

Muted pleasure at cup success

LUTON TOWN 3, ORIENT 1 (Aggregate 7-1)

AN INJURY to Paul Elliott and the lowest home attendance for many years dampened the celebrations as the Town duly completed their stroll into today's third round draw of the Milk Cup.

With two attractive home league games on the near horizon, supporters shunned First Division prices for a tie that was just about settled before kick-off, and the Kenilworth Road atmosphere had a dream-like air about it.

Orient competed as well as they could, but the unlikely prospect of a cup shock vanished completely when Frank Bunn scored in the 26th minute to make the aggregate 5-1.

Manager David Pleat complained that his team had not been progressive enough. Poor Orient, struggling to avoid relegation worries in the Third Division, settled for a brave attempt to play open football, and could not match the Town's standards.

The Town did a sensible controlled job, and as in the first leg at Brisbane Road, the major difference between the sides was in the two penalty areas.

The Town changed their line-up for the fourth time in as many games with the recall of Bunn to midfield in place of Garry Parker, and he staked his claims for a place against Sheffield Wednesday with a cracking goal.

Ashley Grimes fed a pass through the inside left channel, Bunn beat the defence for pace, and took full advantage as on-loan goalkeeper Rhys Wilmot left a gap for the angled shot into the net.

Richard Cadette and Chris Jones posed a brief but passing threat as Orient tried to salvage a little pride, but both teams had to reorganise through injury.

Colin Foster limped off with a cut leg three minutes after the goal, and within five minutes the Town had suffered the loss of Elliott.

Cadette, rejected by the Town two years ago, nearly got on to the end of a through-pass that left the Town's rear-guard stretched. Elliott and Mitchell Thomas snuffed out the danger with a double challenge, with Thomas's boot leaving the centre-half nearly unconscious.

It gave Vince Hilaire the chance to go on as sub for a run on the right wing, with Bunn dropping back into defence.

"It was our boys against their men," confessed Orient manager Frank Clark afterwards. "My only hope is that we have learned something from the experience."

A neat pass by Ricky Hill set Stein up for the night's second goal after 53 minutes, and a bullet header by Steve Elliott from Stein's right wing cross nine minutes later made the aggregate 7-1.

Andy Dibble did well to save a header by Chris Jones, but the defensive marking was suspect when Barry Silkman shot Orient's consolation in the 76th minute.

THE SECOND LEG DETAILS

LUTON TOWN: Dibble; Thomas, Paul Elliott, (Hilaire, 30 mins), Donaghy, Grimes; Hill, Turner, Bunn, Stein, Steve Elliott, Moss.

ORIENT: Wilmot; Hales, Foster, (McNeil, 9 mins), Banfield, Corbett; Stride, Silkman, Brooks, Corwell, Jones, Cadette.

THE GOALS: Frank Bunn, 26 minutes, angled shot from Ashley Grimes pass; Brian Stein, 53 minutes, from opening made by Ricky Hill and Stein's own pace; Steve Elliott, 62 minutes, bullet header from cross by Brian Stein; Barry Silkman for Orient, 76 minutes, when the Town's right flank was caught out.

OTHER STRIKES: Town six saved and five wide; Orient four saved and seven wide. Corners: 6-2 to the Town.

ATTENDANCE: 2,574, lowest ever in David Pleat's management.

REFEREE: Tom Holbrook, Stafford—enjoyed a pleasant stroll, with neither team causing any bother.

ENTERTAINMENT: Not very satisfying, with the result too much of a foregone conclusion.



● **RIGHT:** Steve Elliott gets up to power the ball into the net with his head from a cross by Brian Stein for the Town's third goal against Orient



● **HAPPY RETURN:** Frank Bunn, back in the side against Orient, celebrates the first goal in the 26th minute.