Kingham. A long and harmless looking kick went up the field, and the Town full-back could have cleared very easily, for he had a very big space in which to work and no opponent within many yards; he seemed to have lost his bearings for the moment, and called to Harford to cover the ball, but it was a long way to the right hand of Harford, and the latter had no chance of getting near it. Fletcher summed up the situation and dashed through in a trice, and when challenged by Kingham he deftly tapped the ball to TRICKER, who promptly shot hard and true into the net away from the goalkeeper. With the Town striving to recover, the whistle was necessary, and Lawrence was pulled up three times for petty fouls. From one of these Clark drove in very hard, and Broadbent headed away just in time.

—TWICE

When a rather aimless attack had been repelled there was another quick rush by the Orient, and TRICKER received and beat McGinnigle and Kingham by neat feinting and then shot hard, the ball being slightly deflected by Kingham's foot, to go right away from Harford and put the Orient two ahead, and the crowd on very good terms. However, the Town began to open out a bit, and once more the Orient left-half resorted to a foul to stop the Town right wing. Clark planted the kick well in the goal mouth, and Yardley intervened and brought the ball down to the feet of SLICER, who shot a lovely goal. The ball travelled rapidly from end to end, with the Orient the more dangerous, though the Town were still trying to play carpet football. Harford made a wonderful save from Fowler, and at the other end, Fraser's fine work deserved a goal, but the Orient plunged into the struggle at close quarters, and eventually the ball was got away by Fowler falling into the scrum and using his hands.

AND FOWLER

Fletcher was again responsible for the Orient's further success. He made a quick sprint that drew the defence, and then sent the ball right across to Fowler, who drove home a magnificent shot. To the change of ends the Orient persisted in their open work, and the forwards rushed the defence at every opportunity, and play was inclined to be lively, so that the referee had need to keep a firm grip, and he did it.

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TOWN		1

With the breeze in their favour, it was expected that the Orient would go even better, but though they held their own for a time, they could not raise so much vim as in the first half. Their attacks usually came through Tricker and the extreme wingers keeping well down the field, and long passes, in which Fletcher especially was prominent, gave the Town defence most trouble. Several times they came near scoring, and all of them shot well, but there was a different Town to face now. More life was put into the work, and the wingers were used altogether better than in the first period. Still, there were not a great number of incidents that called for mention, and there was lack of punch in the Town attack in front of goal that enabled the Orient's dauntless defenders to get the ball away, and Wood was not often extended.

TOWN REVIVAL

In the last quarter of an hour, however, it was clear that the Orient had about shot their bolt, and the Town attacked almost incessantly. At this stage they had adopted tactics that were more likely to pay, and the ball was being passed to the wings much better. Slicer, who had gone to the extreme, was the most effective in the line, and got across nice centres, but the Orient backs and halves packed well. Clark made one or two efforts on his own, but Wood was not troubled. Then Clark made ground into the middle, and, at the right moment, sent to McNestry, who retained possession as Heslop ran inside. M'Nestry dribbled at great speed and was cutting into goal and about to tap the ball in front, when Dudley tripped him. Though M'Nestry kept his feet, the offence was so palpable that before the ball had left M'Nestry's foot the whistle had gone for a penalty kick, and CLARK gave Wood no chance with a powerful drive.

TOO LATE

The last seven or eight minutes were the most exciting of the match. The Town, recognising that they had a good chance, came through in great style, and twice the Orient goal seemed bound to fall; but the ball was got away in a fashion that none could explain. Then came the best chance of the match, for Slicer drew the defence, and with Wood right out of the way, there was a blank goal to shoot into; M'Nestry took the ball first time and tried to guide the ball into the net with the side of his foot, but it rose over the bar. There was no further chance like that, and the game ended with the Orient winning, as a result of their first half strength.

TOWN PLAYERS

Hartford was not to blame in the slightest degree. He made fine saves, too, and Hodgeson played grandly throughout. Kingham did very well, save for that error in the opening stages, and the pair kicked and tackled stoutly against rugged attackers. Fraser was quite the best of the middle men. He did grand work at all times, and was a big factor in the second half revival. Clark was not so good as in recent games, and seemed disposed to keep the ball too close. McGinnigle puzzles me more than any other player Luton have had since the war. At his best he is splendid, and at his worst he seems unable to do little right. This was one of his bad days, and he could not hold the Orient's cashing inside forwards. Slicer was not doing at all badly at inside-left, but infinitely better on the extreme. No player can middle a ball better. Heslop did well when he got the chance, but his opportunities were very few. Yardley tried to put some virility into the line, but was well watched in front of goal and had few shots. M'Nestry could not master the ground conditions, and Bryce did well in patches, but is not an inside forward.

For the Orient, Broadbent was the better back; Lawrence was the best half, though disposed to rough it without provocation of any sort; Fletcher and Fowler played well in an assertive forward line.

There were 5,000 spectators.