

TOWN RALLY

By ERIC PUGH

ORIENT, taking advantage of every opportunity this afternoon, deserved their goals. But the Town, who were unlucky not to get more, played well.

After the visitors had their first goal in the net they played a defensive role and the Town were hard pressed to get through until well into the second half.

A problem of who to leave to accommodate John Collins, who was ineligible for Wednesday's League Cup-tie, was resolved when manager Alec Stock decided that Brian Lewis, last season's leading scorer, should be the substitute.

Thus, the Town's line-up was exactly the same as that which won at Bournemouth last Saturday.

During the week there were doubts about the fitness of some members of the Orient team, principally the former England international winger Peter Brabrook, but in the event all reported fit, and Orient were unchanged.

Dark clouds hung all around the ground as the teams came out, and possibly deterred some people from coming because the crowd was still below last season's average.

Both these teams had 100 per cent records, so something had to give.

Orient had quite a following, and they saw their team's defence first in action, with Goddard cutting out a centre by Keith Allen.

A determined break by Sheffield from a header by MacDonald brought the first casualty of the match, Goddard, who was hurt in diving at the centre-forward's feet, but was soon all right again.

TALKING TO

Sheffield was in trouble with the referee for charging Goddard, though he pointed out that he used his shoulder, which was undoubtedly the case.

It all amounted to no more than a talking to, but even so, the home fans thought that was going too far.

Best scoring effort to date came when MacDonald flashed the ball inches wide with his head after a cross by Keen.

Then French embarked on one of his tricky runs which ended with a swirling centre that just missed the far post.

MacDonald continued to be dangerous and he was right out of luck with a shot that was deflected by Goddard to hit the outside of the post and

TEAMS

LUTON TN.: Read; Ryan, Bannister; Keen, Branston, Slough; Collins, MacDonald, Sheffield, Allen, French. Substitute: Lewis.

ORIENT: Goddard; Jones, Rolfe; Taylor, Mancini, Harper; Slater, Bullock, Allen, Dyson, Brabrook. Substitute: Plume.

Referee: F. M. Nicholson, Manchester.

go for a corner from which Branston headed too high.

When Orient advanced again, they were awarded a free-kick just outside the penalty area, for a reason that was not altogether clear, and after some meticulousness in pushing the Town players 10 yards off the ball, the referee signalled the kick to be taken.

For some reason or other, the Town's line-up was not adequate, and JONES found the gap to smash the ball through and give Orient a shock lead after 14 minutes.

QUICK RECOVERY

When the Town hit back, Taylor was laid out and lay prone on the turf for some time while play continued until the ball went out of play.

When the Town advanced next, Taylor, who had made a quick recovery, raced across to stop MacDonald.

Next, with the Town pressure developing, Keith Allen almost took Goddard by surprise with a back-heeled flick.

Trouble for the Town came when Orient made ground on their left through Rolfe, and with the defence pulled out of position, Branston headed over his own bar for safety.

Basically, the Town were having more of the play but

they were not getting much change out of a defence that was leaving few gaps. Their passing was not as accurate as it should have been either.

Goddard was the busier goalkeeper, and he threw himself full-length to give away a corner as Collins streaked through to try to fasten on to a pass by King.

At this stage, Orient were being allowed to pick up far too many balls in midfield.

Then came a dramatic escape at the Orient end, when Sheffield suddenly produced a shot which Goddard saved at full length, but couldn't hold.

MacDonald was on it in a trice, but was frustrated by Goddard as he tried to force it home.

Back came Orient and Ryan, harassed near the goal line, headed the ball on to the top of his own bar for a corner which Read pulled down brilliantly.

UNLUCKY

Now Orient were concentrating on maintaining their lead, mainly leaving Bullock upfield.

A sudden rush by the Town in which MacDonald was unlucky with a firm header from a centre by French flew just over.

Brabrook and Slater had switched wings, but the Orient accent was still on defence.

The Town kept on persevering to try to find a way through this massed defence, and Goddard still busier than Read, threw himself to his left to keep out a shot from Keith Allen.

Certainly the Town were not having the best of luck in front of goal, and just before half-time Sheffield headed inches wide from MacDonald's centre.

With half-time only seconds away, the Town had a free-kick midway in the Orient half, and Bannister placed it so that MacDonald glanced it with his head, again the wrong side of the post, by a matter of inches.

There was terrific pressure after this, but the goal still proved to be elusive. Half-time:

LUTON	0
ORIENT	1

69/70
It had been a frustrating first-half for the Town for whom just about nothing had gone right at close quarters. But credit had to be given to Orient for their efficient defence.

The first incident after the interval was a careless back pass by Ryan which Read could not prevent running for a corner.

When the Town made ground it was through a wide-flung pass by Sheffield to French, as a result of which Bannister came racing up to make a centre that was hurriedly cleared, with Orient back in force in their own penalty area.

Orient were lucky when Collins, on the left, took a corner which proved to be a huge in-swing which beat Goddard, but Rolfe, standing on the line, headed it away. With the continued lack of goals a section of the crowd began to chant, "We want Lewis."

While this was going on MacDonald was again unfortunate with a header which Goddard seemed to touch on to the bar. The upshot was a free kick to Orient.

After their early spurt Orient had now gone completely on to the defensive, and when the Town gained a corner, every red-shirted player was in the penalty area.

AMAZEMENT

Then, by way of change, Orient attacked, and to everybody's amazement increased their lead.

The start of it was a too tentative tackle by Bannister which let through Dyson, whose shot Read pushed away.

The ball went to Slater, whose cross was met firmly by BULLOCK with his head, and this time Read was left stranded.

This came after 60 minutes and was a complete misrepresentation of the run of play, but Orient had shown how to take the snap opportunity.

With 18 minutes of the second half gone, manager Alec Stock sent on Lewis in place of Sheffield, and his appearance was greeted with cheers.

Next incident was the booking of Ryan for a foul on Brabrook, and that apart, the Town needed to improve considerably to maintain their long unbeaten home record.

When the Town came back again, Goddard had to be quick to punch out a header by Mancini which seemed to be booked for his own net.



Malcolm MacDonald

For once the Orient defence was caught napping so that MacDonald had very nearly a clear run, but as Mancini came across and Goddard came out to challenge, his shot whipped just wide of a post.

Now the Town had MacDonald, Keith Allen and Lewis well upfield.

At last the Town moved with some purpose to reduce their arrears after 74 minutes, through COLLINS. Keith Allen did the approach work with a strong run, and Collins was handily placed to sweep the ball in.

That at least set the stage for a grandstand finish and then there was a flare-up between Bullock and Branston.

Amid scenes of great enthusiasm came the equaliser, almost out of the blue, with just ten minutes left.

FRENCH was the scorer and it came at the end of an attack begun by Keith Allen and carried on by Lewis.

For once, the Orient defence got itself into a tangle and the ball went out to French, who coolly lobbed it

into the corner of an unattended net with Goddard having been drawn out.

These two quick goals put an entirely different complexion on matters, and it remained to be seen whether there was sufficient time for the Town to snatch a dramatic victory.

Certainly there was evidence of jitters among the Orient defence especially when Lewis bore goalwards and Mancini headed behind for a corner

How the goals came

JONES for Orient after 14 minutes.

BULLOCK for Orient after 60 minutes.

COLLINS for Luton after 74 minutes.

FRENCH for Luton after 80 minutes.

MacDONALD for Luton after 87 minutes.

from which Branston raced up, bundled the long suffering Goddard over the line, but the goalkeeper didn't have possession of the ball, and in any case it was a foul.

With five minutes to go, Mancini committed a crude foul on Lewis, out on the right wing, but the centre-half escaped with a talking to. However, the free-kick raised hopes of a winner—and it came, with Keen placing in beautifully and MACDONALD going up to head the ball firmly past Goddard with three minutes left.

It was a remarkable transformation, and Orient who had been so completely on the defensive just could not sweep into an attacking frame of mind again.