

# BELL'S EARLY GOAL

## BRINGS A POINT FROM THE ORIENT

### Luton Again in Form

(By "CRUSADER")

CLAPTON ORIENT ..... 1

(Foster)

LUTON TOWN ..... 1

(Bell)

**ORIENT.**—Robertson; Searle, Crompton; Fogg, Fellowes, Ware; Mayson, Halliday, Foster, Crawford, Rigby.

**LUTON TOWN.**—Coen; Reece, Mackey; Brown, Thayne, Fraser; Martin, Bell, Ball, Rennie, Stephenson.

Referee.—L. Boulstridge, Tamworth.

**A**NOTHER point away compensated for Luton Town's failure to overcome Watford. In some respects, there was a considerable improvement in the general play at Lea Bridge, but the team did not touch the standard shown in some of the away matches. Much of the fault, however, could be attributed to the rough state of the ground, which was all against accurate ground passing. In places, it was very soft, and in others bumpy. The Orient, of course, knew this, and, possibly, their methods were adopted with an eye to that drawback. Big kicking by the Orient backs and halves, the ball often being in the air, did not make for fascinating football, but the Town stuck to their own game, and none of us from Luton would have it otherwise.

The Orient had easier chances, but fewer, and, though Coen was taxed at times, he never had such severe work as Robertson, all of which argues that the shooting of the Town forwards was better.

There is still room for improvement in marksmanship all along the line, because no forward can be too efficient in this quality, but we were glad to see so many hard, low drives, and such promptitude in taking them.

#### AN EARLY GOAL

The Orient had the balance of play in the first half, especially after being in arrears, but could not batter down the defence. Almost from the kick-off, the Town were attacking, and Robertson had already accepted a header from Ball before a minute had elapsed. In the third minute came a goal, and a very good point.

The Town left-wing had been frustrated somewhat luckily, but came again. Stephenson broke clean through, cut in and wound up with a terrific shot; Robertson went down in a hurry, and did very well even to stop the ball at all; it struck his chest, and came out for BELL to rush up, and simply tap it into the net.

The Orient were stung by this reverse, and set about the business with a gusto that threatened to sweep the Town defenders off their feet. A shot by Halliday was a scorer all the way but for striking Reece's cocked foot, and, when the resultant flag-kick was placed in the goal-mouth, a determined rush by the home forwards seemed likely to carry defenders and ball into the net. However, Halliday was too desperate, and the referee intervened.

The Town left wing had more of the ball, and made good use of it, Stephenson especially being a lively customer, and, on the same flank, but the reverse way. Mayson was the harbinger of trouble for the Town defence.

This fleet-footed little fellow required a lot of stopping, and usually managed to get the ball across, only to find his colleagues well marked.

#### LINESMAN KNEW

When the Town right-wing emulated the left, Martin chased a pass by Bell, and swung the ball into the goal-mouth for Ball to beat Robertson with a perfect header, but the linesman signalled that the ball had been over the goal-line before Martin centred. A second goal then would probably have ensured success.

However, the Town pressed hotly, their moves invariably beating the Orient halves and backs, but Robertson rose to the

occasion, and great shots by Stephenson (twice) and Ball were accepted by the goalkeeper at full length.

The Orient threw themselves into the struggle with intense energy, and, though Coen did not have frequent calls, his backs and halves were kept at full stretch.

Once Thayne held up the inside forwards a few yards from goal as he threw himself at the ball, and efforts to drive the ball over him or through him failed.

Coen had some shots to handle, but did not look like being beaten by anything that he could see. His best save in the first half-hour was from Rigby, who cut in and shot hard, and soon afterwards a high centre from Mayson had beaten the goalkeeper, but Reece was at hand, and booted behind.

The Town halves played grandly, and eventually opened up a series of attacks, and Robertson did well to get at efforts from Bell, Martin, and Ball, while Rennie sent a sizzling drive just over the bar. Two chances fell to the Orient in fierce assaults before the interval, and on each occasion Mayson was the player to bring the trouble. Halliday seemed certain to score as he met one pass, but the ball crashed against the bar, and, later, Foster got through with only Coen to beat, but shot wildly and high.

Against that, the Orient goal had a lucky escape when Ball and Stephenson passed and re-passed until the Orient defenders did not know where to look for the ball, and, finally, it rested with Martin, whose intent was better than his aim, and once more the ball went sailing over the bar. Half-time:—

LUTON TOWN ..... 1

CLAPTON ORIENT ..... 0

If there could be what is called "the better way to kick" at Lea Bridge, the Town now had it, and seemed as if they were going to show their appreciation by scoring. Robertson quickly had to tip over the bar a very fine effort by Martin, but the same player could not get past Crompton when he hesitated just afterwards. Searle was fortunate to bar the way against Stephenson as the latter cut in, the ball stopping almost dead when the forward met it, and another hot shot by Rennie brought a gasp from the crowd, but the ball travelled wide.

The Orient were still striving hard to get a footing, but were compelled to shoot from long range, and Coen watched the ball go past or over his goal.

The Town were playing well together at this stage, and another fine shot by Rennie missed by inches. Bell dribbled past three opponents, but was stopped by a fourth half-a-dozen yards from goal. Robertson again saved brilliantly a fierce shot by Rennie, and Bell gave Ball a chance just afterwards, but the centre-forward put too high.

Stephenson again cut in as he received from Rennie a pass that had the defence all awry, but Robertson flung himself full length and brought off a wonderful save.

#### BEST CHANCE MISSED

After all this incident the Orient had a turn, and Crawford missed the best chance of the match when he shot wide with only Coen to beat. Efforts by Foster and Halliday to bore through met with determined resistance, in which Thayne and Mackey were prominent. Rigby twice got across good centres, but as a rule Reece kept him very quiet.

Martin and Bell took on following a delightful bit of work by Ball, and Stephenson raced in to meet the centre; once more a goal seemed a certainty, but the ball rose awkwardly as he shot, and although it was right on the mark, Robertson managed to reach it at full stretch and clear.

The crowd howled at Foster when he found a way through the middle and could have scored with a straight shot, but he sent well wide.

#### BELL ON THE MARK

Once more the Town forwards went down in line, and Bell rammed in a grand

shot, very low and travelling at great pace, but the goalkeeper threw himself across and held the ball at the second attempt. Stephenson being just too late to get to it when it first eluded the custodian's grasp.

Brown, who had done splendid work, especially in assisting the forwards, sent them to the attack again and again, but the Orient backs and halves packed their area, and prevented shots reaching the mark. Several corners were forced, but the ball was rushed away.

Coen saved cleverly as the Orient made even more strenuous endeavours to break through. Foster was knocked off his feet when trying to dribble through, and a free kick was wrongly given, for the charge was fair and square from the shoulder. Possibly the referee thought there was too much weight behind it.

Only seven minutes remained for play when the Orient equalised. In a resolute attack the ball was constantly in the Town goal area, but the backs and halves kept trouble from Coen. First-time shots were essayed, and from one of these the ball went out to Mayson, who returned it to the middle, and FOSTER scraped it just inside the post.

It was a rather lucky goal, because Thayne was hindered by Coen from getting at the ball, or he could have kicked away.

In the last few minutes the Town should have taken the lead again. They kept the ball in the Orient quarters, and Ball received with a wide space between the backs. Perhaps he was surprised by the chance, for he had not had many passes that left him an open course; anyway, he shot hurriedly when he might have run in a few yards, and Robertson watched the ball go much too high. A corner, forced by the Town left, was not well placed by Stephenson, and the end came with the spoils shared.

## THE TOWN

Coen did his work well, though he had not a great deal—nothing to compare with his task of the previous week. His backs did well.

I think this was the first time I had seen Reece at right-back. He played just as well there as on the other flank, and robbed the Orient attack of half its sting by keeping well on top of Rigby.

Mackey had a warm handful in Mayson, but kept his head always, and, by skilful positioning, frustrated the Orient inside forwards.

The Town captain deserved a magnum of praise for his pluck. He had a pulled muscle, but stuck his job grimly, and did well.

The halves have not played better this season. Brown and Fraser were clever as ever, their support of the forwards being remarkably good, and the latter had many passes on the ground that they could take on the run. Thayne put up his best of the season. Not only was he a bar to the Orient's three inside men, who were big and strong, as well as skilful, but he was able to take part in attacks. There was no better half-back on the field.

Ball led the line well, but did not receive through passes as often as he might have done. He set his wings going, and it required the ever-constant attention of Fellowes to keep him at bay. Both Bell and Rennie played finely, the former shooting splendidly, and Rennie also got in a few, though his marksmanship is not what it once was. Stephenson played one of his best games, harrying the defenders, and shooting hard. Martin did not shine on the wing, and it is clear that he is not cut out for that job. When he ran inside, opponents could make little of his footwork, and that is where he belongs.

## THE ORIENT

Robertson saved the Orient from defeat. He kept goal magnificently. Searle and Crompton put up a sound defence, and Fellowes played a hard and resolute game, but there was not much co-operation with the forwards. Mayson was the shining light of attack, for he rarely failed to do something good with the ball, and Halliday is still a very skilful player. Late in the game he changed places with Foster, and it was then that the equalising goal was scored.