

VERDICT: Many other teams will play well here and still lose

BUSBY SHOWS HIS OLD GOAL-SNAP

ORIENT 0, LUTON TOWN 1

AFTER this fine win at Brisbane Road, the Town's first on opponents' ground this season, Town manager Harry Haslam praised his back four. "It was the boys at the back who kept them out," he said.

Certainly with their sound covering and tireless efforts in pushing up with the attack and then getting back quickly to pick up the Orient forwards, the back four covered well. Basically, however, the game was won in midfield, where Anderson, Halom and Jimmy Ryan stamped their authority.

Once again, we saw the Town stagger the home side at the start by their aggressiveness, and there is no doubt that the whirlwind start that they favour puts opponents out of their stride and goes a long way towards picking up valuable points like the two they earned on Saturday.

Haslam said: "It was a very hard game, and was a good win here. Many clubs will come here and play well, and end up losing."

Orient fans were obviously smarting from the sale of Dennis Rofe to Leicester City in midweek, and registered their disapproval by staying away, because the attendance was a miserable 6,494.

But those who stood by the club, boosted by a very vocal hard core of Town supporters, saw an entertaining game, with the Town succeeding in their aim of playing entertaining football.

The decisive goal came to the Town in the 56th minute when the ever alert VIV BUSBY darted in to pick up a hasty back pass by Allen and rounded goalkeeper Goddard who had come out to pick up, before sliding the ball into the net.

This was just the sort of opportunity that Busby had been looking for. He was continually worrying the

LINE-UP

ORIENT: Goddard; Arber, Hoadley; Bennett, Harris, Allen; Downing, Brisley, Bullock, Dyson, Bowyer. Substitute: Riddick.

LUTON TOWN: Barber; John Ryan, Thomson; Anderson, Faulkner, Garner; Jim Ryan, Fern, Busby, Halom, Aston. Substitute: Slough.

Referee: H. P. Hackney, Barnsley.

Attendance: 6,494.

Orient defence into mistakes, and this was only one example of his quickness of thought in trying to snap up the half-chances.

Orient's 19-year-old full-back Bobby Arber, pitched into the side to fill the hole left by Rofe's departure, was generally acclaimed as the man of the match.

He certainly played Aston very well, marking him tightly, and it was due mainly to him that the Town's attack was held. He was in action right from the outset when a good cross by Jimmy Ryan spelt danger to the Orient goal, and the youngster was in to head away.

Expert Barber

After the Town's initial onslaught, Orient hit back hard, and Barber's first test came when he cut out expertly a chip into the middle by Brisley, and followed up with a fine save from a shot by Downing that threatened to creep in by the far post.

But, generally, the Town were succeeding in keeping the Orient forwards at a distance, with Bowyer the only man who was keen to have a go, though most of

By ERIC NORRIS

his efforts were high and wide.

The first real shot of the match from the Town came from Rodney Fern, but once again it was the alert Arber who came to Orient's rescue with a goal-line clearance.

Peter Anderson was always the main threat to Orient, and in the 18th minute he made one of his exciting bursts through the middle, to give Busby a chance to open the Town's account, but the striker's left foot shot flew just wide of the target.

Towards half-time the Town got really on top, and Goddard had to move quickly to cut out an in-swinging corner by Jimmy Ryan. Before the pressure was relieved, the goalkeeper was grateful to see a good effort by Thomson fly just wide.

There was another fine run down the left by Fern, who gets better with every game, and it was Arber who was positioned on the line again who headed clear.

Lead deserved

The Town went in at half-time deserving to be in front, and they would have been had Goddard not made a splendid save in tipping a Fern header over the top from a corner by Anderson.

Fern rose to the ball superbly to head it down, and there is no doubt that this was the nearest approach to a goal that the first half had produced.

At the start of the second half, the Town were under pressure, but countered it quite comfortably, and long before the end, the disgruntled Orient supporters, who had given their side the slow handclap, had given the game up as lost, and were streaming out of the ground.

Once Busby had got the Town's noses in front, there seemed little fear of them relaxing their grip again, although they had one anxious moment when the usually safe Barber failed to hold a corner by Hoadley, and Thomson had to boot a shot by Bullock off the line.

The only other time the Town's lead looked in danger was when Bowyer hit a post from a free kick taken by Brisley, with five minutes remaining.

The Town never stopped fighting and running, and the issue was almost put beyond doubt two minutes from time, when Anderson worked himself another

opening, but his shot was just wide of the post.

Star rating

It was Anderson who once again took the star rating on the Town side, and Halom was not far behind him with a hard-working display in shuttling back and forth in midfield.

But emphasis at Luton these days is on team work, and team spirit and these two well-deserved points were earned by every man giving of his best and working for each other.

Alan Slough, sitting on the substitute's bench, was not needed on this occasion, and it says a lot for the way in which the team is playing that players of his calibre are having to fight for a place.

SPORT

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● Peter Anderson again earned a star rating.

With him on the bench was a former Town player, Gordon Riddick, who was nominated as the Orient substitute, but, like Slough, he was not called into action.