

BOBBY IS JUST THE MAN FOR THE JOB

... but Orient miss the presence of Dennis Rofe

Orient 0, Luton Town 1, — By VINCE WRIGHT

72/73

THE adverse psychological effect on the Orient team of losing a player of Dennis Rofe's quality stood out like a sore thumb at Brisbane Road on Saturday when Os turned in a shoddy performance against boggy side Luton.

Os missed Rofe's presence more than his playing ability as they struggled in vain to achieve a cohesive rhythm. The side, with one or two notable exceptions, played with little spirit, drive or purpose as if they regarded Rofe's departure as a bad omen for the season.

Unfortunately they may be right unless Orient boss George Petchey makes good and quick use of the £112,000 received for Rofe.

Apart from a lively, fluent spell early on, apprehension was at the root of every Orient move with most of the players showing a marked lack of confidence.

Exempt from this general criticism was Rofe's 21-year-old replacement Bobby Arber, who enhanced his claims for a regular first team place by completely mastering former Manchester United winger John Aston. Hoadley, switching to left-back, can also be pleased with his contribution while Peter Bennett was, as ever, a steadying influence.

Despite the non-stop efforts of Terry Brisley, Orient were unable to gain mid-field control and depressingly few chances were created.

To complete Orient's day of gloom a tragic mistake by an off-form Peter Allen presented Luton with a 56th minute winner. His back pass to goalkeeper Ray Goddard fell too short and Viv Busby nipped in to crash the ball home.

Orient: Goddard, Arber, Hoadley, Bennett, Harris, Allen, Downing, Brisley, Bullock, Dyson, Bowyer.



Orient centre-forward Mickey Bullock beats Luton goalkeeper Keith Barber to a high centre but his header is off target. Paul Harris (right) waits expectantly.