

SPARKLING DISPLAY

LUTON OVERCOME THE ORIENT

Fraser at His Best

(By CRUSADER)

LUTON TOWN 2
CLAPTON ORIENT 0

LUTON: Harford; Kingham, Mackey; Kean, McGinnigle, Fraser; Pease, Martin, Bell, Rennie (A.), Hutchison.
ORIENT: Robertson; Kean, Crompton; Fogg, Fellowes, Ware; Mayson, Mills, Halliday, Crawford, French.
Referee: Mr. S. F. Rous, Watford.

CLAPTON ORIENT visited LUTON on Saturday with all the confidence that arises from the outstanding success in a full list of League games on the previous Saturday. Their display against Aldershot so heartened a number of their followers that, for nearly half-an-hour before the game there was a chorus of "One-two-three—" and so on, to nine, as a reminder that the Orient had beaten Aldershot and scored nine goals, just to show that the stalwart defence of the Hampshire club could be subdued. There were occasional flashes in their play at Luton which showed that, allowed the latitude, they would have repeated their feat. Alas! their supporters had to return without even one comforting cheer, and must have told themselves on the way home that only the brilliance of their goalkeeper prevented Luton rubbing in a defeat quite as decisive as that the Orient had scored against Aldershot.

TWO BEST

Two players took the eye and evoked the enthusiasm of the spectators more than any other half-a-dozen—Robertson in the Orient goal, and Fraser in the Town middle line. Both deserved thoroughly all the eulogies expressed. Robertson was the sheet anchor of a team of stubborn and determined workmen; Fraser was the most polished craftsman of a skilled and scientific team. On the balance of play the Town should have run up a big score, and although chances were missed, the forwards had very hard luck, though conversely that was the good fortune deserved by the Orient custodian. It was a splendid match, with much attractive football from both sides, but the Orient were ploughing a very hard furrow, and their game did not run so fluently as that of the Town, especially in the second half, when most of us thought the visitors had overcome the worst of their troubles. On the whole it was one of the best games we have had at Luton, though the balance of play was rather heavily in favour of the Town.

HUTCHISON'S SHOT

The Town opened the more effectively, and the Orient defenders were soon busy, the attempts to transfer play being checked by the Town defenders without undue exertion. After sallies on the Town left, play was transferred to the right, and the first really good shot came from Bell, who slipped between the backs and fired in a hard shot which rose a foot or so too high. In another hard attack two or three shots were essayed, and one eluded Robertson, only for Crompton to fall back and kick clear. There was a disposition to hold the ball too long in the Town defence, and with Mills and Crawford very eager to get going this was not a wise policy, and once Halliday rushed through and seemed likely to score, but Kingham foiled him, and the ball went past the upright. The Orient were encouraged, and came again, Halliday trying very hard, and being well supported by Mills and Mayson. Both Kingham and Mackey kicked well, and from one clearance Fraser brought the ball along; there was a neat bit of passing, Rennie putting Hutchison right through; the winger raced in and shot strongly for the farther corner of the goal, but Robertson leapt up and just managed to deflect the ball on to the bar, whence it rebounded and was scrambled away.

PEASE FOLLOWS SUIT

The Town were showing fine form, the forwards and halves combining well, and repeated attacks were made. Robertson saved splendidly from Bell and Pease, cutting out centres from the latter in very clever fashion. His backs kicked hard and tackled strongly, too, but Martin nearly scored with a quick header when Hutchison beat the defence and swung the ball squarely across goal. We had a glimpse of Halliday's shooting powers a moment later, when he suddenly drove in a beautiful low shot from twenty yards, Harford anticipating and accepting cleanly. French sent over a high centre which Harford cut out, and then enthusiasm was evoked by a delightful movement by Kean and his wing, and when the ball came over, Rennie sent it back to the right, for Pease to dart in and fire hard with his left foot; the ball beat Robertson all the way, and a goal seemed certain, but again the ball flashed back from the bar and upright. Bell beat the backs and Robertson dashed out in the nick of time, the centre-forward's shot hitting the goalkeeper, and when Bell tried again the ball struck Crompton's foot and was cleverly caught on the rebound by Robertson.

BELL SCORES

The Orient put in all they knew, and Kingham and Mackey had to be wide awake, but Harford had nothing exciting to do, and for the most part play was in the Orient half, the Town halves playing beautiful football. Robertson made many grand saves, and once Hutchison was only inches too high with a great shot. Half-an-hour had passed when the Town took the lead. The ball had been lobbed over to the left; Hutchison neatly headed up the middle; BELL pounced on it, and got the better of Kean in a sharp duel, before shooting hard and low past Robertson. The Orient right had been the most dangerous element in the side, and Mayson was applauded for a quick dribble that carried him right through, but he shot rather too soon, and Harford watched the ball travel behind. The Town forwards entertained the crowd with bright passing movements, and

Martin's crafty footwork on the right, and Fraser's on the left, resulted in Robertson being constantly engaged, and he did his work well. He made a wonderful save from Pease, recovering the ball at the second attempt, and then, in another hectic assault, he was unable to hold the ball as Bell challenged, but Kean got it away just in time. French was at fault when he had a clear field, for he shot badly when he might well have scored, and before the whistle sounded Robertson again saved in grand style from the Town inside forwards.

LUTON TOWN 1
CLAPTON ORIENT 0

In the second half the Orient were not nearly so dangerous as previously. For long stretches they were kept on the defensive, and their goalkeeper did wonders. The goal was besieged, but the Orient rearguard fought desperately and never yielded a foot of ground without a struggle. Fraser won applause by a really extraordinary bit of juggling, beating three men, but the fourth robbed him, and as a result the Orient got away, and the Town defenders were beaten, Halliday and Crawford being dead in front of goal with only Harford to beat. There was a sigh of relief when the ball landed in Harford's arms. The visitors, who had played pluckily and fairly, seemed to lose their heads as the Town hammered away, and there were one or two ous that were resented. The Town were foiled time after time by the fine saves of Robertson, and three times in quick succession he made thrilling saves by diving first to one side and then to the other to keep out hard shots that were bound to score against a less resourceful and agile goalkeeper.

MARTIN SUCCEEDS

For several minutes the Orient were penned in their own penalty area, and shots were rained in, but the goalkeeper came as near miracles as anyone could. It was amazing how the goal escaped, and but for the brilliance of their goalkeeper the Orient must have suffered an overwhelming defeat. When he had to fish the ball out of the net for the second time he was not to blame. Ware, who had been rattled badly by the inability to hold Martin, back-heeled Pease as the latter raced past him, and the referee saw the offence and gave a free-kick. Kean placed the ball in the goal-mouth, and it was beaten out; Rennie drove back hard, and the ball struck a defender and went to MARTIN, who promptly shot hard past a crowd of players, and Robertson threw himself in vain at the ball.

ROBERTSON SUPREME

Fraser and Kean kept sending their wings to the attack, and the Town were masters of the match, the Orient forwards getting little support, and rarely making much progress. Robertson continued to win applause by his magnificent work. Time after time he thwarted the Town attacks when his colleagues were hopelessly at sea, and although he had a lot of good fortune, he deserved it. After a long spell of inactivity, Mayson and Mills broke away, and as a result Halliday was presented with an easy opening, but failed lamentably, putting wide. The visitors never had another chance, the Town establishing themselves in the Orient half and rarely allowing the ball to come far away. Robertson maintained his form to the end, saving from all the forwards again and again, and at the close he was given something of an ovation.

TOWN TEAM WORK

Harford had very little to do, and the others in the rear were generally safe. Kingham was probably better than for some weeks past, and he evidently appreciated the better playing conditions. Rarely did he put a foot wrong, and the kicking by both backs was of good length and very true. Mackey had the more ticklish job, for both Mayson and Mills were dangerous on the move. Fraser played a glorious game, never better, his footwork being a sheer delight, and the passes to his wing, with the ball on the carpet, were an education. McGinnigle once more frustrated a famous centre-forward, and his general play, both in attack and defence, was splendid. Kean did as well as ever, and seems to have years of football in him yet. The forwards played first-class football, and there was little for one to desire in their exhibition except finishing—more penetration. Undoubtedly they were up against a great goalkeeper, and on this form Robertson is quite the equal of any goalkeeper, including Wharton, seen on the ground this season.

Both the Orient backs kicked and tackled well, and the halves were workers to a man, though now and then their tactics displeased the crowd more than they upset the sufferers. The forwards revealed spots of brilliance, but were never allowed to settle down.

There were 7,106 spectators; receipts, £388 5s. 7d.