

NEW FORMATION HAS CUP TIE SEWN UP

THE demolition of Third Division strugglers gave the Town more than a near-certain place in the next round of the Milk Cup at Brisbane Road on Tuesday night.

Manager David Pleat changed people and positions, and the first win since the opening day of the season was full of personal confidence-boosters.

Brian Stein scored his first goals since last May, Vince Hilaire made his debut and positively sparkled, and Garry Parker had an explosive effect when he went on for the last 19 minutes.

It was all too much for Orient, who are second from bottom of the Third Division after four consecutive league defeats, and who had only 13 fit professionals after defender David Stride was stretched off with a broken bone in his foot in the 60th minute.

They tried to play football, and looked reasonable between the two penalty areas, and their approach helped to make it a much more entertaining game than Saturday's Chelsea whirlwind affair.

Andy Dibble had to make a couple of good saves, and

ORIENT 1, LUTON TOWN 4

84/85 (FLC)

**Report by Brian Swain
Pictures : Mark Richards**

was helped out by defenders when he found shots too hot to hold.

But Orient rarely looked like matching the Town's hard tackling at the back and penetration up front, and it will be interesting to see if Mr Pleat dares to use the tactics and formation tried at Brisbane Road in the First Division.

RESPONSE

David Moss collected a knee injury when Colin Lee whacked him on Saturday, and although he declared himself fit for Tuesday the manager decided to give Hilaire the chance he has been waiting for.

The response could not have been better, with Hilaire's pace down the left

flank causing Orient severe problems.

Meka Nwajiobi played on the right wing, with Frank Bunn at centre-forward and Stein holding back behind him.

That threw a lot of responsibility on Wayne Turner and Ricky Hill in midfield, and though they came through well enough I doubt if Spurs, for instance, would let the Town get away with it quite so easily.

Orient tried using five at the back to counter the threat of Stein and Hill hoisting in behind attacks, and broke out of defence with impressive speed.

LATE FLUKE

But First Division experience and class made the difference, with Orient's major problem the lack of a forward sharp enough to look like scoring.

Defenders produced their best scoring efforts with long range drives, with Dibble saving well from Kevin Hales, and being lucky when Hales hit a post with a 30-yarder.

Orient's goal was a last-minute fluke, with John Cornwell hoisting a long centre from the right wing towards the far post. Under challenge from Richard Cadette, who was with the Town a couple of years ago, Dibble was unable to stretch high enough to make a save.

Orient probably deserved a

goal for their unflagging efforts to play neat football, but the Town were also good value for their four.

Hill hit a post from 20 yards after a smooth build-up involving Hilaire and Stein in the fifth minute, and the Town went ahead in the 18th minute when Hilaire hammered a free kick across the face of goal and Mal Donaghy hooked in a close-range shot at the far post.

UNLUCKY

Stein was unlucky with a shot that hit the keeper and bounced over the bar after Paul Elliott's back header had made the opening, but the striker's persistence and quick thinking broke his goal famine in the third minute of the second half.

Hilaire chased down the left wing in pursuit of a ball that looked to be going out of play. Orient defenders saw the danger too late and he left two of them flat-footed before crossing, and Stein bundled the ball into the net as he and Rhys Wilmot went for it.

Parker's introduction as sub in place of Nwajiobi added an extra attacking dimension to the Town's game, and his long-range shooting finished the contest.

He had been on for barely a minute when he started a passing move which Hill and Stein continued, with Parker producing a finishing shot which hurtled into the net from 25 yards to make it 3-0 in the 72nd minute.

Three minutes from time

Parker hammered in another long drive which Wilmot could not hold, and Stein picked up his second goal from the rebound.

DETAILS

TOWN: Dibble; Thomas, Elliott, Donaghy, Grimes; Hill, Turner; Nwajiobi (Parker, 71 mins), Bunn, Stein, Hilaire.

ORIENT: Wilmot; Hales, Foster, Banfield, Stride (Cornwell 60 mins); Corbett, Silkman, Eooks, Godfrey; Sussex, Cadette.

GOALS: Mal Donaghy 18 minutes, Brian Stein two, 48 and 87 minutes; Gary Parker 72 minutes; John Cornwell for Orient, 88 minutes.

OTHER SCORING ATTEMPTS: Town eight saved, nine off target, one hit a post; Orient four saved, seven wide, one hit a post. Corners: 10-10.

REFEREE: Darryl Reeves, Middlesex.

ATTENDANCE: 3,680, Orient's best of the season so far.

ENTERTAINMENT: Attractive open game, far better to watch than the Chelsea match on Saturday.



● TWO UP: Brian Stein turns in delight, and perhaps relief, after scoring his first goal of the season at Brisbane Road on Tuesday. It put the Town 2-0 ahead early in the second half.