

ORIENT OVERCOME AT LAST

SPLENDID VICTORY FOR LUTON LAST NIGHT

Tait and Mills Each Get a Pair

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 4
CLAPTON ORIENT 1

LUTON.—Harford; Kingham, Hodgson; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Mills, Hutchison, Tait, Rennie, Roberts.

ORIENT.—Emery; Hebden, Jones; Peacock, Keen, Ellis; Best, Earle, K. L. Cooper, Phillips, Fletcher.

Referee.—Mr. P. Graham, Coventry.

We were very much in need of the tonic, and the pity was that there were fewer than 5,000 spectators to reap the benefit. Had others, absent either from dissatisfaction or by compulsion, been present the next League game would assuredly attract something like a record crowd. It would not be true to say that the Orient were outclassed, because they fought gamely, and often showed skill and understanding in their advances, but there was a new nippiness and energy fore and aft among the Town, and frequently they overplayed the opposition. When the middle line of a team is sound other departments may be rendered correspondingly safe and serviceable, and, in the main, the Town's decisive success was the reward of sterling play in the spine of the side, though the forwards certainly deserve a big measure of praise for the very real improvement they showed.

Victory was all the more palatable since it was the first time the Town had defeated the Orient in a League game. This was the eighth League game, and the Orient won the first five.

TAIT SOON TOUCHES

Rain was falling sharply when the teams turned out, and the light did not appear likely to last, so the kick-off was made a few minutes before the advertised time. Hodgson was unsuccessful again in the spin of the coin, and the Town defended the Kenilworth-road end. They were first away, Mills putting behind in trying to turn inwards a fast moving ball. When the visitors threatened Kingham intercepted, and McGinnigle also was an obstruction. Fraser opened out the game, and the Town went away through Roberts's quickness in robbing Hebden, but when he sent across Hutchison was not up to receive. Fraser was penalised for charging Earle, but the free kick was cleared, and Phillips was offside in a raid when Best centred. Then the Town set to work, and Rennie gave Roberts a neat pass, and from the winger's centre TAIT got possession, beat Jones, and ran in to shoot into the net, this goal coming within four minutes of the start, and evoking tremendous applause. Immediately the Town renewed the assault, a corner being forced on the right, and play remained in the Orient quarters for some time. Fletcher was offside when he tried to break the ice, and the next incident was a fine recovery by Rennie when the ball was going behind, and the ball went right across goal to Mills, whose first-time effort went wide.

A GRAND GOAL

Fraser and Kingham were conspicuous, and then Tait dashed through and forced a corner, and after the Orient goal had narrowly escaped, another flag kick followed, and a hard drive by Rennie rebounded from a defender. The Town were playing strongly, and Kean was prominent in engineering another fierce attack, Hutchison shooting very hard for the ball to rebound from a packed defence. Emery saved well from Roberts, and a quick rally by Fletcher and Phillips was held up by McGinnigle. Tait and Mills raced away, and from a flag kick Hutchison headed over when Fraser gently lobbed the ball across. Cooper had a sprint out to the left wing of the Orient, but his centre went wide. Two or three corners fell to the Town, shots rebounding from the backs, and there was a lot of excitement until Roberts put behind. After some close play on the Town left, Roberts again got the ball over nicely, and TAIT, without hesitation, met the speedy ball and hooked in a terrific shot that had Emery beaten all the way. It was a magnificent effort, and fully merited the loud cheers.

BRIGHT BEST

The Town were now going great guns, and the Orient defenders had to work very hard. They put in all they knew, and were very fair, and though there were hard knocks the game was fought in a good spirit. Tait was always a trouble to the Orient rear-guard, and then Best broke away and tested Harford. In a rapid return to the other end Emery made a magnificent save from a header by Tait, and Rennie banged wide from Mills's centre. Best proved too cute for Hodgson, but Harford saved. BEST was at fault when failing to make good use of a nice pass from Fletcher, but a moment later came again, and, going on the inside of Hodgson, drove home a lovely left foot shot that entered the net just inside the upright, Harford

having no chance. The Town made a warm reply to this challenge, and Emery was constantly in demand for a few minutes. Fletcher raised the siege, and the Orient forwards got away through clever footwork by Phillips. Pierce shots were driven in by Best and Fletcher, the ball striking the Town defenders as they crowded goal, but McGinnigle and Fraser got the ball away. Fine play by Fraser brought another corner to the Town, and then Kean cut through in a solo effort, but shot wide. Emery made another fine save from a header by Tait, but the referee failed to see that the custodian touched the ball and refused a corner kick.

The Town defenders had to put in a bit of hard labour, and the Orient wingers were always a menace when they got away. Best went right away and squared the ball, only to find Cooper encroaching. Phillips next tried his foot, but skied the ball, and Fletcher was offside in another venture. Sturdy play by Hodgson and Kingham repulsed the visitors, and then Fraser set his forwards going in good style. Emery saved from Rennie, and there was a loud appeal for a penalty when Tait was charged from behind as he was trying to play the ball close to goal. Kingham let in Fletcher, but the winger shot well wide. A burst on the home right brought a corner, and the Orient goal escaped luckily when Rennie put in a high shot, and Tait dashed in and knocked the ball out of Emery's hands, Hebden kicking away from the goal line. Hutchison was too high with a shot from long range, but the Town pressed continuously. Rennie sent Roberts away again, and the winger centred, the ball travelling beyond a crowd of players to MILLS, who shot low, without hesitation, and Emery was well beaten. The interval came just afterwards.

LUTON TOWN 3
CLAPTON ORIENT 1

The pace had been warm, and it was not surprising that the second half was not so fast. The Orient inside forwards made a very clever passing run right from the kick-off, and the first Luton player to touch the ball was Harford, who saved from Earle. A run by the Town right wing, with Kean in attendance, was repelled by Jones, but play veered to the left after the clearance, and Hebden made a dashing clearance. Kingham was applauded for a splendid bit of work, and then the referee had to leave the ground for some reason, a linesman taking over, and Mr. Fred Hawkes taking the flag. While the chief official was away the fourth goal came. Rennie got away by clever feinting, and sent through to Tait; the defenders crowded the centre-forward, but he managed to get the ball across goal. Hutchison had the easiest of chances, but completely missed the ball; MILLS was at hand, however, and shot hard and true into the net. After a faint skirmish by the Orient the Town were breaking through when pulled up for offside, and then Tait beat the defence, and from away on the left put the ball across, none being there to take it in front of goal.

LECTURES

The Town goal was in jeopardy when Best forced a corner, but McGinnigle made a rather lucky clearance, the ball appearing to stick to his head for a fraction of time before he cleared. Rennie evaded two or three opponents with deft touches and swung the ball over to Mills, who was baulked by the long legs of Jones, but Kean had a shot saved by Emery. Tait forced a corner off Jones, and Roberts sent the ball right across the face of goal, but none could put it through. The Orient were almost penned in now, and Fraser and McGinnigle had shots, while all the inside forwards took a turn without success. The referee stopped the game to speak to Earle, the Orient captain, and the Town soon pressed again, but Emery saved finely from Tait and Mills, and Rennie failed to get properly at the ball and scraped it behind. A free kick against Kingham was taken by Cooper, but the ball, travelling at great speed, struck a wall of players. Kingham incurred the wrath of Phillips by robbing him neatly, and soon afterwards the referee had to severely lecture the Orient inside left for a very bad foul on Kingham. A loud appeal for a penalty followed a rush by Tait when Hutchison passed inside, Jones appearing to handle in clearing.

HIT THE BAR

Emery saved from McGinnigle, and then the Orient made headway on the right, Harford saving from Earle twice in quick succession, and another hard shot from Cooper. The Orient were playing a bit better, but the Town were easing up in all departments. Hodgson had a knock, and while he was hugging himself the Orient were able to attack hotly, and Harford saved well from Cooper, who could certainly shoot hard. Then came a brilliant effort by Mills, and he nipped inside and banged in a shot that had Emery beaten all the way, but the ball struck the bar, and Emery

cleverly contrived to tip it out, although there was a loud appeal for a goal. In the last minutes the Town nearly added to their lead through Tait.

PRAISE

Apart from the one incident that was to the discredit of Phillips, the game was a real pleasure to watch, and was contested in really good spirit. There could be no mistake that the Town were worthy winners, and maintenance of this standard will bring them many victories, and the crowd follows the successful. If there were shaky moments in the defence, that could be well understood, for the rain had made the turf very slippery, and there was rather a lot of grass up the flanks. The benefit of that, however, will be felt later. Harford soon got a little tame work, and after the first few minutes gave no cause for anxiety. Kingham and Hodgson had their hands full whenever the visiting wingers got away, but both kicked and tackled well, and the halves played a grand game all along the line. McGinnigle gave the Corinthian no latitude, and was more often in the limelight than anyone. Fraser and Kean played beautiful football, and the former's strong work, though never unfair, was not to the relish of Earle. The most satisfactory feature was the general improvement in the forward play. Mills played his best game; not because he got two goals, but because he positioned and centred well, and if now and then he tried to do a little more than he could manage, did so well that he justified the hopes that he is going to be a very fine player. Hutchison was also clever, and with a few more games will be a bit quicker on the ball. Some of his movements were bewildering, but more speed and a closer association with Tait were desirable. Rennie played skilfully as ever, and Roberts did quite well—far better than with the Reserves on Saturday. I should think—while Tait was a grand leader and an inspiration to the side. His energy and dash roused the spectators to enthusiasm, and were the undoing of the Orient defenders. The line played faster and more thoughtful football, and the combination and positioning was far better than anything they have previously shown.

For the Orient Emery proved a very good goalkeeper, while the backs also played strenuously. The halves were not strong enough, though working zealously, and the forwards suffered from lack of support. Best was certainly the best, but Earle and Phillips were craftsmen, and Cooper will be a dangerous forward soon. Fletcher did not have such a good match as usual, but the chief need was for support from the middle men.