

GREAT RALLY SAVES TOWN'S HOME RECORD

LUTON TOWN 3, ORIENT 2

IT IS doubtful whether we shall see anything more dramatic at Kenilworth Road this season than the way the Town clawed their way back from defeat against the Orient.

With the game about to enter its last quarter of an hour the Town were two down and looked virtually certain to lose the unbeaten home record which had spanned 25 League games and 30 if one counted those in the Cup competitions.

For much of the game they had been battering against massed defensive measures by the Orient, a not unfamiliar procedure by Division III teams in away matches.

Luck had not run their way, especially in the first half when MacDonald and Sheffield were within inches of scoring.

At the same time, Orient having increased their early lead with a breakaway goal soon after half-time, looked in no danger of losing.

Nor did the Town seem to have any real idea of how to penetrate the Orient rearguard.

First ray of hope

First ray of light came with only 16 minutes left, when JOHN COLLINS scored for the second consecutive time at home.

Six minutes after that, GRAHAM FRENCH secured as valuable a goal as is likely to come his way for some time.

So, with ten minutes left the Town were level and enthusiasm knew no bounds.

At least it did not, until with a bare three minutes remaining, MALCOLM MacDONALD received full consolation for some terrible luck he had had earlier by heading what proved to be a spectacular winner.

Had the Town lost their home record, it would have been less than justice because they were by far the more ambitious team.

That goals did not come until those thrilling later stages was not entirely their own fault, though I thought they contributed largely to the supremacy attained by the Orient defence by keeping the ball far too much in the air.

But whatever shortcomings there were in front of the goal, they were speedily forgotten in the excitement at the end.

The Town brought on Lewis for Sheffield before the scoring began. Whether his presence had a significant effect on the revival I would not like to say, but he definitely had a hand in one goal.

On the other hand, Sheffield tried tremendously hard without fortune really smiling on him.

But indisputably the danger man of the front line was MacDonald, who confirmed earlier impressions that he can be a match-winner in his own right.

Attendance: 14,761.